



Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Regional and Local Plan

PY 2022—PY 2023

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APPENDIX A

Central Arkansas PY 2022 – PY 2023 Regional Plan

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires regional planning— a broad strategic approach to planning focused on the overarching vision, goals, alignment and shared responsibilities within the region. Arkansas intends to implement a two-tiered regional approach to meeting this requirement by allowing a two-year transitional plan. This approach provides latitude for regions that may not yet be able to fully address all of the outlined elements required in a four-year regional plan.

In addressing the elements outlined below, if the planning region is not fully prepared to provide a complete response to the specified element at the time of plan submission, the region must provide an indication of how the region plans to address the respective element requirement in the forthcoming regional plan.

1.1. Provide a labor market and economic analysis of the workforce development planning region.
This regional analysis must include:

A. Economic conditions

The Central Arkansas LWDA, which includes a large portion of The City of Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway

Metropolitan Statistical Area and six counties: Faulkner, Lonoke, Monroe, Prairie, Saline, and Pulaski County (excluding Little Rock) had an estimated population of 534,473 in 2020 [2023 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report].

According to the 2020 Census, the population of the six counties included in the Central Arkansas LWDA stood at the following levels:

Area: Central	Period Type	Population
Faulkner County	5 Year Estimates	124,800
Lonoke County	5 Year Estimates	73,163
Monroe County	5 Year Estimates	6,879
Prairie County	5 Year Estimates	8,138
Pulaski County	5 Year Estimates	393,078
Saline County	5 Year Estimates	120,990

The City of Little Rock LWDA population decreased by 593 between 2020 and 2021, bringing the population to 201,998. The City of Little Rock’s population grew by 4,218 between 2017 and 2021. The area is the county seat of Pulaski County and includes part of the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area [2023 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report].

As of July 2021, the MSA had an estimated population of 750,936 [Arkansas Economic Development Institute and The United States Census Bureau]. Located at the convergence of Arkansas's other geographic regions, the region's central location make Central Arkansas an important population, economic, education, and political center in Arkansas and the south. Little Rock is the state's capital and largest city, and the city is also home to two Fortune 500 companies, Arkansas Children’s Hospital, and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS).

National, state and local population growth slowed in the 2010-2020 decade. • Little Rock MSA growth rate dropped from a very fast 14.6 percent 2000-2010 to 6.9 percent 2010-2020. • The region grew a little more slowly than the U.S. average, but well above the state average.

The Central Arkansas WDA is expected to add 18,507 new jobs, 2018-2028. The area's 10.19 % growth is faster than the state as a whole. Education and Health Services is estimated to be the top growing supersector, with a growth of 4,903, an increase of 13.71%. Central Arkansas is expected to have 23,958 annual job openings during the projection period, with 8,594 created from employees leaving the workforce, 13,513 from changing jobs, and 1,851 from growth and expansion. Personal Care and Service Occupations is estimated to be the fastest growing major group, with an increase of 20.83% [State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas Long-Term Industry and Occupational Projections, 2018-2028].

The City of Little Rock WDA is expected to grow by 19,088 jobs during the 2018-2028 projections period, or an increase of 9.19 percent, greater than the state growth rate. Education and Health Services is estimated to be the top growing supersector in the City of Little Rock WDA, adding an anticipated 5,228 new jobs, an increase of 10.24 percent. City of Little Rock WDA employers are expected to have 25,271 annual openings during the projection period. Of these, 8,908 could come from employees leaving the workforce, while 14,454 would be from employees changing jobs. Growth and expansion would account for an additional 1,909 jobs. Personal Care and Service Occupations is expected to be the fastest growing major group, with an increase of 20.94 percent [State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas Long-Term Industry and Occupational Projections, 2018-2028].

The top industry supersectors in both the Central Arkansas and LWDAs include Trade, Transportation, and Utilities as well as Education and Health Services. Updated data supports higher priority for the Transportation sector and continued high priority for the Health Services sector.

Top Growing Industry Supersectors

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2021 Estimated Employment	2023 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
102100	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	39,126	40,518	1,392	3.56%
102400	Professional and Business Services	14,826	15,992	1,166	7.86%
102700	Other Services (except Government)	12,801	13,858	1,057	8.26%
102500	Education and Health Services	37,424	37,927	503	1.34%
102600	Leisure and Hospitality	17,536	17,907	371	2.12%

Central Arkansas LWDA, Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report

Top Growing Industry Supersectors

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2021 Estimated Employment	2023 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
102300	Financial Activities	22,792	24,186	1,394	6.12%
102100	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	27,464	28,516	1,052	3.83%
102400	Professional and Business Services	25,305	26,234	929	3.67%
102500	Education and Health Services	54,885	55,624	739	1.35%
102700	Other Services (except Government)	14,619	14,885	266	1.82%

Little Rock LWDA, Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report

Within the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities supersector, top growth occupations include Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators and Warehouse and Storage workers. Within Education and Health Services, top growth occupations include Home Health and Personal Care Aides.

According to the 2022 Arkansas Labor Market Report from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS):

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities has outpaced Construction to join Health Services as a top sector priority. It is also notable that, in addition to the Heavy Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers occupation, Transportation Warehousing is an emerging occupational area of focus.

NAICS	Dec 22	Nov 22	Dec 21	OTM	OTY
Total Nonfarm	373.4	373.5	366.4	-0.1	7.0
Goods Producing	38.2	38.4	37.6	-0.2	0.6
Mining, Logging & Construction	18.4	18.4	18.3	0.0	0.1
Manufacturing	19.8	20.0	19.3	-0.2	0.5
Service Providing	335.2	335.1	328.8	0.1	6.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	77.8	77.0	76.0	0.8	1.8
Wholesale Trade	16.9	16.9	16.3	0.0	0.6
Retail Trade	39.3	38.8	39.1	0.5	0.2
Trans., Warehousing & Utilities	21.6	21.3	20.6	0.3	1.0
Information	5.6	5.6	5.5	0.0	0.1
Financial Activities	23.5	23.5	22.7	0.0	0.8
Professional & Business Services	45.5	45.7	47.7	-0.2	-2.2
Educational & Health Services	60.2	60.8	58.2	-0.6	2.0

2022 Arkansas Labor Market Report

- 2021 Bureau of Labor Statistics State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates
New data related to the Transportation sector with Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers listed at an annual mean wage of \$49,090.

NAICS Industry	2020 Annual Average Covered Employment	2021 Annual Average Covered Employment	2020-2021 Numeric Change	2020-2021 Percent Change	2021 Average Weekly Earnings
Total	229,161	233,803	4,642	2.0%	\$1,084.08
Natural Resources and Mining	624	634	10	1.6%	\$1,417.96
Construction	9,037	9,620	583	6.5%	\$1,164.39
Manufacturing	12,343	11,828	-515	-4.2%	\$1,160.97
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	47,514	49,973	2,459	5.2%	\$998.64
Information	2,810	2,672	-138	-4.9%	\$1,413.57
Financial Activities	17,596	17,038	-558	-3.2%	\$1,633.56
Professional and Business Services	33,126	34,090	964	2.9%	\$1,163.19
Education and Health Services	40,470	41,113	643	1.6%	\$1,104.42

2022 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities has joined Health Services as a top sector priority. It is also notable that, in addition to the Heavy Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers occupation, Transportation Warehousing is an emerging occupational area of focus in the Little Rock WDA.

2021 Bureau of Labor Statistics State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates show new data related to the Transportation sector with Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers listed at an annual mean wage of \$49,090 {2022 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report}.

Construction remains consistent in growth while Manufacturing has declined since the 2017 reporting cycle (although the decline can be correlated to the COVID-era years of 2020 and 2021, which suggests it may be poised for recovery given application of workforce and economic development resources. Leisure and Hospitality joins these other industries as a top occupation in the Central Arkansas WDA.

NAICS Industry	2020 Annual Average Covered Employment	2021 Annual Average Covered Employment	2020-2021 Numeric Change	2020-2021 Percent Change	2021 Average Weekly Earnings
Total	81,020	83,375	2,355	2.9%	\$813.24
Natural Resources and Mining	1,095	1,047	-48	-4.4%	\$941.59
Construction	6,213	6,333	120	1.9%	\$972.56
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	16,924	17,601	677	4.0%	\$727.38
Information	1,863	1,776	-87	-4.7%	\$1,801.65
Financial Activities	3,167	3,305	138	4.4%	\$1,095.13
Professional and Business Services	6,005	6,154	149	2.5%	\$955.89
Education and Health Services	14,449	14,732	283	2.0%	\$841.85
Leisure and Hospitality	10,135	11,334	1,199	11.8%	\$366.48

2022 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report

B. Labor force employment and unemployment data

In December 2022, the unemployment rate for the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA stood at 2.8% with 9,797 unemployed.

The Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA = Faulkner, Grant, Lonoke, Perry, Pulaski, & Saline counties.

Civilian Labor Force Estimates (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

	<u>Dec 22</u>	<u>Nov 22</u>	<u>Dec 21</u>	<u>OTM</u>	<u>OTY</u>
Civilian Labor Force	353,640	353,381	350,674	259	2,966
Employment	343,843	343,203	341,122	640	2,721
Unemployment	9,797	10,178	9,552	-381	245
Unemployment Rate	2.8	2.9	2.7	-0.1	0.1

2022 Arkansas Labor Market Report

Additional 2022 unemployment rates and labor force statistics for the Central Arkansas area include:

Unemployment Rates and Labor Force Statistics				
LWDA/County	Civilian Labor Force	Number of Employed	Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Central Arkansas	251,213	244,446	6,767	2.70%
Faulkner County	62,105	60,479	1,626	2.60%

Lonoke County	33,513	32,718	795	2.40%
Monroe County	2,448	2,343	105	4.30%
Prairie County	3,443	3,361	82	2.40%
Pulaski County	186,548	180,899	5,649	3.00%
Saline County	59,085	57,689	1,396	2.40%

Unemployment Rate Ranking				
Area	Month	adjusted	Rate	Rank
Lonoke County	December	Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimates	2.4	6
Prairie County	December	Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimates	2.4	6
Saline County	December	Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimates	2.4	6
Faulkner County	December	Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimates	2.6	10
Pulaski County	December	Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimates	3.0	26
Monroe County	December	Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimates	4.3	61

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Workers in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$23.78 in May 2021, 15 percent below the nationwide average of \$28.01 [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics].

City of Little Rock LWDA Wages of 10 Largest Occupations

Occupation	Estimated Employment	Average Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage
Registered Nurses	8,850	\$70,466	\$55,247	\$78,076
Retail Salespersons	6,840	\$28,836	\$23,313	\$31,598
Customer Service Representatives	5,750	\$37,029	\$27,553	\$41,768
General and Operations Managers	5,560	\$89,826	\$37,678	\$115,900
Fast Food and Counter Workers	5,030	\$24,662	\$23,469	\$25,259
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,980	\$51,749	\$33,851	\$60,698
Office Clerks, General	4,750	\$35,516	\$26,070	\$40,239
Cashiers	4,710	\$25,196	\$23,167	\$26,210
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	4,270	\$30,697	\$23,941	\$34,074
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	3,760	\$25,195	\$23,215	\$26,185

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, May 2021 Wage Survey

Across Central Arkansas, including Little Rock, higher wages mirror top occupations like Leisure and Hospitality; Education and Health Services; Trade, Transportation, and Utilities; and Construction.

C. Information on labor market trends

Trends in the labor force and unemployment rates provide insight into where the Central Arkansas and Little Rock Workforce Development Boards can best apply resources.

The Central LWDA saw a decrease in the labor force of 3,585 to 247,793 from 2020 to 2021, and the labor force increased by 3,050 over the 2017 to 2021 period. Employment increased by 2,136 between 2020 and 2021, but decreased by 4,198 over the five-year period. Central has seen a fluctuation in unemployment over the same time periods. From 2020 to 2021, unemployment increased by 1,148. The unemployment rate rose by 0.5% over the five-year period. In 2022, the unemployment rate rose by three-tenths of a percent from January to 3.8% in July 2022 [*Central Arkansas LWDA, Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report*]. **Central**

The labor force decreased in the Little Rock LWDA by 1,967 from 2020 to 2021 and saw a decrease of 1,725 between 2017 and 2021. Employment increased by 482 from 2017 to 2021, but decreased by 3,391 from 2020 to 2021. Unemployment and the unemployment rate decreased from between 2020 to 2021, with unemployment decreasing by 2,449 and the unemployment rate decreasing by 2.5 % to 5.1% in 2021. The unemployment rate increased by 1.8% from 2017 to 2021. The area unemployment rate fluctuated from January 2022 through July 2022, settling to 4.5% in July 2022 [*Little Rock LWDA, Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report*].

In order to understand labor market trends in the Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area, it is also imperative to identify projected growth industries so that both Boards can be proactive in the development of a pipeline of skilled talent.

City of Little Rock



The City of Little Rock Profile indicates that Transportation and Material Moving Occupations is slated to be the fastest growing major group, raising employment levels by 4.99 percent [State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas: Short-Term Industry and Occupational Projections, 2021-2023]. Personal Care and Service Occupations is expected to be the fastest growing major group, with an increase of 20.94 percent [State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas Long-Term Industry and Occupational Projections, 2018-2028].

Central Arkansas



In Central Arkansas, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations is predicted to be the top growing major group, increasing staffing by 884 jobs [[State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas: Short-Term Industry and Occupational Projections, 2021-2023]. Education and Health Services is estimated to be the top growing supersector in Central Arkansas, with a growth of 4,903, an increase of 13.71 percent. The Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations major group is projected to add the most jobs, with 3,065 new jobs anticipated, while Personal Care and Service Occupations is estimated to be the fastest growing major group, with an increase of 20.83 percent.

C. Workforce development activities

Regional Central Arkansas Workforce Centers

The Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area is at the forefront of workforce development activities, and represent Arkansas's version of "the American Job Centers". There are six workforce centers spread through the six-county region to ensure access to all Arkansans residing in the region. The Little Rock and Conway Workforce Centers are the region's comprehensive centers. The workforce centers are managed locally by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board and the Little Rock Workforce Development Board, which are both composed of members from both the public and a majority private sector.

Central Arkansas Workforce System Services-Unemployed and Underemployed

The Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area's Workforce Centers offer a full array of career services which are outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed. The workforce centers have computers, printers, copiers, and resources along with staff to help jobseekers. However, digital services are offered as well such as Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas's Labor

Market Information portal. These two tools allow for jobseekers to search for jobs 24/7 and make data informed decisions about which path is best for them.

Jobseeker Services

Career services, found through the Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area's Workforce Centers, offer a full line of services to prepare jobseekers for the regional workforce. Soft skills and technical training are two examples of these services which are provided and which employers look for in a good candidate for a position.

Labor Market Information which is updated regularly to ensure accuracy is provided to individuals seeking services. This data includes information pertaining to job vacancies, skills needed to obtain said jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential, along with career ladders which exist within those occupations.

Other career services provided through our one-stop centers are outreach, intake, and orientation. Upon the completion of the initial assessment, eligibility will be determined and our career coaches will begin to provide recommendations for various programs along with financial aid information. Services are also provided to individuals to assist them in obtaining and retaining employment. Some of these services include:

- Career Planning and Counseling
- Occupational Skills Assessment
- Short-term prevocational services
- Internships and work experience
- English language acquisition
- Financial literacy

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the region, but all the offices offer a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modern workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require such as:

1. Workforce Centers provide the following career services including outreach, intake and orientation; initial assessment; labor exchange services; eligibility determination; referrals to programs; performance and cost information; information on unemployment insurance; financial aid information and follow-up services.
2. Labor exchange services must also provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information must be accurate and include information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as job vacancies; skills necessary to obtain the jobs. In-demand occupations and related earning potential and opportunities for advancement in those occupations
3. Workforce Centers and partners must provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to Individual Employment Plan (IEP); career planning and counseling; comprehensive assessment; occupational skills assessment; short-term prevocational services; internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships; workforce preparation; out-of-area job search; English language acquisition and financial literacy

Training Services

Career services help equip a jobseeker with the skills they need to find sustainable employment, however such skills may not be enough to obtain sustainable employment. In those circumstances formal training may be required. Copious amounts of training opportunities exist through the Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area's Workforce Centers, such as occupational skills training which can be obtained from numerous educational opportunities. Registered Apprenticeships are also available in a wide variety of traditional sectors, and are in the process of being expanded into non-traditional sectors such as information technology and nursing.

These training services are provided through numerous local and state partners. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area and the Little Rock Workforce Development Board have individually established policies for the determination of eligibility, Individual Training Account Limits (ITAs) and targeted training aimed at in-demand industry sectors throughout the region such as transportation logistics and healthcare. Sector strategies have taken on a new role in the region, with the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board and the Little Rock Workforce Development Board both using data-driven decision making to enhance the likelihood of employment of participants.

Supportive Services

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area and the Little Rock Workforce Development Board are both responsible for establishing a supportive service policy that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include childcare; transportation; needs-related payments; housing; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has developed relationships with community partners that assist with utility payments, food, shelter, and other basic needs.

The Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area shall establish a communication platform to ensure coordination of supportive services and prevent duplication. This platform will enhance collaboration between the two Boards, and will be “web-based”.

Business Services

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place statewide and include a broad array of services to employers. Business Services assistance is broad; however they are tailored to meet the individual needs of each employer. Services provided to businesses can be categorized into three broad categories:

A. Assessments and Information:

Through the Arkansas Workforce Centers, businesses can utilize assessments and test to measure the skills, interests, or personality traits of job seekers or current employees. Businesses can also receive a variety of information pertaining to incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Labor Market Information is available to businesses on market conditions, industries, occupations, and workforce characteristics as well. Also short- and long-term industry trends and occupational projections are available.

B. Direct Assistance:

Businesses have access to any of the Workforce Center locations for the purposes of meetings, trainings, orientations, and interviews. The Central Arkansas and Little Rock Workforce Areas can also host hiring events which are customized to the specific needs of businesses. Job orders which have been approved by staff can also be placed through the workforce areas, along with job placement assistance and information on unemployment benefits. Businesses can also receive assistance with applicant screening, which involves the initial evaluation of applicants.

C. Response and Training:

The Workforce Areas provide rapid response measures in the event of a business downsizing or restructuring. These include a variety of workshops to assist employees who are in transition. The Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area will also coordinate with the Governor’s Dislocated Worker Task Force to assist individuals impacted by layoffs within the region. Training and retraining services are also available for both current and future employees. Customized Training Programs are also available in the Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area. The development of “Customized Training” may be considered when available training programs and/or curricula do not meet the specific training requirements of an employer(s) which are identified as “in demand” occupations within identified industry clusters. The training provider must be competitively procured and such training must be designed to meet the specific needs of a participating employer.

Employers eligible to participate in Customized training shall be:

- Current in unemployment insurance and workers’ compensation taxes, penalties, and/or interest or related payment plan;
- Located within the State of Arkansas;
- Currently liable for Arkansas State Business and Occupation tax;

- In need of assistance in training future and current employees;
- Able to contract for customized, short-term, training services (typically less than 6-9 months);
- Have not laid-off workers within 120 days to relocate.
- Committed to employ all individuals upon successful completion of the training; and
- Identified as “In-demand” as defined by WIOA Section 3(23) and determined by LEVERAGE; or
- Declining, but there is a compelling reason justifying investment in customized training.
- Paid for, in part, by participating employer, who must pay a “significant cost” of the training.

(Customized training will not supersede the individual’s rights for consumer choice.) The Little Rock/North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area’s partners also offer incumbent worker training programs for existing businesses. For example, the Arkansas Department of Career Education’s Office of Skills Development offers several grant programs which provide training to existing businesses throughout the region.

As a region, the two Central Arkansas and City of Little Rock’s Business Services team will begin exploring avenues to share data, collaborate on business assistance, and coordinate outreach efforts

in order to avoid duplication of services and provide first-class service. The two Business Service teams met for the first time in April of 2017 to explore web-based platforms for coordination and collaboration. These meetings will continue each quarter (or on an as-needed basis).

Services to Individuals with Disabilities

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and Division of Services for the Blind provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. 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 Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities to enable them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

All of the Workforce Centers in the Little Rock/North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area are compliant with the Americans with Disability Act. Each Workforce Center in the region is equipped with the following assistive technology:

- An accessible computer workstation equipped with a CPU, Monitor, Keyboard, Mouse, and software.
- Assistive Devices, including amplifiers, magnifiers, tapes, videos, and calculators.
- Arkansas Relay Service TDD Telephone.
- Access to Sign Interpreters.
- Alternative Format Forms and Information.

Through the Governor’s Executive Order 10-17, the Department of 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.

E. The educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers

**Educational Attainment
by Level - Faulkner
County**

Education Level	2019 Population	2020 Population	2019 % of Population	2019 State % Population	2019 National % Population
High School Diploma	24,782	25,197	32%	35%	28%
Some College	18,220	18,290	23%	22%	21%
Associate degree	5,099	5,083	7%	6%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	14,310	14,492	18%	14%	19%

**Educational Attainment
by Level - Lonoke
County**

Education Level	2019 Population	2020 Population	2019 % of Population	2019 State % Population	2019 National % Population
High School Diploma	16,785	16,949	34%	35%	28%
Some College	12,994	13,086	27%	22%	21%
Associate degree	3,926	3,980	8%	6%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	6,425	6,490	13%	14%	19%

**Educational Attainment
by Level - Monroe
County**

Education Level	2019 Population	2020 Population	2019 % of Population	2019 State % Population	2019 National % Population
High School Diploma	1,980	1,926	41%	35%	28%
Some College	1,029	1,009	21%	22%	21%
Associate degree	221	217	5%	6%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	359	354	7%	14%	19%

Educational Attainment
by Level - Prairie County

Education Level	2019 Population	2020 Population	2019 % of Population	2019 State % Population	2019 National % Population
High School Diploma	2,675	2,691	45%	35%	28%
Some College	1,065	1,027	18%	22%	21%
Associate degree	241	233	4%	6%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	596	600	10%	14%	19%

Educational Attainment
by Level - Pulaski
County

Education Level	2019 Population	2020 Population	2019 % of Population	2019 State % Population	2019 National % Population
High School Diploma	73,489	73,886	27%	35%	28%
Some College	64,599	64,877	24%	22%	21%
Associate degree	17,469	17,674	6%	6%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	54,489	54,383	20%	14%	19%

Educational Attainment
by Level - Saline County

Education Level	2019 Population	2020 Population	2019 % of Population	2019 State % Population	2019 National % Population
High School Diploma	29,402	29,763	35%	35%	28%
Some College	19,797	20,038	23%	22%	21%
Associate degree	5,961	5,995	7%	6%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	14,366	14,603	17%	14%	19%

*Source: Emsi Q2 2019 Data Set and the American Community Survey
Data cover only the population aged 25 years or more and indicate the highest level achieved.*

The Little Rock/North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area recognizes individuals with barriers to employment include those individuals in one or more of the following categories as stated by WIOA Sec 3(24): §680.320(b)(1-14):

1. Displaced homemakers;
2. Low-income individuals;

3. Indians, Alaska Natives , and Native Hawaiians;
4. Individuals with disabilities;
5. Older individuals, i.e./ those aged 55 or over;
6. Ex-Offenders;
7. Homeless individuals;
8. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
9. Individuals who are English language learners; individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
10. Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, defined in WIOA Sec.167(i);
11. Individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under TANF (part A of title IV of the Social Security Act);
12. Single-parents (including single pregnant women);
13. Long-term unemployed individuals; or
14. Other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment.

D. The development and implementation of sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

Little Rock Workforce Development Board Tier I Sectors

Healthcare

Advanced Manufacturing

Transportation and Logistics

Little Rock Workforce Development Board Tier II Sectors

Construction

Education/ Administrative Support

Information Technology

Tourism/Hospitality

Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board Tier I Sectors

Healthcare

Advanced Manufacturing

Transportation and Logistics

Business Services/Administrative Support

Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board Tier II Sectors

Construction/General Trade

Retail and Service

Education.

Sectors were identified based on data from the United States Census Bureau, EMSI, and stake holder input. The “tiers” represent the level of demand within the region as it pertains to the labor force needs of employers. The Little Rock/North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area will explore the development of a sector strategy for the Tourism/Hospitality sector first. This decision was based on the grounds that there are currently no active sector strategies for this sector within the region.

*For more information see respective Regional Plans for the City of Little Rock and The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area.

Indicate the sources of regional labor market and economic data. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(C)]

U.S. Census Bureau

Bureau of Economic Analysis

Bureau of Labor Statistics

EMSI, ADWS

Arkansas Research Center

1.2. Based upon the regional labor market and economic conditions analysis and Arkansas's Workforce Development Plan (PY 2020 –PY 2023) describe the planning region's economic and workforce development-oriented vision and strategic goals. [WIOA Sec. 106(c) and Sec. 107(d)]

The Little Rock/North Little Rock MSA Regional Workforce Development Area has adopted the State's vision and goals and adapted them to the local area.

VISION

The Little Rock/ North Little Rock MSA Regional Workforce Development Area will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas's economy competitive in the global marketplace.

GOALS:

Strategic Goal 1: To develop efficient partnerships with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community-based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers in Central Arkansas and the City of Little Rock.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Develop tailored sector strategies through joint industry engagement and coordinated business service efforts.
2. Coordinate outreach efforts between the two Boards in the realm of economic development organizations and educational training providers to enhance service delivery
3. Develop a data-sharing platform for enhanced communication and collaboration between the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area and the City of Little Rock's Workforce Development Board.

Strategic Goal 2: To enhance service delivery to both employers and jobseekers in Central Arkansas and the City of Little Rock.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Promote coordination between the City of Little Rock and the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's Business Service Team in order to enhance service delivery to employers.

2. Promote jointly, in-demand industry sectors throughout the region as part of sector strategy development.
3. Foster communication and collaboration between the two Boards by meeting quarterly.

Strategic Goal 3: To increase awareness of the Central Arkansas Region's and City of Little Rock's Talent Delivery System.

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Explore joint outreach efforts to conduct joint outreach initiatives to increase awareness and perception of the services available to both employers and job seekers.
2. Promote regional sector strategies on each Boards website in dedicated sections.
3. Conduct joint employer engagement sessions and sector strategy events for in-demand sectors common to both regions.

Strategic Goal 4: To address Skills Gaps specific to Central Arkansas and the City of Little Rock's in-demand industry needs.

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Identify and bolster career pathways in regional in-demand industry sectors, which can be used by both Boards to fill skills gaps.
2. Conduct joint strategic planning sessions focused on the development of regional sector strategies.
3. Promote collaboration between the Boards Business Services Team in order to identify skills gaps within in-demand industry sectors in the region.

1.3. Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the State on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(H)] [proposed 20 CFR 677.210(b) and (c)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2)]

The Little Rock/North Little Rock MSA Workforce Development Area currently operates under the same performance accountability measures. The Little Rock Workforce Development Board and the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board are individually responsible for their own performance accountability measures.

APPENDIX B

Central Arkansas PY 2022 – PY 2023 Local Plan

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each local workforce area to develop a local plan that supports workforce development and which is submitted as a component of its regional plan. The narratives framed in the local plan will include more detailed, actionable plans and objectives, consistent with the local plan's respective regional plan strategic visions and goals.

In addressing the elements outlined below, if the local board is not prepared to provide a complete response to a specific element at the time of plan submission, a response must be provided that indicates how the local board plans to fully address that particular element in the multi-year plan.

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

1.1 Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sector occupations [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Analysis of Economic Conditions

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area houses a diverse economy, due in part by the strength of the economic base of the region. From an expanding infrastructure network, copious institutions of higher and secondary education, it's understandable why so many Fortune 500 companies operate within the region.

The Central Arkansas region has vast employment opportunities for citizens across several strong industry clusters, which will be explored in the subsequent section. This high concentration of companies across the six county region further amplifies the importance of workforce development solutions at the regional and local level. These companies are the backbone of the economy and therefore our communities. When a company is making the crucial decision on where to locate their operations, workforce is one the foremost deciding factors. Knowing this, the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board understands the importance of the task at hand, and remains committed to providing the training needs for Arkansas residents to obtain a good paying job in those sectors, no matter what barrier they may face. Plus, this sector identified training will help ensure these companies have the quality of workforce they need to continue to operate and expand in the Central Arkansas region.

While the State of Arkansas and the Central Arkansas region collectively has numerous assets including both natural amenities and a competitive tax structure. However, the most important resource is the human capital which call Arkansas and the Central Arkansas region their home. Most of the clusters for service industries are located in the major metropolitan areas such as Little Rock and Conway. However this presents numerous challenges when three of the six counties within the region are nearly,

completely rural. These challenges present a great opportunity to foster economic growth, and workforce development within the rural areas of the Central Arkansas region.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board has identified seven in-demand industry sectors in the Central Arkansas region. These industry sectors include; Manufacturing, Health Care, Transportation and Logistics, Business Services, Education, Construction and General Trade, and Retail. While the specific occupational skill sets needed for each sector vary, there are several commonalities among the seven in-demand sectors.

A WIOA participant will need to possess soft skills in order to succeed within any of the in-demand industry sectors. Soft skills are defined as “personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people”. Examples of soft skills include being on time, being a team player, respect for others, problem solving, commitment, flexibility, time management, leadership, and personal responsibility. While various training programs touch on these components, the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will work towards the development of a soft skills training program for WIOA participants

Financial literacy is another skill set that can benefit WIOA participants, regardless of their chosen educational path. Financial literacy encompasses the ability to manage and earn money. This includes the importance of subjects such as budgeting, giving, saving, and investing. Employees who possess these skills may be less stressed at work, have an enhanced quality of life, and an increased chance at long term employment. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area is actively seeking a program to incorporate financial literacy throughout all of our Workforce Centers.

Information on Labor Market Trends

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board has adopted a report titled “LEVERAGE” to align job placement with job creation. The report is designed to align all training programs available through WIOA with the Central Arkansas region to the seven identified in-demand industry sectors. This decision ensures that participants are obtaining the skills needed to support in-demand industry sectors.

Labor Force Employment Data

2020-2030 Long-Term Employment Projections

Projected Industry Growth



Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Total All Industries	178,746	198,017	19,271	10.8%
Natural Resources and Mining	2,024	2,447	423	20.9%
Construction	10,647	11,280	633	6.0%
Manufacturing	11,185	11,035	-150	-1.3%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	38,192	40,850	2,658	7.0%
Information	2,308	2,364	56	2.4%
Financial Activities	7,482	8,865	1,383	18.5%
Professional and Business Services	14,381	16,618	2,237	15.6%
Education and Health Services	35,751	41,691	5,940	16.6%
Leisure and Hospitality	17,051	20,946	3,895	22.8%
Other Services (except Government)	13,248	14,782	1,534	11.6%
Government	15,351	16,317	966	6.3%

Projected Occupational Growth



Occupation	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Openings Change
Total, All Occupations	178,746	198,017	19,271	10.8%	23,007
Management Occupations	12,798	14,073	1,275	10.0%	1,240
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	7,155	8,156	1,001	14.0%	740
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	3,237	3,730	493	15.2%	293
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	1,300	1,389	89	6.8%	109
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	825	894	69	8.4%	81
Community and Social Service Occupations	5,486	6,185	699	12.7%	669
Legal Occupations	900	1,018	118	13.1%	82
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	9,916	11,314	1,398	14.1%	1,048
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,855	2,105	250	13.5%	235
Healthcare Practitioners and	11,702	13,524	1,822	15.6%	891

Projected Occupational Growth



Occupation	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Openings Change
Total, All Occupations	181,674	186,742	5,068	2.8%	23,132
Management Occupations	13,126	13,481	355	2.7%	1,282
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	7,317	7,576	259	3.5%	752
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	3,236	3,457	221	6.8%	343
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	1,328	1,362	34	2.6%	116
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	854	869	15	1.8%	79
Community and Social Service Occupations	5,137	5,487	350	6.8%	720
Legal Occupations	909	945	36	4.0%	85
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	10,552	10,601	49	0.5%	936
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,689	1,783	94	5.6%	226
Healthcare Practitioners and	12,347	12,721	374	3.0%	909

Sources for all charts: Arkansas Divisions of Workforce Services Labor Market Information

The Central and Little Rock Workforce Development Areas house a diverse economy. The top private industries for employment in the year of 2021 are as follows:

Faulkner County: Trade, Transportation and Utilities Average - Employed 7,946 with Average Wage - \$37,790, Education and Health Services Average - Employed 7,755 with Average Wage - \$45,710, Leisure and Hospitality - Average Employed 5,410 with Average Wage - \$19,019

Lonoke County: Trade, Transportation and Utilities Average - Employed 3,100 with Average Wage - \$35,789, Leisure and Hospitality - Average Employed 1,991 with Average Weekly - \$19,137, Education and Health Services Average - Employed 278 with Average Wage - \$16,493

Monroe County: Trade Transportation and Utilities Average - Employed 1,495 with Average Wage - \$36,575, Education and Health Services Average - Employed 315 with Average Wage - \$35,591, Leisure and Hospitality - Average Employed 5,410 with Average Wage - \$19,019

Prairie County: Trade, Transportation and Utilities Average - Employed 354 with Average Wage - \$36,992, Education and Health Services Average - Employed 249 with Average Wage - \$35,197, Natural Resources and Mining - Average Employed 160 with Average Wage - \$56,126

Pulaski County: Trade, Transportation and Utilities Average - Employed 49,960 with Average Wage - \$51,925, Education and Health Services Average - Employed 41,106 with Average Wage - \$57,446, Professional and Business Services - Average Employed 35,384 with Average Wage - \$58,203

Saline County: Trade, Transportation and Utilities Average - Employed 5,720 with Average Wage - \$38,378, Education and Health Services Average - Employed 4,629 with Average Wage - \$44,271, Leisure and Hospitality - Average Employed 3,566 with Average Wage - \$19,280

While trade, transportation and utilities along with education and health services are the primary industries in Central portion of the region; leisure and hospitality along with natural resources and mining are the primary industries in the western more rural parts of the region. Various strategies will be required to serve the entire region. The diverse topography, geography, and industry sectors of the region will require specifically tailored approaches for different parts of the region.

1.2 Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor trends, and the educational skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment [WIOA Se. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [20 CFR 679.560(a)]

The Central Arkansas WDA lost 9,742 jobs between first and second quarter 2020, a 6.23% drop. By first quarter 2021, the area had recovered 7,882 jobs for an 80.91% recovery. According to industry projections, the area is expected to experience a gain of 5,068 jobs, an increase of 2.79%. Goods-Producing industries are projected to experience a net gain of 296 new jobs, while the Services-Providing industries are predicted to gain 4,732 jobs. Self-Employed is slated to manage a small gain of 40 workers. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities is predicted to be the top growing supersector, adding 1,392 jobs to the local economy.

Other Services (except Government) is slated to be the fastest growing supersector, increasing its workforce by 8.26%. Administrative and Support Services is projected to be the top growing industry, with an increase of 865 jobs, while Warehousing and Storage could have a significant increase in jobs, raising employment levels by 40.47%, becoming the fastest growing industry in the Central Arkansas WDA. On the negative side of the labor market, Credit Intermediation and Related Activities is estimated to be the top declining industry, losing 186 jobs during the projection period, or 8% of its workforce, while Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers is slated to lose 23.01% of its workforce, becoming the fastest declining industry. Overall, the Government supersector could face a net loss of 50 jobs between 2021 and 2023.

According to occupational projections, the Central Arkansas WDA is expected to have 23,132 annual job openings during the projection period, with 8,296 being created due to employees exiting the workforce, 12,302 created due to employees changing jobs, and 2,534 due to growth and expansion. Transportation and Material Moving Occupations is predicted to be the top growing major group, increasing staffing by 884 jobs. Computer and Mathematical Occupations are slated to be the fastest growing major group, increasing its workforce by 6.83%. Cashiers and Stockers and Order Fillers tie for the top growing occupation in Central Arkansas, each estimate to gain 220 jobs. Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators is projected to be the fastest growing occupation, increasing its workforce by 20.57%. On the negative side of the local economy, Tellers are estimated to lose 82 jobs, or 10.20% of its workforce, to become the top declining occupation, while Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders could cut 12.56% of its workforce, becoming the fastest declining occupation.

The Central Local Workforce Development Area saw a decrease in the *labor force of 3,585 to 247,793* from, 2020 to 2021, and the labor force increase by 3,050 over the 2017 to 2021 period. Employment increased by 2,136 between 2020 and 2021, but decreased by 4,198 over the five year period. The

Central Local Workforce Development Area has seen a fluctuation in employment over the same time periods. From 2020 to 2021, unemployment decreased by 5,721, but from 2017 to 2021, unemployment increased by 1,148. Central's unemployment rate rose by 0.5% over the five year period. In 2022, the unemployment rate rose by three-tenths of a percent from January to 3.8% in July 2022.

Labor Force and Unemployment Rate

February 01 2023

Workforce Areas and Counties

Not Seasonally Adjusted Statistics

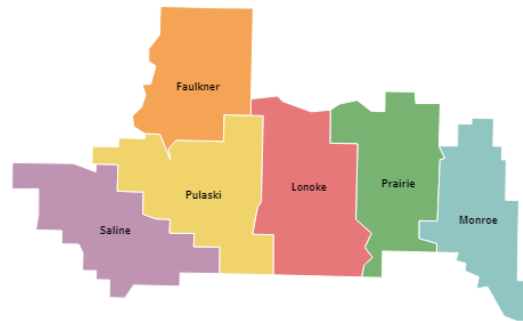
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Start Date Dec/2019

End Date Dec/2022

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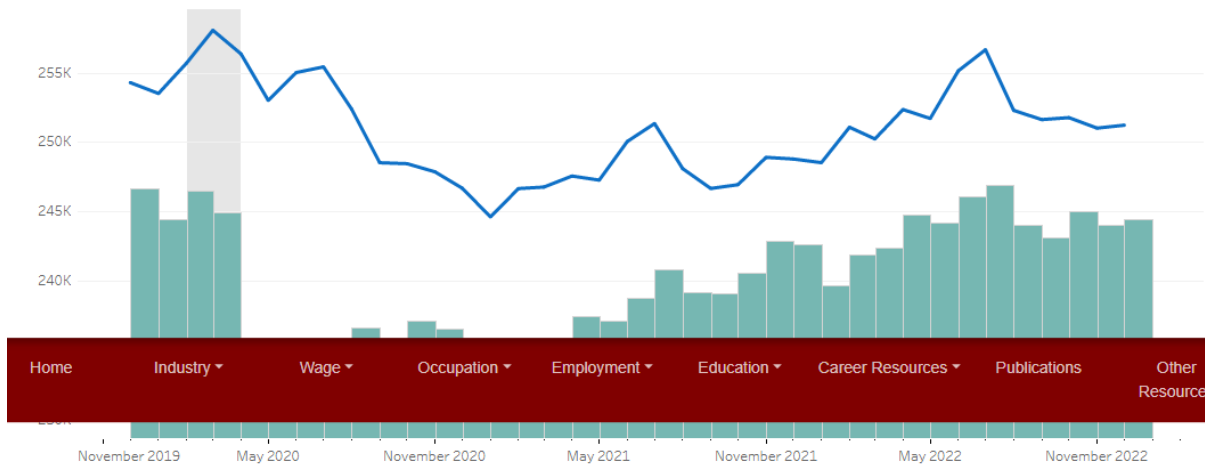
Click on Map to Select a County and View all Areas



© 2023 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Central Arkansas

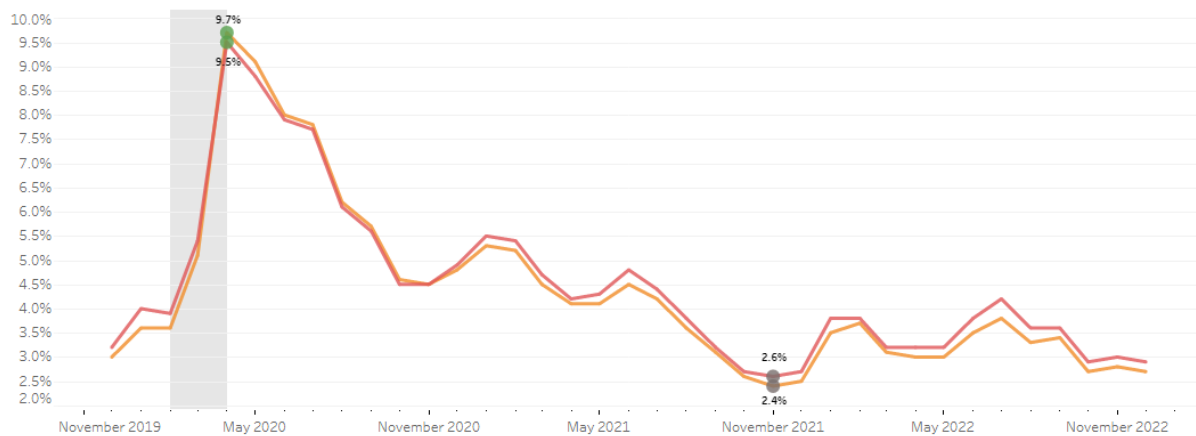
Labor Force Employed



Unemployment Rates:

Arkansas Central Arkansas

Highest Lowest



Prepared by Arkansas Division of Workforce Services. Labor Market Information using Employment and Unemployment statistics from Discover Arkansas website

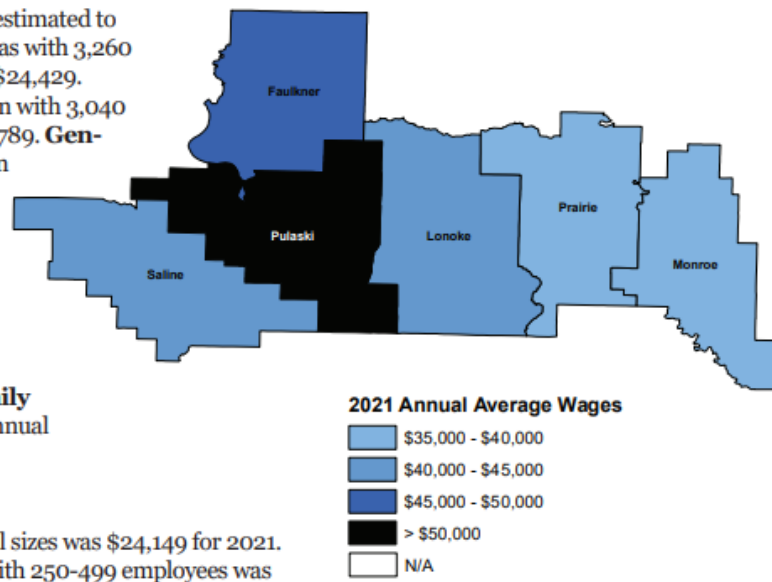
The chart above was provided by Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and depicts employment by Industry and County for the Central Arkansas Region. The chart does not include Pulaski County.

Fast Food and Counter Workers was estimated to have the most employees in Central Arkansas with 3,260 employed in 2021 with an average wage of \$24,429. **Cashiers** was the second largest occupation with 3,040 employed, earning an average wage of \$24,789. **General and Operations Managers**, with an estimated employment of 2,080, had the highest average wage of the 10 largest occupations, earning \$79,341 annually.

Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric topped the Occupations Paying the Most list with an annual salary of \$338,417. **Family Medicine Physicians**, with an average annual salary of \$273,787, ranked second on the Occupations Paying the Most list.

The entry wage estimate for employers of all sizes was \$24,149 for 2021. The median wage estimate for employers with 250-499 employees was \$37,107, while wages for experienced workers averaged \$52,707 for employers in all size categories.

Of the 76,530 estimated employees in the area with hourly wage data, 11,100 made less than \$12 an hour while 12,800 made more than \$27 an hour. Employees making between \$17 and \$21.99 totaled 14,040. **Note: Wage data for Central Arkansas LWDA does not include Pulaski County.**



**Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, May 2021 Wage Survey*

Central Arkansas LWDA Wages of 10 Largest Occupations

Occupation	Estimated Employment	Average Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage
Fast Food and Counter Workers	3,260	\$24,429	\$23,383	\$24,952
Cashiers	3,040	\$24,789	\$23,133	\$25,618
Retail Salespersons	3,040	\$28,925	\$23,251	\$31,763
General and Operations Managers	2,080	\$79,341	\$34,130	\$101,946
Waiters and Waitresses	1,760	\$24,294	\$22,880	\$25,001
Office Clerks, General	1,670	\$33,492	\$24,842	\$37,817
Stockers and Order Fillers	1,670	\$27,907	\$23,547	\$30,087
Nursing Assistants	1,620	\$28,487	\$24,635	\$30,413
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	1,610	\$25,270	\$23,162	\$26,324
Registered Nurses	1,550	\$64,949	\$50,275	\$72,287

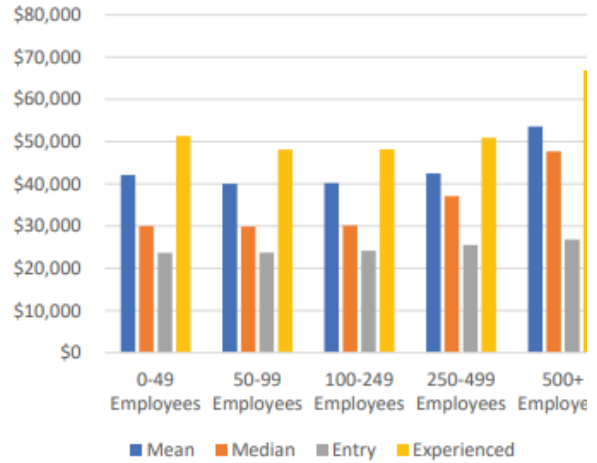
Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, May 2021 Wage Survey

Central Arkansas Wage Estimates by Employer Size

Central Arkansas Wage Estimates by Employer Size

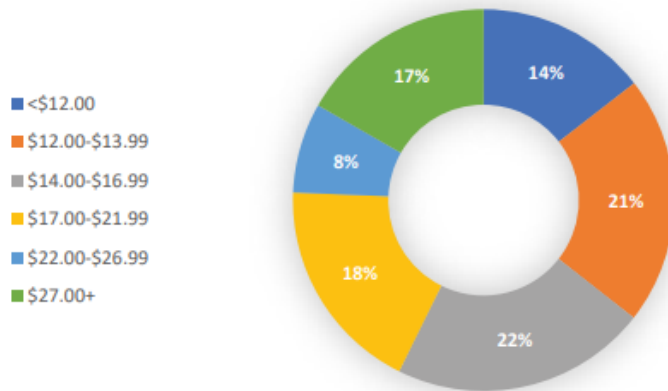
Employer size	Mean	Median	Entry	Exper.
All Sizes	\$43,181	\$30,659	\$24,149	\$52,707
0-49 Employees	\$42,078	\$30,014	\$23,629	\$51,314
50-99 Employees	\$39,978	\$29,869	\$23,712	\$48,131
100-249 Employees	\$40,186	\$30,139	\$24,149	\$48,194
250-499 Employees	\$42,432	\$37,107	\$25,501	\$50,898
500+ Employees	\$53,539	\$47,674	\$26,811	\$66,893

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, May 2021 Wage Survey



Central Arkansas Number of Employees by Hourly Wage Rate

Central Arkansas Number of Employees by Hourly Wage Rate



Total	76,530
<\$12.00	11,100
\$12.00-\$13.99	16,120
\$14.00-\$16.99	16,630
\$17.00-\$21.99	14,040
\$22.00-\$26.99	5,840
\$27.00+	12,800

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, May 2021 Wage Survey

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area is projected to have the second highest job growth in the State, only behind Northwest Arkansas. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area is expected to create 25,613 jobs by 2022, while the Northwest Region is expected to create 34,362 jobs by 2022. The adjacent chart depicts industry growth projections by sector through 2022.

Central Arkansas LWDA 2017-2021 Labor Force/Employment

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Labor Force	250,843	251,133	254,750	251,378	247,793
Employment	242,485	242,775	246,611	236,151	238,287
Unemployment	8,358	8,358	8,139	15,227	9,506
Unemployment Rate	3.3%	3.3%	3.2%	6.1%	3.8%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services



Central Arkansas and State Unemployment Rate*

Year	Month	Central Arkansas Unemployment Rate	AR Unemployment Rate
2022	January	3.5%	3.2%
2022	February	3.7%	3.1%
2022	March	3.1%	3.1%
2022	April	3.0%	3.2%
2022	May	3.0%	3.2%
2022	June	3.5%	3.2%
2022	July	3.8%†	3.3%**

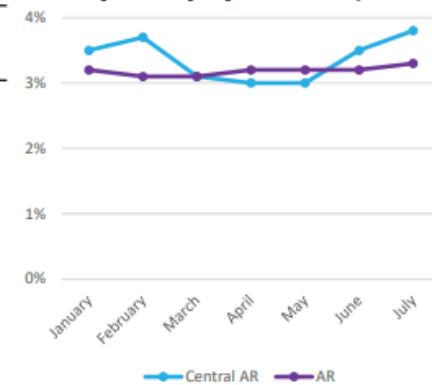
Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Local Area Unemployment Statistics

*Not Seasonally Adjusted, Not Preliminary

**Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary

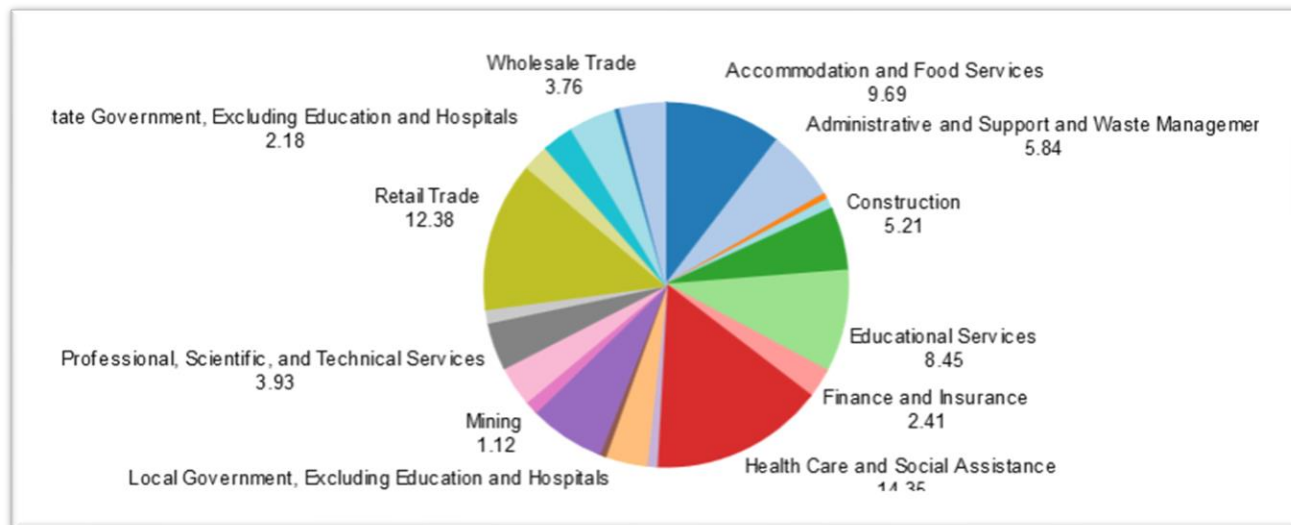
†Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary

Monthly Unemployment Rate, 2022



Percent of Workforce 2022

The pie chart below represents what percent of the workforce is expected to be employed in the respective industry sectors listed on the chart below. Health Care and Social Assistance compose the largest employment sector, representing 14.35% of the workforce. Retail Trade is the second largest industry sector with 12.38% of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's labor force.



Source: Arkansas Research Center

Spotlight on Healthcare

The Healthcare section is a very diverse sector within the region. Therefore it is vital for the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area to continue its focus on the health care sector.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area currently trains many Nursing Assistants, and is expanding into the realm of Personal Care Aides through the Arkansas Sectors Partnership Grant.

The stability of the job market for the Health Care industry compared to other sectors is a positive point worth noting. As depicted, with the exception of the period of 2005-2007, the industry remained relatively calm in the region.

1.3 Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Labor Force By County, (Not Seasonally Adjusted, Preliminary Estimate)

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Faulkner	63,878	62,416	1,462	2.3
Lonoke	34,711	33,972	739	2.1
Monroe	2,529	2,454	75	3.0
Prairie	3,628	3,547	81	2.2
Pulaski	190,915	186,238	4,677	2.4

(including the City of Little Rock)				
Saline	60,717	59,407	1,310	2.2

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Education/Training Job Outlook

Area
Central Arkan...

Time Frame
ST-2021-2023

Training Type
Education

Education Training Employment Outlook

Training Category	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Annual Openings-Total
Associate's degree	2,981	3,061	80	2.68%	96	170	36	302
Bachelor's degree	34,738	35,987	1,249	3.60%	1,004	1,787	626	3,417
Doctoral or professional degree	3,594	3,651	57	1.59%	88	91	35	214
High school diploma or equivalent	73,877	75,448	1,571	2.13%	3,140	4,988	789	8,917
Master's degree	3,181	3,283	102	3.21%	90	137	48	275
No formal educational credential	43,916	45,482	1,566	3.57%	3,023	3,954	779	7,756
Postsecondary non-degree award	15,519	15,894	375	2.42%	629	937	189	1,755
Some college, no degree	3,868	3,936	68	1.76%	179	203	34	416

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Employment Projections

Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area Capacity to provide services

Educational skill of individuals with barriers

Individuals with barriers to employment include those individuals in one or more of the following categories as stated by WIOA Sec 3(24): §680.320(b)(1-14):

15. Displaced homemakers;
16. Low-income individuals;
17. Indians, Alaska Natives , and Native Hawaiians;
18. Individuals with disabilities;
19. Older individuals, i.e./ those aged 55 or over;
20. Ex-Offenders;
21. Homeless individuals;
22. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
23. Individuals who are English language learners; individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
24. Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, defined in WIOA Sec.167(i);
25. Individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under TANF (part A of title IV of the Social Security Act);
26. Single-parents (including single pregnant women);
27. Long-term unemployed individuals; or
28. Other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area is equipped with the resources, partnerships, and staffing capacity needed to provide workforce development activities throughout the region. The region has benefited significantly from the Arkansas Workforce Development Board's continued strides for improvement and innovation. The CAWDA's capacity is further amplified by its broad array of partners, both who co-locate in the workforce centers and those that do not. Some of those partnerships include:

- *Adult Education (Core)*
- *Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation (Core)*
- *Division of Services for the Blind (Core)*
- *Wagner-Peyser (Arkansas Department of Workforce Services) (Core)*
- Arkansas Literacy Council
- Department of Human Services
- Arkansas Department of Corrections
- Arkansas Community Colleges
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission
- Institute for Economic Advancement, UALR

1.4 Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)] Central Arkansas Workforce Centers

The Central Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities, and represent Arkansas's version of the American Job Centers. There are five workforce centers spread throughout the six county region to ensure access to all Arkansans residing in the region. The Conway Workforce Center is the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's comprehensive center. Our workforce centers are managed locally by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board, which is composed of members from both the public with a majority from the private sector.

[Central Arkansas Workforce System Services-Unemployed and Underemployed](#)

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's centers offer a full array of career services which are outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed. The workforce centers have computers, printers, copiers, and resources along with staff to help jobseekers. However digital services are offered as well just as Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas's Labor Market Information portal. These two tools allow for jobseekers to search for jobs 24/7 and make data informed decisions about which path is best for them.

[Jobseeker Services](#)

Career services, found through the Central Arkansas Region's Workforce Centers, offer a full line of services to help prepare jobseekers for the regional workforce. Soft skills and technical training are two examples of these services which are provided and which employers look for in a good candidate for a position.

Labor Market Information which is updated regularly to ensure accuracy is provided to individuals seeking services. This data includes information pertaining to job vacancies, skills needed to obtain said jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential. In addition, information on career ladders which exist within those occupations are provided to help participants.

Other career services provided through our one-stop centers are outreach, intake, and orientation. Upon the completion of the initial assessment, eligibility will be determined and our career coaches will begin to provide recommendations for various programs along with financial aid information. Services are also provided to individuals to assist them in obtaining and retaining employment. These types of services include:

- Career Planning and Counselling
- Occupational Skills Assessment
- Short-term prevocational services
- Internships and work experience
- English language acquisition
- Financial literacy

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the region, but all the offices offer a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modern workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require such as:

4. Workforce Centers provide the following career services including outreach, intake and orientation; initial assessment; labor exchange services; eligibility determination; referrals to programs; performance and cost information; information on unemployment insurance; financial aid information and follow-up services.
5. Labor exchange services must also provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information must be accurate and include information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as job vacancies; the skills necessary to obtain jobs within In-demand occupations and related earning potential and opportunities for advancement in those occupations
6. Workforce Centers and partners must provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to Individual Employment Plan (IEP); career planning and counseling; comprehensive assessment; occupational skills assessment; short-term prevocational services; internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships; workforce preparation; out-of-area job search; English language acquisition and financial literacy

Training Services

Career services help equip a jobseeker with the skills they need to find sustainable employment, however such skills may not be enough to obtain sustainable employment. In those circumstances formal training may be required. Copious amounts of training opportunities exist through the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers, such as occupational skills training which can be obtained from numerous educational opportunities such as C1 Trucking, the Arkansas Welding Academy, and Pulaski Technical

Institute. Registered Apprenticeships are also available in a wide variety of traditional sectors, and are in the process of being expanded into non-traditional sectors such as information technology and nursing.

These training services are funded through a variety of funding streams from local, state, and Federal partners. Pell funding and financial aid shall be explored before utilizing funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has established policies for the determination of eligibility, Individual Training Account Limits (ITAs) and targeted training aimed at in-demand industry sectors throughout the region such as transportation logistics, business services, manufacturing, general trades, education, and healthcare. Sector strategies has taken on a new role in the region, with the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board using data-driven decision making to enhance the likelihood of employment of participants.

Supportive Services

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has established a supportive service policy that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include child care; transportation; needs-related payments; housing; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, Central Arkansas has developed relationships with community partners that assist with utility payments, food, shelter, and other basic needs.

The need for any supportive service will be documented in the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS), as must all efforts to obtain the needed services from a non-WIOA source. The types of supportive services available through the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers are described in more detail below:

Child/Dependent Care:

Child or dependent care may be provided to a participant's child or parent while the participant is engaged in training or employment, including transportation time, consistent with her or his IEP or ISS. Payment will be based upon actual costs while the participant is participating in and traveling to or from approved activities, as documented in attendance records, at rates that are not greater than current Arkansas Department of Human Services reimbursement rates. In instances where an hourly rate is being paid, the amount paid is not to exceed the maximum daily rate.

Transportation:

Transportation assistance may include bus tokens or passes or mileage allowances. Transportation will be reimbursed at the rate of 56 cents per mile for travel from the participant's home to the training site and return.

Clothing:

Appropriate work clothing, including uniforms required by an employer, safety gear, and suitable clothing for interviewing are an allowable supportive service. The need for this service must be described in the participant's file.

Certification, Screening, and Testing:

Supportive service funds may be used for employment-related fees, including but not limited to testing fees, drug screening, background checks, food handlers permits, security clearance, first aid/CPR certification, finger printing, commercial and business licenses, and other similar expenses. Union dues may be paid for the first month of employment.

Tools/Supplies/Equipment:

Participants may receive assistance for the purchase of tools, supplies, and equipment related to training or necessary for accepting an employment offer.

Other Allowable Supportive Services:

Participants may receive assistance with housing and food, utility payments, medical and prescription services, employment related professional memberships, access to translations, learning disability assistance, and out-of-state job search and relocation to a new job.

Business Services

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board trains participants to increase their quality of life and provide business and industry with a skilled workforce. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's Business Services Team plays a vital role in achieving this mission. The Central Arkansas Business Services Team provides a variety of services to companies throughout the Central Arkansas region. These services can be categorized into three categories; Assessments and information, Direct Technical Assistance, and Response and Training.

A. Assessments and Information:

Businesses can utilize skills assessments and other testing methods to measure the skills, interests, or personality traits of job seekers or current employees. The Career Readiness Certificate is an example of one of the certifications provided through the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers. Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) is a job readiness program conducted by Adult Education. WAGE™ offers six certifications which cover 112 basic skill competencies based on the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) which have been determined as essential by the nation's and Arkansas' employers, according to the Arkansas Department of Career Education's website. WAGE™ accepts students who assess at less than a 12th grade, 9 month equivalency on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE™).

Businesses can also receive a variety of information pertaining to incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Labor Market Information is available to businesses on market conditions, industries, occupations, and workforce characteristics as well. Also short and long term industry trends and occupational projections are available.

B. Direct Technical Assistance:

Businesses have access to any of the Workforce Center locations for the purposes of meetings, trainings, orientations, and interviews. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area can also host hiring events which are customized to the specific needs of businesses. Job orders which have been approved

by staff can also be placed through the workforce areas, along with job placement assistance and information on unemployment benefits. Businesses can also receive assistance with applicant screening, which involves the initial evaluation of applicants.

C. Response and Training:

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area provides coordinated rapid response measures in the event of a business downsizing or restructuring. These include a variety of workshops to assist employees who are in transition. Training and retraining services are also available for both current and future employees. The Business Service Team coordinates with the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force to directly assist individuals impacted by plant closures and layoff announcements.

Customized training is also available through the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area. The development of "Customized Training" may be considered when available training programs and/or curricula do not meet the specific training requirements of an employer(s) which are identified as "in demand" occupations within identified industry clusters. The training provider must be competitively procured and such training must be designed to meet the specific needs of a participating employer.

Employers eligible to participate in Customized training shall be:

- Current in unemployment insurance and workers' compensation taxes, penalties, and/or interest or related payment plan;
- Located within the State of Arkansas;
- Currently liable for Arkansas State Business and Occupation tax;
- In need of assistance in training future and current employees;
- Able to contract for customized, short-term, training services (typically less than 6-9 months);
- Have not laid-off workers within 120 days to relocate.
- Committed to employ all individuals upon successful completion of the training; and
- Identified as "In-demand" as defined by WIOA Section 3(23) and determined by LEVERAGE; or
- Declining, but there is a compelling reason justifying investment in customized training.
- Paid for, in part, by participating employer, who must pay a "significant cost" of the training.

Incumbent worker training programs are also available through our partners, such as the Office of Skills Development's (OSD) Grant Program. The Office of Skills Development is a division of the Arkansas Department of Career Education. OSD grants support the development of the Central Arkansas Workforce by strategically investing in training programs that are prioritized by employer needs and economic impact. Grants are available to support training in the following categories:

- Grow Our Own
- Skills Gap
- Customized Technical
- Professional Development

Services to Individuals with Disabilities

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ACE/ARS), and Division of Services for the Blind provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment.

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 Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities to enable them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

All of the Workforce Centers in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area are compliant with the Americans with Disability Act. Each Workforce Center in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development is equipped with the following assistive technology:

- An accessible computer work station equipped with a CPU, Monitor, Keyboard, Mouse, and software.
- Assistive Devices, including amplifiers, magnifiers, tapes, videos, and calculators.
- Arkansas Relay Service TDD Telephone.
- Access to Sign Interpreters.
- Alternative Format Forms and Information.

Through the Governor's Executive Order 10-17, the Department of 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.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Strengths:

- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area, through the implementation and utilization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, has a strong program which provides assistance to jobseekers and employers in its six-county service area.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board is composed of over 51% private sector representation, providing insights to the needs of business and industry in its six-county service area.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Boards private sector members represent in-demand industries which were identified in the Boards economic analysis titled *LEVERAGE*.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has strong working relationships with local, regional, and state economic development organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and the Arkansas Economic Development Commission.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has strong coordinated relationships with its core partners under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Wagner-Peyser, Division of Services for the Blind, Adult Education, and Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation. Furthermore, the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area is partnered with numerous other organization who provide career and supportive services to jobseekers.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has a strong diverse staff which is growing annually in order to provide enhance delivery or services to both jobseekers and business and industry.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board has conducted an independent internal economic analysis which identified seven in-demand industry sectors; Manufacturing, Education,

Healthcare, Retail, Construction and General Trades, Business Services (which encompasses Information Technology), and Transportation and Logistics.

- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board has aligned all training programs to the fore mentioned in-demand industry sectors, provided enhanced opportunities for sustainable employment for all jobseekers.

Weaknesses:

- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area services several rural counties which are witnessing “brain-drain” in the face of an aging workforce.
- Quality of Life and Place issues exist in rural areas throughout the region, causing mentioned brain-drain.
- Coordination with Economic Development is weak at the macro-level.
- Coordinated marketing and outreach with partners is weak and shall be improved.
- Relationships with certain Community Colleges and Four Year Institutions in the Central Arkansas region need to be strengthened.
- Staff Training Programs need to be enhanced to ensure smooth delivery of all local, state, and federal guidance.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has a weak relationship with Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

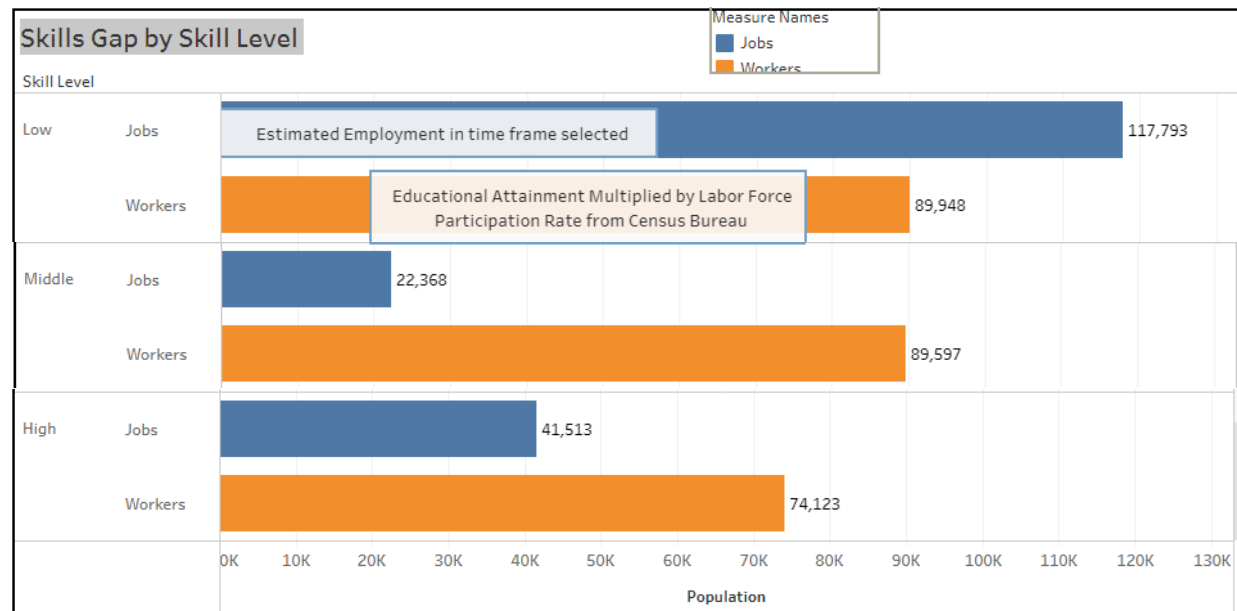
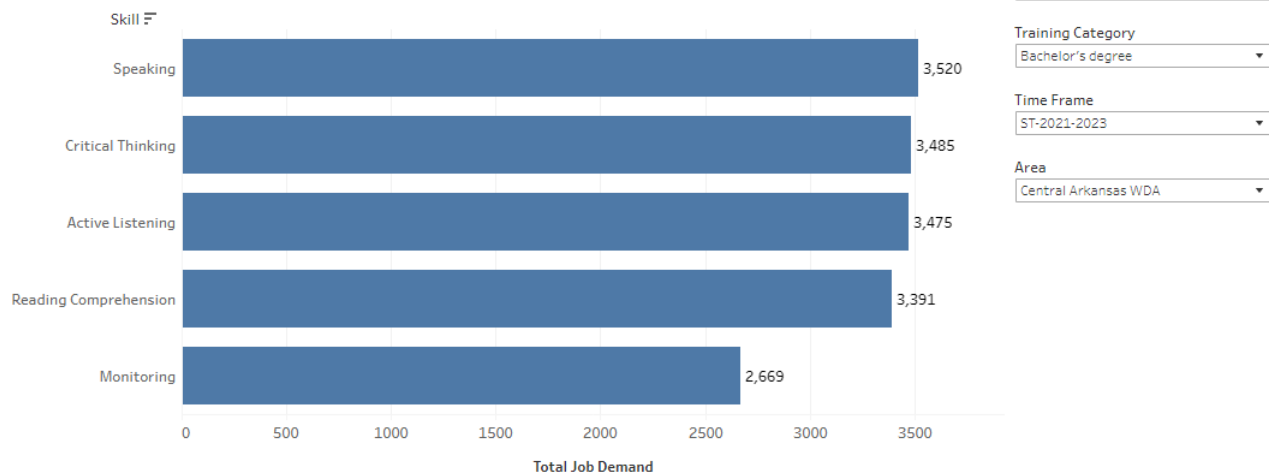
Opportunities:

- Coordinate with Registered Apprenticeship programs to provide jobseekers access to quality career paths beyond collegiate and vocational training.
- Continue to grow the Business Service Team to provide a broader reach for companies throughout the entire region.
- Customized training programs can be developed to provide tailored assistance to business and industry.
- Expanding Job Growth in the State of Arkansas through Governor Hutchinson’s economic development area provide new employment opportunities to jobseekers in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area.

Challenges:

- As business and industry are faced with an aging workforce, many of the jobseekers currently do not possess applicable skill sets to replace the aging workforce.
- Many Industries and economic development organization may not feel that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act can assist them.
- Duplication of Workforce Development efforts not only causes redundancy for jobseekers and industry, it is also a major waste of resources.
- Budgetary cuts restrict the capabilities of the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers.

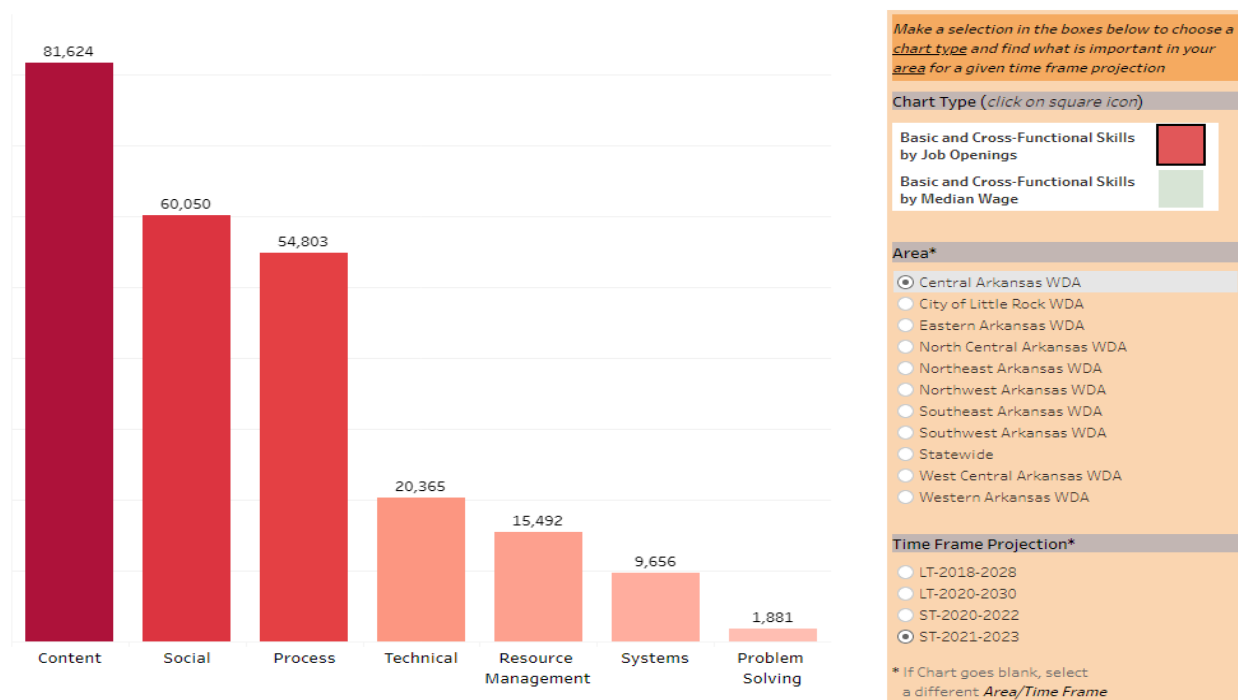
Top 5 Skills by Education/Training



Each Skill Level has two components (Workers, which is the number of residents (18-Over) that have obtained the skill level and are estimated to be in the Labor Force and Jobs, which are the number of employees in jobs requiring the specific skill level). Worker Data is based on place of residence, while Job data is based on place of work.

Sources: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Employment Projections

Developed capacities that facilitate performance of activities that occur across jobs



Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Labor Market Information

Unemployment

Unemployment for each of the six counties within the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has been in a steady decline, and, is projected to reach pre-recession levels over the next few years. For comparative purposes, and due to the location of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's North Little Rock Workforce Center, Pulaski County has been included. For expanded data on unemployment, please see the report *Leverage*.

Monroe County continues to experience the highest levels of unemployment for the entire region, reaching a staggering 10% in 2011. The region collectively has held the same course, as noted by the polynomial trend line in the following chart, and is working its way back to pre-recession levels. While unemployment rates for each of the respective counties have followed similar trends, it's vital to note that correlation does not mean causation was the same. Monroe County, for example, was suffering from extremely high unemployment prior to the recession.

Despite the recession, total employment in Faulkner County grew 2.36% from 2007-2011¹. However, during this same time period, a population influx into the county caused a rise in the unemployment rate, due to a slow increase in job production as a result of the recession.

Other data can be used to help paint the picture to what is happening to a county's economic base, such as transfer receipt data, which can be found on our report title "LEVERAGE".

While current employment levels in the State of Arkansas are reaching all-time historic lows, counties such as Prairie and Monroe, who represent rural Arkansas, need workforce solutions which look different than those that work in Pulaski County. Below is expanded employment data for each of the six counties in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area has been provided.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

2.1 Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

Vision

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas's economy competitive in the global marketplace.

Goals

Strategic Goal 1: To develop efficient partnerships with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers in Central Arkansas.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Develop monthly "Core-Four" partner meetings with the leadership of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area, Adult Education, Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser, and Division of Services for the Blind.
2. Conduct 20 site visits with employers throughout the six-county service area of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area in order to identify and monitor needs and build industry relationships.
3. Conduct partner meetings with educational training providers on a quarterly basis in order to build strong relationships and enhance service delivery.
4. Develop an effective referral system between all partners to enhance service delivery for jobseekers, ensuring all participant receive the services and support they need to succeed.

Strategic Goal 2: To enhance service delivery to both employers and jobseekers in Central Arkansas.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Expand service delivery access points by the utilization of "virtual workforce centers" and revolving workforce centers throughout the region.
2. Train for applicable in-demand industries only, to ensure jobseekers receive the training of their choice in a field which provides sustainable employment.
3. Develop career pathways with input from private industries and educational training providers in the region.
4. Provide training in the Central Arkansas Region which leads to recognized credentials which assist jobseekers obtain sustainable employment and meet the needs of business and industry.

5. Coordinate business outreach activities with core, co-located, and external partners through the development of a joint data-base.

Strategic Goal 3: To increase awareness of the Regions Talent Delivery System.

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Conduct coordinated outreach efforts on social media platforms in order to increase awareness of the services available through the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers.
2. Improve employer perception of the Arkansas Workforce Centers located in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area through educational outreach campaigns.
3. Finalize the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's website www.WorkforceAR.com to serve as a "one-stop-shop" for services in the region.
4. Coordinate with partners to ensure all applicable information is available at community outreach events.

Strategic Goal 4: To address Skills Gaps specific to Central Arkansas in-demand industry needs.

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Survey businesses within each of the seven identified "in-demand" industry sectors to assess the true needs of business and industry in the Central Arkansas region.
2. Utilize partnerships to develop customized training programs which are identified by comparing the fore mentioned survey results to training available in the region.
3. Identify training gaps which may exist within the seven "in-demand" industry sectors through surveys and analytics.

2.2 Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision and goals for the state's workforce development system as established by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)

The vision statement adopted by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board was used as a pattern for the development of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board's vision and mission. The Central Arkansas consortium of Chief Elected Officials and the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board are committed to the implementation of Arkansas Talent Delivery System.

The following are ways in which the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will help achieve the state workforce development goals:

- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will identify specific needs of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area and develop new and innovative strategies for meeting the needs of the employers and job seekers.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board, through the five workforce centers located throughout the region, will deliver specific programs designed for existing employees. Through coordination and collaboration with primary in-demand industry sectors, these efforts will provide existing and emerging jobs throughout the region.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will conduct aggressive outreach campaigns such as social media "boosting", canvassing, partnerships with other non-profit organizations to promote the services provided at the regional level and the states Talent Delivery System.

Outreach material will be developed for each of the special populations identified by the Department of Labor.

- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will serve as the catalytic convener between educators, industry, and jobseekers to establish expanded apprenticeship programs and fill educational gaps.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will conduct targeted outreach to Veterans.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will coordinate and collaborate with internal and external partners in order to eliminate duplicative services.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will ensure that current, accurate, and applicable labor market information is available at all workforce centers, delivered in a manner easy to understand.
- The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will work with Economic Development Organizations throughout the region to enhance services provided to industry.

2.3 Describe how the local board's vision and goals contributes to each of the governor's goals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources) Note: The state Plan includes a number of objectives under each goal.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area shares the Governor's vision for Economic Development and the State's Strategic Plan that defines a stronger partnership between economic development, education, and the state workforce investment system to attract, retain and grow Arkansas' high growth industries and encourage the development of regional economies. For participants enrolled in educational/skills training the goal is to complete training, to obtain their credential and accomplish measurable skills gain. Participants will be directed to higher paying jobs with a livable wage focused to ensure higher retention rates at program exit. For participants receiving basic and individualized career services the same goal applies.

CAWDA will fully support the Governors strategic goals for attracting and growing emerging businesses and industry. The plan is consistent with the following goals outlined in the Governors Strategic Plan:

Strategic Goal 1:

Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.

Strategic Goal 2:

Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.

Strategic Goal 3:

Increase awareness of the State's Talent Development System

Strategic Goal 4:

Address Skills Gaps

2.4 Describe how the local board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board is determined to only provide training opportunities to participants that will prepare them for a sustainable career within the seven identified industry sectors. The attainment of credentials and measurable skill sets will direct participants towards jobs which have a livable wage and have a higher probability of sustained employment beyond a year after exit; thereby supporting the achievement of federal performance accountability measures.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board conducted an in-depth analysis of the regional economy, including a local and non-local cluster analysis, business inventory, and occupational assessment. This report titled "LEVERAGE" can be viewed by visiting the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's website; www.WorkforceAR.com. Case managers have been trained to educate participants on the in-demand industries available in the region. Educational material has also been developed for each industry sector and is provided to jobseekers in the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers. The eligible training provider list is approved by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board, and has been developed in a way that displays training programs by industry sector. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area shall make exceptions for Registered Apprenticeship programs which fall outside the seven industries on a case-by-case basis at the direction of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

3.1 Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:

A. A description of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another;

Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. was designated by the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials as the fiscal agent for the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area.

Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. was designated by the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials as the administrative entity.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board selected Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. as the One Stop Operator through a competitive bid process. The Consortium

of Chief Elected Officials confirmed the selection of Central Arkansas Planning and Development, Inc. as the One Stop Operator.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board has appointed four standing committees to review, recommend, and provide oversight of all activities of the Board;

- Executive Committee
- One-Stop Committee
- Youth Committee
- Compliance Committee.

The Central Arkansas Planning and Development District manages the operation of all five workforce centers, and provides administrative services, business services, and management services for the WIOA work programs as directed by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development board in consensus with the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials.

Required partners include the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (Wagner-Peyser), Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education, and Division of Services for the Blind. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area works with our partners to provide a broad range of services to program participants, for a full description of services see Section 4.1 (D).

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board has a strong working partnership with Adult Education. Adult Education enhances the capacity of services available to participants through Job Readiness Training, Workforce Alliance for Growth in the economy classes, TABE testing, Career Scope Testing, General Education Diploma courses, and English as a second language.

B. A list of all Arkansas Workforce Centers in the local area; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation:

Faulkner County
Arkansas Workforce Center
1500 Museum Road, Suite 111
Conway, AR 72032
501-730-9894
Hours: 8:00AM-4:30PM

Saline County
Arkansas Workforce Center
400 Edison Avenue
Benton, AR 72015
501-315-7702
Hours: 8:00AM-4:30PM M-F

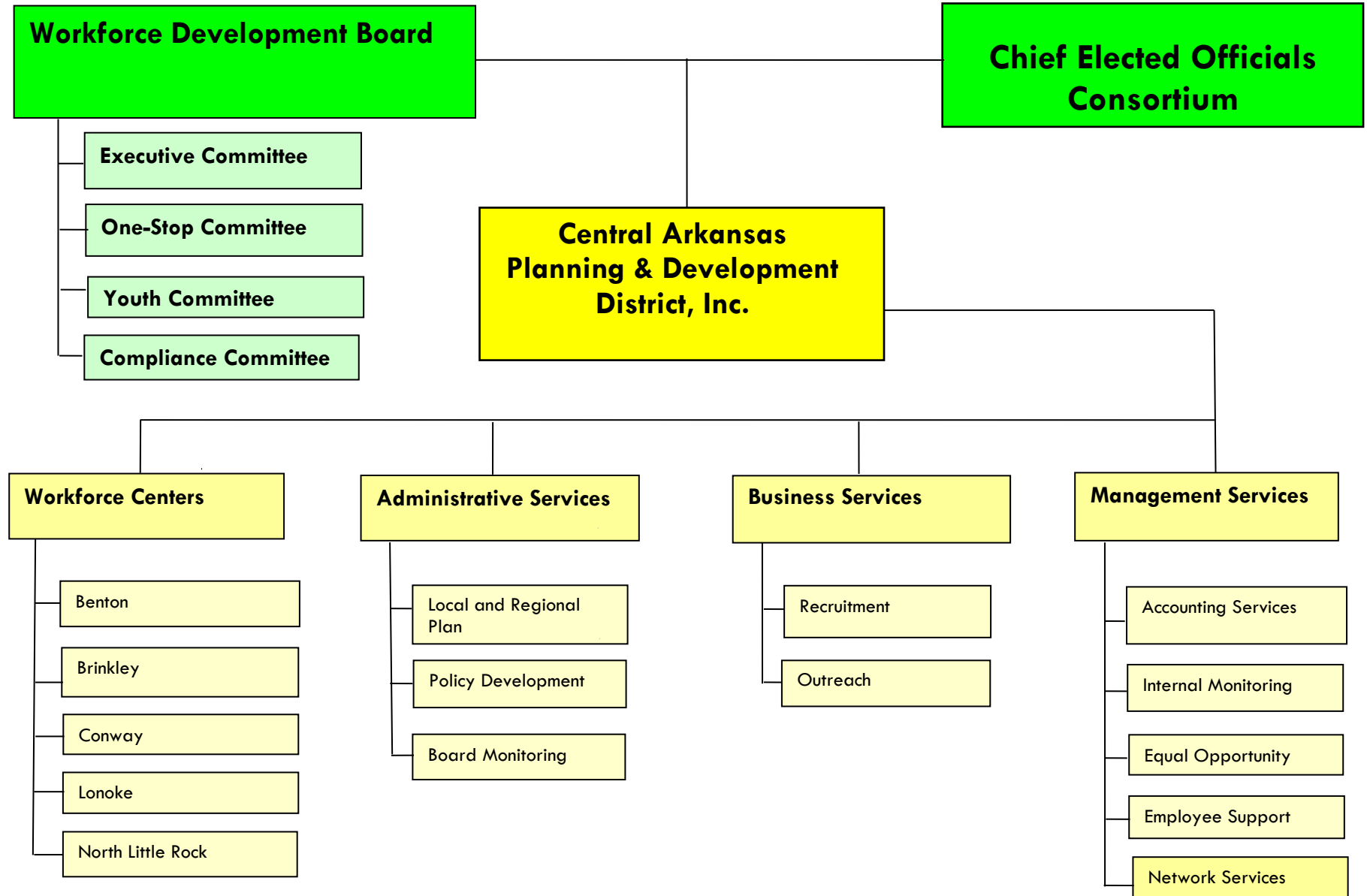
Pulaski County
Arkansas Workforce Center
324 W Pershing Blvd
North Little Rock, AR 72114
501-376-4119
Hours: 8:00AM-4:30PM M-F

Prairie and Monroe Counties
Arkansas Workforce Center
1401 E 4th Street
Brinkley, AR 72021
870-734-3374
Hours: 8:00AM-4:30PM M-F

Lonoke County
Arkansas Workforce Center
902 N Center Street
Lonoke, AR 72086
501-676-2721
Hours: 8:00AM-4:30PM M-F

C. An attached organization chart that depicts the local board, administrative and fiscal entities, and service providers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area



3.2 Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et. seq), that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

Note: The six (6) core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development system includes the required core partners and other partners. The local board will coordinate work with the core programs through a referral process that ensures an individual seeking services is made aware of the available core program services. In developing the talent pipeline the Board and system are working closely with educational institutions such as Pulaski Technical College, the University of Central Arkansas, and others.

3.3 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area, working in partnership with Core partners (Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation, and Division of Services for the Blind) will develop a referral process to ensure jobseekers receive the services they need to succeed. This referral system coupled with increased communication through monthly “core-four” meetings will expand access to employment, training, and supportive services to all jobseekers no matter the point of entry. This partnership will promote co-enrollment and increase credential attainment. Career pathways will be developed by engaging business and industry and educational training providers to identify pathways that exist in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area.

3.4 Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

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

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board created a report with an emphasis on serving businesses who make up the in demand industry sectors in the region. The report, which is titled *Leverage* (www.WorkforceAR.com/Leverage), serves as a road map for which industries to target, and includes a list of over 500 prospective companies. Business roundtables by industry sectors will be conducted during the following year, along with site visits to major employers as well as small businesses. During the roundtables, the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will facilitate a discussion with industry employers on their challenges, needs, and concerns with the Central Arkansas workforce.

This information will be utilized by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board to enhance service delivery to employers and prepare jobseekers for employment.

B. Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses;

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board voted for the realignment and restructuring of training programs on September 15, 2016. Programs are now organized by “in demand” industry sectors to ensure we are not only training to meet the needs of businesses, but we are also training clients in fields where jobs are available. Non “in demand” industry training programs will no longer be included as an “eligible training provider” through the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development; and

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board recognizes that in order for economic and workforce development to align, job placement activities must coincide with job creation activities. The private sector must be included in the decision making process, and data driven decision making must be used in all decisions pertaining to training programs. The CAWDA will continue to engage with Economic Development Organizations to leverage WIOA grant opportunities for both existing and future businesses. CAWDA’s goal is to become an applicable partner for existing industry in the region.

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

This may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies that support the local board’s strategy in element 3.1.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B)].

Core-Four meetings will be held monthly, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (Wagner-Peyser) shall be included in this new line of meetings between these organizations leadership. The co-enrollment which will be utilized will help the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance program better serve participants. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will utilize on-the-job training programs to help jobseekers currently utilizing unemployment insurance gain sustainable employment. The utilization of sector strategies through the development of *LEVERAGE* will also assist jobseekers currently utilizing unemployment insurance. *LEVERAGE*’s primary goal was to increase the probability that jobseekers receiving services in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will achieve sustainable employment following their training. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area shall engage employers through survey’s and a series of business roundtables to development career pathways that exist in Central Arkansas.

3.5 Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, in coordination with economic development and other partners.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will develop relationships with partners such as the Small Business Administration, Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center, The

Innovation Hub, and Technology Transfer organizations such as Tech Launch at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to connect clients who may wish to open their own business with partners who provide those specific services. By building relationships with SBA and ASBTDC the CAWDA will be able to assist small enterprises with their specific workforce needs. Many small and medium firms do not have the resources to train staff. The CAWDA through the Business Services team and WIOA scholarships can link jobseekers to small business employment opportunities. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area shall develop a referral process so that individuals interested in entrepreneurship receive access to those services.

3.6 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

The local board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities with secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities through input at partner meetings. There is also collaboration between the board and secondary and postsecondary education programs providing services to the youth such as working with Educational Cooperatives, the Central Arkansas Youth Committee, and school districts.

3.7 Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Supportive Services shall be coordinated through the partner referral system, along with being documented on a case-by-case basis on the job seekers individual employment plan. A coordinated referral process will allow participants access to the resources they need to thrive no matter the point of entry. More information on supportive services in the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area is provided below:

All WIOA enrolled adults, dislocated workers and youth are eligible for supportive services as defined in WIOA Section 3(59). Supportive services are provided to eligible WIOA adults, dislocated workers, and youth when the supportive service will assist the participant with reaching his/her employment and training goals.

Supportive Services are based on financial need and participants are not automatically entitled to supportive services.

Supportive Services may be provided to eligible WIOA participants who:

1. Are enrolled in WIOA career or training services; and,
2. Are unable to obtain the supportive service through any other resource program providing such services.

Supportive services must be necessary for a given participant to complete her or his Individual Employment Plan or Individual Service Strategy and be beyond her or his ability to pay. Supportive

services are not entitlements and will be approved by CAPDD Arkansas Workforce Center managers for a given participant on the basis of a documented financial assessment, individual circumstances, the absence of other resources, and funding limits.

Supportive services may take the form of in-kind or cash assistance. Reimbursement will be for actual costs up to the established limits. Supportive services in excess of the established limits must be requested in writing and approved by the executive director of the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District **before** costs are incurred. Costs incurred before approval will **not** be reimbursed.

Workforce center staff will provide workforce center participants with accurate information about the availability of supportive services in the local area. Resource area staff will also refer applicants and participants to locally available services. The provision of information and referral to other agencies for such resources are classified as self-assisted services for adults, youth and dislocated workers.

Types of Supportive Services are listed below:

Child/Dependent Care:

Child or dependent care may be provided to a participant's child or parent while the participant is engaged in training or employment, including transportation time, consistent with her or his IEP or ISS. Payment will be based upon actual costs while the participant is participating in and traveling to or from approved activities, as documented in attendance records, at rates that are not greater than current Arkansas Department of Human Services reimbursement rates. In instances where an hourly rate is being paid, the amount paid is not to exceed the maximum daily rate.

Transportation:

Transportation assistance may include bus tokens or passes or mileage allowances. Transportation will be reimbursed at the rate of 56 cents per mile for travel from the participant's home to the training site and return.

Clothing:

Appropriate work clothing, including uniforms required by an employer, safety gear, and suitable clothing for interviewing are an allowable supportive service. The need for this service must be described in the participant's file.

Certification, Screening, and Testing:

Supportive service funds may be used for employment-related fees, including but not limited to testing fees, drug screening, background checks, food handlers permits, security clearance, first aid/CPR certification, finger printing, commercial and business licenses, and other similar expenses. Union dues may be paid for the first month of employment.

Tools/Supplies/Equipment:

Participants may receive assistance for the purchase of tools, supplies, and equipment related to training or necessary for accepting an employment offer.

Other Allowable Supportive Services:

Participants may receive assistance with housing and food, utility payments, medical and prescription services, employment related professional memberships, access to translations, learning disability assistance, and out-of-state job search and relocation to a new job.

3.8 Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State’s employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), and the local board’s service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

Wagner-Peyser staff and the Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth provider staff are co-located in several of the Central Arkansas Workforce Centers which simplifies and enhances the process.

Central Arkansas has strong partnerships among state agencies, community colleges, economic development, and community-based organizations. A priority of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board is to prevent and eliminate duplication across programs and align core programs.

Alignment of core and optional programs will be made possible by the following strategies:

Reflect Robust Partnerships – Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The one-stop operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners. They have regular partners meeting in each of the comprehensive centers to improve coordination and seamless delivery of one-stop services.

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will strive to organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program’s authorizing statute and as appropriate. The Board will also work toward the coordination of staff communication, capacity building and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having workforce center staff who are cross-trained to serve all customers seamlessly (including target populations) by providing a full range of services.

3.9 Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board shall appoint an “Adult Education RFP Review Committee” to review and score local applications for Adult Education Funding. The Adult Education RFP Review Committee shall review applications based on the following criteria:

1. The applications alignment to the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board regarding employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adult education students
2. The applications identification of regional priorities as set forth by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

3. Applicants alignment of proposed activities, services, and regional needs as identified by the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's local plan.

4. How the applicant will promote concurrent enrollment and coordinate referrals for partner services with the Local Workforce Development Board.

5. Details provided about shared cost activities and resources used to support those cost.

3.10 Based on the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, identify the industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Categorize the sector partnerships as active, emerging, or exploring as defined below.

- **Active**
 - Has a clear coordinator, convener, or convening team;
 - Is led by industry as demonstrated by private sector members playing leadership roles;
 - Has broad industry engagement as demonstrated by industry members attending meetings, partnering on activities, providing in-kind or financial resources, or similar;
 - Includes critical and engaged partners across programs from workforce development;
 - Can demonstrate that the partnership is not "just a workforce thing," "just an economic development thing," or "just an education thing."
 - Operates in a true labor market region, not within the confines of a workforce area or other geopolitical boundaries;
 - Operates under some kind of shared strategic plan, road map, etc.;
 - Can demonstrate clearly identified priorities and an action plan, be able to demonstrate recent or current activities, services or products that are a direct outcome of the partnership.
- **Emerging**
 - Has at least an interim coordinator, convener, or convening team;
 - Has engaged at least one private sector champion to help drive the launch and implementation of a sector partnership;
 - Includes individuals from workforce development, education, economic development and other programs or organizations in strategic partner roles;
 - Actively working to implement strategic priorities outlined in a launch meeting.
- **Exploring**
 - Is in the infancy stage, but actively considering or planning the preparation needed to launch a partnership;
 - Working to identify partners who would be involved;
 - Determining if the partnership really makes sense for the community.

Below the seven targeted industry sectors have been listed and the status of the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's involvement in each sector is included. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will work toward ensuring each sector is titled as "active" during the next two years.

HEALTHCARE: *Emerging*

EDUCATION: *Emerging*

MANUFACTURING: *Emerging*

TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS: *Emerging*

RETAIL SERVICE: *Exploring*

CONSTRUCTION AND GENERAL TRADE: *Emerging*

BUSINESS SERVICES: *Emerging*

3.11 Does the local board currently leverage or have oversight of funding outside of WIOA Title I funding to support the local workforce development system?

Yes, the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board currently leverages and has oversight of funding outside of WIOA Title I funding to support the local workforce development system.

Briefly describe the additional funding and how it will impact the local system.

TANF Grants have been awarded to the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board for the year. TANF stands for Transitional Aid for Needy Families'. TANF Funds will be utilized to serve clients for workforce training to secure their Certified Nursing Assistant and commercial Driver's License training for job placement to achieve the goal, we will partner with a variety of businesses, employers and training providers to accomplish the training placement goals.

If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any future plans to pursue them.

Not Applicable.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

4.1 Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

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

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will continue to evaluate and adjust the list of "eligible training providers" to ensure they meet the needs of businesses within the seven identified "in

demand industry sectors”. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will evaluate the effectiveness of eligible training providers by utilizing the Economic Security Report developed by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will also begin aggregating data from case management services to identify top performing training providers.

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

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area will work closely with ‘remote’ service locations such as community based organizations, libraries, and other social service agencies within the Central Arkansas region to identify opportunities for electronic access to be made available as widely as possible. The core remote areas in the Central Arkansas Region are Monroe and Prairie Counties. Our Brinkley workforce center is strategically located to provide assistance to these remote locations.

Targeted outreach through social media and the region’s website (www.WorkforceAR.com) will also be used to broadcast information in these areas. However, understanding many participants may be computer illiterate and need staff assistance, general outreach techniques such as flyers, brochures, and strategic partnerships will be deployed.

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

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development system will comply with WIOA section 188 by ensuring accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities by providing staff training and support by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Services for the Blind. The JAWS (Job Access With Speech) system is available at all Centers as assistance for visually impaired customers. JAWS is a screen reader developed for computer users whose vision loss prevents them from seeing output for the most popular computer applications.

The Central Arkansas Area will provide training to staff on applicable provisions of the ADA using material jointly developed by the partners and State entities.

The Central Arkansas Area will bring together core program partners to integrate services and supportive services and leverage resources to improve services to individuals with disabilities and other protected groups.

The Central Arkansas Area will explore changes in service delivery and design and programs by establishing partnerships, alternate assessments, and programs that better connect education, training, workforce development, and supportive services to improve employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities.

The Central Arkansas Area will encourage active engagement with the private sector to identify skills and support that workers with disabilities need and communicate those needs to the partners, education and training providers, as well as job seekers with disabilities.

The Central Arkansas Area will assess the physical and programmatic accessibility of all our centers and training facilities.

Work with Vocational Rehabilitation to provide clients with disabilities and other protected groups who are unemployed, underemployed, or receiving Social Security disability benefits, by utilizing services available through our local centers to connect them to existing successful career pathway programs.

D. List all required and optional program partners; indicate the program(s) each partner provides and the physical location where the program(s) can be accessed. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]

Benton Workforce Center - Programs and Services of Partners

1. Arkansas Department of Workforce Services – Required

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services offers programs that are designed to enable the Arkansas workforce to compete in the global economy by linking a comprehensive array of services for employers and job seekers. The primary objective is to help job seekers find employment, to assist employers with finding qualified employees, and to provide pre-employment assessments and workforce development programs.

Services provided by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services include:

- helping job seekers enhance their workplace skills;
- producing labor market information which includes unemployment rates, salary information and career information;
- administering the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) Program which provides employment and job-training assistance to working adults and eligible parents with children under the age of 18;
- providing staff support to the Arkansas Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Board;
- providing unemployment insurance benefits to those eligible;
- collecting unemployment insurance contributions from employers;
- assisting employers and job seekers who are affected by layoffs and closures;
- maintaining several Web sites to assist job seekers with job searches and provide labor market information for economic developers, researchers, and the general public.

2. Arkansas Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Required

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program, operated by the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District (CAPDD), serves the six counties of Monroe, Prairie, Lonoke, Faulkner, Saline and Pulaski, with the exception of the City of Little Rock. The WIOA program provides a variety of resources, services and information to both job seekers and employers. Core, Intensive and Training Services are available to Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. The main function of the WIOA is to assist job seekers to gain and maintain employment. If a job seeker is unable to obtain employment after receiving the initial Core and Intensive services, Training services may be provided. Core and Intensive

services are free and available to all customers who are eligible to work in the United States. Customers who receive training services must meet certain eligibility requirements.

Training services include Work Experience and Occupation Skills training. Work Experience pays a client a stipend as the client gains experience while working on a job. Occupational Skills training provides educational funding, not to exceed two years, while a client attends post-secondary school to complete a course of study leading to a credential that can be utilized to seek employment.

Individuals looking for a job will need to be registered in the AJL database to be considered for employment counseling and job matching. Everyone who is employed is also welcome to register for Job Services, use the Workforce Center's computer lab, and do Internet job searches on their own.

3. CareLink – Not Required

CareLink provides programs that connect older people and their families with resources to meet the opportunities and challenges of aging. CareLink helps homebound older people receive services that allow them to stay at home as long as possible, avoiding more costly care.

In the AR. Workforce Center in Benton, CareLink interviews, takes applications and providing employment and/or careers in caregiving, social work, nursing, financial management, human resources, development, transportation and administrative specialties.

4. Educational Opportunity Center – Not Required

The Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) is a federally funded TRIO program that assists adults of ages 19 or above and U.S. veterans to enroll in and complete a post-secondary education program. All services are provided free of charge to participants who meet the eligibility requirements. The Federal TRIO Programs are Federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services to individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In the Arkansas Workforce Center in Benton, EOC staff provide information and counseling on college admissions to qualified adults who want to enter or continue a program of post-secondary education. EOC services include:

- Academic Assistance
- Career Exploration
- Enrollment Counseling
- Financial Aid Counseling

The goal of the EOC program is to increase the number of adult participants who enroll in post-secondary education institutions.

5. Saline County Adult Education Center – Required

Saline County Adult Education offers education and training courses to help adult clients in Saline County upgrade their educational level, attain job readiness skills and improve the life skills that prepare them for self-sufficiency and improvement in the quality of life.

Saline County Adult Education Center provides students with the opportunity to study English as a Second Language (ESL) or attain the General Educational Development (G.E.D.) Credential. Among other options, students can enroll in the W.A.G.E. program, conversational Spanish classes, business computer classes,

computer assisted instruction classes, or basic skills remediation classes for college or military entrance exams.

Brinkley Workforce Center - Programs and Services of Partners

1. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services – Required

Provides opportunities for Arkansans with disabilities to live productive and independent lives.

2. Adult Education (Crowley's Ridge Tech) – Required

Adult Education offers education and training courses to help adult clients upgrade their educational level, attain job readiness skills and improve the life skills that prepare them for self-sufficiency and improvement in the quality of life. It provides students with the opportunity to study English as a Second Language (ESL) or attain the General Educational Development (G.E.D.) Credential.

3. Literacy Council of Monroe County—Optional

Program/Services: provides four levels of one-on-one tutoring and classes in Adult Basic Literacy and English as a Second Language (Basic, Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced) that include curriculum in language, civic, financial, health, and workforce literacy. Services are free with trained volunteer tutors.

Conway Workforce Center (Comprehensive) - Programs and Services of Partners

Inside the Workforce Center:

1. Central Arkansas Planning & Development District Inc. – WIOA – Required partner

Programs / Services: WIOA Title I Adults, Dislocated Workers, & Youth, National Emergency Grant, Promise Work Experience Program, Job Search, Business Service Team.

2. Department Of Workforce Services. – Required partner

Programs / Services: Unemployment Assistance, TEA / TANF, Job Search, TAA

3. Adult Education – Required partner

Programs / Services: GED, English as Second Language, Career Readiness Certificate. TABE Testing, Certifications in Industrial, Banking, & Clerical. Microsoft Office modules.

Outside Workforce Center:

4. Arkansas Rehabilitation, Conway – Required partner

Programs / Services : Disability Help in Job, Training, and equipment to help people work at a job.

5. Carelink, Conway – Not required

Programs / Services: They are a staffing agency that comes into the workforce to hire at home health care workers.

6. **Community Service Inc., Conway – Not required**
Programs / Services: Comprehensive Counseling for youth and families. They provide mentoring & counseling to all youth and families that request.
7. **Faulkner County Juvenile Court, Conway – Not required**
Programs / Services: working with Youth who have been incarcerated. From keeping them detained to serve their sentence to after care when they leave. They provide probation, and structure when they leave and refer them to workforce center to help with job search and programs.
8. **His Place His Way Ministries, Conway: - Not required**
Programs / Services: Helping all those who ask. They are a Local Ministry who helps with all sorts of fund raisers and helps find a place for those who are homeless.
9. **Women's Shelter of Central Arkansas, Conway – Not required**
Programs / Services: They help battered and abused individuals. They help relocated those individuals to a safe place. They also run a Crisis hotline for people to call with counselors to speak with anyone in need.

[Lonoke Workforce Center - Programs and Services of Partners](#)

1. Arkansas Department of Workforce Services – Required

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services offers programs that are designed to enable the Arkansas workforce to compete in the global economy by linking a comprehensive array of services for employers and job seekers. The primary objective is to help job seekers find employment, to assist employers with finding qualified employees, and to provide pre-employment assessments and workforce development programs.

Services provided by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services include:

- helping job seekers enhance their workplace skills;
- producing labor market information which includes unemployment rates, salary information and career information;
- administering the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) Program which provides employment and job-training assistance to working adults and eligible parents with children under the age of 18;
- providing staff support to the Arkansas Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Board;
- providing unemployment insurance benefits to those eligible;
- collecting unemployment insurance contributions from employers;
- assisting employers and job seekers who are affected by layoffs and closures;
- maintaining several Web sites to assist job seekers with job searches and provide labor market information for economic developers, researchers, and the general public.

2. Arkansas Human Development Corporation – Required

The Arkansas Human Development Corporation (AHDC) program provides a variety of resources, services and information to both job seekers and employers. Core, Intensive and Training Services are available to Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth in the Migrant & Seasonal Farm Working community. The main

function of the AHDC is to assist Migrant & Seasonal Farm Workers to gain and maintain employment. Customers who receive training services must meet certain eligibility requirements.

Training services include Work Experience and Occupation Skills training. Work Experience pays a client a stipend as the client gains experience while working on a job. Occupational Skills training provides educational funding, not to exceed two years, while a client attends post-secondary school to complete a course of study leading to a credential that can be utilized to seek employment.

3. Arkansas Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Required

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program, operated by the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District (CAPDD), serves the six counties of Monroe, Prairie, Lonoke, Faulkner, Saline and Pulaski, with the exception of the City of Little Rock. The WIOA program provides a variety of resources, services and information to both job seekers and employers. Core, Intensive and Training Services are available to Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. The main function of the WIOA is to assist job seekers to gain and maintain employment. If a job seeker is unable to obtain employment after receiving the initial Core and Intensive services, Training services may be provided. Core and Intensive services are free and available to all customers who are eligible to work in the United States. Customers who receive training services must meet certain eligibility requirements.

Training services include Work Experience and Occupation Skills training. Work Experience pays a client a stipend as the client gains experience while working on a job. Occupational Skills training provides educational funding, not to exceed two years, while a client attends post-secondary school to complete a course of study leading to a credential that can be utilized to seek employment.

Individuals looking for a job will need to be registered in the AJL database to be considered for employment counseling and job matching. Everyone who is employed is also welcome to register for Job Services, use the Workforce Center's computer lab, and do Internet job searches on their own.

4. CareLink – Not Required

CareLink provides programs that connect older people and their families with resources to meet the opportunities and challenges of aging. CareLink helps homebound older people receive services that allow them to stay at home as long as possible, avoiding more costly care.

CareLink interviews, takes applications and providing employment and/or careers in caregiving, social work, nursing, financial management, human resources, development, transportation and administrative specialties.

5. Experience Works

The Experience Works Program provides a variety of resources, services and information to job seekers, 50 and older and employers. Core, Intensive and Training Services are available to Adults and Dislocated Workers. The main function of Experience Works is to assist older workers to gain and maintain employment. Customers who receive training services must meet certain eligibility requirements.

Training services include Work Experience and Occupation Skills training. Work Experience pays a client a stipend as the client gains experience while working on a job. Occupational Skills training provides educational funding, not to exceed two years, while a client attends post-secondary school to complete a course of study leading to a credential that can be utilized to seek employment.

6. Lonoke and Prairie County Adult Education Center – Required

Lonoke County Adult Education offers education and training courses to help adult clients upgrade their educational level, attain job readiness skills and improve the life skills that prepare them for self-sufficiency and improvement of their quality of life.

Lonoke County Adult Education Center provides students with the opportunity to study English as a Second Language (ESL) or attain the General Educational Diploma (G.E.D.). Among other options, business computer classes, computer assisted instruction classes, or basic skills remediation classes for college and military entrance exams. Financial Literacy and Job Readiness are integrated components of all Adult Education Courses.

North Little Rock Workforce Center - Programs and Services of Partners

1. Arkansas Baptist College Adult Education Program – Required

Services Provided: Serves the Little Rock and North Little Rock side of Pulaski County by planning, promoting and implementing educational activities to meet the needs of adults. These services include GED preparation, refresher classes, basic skills programs and teaching parents to help their children.

2. Arkansas Job Corp – Required

Services Provided: Education and Vocational Training, Recruitment services for Room, Board and Meals, Monthly Stipend, Clothing Allowance, Recreational Activities, Medical and Dental Care and much more.

3. Communication and Outreach of Child Support Enforcement – Optional

Services Provided: Assist Noncustodial parents who are unemployed and behind in child support payments offering employment placement assistance and job readiness services.

4. Central Arkansas Development Council – Optional

Services Provided: LiHeap, Crisis Intervention, Utility Assistance

5. Experience Works – Optional

Services Provided: Assistance to applicants 55 years of age and over who are low income and looking for employment. These eligible individuals participate in paid community service assignment at local public and nonprofit organizations.

6. Pulaski County Special School District Adult Education/WAGE – Required

Services Provided: TABE Testing (Test of adult basic education), GED Preparation, Basic Skills Improvement (prepare for pre-employment testing, college entrance/ABSVAB) WAGE™: (Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy), Employability Certificate, Customer Service I Certificate,

Customer Service II Certificate, Bank Teller Certificate, Industrial Certificate, Office Technology Certificate (w/Microsoft Office Professional 2010 Career Readiness Certificate TEST Preparation (CRC)

7. Shorter College Alumni – Optional

Services Provided: Recruitment of students for Post-Secondary Education

8. Wagner Peyser (Employments Services)-DWS – Required

Services Provided: Provides Employment, UI, and TAA Veteran Services to eligible individuals. Provides assistance to workforce office with Employers looking for qualified job seekers.

E. Describe how the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology enabled intake and case management information system for core programs [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]

Our local area advocates and supports an integrated information system at the state and local level that would allow entities that carry out core programs to better coordinate service delivery for mutual customers and cross program referrals. Currently, all DOL-funded partner programs utilize Arkansas Job Link (AJL) as a technology platform. The state is exploring information technology options that will assist in the transitioning to an integrated common intake component which acts as the front end to the state's workforce programs. Until such an option exists, our workforce center staff maximizes the utilization of currently available technology to consolidate, streamline services and enhance the overall customer experience.

Central intends to participate with partners as integrated case management systems are developed that insure secure customer service throughout the customer's interaction with the integrated system. The area seeks to utilize systems allowing information collected from customers at intake to be captured once. Customer information is properly secured in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and regulations. Data, however, would be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the workforce delivery system only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.

4.2 Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]

The coordination of training services for adult and dislocated workers will ensure efficient services are provided to jobseekers. Outreach through labor organizations and company management ensures that laid off workers have easy access to dislocated worker programs.

Program offerings to adult and dislocated worker clients are available through partner agencies such as the Arkansas Department of Career Education, and include customized training opportunities that respond to labor market growth and market trends. Prevocational training can be offered as necessary for adults and dislocated workers who may be lacking basic skills, English as a Second Language (ESL) skills, or other prevocational competencies. The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will ensure the coordination of support services as necessary for adults and dislocated workers who lack the financial means to sustain activities or training required to return or remain in the workforce.

4.3 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

Rapid Response is an early intervention designed to coordinate transitional services at the earliest point possible, for employers and workers affected by mass layoffs or plant closure. Rapid Response works closely with the Local Workforce Development Board and Local Elected Officials in adversely affected areas to insure that dislocated workers receive program information and services.

Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force division of Business Retention & Workforce Transition is responsible for the statewide rapid response and layoff aversion activities. Immediately upon receiving notice of a closure or workforce reduction, the Task Force contacts company officials. A community meeting is scheduled with elected officials and business leaders to create action plans to assist both the community and dislocated workers. To avoid duplication and confusion, local AWC staff do not initiate contact with an employer regarding a layoff without first speaking with the Task Force Coordinator.

The Business Retention & Workforce Transition team may conduct a worker assistance workshop, attended by representatives of local and state agencies and affected workers to review available resources. Services and needs discussed at the workshop may include retraining and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, social service programs, credit counseling, insurance options and resources to find a new job.

The Task Force Coordinator also serves as the liaison to the local chambers of commerce throughout the area. Information is provided to them about the affected workers, including their occupations and their educational and skill levels. The local AWC staff builds on the services provided through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce by providing information and services to the affected employees. Dislocated workers are given a full array of services available to them through the Arkansas Workforce Center partnership and community organizations.

State and local WIOA partners will continue to build and maintain relationships with the business community to help with early warning of potential layoffs and promote early intervention. Together, the following services will be provided:

- Layoff aversion activities
- Immediate and on-site contact with employers and local community representatives
- Assessment and planning to address the layoff schedule, assistance needs of impacted workers, re-employment prospects, and available resources
- Information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, AWC services, and employment and training activities, including Trade Act, Pell Grants, GI Bill, WIOA DLW Program, and other resources
- Necessary services and resources, such as workshops, resource and job fairs to support re-employment assistance
- Trade Act petition services through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce

4.4 Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

Note: This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS

	Element	Implementation
1.	Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to high school completion, including dropout prevention strategies. Dropout prevention strategies can include, but are not limited to, placement in an alternative secondary school services setting, facilitating involvement of families and community, taking an individualized approach based on youth's individual needs. A	Provision of on-line coursework, one-on-one instruction, peer-to-peer interaction, or in a group setting. Referrals to partners providing educational services and the use of on-line tutorials. The WDB authorizes incentives for the participants that achieve goals that contribute to their success. The primary goal of local WIOA youth programming is to insure youth completion of a HSD GED.
2.	Alternative high school services which offer specialized, structured curriculum inside or outside of the public school system which may provide work, study and/or academic intervention for students with behavior problems, physical/mental disabilities, who are at risk of dropping out, and/or who are institutionalized or adjudicated youth	WIOA youth programs will work closely with alternative schools throughout the central area. Alternative schools will be one source for referrals for eligible WIOA Youth participants. WIOA youth services will be designed to complement activities occurring within alternative schools. The primary goal will be for the youth to obtain their high school diploma or a GED.
3.	Summer youth employment that takes place between May 15 th and September 30 th and consists of employment for which youth are paid a wage. Summer employment should be coordinated and linked with academic and occupational learning that leads to the career or employment goal as stated in the individual service strategy.	Participants will prepare for employment opportunities through the provision of various services including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic skill remediation; • supervised work experiences; • pre-employment abilities such as career planning, resume preparation, use of labor market information, completing applications, and interviewing skills attainment ; • attainment of core employability/work maturity skills such as dependability, honesty,

	Summer Youth Continued	problem solving skills, initiative, enthusiasm, team player; • Interpersonal skills, appearance, leadership, and cultural sensitivity. emphasis on jobs in in-demand and emerging industries;
4.	Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing are short-term, planned, structured learning experiences that occur in a workplace and are focused on career exploration and the development of work readiness skills. The primary purpose of work experiences is to expose youth to the requirements of work and to employers expectations. An employer may benefit from the work done by a youth, but the primary benefit must be to the youth.	Work opportunities with an emphasis on jobs in in-demand and emerging industries;
5.	Occupational skills training constitutes an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. These include programs that lead to the attainment of a certificate or credential, participation in Job Corps, apprenticeship programs, and training programs that provide skills necessary to enter or advance in a specific occupation.	Enrollment into programs that provide recognized degrees, certifications, or marketable skills for in-demand and emerging occupations;
6.	Leadership development opportunities, which include community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. Examples include community volunteering, peer mentoring or tutoring, character education, citizenship education, including how and why to vote, serving on a youth council, community or advocacy organization board, leadership training consisting of how to work in a team, how to run meetings, diversity training, and life skills training such as parent education, financial education, goal setting and conflict resolution.	Participation in community service learning projects, peer centered activities, teambuilding, life-skills training, healthy lifestyle choices, etc.;
7.	Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months; this service may occur during program participation or during the Follow-up period. Adult mentoring is a one-to-one supportive relationship between an adult and a youth that is based on trust. High-quality adult mentoring programs include an adult role model who builds a working relationship with a youth and who fosters the development of positive life skills in youth.	Referral to community-, faith-based, and/or other organizations to provide one-on-one encouragement and direction;
8.	Supportive services to enable an individual to participate in WIOA youth program activities. These may include, but are not limited to, housing, meals, medical care, day care, transportation, school related supplies, training related supplies, etc.	Assistance with transportation, childcare, clothing, supplies, and related needs;
9.	Follow-up services include activities after completion of participation to monitor youths' success during their transition to employment and further education and to provide assistance as needed for a successful transition. Follow-up services must be provided for not less than 12 months after obtaining employment and/or completion of participation.	Frequent interaction, including guidance and counseling, support services, and other assistance for at least 12 months after exit;

10.	Comprehensive guidance and counseling to help youth make and implement informed educational, occupational, and life choices. It includes imparting skills through counselor-directed learning opportunities that help youth achieve success through academic, career, personal, and social development.	Career counseling will be an integral part of youth programming and provide the basis for individual employment plans. Adult Education can assist 16-17 year olds that are waived out of high-school and/or have been home schooled.
11.	Financial literacy education to help youth gain the skills needed to create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals. An example of financial literacy education is the FDIC approved Money Smart curriculum.	Financial literacy education is supported by activities such as partnerships with financial institutions and to provide workshops at the local one stop. Adult Education Programs will have a financial component beginning July 1, 2017.
12.	Entrepreneurial skills training including the use of curriculum based training modules that teach youth the value of being skilled and applying those skills to meet a consumer need or demand; to think creatively and critically; to problem solve; how to recognize opportunities, and other skills related to entrepreneurialism.	Entrepreneurial skills training is supported by activities such as partnerships with economic development agencies and referrals to business development organizations.
13.	Services that provide career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration by using labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area.	Workshops and other services that prepare youth for careers in in-demand and/or emerging occupations. Information is provided in the local one-stops or on-line systems such as the Arkansas Job Link. Information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations is available in areas, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
14.	Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training includes the delivery of activities listed within the 14 WIOA program elements and other activities that provide exposure to post-secondary education options; assisting youth with placement into post-secondary education; and placement into training opportunities such as apprenticeships and occupational training.	Individual guidance and counseling, including career pathway discussion; assistance with applications for FAFSA; and referral to enrollment and career counseling services at Post-secondary institutions.

4.5 Describe local board actions to become and/or remain a high-performing local board, consistent with the factors developed by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. These factors have not been determined but will include effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria for local boards. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)] (See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources*)

The Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board will engage in continuous monitoring of the programs to ensure compliance with the laws and that performance measures are met. Board members

have a complete understanding of their roles and inventory their own resources. The Board also has policies and procedures in place which ensure continuous improvement and oversight is in place.

4.6 Describe how training services will be provided in accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), the process and criteria for issuing individual training accounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

Training services will be provided to eligible participants and may be for various types of training including on-the-job training, work experience, apprenticeship or classroom training.

The individual training accounts (ITA) system is used by participants who are eligible for training services and choose to attend training. A case manager uses the WIOA Training Expenditure Form and Financial Aide documentation various educational institutions to determine a participant's financial need from WIOA. The individual selects the course of study from the eligible training provider list. The individual must have made application and received determination from other funding sources and present the award letter to the career specialist to show the monetary amounts of unmet financial need. Consideration of all available funds, excluding loans, will determine the person's overall need for WIOA funding. The ITA may be used to cover expenses for tuition, books, fees, supplies and/or tools. Case manager will make sure that there is no duplication of services.

The amount of monies available from all sources, the financial status of the family and the potential of the applicant prior to a determination of qualification are also taken into consideration. If approved, the ITA is completed by the employment/training advisor. The Eligible Training Provider will invoice the WIOA Program each semester. ITA's may be adjusted up or down based upon case necessity. ITA's are not issued if the training program is not on the Arkansas Consumer Report System (ACRS) list.

4.7 If contracts for training services are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

Once full board approval was made on September 15, 2016, the ETP list was distributed to all workforce centers. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA. The document developed at the request of the CAWDB categorized the training programs into the seven in demand industry sectors for the region. This action was to assist customer choice in the selection of a training program which will increase the probability of employment. Registered Apprenticeship Programs are also available within the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area. The seven in-demand industry sectors encompass most of the registered apprenticeship programs available in the State of Arkansas. If a program falls outside of the seven in-demand industry sectors, that program will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

4.8 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)] and [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

All training providers will complete an online electronic application through the automated Arkansas Consumer Reporting System. All training must be directly linked to employment opportunities in the local

area. Training for occupations in which a participant is willing to relocate will be analyzed by the Executive Committee on a case by case basis. Any training for a participant that is paid for by WIOA funds must be on the Projected Employment Opportunities List for the state or local area. To be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), providers must submit an electronic application to the local board for their approval. Furthermore, the CAWDB has realigned eligible training providers to ensure ETPs (educational training providers) support occupations within the seven in-demand industry sectors.

Section 5: Compliance

Responses are focused on the local area's compliance with federal or state requirements. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

5.1 Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated in the area with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

Local ARS Field offices or other ARS organizational units will replicate cooperative agreements in part or in whole with local divisions of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act core programs. These may include the following:

- provision of inter-component staff training and technical assistance with regard to:
- the availability and benefits of, and information on eligibility standards for, vocational rehabilitation services; and
- the promotion of equal, effective, and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through the promotion of program accessibility, the use of nondiscriminatory policies and procedures, and the provision of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and services, and rehabilitation technology, for individuals with disabilities;
- use of information and financial management systems that link all components of the statewide workforce development system, that link the components to other electronic networks, including nonvisual electronic networks, and that relate to such subjects as employment statistics, and information on job vacancies, career planning, and workforce innovation and opportunity activities; use of customer service features such as common intake and referral procedures, customer databases, resource information, and human services hotlines;
- establishment of cooperative efforts with employers to:
- facilitate job placement; and
- carry out any other activities that the designated State unit and the employers determine to be appropriate; identification of staff roles, responsibilities, and available resources, and specification of the financial responsibility of each component of the statewide workforce investment system with regard to paying for necessary services (consistent with State law and Federal requirements); and

- specification of procedures for resolving disputes among such components.

Development of these agreements at the local level must include the local manager (field office district manager or the top executive at the organizational units of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services). The agreement must be signed by the local manager, the supervising Senior Leader from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services or his/her designee. Copies of the agreement will be maintained by the local manager and Chief Fiscal Officer of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

5.2 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Incorporated

5.3 Describe the competitive processes to award the sub grants and contracts for activities funded by WIOA Title I programs within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

The local board uses an RFP or RFQ process to award sub grants and contracts. The notice advertising the RFP or RFQ is placed at least twice in a statewide newspaper. Additional media sources may be used. Each proposal submitted is rated based on specific criteria. After the evaluation, the rating of each proposal is presented to the full board. The provider is selected by the local board with agreement by the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials. Conflict of Interest is eliminated through the One Stop Operator Task Force's selection of an independent contractor. The selected independent contractor will serve as staff for the Task Force, developing the RFQ, issuing the RFQ, and working with the Task Force to score and rank respondents.

Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area

One-Stop Operator Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

- CAWDB Chairman appoints a RFQ committee which is composed of board members
- RFQ committee meets following CAWDB Meeting and requests that the fiscal agent obtains four bids for the procurement of OSO, Title 1 provider, and administrative entity.
- RFQ committee reviews the four bids and selects a third-party entity to procure the OSO, Title 1 provider, and administrative entity
- RFQ committee meets with third-party entity and develops the RFQ.
- RFQ is published in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette and on the CAWDB website.
- Deadline for Submitting RFQ responses to the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board (received by close of business).
- RFQ Committee scores and ranks respondents with third-party entity. RFQ Committee chooses their recommendation for the One-Stop Operator
- RFQ Review Committee presents recommendations of One-Stop Operator to CAWDB
- CAWDB selection of One-Stop Operator presented to Chief Elected Officials

5.4 Describe the local area’s negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Note: See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources “Performance Targets Template”.

The Department of Labor provided the State of Arkansas with a performance tool which is based in excel. The tool generates baseline indicators for performance and populates performance for the following categories:

Adult: Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit, Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit, Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit.

Dislocated Worker: Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit, Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit, Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit.

Wagner-Peyser: Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit, Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit, Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit.

Youth: Employment or Placement Rate 2nd Quarter after exit, Employment or Placement Rate 4th Quarter after exit, Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after exit.

The primary implications for the local workforce system lie in adding emphasis on “Measurable Skill Gains” and “Effectiveness in Serving Employers.” Adding the “Measurable Skill Gains” negotiated measures requires the local area to meet stated goals in skill areas beyond formal education, such as certifications or credentials. Adding the “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” negotiated measure requires the local area to consider the needs of employers as a primary driver in building a talent pipeline, whereas the previous driver had largely been job seeker-focused

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

Financial reports will be provided to the full board at every local board meeting in order for the local board to remain informed of all activities throughout the Title I funding. The local WIOA monitor will provide quarterly monitoring reports of the fiscal operations of the one stop operator and youth service provider. The monitor will also provide an annual program service monitoring report to the Executive Committee of the local board. There will also be a separate procured independent audit of the one stop operator and fiscal agent on an annual basis.

Performance reports will be presented to the board for the board to review/approve/disapprove once sufficient data for accountability has been established by DOL and ADWS. The fiscal agent, Title I service provider and One-Stop operator shall be audited on an annual basis as required in WIOA. The board will be presented the eligible training provider list and programs as requested. The board staff is required to review and approve all acceptable programs as established annually by designated committee in cooperation of the LMI department of ADWS.

- 5.6 Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b)(20)]**

Upon completion of a draft local plan, an advertisement will be placed in the statewide newspaper giving the public time to review and submit any comments back to Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area for a 30 day period. The plan will remain on display for that 30 day period and anyone wishing to review may stop by any of the five workforce centers listed in Section 3.1B, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The public may also request a mailed copy of the plan by contacting Central Arkansas Planning and Development District in Lonoke Arkansas. The draft plan and all public comments received shall be presented to the Central Arkansas Workforce Development Board for their consideration and approval. The public comment period was held between April 14, 2023- May 19, 2023

- 5.7 Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan, the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.**

- A. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(1)];**

The local and regional plan will be made available through email, public display, and on Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area's website: www.WorkforceAR.com from April 14, 2023- May 19, 2023

- B. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and**

Following the conclusion of the public comment period, comments collected during the public comment period will be presented to the board for review and consideration.

- C. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan's attachments. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(3)]**

Disagreements or concerns received during the public comment period will be addressed following the Board's review of said concerns. Those concerns will also be included in the attachments of this plan. No comments received.

5.8 List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each workforce center within the local area.

Tina Roush
Deputy Director/ EEO Officer
P.O. Box 300
Lonoke, AR 72086
501-676-2721

Section 6: COVID Recovery Readiness, Diversity, and Inclusion

Responses are focused on the local area's readiness to continue full operation in the post-COVID era as well as adherence to the Administration's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workforce Services Initiative.

6.1 What is the Local Area's equitable and inclusive recovery and reemployment? What are community partners' roles in this vision? How much of this vision is accomplishable with current WIOA funding?

Central Arkansas equitable and inclusive recovery and reemployment strategies are outlined in our 2022 COVID-19 Economic Recovery and Resilience Plan which includes seven (7) focus areas:

- Workforce Development
- Supply Chain Logistics
- Inflation
- Healthcare
- Affordable Housing
- Emergency Plans/Business Continuity Plans
- Broadband
- Cyber Security
- Business Resources

6.2 How has the local area modified their service delivery strategies and services as the Arkansas Workforce Centers have safely reopened?

Strategies to Address workforce development

- Build regional partnerships to cultivate a more equipped and devoted workforce.
- Identify and pursue opportunities for employers to stay competitive in retaining and attracting workers.
- Retain Arkansas students post-graduation to better support the Arkansas Workforce.

Action Steps to Address Workforce Development

- Host a summit in each of the six CAPDD counties with business owners, elected officials,

- representatives from the Division of Workforce Services, and representatives from the
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission
- Conduct roundtable discussions with employers and chambers of commerce to assess
- current and future employment opportunities in the community
- Explore and research opportunities to make communities more vibrant and equipped
- for remote working & learning
- Expand accreditation programs with partnerships among region community colleges
- and area school districts
- Encourage more CTE/Business Academy Centers across the region; Facilitate trips with
- community/business leaders to well established Arkansas CTE Centers
- Examine job shadow opportunities with high school/college students and area
- employers

Implementation Partners

Resiliency Implementation Taskforce-Workforce Development Committee, Chambers of Commerce, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, County and Municipal Officials, Area Community Colleges and, Area High Schools

6.3 What are the local strategies to identify engage and enroll participants who may be unaware of services available through the public workforce system? How have you ensured these services reach all populations, including marginalized and underserved populations?

We have updated our website to include a Virtual Career Center. Our goal is to provide job seekers with the most diverse job opportunities in the Central Arkansas Region. We understand that deciding on and navigating a career can be difficult at times, so we provide additional resources and services to assist the community in securing a job that will lead to a promising career through services provided on our website. We also work with the Division of Workforce Services and other partners to have community job fairs and other program events by using the mobile units and hosting activities in the local community.

6.4 Has the local area created an outreach and engagement plan to make the public more aware of the available services of the public workforce system? If no, does the Local Area plan to create such a plan?

An outreach and engagement plan has been developed in 2022 and is being modified to address the ever-changing needs in the local area.

6.5 How are partners, including non-traditional and community organizations, being engaged to improve access to services for all populations, including marginalized populations? Is this different for in-person vs online services? What decisions were made regarding the capacity of the Local Area to provide remote and in-person services to marginalized populations?

Partner meetings are held at all workforce centers on a quarterly basis. Partners are actively engaged and referrals continue to be reviewed and used to ensure all populations are being served. Disadvantaged and vulnerable populations may need supportive services, multiple service strategies, co-enrollment in additional programs, referrals to community service providers, and/or a team approach on your part to succeed in the labor market. Many services have been made available to the public through the use of our virtual career center online but customers may still need to engage with local staff to complete some portions of programmatic services.

6.6 What is the 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? 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?

Central Workforce Development Area intends to expand youth services through outreach efforts outlined in the Outreach Plan in collaboration with the business services team. Partnership meetings help to further develop these efforts as we strive to reach you in diverse communities with a variety of social and economic needs.

Section 7: Plan Assurances

	Planning Process and Public Comment	References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.1 The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.2 The final local plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.3 The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550
	Required Policies and Procedures	References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.4 The local board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.390
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.5 The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts.	WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c)

☒	6.6	The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.	WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510
☒	6.7	The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one-stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.	WIOA Section 121(c)(v)
☒	6.8	The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and the Governor.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); proposed 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b)
☒	6.9	The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting one-stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA.	WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400
☒	6.10	The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts	WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430
☒	6.11	The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600
☒	6.12	The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.	WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305
☒	6.13	All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)
☒	6.14	The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
☒	6.15	The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
☒	6.16	The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.17 The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.	WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.18 The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements	2 CFR Part 225 Appendix B; 2 CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.19 The local board ensures that one-stop Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven.	WIOA Section 167
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.20 The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603
<input type="checkbox"/>	Administration of Funds	References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.21 The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.	WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.22 The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program funds.	WIOA Section 108(b)(15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.23 The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.	WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.24 The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.	WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.25 The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility	References

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.26 The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.	Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.27 The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.28 The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.	WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.29 The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its workforce centers for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services.	Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010; TEGL 10-09

Appendix C: Performance Goals: PY2022 – PY 2023 Performance Targets

PY 22-23 WIOA PERFORMANCE GOALS

WIOA Title I: Adult Measure	Arkansas Negotiated Performance Levels		Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area Negotiated Performance Levels	
	PY 22	PY 23	PY 22	PY 23
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	83.0%	83.0%	85.0%	85.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	82.0%	82.0%	84.0%	84.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$6,649	\$6,649	\$6,849	\$6,849
Credential Attainment Rate	81.0%	81.0%	83.0%	83.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	71.0%	71.0%	73.0%	73.0%

WIOA Title I: Dislocated Worker Measure	Arkansas Negotiated Performance Levels		Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area Negotiated Performance Levels	
	PY 22	PY 23	PY 22	PY 23
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	83.0%	83.0%	85.0%	85.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	85.0%	85.0%	87.0%	87.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$7,227	\$7,227	\$7,227	\$7,227
Credential Attainment Rate	79.0%	79.0%	81.0%	81.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.5%	68.5%	70.5%	70.5%

WIOA Title I: Youth Measure	Arkansas Negotiated Performance Levels		Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area Negotiated Performance Levels	
	PY 22	PY 23	PY 22	PY 23
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 2nd quarter after exit	73.0%	73.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 4th quarter after exit	76.0%	76.0%	78.0%	78.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$3,700	\$3,700	\$3,900	\$3,900
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%	62.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	59.0%	59.0%	61.0%	61.0%

Effectiveness In Serving Employers

Adult: Baseline

Youth: Baseline

Dislocated Workers: Baseline

APPENDIX D: Planning References and Resources

Transitional Planning References and Resources

I. State of Arkansas's Combined Workforce Development Strategic Plan (*State Plan*)

President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law on July 22, 2014, providing a framework for Governors and states to make changes to their workforce systems. The federal law sets the parameters for the workforce system which is an integral part of the State's ability to serve jobseekers and employers. WIOA will enable the State to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future.

An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. Arkansas will look beyond WIOA to set broad goals for a comprehensive workforce development system. We will do this by providing the highest quality of service to jobseekers and employers through well-coordinated approaches at the state and local levels. System access will be enhanced through the use of technology and creative partnerships with community organizations and other service providers. While access will be improved for all jobseekers, the provision of services and training will be focused on those most in need and hardest to serve.

The four main goals in the State's Combined WIOA Plan are as follows:

Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action between all workforce related boards.
6. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.

7. Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
8. Partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
9. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).
10. Expand small business participation.

Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Develop a common intake process for jobseekers and businesses that will efficiently connect them with services available from all workforce development partner programs and identify any barriers to employment that need to be addressed.
2. Develop an integrated data system that will enable the sharing of information between partner agencies to more efficiently service both employers and jobseekers.
3. Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
4. Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
5. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
6. Expand service delivery access points by the use of virtual services.
7. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by all workforce system partners.
8. Develop a menu of services available at each service delivery access point that provides a list of the services and training opportunities available through Arkansas's talent development system.
9. Utilize customer satisfaction surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the State's talent development system.
10. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).

Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the State's Talent Development System

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services.
2. Change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
3. Develop an image-building outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the State.
4. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.

5. Develop a user-friendly website that provides a common repository of information about career development opportunities that are relevant to K-12 education, parents, educators, adults, employers, government agencies, and the general public.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Conduct a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue.
2. Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas.
3. Analyze the effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) program.

PY 2020 – PY 2022 Combined State Plan to be found at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm>

II. State Policy and Guidance.

State policy can be found at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm>

III. Labor Market and Workforce Information.

A. Discover Arkansas

Labor Market Information Portal Arkansas Labor Market Information (LMI) is posted online using the Discover Arkansas web portal located at www.discoverarkansas.net and is available to the general public.

Arkansas State Plan Economic and Workforce Analysis

The Arkansas Combined State Plan includes an analysis of the current workforce. The data provided in Section II of the state plan under strategic elements may be very helpful to local boards in conducting a local area and regional economic and workforce analysis.

To provide local workforce boards in the state with tools for development planning in their own areas, data were downloaded and prepared from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services Labor Market Information (LMI) website, <http://www.discoverarkansas.net>. These data were then turned into interactive visualizations, which are available at the following websites. These visualizations can be downloaded as an image or in PDF format. The goal is to help stakeholders at the state and local level better understand future industry and occupational needs and to provide workforce development boards with the tools needed to better serve their areas.

The data available at <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=153> includes:

- Industries

- Job Growth
- Projected Job Growth by Workforce Development Area
- Projected Job Growth by Industry
- Percent Workforce

These data demonstrate the current makeup of the workforce by major industry, as well as projections of the number of jobs these industries will need in 2022. To the right of the visualizations are "filters" to help explore the data choosing multiple regions to compare, such as United States vs Arkansas, Arkansas vs. workforce region, or directly compare regions.

The data available at <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=154> includes:

- Arkansas Occupations, Current and 2022 Projections, which includes data visualizations concerning occupations in Arkansas, both currently and projections for 2022. Occupations are listed by their Standard Occupation Code (SOC) title. The SOC system is hierarchical. SOC Major codes are the top level occupational areas, such as "Construction and Extraction Occupations." At the next level would be SOC Minor, one of which for the above would be "Construction Trades Workers." Finally there is SOC Detail, such as "Stonemasons" or "Carpenters." This web tool allows users to manipulate the data by indicating the level of detail desired.

IV. PY 22-23 Performance Targets Template.

See Appendix C

V. Other Resources.

- TEN 1-15; Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide; July 6, 2015
- TEGL 37-14; Update on Complying with Nondiscrimination Requirements: Discrimination Based on Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Stereotyping are Prohibited Forms of Sex Discrimination in the Workforce Development System; May 29, 2015
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

