



Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area



Local Plan Modification 2020-2023

MODIFICATION 2023

By:

**Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas
&
Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

WIOA Local Plan



The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each local workforce development board (LWDB) to develop and submit, in partnership with the chief elected official (CEO), a comprehensive four-year plan to the Governor. The regional and local plan shall support the vision, goals and strategy described in the State plan and otherwise be consistent with the State plan.

The WIOA four-year plan will be effective July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2024. This Regional and Local Plan submitted by the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SEAWDB) seeks to address current and future strategies and efficiencies that address the continuing modernization of the workforce system and creation of a customer-centered system: where the needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions; where One-Stop Career Centers provide excellent customer service to all jobseekers and businesses; and where the workforce system supports strong regional economies, as well as alignment with State priorities.

WIOA strengthened the alignment of the workforce development system's six core programs by imposing unified strategic planning requirements, common performance accountability measures, and requirements governing the one-stop delivery system. In so doing, WIOA placed an increased emphasis on coordination and collaboration at the Federal, State, and local levels to ensure a streamlined and coordinated service delivery system for job seekers, including those with disabilities, and employers. Therefore, this plan is based on current and projected needs of the workforce investment system as a whole. The needs of job seekers, incumbent workers, youth, and businesses have been considered in every step of the planning process.

It is the responsibility of the SEAWDB to maintain a global view of the system-wide needs of the workforce development area and its relationship to the state vision rather than focusing on programmatic and operational details. To accomplish the objectives set out by WIOA and these plan guidelines, the SEAWDB in consultation with the chief elected officials, have incorporated broad involvement in the development of this local plan. Input was received from a variety of stakeholders and the public. An atmosphere of collaboration and partnership and an emphasis on enhancing the entire system rather than categorical programs, has been the focus of this planning process.

It is the SEAWDB's responsibility to provide the leadership to achieve this goal. As noted above, this Regional and Local Plan is designed to support the vision, goals and strategy put forth in the State Plan. Arkansas's strategic vision, clearly articulated states "The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is quality focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. It aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provide a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. This is accomplished by providing all customers access to high-quality workforce development centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking to find jobs, build basic educational or occupational skills, earn a postsecondary certificate or degree, or obtain guidance on how to make career choices, or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers."

Arkansas' Unified State Plan establishes the framework to achieve the vision, and the SEAWDB's Local Plan serves to accomplish the same goals. To accomplish the vision and meet these goals, the SEAWDB embraces, a set of guiding principles for Southeast's workforce system:

- Collaboration among partners and stakeholders is essential
- Innovation is crucial, including use of technology and new approaches
- Data and evidence must be used to shape strategy
- Continuous improvement must be a way of life

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board, in compliance with WIOA Sec. 108: Local Plan; after collaborating with its chief elected officials, all relevant stakeholders, system partners and the public offers the following update for its' 4 Year Regional & Local Plan.



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Appendix A: Local Plan

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

1.1. Provide the following:

A. A reference name for the planning region:

Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (SEAWDA)

B. Identification of the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region; Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

C. Identification of the county(ies) each local workforce development area serves;

Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, Lincoln

D. Identification of the key planning region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan; The Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas, Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board, WIOA Core Partners

E. Indication of the local workforce development area each committee member is associated with; All- Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

F. A list of key planning region committee meeting dates. [WIOA Sec. 106(a) and (c)]

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

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).

The following information is included in the State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas Long- Term Industry and Occupational Projections: 20

Southeast Arkansas



Southeast Arkansas Profile

Population Growth (2008-2018): -9.09%

Projected Employment Growth (2018-2028): 4.26%

Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted) (2018): 4.6%

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (WDA) consists of 10 counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Southeast Arkansas Profile Population Growth (2008-2018): -9.09% Projected Employment Growth (2018-2028): 4.26% Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted) (2018): 4.6% Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, and Lincoln. Two states border the Southeast Arkansas WDA, Louisiana to the south and Mississippi to the east; and the Pine Bluff Metropolitan Statistical Area is located in the Area.

The Southeast Arkansas WDA is expected to increase employment by 1,875 between 2014 and 2024. Goods Producing industries are projected to lose 829 jobs, while the Services Providing industries are predicted to gain 2,914 jobs. The Area is estimated to lose 210 Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers. Population in the Area declined 7.77 percent from 2004 to 2014 with a loss of more than 17,000 residents bringing its residency to 205,368. The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for annual 2014 was 8.0 percent, the highest in the state.

The Education and Health Services super sector is predicted to lead the Area in net growth with 1,613 new jobs anticipated, while Professional and Business Services is estimated to be the fastest growing super sector during the projection period with a 14.33 percent increase in jobs. Social Assistance is projected to be the top growing industry adding 766 jobs between 2014 and 2024. Ambulatory Health Care Services is expected to be the fastest growing industry increasing employment by 29.59 percent. On the negative side of the economy, Paper Manufacturing is expected to lose 296 jobs during the projection period making it the top declining industry, while Broadcasting (except Internet) is forecast to be the fastest declining industry with a 40.63 percent reduction in employment. Manufacturing as a whole could lose the most among the super sectors losing 803 jobs, while Information could be the fastest losing 13.04 percent of its workforce.

Southeast Arkansas WDA employment is expected to increase by 2.38 percent between 2014 and 2024. Of the 2,209 job openings projected to be available annually, 372 would be for growth and expansion, while 1,837 would be for replacement. Healthcare Support Occupations is predicted to be the top and fastest growing major group with a gain of 457 new jobs, a 16.32 percent increase. Nurse Practitioners is anticipated to be the fastest growing occupation in the Area increasing employment by 41.27 percent. Personal Care Aides is estimated to be the top growing occupation adding 313 jobs to the local economy between 2014 and 2024. Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers is predicted to be the top declining occupation with a loss of 221, while Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service could lose 40.00 percent of its workforce making it the fastest declining occupation. Overall, in the Southeast Arkansas WDA, seven major groups are anticipated to see net job losses with Production Occupations losing the most at 480, or 4.76 percent of its workforce.

The Southeast Arkansas WDA is expected to increase employment by 628 between 2018 and 2028. Goods-Producing industries are projected to experience a net loss of 1,146 jobs, while the Services-Providing industries are predicted to gain 1,871 jobs. The area is estimated to lose 97 Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers. Population in the area declined 9.09 percent from 2008 to 2018, with a loss of 19,614 residents, bringing its residency to 196,279. The not-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for 2018 was 4.6 percent.

The Education and Health Services supersector is predicted to lead the area in net growth with 1,082 new jobs anticipated, while Leisure and Hospitality is estimated to be the fastest growing supersector during the projection period with a 14.04 percent increase in jobs. Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries is estimated to be the top and fastest growing industry in Southeast Arkansas, raising employment by more than 180 percent, due to ramp up of casino operations. On the negative side of the labor market, four supersectors are slated to experience a net loss of jobs. The Manufacturing supersector is projected to have the worst outlook, with a loss of 696 jobs, or 4.71 percent of its workforce. Paper Manufacturing is predicted to be the top declining industry, losing 480 jobs, almost 15 percent of its workforce.

The Information supersector could lose 23.16 percent of its workforce during the 2018-2028 projection period. Driving this is Telecommunications, slated to be the fastest declining industry at a loss of 38.93 percent of its workforce. Southeast Arkansas WDA employment is expected to increase by 0.76 percent between 2018 and 2028, the slowest WDA in the state. Of the 9,451 job openings projected to be available annually, 3,672 would be from employees leaving the workforce, while 5,716 would come from employees changing jobs. Growth and expansion could account for 63 annual job openings. Personal Care and Service Occupations is predicted to be the top and fastest growing major group, with a gain of 554 new jobs, a 16.18 percent increase. Personal Care Aides could be the driver of this growth, raising employment by 448 new jobs. Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop is estimated to be the fastest growing occupation, raising its workforce by 36.36 percent.

On the negative side of the economy, Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers is predicted to be the top declining occupation, with a loss of 219, while Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers could lose 32.14 percent of its workforce, becoming the fastest declining occupation in the area.. Production Occupations is estimated to be the top declining major group, losing 595 jobs, while Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations could be the fastest declining major group, cutting 9.43 percent of its workforce

In order to meet the demands of employers in the SEAWDA, efforts have been made to develop a strong business services team in the area. The program provider now employs two professional Business Services professionals who are diligently training and working with local businesses to assess needs and challenges. Since July 1, 2020, nearly sixty new employers have been engaged in a WIOA business services activity, ranging from outreach meetings to participating as a work experience worksite, to hiring events, to having discussions on implementing training programs including apprenticeships to address skills gaps and workforce issues in Southeast. The business services team has received staff development from Thomas P. Miller & Associates Consulting team to strategize and plan approaches to effectively serving employers. In addition, the team is now using Salesforce software to track and record contacts made with local businesses.

Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

2018-2028 Industry Projections by Major Division

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
000000	TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES	82,189	82,817	628	0.76%
000671	Total Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs	7,732	7,635	-97	-1.25%
006010	Self Employed Workers, All Jobs	7,215	7,057	-158	-2.19%
007010	Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs	517	578	61	11.80%
101000	Goods Producing	20,327	19,181	-1,146	-5.64%
101100	NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINING	3,423	3,044	-379	-11.07%
110000	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3,370	2,989	-381	-11.31%
210000	Mining	53	55	2	3.77%
101200	CONSTRUCTION	2,120	2,049	-71	-3.35%
101300	MANUFACTURING	14,784	14,088	-696	-4.71%
	Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing	8,502	8,204	-298	-3.51%
	Durable Goods Manufacturing	6,282	5,884	-398	-6.34%
102000	Services Providing	54,130	56,001	1,871	3.46%
102100	TRADE, TRANSPORTATION, AND UTILITIES	12,585	12,166	-419	-3.33%
420000	Wholesale Trade	1,901	1,810	-91	-4.79%
440000	Retail Trade	7,401	6,955	-446	-6.03%
480000	Transportation and Warehousing	2,752	2,869	117	4.25%
220000	Utilities	531	532	1	0.19%
102200	INFORMATION	285	219	-66	-23.16%
102300	FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	2,433	2,435	2	0.08%
520000	Finance and Insurance	1,836	1,838	2	0.11%
530000	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	597	597	0	0.00%
102400	PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES	3,538	3,725	187	5.29%
540000	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	862	881	19	2.20%
550000	Management of Companies and Enterprises	384	440	56	14.58%
560000	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,292	2,404	112	4.89%
102500	EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES	19,191	20,273	1,082	5.64%
610000	Educational Services	7,640	7,839	199	2.60%
620000	Health Care and Social Assistance	11,551	12,434	883	7.64%
102600	LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	4,516	5,150	634	14.04%
710000	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	228	625	397	174.12%
720000	Accommodation and Food Services	4,288	4,525	237	5.53%
102700	OTHER SERVICES (EXCEPT GOVERNMENT)	2,855	3,036	181	6.34%
102800	GOVERNMENT	8,727	8,997	270	3.09%

Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

2018-2028 Industry Projections Rankings (by NAICS Subsector)

Top 10 Growing Industries Ranked by Net Growth

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
713000	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	210	607	397	189.05%
624000	Social Assistance	3,271	3,643	372	11.37%
311000	Food Manufacturing	3,724	4,045	321	8.62%
722000	Food Services and Drinking Places	3,864	4,100	236	6.11%
611000	Educational Services	7,640	7,839	199	2.60%
999200	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	3,999	4,193	194	4.85%
622000	Hospitals	3,095	3,287	192	6.20%
621000	Ambulatory Health Care Services	2,805	2,993	188	6.70%
813000	Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	1,660	1,824	164	9.88%
999300	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	2,871	3,028	157	5.47%

Top 10 Fastest Growing Industries Ranked by Percent Growth (Minimum Employment of 50)

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
713000	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	210	607	397	189.05%
493000	Warehousing and Storage	567	692	125	22.05%
562000	Waste Management and Remediation Service	115	135	20	17.39%
488000	Support Activities for Transportation	448	515	67	14.96%
551000	Management of Companies and Enterprises	384	440	56	14.58%
624000	Social Assistance	3,271	3,643	372	11.37%
813000	Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	1,660	1,824	164	9.88%
311000	Food Manufacturing	3,724	4,045	321	8.62%
811000	Repair and Maintenance	516	552	36	6.98%
621000	Ambulatory Health Care Services	2,805	2,993	188	6.70%

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Top 5 Declining Industries Ranked by Percent Growth (Bottom Five)

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
322000	Paper Manufacturing	3,203	2,723	-480	-14.99%
115000	Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry	987	685	-302	-30.60%
452000	General Merchandise Stores	2,252	2,009	-243	-10.79%
333000	Machinery Manufacturing	1,429	1,293	-136	-9.52%
113000	Forestry and Logging	861	739	-122	-14.17%

Top 5 Declining Industries Ranked by Percent Growth (Bottom Five)

NAICS Code	NAICS Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change
517000	Telecommunications	131	80	-51	-38.93%
115000	Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry	987	685	-302	-30.60%
442000	Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	103	77	-26	-25.24%
443000	Electronics and Appliance Stores	152	119	-33	-21.71%

Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area
2018-2028 Occupational Projections by Major Group

SOC Code	SOC Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Total Annual Openings
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	82,189	82,817	628	0.76%	3,672	5,716	63	9,451
11-0000	Management Occupations	8,256	8,164	-92	-1.11%	365	383	-9	739
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	2,235	2,356	121	5.41%	64	152	12	228
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	545	573	28	5.14%	10	32	3	45
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	681	680	-1	-0.15%	16	37	0	53
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	628	619	-9	-1.43%	11	52	-1	62
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	2,011	2,221	210	10.44%	80	147	21	248
23-0000	Legal Occupations	302	319	17	5.63%	7	10	2	19
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	4,730	4,892	162	3.42%	183	224	16	423
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	484	486	2	0.41%	21	35	0	56
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	4,057	4,306	249	6.14%	115	134	25	274
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	2,574	2,773	199	7.73%	138	165	20	323
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	3,059	3,112	53	1.73%	105	156	5	266
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	4,757	5,171	414	8.70%	340	493	41	874
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	2,247	2,436	189	8.41%	136	170	19	325
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	3,425	3,979	554	16.18%	266	272	55	593
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	6,389	6,079	-310	-4.85%	354	535	-31	858
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	9,397	8,965	-432	-4.60%	447	620	-43	1,024
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	2,662	2,411	-251	-9.43%	100	304	-25	379
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	2,799	2,774	-25	-0.89%	94	222	-2	314
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	4,032	4,083	51	1.26%	129	261	5	395
51-0000	Production Occupations	10,372	9,777	-595	-5.74%	392	788	-60	1,120
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	6,547	6,641	94	1.44%	298	524	9	831

Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

2018-2028 Occupational Projections Rankings

Top 10 Growing Occupations Ranked by Net Growth

SOC Code	SOC Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Total Annual Openings
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	1,885	2,333	448	23.77%	156	138	45	339
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1,993	2,219	226	11.34%	168	207	23	398
29-1141	Registered Nurses	1,219	1,341	122	10.01%	36	33	12	81
21-2011	Clergy	663	754	91	13.73%	31	46	9	86
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	319	404	85	26.65%	15	32	8	55
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	1,231	1,305	74	6.01%	68	74	7	149
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	309	381	72	23.30%	18	30	7	55
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	904	964	60	6.64%	33	58	6	97
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	925	981	56	6.05%	58	67	6	131
13-1111	Management Analysts	212	261	49	23.11%	7	15	5	27
53-3041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	146	195	49	33.56%	9	9	5	23

Top 10 Fastest Growing Occupations Ranked by Percent Growth (Minimum Employment of 25)

SOC Code	SOC Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Total Annual Openings
35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	77	105	28	36.36%	10	10	3	23
53-3041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	146	195	49	33.56%	9	9	5	23
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	319	404	85	26.65%	15	32	8	55
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	1,885	2,333	448	23.77%	156	138	45	339
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	309	381	72	23.30%	18	30	7	55
13-1111	Management Analysts	212	261	49	23.11%	7	15	5	27
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	73	88	15	20.55%	4	7	2	13
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	92	110	18	19.57%	3	3	2	8
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	34	40	6	17.65%	1	1	1	3
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	110	129	19	17.27%	2	4	2	8

Top 10 Occupations Ranked by Annual Openings

SOC Code	SOC Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Total Annual Openings
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	4,562	4,343	-219	-4.80%	277	166	-22	421
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1,993	2,219	226	11.34%	168	207	23	398
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	1,885	2,333	448	23.77%	156	138	45	339
41-2011	Cashiers	1,774	1,632	-142	-8.00%	152	169	-14	307
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	1,902	1,838	-64	-3.36%	108	166	-6	268
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,597	1,633	36	2.25%	73	151	4	228
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,617	1,625	8	0.49%	67	118	1	186
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	1,623	1,517	-106	-6.53%	88	100	-11	177
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	1,231	1,305	74	6.01%	68	74	7	149
33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	1,687	1,663	-24	-1.42%	64	84	-2	146

Top 5 Declining Occupations Ranked by Net Growth (Bottom Five)

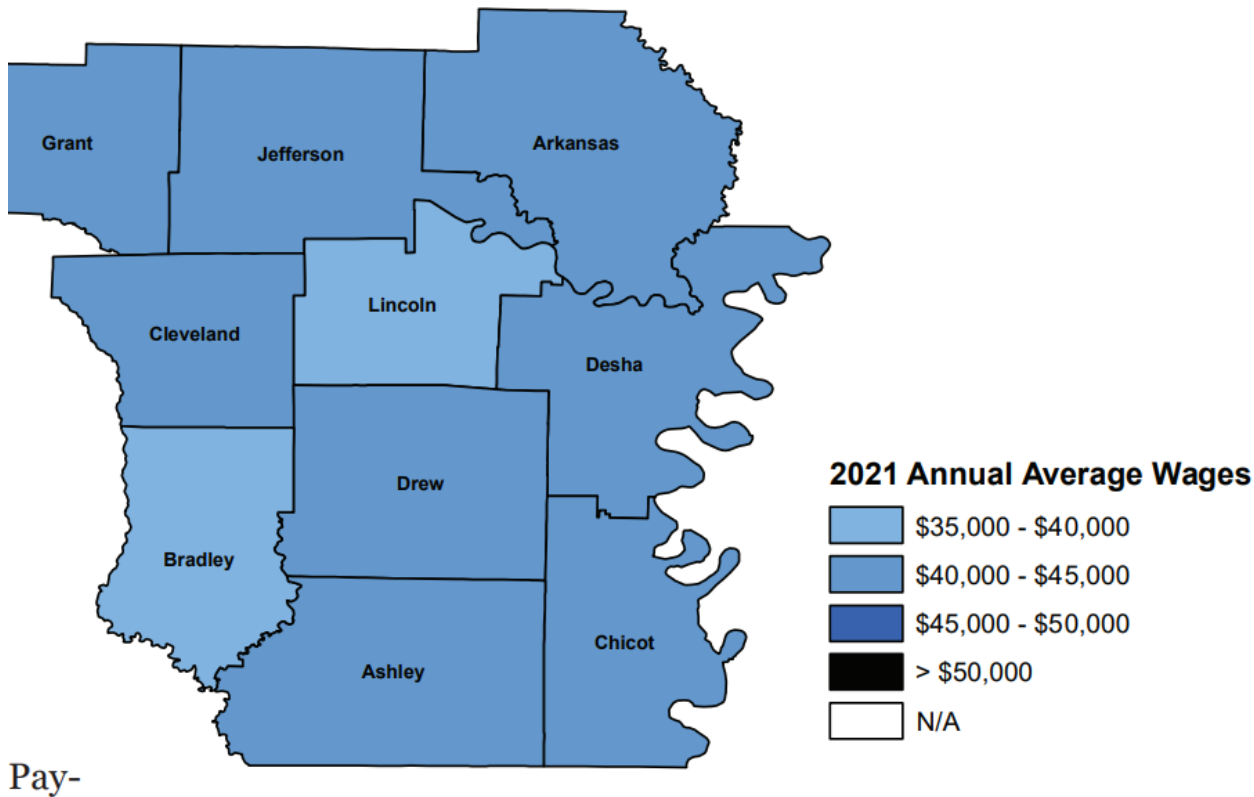
SOC Code	SOC Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Total Annual Openings
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	4,562	4,343	-219	-4.80%	277	166	-22	421
41-2011	Cashiers	1,774	1,632	-142	-8.00%	152	169	-14	307
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	652	527	-125	-19.17%	23	49	-12	60
51-2098	Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other, Including Team Assemblers	1,241	1,134	-107	-8.62%	49	90	-11	128
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	1,623	1,517	-106	-6.53%	88	100	-11	177

Top 5 Fastest Declining Occupations Ranked by Percent Growth (Minimum Decline of 5)

SOC Code	SOC Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Total Annual Openings
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	56	38	-18	-32.14%	1	4	-2	3
43-9021	Data Entry Keyers	80	61	-19	-23.75%	3	5	-2	6
43-2011	Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service	22	17	-5	-22.73%	1	1	0	2
43-4071	File Clerks	29	23	-6	-20.69%	2	2	-1	3
49-3043	Rail Car Repairers	25	20	-5	-20.00%	1	2	0	3

Source (All Charts): [LT-LWDA-18-28.pdf \(arkansas.gov\)](https://www.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/LWDA-18-28.pdf)

State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas-Longterm Industry and Occupational Projections: 2018-2028 (Pgs. 85-93)



Pay-

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

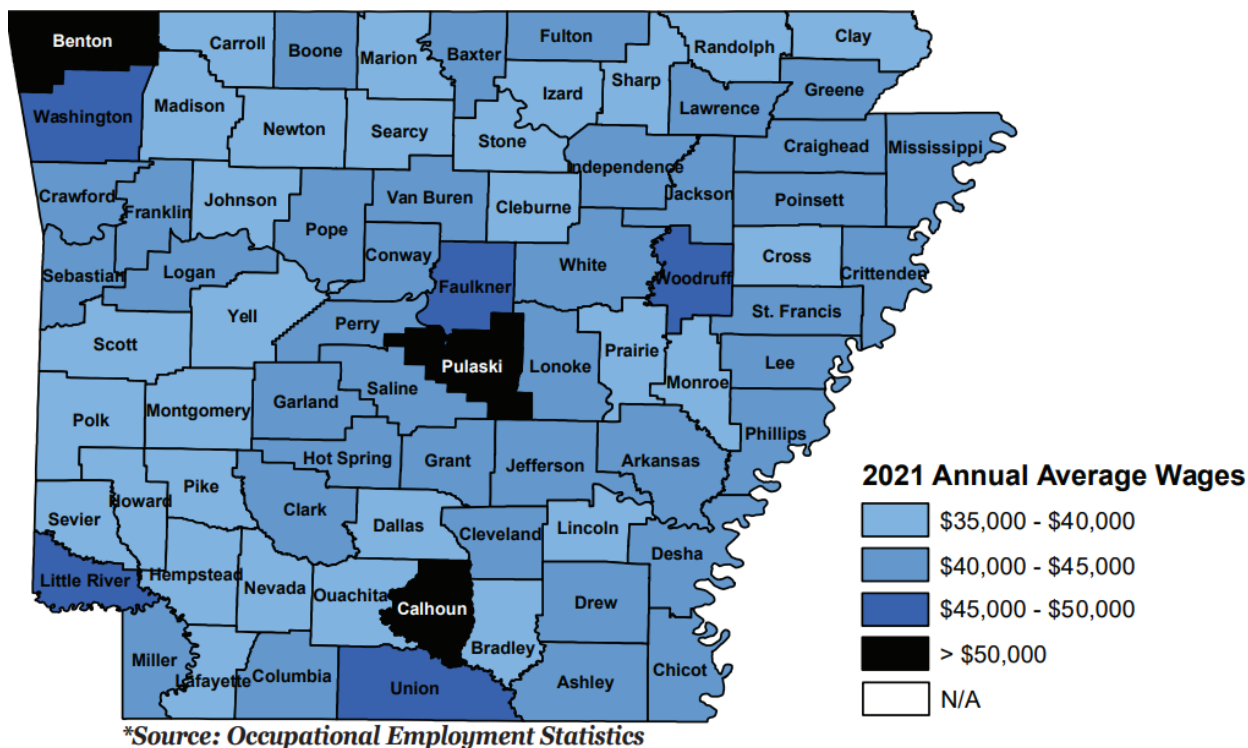
2020 Per Capita Income - BEA



County	Income
Arkansas County	\$50,534
Ashley County	\$38,489
Bradley County	\$42,037
Chicot County	\$44,762
Cleveland County	\$40,366
Desha County	\$44,920
Drew County	\$40,726
Grant County	\$41,674
Jefferson County	\$39,443
Lincoln County	\$29,008

Updated Annual Average Wages Per County: Arkansas 2018

Annual Wages for Southeast Arkansas counties have fluctuated in the past few years. Three counties average annual wages of \$40,000 or more: Arkansas, Ashley, and Grant. Three counties average annual wages of \$35,000-\$40,000: Bradley, Desha, and Jefferson. Four counties average annual wages of \$30,000-\$35,000: Chicot, Cleveland, Drew & Lincoln.



Source: Discover.arkansas.gov Labor Market Report- September 2022

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)]

One of the greatest challenges facing Southeast's workforce is the fact that it has one of the lower levels of education in the state. The Southeast region has a disappointing lack of Adults, aged 25 or older, with more than a High School diploma. Armed only with a high school diploma, job seekers are hard pressed to meet the employers' needs. Job seekers must receive hands on technical training in a broad sense.

Historically, the Southeast region has maintained a population where 39 % have at least a High School diploma; 4.3% have an Associate's degree; 10.2% a Bachelor's degree and 4.4% Graduate or Professional degree. The largest part of

the demographic, 41.2% has no more than a high school diploma or equivalent. The projections based on historical data indicate that the Southeast's region employment skill levels will not change dramatically by 2022. If the projections are accurate, the Southeast region will remain on the lower end of the higher paying occupations.

Southeast, like many other rural areas across the country, are teetering on the emergence of area widely diverse manufacturing opportunities and would be remiss to center future possibilities on past shortcomings. The most common skill gap is not isolated to Southeast Arkansas and has been echoed nationally for decades. Parents no longer teach soft skills in the home. The situation is made worse in homes where generational dependence on welfare is the norm. It is unfair to place the burden on secondary schools who battle to keep students engaged. It is also unreasonable to expect employers to hire individuals who lack soft skills, so the problem will have to be addressed by training programs. Workforce programs, educational institutions, and training providers must collaborate to address these skills gaps and deficiencies. Employers must be engaged to identify their needs and to provide jobs to individuals working through training programs. Government must be engaged to make and change policies that will align with new training designs that meet the needs and challenges of jobseekers.

Educational and Skill Levels of the Southeast Workforce

Subject	Population 18 to 24 years	Less than high school graduate		High school graduate (includes equivalency), no college		Some college or associate's degree		Bachelor's degree or higher	
Arkansas	286,456	38,318	13.40%	93,821	32.80%	132,402	46.20%	21,915	7.70%
Arkansas County, Arkansas	1264	138	10.90%	376	29.70%	691	54.70%	59	47.00%
Ashley County, Arkansas	1509	247	16.4%	661	43.8%	533	35.3%	68	4.5%
Bradley County, Arkansas	732	275	37.6%	267	36.5%	140	19.1%	50	6.8%
Chicot County, Arkansas	732	275	37.6%	267	36.5%	140	19.1%	50	6.8%
Cleveland County, Arkansas	528	114	21.6%	234	44.3%	161	30.5%	19	3.6%
Desha County, Arkansas	827	67	8.1%	430	52.0%	257	31.1%	73	8.8%
Drew County, Arkansas	2518	177	7.0%	561	22.3%	1652	65.2%	128	5.1%
Grant County, Arkansas	1306	170	13.0%	705	54.0%	408	31.2%	23	1.8%
Jefferson County, Arkansas	6107	363	5.9%	3117	51.0%	2588	42.4%	92	8.8%
Lincoln County, Arkansas	1042	329	31.6%	387	37.1%	234	22.5%	92	8.8%

Subject	Population 25 years and over	Less than 9th grade		9th to 12th grade, no diploma		High school graduate (includes equivalency), no college		Some college, no degree	
Arkansas	1,985,770	103,458	5.20%	182,659	9.20%	681,486	34.30%	448,518	22.60%
Arkansas County	11,988	688	5.60%	928	7.70%	5020	41.90%	1962	16.40%
Ashley County	13,411	768	5.7%	1220	9.1%	6823	50.9%	2193	16.4%
Bradley County	7251	409	5.6%	742	10.2%	3111	42.9%	1575	21.7%
Chicot County	7114	511	7.2%	1026	14.4%	2725	38.3	1443	20.3%
Cleveland County	5531	67	1.2%	447	8.1	2584	46.7	1216	22.0%
Desha County	7728	721	9.3%	756	9.8%	3415	44.2%	1487	19.2%
Drew County	11,170	462	4.1%	994	8.9%	4090	36.6%	2289	20.5%
Grant County	12,554	272	2.2%	783	6.2%	5351	42.6%	2969	23.6%
Jefferson County	45,337	1698	5.90%	3427	7.6%	16,927	37.30%	9,096	20.21%
Lincoln County	9871	630	6.4%	1225	12.4%	4753	48.2%	1949	19.7%

Subject	Population 25 years and over	Associate's degree		Bachelor's degree		Graduate or professional degree	
Arkansas	1,985,770	132,221	6.70%	280,677	14.10%	156,751	7.90%
Arkansas County	11,988	1423	11.90%	1340	11.20%	647	5.40%
Ashley County	13,411	795	5.9%	1223	9.1%	389	2.9%
Bradley County	7251	506	7.0%	644	8.9%	264	3.6%
Chicot County	7114	359	5.0%	737	10.4%	313	4.4%
Cleveland County	5531	293	5.3%	607	11.0%	317	5.7%
Desha County	7728	292	3.8%	746	9.7%	311	4.0%
Drew County	11170	683	6.1%	1703	15.2%	949	8.5%
Grant County	12,554	924	7.4%	1648	13.1%	6	4.8%
Jefferson County	45,337	1971	4.30%	7908	17.40%	4310	9.50%
Lincoln County	9871	452	4.6%	609	6.2%	253	2.6%

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)]

Population data for the period from 2000 to 2015 shows a decrease of 25,611 people. The number of individuals aged 65 and over is expected to be the highest demographic by 2020, indicating a broader workforce for older workers in the future. An aging workforce is a dramatic change and the one which has the greatest implications for the region. The ratio of aged persons to youth is expected to continue to rise. This increase in the number and proportion of aged persons has big implications for health and social services, education, available workforce, and other areas.

Labor force data, produced by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and released by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, show Arkansas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate declined one tenth of a percentage point, from 3.7 percent in March 2019 to 3.6 percent in April 2019. Arkansas' civilian labor force rose 1,001, a result of 2,107 more employed and 1,106 fewer unemployed Arkansans. Down two tenths of a percentage point, the United States' jobless rate decreased from 3.8 percent in March to 3.6 percent in April.

Southeast annual unemployment rates for year 2018 was 4.7%. Currently the rate is higher than the national and state average.

Southeast Arkansas saw a decrease in the labor force of 418 to 76,542 from 2021 to 2022, but employment increased by 249 to 72,999 for the same time period. Both the labor force and employment have decreased since 2018 by 4,843 and 4,551 respectively. Unemployment decreased by 667 to 3,543 from 2021 to 2022 and the unemployment rate decreased to 4.6 percent in 2022. After starting at 4.9 percent in January 2023, the unemployment rate fluctuated, ultimately settling to 4.2 percent in July 2023. The ratio of aged persons to youth is expected to continue to rise. This increase in the number and proportion of aged persons has big implications for health and social services, education, available workforce, and other areas. Individuals with disabilities have an 84 percent employment rate and face the reality of earning inadequate incomes. Less than 38 percent of Southeast Arkansas population ages 18 to 24 have a high school diploma. Southeast also serves the justice involved population. Some of their convictions can prevent some employers from hiring them. Most do not have a high school diploma or GED, which can be a hinderance for some employers from hiring them. Veterans also make up a small portion of the current labor force in Southeast Arkansas. Individuals who receive public assistance such as SNAP and TANF make up a very small portion of the workforce in Southeast Arkansas. Most employers for entry level jobs require at least a high school diploma and/or some college. Most entry-level employers most required skills are basic speaking, critical thinking, coordination, active listening, and reading comprehension. Basic and Cross-Functional Skills by Median Wage include Problem Solving, Content, Systems, Resource Management, Technical, Process, and Social.

Cashiers were estimated to have the most employees in Southeast Arkansas with 1,940 employed in 2022 with an average wage of \$25,113. Fast Food and Counter Workers was the second largest occupation with 1,800 employed, earning an average wage of \$24,974. General and Operations Managers, with an estimated employment of 1,460, had the highest average wage of the 10 largest occupations, earning \$77,119 annually. Physicians, All Other topped the Occupations Paying the Most list with an annual salary of \$249,514. Dentists, General, with an average annual salary of \$200,803, ranked second on the Occupations Paying the Most list. The entry wage estimate for employers of all sizes was \$25,818 for 2022. The median wage estimate for employers with 250-499 employees was \$37,449, while wages for experienced workers averaged \$53,793 for employers in all size categories. Of the 65,620 estimated employees in the

area with hourly wage data, 8,904 made less than \$12 an hour while 13,972 made \$17 to \$21.99 an hour. Employees making more than \$27 an hour totaled 12,775.

Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods is projected to be the top and fastest growing industry in Southeast Arkansas, increasing its workforce by 175 new jobs, a 17.41 percent gain. On the negative side of the local economy, Paper Manufacturing could lose 266 employees, dropping 10.95 percent of its workforce. Waste Management and Remediation Service is set to be the fastest declining industry, cutting its workforce by 26.51 percent, moving from 83 jobs in 2022 to 61 jobs in 2024. Leisure and Hospitality is anticipated to be the top growing super sector, adding 228 jobs between 2022 and 2024, a 4.28 percent rise in employment.

Management Analysts is projected to lead Southeast Arkansas in numeric change, growing by 64 jobs, reaching an employment level of 374. Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents is predicted to be the fastest growing occupation, increasing its workforce by 37.29 percent. On the reverse side of the labor market, Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders is anticipated to be the top and fastest declining occupation, losing 58 jobs, or 10.88 percent of its workforce. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations is estimated to be the top growing major group during the 2022-2024 projection period, with 122 new jobs, moving employment 2.48 percent to 5,036.

REMOVING OLD CHART

ARKANSAS CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY
(Seasonally Adjusted)

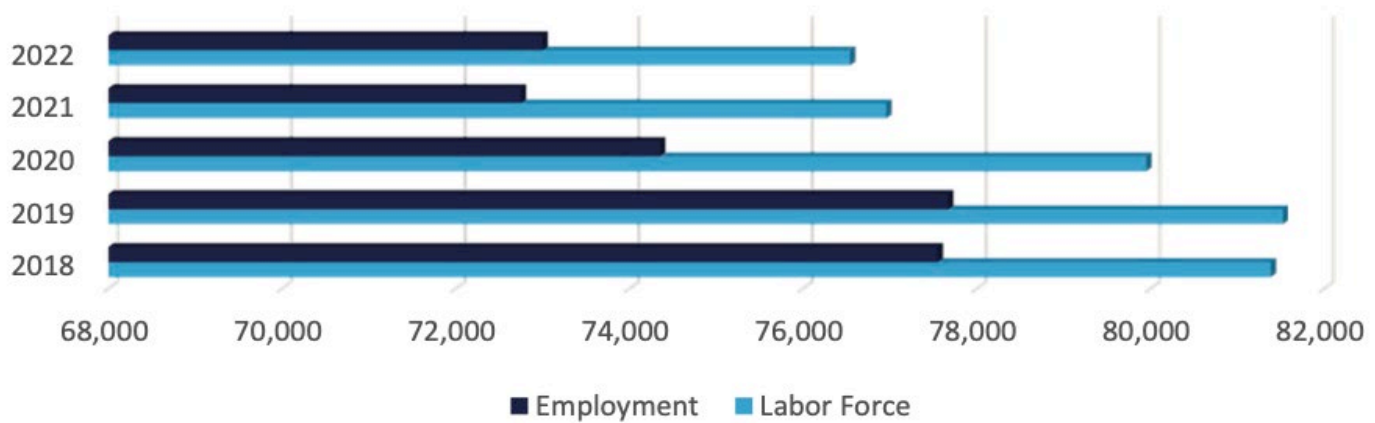
	April 2019	March 2019	April 2018	Change From March 2019	Change From April 2018
Civilian Labor Force	1,360,466	1,359,465	1,350,620	1,001	9,846
Employment	1,310,833	1,308,726	1,300,133	2,107	10,700
Unemployment	49,633	50,739	50,487	-1,106	-854
Unemployment Rate	3.6	3.7	3.7	-0.1	-0.1
U.S. Unemployment Rate	3.6	3.8	3.9	-0.2	-0.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Southeast Arkansas LWDA 2018-2022 Labor Force/Employment

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Labor Force	81,385	81,524	79,951	76,960	76,542
Employment	77,550	77,671	74,352	72,750	72,999
Unemployment	3,835	3,853	5,599	4,210	3,543
Unemployment Rate	4.7%	4.7%	7.0%	5.5%	4.6%

Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services



October 2023 Southeast Arkansas Labor Force Statistics

County	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Arkansas	9,169	8,971	198	2.2%
Ashley	6,477	6,163	314	4.8%
Bradley	4,001	3,852	149	3.7%
Chicot	2,826	2,683	143	5.1%
Cleveland	3,055	2,972	83	2.7%
Desha	4,926	4,732	194	3.9%
Drew	7,710	7,452	258	3.3%
Grant	8,534	8,323	211	2.5%
Jefferson	25,347	24,300	1,047	4.1%
Lincoln	3,663	3,543	120	3.3%

Source: <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Employment/Labor-Force-by-County>

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 [20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Southeast's workforce development activities are coordinated through the following state agencies and WIOA Core partners: Title I-B: Youth, Adult and Dislocated Workers Program, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) which includes Adult Education, AR Rehabilitation Services, and the Division of Services for the Blind. These agencies are responsible for all the core and non-core programs included in the combined regional and local plan. These agencies are also represented on the local workforce development board.

Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities and represent Southeast's version of the American Jobs Center. Southeast has five workforce centers spread across the region providing access to many Arkansans. One comprehensive center is located in Pine Bluff and four affiliate centers are located in Monticello, Dumas, Crossett and Lake Village. Satellite centers are open one day a week in the following locations: Dewitt, Stuttgart, and Sheridan. Satellite Centers are offices located at a local community college where Career Advisors are

available on a part-time basis to provide WIOA services such as basic career services, job searches, and training assistance in that area to those who cannot come into the local workforce center.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are overseen by the local workforce development board. The local board is comprised of representatives of local businesses, labor, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The board, in alignment with the States' vision, provides front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to their locally determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development, youth programs, targeted sector partnerships and others.

The local board has procured a one-stop operator for the daily operation of the perspective center(s) in accordance with WIOA 121(d). The Board carries out workforce activities by partnering locally through Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to implement core, non-core, and other partner programs. Arkansas Workforce Centers are fully integrated with WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Adult Education and Family Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation. Local partnerships and integration also exist in many areas with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Programs and others.

Typical customers entering the center are engaged by an intake process that is designed to identify the needs of the individual by gathering information and then utilizing the appropriate resources for those needs. In some cases, the resources are initiated by a referral to a partner program. Customers are given solutions and next steps to their questions, barriers, and issues by connecting directly with the appropriate workforce system partner as part of this philosophy.

The Adult Education section of ADWS funds local adult education programs, community-based and/or privately-operated literacy councils, and special projects state and federal grants. The service delivery systems are diverse. Program services are provided through a variety of local entities, including public schools' systems, community-based organizations, colleges, community colleges, technical institutes. Local programs provide adult education services such as teaching academic skills to people who function from beginning reading through a high functioning educational level and English as a Second Language (ESL). These services are free and provided in classes held in locations throughout each program's service area. Additional programs such as Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) and Career Readiness Certification are also offered in educational institutions, career centers, workplaces and correctional institutions. Adult Education assists all partners through detailed assessments, individual specific remediation and preparing individuals for either the workplace or for industry specific formal training.

Division of Services for the Blind continues to support the Arkansas Workforce Centers. In the Fall of 2019, the program co-located their headquarters within the One-Stop Comprehensive Center in Pine Bluff and makes routine visits to the affiliate centers throughout the district.

Workforce System Services - Unemployed and Underemployed

Arkansas Workforce Centers offer the full array of career services outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers. Career services available at the centers vary because of local area inflexion and needs of particular employers and communities. Basic career services are available at all five centers throughout the Southeast region. Each center has computers, printers, copiers, printed resources, and staff to assist jobseekers. Many of the services, including Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas LMI Portal, can be accessed anywhere through the internet via computer, smart phone, or tablet. Arkansas Job Link is the state job matching system and the virtual one-

stop-shop where Arkansans can centralize all their career search activities. It allows jobseekers to self-enter his/her resume(s) and job search 24/7.

Arkansas Job Link also provides access to a toolbox of job search assistance links, including career exploration, training resources, self-marketing tools, Unemployment Insurance information, and additional job banks. The built-in event calendar communicates upcoming hiring events, job fairs, workshops, trainings and other workforce activities. In addition, the TorQ system, a web application that empowers job seekers to take on new jobs and career paths using a powerful, unique algorithm that gives employers and workforce professionals rock-solid skills validation for their hiring needs, serves as an extra resource for Jobseekers. The Discover Arkansas LMI Portal provides the general public with the most recent labor market information.

Jobseeker Services

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:

- Labor exchange services that provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information is current and includes information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as: job vacancies, skills necessary to obtain the jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential and opportunities for advancement in those occupations
- Workforce Centers provide the following career services: 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
- Workforce Centers and partners provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to individual employment plan (IEP), individual service strategy (ISS), 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, basic skills training, and financial literacy.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims are no longer handled at the local office. They are handled through the Unemployment Service Center and via the UI Hotline. Those needing to file for unemployment benefits still have access to computers located in the local office. The local office does have handouts available for UI claimants with information on how to file for unemployment, weekly claim, set up direct deposit, UI debit card information, file an appeal, and provide self-addressed envelopes to anyone needing to make repayment on an overpayment.

Training Services

Career services are not always enough to enable job seekers to obtain self-sufficient employment. In some instances, formal training is required. Arkansas Workforce Centers offer multiple training services such as: occupational skills

training, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, skill upgrading and retaining, entrepreneurial training, on-the-job training, customized training and adult education and family literacy activities.

Training services are funded through WIOA programs, Pell Grants, partner programs, and state and local grants, scholarships and private funds. The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board is responsible for establishing and implementing local policies for eligibility, Individual Training Account (ITA) limits, and the identification of in-demand sectors or occupations. Through multiple initiatives and projects, Arkansas has focused training and career development activities on sector strategies /partnerships and career pathway development. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) has been updated pursuant to WIOA Sections 122 and 134 by Department of Workforce Services at the State level. This list ensures that Arkansans are able to make informed decisions on training providers and programs based on accurate data including completion and placement rates; labor market information; and wage expectations.

Supportive Services

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Southeast region has established supportive service policies that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include, but are not limited to, childcare; transportation; tools and equipment; uniforms; travel expenses, utility assistance, rental assistance and testing fees. These services are made available as a means of rehabilitation to alleviate barriers for targeted populations. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, Southeast has developed relationships with community partners that provide additional assistance and other basic needs.

Business Services

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place in the region and may include: **Access to facilities** -Use of Workforce Center facilities by a business for a variety of purposes such as meetings, trainings, orientations, interviews, etc.; **Assessments** - Any test or assortment of tests used to measure the skills, interests and/or personality traits of a jobseeker, potential employee, or current employee; **Business engagement** - Seminars, round tables, workshops, focus groups, etc.; **Business information** - Information given to a business pertaining to a variety of incentive programs or other information requested that provides a benefit to that business; **Hiring events** - A customized event for a single employer that assists with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; **Job fairs**- Event for multiple employers that assists with the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; **Job postings** - Staff-entered or web-entered job orders approved by staff; **Labor market information** - Information on state and local labor market conditions; industries, occupations, and characteristics of the workforce; area business identified skills needs; employer wage and benefit trends; short and long-term industry and occupational projections; worker supply and demand; and job vacancies survey results; **Rapid Response** - A variety of services to businesses that are facing restructuring and downsizing including onsite workshops for employees in transition; job placement assistance; and information on unemployment benefits; **Screening** - Any service that involves the initial evaluation of applications or resumes that assists the employer in the recruiting process; **Training and retraining** - Any service provided to a business that involves the training or retraining of current or future employees including OJTs, Incumbent Worker Training, etc. **Mobile Units**- most aforementioned services can be provided at locations outside of Arkansas Workforce Center offices.

Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services' Vocational Rehabilitation Services section provides services to individuals with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining

employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC1) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities. Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. The efforts of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge in providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities in order for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

Southeast Arkansas Workforce System's Strengths and Weakness

The strength of the Southeast Arkansas system is the availability of services throughout the predominantly rural area and a strong partnership with service agencies outside the workforce arena. The system partners have long term relationships with and are supported in the effort by the local chief elected officials and some key employers. The Southeast community tends to rally around new initiatives and ideas and take pride in their region.

The major weakness in the local system is the lack of public transportation, and an abundance of negative press leading to a far-reaching negative perception of the area's labor force. Housing proves to be an additional weakness in Southeast Arkansas. The need for broadband and internet services in our rural areas, often can be a challenge for residents and agencies seeking to serve customers in remote or satellite sites.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

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

The local board will strive to prepare an educated and skilled workforce through partnerships with all core partner agencies, utilizing various training efforts as: Adult Education, Registered Apprenticeship, Institutional Training, Literacy/ Workplace Training, and Work Experience, on-the-job training, and customized training.

Stronger partnerships with the two education cooperatives in the region: Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative and Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative will assist with early intervention of providing services to students who have not completed secondary training but will be planning for a career. In addition, more strategic planning with leaders from community colleges and universities, with the focus on developing joint point programs designed to be tailor-made for individuals with barriers to employment, who need a non-traditional route of navigating through career pathways.

Planning cannot be done in silos. Organizations who seek the same or similar missions must come to the same table and write goals and plans together so that they align and benefit jobseekers and not complicate the process. The goal is to build upon and improve the current regional economic condition by recruiting new industry to create opportunity and supporting the growth of existing employers, in efforts to enhance the economic self-sufficiency of the citizens of Southeast Arkansas. Evidence of this goal being achieved will be the increase of employment and job retention rates for Adults and Dislocated Workers, increased credential rates form Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Workers, increased training and placement rates for Youth, which will all lead to earnings increase for all WIOA populations. Earnings increase for individuals who may have once been dependent on government assistance or unemployed or undereducated will reflect on the overall conditions of the economy of Southeast Arkansas. These goals align with performance measures negotiated for the area.

The local board will work closely with the board staff in aiding in recruitment of the Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker populations to aid in meeting all measures set by the State. The local board recommends that Board Staff reach out to old and current training providers to encourage them to become training providers and encourage current providers maintain their performance entries into the AJLA system. By increasing providers, credential attainment will increase in Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker funding streams. Also, by increasing providers and training sites, will also aid in increasing enrollments in all funding streams too. Connecting and supporting small businesses will aid the Southeast area to attain the employment outcome measures set.

GOALS

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

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the Business Services Team, chambers of commerce, economic development partners and other opportunities.
2. Increase the use of all work-based learning programs as viable talent development opportunities by continuing the education and communication between partners, employers, and trainers.
3. Continue to partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, adult education, disability service providers, community-based organizations, and non-profits to understand barriers and resources available to individuals, so individuals can succeed in training programs in our region.
4. Analyze and address barriers to collaboration between state, regional, and local business services teams.

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

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Promote and fund training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification in demand occupations through scholarships, on-the-job training, and work experiences.
2. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives to meet business and industry needs.
3. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by Northwest Workforce system partners.
4. Support the development of functional teams to enhance services.
5. Ensure a comprehensive array of services are provided to employers to meet unmet workforce needs.
6. Outline business solutions and provide training to LWDB staff and stakeholders on mobilizing resources, including peer-to-peer learning opportunities

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

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services throughout the system.
2. Participate in an image-building outreach campaign to educate Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in Northwest Arkansas.
3. Utilize technology, including social media, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Northwest Arkansas. Develop partnerships with libraries and other community organizations to provide access to the workforce system via computers.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gap

Goal 4 Objectives:

1. Participate in a skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue in Northwest Arkansas.
2. Work with partners in education at all levels to help implement a plan to close skills gaps in Northwest Arkansas. Review current job readiness standards and evaluations being used within the workforce system to find best practices that could be replicated.
3. Use labor market information provided by the Department of Workforce Services and contract with a vendor that will provide detailed labor and skills analysis as well as evaluation of post-secondary education performance to determine effectiveness of training to bridge the skills gaps.
4. Seek grants available to education and employers to fund training programs that address skills gaps.
5. Receive input from employers to address the skills shortages and identify alternative methods of recruiting and training workers, such as exploring nontraditional labor pools and methods of upskilling and offering efficient onboarding processes.

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)

Southeast will establish a workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Southeast's economy competitive in the global marketplace. The Southeast Workforce Development understands and embraces its role and responsibility in the bigger picture as

established by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. It is necessary for the Southeast local plan to align with the state plan in order to achieve uniformity and one common goal.

This will be achieved by fulfilling the following functions of the local boards :

Develop and submit a 4-year local plan for the local area in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials and consistent with WIOA sec. 108

Conduct workforce research and regional labor market analysis of Southeast Arkansas

Convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan and identifying non-federal expertise and resources to leverage support for workforce development activities

Lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers and other entities in the region

Lead efforts to develop and implement career pathways within the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment

Lead efforts in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Area to identify and promote proven and promising strategies and initiative for meeting the needs of employers, workers and job seekers and identify and disseminate information on proven and promising practices carried out in other local area for meeting such needs

Develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of local workforce development system for employers, and workers and job seekers

Conduct oversight of youth workforce investment activities, adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities, and the one-stop delivery system

Negotiate and reach agreement on local performance indications with Chief Elected Officials and the Governor

Negotiate with Chief Elected Officials and required partners on the methods for funding the infrastructure cost of one-stop centers in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Select providers of youth workforce investment activities, providers of training services, providers of career services and One-stop operator

Work with State of Arkansas to ensure there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of career services and training services serving the local area and providing the services in a manner that maximizes consumer choice, as well as providing opportunities that lead to competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities

Coordinate activities with education and training providers in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Develop a budget for the activities of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board, with approval of the Chief Elected Officials and consistent with the local plan and the duties of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Assess on an annual basis the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

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)

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 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

- Develop employer partnerships in diverse manufacturing to support and expand manufacturing engagement.
- Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
- Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
- Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
- Utilize the ACT Work-Ready Communities Platform to convene partners from education, workforce, government, business/industry and economic development.

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

Goal 2 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

- Develop a common intake process for jobseekers and businesses that will efficiently connect each with services available from all workforce development partner programs.
- Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
- Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
- Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
- Utilize Salesforce software to track business engagement activities.
- Utilize all avenues of communication whether it be through electronic means such as social media or printed materials.

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

Goal 3 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

- Increase access to the workforce development system through one-stop approach to services.
- Implement a strong branding and outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the region.

- Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
- Cross-train all partners about services that all WIOA programs offer.
- Conduct/participate in an open house twice a year at various core partner locations in the 10 county regions. The open house event will give individuals, partners, and business leaders the opportunity to explore the various partner locations which will ultimately help each partner understand the services offered at each location.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

- Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in the Southeast region.
- Utilize the proven effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

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 enrolling in educational training the goal is for the participants to complete their training and obtain their credential and measurable skills gain. These participants will also be directed toward higher paying jobs which will lead to self-sufficiency. Follow-up services will be provided to help ensure that the individual retains employment in the field, in which they were trained with hopes that employment extends beyond a year after exit. This goal also stands true for those participants receiving basic and individualized career services. Ultimately, the overall effectiveness of the system will be measured by the negotiated outcomes.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

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

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

The Chief Elected Officials (CEO) of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area met on ~~June 8, 2016~~ June 20, 2019 and voted to contract with the Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District to serve as the Grant Recipient/Fiscal Agent for the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act.

The Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas and the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board has entered into a Partnership Agreement which details the duties and responsibilities of each governing board. The SEAWDB, on ~~May 18, 2016~~ November 20, 2019, voted to approve the Administrative Services/Board Staff Contract with SEAEDD.

The SEAWDB procured a one stop-operator, SEAEDD, which also services as program provider of WIOA Title I-B services.

The vision of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board is to serve as a strategic leader and conveners of local workforce development system stakeholders. The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board partners with employers and the workforce development system to develop policies and investments that support public workforce system strategies that support regional economies, the development of effective approaches including local and regional sector partnerships and career pathways, and high quality, customer centered service delivery and service delivery approaches.

The purpose of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board is to:

- A. Provide strategic and operational oversight in collaboration with the required and additional partners and workforce stakeholders to help develop a comprehensive and high-quality workforce development system in the local area and larger planning region;
- B. Assist in the achievement of the State's strategic and operational vision and goals as outlined in the Unified State Plan or the Combined State Plan; and
- C. Maximize and continue to improve the quality of services, customer satisfaction, effectiveness of the services provided.

The board has four committees appointed by the board chair. They are: One Stop Committee, Planning Committee, Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee and Youth Committee. All required partners have been appointed by their various state agencies with a representative seat on the board. The board is comprised of other representatives from: business, workforce, education, labor unions, and government, as described in WIOA law. All parties of the Southeast system are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities under the Act and Regulations.

- A. The committees shall function as follows:

- 1. Planning Committee

- a) The Planning Committee shall draft the local plan and all alterations to the local plan.

- b) The Planning Committee shall develop the local area budget with input from all standing committees.
- c) The budget developed by the Planning Committee must be approved by the Board and Chief Elected Officials.
- d) The Planning Committee shall review and recommend action on eligible training providers in accordance with state procedures.

2. One Stop Operations Committee

- a) The One Stop Operations Committee shall be responsible for the overall design and maintenance of the one stop system.
- b) It shall develop the memorandums of understanding with the various partnering agencies.
- c) It shall be responsible for negotiating with the partnering agencies to leverage resources to support the system.
- d) It shall be responsible for overseeing the one-stop operator and Title I-B Service Provider selection process.

3. Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee:

- a) The Committee shall be responsible for the direction and oversight of services to persons with a disability with the overall program design.
- b) The Committee shall review and recommend action on eligible training providers in accordance with the Americans' with Disabilities Act and the actions of the Planning Committee.
- c) The Committee shall review and recommend action on performance to the targeted population.

4. Youth Services Committee:

- a) The Youth Committee shall be comprised of members of the Board and additional non-voting members as specified in the Act. The additional members shall be nominated by the Board and approved by the Chief Elected Officials.
- b) It shall be responsible for the design and implementation of the youth services and activities.
- c) It shall recommend to the Board the approval or disapproval of requests for funding from various providers.

5. Ad Hoc Committees shall be designated as necessary for specific purposes

The SEAWDB is also tasked with and required to perform all functions of a local workforce development board, as described in WIOA law and regulations; and as aforementioned in section 2.2 of this plan.

B. A list of all Arkansas Workforce Centers in the local area and **WIOA Title I-B offices; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation.**

All centers are open from 8 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Thursday. 8 am to 12pm- Friday.



AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT PINE BLUFF (Comprehensive)

SERVING JEFFERSON, CLEVELAND, & GRANT COUNTIES

P.O. Box 9028, Pine Bluff, AR 71611

1001 Tennessee St. Pine Bluff, AR 71601

Phone: 870. 619.4803 Fax: 870.495.2785

AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT DUMAS (Affiliate)

SERVING DESHA & ARKANSAS COUNTIES

P.O. Box 10

130 W. Waterman Dumas, AR 71639

Phone: 870. 619.4487 Fax: 870.527.4598

AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT MONTICELLO (Affiliate)

SERVING DREW, BRADLEY, & LINCOLN COUNTIES

P.O. Box 619

477 South Main St. Monticello, AR 71655

Phone: 870.224.7075 Fax: 870.376.4271

AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT LAKE VILLAGE (Affiliate)

SERVING CHICOT COUNTY

103 Main St. Lake Village, AR 71653

Phone: 870. 619.4744 Fax: 870.376.4602

AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT CROSSETT (Affiliate)

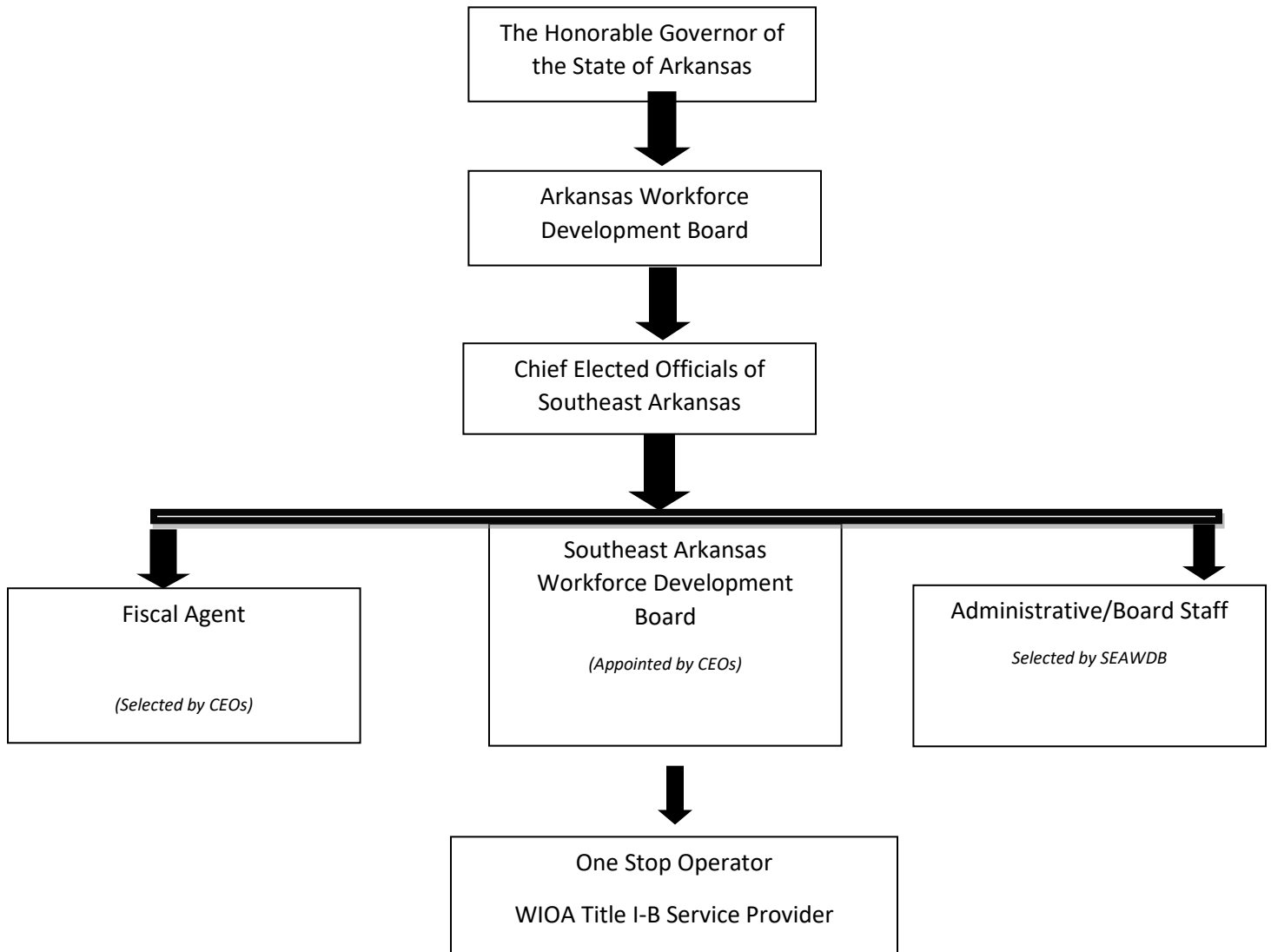
SERVING ASHLEY COUNTY

P.O. Box 1220

304 North Alabama Crossett, AR 71635

Phone: 870. 619.4737 Fax: 870.376.4936

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



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 workforce development system in Southeast Arkansas is proactive and inclusive, as evidenced by the diverse membership of the Southeast Board, which not only includes the required partner agencies, but local community-based organizations with vast experience in providing services to Veterans and persons with disabilities. Also represented on the board are individuals who represent Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education and Registered Apprenticeship Programs. The local board is partnering with UAM's Work Ready Communities project and other entities as they are identified to seamlessly align all services and opportunities available to the benefit of the jobseeker and the employers.

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

The Southeast Workforce Development Board is committed to expanding access to services for eligible individuals. The Board's Title I Provider, under the direction of the Board, has fostered an atmosphere of coordination and cooperation between all partner agencies. This atmosphere will provide for and facilitate the co-enrollment of individuals, particularly individuals with disabilities and other barriers. Strategic efforts have been made to strengthen the lines of communication between programs. Staff of all core programs are being cross-trained and educated about services provided by each partner. Partner meetings are held on the state and local level, which provide a unified service delivery approach to addressing the needs of customers. Additionally, co-locations have increased within the Southeast region. Access of programs have been expanded due to the ease of convenience of customers coming to one location to receive multiple services. Staff of core programs are now traveling more to rural areas and non-required partner facilities to increase outcomes through outreach. As barriers are identified, partners are more equipped to share resources with customers who may qualify for supportive, intensive and basic career services.

The Board and its represented partner agencies are working with the local two- and four-year higher education institutions and the registered apprenticeship programs to develop recognized, high demand, credentials that the industry needs to be successful.

The board has also identified an underserved diverse manufacturing cluster and will be meeting to establish a sector partnership with those employers. The intention is to develop common career pathways and common industry sector credentialing that is portable, not just for the Southeast area, but for the State. The initial business engagement meeting was hosted on May 18, 2017 with the assistance of Maher and Maher.

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

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

The Southeast Board has begun work on an underserved but growing Diverse Manufacturing Sector. It is the intention to first determine the common "pain points" for this group of employers prior to attempting to market an "off the shelf" solution to their needs. The process, if accomplished correctly, will be slow but fruitful for all involved. Theoretically, employers will engage only when and if it benefits their bottom line. The SEAWDB will convene employers in private meetings as well as through a public business forum. During these meetings, employers will engage in dialogue and provide feedback that will be used to further plan as early stages of implementing new strategies.

The Southeast Business Services Team is in the rebuilding stage. It will consist of local partners and business individuals. The will meet at least once quarterly to discuss strategies to help individuals of our region to engage in the programs that are available.

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

Developing a better understanding of industry needs and "pain points". Then and only then, retooling the workforce system to address those identified needs. The local workforce system has to be industry driven. After receiving valuable feedback from business, the SEAWDB will engage educators, economic developers, and legislators into further discussions and planning that will be designed forecast future needs while addressing current needs.

Another strategy is to better educate the business industry on the full array of services at the Arkansas Workforce Centers in the area through open houses, business services, outreach, job fairs, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

One segment of the internal business services team is comprised of individuals with expertise in community and economic development. These individuals continually work with communities and grants designed to attract new industries or support and expand existing industries. Their involvement provides the necessary "seamless" connection, allowing them to both utilize center services and provide feedback as to the needs of a particular industry. Local industrial development groups, local Chambers of Commerce and educational institutions must be at the table after the sector partnership has been developed to give an additional perspective to the process.

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

While the one-stop system has long worked closely with unemployment insurance, the other partner agencies may or may not have been as fortunate. The linkage between partners will be strengthened through communication, co-locations and developed familiarity in partner meetings. Customers who receive UI benefits are required to attend re-employment workshops. A goal for the area would be for all partners to secure a small segment in those meetings to explain services and talk with potential customers one-on-one.

3.5. Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

The Board will continue to support and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services through the partner agencies and through the local economic development district.

SEAEDD has worked with small businesses since the early 1970's, aiding with business plan development and funding through the revolving loan program. The Southeast area also has access to the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluffs Small Business Incubator's services and the Delta I-Fund Project Generator that helps entrepreneurs plan for start-up. Participants interested in learning entrepreneurial skills will be referred to and connected with skilled professional or mentors. As a part of the service delivery, internships, job shadowing and work experiences will be coupled with the training.

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

Coordination in the Southeast area is currently under way by assisting all required partners with a very successful referral systems which avoids duplication of services. The partners have worked for many months to develop a referral format which contains most, if not all, information needed to enroll a prospective client into any partner system. Any participant that enters a workforce center for a request for services will be assessed to determine which partner would be better to assist them with the service they need. Partnerships with local education institutions have been facilitated and future plans to collaborate more are in the work.

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

Southeast Arkansas is extremely rural, with the exception of the city of Pine Bluff. Outside Pine Bluff, transportation options are nonexistent and the coordination of supportive services between the partner agencies is critical. The Board and the agencies are doubling down on local efforts, crisscrossing all partner funding streams to coordinate the transportation needs. The Southeast Workforce Development Board has established a supportive services policy which relies, first

and foremost, on partner agency support. The Title I-B Operator makes referrals to partners for assistance, prior to determining the need for any WIOA financial supportive involvement. Strategic planning meetings have been held with the TANF program to discuss the shared use of transportation providers. In addition, the supportive services policy provides provision for individuals to be transported to training and employment through multiple methods.

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

The very essence of WIOA is the integration of service delivery among multiple workforce and talent development programs. Southeast has strong partnerships among state agencies, two- and four-year educational institutions, economic development, Registered Apprenticeship, and community-based organizations. A priority of the local board and critical to the implementation of the strategic plan is to 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

Foster the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The one stop operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners. They have regular partners meeting in the comprehensive center and in other locations.

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 targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross- functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program.

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

The Board, and more specifically the Board's Planning Committee, served as a regional clearinghouse reviewing local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy. Responses to the Adult Education RFQ were reviewed, rated and returned to Arkansas Career Education, in accordance with their prescribed timeline.

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

Active

The vision for collaboration between educators and employers is neither novel nor has it just come to light for this group of individuals. The partners in this grant have been working together and sharing dreams for an improved vehicle of change and a heightened regard for career and technical education for the past 30 years. More than ever before, many of the group see hope for real change and real progress. Instead of working independently ('in siloes ' as we say) we recognize this grant as an opportunity to accomplish great things. What have been good ideas and good intentions that may not have been accomplished previously due to territorial issues and/or conflicting regulatory processes, are coming together. One such vehicle of change and an integral goal of this grant is the Alliance's objective for counties to become ACT® Certified Work Ready.

Communities. Working toward aggressive goals will produce outcomes that identify future job needs; develop a productive workforce; and ascertain the competencies and skills needed to determine proficiencies and skill gaps of the workforce. To date-~~five~~ **ten** of the ten counties in Southeast Arkansas have reached ACT Work Ready Community status.

Arkansas has been a statewide partner of ACT® since January of 2008 to provide avenues for individuals to earn the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) in the form of the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). In partnership with Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and offering the Work Keys curriculum and NCRC testing; some members of the Alliance are familiar with the value of the ACT credential. The Governor of Arkansas and Department of Career and Technical Education has endorsed the curriculum, and high schools as well as Secondary Career Centers are offering the courses and testing around the state. In this region, the Southeast Arkansas Community Based Education Center in Warren and the Occupational Education Center in Monticello, along with several local high schools have been instrumental in getting young adults through this curriculum and armed with the nationally recognized credential before they graduate from high school.

All ten counties in the Southeast Arkansas area are participating in the county level ACT® Work Ready Communities (WRC) initiative. Although the aim is ambitious, the Alliance desires to demonstrate the benefits of increasing each community's attractiveness by becoming a certified ACT Work Ready Community. In agreement with the ACT initiative, it is the WRC Teams' belief that by obtaining job skills requirements from area businesses and industries and having a valid tool to measure individuals' skills, SEARK, SouthArk, UAM and the UAM Colleges of Technology can plan programs to develop the skills needed to match requirements, and then certify individuals in those essential skills needed for area jobs.

Continuously monitor and adjust to ensure that educational services provided from K-16 are based on realistic needs of current and future businesses. The initiative is in line with the Arkansas' workforce development goal of increasing the number of quality jobs/careers attained, improving the quality of lives, and rebuilding communities. Southeast Arkansas needs job growth. ~~Becoming~~ **Being** an ACT® Work Ready Community ~~will better~~ ensures business and industry leaders that the skills they need for a successful workforce are being addressed in a systematic and productive manner.

Currently operating under the guidance of the University of Arkansas at McGehee and UAM Crossett and SEAEDD, priorities have been established and have moved well pass the implementation phase.

Emerging / Active

As previously stated, the Diverse Manufacturing Sector should encompass the Paper and Wood Products sector. The initial meeting was held on May 18, 2017. We are currently working on securing new partners who would be involved. We are planning to start an apprenticeship program with a garment factory soon. The Southeast Workforce Development Board will continue the support of large-scale job fairs and community outreach activities. Advertisements will also be printed periodically to help with engaging additional partners with other services to offer.

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

Not at the present time, but plans are being made to aggressively secure and leverage more funds outside of WIOA.

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

N/A

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)]**

The Board's efforts to ensure continuous improvement of service providers includes but is not limited to, screening new and subsequent eligible training providers applications against the perceived needs of employers and clients. Additionally, the Planning Committee will review any available performance information to assess continuous improvement. The One Stop Committee will review the annual performance of the Title I Provider. The Title I Provider will also work with clients to align their training needs and choices with high demand career pathways.

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)]

Much of Southeast Arkansas is rural. It is incumbent upon the Board and Title I Provider to utilize technology to provide access. Information about WIOA services can be accessed online and on SEAEDD's and state's website. Case managers utilize email and social media to communicate and share information with customers. In addition, outside of the five main offices, case managers travel to satellite locations to serve customers.

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)]

The Board and the partner agencies will comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility. All facilities are accessible, and the staff has been trained to serve customers with disabilities. The Title I provider collaborates with the Division of Services for the Blind and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff to ensure that proper accommodations and resources are available for all customers.

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)]

The required partner agencies include the WIOA Title I Provider (SEAEDD), Title II- Adult Education, Title III- Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and Title IV- which includes DSB and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Additional partners include: Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker and Older Worker programs. ADWS services include employer services, Veterans' services, Unemployment Insurance and TANF. Adult education has numerous locations but are co-located in many of our workforce centers. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and **Services for the Blind** has two offices, Monticello and Pine Bluff but staff travel to service customers in remote areas and in workforce centers. Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program is located in the **Dumas Workforce Center**. **Arkansas Human Development Corporation provides free assistance to seasonal and migrant agricultural workers in AR**. The Older Worker Program is not located in Southeast Arkansas but services the area and utilizes the workforce centers. ADWS is co-located in Pine Bluff and Monticello. **and Dumas**

One optional partner is the Veterans' Worldwide Assistance Program, located in Rison. VWAP provides counseling and mentoring for veterans and their immediate families. VWAP also makes referrals for WIOA services. Most partners provide services throughout the local workforce

development area comprised of ten counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson and Lincoln.

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)]

ADWS ~~has explored~~ is ~~exploring the idea of~~ creating a universal MIS that would allow all partners access to the same system. This would allow for tracking, monitoring, recording and information sharing amongst partners.

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

The Board has reviewed current eligible training provider and apprenticeship lists and has determined that there currently exists an adequate availability of quality training. The Board's Planning Committee periodically reviews and updates the eligible training provider list to ensure that training providers are current and performing at a suitable rate. This is measured by customer satisfaction assessed by program operator, performance and outcomes reported by training providers, and compliance with accreditation requirements.

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)]

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force and the 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 Title I Provider 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 in the area. Information is provided to the chambers about the affected workers, including the types of impacted occupations and the employee's 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 which may include providing retraining the current workforce
- Immediate and on-site contact with employers and local community representative
- Assessment and planning to address the layoff schedule, assistance needs of the impacted individuals, re-employment prospects, and available resources
- Information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, AWC Services, and employment and training activities, including Trade Act, Pell Grants, GI Bill WIOA DLW Program, and other resources
- Necessary services and resources, such as workshops, resource and job fairs to support re-employment assistance
- Trade Act petition services through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce

4.4. Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]
Note: This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

Element	Providers/Partners/Resources
1. Tutoring, study skills training and evidence-based dropout prevention strategies	Adult Education Programs throughout SEAWDA: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UAM- College of Technology• SEARK Community College• SOUTHARK Community College• College of Quachitas Community College SEAEDD employs certified teachers who facilitate math and literacy basic skills training and tutoring during seasonal months.
2. Alternative secondary school offerings.	Adult Education Programs throughout SEAWDA: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UAM- College of Technology• SEARK Community College• SOUTHARK Community College• College of Quachitas Community College

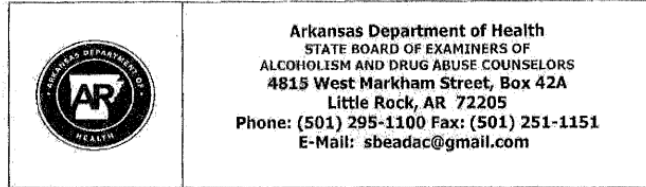
	SEAEDD employs certified teachers who facilitate math and literacy basic skills training and tutoring during seasonal months.
3. Paid and unpaid work experience	SEAEDD: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid Work Experience • Summer Youth Employment • Pre-Apprenticeships • Job Shadowing • OJT
4. Occupational skill training	Eligible Training Providers in the region, State of AR and surrounding areas.
5. Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation	SEAEDD offers this service through work experiences, pre-apprenticeship programs and career readiness workshops and employability skills. SEAEDD Career Advisors use the DOL- “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum to present structured lessons to youth. The lessons are centered around employability skills that are necessary to be successful on any job.
6. Leadership development opportunities	SEAEDD offers this service through various methods. Youth are connected with opportunities that promote leadership and productive citizenship Career Advisors also facilitate like skills workshops and sessions with you to prepare the individuals on how to deal with day-to-day situations and scenarios in life. Youth have had opportunities to serve as ambassadors and unofficial recruiters for the WIOA program and in the future our plan is to involve youth in program planning and affording opportunities for youth to present at WDB meetings about their experiences in the program, to enhance networking and public speaking skills.
7. Supportive Services	SEAEDD Career Pathways Initiative Vocational Rehabilitation Programs Division of Services for the Blind TANF programs
8. Adult mentoring	Employers, Teachers, Counselors, Prominent members of the community who have experience mentoring youth. SEAEDD provides this service, when no other appropriate provider can be identified.

9. Follow-up Services

SEAEDD

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling

SEAEDD employs a Career Advisor who is a licensed Drug and Alcohol Abuse Counselor. In-house referrals are made to her for this service.



Date: June 22, 2022
RE: License verification

Counselor name: Louann Lehman
License #: 12SAL
Type of License: Licensed Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor (LADAC)
Date Licensed: 10-12-2001
Status of License: Active
Expiration Date: 12/31/2023
Eligible for renewal? Yes
Disciplinary problems? None
If so, please explain: N/A

Verified by: Pamela Fite
Board Administrator

In addition, referrals are made to:

- Delta Counseling & Associates
- Quapaw House
- Options, Inc.
- New Beginnings Rehab Center

11. Financial Literacy Education

SEAEDD provides this service using a curriculum developed by FDIC. Lesson plans and materials are used to facilitate sessions throughout the year with youth. Career Advisors instruct as well as SEAEDD certified teachers.

In addition, Local banks provide financial literacy workshops to WIOA participants.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training

SEAEDD offers this service through career readiness training. In addition, SEAEDD seeks local business owners to mentor, serve as worksite supervisors for work experiences, and invites guest speakers to present at monthly workshops.

In the future, occasional trainings will be provided by the Small Business Administration and Delta I-Fund program.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

SEAEDD offers this service through career readiness trainings. Youth participate in orientation sessions where they learn how to use the ADWS website to identify LMI and information about employment statistics and in-demand occupations. In addition, as a part of work-based learning- youth are provided with training that includes an educational and occupational component through work experiences.

14. Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities

SEAEDD offers this training through expose to post-secondary education opportunities. Information is provided about training providers, careers and resources needed to transition from HS/Adult Ed to further training.

The Trio Program also serves as a guest presenter for WIOA workshops and focuses on assisting youth transition into college by assisting with fafsa applications, grants, scholarships and providing resources to prepare for the transition.

The SEAWDB has established working relationships with partners and multiple youth service providers who will carry out the functions described in each of the required 14 youth elements. Memorandum of Understandings are being signed to outline the duties of each provider. When possible, program operator- Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, will provide services as deemed appropriate.

Models that seem to have been effective in the area is pre-apprenticeship and work experiences. Southeast partnered with training providers to develop a welding pre-apprenticeship, in hopes to meet a business/workforce need at SAF Holland of Dumas. Youth who were unengaged and underemployed, signed on to participate in a five-week welding training that included soft skills as well as trade skills, coupled with basic math and literacy skills. The program produced 14 successful completers who were able to secure employment at the employer, some even before the training ended. Participants were selected from various targeted populations including individuals with disabilities, offenders, basic skills deficient individuals, and low-income individuals.

A similar model was successfully implemented, but with carpentry as the focus. Seven of eight participants, all juvenile offenders in the Dermott Juvenile Detention Center, completed and are receiving work readiness training and other transitional services that will ensure a productive future after release.

Youth Requiring Additional Assistance Policy

Background: Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) law and regulations, the state or local workforce areas are to develop and define a Youth policy for “An Individual Who Requires Additional Assistance.” In Arkansas’ state plan, it states that this policy will be developed by each local area and is required to be included in the local plan. Said policy should be specific to the local area of service that applies to the predominant population of youth within service boundaries. This policy is used to enroll youth who may not have other barriers described in WIOA eligibility law and regulations. Along with the development of this policy, local areas are required to include acceptable eligibility documentation and criteria to be used by one-stop center staff in determining eligibility for youth clients. For clarity purposes and to ensure that this policy is clear and aligned with eligibility criteria for WIOA, WIOA eligibility criteria is also listed and described in the policy for staff reference. The full policy can be accessed here:

<http://southeastarkansas.org/media/1084/seawdb-youth-requiring-additional-assistance-policy.pdf>

Note: Up to five percent of youth in a given program year (ISY and OSY, who ordinarily would be required to meet the low-income criteria for eligibility purposes, are allowed a low-income exemption based on this barrier).

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 will include effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria for local boards. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)]

Continuous monitoring of 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. Have policies and procedures in place. Update the labor market analyses and data to be aware of emerging trends. Work with community colleges to determine the needs of employers.

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)]

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

The Planning Committee appointed by the LWIB Chair reviews the **ACRS** **ETP** applications. Once full board approval has been made, an ETP list will be distributed to all workforce centers. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA. ITA's may be adjusted up or down based upon case necessity.

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

Once full board approval has been made, an ETP list can be accessed by all workforce centers, on the **ACRS** **Arkansas Joblink** website. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA.

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

All training providers will complete an online electronic application through the automated **Arkansas Consumer Reporting System** **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.

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)(II), 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)]

The agreement between Vocational Rehabilitation and the Board provides for staff cross training, technical assistance and single points of contact with regards to employers. The parties also agree to utilize the Southeast common referral document which identifies services and eligibility for all required partner agencies and services. The local board will, with the area fiscal agent, share cooperative agreement oversight responsibilities.

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)]

Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. (SEAEDD) was named by the Chief Elected Officials to serve as the Fiscal Agent for grant funds. SEAEDD is located at 721 South Walnut Street in Pine Bluff.

5.3 Describe the competitive processes to award the subrecipient agreements 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 Board authorized the One Stop Committee to develop and advertise a formal request for qualifications (RFQ) for One Stop Operator / Youth Service Provider in April of 2016. The entire RFQ was published on May 15th and 22nd in the legal section of the Arkansas Democrat Gazette.

Applicants had until June 20th to respond. The One Stop Committee reviewed and scored the application for the One Stop Operator and made their recommendation to the full board at the June 2016 Board Meeting. The Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. was selected to be the One Stop Operator and Title I Provider through June 30, 2017 with an option to renew for two additional program years. All future procurements will be handled in a manner consistent with the Uniform Guidance procurement provisions.

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

At this time, the State provides the performance measures for each Local Workforce Development Area. These measures are based upon the State's negotiation with the Department of Labor. The Board, in conjunction with the Southeast Chief Elected Officials are required, by law, to negotiate measures based upon existing and forecast economic factors.

Southeast State Negotiated Performance Goals

Core Indicators of WIOA Program Performance	PY22 State Negotiated Goals
Adult Performance	
Employment Rate- 2 nd Quarter After Exit	81.00%
Employment Rate- 4 th Quarter After Exit	80.00%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,449
Credential Attainment Rate	79.00%
Measurable Skills Gains	69.00%

Core Indicators of WIOA Program Performance	PY 22 State Negotiated Goals
Dislocated Worker Performance	
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	\$7,277
Credential Attainment Rate	81.00%
Measurable Skills Gains	70.50%

Core Indicators of WIOA Program Performance	PY 22 State Negotiated Goals
Youth Performance	
Employment/Education Rate- 2 nd Quarter After Exit	75.00%
Employment/Education Rate- 4 th Quarter After Exit	78.00%
Credential Attainment Rate	64.00%
Measurable Skills 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)]

Financial and Programmatic reports will be provided to the full board at every Board meeting in order for the Board to remain informed of all activities throughout the Title I funding. The local WIOA program compliance officer will perform internal monthly desk reviews of the fiscal operations of the one stop operator. The monitor will also provide an annual program service monitoring report to the One Stop Committee of the local board. There will also be an annual

OMB A-133 of the fiscal agent and One Stop Provider. A third-party entity will also monitor the One-Stop Operator to avoid conflict of interest. This service will be procured and handled by the One-Stop Committee.

The Planning Committee will review applications for the Eligible Training Provider List as necessary. They will make their recommendations to the full board.

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)]

The original draft plan was made available to the Board and the required partners, on Wednesday, May 17, 2016. Representatives of business labor organizations, and education were asked to review and seek sector input.

The updated draft plan was developed by Board staff, SEAWDB members with input from other stakeholders. The plan was reviewed by the CEOs and the SEAWDB and then submitted to ADWS for review on June 21, 2019. This date starts the 30-day public comment period. Member of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations and education may access the document on SEAEDD's website and notification of the comment period will be published in local newspapers. All feedback and questions received from the public will be included in the final plan.

On March 1, 2023, the Local Plan committee met to discuss changes that needed to be implemented in the plan. This consisted of local partners and LWDB members. Information regarding the public commentary will be added after the 30-day comment period. Workforce Center partners provided input in the plan at the partners meeting and via telephone calls and emails. Business, partner agencies, educators, and economic developers from throughout the local area are all represented on the board and had the opportunity to comment.

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

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

As required by Law, the completed Southeast Arkansas local plan will be advertised in the statewide newspaper giving the public time to review and submit any comments back to SEAEDD for a 30-day period. The plan will remain on display for that 30-day period and anyone wishing to review could stop by the local office of SEAEDD or access the document online.

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

Specifically, the Planning Committee worked with Board Staff and was responsible for reviewing all comments received and recommending any changes to the Board. Each committee reviewed the comments in the plan and made necessary changes for the update.

Comments collected during the public comment period will be presented to the board for review and consideration.

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

During the public comment period: June 21, 2019-July 21, 2019, there were no comments received.

Disagreements or concerns received during public comment period will be addressed following the board's review of these disagreements or concerns. Concerns will also be included as an attachment to the local plan.

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

Mr. Gary Goggans
WIOA One Stop Operator/EEO Officer
477 South Main St
Monticello, Arkansas
(870) 224-7075

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

The pandemic created a paradigm shift for our workforce programs, and The Southeast Workforce Development Board began exploring long term ways we can move our WIOA program from traditional brick-and-mortar type programs to being able to interact virtually with our customers. The Southeast Workforce Development contacted its WIOA Youth, WIOA Adult, and Dislocated Workers via Zoom and intends to expand into an online portal in the future. With the help of local partners, Southeast Workforce hosted job fairs during the pandemic aimed at getting recipients of unemployment back into the workforce. Understanding how the pandemic has impacted individuals in their personal lives. It is important to understand how to improve and advance our processes as participants seek to improve themselves. Mitigating workforce anxiety, reducing the worries of participants regarding entering the workforce or returning to school, their future, and the future of their respective industries.

Education and skill Levels of the Workforce including individuals with barriers:

- Target population, focus on serving residents without bachelor's degrees and with multiple barriers to employment.
- Working to increase our number of providers within our 10 counties.

Enhance service delivery to employers and job seekers:

- Creating a sense of safety and security for participants as they seek job placements with the mindset of joining a successful team.
- Listening to the concerns and expectations of the groups experiencing the widest equity gap.
- Increasing the number and diversity of participants. Listening to the concerns and expectations of the groups experiencing the widest equity gap. Preparing an increasingly diverse outcome of job placement.
- Supporting small businesses with access to programs and services with a particular focus on underrepresented communities.
- Preparing an increasingly diverse outcome of job placement. Continue to build on our strong partnership with service agencies outside the workforce arena. Harnessing the power of political and civic leadership to eliminate barriers of public transportation, housing, and internet services in rural areas.
- Aiding those with infants and toddlers to live productive and empowered lives by eliminating barriers.

Address skills gaps:

- Promoting OJT and Apprenticeship Grants opportunities to increase the numbers.
- Increasing Higher Education providers to increase completion rates for technical certification, associate degrees, or bachelor's degrees.

Workforce development activities:

- Finding a way to connect to the vision. When protocol and policies change, finding a way to connect that message back to our vision. Reinforcing the “why” behind our goals and initiatives with passion and conviction
- Reinforcing training post-day one, providing ongoing methods of additional training to reinforce our message and vision for the district’s outcome. Repetition helps with knowledge and retaining important messages and information. Proactively training our staff. Providing training on how to understand new patterns of behaviors of our current and potential participants, understanding the new norm of the workplace, and creating training content topics that will make them feel confident in their day-to-day job duties. Posting our goals in high-volume areas for reminders for staff.

Section 6: COVID Recovery Readiness, Diversity, and Inclusion

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

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

The local area will focus more on equity, education, and training as it is crucial to creating more skilled workers, deeper talent pools, and a more resilient workforce. As the skill requirements of jobs increase and change rapidly, businesses need a diverse, highly skilled pipeline of workers ready for the jobs they create, and Arkansans need access to training so they can be equipped for those jobs. This vision will be accomplished, in part, by utilizing resources provided by partner organizations to support the upskilling efforts of participants; this will allow the local area to accomplish this vision with our current level of funding.

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 President’s emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion of workforce services, and this strategy has been put into action across the Local Area?

The local area has resumed pre-pandemic levels of service. We are utilizing flexible, accommodating approach to deliver workforce services safely and effectively to all individuals.

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

Local strategies to identify, engage and enroll participants who may be unaware of the services available through public workforce system include, at a minimum, developing partnerships with community-based organizations to generate referrals, hosting informational exchange events for local non-profits and members of the public to make them aware of services provided by the workforce system. Southeast has participated in various community events and hosted with the City of Pine Bluff that included non-profits and area businesses to convene and learn about each other's services and the best ways in which we can support participants. Partners and stakeholders will be encouraged to refer their participants to us. This also provides an opportunity for the business services to gather information from these individuals on the workforce barriers they face and influence strategy for regional planning and sector partnerships.

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 local area has developed an outreach and engagement strategy to make the public more aware of the available services of the public workforce system. The local area is utilizing face-to-face outreach, printed marketing materials for distribution to partners and community-based organizations, social media platforms and upgrading the local area provider website. WIOA staff have met with Chambers of Commerce throughout our area, been highlighted in Chamber newsletters and participated in television interviews.

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

The local board staff has worked together to develop a strategic outreach plan that emphasizes partnerships core partners and with many local community organizations to target and serve all populations, including marginalized populations. Local board staff are utilizing a traditional outreach and service approach and is in the process of purchasing software to improve our capacity to provide remote services to marginalized populations in our local area.

6.6 What is the Local Area's plan for increasing the volume of paid and unpaid work experiences, which may include summer and other employment, youth apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training? How does this strategy engage and meet the needs of all eligible youth, including those with disabilities or language barriers, and other marginalized or underserved populations?

Southeast area is working to increase the volume of work experiences by encouraging more out of school youth to participate in Work Experience (WE) activities to help them determine if an identified career path is suitable for their needs and abilities. WE activities will take into account, at a minimum, the skills, abilities, desired career path, and barriers to self-sufficient employment opportunities of all eligible youth, regardless of disabilities, language barriers or cultural marginalization. Accommodations and supports will be provided, as needed and allowable, to overcome any barriers to success. The Summer Youth program provides Work Experience for many in-school students. This program has proven vital for our students as well as our business partners who serve as worksites.

Section 7: Plan Assurances

	Planning Process and Public Comment	References
X	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)
X	7.2 The final local plan is available and accessible to the public.	20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
X	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
X	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
X	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)
X	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
X	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)
X	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)
X	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
X	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
X	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
X	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
X	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)
X	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
X	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
X	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)
X	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
X	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
X	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

X	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
X	7.21 The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable	WIOA Section 108(b)(16); 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15);
	federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); 20 CFR 680.300-310
X	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)
X	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); 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410
X	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
X	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
X	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 enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.	20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A

X	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 I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); 20 CFR 680.300-320
X	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 I WIOA Title programs.	WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); 20 CFR 680.900-970; 20 CFR 681.570
X	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

Appendix B: Transitional Planning References and Resources

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

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

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

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

Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system,

workforce development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action between all workforce related boards.
6. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
7. Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
8. Partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
9. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state' s workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).
10. Expand small business participation.

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

Goal 2 Objectives:

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

10. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).

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

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a one-stop approach to services.
2. Change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
3. Develop a branding and outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the State.
4. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
5. Develop a user-friendly website that provides a common repository of information about career development opportunities that are relevant to K-12 education, parents, educators, adults, employers, government agencies, and the general public.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

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

PY 2016 - PY 2019 Combined State Plan to be found at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm>

I. State Policy and Guidance.

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

II. Labor Market and Workforce Information.

A. Discover Arkansas

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

B. Arkansas State Plan Economic and Workforce Analysis

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

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

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

- Industries in 2012
- Job Growth in 2022
- Projected Job Growth by Workforce Development Area
- Projected Job Growth by Industry
- Percent Workforce in 2022

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

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

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

III. Other Resources.

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

Baseline Indicator Explanation: Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

To affect an orderly transition to the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA, the Departments will use the transition authority under WIOA sec. 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators in the first plan submission. A "baseline" indicator is one for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance. "Baseline" indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The selection of primary indicators for the designation as a baseline indicator is made based on the likelihood of a state having adequate data on which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance and such a designation will vary across core programs.

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&
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