

Local Workforce Development Board Plan Program Years 2025–2028

Board Plan Development Guidelines

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Board Plan Development Guidelines

The Board Plan development guidelines include the minimum plan requirements; however, Boards are encouraged to provide additional information about the following:

- Board initiatives, which may include local, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), or federal grants
- Collaborative efforts to achieve the Board vision and mission
- Success stories

Boards must ensure that each element is fully addressed. Boards may not use statements such as “See Section 1.B.”

Boards are encouraged to provide specific references to the state plans mentioned in WD Letter 11-24 to demonstrate how their efforts complement the larger context of workforce development in Texas and contribute to the achievement of shared goals.

Each Board must submit its plan as a continuous document without separate document attachments.

Send inquiries regarding these guidelines to Board.Plans@twc.texas.gov.

Part 1: Board Vision and Strategies

A. Vision and Goals

References: WIOA §108(b)(1)(E); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(5)

Each Board must include a description of the Board’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. The description must contain:

- goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including the provision of early education services and services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment as defined by WIOA §3(24); and
- goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on the performance indicators described in WIOA §116(b)(2)(A).

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of the strategic vision to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency
- Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including the provision of:
 - early education services;
 - services for youth; and
 - services for individuals with barriers to employment.

- Goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on the performance indicators described in WIOA §116(b)(2)(A)

Board Response: The Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board (WFSCA) serves as the leadership and governing body for the Austin/Travis County workforce system. WFSCA is a public/private partnership, with its Directors representing business, education, labor, economic development, community-based organizations, and public entities. WFSCA’s vision is that all people (our human capital) are productive and the region is prosperous. WFSCA believes that it is best positioned to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency by successfully implementing and holding itself accountable for the following responsibilities:

- Strategic and operational planning;
- Design of the local workforce development delivery system, including the establishment of one-stop career centers;
- Oversight and evaluation of workforce development activities in the local area;
- Connection and alignment of the components of the regional workforce system;
- Leverage and investment in workforce development resources;
- Policy guidance;
- Advocacy for workforce issues and needs;
- Building partnerships in support of local workforce initiatives; and
- Serving as the link between the workforce system and the taxpayers.

WFSCA has established the following goals related to its strategic vision:

I. Employers have access to a skilled workforce, including early education services

Employers are the public workforce system’s primary customer, and working with employers in a meaningful, sustained, productive manner ensures that the workforce system is aligned to the needs of industry. Alignment includes assisting to fill immediate job openings, as well as long-term career pathway planning in order that employers may find locally trained workers to keep their companies growing and competitive.

II. The workforce has the literacy, workforce readiness, education and occupational skills to obtain and maintain meaningful employment

WFSCA strives to serve as both the agency of choice and the “safety net” for job seekers and workers who face barriers to employment, including youth. By actively collaborating with the educational system, from secondary to post-secondary education, and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), WFSCA acts on its vision to design a well-connected and effective local workforce delivery service that is, at its core, a career pathway approach to services. This strategy ensures that Opportunity Youth and those otherwise disconnected from traditional education systems and those individuals who face barriers to employment find the most effective and resource-efficient services through the public workforce system.

WFS believes that educating our community about occupations and industries in demand in our region begins in the schools before students graduate. It is important that students in the K-12 system learn about all opportunities that are available to them to begin a career. WFSCA supports Career and Education Outreach Specialists in the K-12 system, focusing primarily on high school students, but also work with middle schools to ensure the

students know about options for middle skill careers that pay livable wages and don't require a college degree. The specialists also share information about career pathways and further opportunities to build upon their careers. WFSCA also hosts a middle school event called Career Expo. Middle schoolers attend and experience hands-on learning for various careers prior to the requirement for them to pick a pathway.

One of WFSCA's greatest strengths is its ability to serve as a neutral convener of entities and agencies that together form the partnerships that comprise the public workforce system.

III. Job seekers have access to meaningful employment opportunities

WFSCA recognizes that both job seekers and employers endeavor to find a "right fit" in workplaces in order to obtain maximum productivity and satisfaction. Job seekers, especially those from younger generations, report that they desire to have meaningful employment, jobs that they feel contribute to a greater good. WFSCA believes that area employers offer such opportunities, but that job seekers may not always be aware of these occupations or the value that they bring to the companies, community, and global economy. As such, WFSCA has a goal to better inform and raise awareness of the industries and occupations that are in demand and growing. By educating job seekers about the range of opportunities available in our community, we contribute both to meaningful employment for job seekers as well as better-equipped employees for local companies.

It is becoming increasingly important to reach individuals and provide information about in-demand jobs in the region, as well as services available through the workforce system. WFSCA's Board of Directors' vision is to continue our work in high schools and middle schools to share information about occupations and all post-secondary opportunities, such as apprenticeships and skills training. Our vision and goals are to increase awareness so that youth who aren't ready for college may obtain the training and/or enter the workforce shortly after high school to help meet the growing needs of Travis County employers. This also serves as an opportunity to reach parents in need of upskilling or training to further meet the increased local demand for a skilled workforce.

Travis County is growing and has multiple, large mobility and infrastructure projects that will continue to create the need for a skilled workforce, particularly in the skilled trades, as we are building upon and growing Austin's infrastructure. Project Connect will create a rail system and the airport is planning a significant expansion, both of which increases the need for skilled, trained workers. In coordination with local training providers, training entities including Austin Community College, and employers, WFSCA will launch an Infrastructure Academy in early 2025. The Academy will be a consortium of training providers and employers who will hire, coupled with WFSCA career coaches and advisors assisting job seekers with identifying the best option for training and/or employment, and providing the resources to assist them throughout their journey into employment.

B. Board Strategies

References: WIOA §108(b)(1)(F); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(6);

Boards must provide a description of their strategies to work with the partners that carry out Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) activities to align the resources available to the local workforce development area (workforce area) to achieve the Boards' vision and goals.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of the Board's strategies to work with the entities carrying out AEL and VR to align:

- resources available to achieve vision and goals

Core programs:

- Adult Education and Literacy activities
- Vocational Rehabilitation services

Board Response:

WFSCA has established the following partnership strategies related to its strategic vision and goals:

I. Employers have access to a skilled workforce, including early education services

a. Vocational Rehabilitation

- i. Vocational Rehabilitation services (VR) and staff are housed within our North Career Center. Our Career Center staff work closely with VR staff for cross referrals, as well as educational opportunities for staff to learn about service offerings within each organization. In coordination, VR and Career Center staff developed an interagency referral tool that allows for ease of referral, as well as follow up.
- ii. Adult Education and Literacy - prepares employees for the workforce and supports employers through efforts such as onsite workplace literacy, Labor Market Information (LMI), job placement services, the Internationally Trained Professionals Program, offering supported training programs for in-demand occupations, providing digital literacy, training in ESL, College Preparation, workforce readiness skills, case management, college advising and follow up. . All supported AEL training leads to in-demand and targeted occupations as determined by WFSCA. AEL services also assist with the strategies of the WFSCA Hire Local Plan: awareness & enrollment, training, placement, and advancement in career.

II. The workforce has the literacy, workforce readiness, education, and occupational skills to obtain and maintain meaningful employment

a. Vocational Rehabilitation

- b. Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) - AEL and WFSCA have always coordinated for referrals into each other's programs and have also coordinated in Integrated Basic Education Training (IBEST) in which students are able to participate in occupational training while receiving basic education services. WFSCA staff have made referrals for IBEST but also purchases cohorts to allow us to support occupational training for individuals that need extra assistance. AEL and WFSCA have developed a system for

referrals into each program and meet regularly. AEL coordinates with WFSCA to provide labor market information in developing their earn and learn opportunities.

III. Job seekers have access to meaningful employment opportunities

a. **Vocational Rehabilitation**

- i. VR is co-located within the Career Center and the two entities work closely together and developed a referral system to ensure VR customers receive job search assistance and services, as well as training and supports through WIOA or other locally funded programs.
- ii. VR and WFSCA coordinate on summer earn and learn opportunities for youth in which VR refers youth to WFSCA's youth contractor to receive job readiness training and placement at an employer site with a job coach throughout the summer. Employers have hired several youth for part time employment because of the summer opportunity.

IV.

C. High-Performing Board

References: WIOA §108(b)(18); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(17)

Boards must include a description of the actions each Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Board, consistent with the factors developed by the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC).

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- Actions a Board will take to become or remain a high-performing Board

Board Response:

Workforce Solutions Capital Area meets or exceeds all performance targets set by its governing body

WFSCA places a high premium on performance measures such as accountability for the public resources that it administers. While WFSCA has a strong history of meeting and exceeding mandated performance measures, it employs a system of continuous improvement by allocating staff resources to weekly oversight of performance indicators that may point to possible issues with performance. Additionally, WFSCA monitors its activities through rigorous risk assessment and sampling to ensure that performance overall is solid and consistent. Understanding that the taxpayers expect transparency and effective use of resources, WFSCA also employs quality assurance activities that continuously seek to improve how information is shared with internal partners, and external stakeholders, often going above and beyond what is mandated by funders.

It is important to WFSCA that we stay ahead of performance while ensuring quality services. The Technical Assistance team developed a set of core indicators of our system and programs that identify any early warning signs so that we may work with our contractor(s) to course correct.

It is important to WFSCA to share impacts beyond performance measures that are easily understandable by the community and elected officials. Annually, WFSCA produces data that details

impact on wages after receiving services, such as training from WFSCA and the return on investment for providing scholarships, WFSCA feels that performance measures are the minimum standard and by sharing the impacts of our programs in different ways, we are further establishing ourselves as a high-performing agency.

WFSCA meets monthly with training providers to discuss completion/credential and employment outcomes of clients receiving scholarships funded through WFSCA. These monthly meetings have boosted performance outcomes but have also laid the foundation for holding training providers accountable for training outcomes and ensuring customers are referred to WFSCA to assist with employment upon graduation.

Part 2. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Regional Economic and Employment Needs Analysis

References: WIOA §108(b)(1)(A); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(1); WIOA §108(b)(1)(B); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(2); WD Letter 24-20, Change 1

Boards must include a regional analysis of the following:

- Economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations
- Employment needs of employers, including the knowledge and skills needed to meet such employment needs, within in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations

Minimum Plan Requirements:

An analysis of the economic conditions that includes the following:

- Existing in-demand industry sectors
- Emerging in-demand industry sectors
- Existing in-demand occupations
- Emerging in-demand occupations
- Target occupations

A description of employer employment needs, including the knowledge and skills needed to meet such employer's needs, within the following:

- Existing in-demand industry sectors
- Emerging in-demand industry sectors
- Existing in-demand occupations
- Emerging in-demand occupations
- Target occupations

The Board must include its In-Demand Industries List, In-Demand Occupations List, and Target Occupations List

Note: As appropriate, a workforce area may use an existing analysis, if it provides a current and accurate description of the regional economy.

Board Response:

Economic conditions for in- demand occupations and target occupations

Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WFSCA) regularly assesses whether its [targeted occupations list](#) is aligned with high-demand occupations for the Austin/Travis County region. The targeted occupations list are the only occupations for which WFSCA will provide funding for training to eligible customers. Additionally, WFSCA determines whether its targeted occupations represent the industries targeted within the Hire Local Plan. By aligning its targeted occupations with those in the Hire Local Plan 2.0, WFSCA is bringing awareness to occupations with higher earning potential for our customers. WFS will also provide training scholarships and wraparound services to clients that enroll and persist in career training within these occupations.

The following criteria are utilized to evaluate the targeted occupations.

CRITERIA	THRESHOLD
Current job openings (per Labor Insight)	= or > 45
Projected job openings 2018-2028 (TWC)	= or > 50
Occupational Median Wage:	\$20/hour
Required education (consideration for occupations that post entry level posting for youth and adults that is leading to a career pathway)	More than a HS diploma, but less than a 4-year degree (can include long-term on-the job training, such as apprenticeships or postsecondary, some college, no degree, and/or an associates degree)
Focus industries	Goal of 90% of occupations in IT, HC and Skilled Trades, Mobility and Adv Manufacturing from Hire Local Plan.
Local Training Outcomes	Compare graduation outcome data based on OT and other WFS programs
Local Wisdom	Employers and/or industry associations provide feedback based on the demand of the occupation in the region

Data Sources: Lightcast, JobsEq and Texas Workforce Commission

This year, WFSCA added child care workers to our TOL in recognition of the growing needs of this industry. COVID highlighted the importance of child care to our economy and the importance of the industry to economic development. Individuals cannot go to work or training without child care and given the importance child care plays in our workforce system, WFSCA added the occupation to ensure we have ways to meet the needs of the child care employers to build capacity.

Employment needs of employers: collecting industry feedback and local wisdom

Workforce Solutions Capital Area launched a survey in 2024 to collect local wisdom from employers to better understand and validate local labor market needs in the region. Over **3,200 individuals with local businesses** were targeted through a social media campaign and email blast. We received **83 responses from employers** and some of the anecdotal evidence to support the needs of employers, including the knowledge and skills needed to meet such employment needs, within in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations.

Economic conditions for in-demand industry sectors

In a [2023 Industry Analysis](#), Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WFSCA) conducted a deep analysis of the Austin area labor market to identify and understand our region’s target industries — the top industries experiencing substantial growth with opportunities for higher earning potential. We used data to help us find the industries with:

- Rapid growth;
- Low turnover;
- Immediate employment opportunities for jobs with high earning potential, and
- Demand supported by local knowledge and employer input.

The findings: Based on this analysis, we continue to classify Healthcare, Information Technology,

Advanced Manufacturing, and Skilled Trades/Construction as Austin’s targeted industries, and have added a new industry: Mobility/Infrastructure.

Similar to our Targeted Occupations criteria, the following market analysis factors were considered:

1. **Immediate employment:** High-growth industry and large market share with faster pathways to enter and advance (low and middle skill jobs)
2. **Improve income and reduces poverty:** Offering living wages in Austin (\$20/hour)
3. **Stability:** Low turnover
4. **Locally targeted/focus industry:** Based on insights from local wisdom and input from stakeholders and existing sector partnerships

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Targeted Occupations List

Updated: June 2024

#	SOC	Occupation Job Title	Industry
1	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Professional & Business Services
2	43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	Professional & Business Services
3	53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	Mobility
4	29-2031	Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	Health Sciences
5	47-2031	Carpenters	Skilled Trades
6	39-9011	Childcare Workers	Early Childhood Education
7	17-2051	Civil Engineering Technicians and Technologists	Infrastructure
8	29-2010	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	Health Sciences
9	15-1150	Computer Support Specialists includes: 15-1231 Computer Network Support Specialists 15-1232 Computer User Support Specialists	Information Technology
10	15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Information Technology
11	21-2094	Community Health Workers	Health Sciences
12	15-1141	Database Administrators	Information Technology
13	31-9091	Dental Assistants	Health Sciences
14	29-1292	Dental Hygienists	Health Sciences
15	29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Health Sciences
16	47-2111	Electricians	Skilled Trades
17	29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	Health Sciences
18	17-3020	Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, limited to: 17-3023 Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	Skilled Trades/Advanced Manufacturing
19	49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	Skilled Trades
20	53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Mobility
21	49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	Advanced Manufacturing
22	15-1212	Information Security Analyst	Information Technology
23	29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Health Sciences

24	49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	Skilled Trades/Mobility
25	13-1111	Management Analysts	Professional & Business Services
26	13-1161	Marketing Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	Professional & Business Services
27	29-2010	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	Health Sciences
28	31-9092	Medical Assistants (requires obtaining 31-9097 Phlebotomists certification)	Health Sciences
29	29-2071	Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	Health Sciences
30	43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	Health Sciences
31	15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Information Technology
32	31-1131	Nursing Assistants	Health Sciences
33	29-1122	Occupational Therapist Assistant	Health Sciences
34	23-2011	Paralegal and Legal Assistants	Professional & Business Services
35	29-2043	Paramedics	Health Sciences
36	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	Health Sciences
37	31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	Health Sciences
38	47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	Skilled Trades
39	25-2000	Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers (Especially Pre School Teachers (25-2012))	Early Childhood Education
40	51-0000	Production Occupations, Limited to: 51-4041 Machinists 51-9061 Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	Advanced Manufacturing
41	29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	Health Sciences
42	29-1141	Registered Nurses	Health Sciences
43	29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	Health Sciences
44	43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	Professional & Business Services
45	47-2211	Sheet Metal Workers	Skilled Trades
46	15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Information Technology
47	21-1023	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselor	Health Sciences
48	29-2055	Surgical Technologists	Health Sciences
49	17-3031	Surveying and Mapping Technicians	Mobility & Infrastructure
50	49-2000	Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers	Mobility/Skilled Trades
51	49-3000	Vehicle & Mobile Equipment Mechanics, Installers & Repairers, limited to: 49-3023 Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics 49-3031 Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	Mobility

52	15-1134	Web Developers	Information Technology
53	51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	Skilled Trades/Advanced Manufacturing

B. Labor Force Analysis and Trends

References: WIOA §108(b)(1)(C); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(3)

Boards must include an analysis of the regional workforce, including:

- current labor force employment and unemployment data;
- information on labor market trends; and
- the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

An analysis of the regional workforce, including the following:

- Employment data
- Unemployment data
- Labor market trends
- Educational and skill levels
- Individuals with barriers to employment

Board Response:

Over the past 5 years, jobs in the Austin Round Rock, Texas Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) grew by 223,514 and are projected to grow by 192,214 over the next 5 years (14% growth between 2023 – 2028). Our region has over 76,000 payrolled business locations in the MSA and the average earnings per job are at \$93,960, above the national average of \$84,753. Recent data as of November 2024, shows the MSA labor force at 1,510,131 with unemployment at 53,287.

In 2023 the industry characteristics for the Austin Round Rock, Texas Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) show highest jobs posted in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Government, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, Finance and Insurance, and Construction.

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C. Workforce Development Analysis

References: WIOA §108(b)(1)(D); 20 CFR §679.560(a)(4)

Boards must include an analysis of:

- workforce development activities in the region, including education and training;
- the strengths and weaknesses of the Board’s workforce development activities;
- the effectiveness of the Board’s programs and services;
- the Board’s capacity to provide workforce development activities to address;
 - the identified education and skills needs of the workforce; and
 - the employment needs of employers.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including the following:

- General workforce development activities
- Education activities, including Early Childhood Education (ECE) and K–12
- Training activities
- Strengths and weaknesses of activities
- Effectiveness of programs and services
- The Board’s capacity to provide workforce development activities
- Individuals with barriers to employment
- Employment needs of employers

Part 3: Core Programs

A. Workforce Development System

References: WIOA §108(b)(2); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(1)

Boards must describe how the local workforce development system will work with entities carrying out core and required partner programs to support alignment to aid in the provision of services that support the strategies identified in TWC’s WIOA Combined State Plan.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of the local workforce development system will work with entities carrying out core and required partner programs to support alignment.

Note: The plan must describe how the Board’s system will work with the entities carrying out the core programs. **The following checklist is for reference only.**

Core programs:

- Youth workforce investment activities
- Adult employment and training activities
- Dislocated worker employment and training activities
- Adult education and literacy activities
- Employment services
- Vocational rehabilitation services

Required programs (if operated in the Board Area)

- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program
- Choices, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) employment and training program
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP)
- Child Care Services
- Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs
- National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) program
- Apprenticeship programs
- Career and Technical Education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 USC §2301, et seq.)
- Veteran employment and training programs—Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)

- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Board Response:**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes key employment and training programs in the service delivery system to help workers acquire the tools and skills they need to be successful and to connect employers to the skilled workers they need. WIOA further aligns “core” programs to provide coordinated, comprehensive workforce services.

The core programs provided within the Career Centers are:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker;
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CHOICES;
- CHOICES Non-Custodial Program (NCP);
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP);
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA);
- Rehabilitation Act: Provides services to individuals with disabilities;
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: staff located within centers and directly employed by TWC; the contractor integrates these services under the Texas Model;

- Veteran’s Employment Services/Texas Veterans Leadership Program (TVLP): provided by staff located within the centers and employed by the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) or TWC. The contractor is responsible for the coordination of this program and staff with the TVC or TWC.

Additionally, WFSCA receives funding for the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC), a City- and County-funded program designed to provide short-term job training, job search and employment services. These services are similar to WIOA and offered to customers that might not qualify for WIOA services or as a supplement to enhance WIOA services.

Goodwill’s mission is “Transforming lives through the power of education and work.” Goodwill has served Opportunity Youth since its founding, with approximately 10,100 Opportunity Youth served in 2023. Opportunity Youth are defined as youth ages 16-24 that are not sufficiently connected to education or work. About 350 participated in WIOA Youth services in 2023, which continues to represent one of Goodwill’s most intensive, highest-impact programs. The organization has chosen to focus strategically on five target populations for maximum impact: people with disabilities, those lacking skills or education, people with criminal backgrounds, those who are unhoused or experiencing housing insecurity, and Opportunity Youth.

For required programs that are not under the direct oversight of the workforce board, WFSCA has established Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with:

- Adult Education and Literacy (WIOA, Title II);
- Apprenticeship programs;
- National and Community Services Act Program;
- Non-Certificate Postsecondary Career and Technology Training Programs;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program; and

WFSCA works to strengthen service integration for seamless delivery of services to our customers as well as our community. WFSCA has MOUs in place with several community agencies to provide co-case management and workforce services through co-enrollment when appropriate.

WFSCA has established the following partnership strategies related to its strategic vision and goals:

Employers have access to a skilled workforce

Meet regularly with, and attend convenings hosted by, local Chambers of Commerce.

- a. Become members of areas Chamber of Commerce.
- b. Join existing, or create if none exist, industry sector partnerships.
- c. Leverage the knowledge, expertise, and networks of Board of Directors in order to deepen trust and commitment to the public workforce system.
- d. Engage and ensure customer satisfaction of the employers who utilize the public workforce system.

WFSCA and our neighboring Board are working closely to align industry sector work, as well as services provided to businesses. In 2022, both Boards participated in system alignment of business services between the Board Industry Directors and contractor Business Service staff. This partnership allows for seamless and consistent services to businesses in the region. Additionally, WFSCA has

developed a mobility partnership with Capital Metro to get in front of the needs our area will have as Project Connect is implemented which will create thousands of jobs in the skilled trades and mobility industries.

WFSCA and Capital Metro entered into an interlocal agreement to establish the work done together to implement, expand and enhance the mobility sector utilizing the following strategies:

1. Leverage funding to create a clear understanding of talent access points in the area, notably the education institutions, and also the capacity to scale up proportionate to meeting more of the area's needs.
2. Connect local residents to open positions at Capital Metro, including no-cost trainings for motivated residents to acquire the skills necessary to do the work.
3. The Mobility Partnership will be a key strategy outlined in the Hire Local Plan to address Capital Metro's workforce needs as projected within Project Connect
4. To develop and launch the Mobility Partnership, Workforce Solutions will accomplish the following necessary goals.
 - a. *Serve as public workforce system counterpart to Capital Metro's Workforce Director* – Workforce Solutions will coordinate with Capital Metro's Workforce Director to connect local education entities, labor union trades people, school districts, and community-based organizations from around the region to build relationships and collect initial capacity data.
 - b. *Analyze the mobility workforce ecosystem* -analysis will also draw out unintended consequences of hiring demands, such as displacing CDL drivers from area school districts and hiring in competition with highly recognized employers like Tesla and Samsung Austin Semiconductors.
 - c. *Educate leaders* – Workforce Solutions will educate workforce development leaders regarding the mobility employment ecosystem in Austin.
 - d. *Identify and recommend available resources for workforce development*

Austin Regional Manufacturing Association (ARMA) serves as sector partnership for manufacturing. With Tesla entering our region, as well as the thousands of jobs that will be created with Samsung, our Industry Directors are working closely with employers, training providers, as well as Rural Capital Board to ensure we have or to develop training and upskilling programs.

The workforce has the literacy, workforce readiness, education and occupational skills to obtain and maintain meaningful employment

- a. Enter into an agreement with, and meet regularly with, the local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) provider and its contractors.
- b. Meet regularly with executive and operational leadership of key secondary and post-secondary systems (area Independent School Districts and Austin Community College) to ensure understanding of and ability to contribute to effective and results-driven career pathways.

- c. Enter into agreements with area CBOs who are essential participants in the provision of services in the workforce system.
- d. Collaborate with and plan for future co-location of representatives from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and the Division of Blind Services (DBS), now under the governance of TWC. Ensure regular and planned presence of DARS and DBS staff on-site at One-Stop to ensure access to services for all customers, particularly those with disabilities.

Job seekers have access to meaningful employment opportunities

- a. Through area educators and with area CBOs, promote customer-focused, engaging collateral about in-demand industries and occupations via the Board’s website and printed materials for educators, parents, youth, and job seekers
- b. Post and publicize WFSCA’s Target Occupation List, with related information about access to training in those occupations.
- c. In collaboration with area employers, promote the multitude of earn-and-learn opportunities. Engage and enter into agreements with employers who will offer registered apprenticeship opportunities for job seekers. Increase work experience and On-the-Job training opportunities for youth and job seekers with barriers to employment, including those job seekers with disabilities.
- d. In collaboration with local government and area ISDs, support, promote, and participate in career fairs for young people, including Opportunity Youth to inform about and connect youth to career pathways which lead to meaningful employment.

Workforce Solutions Capital Area meets or exceeds all performance targets set by its governing body

- a. In collaboration with WFSCA’s contractors, meet at least monthly to review budgets, expenditures, and procurements.
- b. In collaboration with WFSCA’s contractors, review performance and provide technical assistance on a monthly basis.
- c. With CBOs and other community stakeholder groups, identify trends that impact the workforce system’s ability to prepare the workforce and meet employer demand, both current and future.
- d. Continually evaluate performance outcomes related to training, specifically training related employment outcomes.
- e. Establish and follow a regular risk-assessment monitoring schedule for publicly funded contracts.

WFSCA has Industry Sector Partnership Directors to work with employers in our key sectors of Healthcare, Manufacturing, Information Technology, and Mobility and Infrastructure. The Directors work closely with industry to understand their hiring and training needs to identify ways in which we can support through job seeker referrals to open positions, training, and upskilling. The Directors work closely with our Career Center contractor to identify job candidates for open positions and provide training for job seekers seeking employment in these demand industries.

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A. Core Programs—Expand Access, Facilitate Development, and Improve Access

References: WIOA §108(b)(3); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(2)

Each Board must include a description of how the Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:

- expand access to employment, training, education, and support services for eligible

individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment;

- facilitate the development of career pathways and coenrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and
- improve access to activities that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential (such as an industry-recognized certificate or certification) that is portable and stackable.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of how the Board will work with entities that facilitate core programs to do the following:

- Expand access to employment training, education, and support services for the following:
 - Eligible individuals
 - Eligible individuals with barriers to employment
- Facilitate development of career pathways and coenrollment in core programs
- Improve access to activities that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential (such as an industry-recognized certificate or certification) that is portable and stackable

Core programs:

- Youth workforce investment activities
- Adult employment and training activities
- Dislocated worker employment and training activities
- Adult education and literacy activities
- Employment services
- Vocational rehabilitation services

Board Response:

WFSCA works with entities carrying out core programs, and with required partners to align resources available to the local area by continuing to implement and strengthen execution of the Texas Model in the Capital Area. The contractor that manages the Career Centers in Travis County is responsible for the provision of core programs and services. These include TANF, SNAP, and WIOA (Adult and Dislocated Worker). The contractor also provides guidance and oversight to TWC Employment Services staff. Although these staff work for the state, they are located within our career centers and provide services to customers. Similarly, Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation staff are co-located within our flagship career center location. The contractor is likewise responsible for providing direction to Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) staff, in coordination with TVC administration.

- Although not co-located with the career centers, the WIOA Youth program works closely with the career centers to provide referrals, as appropriate. Orientations for the WIOA Youth program are also held monthly at the three career centers.
- WFSCA's subsidized child care program is co-located with our Career Center. If a parent receiving child care becomes unemployed, a direct referral is made to the Career Center staff to assist the parent in obtaining employment and/or entering into training. Additionally, Career Center and child care staff coordinate to share opportunities for employment and/or training with

- all parents receiving child care.
- Having the City- and County-funded Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC) and Level Up programs within the career centers provides another avenue for individuals with barriers to employment to receive workforce services. Individuals that do not meet workforce program eligibility requirements or are not ready for training are able to receive services through the City- and County-funded programs.
 - WFSCA has staff located with the Central Texas Food Bank. They receive referrals from individuals receiving services from the Food Bank to assist with employment and training opportunities.
 - Through a grant received from the City of Austin, two local community-based organizations are working closely with WFSCA to provide their services and also to promote referrals to Career Center services. The Austin Child Guidance Center provides counseling services to economically disadvantaged families. They have staff onsite once a week and take referrals from Career Center staff. El Buen Samaritano is an organization that provides a variety of services, from health literacy programming to English as a Second Language and digital literacy, to the Latino and Spanish-speaking community in Travis County. Through the City grant, El Buen maintains a mobile food pantry and house in the WFSCA parking lot twice a month. This is an opportunity for individuals to be referred to WFSCA for services, including SNAP E & T, that might not know of employment and training opportunities.
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- WFSCA partners with Equidad, a local community-based organization that provides mobile services to the eastern crescent of Travis County. This is considered an underserved area of the county and has a prosperity index below the city's median. WFSCA partnered with Equidad to provide mobile services in the area and also funded training programs through Austin Community College at a local school in the evenings, thereby enabling individuals to conveniently attend training for in-demand careers.
 - At the request of the Mayor of Austin and Travis County Judge, WFSCA created the Community Workforce Plan in 2017 that has become the Hire Local Plan. The goal of the plan is to grow our own and ensure we have the local skilled talent to meet employer needs so they do not have to look for talent outside of Travis County. This plan creates a common agenda for the Austin community united in building or enhancing career pathways for economically disadvantaged individuals into middle-skills jobs via career pathways. The Hire Local Plan is built on four strategies: Awareness, Training, Placement (Employment), and Upskilling. These strategies help to meet employer needs, but also ensure everyone in Travis County can train for not only jobs, but careers, so that all residents can enjoy the prosperity that Austin has to offer.

Part 4: One-Stop Service Delivery

A. One-Stop Service Delivery System

References: WIOA §108(b)(6); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(5)

Each Board must include a description of its workforce area's one-stop delivery system, including explanations of the following:

- How the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers and how providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers
- How the Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery

system, including to remote areas, using technology and other means

- How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including Boards, contracted service

providers, and one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA §188 (related to Non-Discrimination), if applicable, and with applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals who have disabilities.

- The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of the one-stop delivery system, including explanations of the following:

- How the Board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers
- How providers will meet the employment needs of employers, workers, and job seekers
- How the Board will use technology and other means to facilitate access to services, including referrals to VR and AEL services and access to remote areas
- Compliance with non-discrimination provisions consistent with WIOA §188 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners

Board Response:

- a. WFSCA believes that TWC contracted performance is only one way in which to measure contractor/provider performance. Along with the required measures, WFSCA places quality measures into provider contracts that measure the effectiveness of the system and programs. WFSCA evaluates the outcomes of our second largest investment after child care, training scholarships, to ensure that individuals for whom we fund training are able to obtain employment in the field in which they were trained. WFSCA has expanded the analysis and reporting of outcomes to also evaluate income gains for those that obtain employment related to training compared to those that don't, as well as the local return on investment into the community from these increased wages. Because income gains are significant for those job seekers that obtain a credential and enter employment related to their training, WFSCA created a Quality Expectations Plan focusing on six core elements of providing quality case management while ensuring customers are supported throughout training and as they enter employment. The six core elements are:
 - Create clear pathways to training and employment
 - Assist clients to enter a pathway
 - Keep clients on a pathway until completion
 - Ensure clients know how and where to look for a job
 - Assist clients in getting a job
 - Support clients after job placement

The Quality Expectations Plan outlines a path to provide services that meet the needs of job seekers/participants, as well as employers. The strong case management and career pathway focus allows for job seekers/participants to enter into a pathway through training and/or case management and on to a career. With a strong focus on identifying employment opportunities for individuals exiting training, the Plan ensures that the Business Solutions Team is identifying jobs within industries in which customers are completing training and matching customers to those employers.

To ensure that the youth most in need in the Capital Area were able to receive services, WFSCA required the WIOA Youth contractor to maintain a 75% out-of-school expenditure rate 6 years prior to the WIOA legislation that required this expenditure rate.

The WIOA Youth contract is a consortium of four youth-serving agencies within the community. Goodwill is the lead agency and the partners are LifeWorks, American Youthworks, and Skillpoint Alliance. Each agency specializes in services to youth with specific challenges, such as homelessness or foster youth. This consortium ensures youth are able to be served throughout the community and not solely within one entity. This system allows for youth to “begin where they are,” often transitioning from one partner to another and growing within the program.

The Youth contractor has developed a system for case management in which staff specialize in serving the youth at various points within their service plan. Staff specialize in case management, while other staff begin working with youth when they complete training and are ready to begin to look for work. There are also staff that provide GED preparation and tutoring. This team approach of working with youth helps to ensure the youth feel supported at every step of their service plan and know that a team is working together to ensure their success.

WFSCA maintains two (2), full service Career Centers within Travis County in order to provide access throughout the city. In 2024, WFSCA closed its south location and have staff located at the entral Texas Food Bank. Staff work with individuals coming in for services to share labor market information, assist with job search, provide information on workforce services, and refer interested job seekers to our full-service center for case managed services.

The co-location of VR Staff in WFSCA North Career Center has provided for actual time interactions among the staff. Co-location strengthens inter-agency collaboration, ensuring coordinated support for job seekers and employers across programs. VR and workforce can routinely share information and resources on an informal basis and work closely to provide services needed for customers. VR has access to our adaptive equipment and services with our Career Center. WFSCA and VR utilize an internal referral system to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to employment and training services opportunities. WFSCA and VR also hold monthly check-ins to continuously improve service integration.

Physical accessibility of each career office location is assessed by the EO Officer on an annual basis. WFSCA staff conduct accessibility reviews to remove or correct barriers for individuals with disabilities. Board and workforce center staff conduct annual training on WIOA 188, the Americans with Disabilities Act and proper use of accessibility software and hardware. The workforce center operator provides customers with equal opportunity to access all facilities, programs, and services without regard to race, color, religion, gender, marital status, age, national origin, disability, political

affiliation or belief. We manage and operate the Capital Area Workforce in compliance with EO and ADA requirements.

To comply with minimum accessibility standard drafted in March 2016, the array of adaptive equipment and services provided for customer use has been expanded in order to assure full accessibility to all available programs and center services.

The following is a list of adaptive strategies used by contractor staff in each office to assist customers requiring accommodation:

- Screen Magnifier Software such as MAGic, ZoomText, CDesk
- Screen Reader Software such as JAWS and ZoomText
- Headphones, Speakers
- Qualified or Staff Readers
- MAGic Large Print Keyboard
- Microsoft Windows On-Screen Keyboard
- Speech Amplification Systems such as Chattervox
- Trackball Mouse(s)
- Telephones with Volume Control and/or Amplification Devices
- Video Text Display Phones, Video Relay Interpreting Services (VRIS), Video Relay Services (VRS)
- Written Materials for Orientations, Workshops etc.
- Adjustable Height Desks, Keyboard Tray, Worktables and Chairs
- Interpreters are available upon request and coordinated and funded by the Board to ensure access and quality of service.

To make certain staff are focused on customer abilities, all career office staff participate in professional development trainings which include:

- Courses through a Learning Management System where staff learn to provide customer service from a strength-based approach; identifying customers' skills and abilities and then matching them to available jobs.
- Computer-based trainings from Texas Workforce Commission on Diversity, EEO, and Discrimination Prevention as well as the Discrimination Complaint Process, required of all new hires and then to be renewed at least every 2 years.
- Diversity Awareness training from Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
- Usage of assistive technology in the career offices and various disability awareness topics.
- An overview of Equal Opportunity Standards and Guidelines including providing accommodations and the discrimination complaint process, as described in TWC's Employment Services guide.

To ensure customers with disabilities can "navigate" the workforce system in finding employment, our Business Solutions Team and Management staff:

- Provide staff training on various disability related topics including the use of auxiliary aids and assistive technologies.
- Coordinate with Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other community organizations to promote awareness of disability related topics, attend disability related events, and assist individuals with reaching their employment goals.
- Work alongside career office staff to ensure the needs of individuals with disabilities are being met.
- Recruit and prepare individuals with disabilities for special hiring initiatives.
- Host employer education events to provide information on hiring and providing accommodations for job seekers with disabilities.

- b. WFSCA believes that service delivery should be seamless for customers. They should not have to worry about which funding stream or partner is serving them. Rather, they should simply receive quality services from the workforce system. All Career Center partners are considered to be staff and are included in trainings and staff meetings. This helps to encourage coordination for customers and staff. New customers are encouraged to attend an orientation detailing all services available within the Career Center and complete a universal application that is not categorized by funding or program. The application allows for staff to evaluate all programs for which a customer might qualify to braid services to ensure that the customer receives the highest quality of service.

B. Employer Engagement, Economic Development, and Unemployment Insurance Program Coordination

References: WIOA §108(b)(4); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(3); WIOA §108(b)(5); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(4)

Boards must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the workforce area to:

- facilitate the engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors, in-demand occupations, and target occupations, in workforce development programs;
- support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the workforce area;
- coordinate workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local workforce area;
- promote entrepreneurial-skills training and microenterprise services; and
- strengthen the linkage between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

Note: This may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, the use of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies that are designed to meet the needs of regional employers. These initiatives must support the strategy described above.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of strategies and services to:

- Facilitate the engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers of in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Support a local workforce development system that meets needs of businesses
- Better coordinate workforce development and economic development activities
- Promote entrepreneurial-skills training
- Promote microenterprise services
- Strengthen the links between one-stop and unemployment insurance

Board Response:

While our system serves all job seekers within our region, a special emphasis is placed on ensuring customers completing WFSCA-funded training programs are presented with employment opportunities that align with their course of study. In addition to being industry focused, Business Solutions Team members are charged with identifying target employers with current and future job openings that align with WFSCA’s in-demand Targeted Occupations List.

WFSCA uses an industry sector approach to employer services. We seek real-time input from employers through our industry sector partnerships in each of our target industries to understand their needs and develop our services and training offerings to meet those needs. A current example is the work WFSCA is doing with mobility and infrastructure. There are five major mobility projects that are being implemented in our region; Project Connect, airport expansion, I-35 expansion, Samsung, and Tesla all of which require a trained workforce. Through industry feedback and research, WFSCA discovered that there is a need for 10,000 jobs between now and 2040, yet our training providers are only producing 6,000 graduates a year. Through a partnership with the City, County, Austin Community College, employers, and local training providers, WFSCA is launching an Infrastructure Academy that will serve as the hub for career navigation and assessment to ensure we are able to fill these jobs with local residents. The goal of the Academy is to inform and guide job seekers about the opportunities, connect them to employment opportunities and/or training to meet the current needs of employers and their immediate projects. The Academy’s success will be the collaboration of training providers, including standardizing curriculum, as well as the collaboration of employers to ensure there is access to a trained workforce.

Recognizing one of the greatest challenges local employers face is the ability to develop in-house programming to help incumbent workers gain or to find new hires already with the up-to-date skills needed to grow their business, WFSCA will engage and enter into agreements with (as appropriate) employers to establish various training programs including:

- On-the-Job Training opportunities
- Internship and Subsidized Employment opportunities for job seekers with limited work experience and/or other barriers to employment
- Registered Apprenticeships

In addition, WFSCA will engage and enter into agreements with (as appropriate) employers to participate in publicly- and privately-funded grant opportunities to support additional in-demand skills training, including but not limited to Texas Workforce Commission-supported customized Skills Development Fund and Skills for Small Business grants.

- Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development

Board Response:

WFSCA is a member of the Austin Chamber as well as a number of smaller, more niche chambers that support many small businesses. WFSCA staff regularly present information at chamber meetings and meet one-on-one with employers who are introduced to WFSCA by chamber staff. These chambers include:

Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce
Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce
Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce
Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Austin Young Chamber

WFSCA works closely with Pflugerville Economic Development Corporation on grants and programs to develop training in high school, as well as opportunities in manufacturing.

- Strengthen links between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

C. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services

References: WIOA §108(b)(12); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(11)

Boards must include a description of the strategies that are used to maximize coordination, improve service delivery, and avoid the duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services that are provided through the one-stop delivery system.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of the strategies that are used to:

- Maximize coordination
- Improve service delivery
- Avoid duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services that are provided through the one-stop delivery system

D. Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management

References: WIOA §108(b)(21); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(20)

Boards must include a description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to WorkinTexas.com for the programs that are carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of the following:

- How one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to WorkInTexas.com for programs carried out under WIOA and one-stop partners

Board Response:

WFSCA incorporates technology into the one-stop system that includes integrated intake and case management systems WIOA programs, as well as all programs operated by the Career Center. WFSCA incorporates the following technology-based programs that are administered by the Texas Workforce Commission:

- WorkInTexas.com (WIT): online labor-exchange system that is mandated by the Wagner-Peyser Act. This system is available to individuals within the Career Centers, as well as anyone with access to a computer.
- In mid-2024, the case management system utilized by the State was incorporated into WorkInTexas. WIT is an integrated intake, eligibility, case management, and reporting system. WIT is utilized by employment and training programs. This central repository allows for case managers to identify additional services that a customer might be receiving or is eligible for.
- Virtual One-Stop Greeter-provides a tool for Boards to record customer information during Career Center point-of-entry visits; the ability to quickly identify priority of service veterans who are registered in WIT; designate a selection of staff to be alerted via an office check-in log dependent on customer visit reasons; adds customers to a waiting list upon sign-in; and provide reports identifying how customers and/or staff are using the Greeter interface.
- Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting (CDER)- TWC's web application that allows Boards to report and draw down funds from their program allocations.

E. Third Party Partnership in SNAP Employment and Training Programs

Reference: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Third-Party Partnership Guide

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission has directed TWC to expand the use of SNAP E&T Third Party Partnerships (TPP) throughout the state, with a goal of implementing TPP in all workforce areas by Federal Fiscal Year 2029. Boards must provide an assurance that they are planning for the expansion of TPP and must describe any planned or completed steps toward implementation.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- An assurance statement that the Board is planning for TPP expansion, including a description of any planned or completed steps.

Board Response

WFSCA was the only Board in the state to implement the Third Party Reimbursement Program (now called TPP) and was able to use local funding from the City and County as match to draw down funds for individuals served that are receiving SNAP benefits. WFSCA expanded the program to incorporate local CBOs that were serving SNAP recipients.

WFSCA is one of three Board areas currently participating in the TPP expansion pilot, rolled out by TWC and HHSC in 2024. WFSCA has contracted with our career center contractor, C2 Global Services, for the provision of TPP match funding for applicable employment and training services provided by C2 Global Services to SNAP E&T customers. The funds leveraged as match are local; City of Austin and Travis County.

Part 5: Workforce Investment Activities

A. Rapid Response Activity Coordination

References: WIOA §108(b)(8); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(7)

Each Board must include a description of how the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities that are carried out in the workforce area with the statewide rapid response activities described in WIOA §134(a)(2)(A).

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of how the Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with statewide rapid response activities described in WIOA §134(a)(2)(A).

Board Response

WFSCA will partner with the State Rapid Response Unit to ensure local employers and workers receive timely

and appropriate services. WFSCA services include the coordination of customized Rapid Response Orientation and the provision of packets of relevant Unemployment Insurance, job search and workforce development programming information for affected workers.

Time and employer interest permitting, the Board will also provide:

- Customized listings of current job openings similar to those of the affected workers
- Onsite online or paper registration for the statewide online talent database WorkInTexas.com
- Job posting referrals
- Organization of targeted job fairs
- Coordination of additional required supports, including multi-lingual staff

B. Youth Activities and Services

References: WIOA §108(b)(9); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(8)

Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of workforce investment activities for youth in the workforce area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description and assessment of the type and availability of workforce investment activities for:

- youth;
- youth with disabilities; and

Board Response:

Our youth program consists of **four agencies** referred to as the Youth Employment Partnership (YEP). The agencies that make up the YEP are Goodwill Industries of Central Texas serving as the lead agency, and partners LifeWorks, American YouthWorks, and Skillpoint Alliance.

Goodwill's mission is "transforming generations by empowering people through education, career training, and work". Goodwill has served opportunity youth since its founding, with approximately 3,600 opportunity youth served in 2019. Opportunity Youth are defined as youth ages 16-24 that are not sufficiently connected to education or work. About 630 participated in WIOA Youth services in 2019, which continues to represent one of Goodwill's most intensive, highest-impact programs. The organization has chosen to focus strategically on five target populations for maximum impact: people with disabilities, those lacking skills or education, people with criminal backgrounds, those who are homeless or experiencing housing instability, and Opportunity Youth.

The YEP WIOA program model continues to be based on the "Back on Track" design developed by JFF that incorporates the three phases of Enriched Preparation, Postsecondary Bridging, and First-Year Support for

Opportunity Youth. Without these pathways, Opportunity Youth are more likely to remain disengaged in academics and the workforce. With the services offered through the YEP, youth will be supported to make accelerated progress on their educational and career goals through evidence-based interventions.

The YEP offers services throughout the Austin community. All service locations and facilities are fully ADA compliant, with many going beyond ADA compliance by exceeding minimum access requirements, offering assistive technology, etc.

Below is a chart outlining the roles, responsibilities, and functions of each YEP agency and close collaborators.

Partner/Collaborator	Roles and Responsibilities	Function
Goodwill Central Texas	Programmatic and fiscal reporting, program oversight. Will hire, train, and manage Case Managers and other staff for the program, and comply with all relevant rules and regulations. Goodwill will recruit, orient, and refer eligible youth to the program, provide tutoring and basic education instruction, alternative/secondary education options, work experiences, occupational skills training, education, leadership development, supportive services, follow-up services, comprehensive guidance and counseling, financial literacy education, entrepreneurial skills training, labor market and employment information, and assistance to youth with transitioning to postsecondary education/training. In order to reduce barriers to opportunity youth and other target populations, WIOA Youth program participants can easily be connected to training and employment opportunities through the Goodwill Excel Center, which is the first free public charter high school in Texas with three locations in Austin. The Goodwill Career & Technical Academy currently offers occupational training in all three targeted industries: healthcare, skilled trades and information technology. Goodwill also operates Goodwill Talent Solutions, a temporary and temp-to-hire staffing agency, which offers clients additional employment opportunities.	Prime contractor and lead and fiscal agent
LifeWorks:	Recruitment, orientation, and referral of eligible youth, particularly youth who are homeless or in/aging out of foster care. LifeWorks will provide GED preparation and training, individual and group counseling, supported employment and education services, assistance with college enrollment, and co-enrollment in other LifeWorks programs.	Funded partner

American YouthWorks	Recruitment, orientation, and referral of eligible youth, alternative secondary school services, GED training, occupational skills training, paid and unpaid work experiences, wraparound support services, life skills, employment readiness training, pre-apprenticeships, career counseling and exploration, financial literacy, comprehensive counseling, community service projects, leadership skills development, and follow-up. Youth will be co-enrolled in other AYW services as appropriate, such as YouthBuild, which provides pre-apprenticeship training in all facets of the building trades and is considered a quality pre-apprenticeship program according to standards established by the U.S. Department of Labor.	Funded partner
Skillpoint Alliance	Referral of eligible youth, skills training, co-enrollment in other Skillpoint Alliance programs.	Funded partner
Austin Community College	Occupational training, postsecondary education, participant referral.	Non-funded collaborator/partner
Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services	Referrals include young adults ages 18-24 who qualify for WIOA and where Goodwill can leverage additional resources as a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) provider. a. Offer transition services for high school students with disabilities (job coaching, work adjustment training, and supported employment). b. Pipeline of referral for eligible students with disabilities, through more than 20 area high schools (upon graduation these students qualify for WIOA OSY and can complete career advancement training, occupational skills training, and paid work experiences). Through the Summer Earn and Learn program, Goodwill also offers paid summer work experiences.	Non-funded collaborator/partner
Career Center Contractor	Youth co-enrollment in WIOA Adult services, other career center services, and access to the full Eligible Training Provider System list for occupational skills training (required for WIOA funding approval). Career Center contractor allows youth access to career exploration/planning and other activities designed to help youth identify career interests and goals.	Non-funded collaborator/partner
Workforce Solutions Capital Area	Labor market expertise, program development guidance, Austin Opportunity Youth backbone agency, co-located One-Stop Career Center at the Goodwill Resource Center, mutual referrals for other programs, co-enrollment in WFS programs.	Funder/Contractor

	TWC executes Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) through the Board and GCT as the subcontractor to provide students with disabilities with work-based learning and training services. Upon high school graduation, students are a referral pipeline for the WIOA OSY Program to access career counseling, career advancement training, occupational training, work experience, and employment opportunities.	
City of Austin Public Health	Youth referral source through Youth Development Program, co-enrollment in other programs, community resource.	Collaborator
Upbring	Foster youth referral source through their local agency programs, co-enrollment in other programs, community resource.	Collaborator
Settlement Home	Foster youth referral source through their local agency programs, co-enrollment in other programs, community resource.	Collaborator
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Protective Services (DFPS)	Foster Youth referral source through their Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program, co-enrollment in other programs, community resource.	Collaborator

For youth with disabilities, the YEP maintains relationships with local high schools to identify and recruit students who are in danger of dropping out of school or aging out of the public school system, including students with disabilities. YEP staff attend ISD Transition Fairs to connect with students with disabilities and parents. YEP staff also work closely with Vocational Adjustment Coordinators at schools, as well as through Transitioning Students to Achieve Independence Through Career Education (TAVAC) where YEP representatives attend meetings and conduct presentations. Other community organizations serving people with disabilities and their families are also a source of eligible youth. The YEP also works with Special Education departments at Travis County high schools to capture that subset of older youth with disabilities who continue in high school beyond age 18. Goodwill also provides job coaching and placement services for Travis County summer youth participants, who are high school students with disabilities, and Goodwill has a School-to-Work Program for youth with disabilities. Both programs are sources of potential referrals. Goodwill also operates the annual Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) program to increase work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities through Texas' integrated workforce system, thereby providing participants with foundational employment skills and better preparing them for successful transition to postsecondary education and employment.

As a contracted Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services Community Rehabilitation Program (CPR) provider, Goodwill is also well-positioned to connect with this population through mutual Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services referrals and complementary services; these include job coaching, work adjustment training, and supported employment.

WFSCA has always conducted a separate procurement for Youth and Adult services. This has been a successful strategy; however, it is becoming apparent that there is a need for youth to be able to seamlessly transition or co-enroll into Career Center programs and services. To offer a full range of services, WFSCA will be re-procuring the WIOA youth contract, per our required 5-year schedule, but will also include Career

Center services so that we may offer a full suite of services to young adults in a seamless manner.

the identification of:

- successful models of such activities.

C. Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs

References: WIOA §108(b)(10); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(9)

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid the duplication of services.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of how the Board will:

- coordinate its workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities; and
- coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Board Response:

WFSCA provides in-person services, virtual services, and educational materials to secondary students, as well as their parents, teachers, counselors and college advisors. WFSCA gives labor market presentations about in-demand occupations and industries at middle and high schools in 5 local ISDs as well as the Region 13 Education Service Center. Additionally, WFSCA attends career fairs as a career resource and provides student career profile resources, which are informational profiles that give students a general understanding of in-demand occupations. These profiles contain local labor market information about the average wages and job openings in the Capital Area. During COVID-19, WFSCA made a virtual career fair platform available to the ISDs so students can continue to connect with employers despite restrictions on in-person gatherings. WFSCA staff have created a library of over 100 videos to help secondary students understand career pathways, how to secure a job, and how to be successful in a professional environment.

WFSCA and Austin Community College have had a long-standing relationship in the coordination of services for individuals in GED and post-secondary education. The Blueprint for coordination of Adult Education and Workforce designs a plan to enhance services for individuals between the two agencies WFSCA has monthly service integration meetings with ACC to ensure smooth coordination of our services and a seamless customer service experience for customers/students. The development of an online referral tool allows ACC staff to conduct a pre-assessment for WIOA eligibility and directly refer to Career Center staff for evaluation for programmatic intake.

D. Child Care and Early Learning

References: 40 TAC §809.12

Boards must include a description of how the Board is strategically managing child care and early

learning within the workforce system to enhance school readiness and strengthen and support the child care industry.

Efforts include:

- coordinating with employers, economic development programs, and other industry leaders to increase the awareness and importance of early learning as a workforce and economic development tool;
- supporting improved school readiness through higher-quality child care, including through the Texas Rising Star program and partnership opportunities; and
- supporting the needs of the child care industry, such as by providing assistance with business development or shared services, or by providing opportunities to support professional growth and career pathways for early education.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of how the Board will:

- incorporate and coordinate the design and management of the delivery of child care services with the delivery of other workforce employment, job training, and educational services;
- maximize the delivery and availability of safe and stable child care services that assist

families seeking to become independent from, or who are at risk of becoming dependent on, public assistance while parents are either working or attending a job training or educational program;

- use strategies for contracted slot agreements, including any local priorities and how the contracted slot agreements help increase access to high-quality care for targeted communities;
- develop and implement strategic quality improvement goals to enhance school readiness; and
- strengthen and support the child care industry

Board Response:

WFSCA has always been at the forefront of understanding the importance that child care plays in economic development. We saw with COVID-19 how critical early education services are for individuals to be able to work or attend school. Child care is economic development. WFSCA works with community partners to increase quality education and Texas Rising Star providers through our QC3 Strategic Plan. The QC3 Plan is in partnership with City and County organizations. Many of the strategies of the plan are to increase teacher education and pay to retain quality early education teachers in the classrooms, as well as increasing the number of quality providers in Travis County.

For the last 20 years, the City and County have invested in WFSCA to create a safety net for parents that lose their CCDF care. The Continuity of Care model allows for WFSCA to continue to serve parents using local dollars until we can bring them back into the federal program. This ensures that parents can continue to work or school and that their children have consistency in quality care.

Continuity of child care is important for families and business in Travis County. WFSCA's child care and career center contractors developed a system in which parents that are out of work or completing an educational program can work with an Employment Specialist to obtain employment and maintain child care services. Additionally, the City of Austin and Travis County fund a Continuity of Care program through WFSCA to create a bridge for families that temporarily lose child care or to pay for care while individuals are looking for employment. This funding provides a safety net for vulnerable families to maintain quality child care for their children.

WFSCA partners with United Way for Greater Austin to expand prekindergarten partnerships across Travis County. Through this partnership, quality child care providers that offer prekindergarten services can draw down public school dollars to expand their programs to serve more children and families.

WFSCA's Center-Based Compensation Support Grant provides salary stipends for child care staff at high-quality centers while also ensuring center owners and directors receive and address feedback from staff to retain highly qualified teachers.

We promote professional growth and career pathways for early education through scholarships for Spanish-language Child Development Associate (CDA) certifications and tests as well as Director credentials. Our Jeanette Watson Wage Supplement program incentivizes early childhood professionals to pursue a CDA credential, Associate's degree, or Bachelor's degree.

E. Transportation and Other Support Services

References: WIOA §108(b)(11); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(10)

Each Board must include a description of how the Board will provide transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate support services in the workforce area in coordination with WIOA Title I workforce investment activities.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of how the Board will provide:

- transportation, including public transportation; and
- other support services

Board Response:

Customers enrolled in WFSCA-sponsored programs are able to receive support services in order to remove barriers to employment, education/training, and participation in workforce programs. Support services are provided as authorized by program rules and if determined to be necessary to enable the participant to enter into or continue with services. Support services include:

- Subsidized childcare assistance
- Transportation in the form of bus passes or gas cards depending upon the customer's circumstances
- Work/employment-related expenses (tools, uniforms)
- Crisis assistance in the form of housing and utility assistance, minor car repairs, vehicle inspection and/or registration fees)

F. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy

References: WIOA §108(b)(13); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(12); WD 18-23, Change 2

Boards must include a description of how the Board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with AEL activities under WIOA Title II. Boards must also include the process used to review the local applications submitted under Title II, as consistent with WIOA §§107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA §232.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of:

- how the Board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with AEL activities under WIOA Title II, including the process used to review local applications submitted under WIOA Title II; and
- the local application review process.'

Board Response:

WFSCA has an Austin Community College Adult Education and Literacy representative on-site at one of our Career Centers. Having staff on-site allows for referral and coordination of services, both Adult Education and workforce. WFSCA and ACC have a long history of coordination. An area of coordination between Adult Ed

and workforce was the development of Integrated Basic Education and Training (IBEST) courses. IBEST is a teaching model that incorporates adult basic education with occupational training so that an individual can gain the skills necessary to enter the workforce. Through coordination with ACC's Adult Education and Continuing Education departments, ACC developed IBEST courses specific to the needs of WFSCA. WFSCA was able to refer participants in need of basic education, as well as training. These trainings enabled participants to obtain the training and education needed to enter the workforce.

WFSCA utilized a grant from TWC to enhance coordination of services between Adult Education and workforce. Through a thorough evaluation of each agency's programs and eligibility requirements, a cross walk was developed detailing points where students/participants can be referred or served by both programs. Frontline staff were trained in the Blueprint for Coordinated Services and have a better understanding of each agency's services in order to ensure effective coordination and service provision for customers. Designated points of contact within the community college and workforce programs, coupled with clear referral processes, will ensure that customers receive needed services from both agencies. WFSCA and ACC Adult Education continue effective coordination through the Blueprint strategies.

WFSCA has reviewed local applications submitted by the community college or other agencies submitting applications under WIOA Title II. Any time coordination with a local workforce board is required in an application, WFSCA works with community agencies to provide letters of support, review of applications, information, and assistance.

Part 6: Adult and Dislocated Workers

A. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training

References: WIOA §108(b)(7); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(6)

Boards must include a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the workforce area.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult, dislocated worker employment and training activities
- A list of assessment instruments (tools) used for adults and dislocated workers

Board Response:

WFSCA offers services to individuals entering the workforce, going back to work, continuing work, or advancing in their careers. The Career Centers provide two levels of service: Career Services and Training Services.

Career Services are available to any customer who wants or needs services. Career Services are designed to assist individuals in obtaining or maintaining employment. Career Services include:

- Job openings/listings;
- Labor market information;
- Computer access
 - Resume preparation
 - Job search
 - Email for job search purposes
- Employment related seminars
 - Resume preparation
 - Job search tools
 - Interviewing tips
 - Overcoming barriers
 - Job clubs;
- Placement services;
- Career counseling and planning;
- Outreach, intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to the full array of services available through the Career Centers (including those not funded by TWC);
- Information on the availability of support services, and appropriate referrals to those services, including:
 - Child care;
 - Child support;
 - Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program;
 - Benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
 - Assistance through the earned income tax credit; and
 - Assistance for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
- Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs; Assessment instruments used include TABE (11/12) and Wonderlic GAIN (Youth).
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Follow up services.

Training services are available to assist individuals in gaining the skills necessary to obtain employment in high demand occupations with the workforce area, subject to eligibility and funding availability. Training services include:

- Occupational skills training;
- On-the-job training (OJT);
- Registered apprenticeship;
- Incumbent worker training;
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above;
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition; and
- Customized training.

The design framework of our youth program consists of five agencies referred to as the Youth Employment Partnership (YEP). The YEP partners are Goodwill Central Texas as the lead agency and partners LifeWorks, American YouthWorks, Communities in Schools, and Skillpoint Alliance. Below is a chart that outlines how the 14 program elements are made available within the framework.

14 Required Program Elements

Required Program Element	Provision/Availability
1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies	Directly by four partners in the YEP (Goodwill, Communities in Schools, American YouthWorks, and LifeWorks)
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services	Directly by YEP and charter schools, including the Goodwill Excel Center main campus and also co-located at American YouthWorks.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education	Directly through the YEP and area employers, as well as through the Travis County Summer Employment Program.
4. Occupational skills training:	Skillpoint Alliance; Payment to Austin Community College or trade/technical schools on the WIOA-approved training provider list.
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster	Directly through YEP.
6. Leadership development	Directly through YEP, as well as utilization of existing community resources such as the Austin Opportunity Youth Collaborative.
7. Supportive services: Assistance with transportation, child care, housing, work attire/tools, linkages to community services, medical expenses, and food.	Directly through YEP, by voucher, or existing resources.
8. Adult Mentoring	Directly by YEP through American YouthWorks (Casa Verde Builders and YouthBuild participants) and . Mentoring is offered for a minimum of 12 months.
9. Follow-up Services	Directly through YEP, offered for a period of not less than 12 months.
10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	Directly through YEP, as well as through community resources such as Austin Child Guidance Center.

11. Financial literacy education	Directly through YEP (EverFi curriculum)
12. Entrepreneurial skills training	Provided directly through the YEP, as well as community classes including through the City of Austin and Austin Public Library.
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area	Provided directly through YEP (CRT Boot Camp and other YEP activities)
14. Assistance transitioning to postsecondary education and training	Directly through YEP

B. Service Priority

References: 20 CFR §679.560(b)(21)

Boards must include the Board policy to ensure that priority for adult individualized career services and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as consistent with WIOA §134(c)(3)(E) and 20CFR §680.600, along with veterans and foster youth, according to the priority order outlined in the WIOA Guidelines for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. Boards must also include a list of any Board-established priority groups, if any.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of the Board policy to ensure priority for adult individualized career services and training services will be given to the following:

- Recipients of public assistance
- Other low-income individuals
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient
- Veterans
- Foster youth
- List of Board priority groups (if any)

Board Response:

Based upon the TWC WIOA Guidelines, WFSCA gives priority of service for individualized career and training services in the following order:

- Eligible veterans and eligible spouses (as defined in TWC WD Letter 01-21) who are also recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.
- Foster youth and former foster youth (as defined in TWC WD Letter 43-11, Chg 2) who are also recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.
- All other individuals who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient.
- All other eligible veterans and eligible spouses.
- All other foster youth and former foster youth
- WFSCA has established two additional priority groups
 - Priority Group 2 shall consist of income eligible individuals who fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Ex-offenders
- School dropouts
- Individuals age 55 and older
- Priority Group 3 shall consist of individuals with an annualized income under 200% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level guidelines for use in determining self-sufficiency wage levels and the career center contractor has determined that the individual is in need of and can benefit from the intensive and/or training services.

As part of the intake and enrollment process, customers complete an Adult Priority of Service form where they can select if they meet criteria that would qualify them for priority of service. This tool enables the career counselor to ensure that priority is being given to those that fall into the various categories.

Part 7: Fiscal Agent, Grants, and Contracts

A. Fiscal Agent

References: WIOA §108(b)(15); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(14)

Boards must identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the CEOs or the governor under WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i).

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- The entity responsible for disbursement of grant funds

WorkSource – Greater Austin Area Workforce Board, DBA Workforce Solutions – Capital Area Workforce Board, is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds for the Austin/Travis County region as described in WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the governor under WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i). The area Partnership Agreement identifies Workforce Solutions – Capital Area Workforce Board as the grant recipient.

B. Subgrants and Contracts

References: WIOA §108(b)(16); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(15)

Boards must include a description of the competitive process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of the competitive process used to award subgrants and contracts

Board Response:

WFSCA utilizes a procurement process for supplies; equipment; construction; and specific services, program activities or goods for Workforce programs to ensure maximum full and open competition. These standards are intended to ensure that such purchases are obtained efficiently and economically and in compliance with the provisions of applicable State and Federal law and regulations and consistent with OMB 2 CFR 200.318, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, Texas Workforce Commission Financial Management Manual for Grants and Contracts, and the Texas Administrative Code Title 34 Part 1 Chapter 20 Subchapter C. These standards are also applicable to any covered procurement by subcontractors of the Board who purchase goods or services all or in part with Workforce funds. Additionally, WFSCA strives to select service providers who are registered as Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBS) and have demonstrated effectiveness in delivering comparable or related services.

The competitive negotiation method of procurement is used if the following conditions are present:

1. The nature of the item or service needed precludes developing a precise specification or a purchase description.
2. In addition to price, other factors will be considered in making an award.
3. Two or more responsible suppliers are willing and able to compete effectively for the award.
4. The price of the item(s) and / or service(s) to be purchased is over an aggregate of \$250,000.

When using the competitive negotiation method, WFSCA adheres to the following:

1. Solicit offers by distributing Requests for Quotes (RFQs) or Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to qualified sources and by publicly advertising the intent to contract. RFQs and RFPs are made available on our website, as well.
2. Ensure that the RFQ or RFP states a formal objective and identifies all significant evaluation factors.
3. Evaluate proposals received, determine responsible offerors and select the contractor(s). A minimum of three (3) evaluators are selected from internal or external subject matter experts. If using external subject matter experts, a Request for Quotation process is utilized to contract with the evaluators. Proposals received are date stamped and documented to ensure compliance with submission requirements. An initial screen of the proposal is done to ensure responsiveness of proposal. The proposals are sent to the evaluators with an evaluation/scoring document.

Upon receipt of the evaluator's scores, a recommendation is presented to a Board Committee for approval and then taken to the Board of Directors for action.

4. Conduct negotiations with offerors deemed to be in the competitive range, if appropriate. A pre-award survey/fiscal integrity evaluation is conducted (Jerry-before or after Board decision?)

5. Award the contract to the responsible offer(s) whose proposal will be most advantageous to Workforce.
6. Notify unsuccessful offer(s) of the award.

Part 8: Performance

A. Board Performance Targets

References: WIOA §108(b)(17); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(16)

Boards must include a description of the local levels of performance that were negotiated with TWC and the CEOs, consistent with WIOA §116(c), that will be used to measure the performance of the workforce area and for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the workforce area.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of local levels of performance to be used to measure performance of:
- the workforce area; and
 - local fiscal agent (when appropriate)

Board Response:

Performance targets are set by TWC and Boards are evaluated based on the “Percent of Target” met. A Board is considered “Not Meeting” if performance falls less than 90% of target, “Meeting” if performance falls within 90%-110% of target, or “Exceeding” if performance is greater than 110% of target.

TWC sets performance targets for the 28 Boards in Texas. FY25 TWC performance targets for WFSCA are:

Program Specific

- Adult Worker Employed Q2 Post Exit 75.00%
- Adult Worker Employed Q4 Post Exit 74.40%
- Adult Worker Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit \$9,030.00
- Adult Worker Credential Rate 75.70%
- Adult Measurable Skills Gains 72.6%
- Dislocated Worker Employed Q2 Post Exit 80.4%
- Dislocated Worker Employed Q4 Post Exit 82.40%
- Dislocated Worker Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit \$11,600.00
- Dislocated Worker Credential Rate 80.5%
- Dislocated Worker Measurable Skills Gains 76.00%-
- Active Job Seeker New Employment Connection Rate 58.31%
- Maintaining Employment Connection Rate 42.62%
- Credential Rate- All C&T participants 71.00%
-

- Youth Employed/Enrolled (Education) Q2 Post Exit 78.50%
- Youth Employed/Enrolled (Education) Q4 Post Exit 78.00%
- Youth Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit \$3,900
- Youth Credential Rate 71.10%
- Youth Measurable Skills Gains 64.30%
- *Active Job Seeker New Employment Connection Rate 58.31%
- *Maintaining Employment Connection Rate 42.62%
- *Career and Training Participants Credential Rate 71.00%
- *Successful Texas Talent Assistance Rate (STTAR) 45.46%
-
- *This is an “All” performance measure established by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and consists of all individuals or entities in the Capital Area Board area. Service providers must focus on performance, in its entirety. When considering the “All” measures, service providers should keep in mind that meeting the Youth targets contributes to meeting the targets set for the “All” measures.
- TWC Performance measures shall be tracked monthly using the TWC Final Monthly Performance Reports (MPR). The Board will utilize the Final MPR Year-to-Date (YTD) version to track all contracted measures listed above.
-
- Contracted performance measures are defined by the Texas Workforce Commission. Performance measures and targets are subject to change based on actions of the Texas Workforce Commission and/or the Board. The Board reserves the right to add local performance measures and targets.
-

Reemployment and Employer Engagement Measures	Current Target
Claimant Reemployment within 10 Weeks	60%
# of Employers Receiving Texas Talent Assistance	4,168
Successful Texas Talent Assistance Rate (STTAR)	45.46%

RESEA Measures	Current Target
RESEA Outreach & Scheduling Rate	100% (weekly)
RESEA Initial Appointment Rate	77%(quarterly)
RESEA Failure to Report Rate	23%(quarterly)

Program Participation Measures	Current Target
Choices Full Engagement Rate	50.00%

Other TWC Deliverables and Performance Measures

Non-Custodial Parent (NCP)

Meet or exceed Year to date (YTD) Entered Employment Rate	65% by 8/31/25
Meet or exceed YTD Employment Retention Rate	50% by 8/31/25
Meet or exceed expenditure benchmarks	40%(2/28/25) 60% (5/31/25)

The following are the NCP Choices-specific performance measures for BCY 2025

- NCP Population Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit
- NCP Choices Population Employed/Enrolled Q2 – Q4 Post Exit

- Active Job Seeker New Employment Connection Rate
- Maintaining Employment Connection Rate
- Career and Training participants Credential Rate

Workforce System: All Programs

- All Job Seekers Employed Quarter 2 After Exit: TBD
- All Job Seekers Median Earnings: TBD
- All Job Seekers Employed Quarters 2-4 After Exit: TBD
- All Job Seekers Credential Rate: TBD

As part of fiscal oversight, information on budget and expenditures is presented to the Board of Directors. This ensures that WFSCA is in compliance with funding requirements and benchmarks that are set by TWC for programs.

Through contract management, WFSCA ensures contractors are in compliance with program rules, policies, and procedures. The Director of Contract Compliance and Director of Workforce Performance ensure that contracts are meeting benchmarks and performance, as outlined in the contracts.

Part 9: Training and Services

A. Individual Training Accounts

References: WIOA §108(b)(19); 20 CFR §679.560(b)(18)

Boards must include a description of how the training services outlined in WIOA §134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts (ITAs), including if the Board will use contracts for training services, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs under that chapter, and how the Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are provided.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

A description of the following:

- How training services will be provided using ITAs in accordance with WD Letter 14-19, Change 2
- How contracts for training services will be coordinated (if contracts are used)
- How the Board will ensure informed customer choice

Board Response:

All WIOA funded training is provided through the use of ITAs. Additionally, WFSCA uses the ITA system and Eligible Training Provider List to fund training in programs funded by local sources as these programs have been vetted by WFSCA and TWC.

WFSCA has set a a maximum ITA amount of \$7,500, although exceptions can be made with Board staff

approval. Job seekers interested in training receive labor market information on our target industries and are provided the TWC statewide eligible training provider list and are encouraged to go to the providers and learn more about their programs and outcomes prior to selecting a training provider.

WFSCA staff review applications to ensure that all criteria are met, and if approved, submit to TWC for final review and inclusion on the statewide list of eligible training providers (ETPL). Once added to the ETPL, customers are able to select training approved in the workforce area. Career counselors work closely with customers to develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that includes previous work and education experience, as well as future employment goals. It is through the career counseling process that staff determine if training is appropriate and refer the customer to the ETPL. Customers are encouraged to visit several providers in the training field they are interested in, before making a decision on which training to attend.

Career counselors continue to maintain regular contact with customers while in training. This helps to ensure that customers have the supports that they need to complete training. This also allows for an opportunity for customers to complete a satisfaction survey for the training that they attended. Results from these surveys are maintained at each Career Center and are available for customers to review as part of their training selection process.

B. ITA Limitations

References: 20 CFR §663.420; WD Letter 14-19, Change 2

Boards may impose limits on the duration and amount of ITAs, of which such limitations must be described in the Board Plan. If the state or Board chooses to impose limitations, such limitations must not be implemented in a manner that undermines the WIOA requirement that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an Eligible Training Provider. Exceptions to ITA limitations may be provided for individual cases and must be described in Board policies.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- Identify whether the Board imposed ITA limits
- Provide a description of the limitations, if applicable
- Provide a description detailing how customer training services selection is continuously maximized despite ITA limitations
- Provide a description of any exceptions to ITA limitations and the process for requesting an exception

Board Response:

WFSCA does not place limits on the duration and amount of ITAs, although the trainings available through the Eligible Training Provider System are no longer than 2 years. ITAs are issued for the cost of the training. As part of the Eligible Training Provider review process, Board staff evaluate cost and contact hours of similar programs in order to determine an appropriate range of costs for each program. The ITA must reflect the cost approved by the Board and reflected on the ETPL.

Through our industry sector partnership work, WFSCA seeks feedback from industry to ensure the trainings we are funding meet the current need of employers. Industry needs can change quickly due to businesses moving into the region, as well as new technologies incorporated into occupations. With this information, WFSCA staff map target occupations to ensure there is a training provider on the ETPL to train for the identified occupation.

WFSCA had a policy to only serve Travis County residents with ITAs; however, due to the rapid changes in the region and to ensure there is no wrong door, in June 2024, the WFSCA Board of Directors approved a policy allowing for individuals that live outside Travis County, but work or were laid off from an employer in Travis County, we can issue an ITA for training, should they come through our Career Center. Our neighboring Board created a similar policy so that a job seeker doesn't have to be referred to another site when seeking services.

Part 10: Apprenticeship

A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Each Board must include a description of how the Board will encourage Registered Apprenticeship programs within its workforce area to register with the Eligible Training Provider System to receive WIOA funding.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of how the Board will encourage Registered Apprenticeship programs

to register with the Eligible Training Provider System to receive WIOA funding

Board Response:

Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WFSCA) regularly connects with our region’s Registered Apprenticeship programs (RAP) and provide the information for RAPs to be listed on the Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS) to encourage opportunities for WIOA funding to support RAPS. WFSCA staff will provide technical assistance to navigate the spreadsheet requirements for a RAP to be added to the ETPS. One strategy that has been effective is cross-checking the submissions we receive to review for Chapter 133 funding with the ETPS and sharing information with the RAP contacts that are not currently listed.

B. ApprenticeshipTexas

Each Board must include a description of the Board’s strategy and commitment to support ApprenticeshipTexas efforts across the state, as applicable.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- A description of the Board’s strategy and commitment to support ApprenticeshipTexas.

Board Response:

Workforce Solutions Capital Area works closely with the ApprenticeshipTexas department to enhance the strategies to expand and support RAPs in our region. WFSCA participates in the reoccurring apprenticeship navigator booster calls hosted by ApprenticeshipTexas to share and learn best practices and lessons learned. WFSCA is dedicated to helping ensure the success of the RAPs in our region and support in the growth of this workforce strategy.

Part 11: Public Comment

References: WIOA §108(d); 20 CFR §679.550(b) and §679.560(b) and (e)

Boards must provide a description of the public comment process, including:

- making copies of the proposed local plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;
- an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of

business, labor organizations, and education;

- providing at least a 15-day, but no more than a 30-day period for comment on the plan before its submission to TWC, beginning on the date that the proposed plan is made available, before its submission to TWC.

Minimum Plan Requirements:

- Describe the public comment period process
- Provide any comments received; or a statement that no public comments were received

WFSCA made the WIOA Plan available for public comment on its website February 18, 2025. The Plan was available for public comment through March 13, 2025.

The Plan was approved by the Operations Committee on February 20, 2025, and approved by the Board on February 27, 2025.

Appendix: Texas Workforce Investment Council Requirements

Local Board Plan Requirements

for Alignment to the Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan

Requirement for Workforce Systemwide Alignment

State law requires local workforce development boards (local board) to adopt a plan that “sets broad goals and objectives for all workforce development programs in the local area consistent with statewide goals, objectives, and performance standards,”¹ as outlined in the workforce system strategic plan, [*Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2031*](#).

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) reviews each board plan to ensure that local goals and objectives are consistent with the workforce system strategic plan. Under state law and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Council is charged with recommending the local board plans to the Governor for consideration and approval.

Demonstrating Local Alignment with Texas’ Workforce System Strategic Plan

The local board planning process highlights the importance and interdependence of the constituents and partners of the Texas workforce system. Local boards oversee the delivery of workforce programs and services and are essential in both the development and implementation of system goals and objectives in the system strategic plan. The planning requirements help local boards inform the Council of innovative practices and articulate how local plans translate the workforce system strategic plan into local action that moves the system forward.

Local board responses apprise the Council—and, with the Council’s recommendation, the Governor—of system alignment, including program implementation, strategic initiatives, and innovative practices. All 28 boards will be represented in the briefing for the approval of the local plans and subsequent Council recommendation to the Governor for consideration for approval in the spring of 2025. Board responses may be included in the Council briefing materials verbatim.

Board response cover the three strategic opportunities and four system goals in *Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2031* that focus system partners on the Council’s mission to produce an agile and resilient workforce. Building on a foundation of continuous innovation and increased collaboration, the system plan calls for accelerated engagement around three strategic opportunities: engagement of employers, improving outcomes for Texans with barriers, and use of data to support investment decisions. Each of these envisions a desirable future state for Texas and lays out essential actions to be implemented that support system goals and stronger outcomes across the Texas workforce system.

The system goals drive accelerated action by system partners in service to Texas employers, learners, partners, and those with policy and planning responsibilities, as follows:

- Employers System Goal: Accelerate the delivery of relevant education and training programs to meet the demand of employers.

- Learners System Goal: Accelerate the expansion of and access to work-based skill and knowledge acquisition to respond to the needs of learners.
- Partners System Goal: Accelerate the development and use of models to support and build system partners' capacity, responsiveness, continuous improvement, and decision-making.
- Policy and Planning Goal: Accelerate the availability of relevant workforce, education, and other data sets and the use of applied analytics to evaluate program outcomes to respond to the needs of policy makers and planners.

(Texas Government Code Sec. 2308.304, Local Plan.)

Directions for Demonstrating Alignment with the Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan

Local board plan responses must demonstrate alignment with the workforce system plan and, therefore, require both summary information and citations to the strategies and initiatives that advance progress towards the workforce system goals in [Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2031](#). Please refer to the workforce system plan for definitions of specific terms.

1. Provide a summary describing how the processes, activities, or initiatives in the local board plan align with the specific system goal and objective and each strategic opportunity. Response guidelines are provided.
2. Accurately cite the referenced information in the local board plan by providing the corresponding page number(s) in the plan.

System Goals and Objectives

1. Employers Goal – Delivery of Relevant Education and Training Programs

Describe local board activities, initiatives, or processes that accelerate the delivery of relevant education and training programs to meet employers' needs, specifically by increasing:

- upskilling and reskilling programs that address employers' needs for middle skill workers,
- adult learners transitioning to employment through integrated education and training programs, and
- attainment of short-term credentials in programs aligned with high-demand occupations.

Response should address the following:

- the institution and/or expansion of upskilling and reskilling programs to meet employers' needs for middle-skill workers,
- the identification and delivery of programs, including with adult education and literacy providers, that support attainment of short-term credentials, industry-based certifications, and licenses,
- populations that require supportive services to improve program completion, certification or attainment of short-term credentials, and employment, and

- data used to track reskilling and upskilling program enrollments and outcomes, including program completions, attainment of short-term credentials and industry-based certifications or licenses, and employment directly related to the credential, license, or certification.
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2. Learners Goal – Expansion of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship

Describe local board activities, initiatives, or processes that are expanding work-based experiences, including apprenticeship, to accelerate skills and knowledge acquisition that improves system outcomes for learners.

Response should address the following:

- work-based learning opportunities with system stakeholders as a pre-employment strategy for youth and adults, including those requiring supportive services and resources,
 - the expansion of the employer network participating in and sponsoring work-based learning opportunities, including registered and industry-recognized apprenticeship programs, and
 - partnerships that address regular engagement with employers and system stakeholders, including collaboration with a Regional Convener for the Tri-Agency Texas Regional Pathways Network and input on the quality of existing apprenticeship programs and development of new programs.
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3. Partners Goal – Alignment to Support Career Pathways

Describe local board activities, initiatives, or processes to build the board’s capacity, responsiveness, continuous improvement, and decision-making to:

- support the identification of credentials of value, and
- streamline and clarify existing career pathways and models to increase alignment between secondary and postsecondary technical programs.

Response should address the following:

- system stakeholders’ input to assess the alignment and articulation of secondary and postsecondary technical programs supporting career pathways; and
 - collaboration with secondary and postsecondary institutions to engage employers to identify credentials of value that respond to local labor market needs, including postsecondary technical sub-baccalaureate credit and non-credit credentials, industry-based certifications, apprenticeship certificates, and licenses; and
 - processes to continuously improve career pathways.
-

4. Policy and Planning Goal – Relevant Data Sets

Describe local board activities, initiatives, or processes that support the availability and coordination of relevant workforce, education, and employment data to evaluate program outcomes to respond to the needs of policy makers and planners to:

- expand high-quality childcare availability,
- identify and quantify quality outcomes, including industry-based certification data, and
- enhance wage records.

Response should address the following:

- engagement with childcare providers and employers to establish on-site or near-site, high quality childcare facilities and expand Texas Rising Star certifications,
- collaboration with employers to identify enhanced employment and earnings data to gain deeper insight into program outcomes, and
- how the board and its system partners identify, evaluate, and implement ways to streamline and improve timeliness and completeness of data matching and sharing, specifically with industry-based certification attainment, to evaluate program effectiveness and outcomes.

Strategic Opportunities

Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2031 envisions a collaborative workforce system capable of accelerating the delivery of workforce programs, services, and initiatives to meet the needs of a thriving economy. The strategic opportunities focus system partners on three critical success factors that will lead to broad achievement of the system plan goals and objectives. Review each strategic opportunity and provide the information requested.

Strategic Opportunity 1 – Employer Engagement

Describe how the local board coordinates with its stakeholders to gain insight into the needs of employers and minimize “asks” that burden employers.

Response should address the following:

- coordination efforts that gain more insight from employers, including participation in the Tri- Agency Texas Regional Pathways Network, if applicable, and
- reducing the number of regional system partners individually making requests of employers.

Strategic Opportunity 2 – Improving Outcomes for Texans with Barriers to Employment

Describe how the local board engages Texans with diverse needs — including those with disabilities, foster youth, sex-trafficking victims, incarcerated juveniles and adults, and opportunity youth — by designing programs that address their needs, maximize outcomes, and improve career opportunities.

Response should address the following:

- models, initiatives, programs, or processes that effectively engage these populations; and
- promising practices in supportive services models and outcomes that consistently demonstrate success.

Strategic Opportunity 3 – Use of Data to Support Investment Decisions

Describe how the local board uses data and evidence to identify and target strategic investments to improve system performance.

Response should address the following:

- evidence-based practices and data to strategically implement and fund initiatives; and
 - programs that have successfully demonstrated previous program participant credential attainment and employment.
-