

Workforce Development Board *of Eastern Arkansas*

Local Plan

Program Years 2020-2023



A proud partner of the

American **JobCenter**
network

Local Plan
PY 2020- PY 2023

WIOA requires each local workforce area to develop a local plan that supports and is submitted as a component of its associated 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.

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Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

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

Note: Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).

Chart 1 presents long-term projected employment data for advanced manufacturing and transportation occupations which are indicated as in-demand by the discoverarkansas.net labor market database.

Chart 1: Long-Term Projected Regional Employment Data				
Manufacturing/Related Occupations	2018	2028	Increase	% Change
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators	157	173	16	10.19%
Machinists	25	32	7	28.00%
Assemblers and Fabricators	26	34	8	30.77%
Merchants, Whole Sellers and durable goods	897	1,308	411	45.82%
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,750	2,055	305	17.43%
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	282	342	60	21.28%
Production Occupations	2,762	2,836	74	2.68%
Total manufacturing/Related	5,899	6,780	881	52.19%
Transportation/CDL Occupations	2018	2028	Increase	% Change
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,238	1,268	30	2.42%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	856	1,012	156	18.22%
Transportation & Material Moving Operations	3,819	4,062	243	6.36%
Total Transportation/CDL	5,913	6,342	429	19.85%

The Eastern Workforce Development Area is targeting two pathways in the ADAPT model: advanced manufacturing (and related to advanced manufacturing) and transportation/distribution/logistics, with a TDL program focus in Commercial Driver Training (CDL). These sectors are targeted because of the high level of regional demand, importance in the region, and the interdependence of the two sectors. The decision is validated by a review of regional labor market information, input from workforce development boards, and employer feedback. ADTEC will also implement a regional consortium-driven approach to Commercial Driver Training. The ADTEC colleges have been in discussion with various trucking industry partners regarding collaboration in CDL program delivery.

The ADAPT model addresses regional labor needs in the following ways:

- Target industries with significant projected employment needs
- Challenge primary workforce skills gaps through a comprehensive workforce readiness solution.
- Deliver relevant technical training through enhanced or new career pathway models.
- Emphasize and assure that students who are potential employees have access to attain a full roster of stacked credentials, employer/industry certifications, and value-added certifications.
- Create new regional workforce alliances driven by collaboration and commitment.

1.2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Basic knowledge and skills that employers need include literacy and math, problem solving, computing, communication, work readiness and other skills. These are things that almost every employer requires. In addition, skills that are particular to each job are varied. For example, advanced manufacturing employers are seeking individuals that have more technical skills and have the ability to work with computerized systems; transportation skills include customer service, understanding of physics and logical thought; and for distribution and logistics individuals should possess decision making, planning and organizing skills.

In order to access high-demand, high-skill, and high-wage careers, individuals will need to develop a full menu of work readiness and industry-specific skills. The ADAPT model, coupled with the technical skills development and stacked credential attainment available through the targeted pathways, will help individuals conquer work readiness and technical skills deficiencies. Attaining these skills is not only necessary for entry into the advanced manufacturing and transportation industry sectors but also necessary for advancement to high-skill, high-wage jobs within these high-demand sectors.

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 employment and unemployment data:

The labor force has decreased by 151 to 47,583 in 2021 from 2020 and has decreased by 3,331 from 2017 to 2021. A reduction in the labor force can be contributed to the lack of skilled workers' and job requirements, skills, and abilities to perform the job, and changes in demographics and culture. Also, jobseekers become less willing to accept job offers and require higher pay. The statistics below document an increase in employment and decrease in unemployment which indicates there is an optimistic future for the region. The Arkansas Workforce Center network and partner agencies are working with employers and job seekers to ensure the skills meet the needs of business and industry. This is done through surveys, business and industry and employer advisory groups, and economic development meetings.

Unemployment and the unemployment rate saw a decrease from 2020 to 2021, having 1,134 fewer unemployed, enough to change the unemployment rate from 7.9 percent to 5.7 percent. Since the beginning of 2022, the unemployment rate fluctuated from 5.3 percent in January, ending July at 6.0 percent. Chart 2 shows the labor force employment and unemployment data by the Workforce Development Area and county. (Source: July 2022 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report – State and Workforce Development Areas and produced by the Occupational/Career Information Unit of the Labor Market Information Section (labor market information web portal: <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>).

Labor Force Statistics and Unemployment Rates

Chart 2: July 2022

County	Civilian Labor Force	Number of Employed	Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Eastern LWDA	43,583	41,099	2,484	5.7
Crittenden County	20,502	19,394	1,108	5.4
Cross County	6,987	6,681	306	4.4
Lee County	2,554	2,411	143	5.6
Phillips County	5,865	5,412	543	7.7
St. Francis County	7,675	7,201	474	6.2

<http://discoverarkansas.net>

Employers of all sizes in the Eastern Arkansas WDA had an estimated entry wage of \$24,211 in 2021. Employers with 250 to 499 employees had an estimated mean wage of \$37,669. Employers of 50 to 99 employees had an estimated entry wage of \$17,650, while estimated experienced wages were \$50,710 for employers in all size categories. Of the 33,620 estimated employees in the area with hourly wage data, 4,110 made less than \$12 an hour, while 5,390 made \$17 to \$21.99 an hour. Employees making more than \$27 an hour totaled 4,220.

Information on Labor Market Trends:

Chart 3 indicates the Top 5 Industry Super sectors for the Eastern Arkansas WDA (Source: 2016 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report).

Chart 3: Top 5 Industry Super sectors

Title	Employment 2020-2030 Projected	Net Growth	Percent Growth
Leisure and Hospitality	4,555	875	23.8%
Professional and Business	1,673	90	5.7%

Natural Resources and Mining	2,075	111	5.7%
Education and Health Services	8,919	185	2.1%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	8,706	109	1.3%

The Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce, Including Individuals with Barriers:

Chart 4 displays the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers.

Chart 4: Educational and Skills Level

County	Population 25 years and over	% High school grad or higher	% Bachelor's degree or higher
Crittenden	30,805	35.4%	17.5%
Cross	11,747	41.8%	14.1%
Lee	6,248	45.6%	9.8%
Phillips	10,976	31.8%	14.3%
St. Francis	16,685	39.3%	11.4%

Data from 2021 American Fact Finder <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools>. Data includes individuals 25 years and over and is a 5-year estimate.

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)]

WIOA provides the framework for an integrated workforce system that is flexible, responsive, customer-focused, and locally managed. Program partners include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Adult Education and Literacy; Vocational Rehabilitation; Career and Technical Education; Title V Older Americans; Department of Human Services; Job Corps; Native American Programs; Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers; Veterans; Youth build; Trade Act; Community Services Block Grant; HUD; Unemployment Compensation; Second Chance; and TANF.

Description of Workforce Development Activities:

Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers - The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities and represent Arkansas's version of the American Job Centers. There are three workforce centers spread throughout the five-county region to ensure access to all Arkansans residing in the region. Two centers in the Eastern Arkansas Region are comprehensive and one is an affiliate.

Eastern Arkansas Workforce System Services - Unemployed and Underemployed - The Eastern Arkansas 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 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 Eastern Arkansas region, 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 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 is provided to help participants. Other career services provided through the one-stop centers are outreach, intake, and orientation. Upon the completion of the initial assessment, eligibility will be determined, and the career advisors 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 may include:

- Career Planning and Counselling
- Occupational Skills Assessment
- 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:

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.

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.

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. Many training opportunities exist through the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers, such as occupational skills training which can be obtained from numerous educational opportunities at post-secondary schools and universities, and on-the-job 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 funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and other local and state partners. The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Board 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 advanced manufacturing, transportation, and distribution and logistics. Sector strategies has taken on a new role in the region, with the Eastern 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. Examples of supportive services include childcare; transportation; needs-related payments; housing; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing. Supportive services are coordinated based on program eligibility, the economic need thresholds of the partner agencies, and the availability of program funds. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind are mandated to research and apply all comparable benefits for services from other resources prior to applying vocational rehabilitation funds. The most frequently applied comparable resources come from sources outside of the core partner agencies. For example, tuition assistance in the form of grant funding, housing assistance from Housing and Urban Development, the individual's own medical insurance must first be applied to physical and mental restoration services.

The supportive services provided by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind are arranged and coordinated according to an individual plan for employment which specifies a career goal and the areas that the individual may need supports in order to reach that goal. The support needed are determined through assessments, evaluations, as well as the analysis and application of state and federal regulations and policies. The following supports services are assessed, evaluated, and analyzed for applicability and comparable services/similar benefits to each individual case: maintenance assistance to participate in employment or training that leads to employment, personal care attendant services, physical and mental restoration services, rehabilitation engineering, rehabilitation technology, and transportation to participate in employment or training activities. These support services are time limited and must accompany a substantial service that is directly related to obtaining or maintaining employment.

Business Services - Business services serve as the primary point of contact and support for local businesses throughout the region. Business services establishes and maintains relationships with businesses and community organizations through various interactions. Business services assists with tours and informational overviews of the Arkansas Workforce Centers and performs various business activities/interactions.

Employer Services include:

Listing in States Largest Free Job Bank-Arkansas JobLink; Assistance with Job Description Development; Applicant Screening (Occupational Skills & Abilities Assessment); Qualifies

Applicant Recruitment & Referral; Participation in Job Fairs; Interviewing Facilities; Development of On-the-Job or Customized Training; Business Incentives & Tax Credits; Industry Growth Trends and Forecasts; Wage Data & Labor Market Information; Information on Federal and State Labor Laws; Information on Training Providers; National Career Readiness Certification; Microsoft Imagine Academy; and Services to People with Disabilities.

Assessments and Information - Through the Arkansas Workforce Centers, businesses can utilize assessments and tests 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. *(Participating Partner Service: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Adult Education and Literacy; Vocational Rehabilitation; Career and Technical Education; Title V Older Americans; Department of Human Services; Job Corps; Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers; Veterans; Trade Act; and TANF.)*

Response and Training - Provides rapid response activities 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 governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force is the lead program. *(Participating Partner Service: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Adult Education and Literacy; Vocational Rehabilitation; Career and Technical Education; Title V Older Americans; Department of Human Services; Job Corps; Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers; Veterans; Trade Act; and TANF.)*

Apprenticeship - Registered Apprenticeship is a viable career option for WIOA participants. Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines on the job training with related classroom instruction that increases an apprentice's skill level and wages. It is a tried-and-true approach for preparing individuals for jobs, and meeting the business needs for a highly skilled workforce. Businesses that use apprenticeship reduce worker turnover by fostering greater employee loyalty, increasing productivity, and improve the bottom line. It is a proven solution for businesses to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers.

The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Board (WDBEA) has two members who are members of the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition. Additional information can be located on the Arkansas Apprenticeship website, <http://arkansasapprenticeship.com>

Career Pathways Initiative - Aligns services with the Arkansas **Division** of Workforce Services, Department of Human Services, Adult Education, community and faith-based organizations, and other programs to ensure that barriers are overcome, and that employment and educational needs are met without duplication of services. The program has enjoyed much success and is touted as a model program nationally. The career pathway approach is a paradigm shift in how we prepare individuals for work and lifelong learning. It reorients existing education and workforce services from myriad disconnected programs to a structure that syncs employers' workforce needs with individuals' education and training needs.

Arkansas Association of Colleges - Arkansas Association of Colleges (ACC) is a strong partner for workforce development. ACC has provided much needed funding to the colleges for equipment and curriculum alignment to address local business and industry needs. Representing colleges in the region include ASU Mid-South, East Arkansas Community College and Phillips Community College – UA.

Job Corps - Job Corps offers free-of-charge education and vocational training to young men and women ages 16 to 24. Job Corps assists young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality and satisfaction of their lives through vocational and academic training.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) program promotes long-term self-sufficiency and independence by preparing SNAP recipients for employment through work-related education and training activities. The goal of SNAP E&T is to assist SNAP recipients in obtaining employment, including provision of work opportunities for 18- to 50-year-old Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) through participation in work programs and education and training activities.

Adult Education/Literacy - The Arkansas Division of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ACE/AED) funds four local adult education programs, two literacy councils. The local service delivery systems are diverse. Programs are funded through public schools' systems and community colleges. Adult education and literacy activities include basic skill remediation; workforce preparation; integrated education and literacy; workplace literacy; correctional/institutional*; and English language acquisition activities (infused with digital and financial literacy) *. Basic academic skills classes are for all participants who are below 12.9 grade level. Workforce preparation classes include soft and employability skills needed to enter the workforce. Integrated education and training classes are offered through the Accelerating Opportunity Learning (AO) program and WAGE™ (Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy). AO class provides participants with basic academic skills preparation, workforce preparation, and workforce training. Workplace literacy classes are offered at the worksite as requested by a business or industry and are designed with the input of the local business to address and improve productivity issues related to deficiencies in basic academic skills. English Language Learning classes are designed to give English learners opportunities to study and practice English language communication skills, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and critical thinking, and earn a high school credential, enter employment, succeed in college and career training programs through career pathways, become United States citizens, and participate in the community.

Adult Education provides services to prepare individuals for the workplace in various ways such as the following: teaching students how to maintain appointments and schedules, teaching students to follow directions, setting goals, following through with goals and completion, soft skills training courses, basic educational skills in reading/writing/math, signing-in and out of class to log attendance hours, etc.

Adult Education and Literacy providers provide academic and employment training to out-of-school youth, adult, dislocated workers, and the unemployed/underemployed individual. These activities include basic skills remediation; soft skills and employability training; digital and financial literacy; career preparation and planning; WAGE and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) remediation; and integrated education and training. Services are coordinated between the programs and Title I to promote concurrent enrollment and provide participants with

academic remediation and supportive services such as tuition, on the job training, transportation, and daycare.

AR&R Transitional Living – AR&R serves the criminal justice involved who are reentering into society.

Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Work-Based Learning - program promotes long-term self-sufficiency and independence by preparing TANF eligible recipients for employment through work-based learning activities. The goal of TANFWBL is to assist participants in obtaining employment, including provision of work opportunities through participation in work programs. The TANFWBL program also provides supportive services for child care and transportation.

ACT Work Ready Communities (WRC) Certification – The region is working towards an ACT Work Ready Communities Certification. The certification empowers states, regions and counties with data, processes and tools that drive economic growth. By achieving certified ACT's Work Ready Communities status, counties are demonstrating they have a robust workforce development effort aligned to their economic development needs. Counties identified are Crittenden, St. Francis, Cross, Lee and Phillips.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities:

STRENGTHS

- The local board and partners are working to certify the workforce development area as an ACT Work Ready Communities region. Four out of five of Eastern counties are certified as work ready communities. (ACT Work Ready Communities empowers regions and counties with data, and process and tools that drive economic growth.
- The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas members are engaged.
- Strong working relationship with local and regional partners.
- Ongoing development of sector strategies and board approval of manufacturing and transportation distribution and logistics).
- Partners referring customers/participants to ADWS to initiate the process to attaining their Career Readiness Certificate.

WEAKNESSES

- Transportation options are limited.
- Development of job shadowing and/or internship programs for middle and high school students with local businesses and manufacturers.
- Marketing and outreach activities

OPPORTUNITIES

- Ensure employers are aware of any job training or hiring subsidies offered in Arkansas for unemployed workers.
- Sector Strategies Advisor group
- Develop better access to Apprenticeship programs (electricians, plumbers, carpenters, etc.)
- Provide certified workforce training programs directly tied to local industry.

CHALLENGES

- Keeping more students who graduate in the region after completing their education.
- Improving the quality of K-12 programs in the region and increasing the graduation rate.
- Decreasing population

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Section 2 responses will require input from members of the local workforce development board and other local stakeholders. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

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) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The States Vision and Goals have been adopted by Eastern. Based upon this action, the local board will strive to prepare and educated and skilled workforce through partnerships with all core partners through various means including adult education, apprenticeship, institutional training, literacy training, on-the-job training, and work experience.

Vision

Eastern Arkansas 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.

Mission

To promote and support a talent development system that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity

Talent Development System Philosophy

- We believe that there must be a pipeline of skilled workers for employers and a job for everyone in Eastern Arkansas that wants one
- We believe that the talent development system of Eastern Arkansas must be relevant to the labor market to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers, and for the local area to compete globally
- We believe that everyone in Eastern Arkansas should have opportunity and access to training and education that leads to a career with gainful employment
- We believe Eastern Arkansas's workforce system must be a viable resource for business and industry

Goals

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. Continue the expansion of employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers, and increase the usage of work-based learning programs.
3. Continue to partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, community-based organizations, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
4. Continue to develop youth programs, by utilizing the Memorandum of Understanding for the local workforce region (14 Required Youth Elements), to analyze and address barriers to employment, and leverage resources available to youth served in the region.
5. Increase the capacity by continuing to partner with organizations, as appropriate.

Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Continue to utilize 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.
2. Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
3. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by all workforce system partners.
4. Work to improve data-sharing among WIOA required partners, community organizations outside the established workforce system, and sector partners that can provide a greater outreach for client intake, referrals, and case management.
5. Offer virtual service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers in rural and remote areas.

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

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Work to change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
2. Continue to participate in an image-building outreach campaign that educates Eastern Arkansians about the services and the career development opportunities available in the local area.
3. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Eastern Arkansas.
4. 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 public.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Help to implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas.
2. Analyze the effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) program and the Work Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

3. Work with each county of the WDBEA Area to become certified as ACT Work Ready communities

4. Provide more reskilling and upskilling programs that issue an industry recognized certification or credential for career advancement to help build the employee and the company.

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 local board has tailored their vision and goals to align with the goals of the State workforce development system. This was accomplished by identifying the specific goals and needs of the Eastern region and ensuring the alignment was met. The goals are based on business services, career exploration and preparation for job seekers, economic development, and training.

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 Eastern Workforce Development Area shares the Governor's vision for Economic Development and the State's Strategic Plan that defines a stronger partnership between education, economic development and the State Workforce system to attract, retain and grow Arkansas' high growth industries.

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

For participants enrolled in educational/skills training the goal is completion of training, obtain their credential and have measurable skills gain. These participants will be directed toward higher paying jobs which have a livable wage to help ensure a higher retention rate well beyond program exit. For participants receiving basic and individualized career services the same goal applies. The goal of the business services teams is to effectively serve employers as a unified group between all partners.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Many of the responses in this section, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

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.

□ The Chief Elected Officials (CEO) of Eastern Arkansas include 12 county judges and mayors of first-class cities. The CEOs roles and functional relationship include: Appointing a CEO chairman to act on behalf of all Eastern Arkansas CEO's, work with the Governor to appoint and certify a local board, revoke the appointment of a local board member, designate an entity to act as grant recipient and fiscal agent on their behalf, ensure local board complies with all Federal and State WIOA requirements, assume ultimate liability for any misuse of grant funds and/or disallowed costs, approve an annual local board budget, approve the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the partners, approve local WIOA plans and modification as required under WIOA and State policy and practice, and approve any request from the local board to provide services or to be the One-Stop Operator.

□ The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas is comprised of 52 percent business representatives and 48 percent of the required WIOA partners. The roles and functional relationship include: Act on behalf of the CEOs as the fiscal administrative entity for the Workforce Development Area, serve as the WIOA Title IB program operator (adult, dislocated worker and youth) and One-Stop Operator, ensuring effective services are provided that meet the needs of employers and job seekers, seeking guidance from the CEOs regarding all major decisions, give priority attention to their oversight responsibilities including program costs and results, oversee and maintain budgets approved by the CEOs, adopt and abide by the by-laws in compliance with the specific code of conduct and other requirements of WIOA, promote participation of all board members and partners, seek outside funding opportunities, sector strategies champion, business services convener and participate in regional planning. Standing committees include the executive committee, youth committee, one stop and disability committees.

□The Executive Committee shall have the authority of the Board to act on behalf of the Board during the interim between Board meetings but shall defer to the board, whenever practical, on matters of major policy implications.

□The Youth Committee provides information and assists with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which shall include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth.

□The One Stop Operations Committee provides information and assists with operational and other issues relating to the one-stop delivery system and also serves on the local board.

□The Disabilities Committee provides information and to assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including without limitation issues relating to compliance with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Pub. L. No. 113-128, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq., regarding providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the one-stop delivery system, as well as appropriate training for staff on finding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including providing the appropriate supports and accommodations to employment for individuals with disabilities.

□Required program partners include Title II Adult Education providers (ASU Mid-South, East Arkansas Community College, and Phillips Community College –UA); Title III Wagner-Peyer Arkansas Division of Workforce Services; Title IV Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Arkansas Department of Human Services, Services for the Blind. This group of partners

provides an array of services that provides job seekers with career services, education and training, and supportive services they need to get good jobs and stay employed and to help business find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training. These partners work together through the Arkansas Workforce Centers and referral system.

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

<p>Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis 2003 W. Broadway West Memphis, AR 72301 870.400.2269 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Arkansas Workforce Center at Forrest City 300 Eldridge Rd., Suite 2 Forrest City, AR 72336 870.633.2900 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Arkansas Workforce Center at Helena 819 Newman Dr. Helena, AR 72342 870.338-7415 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>
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C. An attached organization chart that depicts the local board, administrative and fiscal entities, and service providers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

Please see Section 7, Attachment A, page 39

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 local board works closely with the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC), Ready for Life, and Arkansas Delta Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (ADWORC) to develop a comprehensive talent pipeline. These groups together to provide relevant hands-on, career focused activities to adults and youth, exposing them to career pathways information and resources.

The local board coordinates activities through a referral process that ensures an individual seeking services is made aware of the available services.

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)]

Arkansas Workforce Center staff will review the individuals' needs to determine which programs may be able to provide the appropriate services and then refer that individual to the corresponding program. Providing services to individuals with barriers to employment is a priority under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The local board will ensure that access to curriculum-aligned industry-recognized certificates verifying attainment of the critical skills that employers are looking for in order to match between job seeker and employment can be accelerated and career pathways will be obtained. Any individual who falls into the "individual with barriers to employment priority" will receive services as deemed appropriate for the individual.

"Requires additional assistance" barrier: If local areas use this barrier for OSY and/or ISY, the definition and documentation required must be in the local plan. The definition in the local plan must include required documentation to establish eligibility for the barrier [20 CFR 681.300 & 310]. The barriers for OSY and ISY may be the same or may be different.

POLICY: In addition to meeting low income eligibility criteria, a youth who needs additional assistance may be eligible for WIOA Youth services if one of the following criteria is met:

1. **Barrier:** Limited or no work history. **Definition:** A youth who has never obtained permanent unsubsidized employment. Permanent is defined a permanent full- or part time job lasting for more than 3 months.

Rationale: Youth have a significantly higher unemployment rate across the state of Arkansas (Note: the most up-to-date unemployment information may be found at [Documentation will be the completed and signed application by the participant.](#)

Source: <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Employment/Unemployment-Rate-Rankings-by-Arkansas-County>

2. **Barrier:** Has a family history of chronic unemployment (during the year prior to application a family member was unemployed for six months or more).

Rationale: There is a significant increase in the monthly poverty rate for households with a long-term unemployed member (someone unemployed for six months or more) than the rate for households with no long-term unemployment

Documentation will be the completed and signed application by the participant or family IWAGE printed from the Unemployment Security Division.

Source: <http://www.urban.org/urban-wire/long-term-unemployment-and-poverty-produce-vicious-cycle>

3. **Barrier:** A youth raised or living in a single parent household

Rationale: Children growing up in single-parent families typically do not have the same economic or human resources available as those growing up in two-parent families. Compared with children in married-couple families, children raised in single-parent households are more likely to drop out of school, to have or cause a teen pregnancy and to experience a divorce in adulthood.

Documentation will be the completed and signed application by the participant.

Source: <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/106-children-in-single-parent-families#detailed/1/any/false/573,869,36,868,867/any/429,430>

4. **Barrier:** Youth residing in a rural area (rural vs. metro would be determined by the annual ADWS Issuance for HHS Poverty Guidelines and DOL 70% Lower Living Standard Income Level Information).

Rationale: Although child poverty conjures up an urban image for most Americans, one-fifth of children in poverty live in rural areas. Poverty rates are higher for rural than for urban children, and the gap has increased in recent years. Rural children are more likely than urban children to live in extreme poverty—at less than one-half the poverty threshold (under \$11,000 for a family of four in 2007). And, while many people move in and out of poverty as their circumstances change, spells of poverty last longer for rural children. They are the "forgotten fifth" of poor children because most programs and policies to help the poor are focused on urban areas.

Documentation will be the completed and signed application by the participant with participants proof of address.

Source: <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2009/ruralchildpoverty.aspx>

3.4 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)]

Entrepreneurial efforts are supported and promoted through the East Arkansas Planning and Development District, Arkansas Human Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce's, and Arkansas State University's Small Business Development Center. Some of the elements will be done by partnering with organizations that are experts in specific areas such as entrepreneurial training. Arkansas State University's Small Business Development Center is an example of how we could partner to provide this element.

3.5 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 and youth committee 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. **The local board will also utilize their Co-enrollment and Co-funding policy (Policy 6) and their Concurrent Enrollment Policy (Policy 31) to assure duplication of services are not being provided.**

3.6 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)]

Support services **including** transportation needs are coordinated with the partners and through optional programs as well as other resources available in the area. Supportive services are coordinated based on program eligibility, the economic need thresholds of the partner agencies, and the availability of program funds.

WIOA Title IIB Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services provide supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare assistance, needs related payments, and other supportive services (tools and equipment, uniforms, and other clothing), to job seekers to assist in obtaining and retaining employment.

Supportive services are coordinated based on program eligibility, the economic need thresholds of the partner agencies, and the availability of program funds. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind are mandated to research and apply all comparable benefits for services from other resources prior to applying vocational rehabilitation funds. The most frequently applied comparable resources come from sources outside of the core partner agencies. For example, tuition assistance in the form of grant funding, housing assistance from Housing and Urban Development, the individual's own medical insurance must first be applied to physical and mental restoration services.

The supportive services provided by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind are arranged and coordinated according to an individual plan for employment which specifies a career goal and the areas that the individual may need supports in order to reach that goal. The supports needed are determined through assessments, evaluations, as well as the analysis and application of local, state, and federal regulations and policies. The following supports services are assessed, evaluated, and analyzed for applicability and comparable services/similar benefits to each individual case: maintenance assistance to participate in employment or training that leads to employment, personal care attendant services, physical and mental restoration services, rehabilitation engineering, rehabilitation technology, and transportation to participate in employment or training activities. These support services are time limited and must accompany a substantial service that is directly related to obtaining or maintaining employment. (WDBEA Supportive Service Policy 12).

3.7 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 staff are collocated in all the Eastern Workforce Centers.

Eastern has strong partnerships among state agencies, community colleges, economic development, and community-based organizations. A priority of the local board and central to the implementation of the strategic plan 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 Arkansas Workforce Center dynamic 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.

Organize Service by Function – Organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program’s authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating staff communication, capacity building and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having workforce center staff who cross-trained to serve all customers seamlessly (including target populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope and requirements of each program.

3.8 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 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Law states it is the responsibility of the local boards to review, evaluate and make comments on all Adult Education and Literacy RFP applications submitted by the Department of Career Education/Adult Education Division from the region (Crittenden, Cross, Lee, Phillips, and St. Francis Counties). It was then the board’s responsibility to submit the results to the State by March 10, 2017. The board chair selected an ad hoc committee which reviewed the applications and recommend to the full board for approval during the March 7, 2017, board meeting.

3.9 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.

✓ Advanced Manufacturing ongoing

✓ Transportation ongoing

✓ Distribution & Logistics ongoing

- 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.

✓ Hospitality

- 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.

✓ Healthcare

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

The WDBEA continuously researches grant and funding opportunities for the Eastern Workforce Development Area. The board has secured additional funding through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training (E&T) Grant, TANF Work based Learning Grant, and Arkansas Sector Partnership (ASP) grant. We will apply for future grants as they become available.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training - The goal of this employment and training grant is to assist adults, referred by the Department of Human Services (DHS), with the tools they need to gain meaningful employment and/or get their GED or training to become self-sufficient. This grant services Crittenden, Arkansas, Monroe, and Phillips County residents.

Arkansas Sector Partnership (ASP) - The ASP grant targets dislocated workers individuals. It is the responsibility of the staff to determine program eligibility before individuals are referred to the pre-employment (W.O.R.K) training offered by East Arkansas Community College. The ultimate goal is to provide eligible individuals with the tools, skills and training to become self-sufficient.

Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Work Based Learning Grant – The goal of this grant is to assist TEA eligible participants (Adults and/or In-School Youth) to become self-sufficient by receiving work experience opportunities to gain the skills needed to become employable. Childcare and transportation assistance is also available through this grant.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Many of the responses below should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and one-stop partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

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)]

Ongoing monitoring of services and the evaluation of eligible training providers and applications are conducted to ensure the training provided is meeting the needs of employers and that employers are hiring from those training programs. Additionally, meetings with the educational institutions are held to ensure needs are understood and conveyed on a regular basis. Using a report created by the Arkansas Research Center for the Division of Workforce Services pursuant to Act 852 of 1025 which provides Employment and Earnings Outcomes for Arkansas graduates of State supported higher learning institutions:

<http://dws.arkansas.gov/News/PDF/Act%20852%20Economic%20Security%20Report.pdf>

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)]

With three Workforce Centers across the five-county area -- access to a comprehensive Center may be limited in very remote areas. In those cases, staff will travel to work with participants and employers on an as needed basis. Arkansas Job Link is the State's technology system that allows participants and employers to access many services on a self-serve basis as well as in Centers. As technology continues to evolve Eastern will continue to utilize it to reach out and serve participants and employers alike. As needed the Arkansas Mobile Workforce Unit is available.

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 individuals with disabilities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)] (See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources*)

The Eastern 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 system is available at all Centers as assistance for visually impaired customers.

Qualified applicants with disabilities, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), are invited to request any needed accommodations to participate in the application process covered by area offices. This process includes information related to completing the application, intake/eligibility determination, assessment, and testing. All Workforce Centers will be ADA compliant in Eastern Arkansas. In addition, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ADWS/ARS) and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are available in the Eastern

Arkansas Workforce Centers to serve the needs of workers with disabilities. The Eastern area will:

- Provide training to staff on applicable provisions of the ADA using material jointly developed by the partners and State entities.
- Bring together core program partners to integrate services and supportive services, and leverage resources to improve services to persons with disabilities and other protected groups.
- Explore changes in service delivery design and programs by establishing partnerships, alternate assessments, and programs that better connect education, training, workforce, and supportive services to improve employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities.
- Encourage active engagement with the business sector to identify the skills and support that workers with disabilities need and communicate these needs to the partners, education and training providers, as well as job seekers with disabilities.
- Continue to provide physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities.
- Assess the physical and programmatic accessibility of all our centers and training facilities.
- Work with Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) to provide clients with disabilities extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain employment.
- Strive to improve the employment outcomes of individuals 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 pathways 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)]

Roles and contributions will be described in the memorandum of understand and resource sharing agreements.

Partners in the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Program	Provider	Location
Title 1		
Adult	WDB of Eastern Arkansas	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Dislocated Worker	WDB of Eastern Arkansas	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Youth	WDB of Eastern Arkansas	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
SNAP E & T	WDB of Eastern Arkansas	Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis and Helena

TANF WBL	WDB of Eastern Arkansas	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Job Corps	Job Corps	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Youthbuild	N/A	N/A
Native American	N/A	N/A
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Arkansas Human Development Corporation	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Title II		
Adult Education and Family Literacy	ASU Mid-South	Arkansas Workforce Center West Memphis
	East Arkansas Community College	1620 Newcastle Road, Forrest City
	Phillips Community College U of A	1000 Campus Drive, Helena
Title III		
Wagner – Peyser Employment Services	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Title IV		
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	Arkansas Rehabilitation Services	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
	Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind	By appointment at Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Other Partners		
Senior Community Service Employment Program	Experience Works/Black Caucus	By appointment at Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
ADTEC	ASU Mid-South	ASU-Mid- South Campus
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Community Services Block Grant Training and Education	ASU Mid-South	Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis
Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training	Eastern Arkansas Regional Housing Authority	By referral

Unemployment Insurance	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena
Second Chance Program/Assisted Living	AR&R Transitional Living	248 Barton Lane, Forrest City
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Arkansas Division of Workforce Services	Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City, and Helena

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)]

Eastern utilizes the required Arkansas Job Link system for intake and case management. Eastern also has the GEN+ Assessment tool on Easternworks.org as well as the WIOA applications.

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)]

Eastern's adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities are provided through the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas program staff at the Workforce Centers located across the region.

The WDB of Eastern consistently provides customers with case management, scholarships for institutional training, work experience, and supportive services. ASU Mid-South, East Arkansas Community College, Phillips Community College - UA -- as well as other schools provide a wide choice for those entering education.

Adult and DLW employment and training activities will consist primarily of those available through the eligible training provider list. This list will contain certified providers offering training programs relevant to current labor market demands and will be customized for the local area. Dissemination of the provider list through area one-stops and their partners will ensure that providers meet the employment needs of local employers and job seekers. Once sector initiatives are fully implemented, the Eligible Training Provider's List will support the Employers need for training.

Upon determination of customer needs to receive training services, ITAs will be used in all available training programs. Participants will receive an ITA for the training program they have selected through the eligible training provider list to be presented to the individual school.

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 ensure 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, reemployment 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 reemployment assistance.
- Trade Act petition services through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce

The Shared Work Unemployment Compensation Program provides an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in work force. It allows an employer to divide available work or hours of work among a specific group(s) of employees in lieu of a layoff, and it allows the employees to receive a portion of their unemployment benefits while working reduced hours.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. Work Opportunity Tax Credit joins other workforce programs that incentivize workplace diversity and facilitate access to good jobs for American workers.

For more information please visit: <https://doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/>

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.

The WIOA Title I provider will provide or make an appropriate referral to provide the fourteen required program elements to eligible youth participants in Eastern Arkansas. These services include:

WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS

(Note: Services may be provided by the provider or on a referral basis if needed.)

1.	<p>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.</p>	<p>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 primary goal of local WIOA youth programming is to insure youth completion of a HSD/GED.</p> <p>Clients in need of tutoring will be referred to Adult Education or other partners WDBEA has a MOU with.</p>
2.	<p>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</p>	<p>WIOA youth programs will work closely with alternative schools throughout the 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.</p> <p>Adult Education Centers enroll 16–17-year-old students into the GED Program once eligibility requirements have been met. In order for 16–17-year-olds to participate in educational services provided by Adult Education, they must provide a signed waiver with official seal from their high school along with guardian permission.</p>

		<p>The process for enrolling 16–17-year-old students is the following: 1.) Intake Application and Identification. 2.) Orientation. 3.) Minimum TABE scores of 8.5-9.5 depending upon county 4.) Guardian permission and signature. 5.) High School waiver form with signature and official seal.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Summer youth employment that takes place between May 15th and September 30th 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.</p>	<p>Participants will prepare for employment opportunities through the provision of various services including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> basic skill remediation. <input type="checkbox"/> supervised work experiences. <input type="checkbox"/> pre-employment abilities such as career planning, resume preparation, use of labor market information, completing applications, and interviewing skills attainment; <input type="checkbox"/> attainment of core employability/work maturity skills such as dependability, honesty, <input type="checkbox"/> problem solving skills, initiative, enthusiasm, team player; <input type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills, appearance, leadership, and cultural sensitivity; <p>Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) have youth programs for youth with disabilities that focus on employment. ARS and DSB have Supported Employment Program models that are appropriate for youth with disabilities and the Pre-Employment Transition Program, which serves youth that are also students in an educational program from ages 16 to 21 in the State of Arkansas.</p> <p>The Supported Employment model provides job placement assistance, on-the-job supports and job coaching through a third-party vendor that is qualified and monitored through ARS or DSB. Regular meetings and updates are built into this program model. With the Pre-Employment Transition model ARS and DSB provide 5 core services to youth that are students.</p>

		<p>These services include: self-advocacy, work readiness, work-based learning, counseling on opportunities in post-secondary training, and job exploration. These services can be arranged through third party vendors, schools, or directly through ARS counselors. This program is qualified and monitored by ARS or DSB staff. Additionally, ARS offers a summer work program on the campus of the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) that will train students in work readiness skills and assist them work based learning while on the campus.</p>
4.	<p>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.</p>	<p>Work opportunities with an emphasis on jobs in in-demand and emerging industries. ARS and DSB provide occupational skills training to youth with disabilities by arranging for or directly providing financial resources and assistance with entering a training program. Additionally, the Arkansas Career Development Center (ACDC) offers a variety of occupational skills training that can be provided on campus to eligible applicants.</p>
5.	<p>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.</p>	<p>Enrollment into programs that provide recognized degrees, certifications, or marketable skills for in-demand and emerging occupations.</p>
6.	<p>Leadership development opportunities, which include community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other</p>	<p>Participation in community service-learning projects, peer centered activities, teambuilding, life-skills training, healthy lifestyle choices, etc.</p> <p>The Pre-Employment Transition Program offered through ARS and</p>

	<p>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</p>	<p>DSB provide soft skills training which includes a focus on social behaviors intended to enhance the development of employment skills for transition age youth by fostering the knowledge and growth of independent living skills, communication, and interpersonal skills to gain understanding of employer expectations related to timeliness and performance on the job.</p> <p>ARS offers the Youth Leadership Forum on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas which is open to youth with disabilities and designed to foster leadership skills. This is part of a nationwide effort to join youth with disabilities and promote empowerment.</p> <p>ARS will provide or coordinate students with disabilities.</p> <p>Leadership Development will also be provided through the Career Advisor or partners WDBEA has a MOU with.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>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 and 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.</p>	<p>Referral to community-, faith-based, and/or other organizations to provide one-on-one encouragement and direction.</p> <p>ARS and DSB can arrange for supportive services as related to the employment goal of the individual. This process and the types of supports available are detailed in section 3.7.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Assistance with, but not limited to, transportation, childcare, clothing, supplies, and needs related payments. as long as a need has been determined to complete a WIOA activity, services aren't available through other programs and the participant is not able to afford services themselves.</p>

9.	Follow-up services include activities after completion of participation to monitors 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.	Assistance with comprehensive counseling, participant will be referred to a partner WDBEA has an MOU with. Career Advisors cannot provide comprehensive counseling
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.
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. Entrepreneurial Training will be provided through the Career Advisor or partners WDBEA has a MOU with.
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	<p>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.</p> <p>Youth with disabilities that are receiving educational training can receive Pre-Employment Transition Services through ARS or DSB. One of the core component areas is counseling and guidance on post-secondary opportunities. This service can include exploration of available options, applying to schools, arranging for financial aid and support to participate in the training. See section 3.7 for a description of the types of support available for youth with disabilities.</p> <p>Youth are better equipped to compete for jobs with an educational credential. The area Adult Education Centers are available to assist youth aged 16 and 17 that are waived out of high school with earning the General Equivalency Diploma (GED).</p>

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)]

The local board will continuously monitor the programs to ensure compliance with the laws and performance measures are met. Board members should have a complete understanding of their role and inventory its own resources. Policies and procedures are in place. The board will carry out analyses of the economic conditions in the region; obtain needed knowledge and skills for the region as well as the workforce in the region and workforce development activities. The board will regularly update this information as it becomes available.

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, classroom training, customized training or incumbent worker training.

The individual training accounts (ITA) system is used by participants who are eligible for training services and choose to attend training. A career advisor uses the ITA request form to determine a participant's financial need. The individual selects the course of study from the eligible training provider list. The individual must have made an application and received determination from other funding sources and present the award letter to the career advisor to show the monetary amounts of unmet financial need. He/she must also present a statement of how much the family will be able to contribute to the cost of the training. 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. Employment/Training Advisors 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 career advisor. The Eligible Training Provider bills 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 Educational Training Providers List in Arkansas JobLink.

In addition, Apprenticeship is a workforce development career option. It is an employer-driven training model that combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) advances the use of apprenticeship as an effective work-based learning approach that builds worker skills and establishes pathways to higher levels of employment and wages. Note: In all instances, a participant's eligibility for WIOA must be established and documented prior to the commitment of funds for Registered Apprenticeship programs.

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)]

The primary avenue for training services is through the Individual Training Account; however, contracts may be used but should reflect a training program that is in demand. The Eligible Training Providers list is available online in all workforce centers. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA. Contracts may be used if it reflects a training program that is in demand.

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)]

The Board uses the Projected Employment Opportunities List as the basic guide for determining in-demand occupations. Additionally demand occupations and targeted industry sectors specific to the Eastern area are focused on.

All training providers will complete an online electronic application through Arkansas JobLink. All training must be directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in an area to which an individual is willing to relocate. 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.

Employer feedback regarding employment success may also be a considering factor. Demand occupations from neighboring workforce areas may be used as well.

Targeted training opportunities will provide participants with the increased probability of obtaining a good in a high-demand occupation. The increased labor pipeline will provide businesses with the workforce they need to operate and grow their companies throughout the region.

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)]

Interagency agreements typically are memorandums of understanding. These will be developed by the State Transition Roundtable Policy Committee as part of the Workforce Certification document.

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 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 will be monitored by the local board's rehabilitation committee at annual intervals to determine compliance with the objectives and tenants of the agreement.

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 disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas is responsible for disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Officials.

5.3 Describe the competitive processes to award the subgrants 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 subgrants and contracts. An RFP/RFQ notice is placed in a statewide newspaper twice. 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 Chief Elected Officials.

In Section 107 of the legislation and in § 678.605 of WIOA Regulations Local Workforce Boards are required to competitively procure the One-Stop Operator role and responsibilities. The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas has contracted with an independent consultant to assist a Procurement Task Force comprised of Chief Elected Officials in soliciting and selecting a One-Stop Operator and a Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Service Provider. The hiring of an independent contractor to conduct the procurement is required, as the

Board is submitting qualifications to compete for the One-Stop Operator and Title I Service Provider role and responsibilities.

To ensure the integrity of the procurement process, the Chief Elected Officials will participate in the review and selection process rather than the Board because the Board is responding to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

5.4 Chief Elected Officials on behalf of the Workforce Development Area of Eastern Arkansas, with the release of this Request for Qualifications, are soliciting submittals to identify a single One-Stop Operator and Title I Service Provider for the Eastern Arkansas comprehensive and satellite One-Stop Centers 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)]

Eastern has negotiated with the state and has come to an agreement on the local performance measures as reflected in the chart below.

Eastern WIOA Performance Measures	PY 22 Performance Goals
WIOA Adult	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	85.00%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after exit	84.00%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after exit	\$6,849.00
Credential Attainment Rate	83.00%
Measurable Skill Gains	73%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	85.00%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after exit	87.00%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after exit	\$7,027.00
Credential Attainment Rate	81.00%

Measurable Skill Gains	70.50%
WIOA Youth	
Education/Training/Employment 2 nd Quarter after exit	75.00%
Education/Training/Employment 4 th Quarter after exit	78.00%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after exit	\$3,800.00
Credential Attainment Rate	64.00%
Measurable Skill Gains	61.00%

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)]

Local and state monitoring of the fiscal agent, Title I provider and one-stop operator will be conducted at least annually. The local board will be made aware of any issues or concerns that may arise from the monitoring. The fiscal agent, Title I service provider and one-stop operator shall be audited on an annual basis. The board will be presented the eligible training provider list and programs quarterly for their review.

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)]

During the month of February 2023, the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas' committee members met, discussed, reviewed, and modified the local plan. The committee members consist of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, ADWS, Division of Services for the Blind, Job, Corp, Adult Education, Apprenticeship, and other community partners in the region.

The local plan modifications were presented to the Workforce Development Board for discussion and approval on March 7, 2023.

After the local board meeting the CEOs meet reviewed and discussed changes, updates, and revisions on March 9, 2023.

The CEO Taskforce met March 9, 2023, discussed, reviewed, and approved the modifications to the Local Plan.

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 public notice will be placed in the state newspaper on **March 10, 2023**, advising that the public has 30-days from listed date to submit comments on the proposed plan. The notice, with instructions, will also be posted on the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services website and the Workforce Development of Eastern Arkansas website.

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

After the public comment period -- all comments will be reviewed and submitted.

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)]

Comments will be included in the local plan's attachments.

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

Tracy Hinton
Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas
300 I-40 Service Rd. Suite 4
870.733.0601
Tracy@wdbea.org

Section 6: Covid Recovery, Readiness, Diversity, and Inclusion

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

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

The WDBEA's vision is to provide workforce services in a way that will address disparities. A more diverse workforce leads to higher economic growth, more participation in the consumer market, and a more qualified workforce.

1. Focus on education and training to provide a more skilled workforce.
2. Increase work experience and add more opportunities by reaching out and having more diverse worksites.

Strengthening our referral system, increasing co-enrollments, and reviewing and modifying our polices is the first step in this process. Engaging partners and businesses through our partner meetings and business services team.

1. Referring and co-enrolling with partners will allow for more successful outcomes.
2. Utilizing partners resources to support the upskilling efforts of participants.
3. Business services and business outreach for diverse employment opportunities.

Outreach and recruitment, targeting populations that are most in need of training, reemployment, and/or supportive services. Become more familiar with our communities, organizations, and partners in the area.

1. By co-enrolling with partners WIOA is able to share costs for training and supportive services

2. This also allows for more participants to gain employability skills with work experience

By improving the supportive services policy and our referral policy we have engaged more partners and organizations in the community and WIOA has spent more funds on supportive services.

6.2 How has the local area modified their service delivery strategies and services as the Arkansas Workforce Centers have safely reopened? Is there a thoughtful strategy to deliver services safely and effectively to all individuals, reflective of the Presidents emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion of workforce services and has this strategy been implemented across the local area.

The WDBEA in partnership with ADWS, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education, Division of Services for the Blind and local businesses WDBEA was able to implement "drive-thru" job fairs to continue to serve job seekers and businesses in the local area.

WDBEA staff and partners continued through the Covid Pandemic with virtual enrollments, enrollments by appointment, and by meeting job seekers in the parking lots of the Arkansas Workforce Centers. Assessments were created and placed on the WDBEA website along with WIOA applications for more of a convenient access to all job seekers.

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

The WDBEA has partnered with communities, CEO's, business, and other organizations to host/attend Community Awareness Events. These events are advertised in the papers, radio, word of mouth, and flyers across the area.

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?

The WDBEA does not have a written plan in place but does plan to create a plan with partners.

6.5 How are the 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?

The WDBEA and all partners work closely through a referral system to assure services for all populations are easily accessible via online and in-person.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are fully open with no limit on job seekers entering the building.

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-apprentice programs, internships and job shadowing, and on the job training? How does this strategy engage and meet the needs of eligible youth, including those with disabilities or language barriers, and other marginalized or underserved populations?

The WDBEAs plan for increasing the volume of participants in work experience includes:

- Outreach to local businesses for a variety of worksites to match the job seekers ISS or IEP
- Co-enrollment with other partner agencies to assure an array of services are available to the job seeker.
- Advertisement through social media and websites
- Better trained staff so they are aware of who to target and why.
- Assure partners and organizations are knowledgeable of WIOA work experience and what it entails.
- Target High Schools and assure the school counselors have an awareness of WIOA services including ISY work experience.

Section 7: Plan Assurances

Planning Process and Public Comment		References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.1 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 public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); 20 CFR 679.550(b)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.2 The final local plan is available and accessible to the public	20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.3 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); 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550
Required Policies and Procedures		References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.4 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	20 CFR 679.390
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.5 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); 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.6 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); 20 CFR 678.500-510
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.7 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)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.8 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); 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.9 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; 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.10 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;20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430
Required Policies and Procedures (Continued)		References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.11 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); 20 CFR 683.600
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.12 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);20 CFR 678.305
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.13 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)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.14 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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.15 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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.16 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"/>	7.17 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"/>	7.18 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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.19 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"/>	7.20 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; 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603
Required Policies and Procedures (Continued)		References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.21 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); 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); 20 CFR 680.300-310
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.22 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"/>	7.23 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); 20CFR Part 652; 20CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a)683.7250

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.24 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; 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.25 The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIOA Section 181(b)(7); 20 CFR 680.850
Eligibility		References
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.26 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 enrollments 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.	20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.27 The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title IB 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); 20 CFR 680.300-320
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.28 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); 20 CFR 680.900-970; 20 CFR 681.570
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.29 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

PY2022- 2023 Performance Targets Template

Local Area WIOA Negotiated Performance Measures

Name of local workforce development area: Eastern

WIOA Performance Measures	Local Area PY22 – 23 Performance Goals
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	
Adult	% 85
Dislocated Worker	% 85
Youth (Education or Training Activities or Employment)	% 75
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	
Adult	% 84
Dislocated Worker	% 87
Youth (Education or Training Activities or Employment)	% 78
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	
Adult	\$ 6,849.00
Dislocated Worker	\$7,027.00
Youth	\$3,800.00
Credential Rate Attainment	
Adult	% 83
Dislocated Worker	% 81
Youth	% 64
Measurable Skills Gains	
Adult	% 73
Dislocated Worker	% 70.50
Youth	% 61
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	
Adult	%
Dislocated Worker	%
Youth	%

PLANNING REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Local Areas must list each of the state’s strategic goals in their plans and develop their own objectives for inclusion in the local 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.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnership through the support of industry engagement and our Business Services Team
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnerships with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation with all partners, boards, community organizations, employers, and education entities.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action with WDBEAs Board.
6. Increase connections and outreach with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation in Eastern Arkansas to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
7. 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 in Eastern.
8. Expand Small Business outreach and participation.
9. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.

Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and job seekers.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Better train staff so they are knowledgeable of all partner services for referral purposes.
2. Host/attend partner meetings so that all partners staff are aware of services each partner provides.
3. Assure a menu of services are available at each front desk in the center and each staffs office
4. Host awareness community events for employers, partners, community organizations and job seekers.
5. Create a social media page for all partners to utilize and share.
6. Business Services Team making visits and inviting employers to their meetings.

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

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Change employers and job seekers perception of the workforce system.
2. Utilize technology, including social media, to better connect job seekers and employers with the talent development system in Eastern.
3. Host awareness community events for employers, partners, community organizations and job seekers.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Eastern will continue to refer to partners for services available.

2. Utilizing the Work Ready Assessment for WIOA assessments and referrals
3. Partnering more with educational programs for educational literacy.
4. Increasing our Memorandum of Understandings to offer a variety of partners to assist in providing the Youth 14 Program Elements.