

West AlabamaWorks! WIOA Four-Year Plan

I. Local Area Governance

- a. Provide the most current organizational chart depicting the relationship of the agencies comprising the workforce system, including education, economic development, and the one-stop delivery system partners.

A finalized copy of the organizational chart for the workforce system is currently being developed.

- b. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor (20 CFR 679.560(b)(14)). Identify by name, function, and organizational affiliation of the local area:

- i. Signatory Official: **Mr. Phee Friend**
- ii. Grant Recipient: **Mr. Greg Canfield**
- iii. Chief Elected Official: **Governor Kay Ivey**
- iv. Workforce Development Board Chair: **Mr. Brad Newman**
- v. Chief Fiscal Officer: **Mr. Phillip Fetzer**
- vi. One-Stop Delivery System Area Managers:

Mr. Larry Jowers, Mr. Robert Brantley

II. Local Workforce Development Board

- a. Provide a current listing of Local Board membership, including the category of representation as outlined in WIOA sec. 107(b)(2). The board must include:

- i. Business Representatives:

Brad Newman, ZF Industries; Gary Nichols, McAbee Construction, Norman Crow, DT & Freight Co, Inc.; Ron Davis, Alabama Automotive Manufacturing Association; Russell DuBose, Phifer Incorporated; Tim Harrison, Harrison Construction; Donny Jones, Chamber of Commerce and West AlabamaWorks!; Sarah Lavender Burkhalter, Lavender, Inc.; Phil Tucker, Michelin West America; Mark McClanahan, Fayette Fabrication; Joe Patton, Westerveld Company; Will

Patton, Hunt Refining; Gary Phillips, Premier Service Company; Gudrun Pechtold, Bolta US Inc.; Jon Riley, Hyster-Yale Group; Peggy Sease, DCH Health Systems; Randy Skagen, NUCOR Steel; Charlie Willie, WestRock; Sylvester Hester, ARD Logistics Service Company; Willie Dunn, Bibb Medical Center, Jacob Winborne, Cemex; Keith Ankrom, Southern Carbide technologies, Inc.; Rolf Wrona, Mercedes-Benz US International; Dr. Marcia Pugh, Green County Medical Center; Bregitte Braddock, ARD Logistics; Lauren Pezent, Prystup Packaging Products, Inc.

ii. Workforce Representatives:

Mike Fields, Shelton State Community College; Ronny Johnston, Easter Seals West Alabama; Randall Kelly, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 372; Will Marable, Tuscaloosa JATC; Harold Parker, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 372; Sontonia Stephens, Community Service Programs of West Alabama; Jason Moore, Shelton State Community College

iii. Education and Training Activities Representatives:

Dennis Duncan, Tuscaloosa County Schools; Ken Dawkins, Lamar County School of Technology; Shawn McDaniel, Pickens College, and Career Center

iv. Governmental & Economic and Community Development Representatives:

Phyllis Belcher, Greene County IDA; Leslie Dawson, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services; Lynn Foster, Alabama Department of Human Resources; Larry Jowers, Alabama Career Center System; Dennis Stripling, West Alabama Regional Commission

- b. If the local board has not been formed at the time of plan submission, or it needs membership changes to comply, include a timeframe to become compliant and the process that will be used to meet the requirements for local boards included in WIOA sec. 107. This process must include notifying the State of the formation of or any changes to the board and providing a list following the guidelines in Section II.a. above.

III. Career Centers

- a. List the Comprehensive Career Centers and the Satellite Career Centers operating within the local area.

Tuscaloosa Comprehensive CC, Fayette, Livingston, Demopolis, Vernon Affiliate CC

- i. Identify which partners are represented in the Career Center; and

Co-located Partners include WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs provided by Alabama Department of Commerce; WIOA Title II Adult Education provided by the Alabama Community College System; Wagner-Peyser and Veterans services through the Alabama Department of Labor; Vocational Rehabilitation services by Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

Adjunct partners include Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

While these partners are not physically located in the career centers, in the areas they are located there are cross-referrals of clients between the partner agencies to ensure clients receive the services that are needed.

- ii. Provide the name, title, telephone number, and email address of principal Career Center contacts.

See Attachment A: West Alabama Works! Career Centers

IV. Analysis of Local Area Conditions and Needs

- a. Provide analysis of local area economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i)). Existing current analysis may be used if available and appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(iii)).

West AlabamaWorks contains nine counties, with the Tuscaloosa Metropolitan area at its core. According to the latest census data, the estimated population in the region for 2019 is 335,838 with a majority in Tuscaloosa county (209,355). Nonagricultural employment of the region's residents averaged 113,806 quarterly from the second quarter of 2001 to the first quarter of 2019. The number of jobs declined from 118,316 in the fourth quarter of 2007 to 106,996 in the first quarter of 2010 due to the 2007 recession. Since then nonagricultural employment has been trending up gradually to an all-time high of 123,521 in the fourth quarter 2018 before dropping to about 121,515 in the first quarter of 2019.

After a long but slow economic recovery, county unemployment declined to a range of 2.7 percent to 5.6 percent for 2019 (3.0 percent for the region). This trend continued in January and February 2020 before the novel coronavirus disease of 2019, (COVID-19) pandemic rampaged across Alabama and the U.S. By mid-March, public officials were forced to issue a stringent shelter in place measure to tame the scourge. The severity of the virus coupled with the adopted prevention measures limited business operations and movement of goods and services, workers, and consumers in inconceivable magnitudes. Consequently, West AlabamaWorks' county unemployment rose and ranged from 2.9 percent to 6.2 percent (3.3 percent for the region) in March 2020. The unemployment rate was lowest in Tuscaloosa County and highest in Greene. Regional unemployment was at the same level as the state. However, only Tuscaloosa County's rate was below the state average, underlining the County's large workforce and its influence on the entire region.

Unfortunately, year-to-date monthly labor force data indicate a significantly high regional unemployment rate for 2020 compared to 2019 as a result of the current COVID-19 led recession. The pandemic has disrupted people's way of interaction and resulted in the sharpest economic contraction since World War II. By April, the regional unemployment rose to 16.1 percent, the highest in decades but has been declining partly due to the much-needed relief from Congress through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, improved testing, and personal protective equipment, and as more businesses reopen. In July and August, the West AlabamaWorks unemployment rate declined to 8.9 percent and 6.2 percent although it rose to 6.9 percent in September. Economic recovery from the current recession will depend on reliable and effective infection control measures and supportive public policies. The impact of COVID-19, the resultant economic recession, structural changes in the region's economy, especially in the Black Belt counties of the region, could keep unemployment quite high for a while. Also, there is anecdotal evidence that the increased and expanded federal employment benefits have prevented employees from accepting job offers. The State of Alabama will stop participating in these programs on June 19th, 2021.

Based on data in 2019, the region's workforce is younger than Alabama's due to a higher concentration of college students in Tuscaloosa County. Older workers, age 55 and over, are 20.9 percent of the region's nonagricultural employment compared to 22.4 percent for the state. Those who are age 65 and over constitute 5.4 percent of nonagricultural employment versus 5.7 percent for Alabama. Even so, the labor force participation of younger residents must increase to meet long-term occupational projections for growth and replacement. Otherwise, older workers may have to work longer or the region must invest in attracting new resident workers.

- b. provide analysis of local area employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(ii)). Existing current analysis may be used if available and appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(iii)).

The region has targeted five industries for workforce development: Manufacturing, Automotive, Construction, Healthcare, and Professional Services. These are industries that provide great opportunities for residents of this region to obtain jobs that offer good wages. The targeted occupations reflect targeted industry sectors and projected high-demand occupations.

Existing Demand Industry Sectors		And Occupations by Region
	Target Industry Sectors	Occupations
WDR 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automotive Healthcare Construction Manufacturing Professional Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthcare/Nursing Transportation/Drivers Logistics Information Technology Machinists Industrial Maintenance Production/Assemblers Welders/Fitters

By sector, the top five employers in the region are automotive manufacturing; health care and social assistance; educational services; retail trade; and accommodation and food services. These five industries provided 79,212 jobs, 65.2 percent of the regional total in the first quarter of 2019. Two of the leading employers—manufacturing and educational services—paid higher wages than the region’s \$3,493 monthly average. Economic development should continue to diversify and strengthen the region’s economy by retaining, expanding, and attracting more high-wage providing industries. Workforce development should also focus on prepariworkers for such industries.

Automotive manufacturing has been a great economic boost for this region. Since 2000, employment for automotive manufacturing and parts manufacturing has grown 84 percent. Although these industries did take a hit during the recession, parts manufacturing rebounded quickly in 2012 and continues to grow. Mercedes has continued to add new models to the Alabama production line, and new parts suppliers are still establishing residence in the region. Mercedes announced a 1 billion dollar investment in Tuscaloosa to expand the operations of its existing manufacturing plant to accommodate the production of passenger EVs in the U.S., as well as battery production for those upcoming electrified cars. The Tuscaloosa plant will produce SUV models for the company’s EQ brand, which could mean both all-electric (such as the EQC) and/or plug-in hybrids as well. Construction of a new

battery production facility began in 2018 with EV production planned to start around the end of this decade.

Furthermore, transportation manufacturing makes up over 36 percent of manufacturing employment. The average monthly earnings for workers in transportation manufacturing in 2015 was slightly over \$6,000. Seventy-eight percent of the workforce in the automotive industry are between the ages of 25 to 54, with 30 percent between the ages of 45 and 54.

Construction is the industry sector that took the hardest hit during the recession and has yet to recover to previous levels. In this region, construction employment dropped each of the last three years. However, through 2024 it is projected to increase 10 percent in employment. Approximately 21 percent of the construction workforce is over the age of 55. Furthermore, some of the occupations that are in the highest demand in the region are in the construction industry. Maintenance and repair workers are in high demand, but also experience high turnover. Furthermore, electricians are expected to be in high demand. In 2016 there were over 100 online job ads for plumbers in West Alabama.

Healthcare has experienced a slow, but steady increase in this region over the last decade. It is expected to continue to grow around 15 percent through 2024. Between the increased demand, and the workforce getting older, registered nurses are in very high demand. Both registered nurses and physical therapists are on the high-demand list for the region, in addition to nurse practitioners, LPN's, medical assistants, EMTs and paramedics, and physical therapist assistants.

In summary, the top five fast-growing occupations are Occupational Therapy Assistants; Rail-Track Laying and Maintenance Equipment Operators; Physician Assistants; Industrial Engineers; and Home Health Aides with two of these requiring advanced degrees and certifications.

- c. What knowledge and skills are needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(2))?

Educational attainment in the West AlabamaWorks region is slightly low compared to the state. Over the period between 2014 to 2018, 85.9 percent of residents age 25 and over had graduated from high school, slightly above the 85.8 for Alabama. However, 23.5 percent had a bachelor's or higher degree versus 24.9 percent for the state. Skill and education requirements for jobs keep rising. This highlights a strong need to raise educational attainment in the region since only Tuscaloosa County has higher educational attainment than the state. The table below shows the percentage of selected occupations in the region for which a particular skill is primary. In general, high-earning occupations require high educational attainment levels; all the top 50 high-earning occupations require a bachelor's or higher degree. Eleven (27.5 percent) of the 40 high-demand occupations require a bachelor's or higher degree. Ten (50.0percent) of the top 20 fast-growing occupations require an

associate degree at the minimum, with eight (40.0 percent) requiring a bachelor’s or higher degree. 2018 to 2028 occupational projections indicate that future jobs will require postsecondary education and training at a minimum. Current job ads are requiring more than just a high school diploma or GED. Of the region’s 653 single occupations, 138 are expected to decline over the period and education and training for these jobs should slow accordingly.

The table below shows the percentage of selected occupations in the region that list a particular skill as primary. Primary skills are defined as the 10 most important skills in the required skill set for an occupation. It is important to note that particular skills may be more important and more extensively used in one occupation than another.

Percentage of Selected Occupations for Which Skill Is Primary			
	Selected High-Demand Occupations	Selected Fast-Growing Occupations	Selected High-Earning Occupations
Basic Skills			
Active Learning	28	35	60
Active Listening	68	85	82
Critical Thinking	65	75	82
Learning Strategies	3	5	14
Mathematics	3	5	10
Monitoring	60	75	56
Reading Comprehension	43	60	82
Science	3	5	14
Speaking	63	70	80
Writing	18	15	58
Complex Problem Solving Skills			
Complex Problem Solving	23	45	62
Resource Management Skills			
Management of Financial Resources	0	0	2
Management of Material Resources	0	0	0
Management of Personnel Resources	8	5	14
Time Management	35	25	22
Social Skills			
Coordination	43	45	26
Instructing	18	5	16
Negotiation	5	5	10
Persuasion	5	5	8
Service Orientation	28	35	18

Social Perceptiveness	38	45	30
Systems Skills			
Judgment and Decision Making	25	40	66
Systems Analysis	5	10	12
Systems Evaluation	0	5	8
Technical Skills			
Equipment Maintenance	10	20	0%
Equipment Selection	5	10	0
Installation	3	0	0
Operation and Control	25	25	0
Operation Monitoring	23	25	0
Operations Analysis	0	5	8
Programming	0	5	0
Quality Control Analysis	10	20	0
Repairing	8	15	0
Technology Design	0	0	0
Troubleshooting	15	20	0

- d. Provide analysis of the local area’s workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3)).

The labor force includes all persons in the civilian noninstitutional population who are age 16 and over and who either have a job or are actively looking for one. Typically, those who have no job and are not looking for one are not included (e.g., students, retirees, discouraged workers, and the disabled). After a long but slow economic recovery, county unemployment declined to a range of 2.7 percent to 5.6 percent for 2019 (3.0 percent for the region). This trend continued in January and February 2020 before the novel coronavirus disease of 2019, (COVID-19) pandemic rampaged across Alabama and the U.S. By mid-March, public officials were forced to issue a stringent shelter in place measures to tame the scourge. The severity of the virus coupled with the adopted prevention measures limited business operations and movement of goods and services, workers, and consumers in inconceivable magnitudes. Consequently, West AlabamaWorks’ county unemployment rose and ranged from 2.9 percent to 6.2 percent (3.3 percent for the region) in March 2020. The unemployment rate was lowest in Tuscaloosa County and highest in Greene. Regional unemployment was at the same level as the state. However, only Tuscaloosa County’s rate was below the state average, underlining the County’s large workforce and its influence on the entire region. The table

below shows labor force information for the West AlabamaWorks region and its nine counties from 2019 and for March 2020.

2019 Annual Average from Alabama Department of Labor and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate (%)
Bibb	8,685	8,419	266	3.1
Fayette	6,579	6,372	207	3.1
Greene	2,883	2,722	161	5.6
Hale	6,119	5,878	241	3.9
Lamar	5,849	5,670	179	3.1
Marengo	7,694	7,423	271	3.5
Pickens	7,923	7,647	276	3.5
Sumter	4,854	4,635	219	4.5
Tuscaloosa	104,964	102,122	2842	2.7
West ALWorks	155,550	150,888	4,662	3.0
Alabama	2,241,747	2,174,483	67,264	3.0
U.S.	163,538,666	157,538,083	6,000,583	3.7

March 2020

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate (%)
Bibb	8,524	8,228	296	3.5
Fayette	6,452	6,241	211	3.3
Greene	2,844	2,669	175	6.2
Hale	6,060	5,773	287	4.7
Lamar	5,741	5,547	194	3.4
Marengo	7,557	7,241	316	4.2
Pickens	7,911	7,554	357	4.5
Sumter	4,712	4,497	215	4.6
Tuscaloosa	104,380	101,403	2,977	2.9
West ALWorks	154,181	149,153	5,028	3.3
Alabama	2,205,479	2,131,621	73,858	3.3
U.S.	162,537,000	155,167,000	7,370,000	4.5

- e. Provide analysis of the local area’s current workforce development activities, including education and training. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (20 CFR 679.560(a)(4)).

The Governor’s Local Workforce Areas’ Workforce Development Activities

Alabama devotes significant resources to education and workforce development at the local, regional, and state levels. In 2014, Governor Bentley created and formally established the Alabama Workforce Council. The Council was tasked with advising and supporting core partners in Alabama’s workforce development and education system to include, but not limited to, reviewing ways to streamline and align the existing workforce development functions in the State, evaluating regional workforce development and educational needs by promoting regional workforce councils and evaluating public/private partnerships (sectors) to create a feedback loop for industry and education.

The core programs including WIOA Title I–B, Wagner–Peyser, Adult Education, and Rehabilitation Services provide several educational training activities through their respective programs. These activities are represented on the Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB). The AWDB also has cross representation from the private business sector membership on the Alabama Workforce Council.

The core programs previously under the Workforce Investment Act and currently under WIOA have participated and partnered in Alabama’s One-Stop Career Center system since 2001. The core partner programs include WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth training activities. The State-level administrative entity for WIOA Title I is the Alabama Department of Commerce, which provides oversight and policy guidance through the Alabama Workforce Development Board for activities under WIOA Title I.

The workforce development areas provide career services, client assessment, case management, referral to Individual Training Accounts, on–the–job training (OJT), customized training, and work-based learning. They also provide specialized employment and training activities for youth, including basic education, GED programs, occupational skills training, and work-based learning activities.

The Alabama Workforce System (AWS) includes the following programs and entities operated through the following agents.

- Alabama Career Center System – Operated as a partnership between the Alabama Department of Commerce (WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Alabama Department of Labor (Wagner–Peyser) UI, TAA, and Veterans). The Career Center System also collaborates with Adult Education, Rehabilitative Services, TANF, SNAP, and Title IV of the Older Americans Act (SCESP). For West AlabamaWorks! the Career Centers are designated as the One-Stop Operator.**
- Adult Education Activities – Adult Education services are offered through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) throughout the state. In the Fiscal Year, 2019 they had enrolled approximately 20,000 full-time and 26,000 part-time students in adult education classes. Adult Education has been an active partner with the Alabama Career Center system since 2001 and will continue to expand services within the Career Centers under WIOA.**
- Alabama Department of Labor – Wagner–Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services – The Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) house the Wagner–Peyser**

program (Employment Service), Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services programs. ADOL Wagner–Peyser and WIOA Title I programs have been collocated as part of the Alabama Career Centers since 2001. AlabamaWorks! is the online job seeker and employer registration system that provides job seeker skills, abilities, and work history with employers posting job openings in the system. ADOL provides Trade Act services and Veterans employment representatives in the Career Centers

- **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) – The Department of Rehabilitation Services Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) provides specialized employment and education-related services and training to assist teens and adults with disabilities to become employable. Services include skill assessments, counseling, training programs, job placement, assistive technology, and transportation.**

The strengths and weaknesses of West AlabamaWork! workforce development activities include the following:

Strengths:

- **Strong support from political, education, and business leaders for workforce programs across all agencies and programs.**
- **Business leadership within the Community College system to align training programs with the needs of business and industry.**
- **The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) provides access to students throughout the area seeking career pathways and credentials to qualify for middle-skills jobs.**
- **The state and area have partnerships between state-level core program agencies that go back to 2001. There is a culture of strong communication and collaboration that enhances services throughout the Alabama Career Center System.**
- **The Alabama Career Center System provides services to job seekers and employers at five career center sites.**
- **A unified and universal brand for the Alabama Workforce System increases awareness of the system to job seekers and employers using the “AlabamaWorks!” brand and logo.**

Weaknesses:

- **Limited data integration – Two of the core partner programs maintain separate data management systems for participant tracking and case management functions.**

- **Lack of a P–20W statewide longitudinal data system to track how job seekers and students are using the Alabama Workforce System and competency job training programs from K–12 and postsecondary to employment.**
- **The workforce system core and other partners must continue to emphasize soft skills training into all Alabama Workforce System supported training programs.**
- **The lack of qualified and skilled job seekers and the impact that expanded federal unemployment benefits have played in preventing potential candidates from accepting employment.**

Capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce:

West AlabamaWorks’ workforce system capacity to provide services to both job seekers and employers is shared by several agencies and program providers. The area’s network of Career Centers is a shared function among the Alabama Department of Commerce for WIOA Title I services, the Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) for Wagner–Peysner, UI, Trade Act, and Veterans’ services, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for vocational rehabilitation services and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) for adult education (ABE) services. The network of one (1) Comprehensive Career Centers and four (4) Affiliate Career Centers provides broad coverage in all nine (9) counties in the local area. Also, the AlabamaWorks! is an internet-based online registration system for jobseekers and employers.

The State agencies overseeing Alabama’s WIOA core programs and optional partners not only share space and services throughout the Alabama Career Center System but also interact regularly to share program opportunities to best deliver programs on a local and regional basis. Our agencies working off a solid background of sharing data and collaboration of program services are ready to serve the State’s businesses, job seekers, training seekers, and others with the most viable options to meet their needs. The West AlabamaWorks area has implemented many recent changes including program consolidation and industry-led regional councils to ensure more efficient and comprehensive access to available services.

- a. **What is the local board’s strategic vision to support the area’s economic growth and economic self-sufficiency? This vision should be supported by analysis of the local area (Section I) and align with Alabama’s Combined State Plan (20 CFR 679.560(a) (5)).**

The area will have a Workforce System that is aligned with the general and specific needs of local area business and focus on the alignment of programs to meet the skills gap needs of our workers (especially those with barriers to employment) and the economic strategies provided through the state’s *Accelerate Alabama 2.0* Strategic Plan.

- b. Identify the local area's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) (20 CFR 679.560(a) (5)).

The West AlabamaWorks! Area's goals for preparing an advocated and skilled workforce in the nine-county area includes:

- **Implementation of a robust Regional Workforce Council System that provides direct feedback to the education system (Community College Systems, K-12, Career Tech System) and the WIOA training providers.**
 - **Development of strong public/private partnerships that provide direct engagement between the public and private sectors to increase the capacity to meet workforce needs.**
 - **Aligning and consolidating the programs of the Community College system and Regional Workforce Councils with the State's vision and goals.**
 - **Aligning the programs of the Community Colleges and other training entities with the "Accelerate Alabama 2.0" plans three main elements: Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal.**
 - **Ensure all workforce programs have strategies to serve individuals with barriers to employment and close skills gaps.**
 - **Foster a strong relationship between the workforce development system to create a seamless array of services for job seekers and employers to address skills gaps as well as skills shortages.**
- a. Based on the analysis in Section IV, what is the local area's overall strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in Section II (20 CFR 679.560(a)(6))?

The Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division is dedicated to assisting the growth of Alabama businesses and the workers that sustain their operations. By directing individuals toward improving job skills through education and training, the Workforce Development Division equips workers with the tools and talents that employers demand.

At the center of the Workforce Development Division's mission is AIDT, one of the nation's top state workforce training agencies. AIDT offers comprehensive pre-employment selection and training, leadership development, on-the-job training, and assessments — all specific to each company's needs. AIDT has worked with thousands of businesses and trained more than 600,000 workers.

The Workforce Development Division is responsible for several workforce programs including the Alabama Career Centers (funded by the Department of Commerce and managed by the Alabama Department of Labor) and various training programs. The division also oversees the state’s Regional Workforce Development Councils, which connect local business leaders with education officials to formulate strategies to ensure the job demands of the industry are being met.

Formally established in 2015 by the Alabama state legislature via Alabama Legislative Act No. 2015–450, the Regional Workforce Councils provide a direct link to the workforce needs of business and industry at the local level. The Councils are business-driven and business-led and work with their member counties to develop a regional strategic plan and comprehensive workforce development system that supports local economic and job development activities.

Councils monitor the workforce needs of businesses and industries in their region, then develop and implement practical solutions. These range from hosting regional job fairs for immediate hiring needs, to addressing the short-term and long-term training needs of businesses. Regional Workforce Councils are a key mechanism in helping to ensure that there is an available pipeline of highly trained workers with relevant skills that Alabama companies want. The Region 3 Workforce Council directs critical information and data to and from the West AlabamaWorks! Area Board.

- b. What programs are included in the local area’s workforce development system (20 CFR 679.560(b) (1) (I))? Provide a listing and brief description of each program.

In the West AlabamaWorks! Local Workforce Area, the Governor’s Local Workforce Area Section manages Career Center operations in conjunction with the Employment Service Division of ADOL. All Career Centers have single site managers. Cross-training of staff rather than cross-awareness takes place at the career centers. Monthly reporting has become more standardized and efficient with the issuance of guidance by the Local Area Board. There are currently one (1) Comprehensive Career Centers, four (4) Affiliate Career Centers, as well a mobile career center in the West AlabamaWorks! Local Workforce Area. Comprehensive centers are full-time centers that have all WIOA partner agencies either on-site or have their services available to customers. Affiliate centers are also operated full-time but do not have the full contingent of partner agencies located at the center. The mobile career center or “bus” is used on-site for job/career fairs, Rapid Response events in cases of mass layoffs, in natural disasters, when large numbers of individuals are left unemployed, and numerous other workforce-related activities.

The West AlabamaWorks! Local Workforce Area continues to emphasize giving priority of services to veterans and eligible spouses for WIOA funded activities.

Basic career services were available through Alabama’s Career Center System and included, at a minimum, the following:

- ❖ **Outreach, intake, and orientation to available services;**
- ❖ **Job search, job placement, and career counseling as needed via AlabamaWorks! Virtual One-Stop;**
- ❖ **Labor market information;**

- ❖ Self-directed initial assessment;
- ❖ Provision of performance and cost information on training providers; and
- ❖ Follow-up services.

Individualized career services are provided for adults and dislocated workers who are determined eligible for WIOA and are registered in the AlabamaWorks!. Individualized services include, but were not limited to, the following:

- ❖ A comprehensive and specialized assessment of skills levels, aptitudes, abilities, and needs;
- ❖ Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP/ISS);
- ❖ Case Management activities;
- ❖ Individual career counseling;
- ❖ Referral to training services; and
- ❖ Out-of-area job search assistance.

Training services were provided for adults and dislocated workers who were unable to obtain employment through assistance received in individualized services. Training services included the following:

- ❖ Occupational skills training;
- ❖ On-the-Job Training;
- ❖ Programs that provided workplace training with related instructions;
- ❖ Programs operated by the private sector;
- ❖ Skills upgrading and retraining;
- ❖ Entrepreneurial training;
- ❖ Job readiness training;
- ❖ Adult education and literacy training; and
- ❖ Customized training is conducted with a commitment by an employer or a group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of training.

The primary means of providing training services for adults and dislocated workers is through the utilization of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and On-the-Job Training (OJT). ITAs are available at both public and private training facilities throughout the state with up to \$15,000 available to assist adults and dislocated workers with the cost of books, supplies, and tuition associated with the cost of attending for up to two years. West AlabamaWorks! Area targets occupations that are identified as High Growth/High Demand/High Wage and that support the ongoing economic development efforts of the state.

The OJT program provides reimbursement to employers for the extra costs associated with training WIOA participants. The reimbursement rate and length of training are negotiated and made a part of the OJT contract. Reimbursement was established at fifty percent (50%) of the participant's hourly wage rate for up to twenty-six (26) weeks.

Youth Program Services

The following services are provided for youth in the West AlabamaWorks! Local Workforce Area:

- ❖ A work-based learning program that includes paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing as appropriate;
- ❖ Remedial Education and GED Preparation;
- ❖ Occupational skills training as appropriate;
- ❖ Leadership development opportunities, which include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors as appropriate
- ❖ Supportive services;
- ❖ Adult mentoring;
- ❖ Follow-up services; and
- ❖ Comprehensive guidance and counseling.

The primary means of providing occupational skills training opportunities for youth is through the utilization of the Individual Training Account program. Enrollments in the OJT program were also used as a means of providing youth with training services.

WIOA youth services are provided by a network of youth program providers recommended to the West AlabamaWorks! Local Area Board by the previously established AWDA Local Board. Beginning in PY' 18, youth program providers will be selected by a competitive procurement process. The focus of these youth program providers is services to low out-of-school youth without a high school diploma or GED. These services include assessments, career counseling, and referrals to OJT and ITAs (scholarships). Youth program providers provide various services including remedial education, GED preparation, and soft skills training to prepare youth and young adults to successfully enter the workforce or postsecondary education. Youth can receive occupational skills training via scholarships to postsecondary institutions.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Services

Individual Training Account (ITA)

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), a specific agreement that provides educational or occupational skills training services, are the primary means for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act training services delivery. Individual Training Account services may only be provided to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act participants by those training providers who have applied to and been placed on the State's Eligible Provider List. Prospective education and/or occupational skills training providers must meet specific criteria to initially and subsequently retain Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act training provider status.

Postsecondary education institutions which offer instruction leading to generally recognized certification in high-demand occupational skills, and other institutions providing similar vocational instruction services, are among the several entities which may apply for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List.

West AlabamaWorks! Local Workforce Area strives to maximize the number of clients in training through the efficient use of local area funds. To maximize the number of participants, the previous AWDA Local Board approved new cost limitations on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) (effective October 29, 2018). The maximum amount allowable for ITAs was adopted as follows:

Short term training of 13 weeks or less	up to \$3,500
26 weeks training or less	up to \$4,350
12 months or less	up to \$8,250
Geater than 12, less than 17 months	up to \$10,500
Greater than 17, less than 24 months	up to \$15,000

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, On-the-Job Training participants' employers have reimbursed a portion of these participants' wages in compensation for the extraordinary costs in additional time and attention generally associated with the provision of such training, and in recognition of the lesser workplace productivity of these trainees. Negotiations with the employer establish the maximum length of participants' training period. The maximum length of such training, however, is not to exceed six months.

Effective January 2015, the OJT reimbursement policy was changed to pay up to 75% reimbursement of participants' wages for small employers with 1 – 50 employees. The policy for all other employers remains the same at 50% reimbursement. This program is designed to fulfill the employment needs of local employers by providing a trained workforce while increasing productivity and profits.

The goals of the OJT program are permanent employment upon successful completion of training; placement into long-term occupations, and building a skilled workforce for a growing Alabama economy. The OJT program is a highly successful training program for employers and their participants.

- c. How will the local board support the strategies identified in Alabama's Combined State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 *et seq.*) to support service alignment (20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(ii))? Provide information concerning how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:
 - i. Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i));

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), through public two-year colleges and skills centers, provides assessment, counseling, basic education, and job training services for youth and adults served through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. For employers, ACT Work Keys job profiling and assessment services and customized training programs are available through two-year colleges.

Career/Technical educational programs are administered by the Community College System and are funded through state and federal legislation, including the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act. Although the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act stipulates that institutional recipients of Perkins' funds are mandatory partners in carrying out the Act, it is noted that Perkins' funds are used by a college for overall improvement of career/technical education and are allocated by the college- within the parameters of the legislation- to address various needs identified by college staff and the local career/technical education advisory group from business and industry.

Also within the ACCS, the Adult Education Division provides opportunities for adult learners to improve skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and communications. Diagnostic testing identifies individual needs and as a result, an individualized education plan is designed to help learners reach their educational goals. For many learners, the goal is to earn the General Educational Development (GED) Diploma, generally considered to be equivalent to a high school diploma.

Instruction methods are tailored to meet the needs of the learners. Methodologies range from one-on-one tutoring to group instruction and normally feature computer-based training. Multimedia approaches are being increasingly utilized to aid in individual development. Interactive group instruction and peer tutoring are frequently employed.

Adult education classes can provide the academic instruction that many people in Alabama need to secure the required credential so they can obtain and maintain employment. Most adult education students read at the seventh-grade level or lower. Studies have shown that the lack of basic literacy skills is the single most persistent barrier to obtaining employment, whether the group studies welfare recipients, the chronically unemployed, or others. Adult Education classes provide how they can get the basic education they need to succeed, and in doing so, improve their self-esteem and productivity significantly.

The Source of funding is both state and federal.

Adult education classes will be available through all Alabama career center locations whenever possible and may be accessed by referral from any of the participating partner agencies based on the identified need(s) of the client. Other adult education classes may be in the community and could be more convenient for the individual to attend. Information regarding the location(s) and schedule of all adult education classes will be available in the one-stop career centers.

The Adult education program also offers the following classes that could be of benefit to people who visit the career centers: job readiness classes for welfare participants, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, English literacy/civics classes, adult education classes in all of the major correctional

institutions, family literacy classes, and adult education classes for special populations. West AlabamaWorks! is currently working closely with Adult Education to introduce contextual learning curricula into pilot adult education locations that will be targeted to learning/employment opportunities in the local service areas.

- ii. Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and

West AlabamaWorks, through its network of Career Centers, places major emphasis on providing potential WIOA participants with pertinent labor market information to assist them in making career choices into occupational clusters which will provide a pathway leading to higher-paying employment that provides a sustaining wage for the participant's family. West AlabamaWorks is also currently working with Adult Education to provide contextual learning opportunities targeted to employment and training in occupations that provide a clear career pathway from entry-level/wage employment, through a series of career ladder upgrades in skills and thus to higher-wage employment.

- iii. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (20 CFR 679.560(b) (2)(iii)).

West AlabamaWorks will continue to provide structured assessments and labor market information through the network of Career Centers and only provides WIOA assisted training (Individual Training Accounts) to courses of study which lead to the attainment of a postsecondary credential or other industry-recognized certificate or credential.

- d. What strategies and services will the local area use to:

- i. Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(i));

The West AlabamaWorks Board is comprised mostly of representation from small employers which primarily represent in-demand occupations, thus ensuring that the needs of the small business sector will be at the forefront of board decisions. The West AlabamaWorks Board works closely with Commerce Workforce Division staff who work full time with the Alabama Regional Workforce Council which is comprised of business representation from each of the state's 7 workforce regions. This partnership allows even greater input into the needs of employers within Region 3.

- ii. Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(ii));

As part of an ongoing restructuring of the state, previously separated components of the workforce development system have been brought into the Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division. West AlabamaWorks works closely with a representative of the Region 3 Regional Workforce Council regions, housed within the Commerce Workforce Development Division, to ensure local input into the services provided by WIOA within each region within the local area.

- iii. Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iii));

The restructuring of the state’s workforce development system brings various components of the system into the Department of Commerce (see ii above). It also allows the workforce development components to work closely with the Business Development Division of Commerce. As the major agency for the recruitment of new businesses into the state, and the expansion of existing businesses, the Department of Commerce focuses on insuring maximum coordination between the various workforce development programs and the economic development for the state, and the West AlabamaWorks Area.

- iv. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iv)); and

Adult and Dislocated Worker services are already co-located within the Alabama Career Centers and share front-line staff as well as supervision with the staff of the Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) and includes job search, WIOA training/retraining services/etc., to individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI). UI is housed within the ADOL and utilizes “Call Centers” and/or electronic filing of UI claims, but all UI claimants must report to one of the Career Centers for an interview and register for work of the AlabamaWorks! system. Clients needing assistance to file their UI claims are assisted by Career Center staff when needed.

- v. Implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of local area employers. Any of the above initiatives the local area chooses to implement should be in support of the other strategies to serve employers outlined above in Section III.d. (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(v)).

West AlabamaWorks, and its predecessor AWDA, has previously provided many of the above-listed programs to support businesses. This includes on-the-job training marketed by our WIOA funded Business Service Representatives (BSR) in every Career Center located within West AlabamaWorks and supports the marketing of incumbent worker training programs by these BSRs. West AlabamaWorks is prepared to implement additional services as listed above within local areas as the need is documented.

- e. How will the local board coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities carry out in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(4))?

See ii and iii.

- f. How will the local board promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (20 CFR 679.560(b)(4))?

West AlabamaWorks will continue to work with the postsecondary education institutions to support any training in this area which would result in a recognized credential. Currently, only a couple of providers offer this type of training within the local area.

West AlabamaWorks will also work closely with the Small Business Advocacy office within the Business Development Division of the Department of Commerce to promote the development of new businesses, including microenterprise services. These efforts to promote entrepreneurial skills training are enhanced by partnering with the Alabama Small Business Development Network which coordinates with the Consortiums 10 Small Development Centers located throughout the state.

- g. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:
 - i. How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(i));

West AlabamaWorks in conjunction with the states performance requirements for training providers to be included and remain on the states Eligible Training Provider List, will monitor the performance of entities providing WIOA funded training to ensure that trainees/participants complete training, earn nationally or industry-recognized credentials, and become employed in in-demand occupations needed by regional employers.

- ii. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(ii));

AlabamaWorks! is the online portal to services offered through the Alabama Career Center System. It is an internet-based self-service system for job seekers who can look for work, post their resumes and receive email notifications of job matches. AlabamaWorks! also provides access to Alabama's WIOA Eligible Training Provider List for training programs and access to the different programs provided by ADOL and WIOA. AlabamaWorks! also provides a link to partner agency websites.

- iii. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including career center operators and the career center partners, will comply with WIOA sec. 188,

if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iii)); and

In 2016, a team of Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services employees reviewed each Alabama Career Center (including satellite centers) to check physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, services, technology, and materials using a DOL survey checklist developed under Section 188 of WIOA and a policy checklist. The survey also measured compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. This–survey was being conducted by a team of persons with disabilities and others that include assistive technology experts on deaf and blind needs. These surveys measured physical access from parking to entrances to where services are provided, as well as, accessibility of bathrooms, telephones, tables, and water fountains. Policies were also evaluated to ensure that they did not exclude individuals with disabilities.

After a survey of the Career Centers was completed, a summary report was compiled which listed all physical and programmatic barriers, if any, and suggested strategies to remove those barriers.

In Program Year 2020 Commerce Workforce Development Division staff conducted Career Center Certifications to ensure each Career Center complied with ADA requirements. Any unresolved issues regarding Career Center physical and programmatic accessibility were referred to Dr. Graham Sisson, Executive Director of the Governor’s Office on Disability, for further review and follow-up. A plan of action will be developed by Dr. Sisson and presented to the Local Area for implementation to ensure successful compliance.

- iv. What the roles and resource contributions of each career center partner (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iv))?

The roles and resource contributions of each partner will be listed in the Career Center Partnership’s MOU. An updated MOU for Program Year 2021 is currently under development by each of the partner agencies. Once the updated MOU is completed it will be shared with the local board.

- h. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(6)).

Funds received by the State and allocated to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) for Adult and Dislocated Worker Services will be used to:

- **Provide Basic Career Services to assist job seekers in finding employment**
- **Provide Individualized Career Services to provide a more comprehensive assessment to identify the need for additional services**
- **Provide Follow Up Services for not less than 12 months following entry into unsubsidized employment**

- **Provide Training Services to job seekers who do not have the skills necessary to secure employment**

Services provided through the Alabama Career Center System will assist customers in finding employment, education, and/or training that will lead to employment or career enhancement.

For customers who need more than Basic Career Services to find employment, WIOA provides more comprehensive and specific Individualized Career Services and Training Services to assist in employment development.

Basic Career Services will be provided by Alabama Career Center staff assigned Wagner-Peyser (WP) duties. These services are available to Adult and Dislocated Worker customers through the Alabama Career Center System. Basic Career Services will include, at a minimum:

- **Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult dislocated worker, or youth programs.**
- **Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the Career Center System**
- **Initial assessments of skill levels including academic skills, aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), English language proficiency, and supportive services needed**
- **Labor Exchange Services, including:**
 - **Job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including:**
 - **Provisions of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations**
 - **Provision of information on nontraditional employment**
 - **Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the Career Center System and when appropriate other workforce development programs**
 - **Job vacancy listings in such labor market areas**
 - **Information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs described above**
 - **Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skills requirements for such occupations**
- **Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible training service by program and type of providers**
- **Provision of information on how the local area is performing on Performance Measures and any additional performance information concerning the Alabama Career Center System**
- **Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including child care; child support; medical or child health assistance available through State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program; benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); assistance through the earned income tax credit; housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and assistance under a State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program**

- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA
- Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Re-Employment Services including a one-on-one interview, resume assistance, initial assessment, orientation to the Career Center and electronic database, Labor Market Information, Individual Employment Plan, referrals to Supportive Services, and other services as deemed appropriate
- UI Eligibility Assessment regarding availability for work, ability to work, and job search activities.
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under the WIOA and that are available in the local area
- Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace for participants in workforce development activities, who are placed in unsubsidized employment for not less than 12 months after the first day of employment, as appropriate

Individualized Career Services will be recorded services that will be provided by the Alabama Career Center System staff to Adults and Dislocated Workers who have been determined eligible for WIOA services and are unable to obtain a job. Individualized Career Services are to be individualized for job seekers and require significant staff time and include the following:

- A comprehensive and specialized assessment of skills levels, aptitudes, abilities, and needs which will include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and/or in-depth interview and evaluation to identify employment barriers, supportive service needs, and appropriate goals
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that will include employment goals, appropriate planning objectives, and the appropriate mix of services (both WIOA and non-WIOA) available in the local area necessary for customers to achieve employment goals
- Career Planning activities
- Labor Exchange Activities
- Individual career counseling/planning
- Group career counseling
- Referral to Training Services
- Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance
- Short-term pre-vocational services and activities provided through the Alabama Career Center System including learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality and personal maintenance skills, professional conduct skills, and other skills development designed to prepare job seekers for unsubsidized employment
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers
- Financial literacy services
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs as provided by Adult Education and Basic Literacy services

Follow-up Services must be provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Follow-up services do not extend the date of exit in performance reporting.

Training Services may be needed for employed, unemployed, or underemployed Adults and Dislocated Workers who have not been able to obtain employment leading to self-sufficiency. There is no sequence of service requirements for “career services” and training. This means that the Alabama Career Center System staff may determine training is appropriate regardless of whether the individual has received basic or individualized career services first. Under WIOA, training services may be provided if the Career Center staff determine, after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, that the individual:

- Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
- Needs training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone; and
- Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.

Training services, when determined appropriate, must be provided either through an Individual Training Account (ITA) or through an OJT training contract. Training services must be linked to in-demand employment opportunities in the local area or planning region or in a geographic area in which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. The selection of training services should be conducted in a manner that maximizes customer choice, is linked to in-demand occupations, informed by the performance of relevant training providers, and coordinated to the extent possible with other sources of assistance.

Under, WIOA-funded Training Services are available through public and private partnerships and non-partner agencies as identified on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), <https://alabamaworks.alabama.gov/vosnet/drills/provider/provdrill.aspx?session=provdetail&geo=0101000000&zip=&radius=>

Non-WIOA funded training may be available through public and private partners and non-partner agencies such as Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education, Pell Grant, academic and/or technical scholarships, employer tuition reimbursement programs, and others.

The WIOA states that Training Services is directly linked to job opportunities in the local area and may include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment such as dedicated classroom training, and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
- On-The-Job Training (OJT)
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs
- Training programs operated by the private sector

- Skills upgrading and retraining
 - Apprenticeship training
 - Entrepreneurial training
 - Job readiness training
 - Adult education and literacy training
 - Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training
- i. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(7)).

The West AlabamaWorks Local Board is made aware of all WARN and non-WARN notices by the State's Rapid Response Unit. Local Board staff receive Dislocated Worker event reports via email to be made aware of planned dislocation events by company and location. Career Center Area Managers and local Career Center managers are copied on e-mails announcing the date and time of group employee meetings (GEMs) to coordinate attendance by Career Center staff to provide information to dislocated workers about programs, services, and training opportunities at the local Career Center.

- j. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)).

The Alabama Career Center System uses its association with its Career Center partners and local community agencies to ensure that the needs of youth are met while presenting the maximum opportunities for their goal achievements. A strong connection is fostered between youth program services, activities, and the Alabama Career Center System. It is important to ensure that youth are completely familiar with community services that assist in the reduction of barriers to employment, education, or training. Once eligibility determination has been made, the eligible youth is enrolled into WIOA and shall receive services available through the Alabama Career Center System to include an objective assessment that contains an academic and skills assessment of:

Basic skills

Occupational skills

Prior work history

Employability (pre-employment/work maturity skills)

Aptitudes

Interests

The assessment process also includes an orientation to the assessment process, an interview, determination of supportive service needs, and the determination of developmental needs. Information collected during the assessment process is used to develop individual service strategies for youth and will be recorded on the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and documented in the

electronic case file. If the youth has been recently assessed by another agency for education or training purposes and the previous assessment meets WIOA requirements, an additional assessment may not be required.

Youth must be administered an academic assessment (TABE) within the first 60 days of eligibility determination. This will be the pretest for determining “measurable skills gains”. The TABE assessment can be accepted from another approved agency, such as Adult Education if it was administered within 6 months before eligibility determination. A TABE post-test to document measurable academic skills gains can be administered at any time and multiple times during a youth’s enrollment period but **MUST** be administered at least once during a program year.

It is the role of the Alabama Career Center System or approved Youth program staff to assist youth in the determination of their interests, abilities, and plans through the assessment and interview process.

Assessment information will assist both the youth and the Alabama Career Center System staff in developing an appropriate career plan.

Alabama Career Center System staff will assist youth who are prepared to commit to success.

Assessment is a process through which joint decisions can be made concerning goals, objectives, employment, education, or training. If during the assessment process, it is determined that the youth needs the services of another Career Center partner or community activity, referrals will be made.

Case Management and Career Guidance is an all-encompassing activity that begins with the initial contact with the youth and culminates with any post-follow-up activities that may be needed by the youth. Alabama Career Center System staff begin the Case Management process by conducting an informative orientation to the selected activity, maintaining close contact with youth throughout the participation, counseling and referring to supportive services as needed, assisting in job search and placement activities, and performing needed follow-ups services. Documentation of all case management and career guidance activities will be accomplished through notes entered into the electronic case file.

The ISS will be developed for each youth and that it identifies “an employment goal including, in appropriate circumstances, non-traditional jobs, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant...”

Youth, who choose employment as a primary goal, should be allowed to participate in work readiness activities. Youth, who request job readiness or employment activities, may participate in work experience (paid or unpaid), job shadowing, internships, and/or occupational skills training. In the Governor's Local Workforce Areas, Work-Based Learning (WBL) is a critical program element designed to help youth with limited skills and little to no work experience achieve a state of job readiness. Youth will also be referred to On-the-Job Training or Individual Referral training providers as appropriate.

When job-ready, youth will be provided Labor Exchange Services including job search through AlabamaWorks! and other methods. In addition, the youth will have a professionally developed résumé that includes all education and training gained, as well as any other criteria that would make the youth more employable.

In-School Youth is primarily served through dual enrollment activities which allow them to complete for-credit college courses in a technical field while obtaining their high school diploma. These youths may be transitioned into an individual training account. Additional program offerings may include leadership development activities addressing teamwork, decision-making, personal responsibility, citizenship training, positive attitude development, self-esteem building, cultural diversity training, adult mentoring, and positive social behavior development.

Out-of-School Youth (OSY) may participate in basic academic skills development to obtain the developmental skills necessary to enter employment, postsecondary education, and/or training leading to employment. Depending upon the degree of remediation necessary, these youth may be involved in study skills training, one-on-one tutoring, academic skills remediation, or GED preparation.

All currently enrolled youth should be actively engaged in appropriate services. All youth, whether enrolled in Career Center Youth Services and Individual Training Accounts or with a Youth Services provider, ***must receive*** a monthly contact from their case manager. In addition, all youth enrolled with a Youth Services provider ***must receive*** a “value-added” service from the Youth provider every month. These services must be well documented and dictated by the needs identified and incorporated in the ISS.

Value-added services are provided in-person and may include, but are not limited to, workshops, job shadowing, tutoring, résumé development, labor market, and career exploration, development of basic skills, occupational skills, and work readiness skills, drop-out prevention strategies, interest inventories, peer group motivational meetings, applications for financial aid and many more.

Youth should also be introduced to planning tools such as My Next Move, www.MyNextMove.org, and My Skills, My Future, www.mySkillsmyFuture.org.

- k. How will the local board coordinate relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services (20 CFR 679.560(b)(9))?

The West AlabamaWorks Area Local Board staff regularly network with secondary and postsecondary leadership through State, Regional, and Local forums and meetings to exchange information about programs and services in the local area. Local Board members will also be provided information and updates about relevant secondary and postsecondary programs in the West AlabamaWorks Area.

- I. How will the local board coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities (adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs) with the provision of transportation and other appropriate services in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(10))?

The West AlabamaWorks Area is predominately a rural area with only minimal access to a full-time public transportation system. The public transportation systems that are available to serve the rural areas offer very minimal transportation access that is restricted to very structured routes and travel times and are typically not sufficient to provide participants access to travel to and from training providers or to work-based training opportunities. Transportation assistance is provided by most of our three current Youth Providers either by agency vans, or gas cards for either WIOA participant vehicles or, most often, for participants to use for gas in friends/family vehicles in exchange for transportation to class.

- m. Provide plans and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(11)).

WIOA staff within the West AlabamaWorks Area have been collocated within the Alabama Career Center System of strategically placed (One-Stop) Career Centers for nearly 25 years and have worked closely with the Wagner-Peyser staff to provide non-duplicated services. That coordination and cooperation between the Alabama Department of Labor (WP/UI/TAA/etc.) and West AlabamaWorks. WIOA Title I staff has advanced so that our agencies share in the costs of supervision, and facility costs, to the point that we now have a cost-sharing agreement whereas the costs of Career Center Area managers and individual Career Center local office managers is allocated monthly based on the percent of non-supervisory staff charged to the individual benefitting cost centers. An updated copy of the Cost-Allocation MOU is currently being negotiated and is expected to be finalized and released in July 2021.

- n. How will the local board coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities (adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs) with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II? This description must include how the local board will review local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232, for example, promoting concurrent enrollment in programs and activities, as appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(b)(12)).

Adult Education provided by the Alabama Career College System is present in both comprehensive Career Centers located within the West AlabamaWorks Local Area. West AlabamaWorks Youth Providers only provide adult education services where they are not readily available for Adult Education. West AlabamaWorks Youth providers augment the adult education classes by providing tutors, space, participant incentives, and other services to enhance the participation for participants who are basic skills deficient and/or need a GED or high school diploma to successfully enter the workforce or enter postsecondary education opportunities.

A local Board staff member will be on the State Adult Education review committee for the Adult Education Request for Funding Proposals (RFP). The board reviewer will make sure that each of the submitted proposals is in alignment with the goals of the board. The next competitive process required for Title II under WIOA is in 2021 and must be complete with providers ready to begin on July 1, 2021. The current tentative timeline for the process is to release an RFP in February 2021 and the review the applications in April/May and make selections for new providers in late May to begin providing service on July 1, 2021.

- o. Attach current copies of Memorandums of Understanding or other executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(13)).

Updates to the MOU for Program Year 2021 are currently under development by each of the partner agencies. Once the updated MOU is completed it will be shared with the local board.

- p. Provide a statement indicating that the local area will negotiate local levels of performance consistent with WIOA sec. 166(c) with the Workforce Development Division (WDD) and that these performance levels will be included in each year’s Grant Agreement. These levels will be negotiated when the U.S. Department of Labor and other applicable federal agencies finalize performance levels for the State (20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)).

The West AlabamaWorks Local Workforce Development Area has been notified of proposed WIOA performance levels for the state of Alabama; West AlabamaWorks staff has reviewed the proposed WIOA performance levels, and has accepted the following performance:

Program:	WIOA Performance Goals:
Adult	PY21
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	78.0%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	74.5%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$5,800
Credential Attainment within 4 Qtrs. After Exit	61.5%
Dislocated Worker	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	79.3%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	77.5%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$7,250
Credential Attainment within 4 Qtrs. After Exit	70.5%

Youth

Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	67.8%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	67.5%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$2,795
Credential Attainment within 4 Qtrs. After Exit	45.0%

In PY19 the West Alabama Local Area continued its successful performance levels. The Area has met or exceeded the minimum performance level for all of the performance measures for PY19. Our staff is continuously working to conduct on-site monitoring/technical assistance visits to local area career centers and program providers to address performance. The local area will continue to work with Alabama State WIOA staff to ensure any assistance needs are met.

- q. What actions will the local board take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (20 CFR 679.560(b)(17))?

The West AlabamaWorks board and board staff within the Governor's Local Workforce Areas Section of the Workforce Development Division of Commerce will continue to stress the targeting of training referrals to occupations that have been identified as High Demand/High Growth and High Wage occupations which can be attained by postsecondary education training programs that do not exceed the 104-week maximum allowed by the WIOA. These identified occupations will be adjusted for each Region of the State utilizing data developed by the Alabama Department of Labor's Labor Market Division.

- r. How will individual training accounts be used to provide training services to adults and dislocated workers? Will contracts for training services be used? If training contracts for services are used, how will this be coordinated with the use of individuals training accounts? How will the local board ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (20 CFR 679.560(b)(18))?

The Alabama Department of Commerce, through the Workforce Development Division, hosts a website that provides job seekers full and accurate information concerning available Training Services on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), accessible at <https://alabamaworks.alabama.gov/vosnet/drills/provider/provdrill.aspx?session=provdetail&geo=0101000000&zip=&radius=>. Cost information is provided and may include such items as tuition and required books, materials, supplies, and fees. Performance information available through the website provides general statistics including successful training completions, job acquisition rates, entry-level wages, and career and promotional opportunities. This information will be provided to job seekers and should facilitate comparison shopping to ensure an informed customer choice, which aligns with the current Labor Market Information.

Job seekers may not need WIOA financial assistance to complete the training necessary for job acquisition. Non-WIOA assistance may be available through grants, scholarships, or partner services and should be accessed if WIOA funds are not sufficient to meet all training needs. Career Services will continue to be provided while job seekers are enrolled in Training Services. Case Management will take on even more importance since customers will be receiving services away from the Career Center. Extra efforts may be required to stay in contact with them. Also, additional supportive services may need to be addressed at this time to help ensure success.

Open lines of communication between the Alabama Career Center staff and the proper contact persons, as identified by the training provider, are very important. This may help to ensure that the job seeker will have a smooth entry into Training Services and will facilitate both the Case Management and maintenance of Individual Training Accounts and On-the-Job Training Contracts during the term of participation. Once again, as job seekers complete or near the end of participation in Training Services, appropriate Labor Exchange activities, which may include an updated resume, should be initiated to facilitate entry into unsubsidized employment. These services can be accomplished through a team approach of Alabama Career Center staff and other partners.

Alabama Career Center System is committed to fully integrating Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs as an employment and training solution for one-stop centers. Career Centers are encouraged to use RA as a career pathway for job seekers and a job-driven strategy for businesses. RA programs automatically qualify to be placed on the State and Local Board's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) allowing ITA's to support participants in RA programs

- s. Describe the one-stop delivery system's current intake and case management information system(s). Are all WIOA and career center partners using the same system? How do WIOA and career center partners plan to implement and transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(20))?

Data collection and reporting processes for Title I and Title III programs are through the AlabamaWorks! VOS system for participants through the one-stop centers. Adult Education and Rehabilitative Services use programs developed to facilitate reporting requirement from their respective funding agencies

Two of the core partners in Alabama use the same management information systems to share common data elements. The WIOA Title I entity (Alabama Department of Commerce) and the Wagner-Peyser entity (Alabama Department of Labor) use the VOS system. Also, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) and the Alabama Department of Human Resources participate in a data warehouse provided by the Department of Commerce, known as the Interagency Electronic Linkage System (IELS). The IELS allows these agencies to extract data already collected by the Alabama Career Centers of clients served by these respective agencies.

- t. What policies does the local board have in place for the local one-stop delivery system that ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of

public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (20 CFR 679.560(b)(21))?

The state has established that priority of service will be given to individuals on public assistance, other low-income individuals who are basic skills deficient per the requirements of WIOA sec 134(c)(3). The State Program Integrity Section will review activities, services, administration, and management practices to ensure compliance with the Act, Federal and State Regulations, OMB Circulars, Government Auditing Standards, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), State Law and Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives.

- u. How will the local area, and in particular the career centers, comply with the Jobs for Veterans Act requirements?

In affiliation with the American Job Center (AJC) network, the Alabama Veterans' Services Program within the Alabama Career Center system shall offer comprehensive employment and career placement service to veterans through a combination of self-service Internet-based job services and direct assistance at AJCs throughout the state.

The AlabamaWorks! Virtual One-Stop (VOS) system, as a point of entry for self-service registration, provides a priority service notification to veterans and covered persons at the VOS website.

Veterans and persons entitled to priority services and training complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for priority services and training at the point of entry into the workforce development system.

Veterans who can use VOS competently are encouraged to self-register and make maximum use of the automated access to resources. As a core service, career center specialists review applications and resumes submitted by veterans and covered persons who register for employment using self-service, to ensure that veterans' applications clearly state job objectives and show meaningful information with regards to work history, education, and training. Because veterans' resumes are listed first in the search results and are annotated, employers can quickly locate qualified veterans for job openings. To ensure that veterans receive priority in referral to job openings, the VOS provides 24-hour email alerts to veterans for any job listing that matches their resumes. The automated system to select qualified candidates for job openings is programmed to refer only qualified veterans in the first 24 hours of the listing unless no qualified veterans are available.

Priority service is also provided when veterans, or others eligible for priority, are identified at intake when registering for services at any AJC, or other service delivery points. Career center specialists will ensure that each veteran completing a full application will have properly recorded their skills, education, training, job or career interests, work experience, licenses or certifications, employment availability, contact information, and other vital information.

Additionally, AJCs will use signage, graphics, and displays to inform veterans and Covered Persons of priority service (as described under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and 20 CFR Part 1010) and as applicable to all US DOL-funded employment services and training.

Moreover, local career center managers will develop outreach activities to locate Covered Persons under Veterans' Priority. Managers or designated representatives will review special reports generated by VOS to identify veterans and Covered Persons who may be contacted and made aware of their priority in services and training. Career Center managers will develop local service strategies and training goals for veterans and Covered Persons entitled to Veterans' Priority, in consultation with their partner agencies and training providers, to encourage maximum utilization of services and training by veterans and Covered Persons.

All Alabama Workforce Development regions have implemented Veterans' Priority in the State WIOA and Wagner–Peyster Plan of Service. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) representatives and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) shall complement Priority of Service provided by the AJC to veterans and Covered Persons, as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41, and per the general and special provisions of the Jobs For Veterans State Grant (JVSG), and applicable regulations, policies, and directive guidance for JVSG from the Assistant Secretary, Veterans Employment and Training (ASVET), including Veterans Program Letters addressing DVOP–LVER Roles and Responsibilities.

The Alabama strategy leverages improvements in technology to enable career center specialists to locate and review the resumes of veterans using online self–services to offer helpful advice or suggestions on presenting their skills and abilities to prospective employers, because the VOS data system is designed to support employers searching for keywords, then automatically flags the resumes of veterans and Covered Persons who are identified as qualified candidates within the parameters entered by the employer. This advantage offers veterans and Covered Persons a Priority in Service and enables an employer to contact them directly, with or without a referral through a posted job order.

Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE):

- Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job center (AJC) network will provide comprehensive employment, training, and career placement services to nearly 25,000 veterans a year through a combination of Internet-based job services and personal assistance at Alabama Career Centers in the statewide AJC network. Alabama has more than 32,000 residents currently serving in the Armed Forces.

The Alabama Career Center system in the American Job Center network operates under the auspices of the Alabama Department of Labor, the state agency responsible for providing employment services and related services to veterans, and is authorized by the Governor to make an application for funds to carry out the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) program as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41.

The AlabamaWorks Virtual One-Stop (VOS) enables veterans to use self–services, including registration. This approach enables specialists in the DVOP to review the registrations and resumes submitted by veterans online and then contact veterans who appear to need further assistance.

Alabama DVOP specialists prioritize their efforts with veterans who are facing significant barriers to employment (SBE) in securing employment, including veterans who appear to be having difficulty in using the AlabamaWorks Virtual One-Stop (VOS) automated system. The assignment of DVOP specialists at specific Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job Center (AJC) network is based on a strategy to ensure veterans with SBEs are priority customers in the Alabama Workforce Development system. Although many veterans can and will use the internet-based self-registration and various self-service features, veterans with SBEs are provided intensive services. Veterans who enter the Alabama Workforce Development System at an AJC (Alabama Career Center), are served initially by career center specialists. For veterans who appear to have an SBE, career center specialists will offer additional services, including referral to a DVOP who will provide intensive and case management services to veterans having a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE), as defined by Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 03-14 and VPL 04-14:

1. All veterans enrolled in the Five-track Employment Program administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service. As covered in a separate agreement with VR&E, a client determined to be "Job-Ready" by VR&E will be referred by a VR&E Employment Coordinator to the state's Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC), who will refer the Job Ready VR&E client to an appropriate AJC manager for case management and job placement services.
2. Homeless Veterans, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)).
3. Veterans lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.
4. A Recently-separated military service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who at any time in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.
5. Low-income veterans (as defined by WIOA at Sec. 3(24) (B)).
6. A veteran who is an ex-offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3(24) (F)), who has been released from incarceration within the last 12 months.
7. Veterans ages 18-24 years old transitioning from active military service.
8. A Special Disabled Veteran or Disabled Veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1). Special Disabled and Disabled Veterans are those who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.
9. Veterans in the categories above will be provided a comprehensive Assessment of Employability, addressing barriers to employment, and a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) outlining the individual's employability planning.

Locating Priority Group Veterans

Veterans in priority groups will be located in the data system by developing special reports and search capabilities of the VOS system. Career Center/AJC staff members will outreach to veterans

who may benefit from DVOP services. DVOPs will outreach to homeless shelters, community agencies that provide services to homeless individuals, and will participate in special events for disabled and homeless veterans, such as Homeless Veterans Stand Downs.

V. Service Provider Selection Policies

- a. Provide a description of the competitive process that will be used to award any subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(15)).

Providers will be required to collaborate with partners from the Career Centers and other social services, education, and employment-related supports in the area. The formula will be designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared to established goals as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

The proposal application will collect basic information regarding the eligible provider including, but not limited to, location, service area, the scope of work for the program, demographics served, fiscal management procedures, and audit history. Additionally, each applicant will be required to submit a proposed budget, as well as programmatic information regarding statutory requirements. Questions may include the following:

1. Provide the vision and mission of the program or organization. Please include a description of the population that the program will serve, including how the program will meet the needs of adults with barriers to employment (e.g. Displaced Homemaker, Low-income Individual, individuals with Disabilities, Single Parents, and other individuals as described in the law).
2. Provide a description of any cooperative agreements/contracts that the program has with other agencies and service providers for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities. Also, describe ways in which the program coordinates with other service providers to provide wrap-around services to participants (e.g. child care, transportation).
3. Describe how the program will align activities to the Local Plan for WIOA providers and supportive services. Include a description of how the program will promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs.
4. Describe the methods the program will employ to meet the State adjusted levels of performance. Additionally, describe the program's mechanism and process for collecting and reporting data to assess performance. The description of the program's methods to meet performance measures should focus on efforts to meet or achieve:
 - a. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment after program exit;
 - b. Median earnings of program participants;

c. Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma/equivalent during program participation or after exiting;

d. Effective service provided to employers.

5. Describe the program's current and/or future involvement as a local One-Stop Career Center partner, including how the program will contribute to products or services for Career Center participants, with emphasis on individuals with barriers to employment. Describe how the program's contribution to the One-Stop Career Center will be coordinated with other core providers, and delivered to participants.

6. Describe the scope of the program's activities, and the delivery of services to ensure that the needs of all eligible participants will be met.

7. Describe the program's ability to meet the considerations used to assess the RFP that are listed below.

Assessing the RFP

The assessment of each grant application will involve an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the workforce needs of the area and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At a minimum, the review process and scoring rubric will consider the following:

1. The ability of the eligible provider to meet the workforce needs identified for the population in the area. Emphasis will be given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment—including low literacy skills and an English language barrier.

2. The eligible provider's ability to provide service to individuals with a (physical or learning) disability.

3. The eligible provider's demonstrated effectiveness in providing training and instruction, including its ability to meet required levels of performance.

4. The eligible provider's alignment with the WIOA Local Plan.

5. The depth, intensity, and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. Attention will be given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates stringent research in the grant proposal submission and the development of the program itself.

6. The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research and best practices.
7. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction, including distance education, toward students' improved performance.
8. The eligible provider's demonstrated the integration of contextualized instruction, to blend various skills and preparation for transition to post-secondary education or entry into the workplace. Attention will be given to activities that promote and lead to economic self-sufficiency, and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship.
9. The qualifications and expertise of the eligible provider's instructors, counselors, and administrative staff. The eligible provider must also demonstrate its ability and intent to provide high-quality professional development to instructors and staff, toward the improvement of student performance.
10. The eligible provider's collaboration with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have or establish significant partnerships with public schools, post-secondary institutions, industry/business partners, and workforce boards.
11. The flexibility of program schedule offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with Federal, State, and local support services such as childcare, transportation, and mental health services.
12. The eligible provider's information management system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the state-administered designated Adult Education System for Accountability and Performance for all grant-related data collection and reporting.

b. Identify local board criteria for awarding grants for youth activities.

The Local Workforce Development Area will select providers of WIOA youth services through a Request for Providers (RFP) process. The RFP will award youth program funds to established potential youth providers with the organizational history to meet expected youth performance measures.

c. How will the local area determine service provider suitability for inclusion on the Eligible Training Providers List?

See [GWID 2015-03 Change 3](#)

NOTE: West AlabamaWorks does not manage the ETPL, but will review all providers and courses of instruction provided by these providers to ensure that the training provided meets the West AlabamaWorks local board's focus on promoting only those occupations that provide entry employment into occupations, including those that provide career ladders/career pathways leading

to High Growth/High Demand occupations that provide a sustainable wage for the participant and their families.

http://www.madeinalabama.com/assets/gwd/gwid/GWID_2015-03Change03.pdf

- d. How will the local area secure the required performance information from service providers?

All West AlabamaWorks training providers, including both Youth Providers and ITA/skills training providers, are required to report all performance outcomes to the Alabama Career Center locations within the local area in “real-time”. This includes the reporting of credentials/degrees/employment/measurable skills gains etc. Our network of career centers then reports these outcomes to us by entering the information into the AlabamaWorks! VOS system. In addition, for actual reporting of WIOA reportable outcomes of employment and wages, the area relies on the state to secure this data from the Alabama Department of Labor’s Unemployment Compensation system from actual wages reported to that Agency.

VI. Monitoring & Oversight Policy

- a. Provide a copy of the local area’s monitoring and oversight policies and procedures.

See Attachment B: Governor’s Local Workforce Area Monitoring Guide

VII. Grievance Procedures and Policies

- a. Provide a copy of the local area’s Grievance Procedures and Policies.

See Attachment C: Grievance Procedures and Policies

VIII. Comment Period

- a. What process will the local board use to provide a public comment period no longer than thirty days before submission of the plan? How will the local board ensure that the public, particularly representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations, have an opportunity to have input into the development of the plan (20 CFR 679.550(b), 679.560(b)(19))?

The West AlabamaWorks Local Plan will be posted on the Westalabamaworks.com website for a period not lasting more than 30 days

ATTACHMENT

A

West Alabama Works! Career Centers

Tuscaloosa Career Center
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Phone: (205) 758-7591

Fayette Career Center
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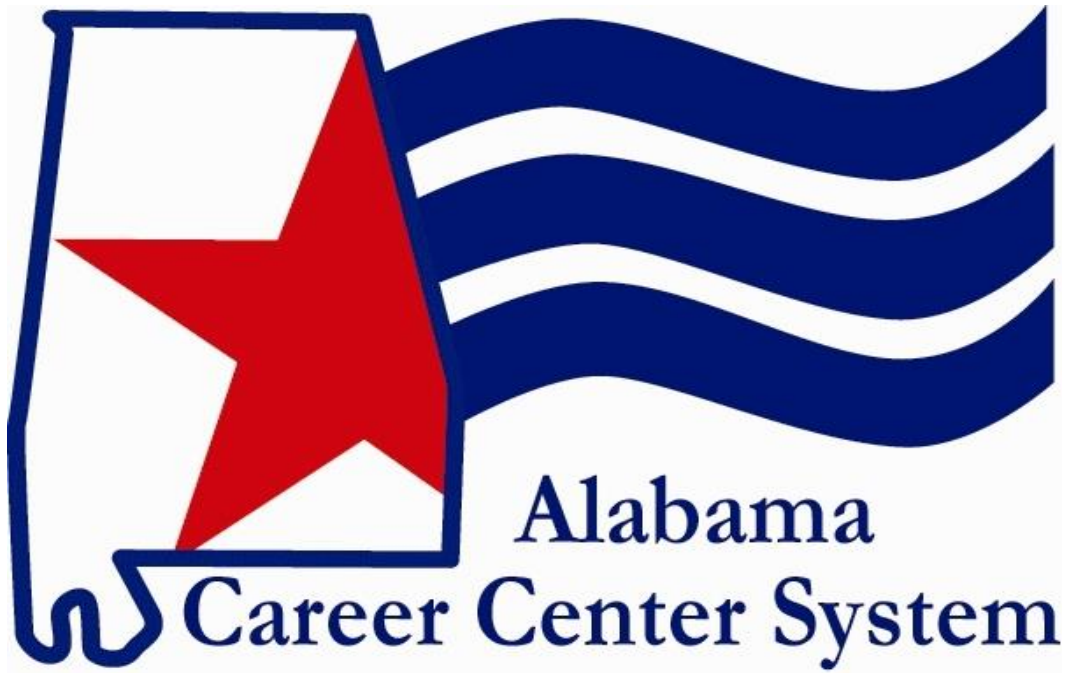
Vernon Career Center
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Demopolis Career Center
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Livingston Career Center
Scarlet Pearce
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Demopolis@alcc.alabama.gov
Phone: (205) 652-3836

ATTACHMENT B

**Governor's Local Workforce Areas
Monitoring Guide**



**Alabama Department of Commerce
Workforce Development Division
401 Adams Avenue
Post Office Box 304103
Montgomery, Alabama 36103-4103
Revised July 2017**

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Introduction and Purpose

Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was designed to increase opportunities and access to workforce development activities for individuals with barriers to employment. WIOA focuses on increasing access to education, training, and employment to allow individuals to succeed in their chosen career pathway.

The Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division is responsible for oversight and monitoring of all federally funded WIOA programs in the State of Alabama. The Workforce Development Division's Program Integrity Unit is responsible for monitoring each of the seven Local Workforce Development Areas in the state.

The Governor's Local Workforce Areas (GLWA) Monitoring Unit is responsible for conducting monitoring reviews of all entities (subrecipients) receiving WIOA funds in five of the Local Workforce Development Areas: North AlabamaWorks!, East AlabamaWorks!, West AlabamaWorks!, Central AlabamaWorks! and Southeast Alabama Works!

Monitoring reviews will cover each program function or activity to determine program compliance with WIOA regulations, state law and policies, contract requirements and Local Area policies and procedures. The review will also determine if the contractor is performing the contracted services at the required level. Monitors will provide technical assistance when necessary and appropriate.

Scope

The scope of an on-site monitoring review includes examining program records, interviewing program staff and program participants. The following areas of operation or systems are also included within an on-site monitoring review as appropriate:

- **Program goals and objectives**
- **Program quality**
- **Eligibility for WIOA**
- **Assessment**
- **Programmatic: Individual Training Accounts (ITA), On-the-Job Training (OJT), and Work-Based Learning (WBL)**
- **Case Management**
- **Program Performance**
- **Internal Monitoring**
- **Administrative procedures**
- **Property management**
- **Procurement**
- **Fiscal Accountability**
- **Grievance procedures**

- **Equal opportunity**
- **Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act**

The monitoring goal is to conduct on-site monitoring reviews for each contract in each of the five Local Areas on an annual basis to ensure compliance with WIOA, federal regulations, state laws, contractual agreements and state and Local Area policies. Periodic desk reviews may also be conducted.

Monitoring Procedures

I. Monitoring Schedule

The GLWA monitoring schedule will be set at the beginning of the program year and reviewed and updated as needed.

II. Review Notification

The subrecipient or contractor will be notified by telephone or email of the upcoming monitoring review. The initial contact should be made with the Career Center Area Manager if monitoring a Career Center or the subrecipient's designated contact person. Subrecipients should be notified at least two weeks in advance of the monitoring review except in circumstances when an unannounced visit is scheduled.

III. Working Paper File

A working paper file will be maintained for each monitoring assignment. The working file should include copies of the subrecipient's contract(s), modifications, data system reports, previous monitoring report and any other contract information that is pertinent to the monitoring process. This information should be reviewed in preparation for the on-site review. A checklist should be prepared for any potential problems noted in the contract review or findings in the previous monitoring report to ensure potential problems are addressed and previous findings have been corrected.

IV. On-Site Review Process

An on-site monitoring review consists of:

- **An Entrance Conference to brief the agency or organization's designated contact of the scope of the review and the agenda for the review**
- **A review of administrative, fiscal and/or programmatic files and systems**
- **Review of WIOA program records, staff interviews, participant interviews, and completion of the appropriate monitoring forms. If the review finds technical**

assistance is needed by the sub-recipient, it should be provided when the problem is encountered and again if needed at the Exit Conference.

- An Exit Conference to discuss both the positive and negative aspects of the review with the designated representative. This briefing gives the subrecipient notice of any problem areas and references the appropriate program regulation or policy. The subrecipient will have an opportunity for rebuttal of any findings. Any problems that can be resolved before the monitor leaves, should be resolved. The monitor should explain if any follow-up will be required. If the subrecipient corrects the problem areas prior to the issuance of the monitoring report, a written explanation with documentation should be provided to the monitor. The monitor will determine if the information received is sufficient. If the documentation is acceptable, it will be noted in the monitoring report. If the documentation is not acceptable, the finding noted in the monitoring report will explain why the documentation is not sufficient and what is needed to resolve the finding.

The Exit Conference should be conducted prior to leaving the site. If on-site management is not available for the Exit conference, it can be completed by telephone once the monitor returns to home base. However, Exit Conferences conducted by telephone should be the exception not the rule.

V. Monitoring Report

After each monitoring review, a written report will be prepared detailing observations or findings with recommendations of the appropriate corrective action if needed or will indicate there were no findings. The monitoring report will be completed within ten work days of the completion of the review. The monitoring report will contain the following elements:

- The dates of the review and the area(s) covered;
- A listing of findings and recommendations if applicable. Each finding shall consist of a description of the violation of Federal or State law, policy, regulation or contract provision and
- A recommendation of the appropriate action to correct the finding. It will also be noted if the finding was corrected prior to the report and the documentation provided;
- The report will be signed by the monitor and the GLWA Monitoring Supervisor and Operations Manager.

VI. Corrective Action

The monitoring report will be forwarded to the subrecipient within 15 days of the date of the report. The subrecipient will be requested to send a corrective action plan, if needed, identifying specific corrective action measures implemented or planned for each finding. The corrective action plan will

be reviewed upon receipt to determine if acceptable. If the plan is acceptable, the file will be closed. If the corrective action plan or any portion of the plan is deemed unacceptable, additional corrective action will be requested. The file will remain open until acceptable corrective action has been implemented.

VII. Acceptance/Non-Acceptance of Corrective Action

A notice should be forwarded to the subrecipient of acceptance or non-acceptance of the proposed corrective action plan within 15 working days of receipt of the plan. If the plan is not acceptable, the subrecipient may be required to submit a subsequent plan within 10 days of the date of the notice. If the subsequent plan is deemed unacceptable, the subrecipient may require additional technical assistance from GLWA in implementing an appropriate corrective action plan. The file will remain open until an acceptable corrective action plan is implemented.

VIII. Follow-Up Monitoring and Verification of Corrective Action

Based on the finding and corrective action plan implemented, a follow-up monitoring visit may be needed. If a follow-up plan is appropriate, the monitor will review the corrective action measures to determine if the noted deficiencies have been resolved.

IX. Permanent Monitoring Files

Permanent monitoring files will be maintained by the Governor's Local Workforce Areas (GLWA) Monitoring Unit. A separate file will be maintained for each on-site visit. The files will contain the following information:

- The email or documentation of telephone contact scheduling the monitoring review
- Pre-onsite review checklist, if applicable
- Signed Monitoring Report
- Completed monitoring questionnaire and forms
- Letter transmitting report to subrecipient
- Response from subrecipient if applicable
- Letter to subrecipient accepting/rejecting corrective action if applicable
- Working paper file

Specific Program Procedures

I. Assessment/Case Management or Eligibility

Once the Entrance Conference is completed, initiate Site Manager/ Case Manager Interviews using the appropriate form. Complete file reviews on a representative number of participants for each case manager. Review 20% of the caseload or ten files whichever is more. If the caseload is ten or less, then each file should be reviewed.

II. Youth Programs

Each Local Area will procure Youth Program operators to coordinate WIOA services to eligible youth. Program Provider staff and designated Career Center staff work together for eligibility determination and to provide youth services. When monitoring a Youth Provider, contact the designated Career Center to review the process between the Youth Provider and Career Center staff for eligibility and enrollment, case management, and reporting /documenting outcomes. The on-site review of participant case files, staff interviews and participant interviews will be completed at the Youth Provider site. Review 20% of the caseload or ten files whichever is more. If the caseload is ten or less, then each file should be reviewed.

III. Individual Training Account

ITA's are monitored on-site at both the Career Center and the Training Provider location. Career Centers may have ITA participants enrolled at several different training providers. The on-site review will be conducted at the school or Training Provider location with the most participants enrolled or the school in which the Career Center refers the most participants. When notifying the Career Center staff of the monitoring review, ask the case managers to schedule an appointment with the WIOA contact person at the Training Provider site. An ITA enrollment report for the Training Provider should be requested from the GLWA ITA Unit prior to the review.

Once the Entrance Conference is completed, initiate the ITA Training Site Review/Contact Person Interview. Compare the participant files with the ITA report for accuracy. Conduct a File Review on all files if less than ten or a minimum of ten participants using the ITA Worksheet. Interview as many participants as time permits.

Once the on-site review is completed at the training location, the on-site review will be held at the Career Center. If any potential findings or questions arise from the Career Center on-site review, the Training Provider will be notified.

IV. On-The-Job Training

OJT reviews are conducted on-site at both the OJT contractor's location and the Career Center. When notifying the Career Center staff of the monitoring review, ask the case managers to schedule an appointment with the WIOA contact person at the OJT contractor

site. Determine which OJT contractors to review based upon those who have submitted an invoice and who currently have an active participant.

Once the Entrance Conference is completed, initiate the OJT Business Service Representative's (BSR) interview. Case files will be reviewed and worksheet completed for active and inactive participants for each contractor. Participant hours will be verified by comparing the most recent invoice submitted to GLWA's Accounting Unit with participant time sheets. The monitoring review then move to the OJT worksite. The OJT employer or supervisor will be interviewed as well as the active participants. Participant files at the worksite will also be reviewed and all necessary forms completed.

V. Work-Based Learning/ Work Experience

Monitoring the Work-Based Learning (WBL) program also involves reviewing both the Career Center and worksite employer files. When notifying the Career Center staff of the monitoring review, ask the case managers to schedule an appointment with the WBL contact person at the employer worksite.

Once the Entrance Conference is completed, initiate the Case Manager interview. Files reviews and worksheets will be completed for a representative number of active and inactive participants. Review 20% of the caseload or ten files whichever is more. If the caseload is ten or less, then each file should be reviewed. Participant hours and rate of pay will be verified by comparing the most recent weekly payroll report from the WBL Payroll Vendor with participant time sheets. The WBL worksite review will be completed after the Career Center review. The WBL employer or supervisor will be interviewed as well as active participants. Participant files at the worksite will also be reviewed and all necessary forms completed.

VI. National Dislocated Worker Grants

National Dislocated Worker Grants may be awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor to reemploy laid-off workers in times of major lay-offs with significant job loss. These grants may also fund disaster relief employment in areas declared federal disaster areas. These grants are subject to monitoring by the GLWA. Monitoring will include participant eligibility, employment policies, timesheets, worksites, job duties and other aspects of the grant.

Monitoring Forms Index

All Programs

WDD/ALL-1 Entrance Conference

WDD/ALL-2 Exit Conference

Assessment/Case Management Reviews

WDD/ACM-1 Site Manager/Case Manager Interview Form

WDD/ACM-2 Assessment Monitoring Worksheet

WDD/ACM-3 General Assessment/Case Management Review

WDD/ACM-4 Assessment/Case Management Worksheet

Youth Contractor Reviews

WDD/YP-1 GLWA Youth Project Review Form

WDD/YP-2 Youth Program Staff Interview

WDD/YP-3 Youth Program Client Interview

WDD/YP-4 Youth Monitoring Worksheet

Eligibility Reviews

WDD/ACC-1 General Eligibility Review

WDD/ACC-2 Eligibility Staff Review

WDD/ACC-3 Eligibility Review

WDD/ACC-4 Eligibility Worksheets

Individual Training Accounts Reviews

WDD/ITA-1 ITA Training Site Review/Contact Person Interview

WDD/ITA-2 ITA Participant Interview

WDD/ITA-3 ITA Career Center Staff Interview

WDD/ITA-4 ITA Monitoring Worksheet

On-the-Job Training Reviews

WDD/OJT-1 OJT Business Service Representative Interview

WDD/OJT-1a OJT Training Agreement Monitoring Worksheet-Career Center (Participant)

WDD/OJT-1b OJT Training Agreement Monitoring Worksheet-Career Center (Contractor)

WDD/OJT-2 OJT Training Site Review

WDD/OJT-3 OJT Employer/Supervisor Interview

WDD/OJT-3a OJT Training Agreement Site Review Monitoring Worksheet

WDD/OJT-4 OJT Participant Interview

National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWG)

WDD/DWG-1 Monitoring Guide

WDD/DWG-2 Worksite-Monitoring Guide

WDD/DWG-3 Participant Interview Guide

WDD/DWG-4 Participant File Review

Work-Based Learning/ Work Experience

- WDD/WE-1 Work Experience Review Form**
- WDD/WE-2 Participant Interview**
- WDD/WE-3 Employer/Supervisor Interview**

WIOA Program Guidelines and Policies

The following guidelines, policies and manuals will be used as appropriate in the monitoring review:

- **Alabama Career Center Guide to Customer Services**
- **State Reporting/Technical Assistance Manual**
- **GLWA's Individual Training Account (ITA) Guidelines**
- **GLWA's On-The-Job (OJT) Training Guidelines**
- **GLWA's Work-Based Learning Guidelines and Manuals**
- **Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives (GWID) for State Policies**
- **Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) from U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training**
- **GLWA Memos**

ATTACHMENT C

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is a federal law that provides for state programs, services, and activities to increase job opportunities, the length of time people stay in jobs, and the amount of money working people earn. The Alabama Department of Commerce (ADC), Workforce Development Division (WDD), receives money from the U.S. Department of Labor to provide WIOA programs, services, and activities. The ADC/WDD is a partner in the Alabama Workforce Development System and in the Alabama Career Centers located throughout the State, except the Career Centers located in Jefferson and Mobile Counties.

Who may use these grievance and complaint procedures?

These grievance and complaint procedures apply to WIOA programs, services, and activities in the Alabama Workforce Development Area (all Alabama counties except Jefferson and Mobile) and Statewide programs, services, and activities run or paid for directly by the ADC/WDD. The procedures may be used by any person who believes the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or any rules or agreements under the WIOA, have been violated (not obeyed) in any ADC/WDD WIOA program or activity.

How much time do I have to file a grievance or complaint?

Discrimination complaints must be filed within 180 days (within about six months) of the date you believe the discrimination happened. Other WIOA grievances and complaints about programs and activities must be filed within one (1) year of the date you believe a violation happened.

How do I file a grievance or complaint?

If your complaint is about a WIOA program or activity, but you are not claiming discrimination, first discuss the grievance or complaint with your supervisor, a counselor at a training location, a human resources or personnel manager where you work, or a person who is responsible for helping people with complaints in the Career Center where you received services to try to settle the complaint locally. If your complaint is not settled in a way that satisfies you within ten (10) days, you may send a written complaint within five (5) days (after the 10 days are over) to Ms. Lillian Patterson, Equal Opportunity/Grievance Officer; Alabama Department of Commerce; Workforce Development Division; 401 Adams Avenue; PO Box 304103; Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4103. Include your name, address, telephone number, and the name and address of the person(s) you believe did something wrong.

An investigation may be conducted, a hearing may be held, or other action may be taken by the WDD to settle the complaint within sixty (60) days. If you are complaining about a program or activity of the Alabama Workforce Development Area and you do not get a decision about your complaint within sixty (60) days, or if you are not satisfied with the decision, you may appeal by writing to Mr. Steve Walkley, Director, at the same address as the Equal Opportunity/Grievance Officer (see above) within ten (10) days after you either get the decision or should have gotten the decision.

If you are complaining of labor standards violations (e.g., An employer disobeyed a law or rule about working conditions, wages and benefits, health and safety standards), and you and the employer you are complaining about are covered by a collective bargaining agreement (i.e., an agreement between an employer and a union about wage rates, hours of labor and working conditions), you may choose to file your grievance through what is called a *binding arbitration procedure*. Contact your supervisor, personnel manager, or union representative for information about whether this applies to you and the steps you should follow.

(Over)

Equal Opportunity is the Law

It is against the law for the Alabama Department of Commerce (ADC), Workforce Development Division (WDD), or any person, agency, organization, employer, or training provider who/that receives WIOA money from the ADC/WDD to discriminate against any person in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political relationship or belief; and against any person who benefits from a WIOA program because of the person's citizenship, because the person is a legal immigrant, or because the person is a WIOA participant.

The ADC/WDD and agencies, organizations, employers, and training providers that receive WIOA money must not discriminate in any of the following ways:

- Deciding who will be admitted or have access to a WIOA program or activity;
- Providing opportunities or treatment in a WIOA program or activity; or
- Making employment (job) decisions related to a WIOA program or activity.

If you think someone discriminated against you because of your race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political relationships or beliefs; or, if you are a WIOA participant and you think someone discriminated against you because of your citizenship, because you are a legal immigrant, or because you participate in a WIOA program, you may file a complaint within 180 days of the date you think the discrimination happened with either Ms. Lillian Patterson, Equal Opportunity/Grievance Officer, at the same address given above or the Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4123, Washington, D.C. 20210.

If you file your complaint with the Equal Opportunity/Grievance Officer at the ADC/WDD, you must wait either until the ADC/WDD issues a written *Notice of Final Action*, or until 90 days have passed (whichever comes first) before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).

If the ADC/WDD does not give you a written *Notice of Final Action* within 90 days after you file your complaint, you do not have to wait for the ADC/WDD to issue the *Notice* before filing a complaint with the CRC. But you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days after the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day you filed your complaint with the ADC/WDD).

If the ADC/WDD gives you a written *Notice of Final Action* on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or result, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date you received the *Notice of Final Action*.

Grievance and complaint procedures were explained to me

by _____
Employee's Name

Title Agency Date

Applicant's/Registrant's/ Participant's Signature
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