



INNOVATE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

January 7, 2020

1:30 p.m.

Little Rock Workforce Center
5401 South University
Little Rock, Arkansas

Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Strategic Planning Committee



AGENDA

January 7, 2020

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

Call to Order..... Karen Breashears, Committee Chair

Chairman's Comments..... Karen Breashears, Committee Chair

Agenda Item 1: ACTION

Approval of Minutes of the September 25, 2019 meeting..... Karen Breashears, Committee Chair

Agenda Item 2: INFORMATIONAL

Committee Action Plan Update Arnell Willis, Workforce Development Board Director
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Agenda Item 3: ACTION

Key Changes for Public Comment Draft- Common Elements of WIOA State Plan PY2020-23
(Note- Waiver Requests were previously approved) Kris Jones
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Key Changes for Public Comment Draft- WIOA Title I and III Program-Specific Sections of the
WIOA State Plan PY2020-23..... Kris Jones
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Little Rock Workforce Center
5401 University
Little Rock, Arkansas 72209



Agenda Item 4: ACTION

PY18 WIOA Annual Report.....Kris Jones
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Agenda Item 5: ACTION

One-Stop Certification Process Review.....Kris Jones
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Announcements

Adjournment

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Strategic Planning Committee**

January 7, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION: Minutes of the September 25, 2019 Strategic Planning Committee Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Committee approve the minutes of the September 25, 2019 meeting.

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: Minutes of the meetings are attached.

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD Strategic Planning Committee September 25, 2019

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board Strategic Planning Committee conducted a teleconference on September 25, 2019. Accommodations were set-up for in-person attendance at the Arkansas Workforce Center, 5401 South University, Little Rock, Arkansas. Chair Karen Breashears presided over the meeting with each of the following board members voicing their presence, via telephone: Dr. Trenia Miles, Mr. Mike Preston by proxy Dr. Charisse Childers, Dr. Julie Roberson, Mr. Mike Rogers, and Dr. Cassondra Williams-Stokes.

Ms. Melissa Hanesworth, Mr. Randy Henderson and Mr. Paul Rivera were unable to attend.

Hearing a quorum, Chair Karen Breashears called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. immediately following the Arkansas Workforce Development Board Program and Performance Evaluation Committee teleconference meeting.

Chairperson Comments: Chair Karen Breashears reminded members that due to the meeting being conducted via teleconference, members would need to identify themselves by stating their names when making a comment, making a motion or providing a second to a motion after roll call.

Agenda Item 1 – ACTION – Minutes of the June 18, 2019, Meeting: Chair Karen Breashears asked committee members to review the minutes of the June 18, 2019, meeting for any revisions or corrections.

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2019, meeting as presented with no additional revisions was made by Mr. Mike Rogers, seconded by Dr. Trenia Miles. The motion carried unanimously after committee members Mr. Mike Rogers, Ms. Cassondra Williams-Stokes, Dr. Trenia Miles, and Mr. Preston by proxy Dr. Charisse Childers each voiced approval of the minutes with none opposed.

Agenda Item 2 – INFORMATIONAL – Committee Action Plan Update: Committee Chair Karen Breashears recognized Arkansas Workforce Development Board Director Mr. Arnell Willis to provide an update of the Committee Action Plan with a review of activities during the past quarter.

Committee Action Plan Update: Director Willis provided updated activities to committee members. Chair Breashears thanked Director Willis for the Committee Action Plan update.

Agenda Item 3 – INFORMATIONAL - WIOA State Plan Timeline: Chair Breashears recognized Mr. Kris Jones to share with the committee updates on the WIOA State Plan Timeline PY20-23

and the Annual Report Narrative. Board members were encouraged to volunteer to review sections of the WIOA State Plan.

Agenda Item 4 – INFORMATIONAL – Dashboard Update: Chair Breashears recognized Board Staff Kris Jones to provide updates of the Dashboard to committee members. Mr. Jones noted there had not been sudden changes or cause for alarm in the reports for this quarter. He added policy changes were made that may have had an impact on the numbers for supportive services delivered. He stated Board Staff will continue to monitor this in the upcoming quarters. The reports are broken down by the respective Local Workforce Development Areas. Numbers have gone up in work-based learning models outside of on-the-job training (OJT). Some numbers have increased in pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship. This is particularly true in the Western Local Workforce Development Area. Mr. Jones noted the data for the Targeted Populations report is not available at this time. Board members may submit any questions to WIOA@arkansas.gov or AWDB@arkansas.gov e-mail.

Agenda Item 5 – INFORMATIONAL – Salesforce Implementation Update: Chair Breashears recognized Mr. Mark McManus to update committee members on the implementation of Salesforce. Mr. McManus highlighted some of the Salesforce activities to the committee. These activities include the completion of the development of the Salesforce tool. This has been a collaborative effort with core partners in each of the four phases of development. This includes account set-up of businesses and establishing the training application, which includes work-based learning with options of on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, paid internships and work experience, and a dashboard for needs-assessment and gap-analysis. The system went active September 16, 2019, for the 35 authorized users across the state. A working group has been established for Salesforce users. An additional 20 licensures are being reviewed to distribute to other stakeholders requesting access. Mr. McManus ended by reporting additional training is being looked at for the following year.

Agenda Item 6 – INFORMATIONAL – High Concentrations of Youth: Chair Karen Breashears asked Mr. Kris Jones to present to the committee the methodology for High Concentrations of Youth. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires administrators of statewide funds to provide additional assistance to the Local Workforce Development Areas where there are high concentrations of youth. Mr. Jones directed members to the agenda book to review the track changes board staff made to the methodology of the High Concentrations of Youth in comparison to the final version. The committee recommended moving this agenda item to the Full Board for a vote.

Agenda Item 7 – INFORMATIONAL – Sector and Regional Planning Policy: Chair Breashears recognized Mr. Kris Jones to present the policy to assist the Local Workforce Development Areas in Sector and Regional Planning as required under WIOA.

Agenda Item 8 – INFORMATIONAL – Workforce System Evaluation (U of A): Chair Breashears recognized Kris Jones to address the committee on the workforce system evaluation. Board Staff noted the Full Board approved the evaluation of the Workforce System at the April 23, 2019, meeting.

Agenda Item 9 – ACTION – WIOA Title I Waiver Requests: Chair Breashears recognized Mr. Kris Jones to present an overview of waiver requests. Mr. Jones made recommendations to the committee to approve the waiver requests to be presented to the Full Board meeting October 15, 2019.

A motion to approve the waiver requests as presented with no additional revisions or comment was made by Dr. Julie Roberson, seconded by Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes. The motion carried unanimously after committee members Dr. Julie Roberson, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes, Dr. Trenia Miles, and Mr. Preston by proxy Dr. Charisse Childers each voiced approval of the waiver requests with none opposed.

Announcements: Chair Breashears thanked committee members for their participation and attendance. Chair Breashears announced the upcoming Full Board meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. in Little Rock at the Crowne Plaza, 201 South Shackleford. Lunch will be provided immediately following the meeting.

The next Strategic Planning Committee will be Tuesday, January 7, 2020. The meeting may be attended by teleconference or in person at the Little Rock Workforce Center, 5401 University Ave., at 1:30 p.m.

Committee Chair Karen Breashears requested Board Staff to convene committee meetings individually, as in previous meetings, and not together.

Adjourn: Chair Karen Breashears adjourned the meeting at 12:24 p.m. with **a motion to adjourn from Dr. Trenia Miles, seconded by Dr. Charisse Childers.**

Ms. Karen Breashears, Chair
Strategic Planning Committee

Arnell Willis, Director Workforce Investment
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Rebecca Edwards
Division of Workforce Services Staff*

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Strategic Planning Committee**

January 7, 2019

AGENDA ITEM 2 - INFORMATIONAL: Strategic Planning Committee Action Plan –
September 2019 Update

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: The Strategic Planning Committee developed an Action Plan during the initial Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program implementation. This Action Plan provides the roadmap for the activities undertaken by this committee.

Attached is the January 2020 updated Action Plan that will provide Committee Members with the status of each of these original strategic goals.

Strategic Planning Committee Action Plan



Board Mission: To promote and support a talent development system in Arkansas that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity.

Board Vision: Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas' s economy competitive in the global marketplace.	GOALS	STRATEGIES/INITIATIVES	BENCHMARKS	STATUS
	Board Bylaws: Develop the State Plan.	1.1 Develop the state plan.	1.1 Submit the PY 2016 – PY 2019 state plan to the federal agencies on April 1, 2016.	1.1 COMPLETED
		1.2 Modify the state plan.	1.2 Modify the state plan every two years. Next modification due by June 30, 2018.	1.3 CURRENT January 2020 Update- After 6 months of Board presentation, we are moving forward with draft changes to the state plan, which will be presented to the AWDB this quarter.
	Board Bylaws: Review of Statewide Policies	1.1 Review statewide policies, of statewide programs, and recommend actions that should be taken by the state to align workforce development programs in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the state.	1.1 Review statewide policies as they are needed and developed.	1.1 ONGOING
		1.2 Guidance for the allocation of one-stop center infrastructure funds to include the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs with the workforce center system.	1.2 Must be developed and implemented no later than June 30, 2017.	1.2 COMPLETED

	<p>Board Bylaws: Continuous Improvement of the State's Workforce System</p>	<p>1.1. Identify barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system.</p>		<p>1.1 ONGOING- Reference Staff Report on Targeted Population Outreach, WIOA Roundtable Executive Committee updates, and Business Services activities. A barrier facing coordination is the lack of consolidated data and processes.</p> <p>January 2020 Update- In July, Arkansas' Department of Workforce Services because the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, which now houses all core partner programs. Several efforts are concurrently being consolidated with a Transformation team that is tasked with removing duplication. The change also consolidates the four Titles (Adult Education, Rehab, Employment Services and Title I Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Workers programs) at a lower-level, which should lead to more effective coordination.</p> <p>The state has been researching ways to collocate central office staff of all 4 WIOA titles, with 2 collocated currently.</p>
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		1.2 The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment;	1.2 Sector Strategies guidance draft will be provided for consideration by the SPC committee at the January 2017 meeting.	1.2 ONGOING
		1.3 The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system;		1.3 ONGOING Reference Staff Reports for Targeted Population Outreach and Business Services. January 2020 Update- Thomas P. Miller and Associates was contracted to provide training to local Business Services teams and community colleges across the state during the quarter. The emphasis was on apprenticeship and work based learning models, but also included customer service topics.

		1.4 The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations;		<p>1.4 ONGOING</p> <p>January 2020 Update- Thomas P. Miller and Associates was contracted to train business services teams and provided services during the quarter. Additionally, the state funded two more work-based learning projects with Statewide funds.</p>
		1.5 The identification of regions, including planning regions, after consultation with local boards and chief elected officials;		1.5 COMPLETED

	<p>Board Bylaws: Develop strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system.</p>	<p>1.1 Increase opportunities for sharing of information between partner programs.</p> <p>1.2 Develop a strategy for staff training across programs.</p>		<p>1.1 ONGOING.</p> <p>WIOA Roundtable Exec. Comm. quarterly newsletter. (November 2020 Update- On hold)</p> <p>1.2 Strategy for business services</p> <p>COMPLETE- Identify functional leads to represent business services for each partner and program. Leverage the WIOA Roundtable to establish this group of subject matter experts responsible for: 1) COMPLETE- Assisting in the development and maintenance of a business focused menu of services across partner programs and 2) UNDER DEVELOPMENT- provide cross-training regarding services.</p> <p>November 2020 Update- ADWS has contracted with Thomas P. Miller and Associates to provide business services training to LWDBs and their partners across the state. Additional Training took place this quarter which focused on community colleges.</p>
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	Board Bylaws: Develop strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the workforce center system.	1.1 Enhance digital literacy skills.		1.1 UNDER DEVELOPMENT The referral processes in the VOCAL system, which will allow for common-registration, referrals, and reporting, and will be complete in September 2019, will improve accessibility to digital literacy skill development services provided within the Arkansas Workforce System. Additionally, ADWS has requested permission to purchase additional RVs that provide services remotely. January 2020 Update- A workgroup has been established to continue improvements in Salesforce. Partners continue discussions around common intake/registration and the WIOA Roundtable IT Committee has been reengaged to tackle this challenge.
		1.2 Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants.		1.2 ONGOING

		1.3 Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals.		<p>1.3 ONGOING</p> <p>ADWS coordinates semiannual cross- training. WIOA Partners Meetings and provides Technical Assistance and training as needed to workforce professionals funded under Title I</p> <p>January 2020 Update- Staff the AWDB received training for Project Management this quarter and is developing process improvement strategies. This should prove useful in IT projects.</p>
		1.4 Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas.		<p>1.4 ONGOING</p> <p>Workforce Center Certification processes have been developed to ensure accessibility.</p>
	Board Bylaws: The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas.	1.1 Review annually the funding distribution policy for WIOA Title I.	1.1 No later than the first full board meeting of each year, as necessary.	1.1 ONGOING
		1.2 Seek input from chief elected officials regarding the formula.	1.2 No later than December 31 of each year.	1.2 ONGOING

	Strategic Goal: 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.	1.1 Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.		1.1 ONGOING Strategy- COMPLETE- Work-based learning funds have been established on the state-level to support business engagement on the local level. COMPLETE- Sector strategy funds will be provided annually to LWDBs to support the engagement of employers. UNDER DEVELOPMENT Additionally, the deployment of Salesforce will enable partners to coordinate services while engaging employers. January Update- TANF and WIOA are working together to develop a strategy to develop another expansion of WBL funding, but the discussion is too early for current reports.
		1.2 Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.		1.2 ONGOING

		1.3 Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.		1.3 ONGOING
		1.4 Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.		1.4 ONGOING
		1.5 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.		1.5 ONGOING
		1.6 Expand small business participation.		1.6 ONGOING See 1.1

	Strategic Goal: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.	1.1 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.		1.1 UNDER DEVELOPMENT January 2020 Update- A workgroup has been established to continue improvements in Salesforce. Partners continue discussions around common intake/registration and the WIOA Roundtable IT Committee has been reengaged to tackle this challenge.
		1.2 Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.		1.2 UNDER DEVELOPMENT
		1.3 Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.		1.3 UNDER DEVELOPMENT
		1.4 Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.		1.4 ONGOING
		1.5 Expand service delivery access points by the use of virtual services.		1.5 UNDER DEVELOPMENT
		1.6 Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that		1.6 ONGOING

		will be utilized by all workforce system partners.		
	Strategic Goal: Address Skills Gaps	1.1 Conduct a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue.		1.1 UNDER DEVELOPMENT January 2020 Update- University of Arkansas has been contracted to perform and evaluation for the upcoming year, as well as a skills gap and asset mapping effectiveness review. This particular review may assist WDBs in closing skills gaps and leveraging local resources.
		1.2 Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas.		1.2 ONGOING

NOTE: The “STATUS” Column, Column Four, Is Used To Denote:

- A. COMPLETED** – These are activities that were primarily a “one-time” occurrence or a WIOA implementation activity and does not require an ongoing update.
- B. ONGOING** – These are activities for which progress and/or efforts are still being taken to complete.
- C. UNDER DEVELOPMENT** – These are activities that either a) require more planning or staff to implement or b) have not been implemented due to their dependence upon the completion of other strategic goals first.

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Strategic Planning Committee**

January 7, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 3 - ACTION: WIOA PY2020-2023 State Plan Public Comment Draft

- Key Changes
- WIOA Title I and III Program-Specific Sections

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, under Arkansas Annotated 15-4-3706(1), is to assist the Governor in ***“the development, implementation, and modification of the state workforce development plan.”***

WIOA Unified and Combined State Plans for Program Years 2020-2023 will likely be due March-April 2020, with implementation beginning on July 1, 2020

Portions of the plan are “Program-Specific” and may be approved through numerous channels. The Program-Specific Sections for WIOA Titles I and III are in the purview of the AWDB and therefore presented directly to this board.

The current draft of the PY2020-2023 WIOA State Plan may be found at:

<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/news-info/adws-public-notice-news-release/>

**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Strategic Planning Committee**

January 7, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 4 - ACTION: PY18 Arkansas WIOA Annual Report

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, under 20 CFR § 679.130, is to assist the Governor with Preparation of the annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of WIOA sec. 116(d).

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommend the Strategic Planning Committee review, edit, and recommend with changes, the Arkansas PY18 Annual Report. The Report will then be submitted to the AWDB on January 21st, 2020, for final approval.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE
INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY
ACT (WIOA) TITLE I AND TITLE III
ANNUAL STATEWIDE
PERFORMANCE REPORT
PROGRAM YEAR 2018

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

From the Director

As the newly-appointed Director of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS), I have the honor of presenting our Program Year 2018 annual report. It is designed to give readers a closer look at our programs, highlight the year's accomplishments, and demonstrate two of the agency's core values: transparency and results.

Although I did not assume leadership of ADWS until July 1, 2019, I am very familiar with the WIOA Programs as the former Director of the Arkansas Department of Career Education. Additionally, I have served on the Arkansas Workforce Development Board since 2016. I am extremely proud of the successes we have seen, the progress we have made, and the challenges we have overcome. Under the guidance of Governor Asa Hutchinson, ADWS has become the state's lead workforce development agency. I would like to thank and commend my staff, the lifeblood of ADWS, for their hard work, dedication, and service to our state. Without them, ADWS would not be the agency it is today.

These are exciting times for Arkansas: total employment is up, the unemployment rate consistently outpaces that of the nation, and thousands of jobs were added in the past year. The economy in our state is growing, and as it continues to expand, ADWS will be there to carry the momentum forward.

Education and workforce development opportunities are critical to a strong economy. To aid in meeting these demands, ADWS will continue to collaborate with its partners and work closely with employers and job seekers to develop initiatives and offer effective programs and services to enrich the economic growth of Arkansas.

Together we are preparing today's workforce for tomorrow's careers.

Sincerely,

Charisse Childers Ph.D
Director

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I. Introduction

Last year, 107,706 Arkansas residents accessed the state's workforce system for assistance in acquiring or retaining employment. They came from a wide array of demographics, characteristics, backgrounds and experiences: low-income, single parents, migrant and seasonal workers, single parents struggling to support themselves, workers displaced by a changing economy and veterans returning from active duty. Many needed help connecting to unemployment benefits and assistance in determining next career steps. Others needed more basic, individualized or training services to overcome barriers to meaningful employment. Two of the primary funding sources for these basic, individualized services is the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and Wagner-Peyser Title III programs. This report provides an in-depth look at the impact those funds have had in Arkansas in Program Year 2018, July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

II. Overview of Arkansas' Workforce Development System

Arkansas' workforce development system is a coordinated and collaborative network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state's workforce. In order to meet the challenge of the 21st century global economy, the public workforce system works in partnership with businesses, educators, organized labor and community leaders to foster economic development and high-growth opportunities in regional economies. This network further helps potential job candidates, particularly low-income youth, adults and displaced workers, overcome obstacles to successful employment. These services are coordinated through Arkansas Workforce Centers, the state's one-stop delivery system. Primary funding for Arkansas Workforce Center operations and many of the basic and individualized services is provided by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933. Other formula-based and competitive federal, state and local resources and services that support our workforce system include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), veteran services, USDOL National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG), Trade Adjustment Assistance, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Assistance and other partner program funds.

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

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

III. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services began its legacy around 1940 as the Arkansas Employment Security Division of the state Department of Labor. In 1941, Act 391 created a

network of public employment offices. With that, a fund for the disbursement of benefits to be paid out during periods of unemployment was put in place, as well as a board of review to hear claims and appeals for unemployment benefits. The division underwent no great changes until Act 100 of 1991. This raised it to a department-level agency and made it the Arkansas Employment Security Department.

In 2007, Act 551 created the Department of Workforce Services Training Trust Fund for the operating expenses of the Unemployment Insurance program. Thus, the name of the agency was changed to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. Throughout its history, the agency's mission remained essentially the same: to provide employment related services that enhance the economic stability of Arkansas.

In 2019, Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson signed the Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 into law, cutting the number of cabinet-level agencies from 42 to 15. This piece of state legislation went into effect on July 1, 2019 and reflects a reorganization of the workforce partner agencies in Arkansas. Specifically, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services became the Division of Workforce Services and incorporated the former Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Division of Services for the Blind, and Adult Education Services. This report incorporates these changes and includes the following new acronyms:

- ADWS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services
- DSB – Division of Services for the Blind
- ARS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- AES – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Adult Education Services

Since ADWS is a state agency, it does not earn a profit and does not measure success by business growth and expansion. The size of the agency's budget and the staffing levels are adapted to best meet the needs of the state and its customers while balancing the requirements of stakeholders. The agency is unique from other state agencies in that it is 99 percent federally funded with taxpayer dollars. Even though the agency is almost entirely funded with federal money, the Arkansas Legislature appropriates the agency's funds and has the authority to pass legislation affecting agency programs and services on a state level. As a result, ADWS must adhere to both state and federal laws and regulations.

Our success is measured by our ability to cushion the impact of economic downturns and bring economic stability to the state by meeting the needs of employers and job seekers. As a proud partner of the American Job Centers, ADWS and the Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of services to assist both groups.

WIOA Roundtable

In PY2018, ADWS focused on revamping the WIOA Roundtable and its subcommittees. The WIOA Roundtable consists of senior-level representatives from partner agencies including the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Arkansas Department of Human Services-Division of Services for the Blind. The goal of the WIOA Roundtable is for partners to coordinate their efforts to improve the state's workforce development delivery system. Moving forward, the Governor's Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 will only strengthen this group's cohesion and effectiveness.

IV. State and Local Roles

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (State Board) assists the Governor in overseeing the state's workforce development system. The core business of the State Board is to coordinating state policy and state strategic planning for the workforce development system, evaluating results and facilitating demonstration projects that test innovations and ideas. ADWS serves as the state's WIOA Title I grant recipient. These WIOA responsibilities include stewardship of the funds, oversight and monitoring activities, issuing statewide policy, management of grants and contracts and allocation of the WIOA Title I funds to the local area Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards) for the delivery of services within an integrated service delivery system. ADWS also fulfills an operational role within the workforce system through providing services funded under the Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans Services Grants, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) programs.

The Local Boards are the local conveners and managers of the workforce system through which WIOA programs are accessed. They are the strategic visionaries for local implementation of WIOA funds. There are ten (10) Local Boards in Arkansas and each is private industry led and locally focused. Local Board members are appointed by Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), and certified by the Governor. CEOs are the local area WIOA Title I grant recipients. CEOs direct their Local Boards' staff to administer the funds and oversee the area's Workforce Centers to most effectively respond to the local economy and needs of local citizens. Local Boards convene with regional partners and stakeholders to assess skill gaps, identify emerging and future employment possibilities and collaborate with economic developers and other partners to develop the region's workforce development plan.

V. WIOA Title I and Title III Programs

WIOA Title I Youth Program

Who is served: Youth must be between 14 and 24 years old, low income (WIOA allows for a 5% exclusion) and meet other criteria described in the WIOA, such as a need for additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

Participation: Approximately 1,000 young people were served by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

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

WIOA Title I Adult Program

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

Participation: Approximately 1,400 participants received career services and 1,200 participants received training services by the WIOA Adult Training Services Program between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

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

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program

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

Participation: Approximately 330 participants received career services and 250 received training services through the WIOA Dislocated Worker Career Program between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

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

Note- Arkansas has taken the approach of housing Dislocated Worker/Rapid Response, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Reemployment Assistance within one unit to ensure proper coordination across those programs. Additionally, a referral process is in place to provide these referrals to Title I service providers and Employment Services and partners are invited to meetings with businesses impacted by layoffs procedurally.

WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program

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

Participation: 85,500 participants were served under Wagner-Peyser between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Program description: The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices, known as the Employment Service. The Employment Service seeks to improve the functioning of the nation's labor markets by bringing together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers. The Wagner-Peyser Act was amended in 1998 to make the Employment Service part of the one-stop delivery system under the Workforce Investment Act. In 2014, the Wagner-Peyser Act was amended again under Title III of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The Employment Service under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act builds upon the previous workforce reforms, requires colocation of the Employment Service offices into the nearly 2,500 American Job Centers nationwide, and aligns performance accountability indicators with other federal workforce programs. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information; consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized services include career and vocational counseling.

VI. Arkansas Workforce Centers

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are the gateways to job services and workforce development programs in our state. With 33 Arkansas Workforce Centers located strategically throughout the state, representatives are available to help employers and job seekers find the best resources and services to meet their needs.

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

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

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

1. Self-service in the resource rooms
2. Intensive services and career counseling
3. Training and skill-building for those who qualify

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

In PY2018, there were 108,114 staff-assisted participant registrations in the Arkansas JobLink system.

Workforce specialists assist individuals who require or request personal assistance and intensive services. In one-on-one meetings, staff interview and assess clients to determine specific needs and eligibility for programs. Workforce specialists also provide career counseling and work with job seekers to develop customized employment plans

based on their current skill sets, professional experience, employment history, cost of living, and personal goals.

In PY2018, there were 50,918 referrals made by Workforce Center staff in the Arkansas JobLink System.

VII. WIOA Discretionary Grants

Discretionary Grants

Since 2010, ADWS has been awarded a total of over \$40 million in discretionary grants funding.

Discretionary grants provide economic support for workforce development initiatives and relief funds for temporary employment, clean-up efforts, and infrastructure repairs when natural disasters strike.

During the Program Year, efforts have been focused on building partnerships with stakeholders and employers across the state to expand and diversify registered apprenticeship programs (and the number of apprentices) in Arkansas. As an example, ADWS has initiated the launching of a series of *Employers Growing Talent Through Apprenticeship – Employer Forums* to increase awareness and interest of the proven registered apprenticeship model as a workforce development solution. These collective efforts have contributed to unprecedented growth in both the number of apprentices and registered apprenticeship programs over the last year. This expansion has been facilitated through the following grants: ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator, Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative (AAPI), and Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA).

ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant

The ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator grant has a period of performance that started on June 1st, 2016 and concluded on November 30, 2018. The Accelerator grant is a planning grant intended to provide support for governors and their states as they build upon existing strategies to expand and diversify registered apprenticeship. These strategies include convening key industry representatives, state agency leaders, community college representatives and other stakeholders to form strategic partnerships, and elevate apprenticeship as a workforce solution in both traditional apprenticeship industries (i.e., construction trades) and non-traditional apprenticeship industries (i.e., information technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, business services, transportation, etc.).

The final deliverable of the Accelerator grant resulted in the development of the *State Plan for Registered Apprenticeship Expansion and Diversification* (<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/news-info/apprenticeship-news/>). The State Plan includes a series of recommendations that together offer a strategic alignment of resources and communications efforts to maximize registered apprenticeship expansion efforts within the state.

Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative

Registered apprenticeship offers a career pathway for job seekers to learn a skill and earn good wages while earning a marketable credential from the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprentices are considered employees from day one of the program; they receive paid training and progressive increases in wage as they demonstrate skills gain.

The AAPI grant is expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities in the traditional registered apprenticeship construction trades, as well as in the non-traditional registered apprenticeship industry sectors, such as information technology and advanced manufacturing.

Collaborative work efforts under the AAPI grant has pioneered non-traditional (i.e., outside the construction trades) registered apprenticeship programs in Arkansas, introducing software developer and cybersecurity apprenticeships working with the Arkansas Center for Data Sciences and partnering employers as well as industrial maintenance, culinary, and nursing related apprenticeships. The AAPI grant is scheduled to end September 30, 2020.

Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship

The AREA grant was the last of the three USDOL ApprenticeshipUSA Initiative Grants awarded to ADWS. This grant award is offering the opportunity to leverage funding to expand Arkansas' capacity to collaborate with employers and start new apprenticeship programs across diverse industries and communities. AREA registered apprenticeship training programs are available across all industry sectors where employer demand drives the expansion of existing programs or the development of new programs. The AREA grant is scheduled to end on October 31, 2020.

Re-Employment Systems Integration

Arkansas strives to promote and support a talent development system that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity. This project's purpose is to build on the relationship between the ADWS and its WIOA Partners in the design & development of a secure, integrated common intake & case management system that is a citizen-focused service delivery model that enhances the access to programs & services for all of our customers.

ADWS and our WIOA partners have implemented a Business Service Teams Solution in Arkansas's workforce centers, that will enable us to coordinate, manage, and record the services being provided to business' to meet the spirit of the WIOA law, to avoid multiple contacts to business by leveraging the communication tools available in Salesforce, and to establish additional data for reporting the new business metrics.

Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant– AR-29 (Storms occurring between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019)

In June of 2017, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency declared storm impacted counties within the northwest and north central regions as federal disaster areas. ADWS received a total award of \$2,060,000 to fund temporary employment and recovery assistance for storm debris removal and repairs. Disaster NDWG AR-29 has an end date of June 30, 2019.

Arkansas PROMISE

Arkansas PROMISE is part of a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Social Security Administration to help youth receiving disability benefits, and their families, improve their educational and employment outcomes. This project is being implemented in 11 states. In Arkansas, the program is administered by the Department of Education and the University of Arkansas, in partnership with several other state agencies and private organizations. PROMISE provides services to youth and their families, including intensive case management, two paid competitive work experiences, education and employment training, and support for youth and families, benefits counseling, and health and wellness training. Arkansas PROMISE has an end date of September 30, 2018.

VIII. Arkansas Labor Market

The 2019 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report, released in Summer 2019, projected information for industry and occupational trends covering the years 2018 to 2020.

Arkansas increased in population in 2018 by 10,828 from 2017; and added a total of 46,099 new residents from 2014 to 2018. Of Arkansas's 10 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), Northwest Arkansas continues to see the largest increase in population, adding 36,160 in 2018. The Eastern, North Central, Southeast, and Southwest Arkansas LWDAs continued to see decreasing populations in 2018.

Between 2017 and 2018 the state's labor force decreased by 2,769 and employment decreased by 2,975. Labor force and employment were mixed across LWDAs. The State's unemployment rate remained at 3.7% in 2018, but that is a drop of two and three-tenths percentage points since 2014. The unemployment rate dropped in 2018, ending the month of July at 3.4%. The unemployment rate decreased across all LWDAs in 2018 and through July 2019. The Northwest Arkansas LWDA unemployment rate fell below state levels through July 2019.

Short-term employment projections for 2018-2020 continue to see an increase in the Arkansas job market with 38,742 jobs, equivalent to a 2.75% rise in employment. Good-producing Industries are estimated to see a net gain of 9,066 jobs; while the Services-Producing Industries are forecast to increase employment by 26,480. Arkansas's self-employed ranks are estimated to experience a net gain of 2,823, an increase of 2.25%.

Jobs requiring a high school diploma or equivalent are estimated to add more jobs than any other education level with 15,511 jobs between 2018 and 2020. Occupations requiring a Bachelor's degree are expected to grow by 7,851.

IX. State's Strategic Vision and Goals Progress

In Arkansas, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board is responsible for ensuring that the vision and goals for the state's workforce development system are being met. Consequently, the Board has assigned this duty to its Strategic Planning Committee. Upon its inception, the Strategic Planning Committee developed a Strategic Action Plan grid that contained the ongoing strategic goals for the State, complete with milestones and completion dates.

At each of its quarterly meetings, the Strategic Planning Committee reviews an updated Action Plan that provides a "report card" towards achieving these goals. Some of this Committee's strategic goals and progress made towards achieving them are listed below:

Strategic Planning Committee Action Plan Results

- The development, implementation, and modification of the state workforce development plan. PY2016-2019 Completed. PY2020-2023 Ongoing.
- The review of statewide policies, of statewide programs, and of recommendations on actions that should be taken by the state to align workforce development programs in the state in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the state, including the review and provision of comments on the state plan, if applicable, for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs. Continuous.

- The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the state, including the identification of barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system. Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment. Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system. Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Continuous and updates provided at each Committee Meeting.
- The identification of regions, including planning regions, after consultation with local boards and chief elected officials. Completed.
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system. Continuous via bi-annual Statewide WIOA Partner Meeting;
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state's one-stop delivery system. Initial policy manual developed, but ongoing review and identification of new policy needs ongoing.
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system. Initial project approved and ongoing, with quarterly progress reports.
- Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals; and Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas. Ongoing.
- The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas. Approved, but reviewed annually.

X. Sector Strategies and Career Pathways

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), economic development entities are partners in the workforce system. While economic development efforts are centered on recruiting new businesses and helping existing ones expand in a region, workforce development partners assist with the expansion and retention activities of existing businesses.

This entails sector strategies for training, skill upgrading, work-based learning (including apprenticeship), on-the-job training, work experience, incumbent worker training, and customized training.

In PY 2018, Arkansas took several steps to improve sector strategies and career pathways. 1) A second round of Sector and Regional Planning funds were made available to Local Workforce Development Areas, funded by the Governor's 15% reserve. Technical Assistance from the Business Services lead were provided to ensure the strategies are effective. 2) Throughout the

year, training was offered to expand applicants of the state's WBL program. During PY18, two projects were funded, which focused on homeless and TANF recipients respectively 3) ADWS continued working towards implementing Salesforce, a business-focused Customer Relation Management tool for local Business Services Teams, which went live on September 16, 2019. 4) Finally, the common registration system moved forward with Services for Blind, Employment Services, and Title I Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker case management systems developing a common file for communicating between systems. Employment Services and Title I (Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Workers) MIS is currently developing processes to accept and produce the file for partners. Funding for further development in the case management systems in Titles II and IV are a current constraint, but the state is actively looking at alternative solutions that remove that barrier.

Sector Strategies and Industry Initiatives

Industry focus groups and sector initiatives (also called sector partnerships or sector strategies) are regional, employer-driven partnerships of industry leaders, education and training consortia, and other stakeholders that focus on the workforce needs of key industries in a regional labor market.

ADWS has previously released guidance and funding availability opportunities to Local Workforce Development Boards to encourage the development and implementation of sector strategies planning efforts on a regional basis. To date, these previous efforts have achieved limited successes. Therefore, ADWS is currently evaluating “best practice” models (e.g., Colorado), technical assistance resources, and various other strategies to incentivize broad-based adoption of sector strategies planning efforts on an ongoing basis across all Local Workforce Development Boards.

Career Pathway Strategies

ADWS, in collaboration with Arkansas Research Center, has developed a Career Pathways report to demonstrate demand within occupations based on Job Posting data (source- EMSI) to wages based on LMI. The reports are grouped by the Career Cluster and Career Pathway associated with each occupation, and presented per Local Area. This information will be provided to Local Areas and updated at least annually.

XI. Business Engagement

During the Program Year, Arkansas continued its efforts in expanding the services available to the State's businesses through the Workforce Center System. These efforts included further solidifying the roles and responsibilities of Local Workforce Development Area Business Services Teams as well as engagement with WIOA core partners. Several of the LWDA's are in the early stages of their business services development, implementation and outreach efforts. ADWS has taken the lead in establishing and convening the WIOA Roundtable – Business Engagement Committee that includes representation across partner programs. This Committee has conducted a statewide business services workshop to communicate the menu of services that are offered through the various partner programs. This workshop provided attendees with an overall awareness of available programs in order to better serve clients.

Additionally, the committee members (including a broader group of WIOA core partner representatives) have been active in the development and implementation of Salesforce. Salesforce is a customer relations management tool that will assist business services teams to track and report business engagement activities across partner programs. The Salesforce system will allow business services staff to begin recording actual business engagement activity leading to improved tracking and reporting. A long- term goal for Salesforce is to integrate the sharing and usage of data within the system with economic development and other state agency partners.

XII. Waivers

The State of Arkansas has not requested any waivers. Arkansas will be request the following waivers in the upcoming 2020 plan for the following: remove the ETP reporting requirement for non-WIOA participants, reduce the Out-of-School Youth requirement from 75% to 50%, to increase the reimbursement for large employers in OJT to 90%, and a waiver to allow the Governor's Statewide Funds to fund temporary cleanup efforts following a FEMA declaration.

XIII. Evaluations

While Arkansas has not yet completed an evaluation, efforts in PY2018 to enter into a contract with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville to complete a workforce system evaluation. This evaluation will employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate, and includes:

- A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas. This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.
 1. Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas-to determine if, based on the participants information in the Case File, the participant might have been eligible to receive services under the required partners listed in 20 CFR § 678.400.
 2. For each local area selected, interview leadership to identify partner programs and non-profits that collaborate with the Workforce Centers beyond the list of required partners above. For all partners, required in number 1 and other partners identified in 2, report whether there exists:
 - Memorandums of Understanding between the programs/entities
 - Referral Procedures
 - Training for partners regarding the services provided or alternative print materials to assist in collaboration OR
 - An alternative method to refer clients between the partners effectively
 3. Identify and report entities in the selected local areas that provide services to the following targeted populations:
 - Displaced Homemaker
 - Low Income

- Limited English Proficiency
- Migrant Worker
- Disabled
- Veteran
- Older Worker
- Out of School Youth
- Foster Youth
- Basic Skill Deficient
- Ex-Offender
- Single Parent
- TANF Recipient
- SNAP Recipient
- SSDI Recipient
- UI Claimant
- Long-Term Unemployed

4. For all programs and services identified in steps 1, 2, and 3, report whether sampled participants were: referred to or co-enrolled in other programs or services.

B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps

Interview staff for examples of:

- i. Skills-gap identification on either the occupation level, based on demand, or the skill-level based on interaction with an employer.
- ii. Determine the services that were provided to address the skills-gap
- iii. Provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the services provided in closing the skills-gap, if possible.

C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State's certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be located in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above

D. Conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.

E. Provide evaluation status reports on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports will be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.

F. Provide a preliminary evaluation report by August 15, 2020.

G. Provide a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations by September 30, 2020.

XIV. Customer Satisfaction

While Arkansas has not implemented a customer satisfaction survey process for WIOA participants, we intend to collect and utilize customer feedback to assist in improving services to better meet the needs of job seeker. The feedback received from customers will be summarized in annual performance report narratives and utilized in the One-Stop certification process.

In addition to the customer service surveys included in our Evaluation Contract that is described above, we will also initiate the following for upcoming years.

DATA COLLECTION

To collect feedback, Arkansas will develop a customer satisfaction survey for job seekers through SurveyMonkey or QUIA. A link to each survey will be emailed to Arkansas Job Link customer accounts accordingly. Initially, this job seeker survey will be sent to WIOA Title I and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) exits each quarter of the Program Year during the months of July, October, January, and April.

The job seeker survey will be sent from the WIOA@arkansas.gov account and will include the corresponding SurveyMonkey or QUIA survey link.

RESULTS

In addition to annual performance reports and One-Stop certification, results data will be used throughout the program year to improve services to better meet the needs of businesses and job seekers. Responses and data will be exported from SurveyMonkey or QUIA by the ADWS on a quarterly basis.

The summary data for the survey will be filtered by date to show the proper reporting periods, exported as a customized read-only link, and sent to the ADWS Senior Leadership.

Overall results filtered by date and Arkansas Workforce Center location will be exported as read-only links and sent all applicable Arkansas Workforce Center Managers.

Managers will share the information with their entire staff and use it to improve service delivery performance.

Both summary data and individual Workforce Center data will be presented to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board.

XV. Common Exit Policy

Please see below, Arkansas's Common Exit Policy:

Definitions Policy 1.2- Common Exit date – Arkansas has chosen to use a common exit date, as allowed in 20 CFR 677.150(c)(3) and encouraged in TEGL 10-16. Included in the common exit are: -Title I-B Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker formula programs, -Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program (Participants in Jobs for Veterans State Grants must be co-enrolled in and have a common exit with Wagner-Peyser Employment Services [TEGL 16-16]), - Trade Adjustment Assistance program (TAA), authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq., and -Title I-D National Dislocated Worker Grants The WIOA common exit date is the last date of service or activities (other than follow-up services,

self-service, and information-only services and activities) in any of these programs in which a participant is enrolled, and no future services (other than follow-up services, self-service, and information-only services and activities) are planned. Information concerning follow-up services may be found in policies concerning each particular program. The criteria must be met for all programs in which a participant is enrolled before a participant is considered to be exited. The last date of service cannot be officially determined until at least 90 days have elapsed since the participant last received services or activities from any of these programs, (other than follow-up services, self-service, and information-only services and activities) [20 CFR 677.150(c); Comments in WIOA Final Rule concerning §677.150(c); TEGLs 10-16, 19-16, and 21-16].

XVI. WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Adult Education Section provides Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Second Language (ESL) services to all eligible adult education and literacy programs in Arkansas. Using the thirteen considerations, eligible programs will be funded as stated in “Distribution of Funds for Core Programs” using the previously stated competitive processes. Eligible provider’s activities include reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, will be based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice. In addition, adult education and literacy providers work collaboratively with other agencies to enhance services.

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

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

XVII. WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program

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

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

ARS

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

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

DSB

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

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

Please note that under the Governor's Transition Plan, the yet to be appointed Secretary of Commerce will have transitional authority regarding the state director of the Arkansas vocational rehabilitation program as well as the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation

- Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests.
- Rehabilitation - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living.
- Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.
- Field Services personnel provide the local level coordination and facilitation of all general vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with blind or visual impairment issues. This includes, but is not limited to, vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational case management, eligibility determination, individual employment plan development, transition services, and job placement.

- Business and Technology personnel provide assistance to educate consumers to develop management and business ownership within the Vending Facility Program (VFP). The Vending Facility Program Services are available to eligible blind persons who are interested in and have the necessary skills to manage snack bars.

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

XVIII. Success Stories

During the Program Year, ADWS encouraged Local Workforce Areas to begin regularly collecting and publishing participant success stories on their websites. However, we have including a sample of these stories.

SHANISA THOMAS' SUCCESS STORY

Shanisa Thomas, a single mother of three, wanted to provide a better life for her family and she was interested in pursuing a career as a Nurse. However, she did not have the financial means to pay for the training.

In May 2017, after she met with a Career Consultant at the Arkansas Workforce Center in North Little Rock to discuss her options, she enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult Program and began working on her educational training at the University of Little Rock (UALR).to become a Registered Nurse.

Working vigorously and determined to succeed, not only was she accepted into the National Nursing Honor's Society, she also graduated from UALR with an Associate of Science Degree in Nursing two years later. Shortly after, she obtained her Registered Nursing License and began working full time employment at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Little Rock making a self-sufficient wage.

In the end, Shanisa was proud of the available resources through WIOA that allowed her to reach her goal in finding a career that she would love and that would allow her to provide for her family.

BRYAN HJELDEN'S SUCCESS STORY

In January 2019, after being laid off from his job, Bryan Hjelden visited the Arkansas Workforce Center in Conway to apply for unemployment benefits. Afterwards, he spoke with Ashlee Ennis, Career Consultant, to discuss possible services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker Program.

He decided that a new career in the transportation industry would provide a steady income and being a Truck Driver would allow him to provide for his family.

Shortly after, Bryan enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker Program. Being self-motivated and driven to succeed, he began his Occupational Skills Training at Level One Driving Academy in February 2019.

After the completion of his training, Bryan received his certification on April 11, 2019. Shortly after, he obtained full time employment at the City of Conway Sanitation Department as a CDL Driver making \$17.00 an hour.

In the end, Bryan was able to take advantage of the amazing opportunities through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and has acquired long-term, sustainable employment in the Transportation industry, which is and in-demand industry in Central Arkansas.

NIKEIA TALLEY'S SUCCESS STORY

Hoping to obtain her degree in Nursing and unable to pay for the course herself, single mom Nikeia Talley visited the Arkansas Workforce Center at Benton to discuss potential opportunities available through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program.

In January of 2019, she enrolled in the WIOA Adult program and received Educational Training Services to assist her with completing her final semester in the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Nursing Program.

Despite managing her special needs child's busy schedule and all the demands that come with being a single parent, on May 11, 2019 she successfully walked across the stage at UALR's Commencement Ceremony and received her degree in Nursing.

Upon the successful completion of the State Board Examination, she accepted a job offer and began working at the Saline Memorial Hospital on July 8, 2019 earning a substantial wage which allows her to support her family.

When it came to defining her educational and career goals, she took advantage of the support and services that were provided through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant.

XIX. Statewide Performance Report Results

Table Narrative

The following data tables make up the final portion of Arkansas's *WIOA Title I and Title III Annual Report*. A few notes may help with interpretation. Federal deadlines and the need for prompt reporting mean that the year-long periods used for some measures are not the same year-long periods used for others. Finally, since these are outcome measures, they concentrate on participants who have left WIOA programs and do not include those who are still participating.

Federal employment rates second quarter after exit and median earnings measures are calculated for participants who exited between July 2017 and June 2018. Federal employment rates four quarters after exit are calculated for participants who exited between July 2017 and December 2017. Median earnings second quarter after exit are calculated for participants who exited between July 2017 and June 2018.

As the charts below indicate, Arkansas met or exceeded the 90% threshold in all performance measures.

Moreover, Arkansas experienced increases in services provided to the WIOA-defined *Populations with Barriers to Employment*. Between Program Year 2017 and Program Year 2018, Arkansas the following increases:

- Exhausting TANF within 2 years - increased from 123 to 1,338
- Ex-Offenders – increased from 1,202 to 1,573
- Homeless – increased from 537 to 693
- Low-Income – increased from 11,816 to 18,971
- Individuals with Disabilities (incl. Youth) – increased from 1,657 to 2,846
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system – increased from 25 to 73

The Employment Rate Q4 experienced increases as well, including:

- Individuals with Disabilities – increased from 50.74% to 56.97%
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system – increased from 75.00% to 81.82%
- Ex-Offenders – increased from 60.78% to 63.86%

Finally, Median Earnings increased for the following populations:

- Displaced Homemakers - \$3,338.29 to \$4,187.37
- English Language Learners - \$4,173.42 to \$4,491.00
- Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers - \$4,026.97 to \$5,323.37
- Individuals with Disabilities - \$3,646.19 to \$4,942.62
- Youth in foster care or aged out of system - \$2,997.15 to \$3,592.26

The actual performance tables for WIOA Titles I & III are listed on the next page.

ADULTS												
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)		Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	
					Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate
Total Statewide	1365	834	Target			91.10%		85.80%	\$6,281.00		74.20%	NA
			Actual	Num.	724		775		661		801	
				Denom.	854	84.78%	922	84.06%	\$6,161.65	818	80.81%	1020 78.53%

DISLOCATED WORKERS												
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)		Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	
					Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate
Total Statewide	327	226	Target			91.00%		85.50%	\$7,000.00		76.10%	NA
			Actual	Numerator	237		214		149		173	
				Denominator	268	88.43%	239	89.54%	\$6,396.00	189	78.84%	212 81.60%

YOUTH													
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)		Placement Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Placement Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		
					Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate	
Total Statewide	998	593	Target			75.00%		78.10%	NA		75.00%		NA
			Actual	Numerator	438		476		256		318		
				Denominator	548		79.93%		592		80.41%		\$3,127.68

WAGNER-PEYSER													
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019)		Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		
					Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate	
Total Statewid e	105,016	102,234	Target			73.40%		74.50%	\$4,750.00		NA	NA	
			Actual	Numerator	75,723		73,505		NA		NA		
				Denominator	104,727						NA		
					7	72.31%	102,206	71.92%	\$5,136.93	NA	NA	NA	NA

XX. Statewide Performance Report - Effectiveness in Serving Employers

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

- Retention with the Same Employer
- Employer Penetration.

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

Effectiveness in Serving Employers	
Employer Services	Establishment Count Cohort Period: 7/1/2018-6/30/2019
Employer Information and Support Services	2,809
Workforce Recruitment Assistance	5,521
Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development	69
Accessing Untapped Labor Pools	119
Training Services	22
Incumbent Work Training Services	6
Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance	65
Planning Layoff Response	27

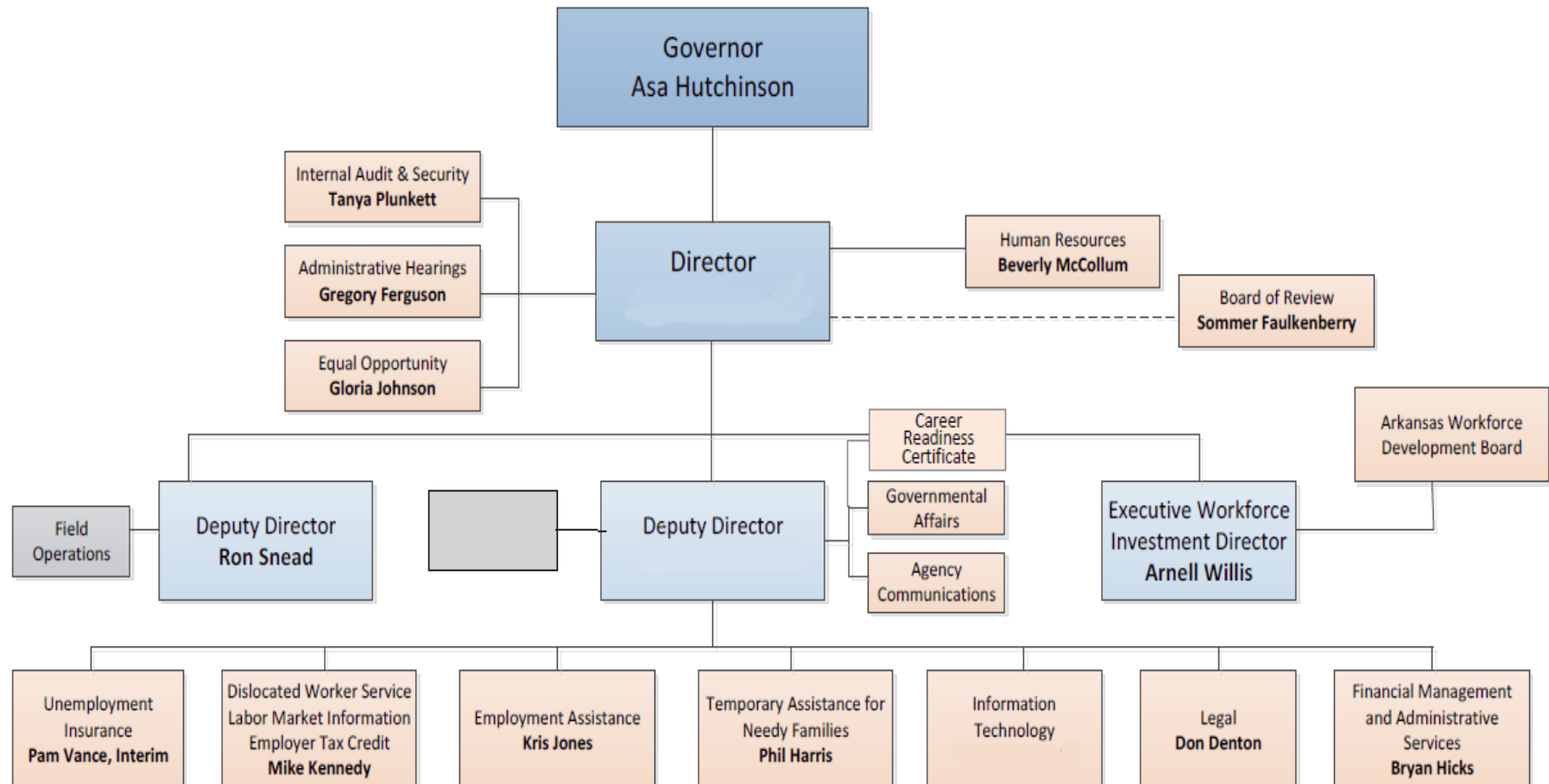
The chart below details the actual achieved performance for the two pilot measures, Retention with the Same Employer and Employer Penetration, during the program year.

Pilot Measures	Numerator/Denominator*	Rate
		Cohort Period: 7/1/2018-6/30/2019
Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate	44.014/66,539	66.1%
Employer Penetration Rate	6,932/104,832	6.6%
Repeat Business Customers Rate	N/A	N/A
State Established Measure	N/A	N/A

XXI. Organization Chart

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

October 2019



**For Consideration of the
Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Strategic Planning Committee**

January 7, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 4 - ACTION: WIOA One-Stop Center Certification Policy Review

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: During implementation, WIOA required the State WDB, in consultation with CEOs and Local WDBs, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800). The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in American Job Centers across a State.

These standards must be reviewed every two years.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommend the Strategic Planning Committee review, edit, and recommend with changes, the current One-Stop Center Certification Policy. The Policy will then be submitted to the AWDB on January 21st, 2020, for final approval.

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
ISSUANCE NUMBER PY 17-04

Daryl E. Bassett, Director

December 11, 2017

TO: Local Workforce Development Board Members
Local Workforce Development Board Directors
Local Elected Officials
Arkansas Workforce Center Partners

SUBJECT: Certification of Arkansas Workforce Centers

- I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this workforce system guidance is to provide instructions to local workforce development boards regarding the certification of Arkansas Workforce Centers.
- II. **General Information:** The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State Workforce Development Board (WDB), in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800), known in Arkansas as Arkansas Workforce Centers. The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Arkansas Workforce Centers across the State. The certification criteria allow States to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The State Workforce Development Board (WDB) must establish objective criteria and procedures for the Local WDBs to use in evaluating the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of Arkansas Workforce Centers. Local WDBs must follow procedures and criteria established by the State WDB and certify its workforce centers and its workforce center network at least once every three years (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800); this includes comprehensive, as well as affiliate centers. Local WDBs may establish additional criteria relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system.

- III. **Action Required:** Local Workforce Development Boards and their contractors, as well as partner agencies, should distribute this policy broadly throughout the system to ensure that workforce system staff are familiar with its content and requirements.
- IV. **Inquiries:** All questions or concerns are welcome and may be submitted to the following email:
wioa@arkansas.gov

V. Attachments:

Appendix A: Application for Arkansas Workforce Center Certification

VI. Expiration Date: Ongoing



APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

Organization Name:		Date:	
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Contact Person/Title:	
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Phone:		Email:	
--------	--	--------	--

Site to be Certified:		Address:	
-----------------------	--	----------	--

Website:	
----------	--

Hours of Operation:	
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Type of Certification:

- ☐ New Certification
 ☐ Recertification – Date of Last Certification [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Level of Certification:

- ☐ Comprehensive
 ☐ Affiliate

Purpose of Certification

The goal of the certification process is to develop a world-class workforce center network that meets and exceeds the minimal requirements established by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). It is critical to make the centers user friendly and attractive, creating a public image that is inviting to job seekers, education seekers, and employers seeking skills and talent in the local labor markets.

This document brings all the tools approved by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) into a single reference for Local Workforce Development Board members involved in certifying or recertifying local Arkansas Workforce Centers. It is the intent of the Arkansas WDB to provide this instrument as a guide to what is expected, not to provide the means of how it is to be accomplished. Ongoing organizing, implementation, and ensuring continuous improvement of the local certification process are the responsibility of the local WDB.

Included are minimum core standards that must be a part of the local certification/ recertification process. In a clear, concise manner this guide documents the Arkansas Workforce Centers Certification Process needed by the local WDB when conducting certification site visits. It also reviews the Quality Assurance Process to be used by the local WDB to ensure minimum standards are met and that the Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is protected. It is expected that each local workforce development area may supplement these core standards with additional locally applicable criteria and performance measures to ensure continuous improvement.

Certification is not just about a one-time designation. It is an ongoing process that keeps all parties involved and achieving at high performance levels. As such, the certification process also allows for achieving excellence standards as continuous improvement planning occurs. This certification process serves as an opportunity to continually re-examine, improve, and revise procedures to ensure that the Arkansas workforce development system is a primary asset in Arkansas's economic growth and subsequent high quality of life

Part I

Introduction

The following are core principles for building and continually improving the Arkansas Workforce Center system:

- High quality services to employers, with quality expectations defined by business and industry needs.
- High quality services to individuals, with quality expectations defined by system users.
- Single points of access for a wide array of integrated and coordinated publicly available services.
- Customers who are empowered by information and user-friendly system tools.
- A variety of access points and services that attract a broad range of system users.
- Coordination of funding sources aimed at addressing identified customer priorities.
- Reducing unnecessary duplication of services.
- Increased accountability at all levels.
- Infusion of continuous improvement methods throughout the system.
- Increased overall value of the system through new, creative partnerships.

Historical Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State Workforce Development Board (WDB), in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800), known in Arkansas as Arkansas Workforce Centers. The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Arkansas Workforce Centers across the State. The certification criteria allow States to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The State Workforce Development Board (WDB) must establish objective criteria and procedures for the Local WDBs to use in evaluating the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of Arkansas Workforce Centers. Local WDBs must follow procedures and criteria established by the State WDB and certify its workforce centers and its workforce center network at least once every three years (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800); this includes comprehensive, as well as affiliate centers. Local WDBs may establish additional criteria relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system.

The State of Arkansas was divided into 10 local workforce development areas based on common geographic and economic factors. Each area contains at least one comprehensive service center, and may have other affiliate centers as part of local access networks connected to the comprehensive sites.

This system provides customers a single point of contact for employment, training, education, and supportive services. Under the oversight of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, Arkansas Workforce Centers in communities throughout the State integrate multiple workforce development programs and resources, and make them available to individuals at the “street level” through a user-friendly delivery system.

It was envisioned that the local Arkansas Workforce Centers would be designed by employers for employers, to help find and train qualified workers, and assist qualified workers to find jobs in business and industry. The idea was to simplify the maze of current programs into a comprehensive, streamlined system of services for job seekers and employers, eliminating the need to visit different locations and understand multiple, complex program requirements.

A significant key to implementing the Arkansas Workforce Center system was the “no wrong door” approach to providing services that encompasses the principles of universal access, integration, co-location, collaboration, and performance as the building blocks to the system. With the “no wrong door” philosophy, when a customer approaches any Arkansas Workforce Center partner requesting assistance with employment and training needs or services in support of the customer’s job search or skill development, the customer is able to access the best mix of services from the combined menu of all partners’ resources, and gain immediate access to the appropriate next step.

The system was designed to be an open marketplace where:

- Employers define the skills and workforce levels they need.
- Job seekers are armed with information and resources to acquire and document skills they can use in the marketplace.
- Employers, through participation on workforce development boards, are able to hold the system accountable through performance standards, strategic information, and system oversight.
- The Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is widely recognized and valued.
- Public resources are targeted and coordinated toward clearly identified customer needs.

The Future

Workforce development depends heavily upon the vision and leadership of our State's employers. The Arkansas Workforce Centers will bring about the integration of federal, State, and local workforce programs, giving employers and workers a chance to connect in real or virtual communities, and access labor market information, education, and training. Progress toward complete implementation of Arkansas's workforce development vision is ongoing. A crucial element in this is the continued involvement of business, industry, and community leaders.

Ultimately, the workforce development system is designed to increase the employment, retention, occupational skill levels, and earnings of Arkansas's workers through universal access to career management tools and high quality service, while creating a well-trained, more competitive workforce for Arkansas's employers. As a result, these systems will improve the skills of the workforce, increase worker income with resulting increases in family self-sufficiency, reduce welfare dependency, enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the State of Arkansas, and ensure a high quality of life for all Arkansans.

Part II

The State Workforce Investment Board's Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

Vision

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

Mission

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

Arkansas's Talent Development System Philosophy

- We believe that there must be a pipeline of skilled workers for employers and a job for every Arkansan that wants one.
- We believe that the talent development system of Arkansas must be relevant to the labor market in order to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers, and for Arkansas to compete globally.

- We believe that every Arkansan should have opportunity and access to training and education that leads to a career with gainful employment.
- We believe innovation and partnerships centered around local economic priorities maximizes effectiveness and puts the State in the best position to address local and regional workforce needs.
- We believe Arkansas's workforce system should be a viable resource for business and industry.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be the preferred system, the system must be accountable, flexible, and align education and training with business and industry needs.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be effective, we must eliminate overlap and duplication of resources and services and streamline investment of funds.

Vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System

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 provides 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; obtain guidance on how to make career choices; or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopted a vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System at their regular quarterly meeting in October 2015. This vision provides standards for a high quality workforce center including customer service, innovation and service design, and systems integration and high-quality staffing.

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.

Under WIOA, partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs collaborate to create a seamless customer-

focused workforce delivery system that integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to the programs' services. The workforce delivery system includes six core programs (Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs; Title II adult education and literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser program; and Title IV vocational rehabilitation program), as well as other required and optional partners identified in WIOA. In Arkansas, these programs are administered by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (Titles I & III), the Arkansas Department of Career Education (Title II), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (Title IV) and Division of Services for the Blind of the Arkansas Department of Human Services (Title IV). Through the Arkansas Workforce Center network, these partner programs and their service providers ensure that businesses and job seekers—a shared client base across the multiple programs identified above—have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes. Under WIOA, workforce centers and their partners:

- Provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages.
- Provide access and opportunities to all job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and high-demand careers.
- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.
- Participate in rigorous evaluations that support continuous improvement of workforce centers by identifying which strategies work better for different populations.
- Ensure that high-quality integrated data inform decisions made by policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

The management of the Arkansas workforce delivery system is the shared responsibility of States, local boards, elected officials, the core WIOA partners, other required partners, and workforce center operators. The Departments encourage all of these entities to integrate the characteristics below into their work, including developing state, regional, and local strategic plans; establishing workforce center certification criteria; examining the state, regional, and local footprint of workforce centers; conducting competitions for selecting workforce center operators; developing local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); updating other workforce center policies and procedures; and operating and delivering services through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Characteristics of a High-Quality Arkansas Workforce Center

The characteristics identified below, consistent with the purpose and authorized scope of each of the programs, are designed to reflect elements that contribute to a high-quality workforce delivery system. They demonstrate the spirit and intent of the WIOA, and they will strengthen the successful integration and implementation of partner programs in Arkansas Workforce Centers. For clarity and readability the characteristics have been grouped into three functional categories: (a) Customer Service; (b) Innovation and Service Design; and (c) Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing.

Customer Service

Arkansas Workforce Centers provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses. Meeting the needs of job seekers, workers and businesses is important in developing thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper. High-quality workforce centers:

- ***Reflect a Welcoming Environment***
Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the workforce centers. All workforce center staff are courteous, polite, responsive, and helpful to job seekers, businesses, and others who visit the workforce centers, either in person or by telephone or e-mail. Moreover, workforce center staff are sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and are prepared to provide necessary accommodations.
- ***Provide Career Services that Empower***
Provide career services that motivate, support and empower customers, including individuals with disabilities, to make informed decisions based on local and regional economic demand and effectively attain their personal employment and education goals.
- ***Value Skill Development***
Value skill development by assessing and improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills.
- ***Create Opportunities***
Create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience by providing customers, including those with disabilities, as much timely, labor market, job-driven information and choice as possible related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options, while offering customers the opportunity to receive both skill-development and job placement services.
- ***Improve Job Seeker Skills***
Improve the skills of job seeker and worker customers. Workforce centers offer access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other strategies that enable customers, including those with disabilities, to compete successfully in today's global economy. They provide businesses with access to the quantity and quality of talent they need and support upskill/backfill strategies that expand job opportunities in the community.
- ***Deliver Quality Business Services***
Develop, offer, and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy. To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, workforce center staff identify and have a clear understanding of industry skill needs, identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across workforce center partner programs, as appropriate. This includes the incorporation of an integrated and aligned business services strategy among workforce center partners to present a unified voice for the workforce

center in its communications with employers. Additionally, workforce centers use the forthcoming performance measure(s) on effectiveness in serving employers to support continuous improvement of these services.

Innovation and Service Design

Arkansas Workforce Centers reflect innovative and effective service design.

- ***Integrate Intake Process***
Use an integrated and expert intake process for all customers entering the workforce centers. Frontline staff are highly familiar with the functions and basic eligibility requirements of each program, and can appropriately assist customers and make knowledgeable referrals to partner programs, as needed and as appropriate given the authorized scope of the program.
- ***Actively Engage Industry Sectors***
Design and implement practices that actively engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, sector strategies, career pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, and competency models to help drive skill-based initiatives.
- ***Use Market Driven Principles***
Balance traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy. This includes use of market-driven principles and labor market information that help to define a regional economy, its demographics, its workforce and its assets and gaps in skills and resources.
- ***Use Innovative Delivery Models***
Incorporate innovative and evidence-based delivery models that improve the integration of education and training, create career pathways that lead to industry-recognized credentials, encourage work-based learning, and use state-of-the-art technology to accelerate learning and promote college and career success.
- ***Offer Virtual and Center-Based Services***
Include both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers. Both methods of delivery support the talent needs of the regional economy, although each may better serve different customers with different levels of service needs at any given time. The workforce delivery system can expand its reach by delivering robust virtual services; and increasing the accessibility of those services through community partners, such as libraries, community and faith-based organizations, and other partners.
- ***Ensure Access to All Customers***
Ensure meaningful access to all customers. Workforce centers must be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. In so doing, workforce centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users;

providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. Workforce centers use assistive technology and flexible business hours to meet the range of customer needs.

Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing

Arkansas Workforce Centers operate with integrated management systems and high-quality staffing. High-quality workforce centers:

- ***Reflect Robust Partnerships***
Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The workforce center operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners.
- ***Organize Services 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 perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams, e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team. Service integration focuses on serving 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.
- ***Use Common Performance Indicators***
Use common performance indicators to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers. Center performance is transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served; data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.
- ***Offer Highly Trained Career Counselors***
Staff the center with highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the workforce center, and skilled in developing customers' skills for employment success.
- ***Implement Integrated Policies***
Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.
- ***Cross-Train and Equip Center Staff***
Train and equip workforce center staff in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in

an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers. Center staff are routinely trained and are keenly aware as to how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board.

- ***Maintain Integrated Case Management***

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

Part III

Role of the State Workforce Development Board for Certification

The Arkansas WDB will establish and coordinate policy for use by local workforce development boards in conducting certification and recertification of Arkansas Workforce Centers. This policy will be provided to the local workforce development areas. The Arkansas WDB will ensure that the workforce centers meet the minimum criteria to be designated as a certified Arkansas Workforce Center. The Arkansas WDB will seek to ensure that other State agencies participate fully in the workforce centers, through MOUs, resource sharing, and cost allocation. If the Arkansas WDB decides that these standards are not being met, the local WDB will be notified and a corrective action plan will be requested. If the deficiencies are not corrected in a timely manner, decertification of the center will be recommended to the Governor.

Role of the Local Workforce Development Board for Certification

It is the responsibility of the local WDB to select a One-Stop operator through methods described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The local WDB is also responsible for certification and recertification of the Arkansas Workforce Centers in their area. The local WDB will use the minimum criteria provided by the Arkansas WDB. The local WDB has the authority to add criteria beyond the State minimum levels. In order to ensure quality, best practices are encouraged throughout the workforce system; any additional criteria should be shared with the other areas and the State Board. The local WDB has the responsibility to monitor the Arkansas Workforce Centers to ensure compliance with the certification/recertification process. If the local WDB determines that these standards are not being met, the One-Stop operator will be notified and a corrective action plan will be requested. The local WDB has the authority to revoke certifications and/or select new operators, if standards are not met and corrective actions of the operator are not successful. The Local WDB will seek to ensure that adequate, attractive, and functional facilities are provided.

Part IV

Arkansas Certification Policy

As a Statewide system, Arkansas Workforce Centers cover metropolitan areas as well as rural areas. Therefore, different types of centers are required in order to meet our customers' needs, ensure statewide coverage, and provide easy access to services. The overall Arkansas workforce development system is a combination of a wide array of public and private resources and programs. Comprehensive Arkansas Workforce Centers are the cornerstones of information and access to these resources. The comprehensive centers are complemented by affiliate centers that provide broader access but more limited on-site service offering connections back to the comprehensive sites. Centers must:

1. Be strategically located to maximize service to employers and employees.
2. Have enough traffic to warrant operations.
3. Provide on-site services (interpreter, documents, etc.) based on demographic need.
4. Have hours of operation that are based on customer needs and are customer driven.
5. Ensure that uniform procedures are in place to implement priority of service for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English-as-a-Second Language persons, and any other priority populations identified at the federal, state or local level for job placement.
6. Ensure that priority of service for job training opportunities for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English-as-a-Second Language persons, and any other priority populations identified at the federal level is clearly implemented for all U.S. DOL programs such as employment, training, and placement services.

The minimum core standard certification criteria approved by the Arkansas WDB will be used to certify comprehensive centers, as well as affiliate centers. Consistent with the State Plan, the Local WDB will certify each local workforce center. At its discretion, the local WDB may set certification requirements and/or standards that exceed the minimum criteria established by the Arkansas WDB.

As stipulated by federal law, all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements must be met before a center is eligible to receive the Arkansas Workforce Center certification, or utilize the Arkansas Workforce Center name and logo.

Local WDBs will notify the Arkansas WDB when a certification is issued, renewed or revoked. Marketing activity utilizing the Arkansas Workforce Center name is allowed when the local WDB approves and issues a certification. If a certification is revoked, the affected center must cease using the Arkansas Workforce Center name in all marketing until the identified problems are addressed.

One-Stop Evaluation and Certification Criteria

LWDBs (or the SWDB in those cases where LWDBs are the one-stop operator) must use the *Application for Arkansas Workforce Certification* approved by the State WDB. The State WDB, in consultation with local Chief Elected Officials and LWDBs, must review and update the one-stop certification criteria every two years as part of the review and modification of the WIOA State Plan.

Local WDBs can establish additional criteria and set higher standards for service coordination than those set by the State. If they do, they must also review and update those additional criteria and standards every two years as part of the WIOA Local Plan update process. Additional criteria must be clearly identified in addenda to the *Application for Arkansas Workforce Center Certification*.

One-Stop Certification Frequency

One-stop sites will be evaluated and certified no less than once every three years. Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator) may conduct site evaluation and certification as determined appropriate and warranted. In support of the goal of continuous improvement, each certified site will provide an annual report to the State and Local WDB detailing the progress toward reaching higher standards set forth in the certification criteria.

Certification Teams

One-stop certification teams will be established by Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator) and are responsible for conducting independent and objective evaluations of one-stop sites and making certification recommendations to Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where LWDBs are the one-stop operator).

One-stop certifications teams are comprised of Local WDB members and staff and individuals who represent local partners with specific expertise serving populations with barriers. Certification team members should be free of conflicts of interest. Certification teams may utilize experts from the state level or outside of the local area to ensure evaluations are objective. They may also utilize local experts who represent targeted populations but have no financial ties with the one-stop site.

Note: Per 20 CFR 678.800(a)(3), the State WDB, rather than local one-stop certification teams, must certify one-stop sites if Local WDBs are the one-stop operator.

Certification Determinations

One-stop certification teams will render written determinations within 30 days of conducting one-stop site evaluations. There are three possible determinations: (1) certification, (2) provisional certification with a requirement that one-stop operators provide action plans and timelines for meeting certification standards, and (3) not certified or decertified.

Provisional certifications must be accompanied by detailed description of the issues/concerns identified so one-stop operators have sufficient information around which to develop required action plans and timelines. A determination to not certify a one-stop site must be accompanied by a detailed description of the deficiencies, including an explanation as to why the certification team believed the deficiencies could not be addressed or resolved provisionally.

Appeals

Operators of comprehensive one-stop sites that are not certified may choose to appeal those determinations, in writing, to the Local WDB (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator). Those

appeals will be subject to the processes and procedures outlined in locally-required dispute resolution and appeal policies (or WIOA Title I Policy 5410 in those cases where the State WDB is the certifying body).

Non-Certification

If an existing comprehensive one-stop site is ultimately not certified following a standard or “for-cause” evaluation, the Local WDB and one-stop operator must have a plan to ensure continuity of service between the time a site is not certified and a new one-stop operator is procured.

Types of Centers

WIOA Section 121 (e)(2) states that the one-stop delivery system—

(A) at a minimum, shall make each of the programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) accessible at not less than 1 physical center in each local area of the State; and

(B) may also make programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) available—

(i) through a network of affiliated sites that can provide 1 or more of the programs, services, and activities to individuals; and

(ii) through a network of eligible one-stop partners—

(I) in which each partner provides 1 or more of the programs, services, and activities to such individuals and is accessible at an affiliated site that consists of a physical location or an electronically or technologically linked access point; and

(II) that assures individuals that information on the availability of the career services will be available regardless of where the individuals initially enter the statewide workforce development system, including information made available through an access point described in subclause (I);

(C) may have specialized centers to address special needs, such as the needs of dislocated workers, youth, or key industry sectors or clusters; and

(D) as applicable and practicable, shall make programs, services, and activities accessible to individuals through electronic means in a manner that improves efficiency, coordination, and quality in the delivery of one-stop partner services.

Comprehensive

- Accessible to the general public during regular business days, as well as physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Portal site for electronic access
- Provider of **basic and individualized career services, and training services**
- **Provider of business services**
- Representation of **core** mandated partners (WIOA Titles I-IV)
- Additional related employment and training resources

Affiliate Center

- Accessible to the general public and physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Portal site for electronic access
- Provider of **basic career services**

- Representation of **one** or more mandated partners
- Additional related employment and training resources
- Established working relationship as part of an integrated system of Arkansas Workforce Center sites

IV. Checklist – System Requirements

The checklists below are to be used by sites and evaluators to help determine the extent to which system requirements are met and services and programs are present. Each application will vary in its responses based upon the level of certification being requested by the site and the agreements of the local partnership to best meet the needs of the locally-determined service delivery model.

	Yes	No – Provide Plan for Compliance
Compliance with AWDB Policies		
ADA Accessibility		
Use of MIS for customer tracking		
Memorandum of Understanding with Partners		
Arkansas Workforce Center and American Job Center Brands Used Appropriately		
Wagner-Peyser Services are Co-Located		

Required Program/Partner Checklist

- In the column named “On-Site”, indicate programs/partners that are currently located on-site.
- In the column named “Off-Site Electronic Connection”, make a check mark for the programs/partners that are off-site but their basic career services are made available to customers through an electronic connection. Note: Not all customers will be able to use the electronic connection(s) without help from workforce system staff.
- For programs/partners that are off-site but an agreement is in place to provide their basic career services in another manner, check the last column and attach a narrative explaining how this is accomplished (use a separate sheet).

Required Programs/Partners	One-Site (Average Hours/Week)	Off-Site Electronic Connection	Off-Site Basic Career Services Made Available in Another Manner
WIOA Title I Adult Services			
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker			
WIOA Title I Youth Services			
Wagner-Peyser Title III			
Adult Education and Family Literacy Title II			
Vocational Rehabilitation – Arkansas Career			

Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services			
Vocational Rehabilitation – Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind			
Title V – Older Americans Act/Senior Community Service Employment Program			
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families			
Career and Technical Education Programs			
Trade Adjustment Assistance			
Jobs for Veterans State Grant			
Community Services Block Grant			
Housing & Urban Development Employment and Training			
Unemployment Compensation			
Second Chance Act			

Additional Partners (not mandated)

Required Programs/Partners	One-Site (Average Hours/Week)	Off-Site Electronic Connection	Off-Site Basic Career Services Made Available in Another Manner
Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency			
Small Business Administration			
SNAP Employment and Training			
(Please add partners are appropriate)			

Career Services Checklists

In the column named “On-Site”, check the basic career, individualized career, and training services that are currently available on-site for all job seeking customers who come into the workforce center or affiliate site.

Basic Career Services	On-Site (Mark with x)
Initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs	
Outreach, intake and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system	

Basic Career Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Eligibility determination	
Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, career counseling, provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, provision of information on nontraditional employment	
Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including small employers, which may include providing information and referral to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system	
Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop delivery system and other workforce development programs	
Workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas; information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs; and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations	
Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services and eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, providers of adult education, providers of career and technical education activities at the postsecondary level, and career and technical education activities available to school dropouts, and providers of vocational rehabilitation	
Information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to onestop center customers, regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information with respect to the onestop delivery system in the local area	
Information, in formats that are usable by & understandable to one Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for stop center customers, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, assistance through the earned income tax credit, assistance under State program for temporary assistance for needy families, and other supportive services and transportation provided through funds made available in the local area	
Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation	
Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs	
Translation Services	
Orientation to Arkansas Workforce Center Services	

Individualized Career Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Comprehensive and specialized evaluation to Identify barriers to employment and employment goals	
Development of Individualized Employment Plan (IEP)	
Group Counseling	
Individual Counseling	
Career/ Vocational Planning	
Short-Term Preemployment/ Vocational Services	
Internships and work experiences	
Workforce preparation activities	
Financial literacy activities	
Out-of-Area Job Search and relocation assistance	
English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs	
Follow-up services	

Business Services Checklist

Check the business services that are available to employers.

Business Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Establish and develop relationships and networks with large and small employers and their intermediaries	
Develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships	

Other Business Services (not mandatory)

Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers	On-Site (Mark with X)
Customized services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations, on employment-related issues	
Customized recruitment events and related services for employers including targeted job fairs	
Human resource consultation services, e.g., writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks; Developing performance evaluation and personnel policies; Creating orientation sessions for new workers; Honing job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance; Analyzing employee turnover; or Explaining labor laws to help employers comply with	

wage/hour and safety/health regulations;	
Customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters	
Customized assistance or referral for assistance in the development of a registered apprenticeship program	
Listing of Job Orders	
Applicant Referral	
Employer Needs Assessment	
Unemployment Insurance Access	
Access to Facilities	
Translation Services	
Developing and delivering innovative workforce investment services and strategies for area employers, e.g., career pathways, skills upgrading, skill standard development and certification for recognized postsecondary credential or other employer use, apprenticeship, and other effective initiatives for meeting the workforce investment needs of area employers and workers	
Assistance in managing reductions in force in coordination with rapid response activities and with strategies for the aversion of layoffs, and the delivery of employment and training activities to address risk factors	
Marketing of business services offered to appropriate area employers, including small and mid-sized employers	
Assisting employers with accessing local, State, and Federal tax credits	

Certification Criteria

The Certification application is one step in the ongoing pursuit of growth, quality improvement, and performance excellence. Attainment of certification provides assurance to the public that the center has achieved a high standard and consistently maintains and improves upon that standard. The following quality standards are the criteria by which Arkansas's local Workforce Development Board's assess and certify One-Stop Centers and Affiliates Sites.

Each site is asked to work together with leadership and staff to develop responses to the following:

- I. Rank on a scale of 1 to 5, where the site believes it is in its path toward meeting, or exceeding, the stated standard.
 - 5 = achieved the standard and excelling
 - 4 = significantly meeting standard with some work yet to do
 - 3 = have some of the elements in place, some of the time
 - 2 = making progress but long way to go
 - 1 = no progress yet

These scores will be used by the Certification Team as benchmarks for the site and help point to both areas of excellence and those in need of improvement.

- II. Provide clear evidence and examples of current status and future plans with strategies and timelines to reach these standards.

Functional and Programmatic Integration
It is critical for Arkansas Workforce Centers and its partners to think and act as an integrated system. Arkansas Workforce Center partners ensure that client services are aligned to common goals and the customer experience is seamless – regardless of funding streams. Each customer is mutually regarded as a shared customer, with all staff and programs operating at the site having a vested stake in that customer’s success. Integration of programs is incorporated into planning, intake, assessment, registration, and service processes, information sharing, resource decisions, actions, results, and analyses.
Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Functional and Programmatic integration. <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
Describe your site’s approach to integrated service delivery and the use of functional teams to deliver career services to all customers.
Include a detailed diagram of customer flow, services available, assessment and referrals, and describe how the MIS system is used to facilitate shared customer management across partner programs. Reference it as Appendix A.
Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Performance Accountability
Results and outcomes for the public investment in Arkansas Workforce Centers are essential to the system’s relevance. The effectiveness of Arkansas Workforce Centers for employers and job seekers is evident in system performance and service delivery decisions are based on data. On an ongoing basis, customer data from one-stop partners and regional economic data is collected, analyzed, and shared with all workforce system staff and community stakeholders. Plans for improvement, enhancement, or adjustment are established and acted upon.
Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Performance Accountability. <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1

Describe how you measure, analyze, review, and improve system performance through the use of data and information.

Describe how this data is shared with staff and stakeholders and what changes have resulted from use of data. How has data been used (examples) to improve services?

What methods are in place for staff to provide feedback? How do you incorporate staff feedback as part of continuous quality improvement? How are staff informed how their feedback was reviewed and any action taken from their feedback? What metrics are used to show improvement and success?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Service Provision, Universal Access, and Outreach

Improved availability, a welcoming atmosphere, inclusive settings, and high quality customer service benefit all customers. Arkansas Workforce Centers extend services and outreach not just to individuals who walk in the door, but also to those who have become disengaged in the labor force. Integrated, quality services are provided to all customers within the center and via technology through online or phone access. Principles of universal design are considered, which designs inclusive space and materials to be available to individuals regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence, or educational level.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Service Provision to all customers including Services, Access, and Outreach to populations with barriers.

☐ 5

☐ 4

☐ 3

☐ 2

☐ 1

Describe how the site works cooperatively with WIOA core partners to provide quality services to all customers. Describe your outreach to populations with barriers in the community and relationship with core program and community partners to effectively serve them.

Provide evidence that basic ADA requirements have been met, including processes to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Describe initiatives or strategies in developing universal access and provide tangible evidence of implementation or solution driven plan development. Address the following four specific areas of access:

1. Physical: Architectural or building
2. Information: all paper, printed or posted materials
3. Digital: software, web-based programs and alternatives to print
4. Communication: verbal, non-verbal access for services, phone and other

Describe your wireless internet infrastructure.

How are the needs of populations with barriers met through staff-assisted and other means?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Customer Satisfaction

Performance and value are ultimately judged by customers – businesses and job seekers. Customer-centered design relies upon satisfying customer needs, identifying shortcomings and responding accordingly on a timely and ongoing basis. Tools to obtain feedback are appropriate for each customer's use and take into consideration factors including literacy levels, use of technology, disability, and language.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Customer Satisfaction.

☐ 5

☐ 4

☐ 3

☐ 2

☐ 1

Describe how the voice of the customer is heard and how your site incorporates both job seeker and business customer feedback as part of continuous quality improvement? How are the voices of populations with barriers heard and brought to the table when designing services and facilities? How do you inform customers of how their feedback was reviewed and any action taken from their feedback? What metrics are used to show improvement and success?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Staff Competence and Staff Training Participation

Professional development is a key feature in order to ensure that staff are aware of the implications of recent evidence-based research and can implement the latest policies and procedures established at the local, State and Federal levels. Also of vital importance is the use of labor market information by staff to better inform customers' career and training decision-making. The investment in staff development is substantial, ongoing, and focused on cross-training with partner programs, overall skill development, and use of labor market information. Every member of the one-stop staff has the ability and authority to meet customer needs, either directly or, where appropriate, by helping the customer make the right connections to the expertise he or she seeks. Participation in one-stop-sponsored training is required.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Staff Competence and Staff Training Participation.

☐ 5

☐ 4

☐ 3

☐ 2

☐ 1

How are staff and leadership trained and cross-trained on an ongoing basis to stay current on programs and services? How is this tracked to ensure that all staff participate?

How do you actively engage staff of all programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, TANF, ABE, DVR, Perkins, etc. – in design of services, action planning and analysis of indicators and trends? How are all staff informed of progress towards site performance and goals?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Partnership
The one-stop system is built upon a foundation of partners linked together to deliver a comprehensive array of services and reach the shared outcomes of employment, education, skills gains, and earnings. All core and required one-stop partners are present at the site and invested in the development and implementation of service delivery to connect customers to resources.
Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Partnership. <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
Describe how the partnerships function at the site and the roles of each core partner from Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Title II - Adult Basic Education, Title III - Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation.
Describe how the partnerships function at the site with other required partners from postsecondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins Act), CSBG, HUD, Job Corps, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Re-entry programs, SCSEP, TAA, TANF, UI, VETS, and YouthBuild.
Describe how the site is linked to other partners beyond the site to ensure alignment with community and regional strategies. Please give examples of how this functions and the results for customers.
Describe how leadership works together to set the vision and goals for the site and then implements service strategies to achieve shared objectives.
Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

Employer Engagement
Business is one of our primary customers and one-stop partners work collaboratively to deliver value-added services and eliminate duplication. Business services staff from all one-stop partners have a comprehensive understanding of labor market conditions, economic development activities, skill needs of the workforce and are connected to regional and local business partnership activities and sector strategies. Employers' human capital needs are communicated to and acted upon by the workforce system. Business services are coordinated to the maximum extent possible to limit duplication and streamline the employer experience.
Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Employer Engagement.

<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Describe how partners work to deliver seamless business services. How do business services staff use and share labor market information? What strategies are used to involve employers in identifying skill gaps and developing solutions to meet their workforce needs?				
Describe how regional and local sector strategies are used to target services and resources to focus workforce efforts on investments and improve outcomes.				
How are career pathways and training modalities such as industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and other work-based learning opportunities aligned with employers' needs and marketed to support talent development?				
Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.				