

COMMERCE

Indiana Arts Commission

This section outlines the Indiana Arts Commission's internal review of DEI positions, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

The IAC did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

The IAC does not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

- The IAC adopted a Cultural Equity statement in 2020 that was a resulting recommendation from a 2019 commission working group. The IAC has removed the statement.ⁱ

Programs Administered to the Public

The IAC did not administer any DEI programs to the public.

Grant Conditions

The IAC does not require any DEI grant conditions

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

The IAC did not participate in any DEI trainings for employees

Job Applicant Requirements

The IAC did not maintain any DEI job applicant requirements.

ⁱ Appendix A



Cultural Equity Statement:

We Believe in Equitable Access to the Arts

To create equitable access to the arts for all Indiana residents, the Indiana Arts Commission is committed to intentional and ongoing engagement with all communities in our state. We will listen, engage, and incorporate diverse people and perspectives into all policies, programs, and services. Being consistently mindful and inclusive of the needs, ideas, and cultural history of the people who call Indiana home, we value and embrace their artistic expression and support them as they advance the arts that reflect their values and traditions. We believe in embracing diversity, championing inclusion, practicing equity, and embodying both the geographic and cultural variety that form the fabric of Indiana.

Department of Workforce Development

This section outlines the Department of Workforce Development's internal review of DEI position, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

The Department did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

The Department did not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

The Department did not have a mission or value statement including DEI language.

Programs Administered to the Public

- Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG): JAG has historically been DWD's primary program serving in-school youth under WIOA Title I requirements; federal regulations require DWD to focus services toward at-risk students with barriers. As a result of JAG expansion during 2024, more than 250 JAG programs were offered during the 2024-2025 school year at Indiana high schools, middle schools, and postsecondary institutions. The JAG National organization provides training documents that currently describe DEI-related activities. However, state affiliates are able to select documents to implement as part of their state's programs. HEA 1001-2025 removed DWD's appropriation for JAG.ⁱ

Grant Conditions

- The Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation Agreement: DWD receives an appropriation to pass through to the Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation (Foundation). The Foundation's Statement of Work in the FY 2025 grant agreement references "address[ing] the disparity studies in Indiana" and includes "diversity" as a measurable outcome. Pending appropriations for Fiscal Year 2026, DWD will ensure the Foundation's Statement of Work does not include references to activities and programs prohibited by Executive Order 25-14.ⁱⁱ

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan: The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) in collaboration with DWD included DEI as a potential focus for future program evaluations and referenced DEI training opportunities in Indiana's Program Year 2024 - Program Year 2027 WIOA State Plan. DWD will not implement these components of the State Plan and further intends to remove them from the Plan in accordance with the timeframe provided via USDOL guidance or during the next federal modification cycle in FY 2026, whichever occurs first.ⁱⁱⁱ
- DWD Intranet: The DWD Intranet houses internal agency resources and documentation for DWD staff. Upon the issuance of Executive Order 25-14, the DWD Intranet still included several newsletters from a DEI committee that was disbanded in 2024. These newsletters have been removed.^{iv}
- UI Mentoring Presentation: DWD's Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division trains UI mentors using a PowerPoint presentation. This presentation previously listed "diversity and inclusion" as a benefit of mentorship. This has been removed from the presentation.^v

Job Applicant Requirements

The Department did not have any DEI job applicant requirements.

ⁱ Corresponding documentation is not included pursuant to terms of the *Jobs for America's Graduates Partnership Affiliation Agreement*.

ⁱⁱ See Item 1.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Item 2.

^{iv} See Item 3.

^v See Item 4.

Item 1

**FY2025 Grant Agreement with Indiana
Construction Roundtable Foundation**

GRANT FOR THE PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES

ICRF23897

CONTRACT #000000000000000000074953

This Grant Agreement ("Grant Agreement"), entered into by and between the **Indiana Department of Workforce Development** ("DWD") for and on behalf of the State of Indiana (hereinafter the "State") and **Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation** (hereinafter the "Grantee"), is executed pursuant to IC § 22-4-18-1 (b)(3) and the terms and conditions set forth herein. In consideration of those mutual undertakings and covenants, the parties agree as follows:

1. Applicable Law, Purpose, and Funding Source

A. Applicable Law: The applicable federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations, as the same may be amended from time to time, for the Grant funds are set forth in **Exhibit A**, attached hereto and incorporated fully herein ("Grant"). This Grant Agreement shall be used exclusively in accordance with the provisions contained in this Grant Agreement, and in the applicable federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations and applicable Office of Management and Budget ("OMB") regulations.

B. Purpose: The purpose of this Grant Agreement is to implement the employment and training programs and/or services described in the "Scope of Work", attached hereto as **Exhibit B**, attached hereto, and incorporated fully herein ("The Scope of Work").

C. Funding Source: The funding sources to support this Grant Agreement are funds made available pursuant to the state biennial budget, P.L. 201-2023; Sec. ,6 Economic Development; Sec. C, Employment Services for the Department of Workforce Development; Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation which is incorporated fully herein and made a part hereto by reference.

2. Term

The term of this Grant Agreement shall be from **July 01, 2023** until **June 30, 2025** (the "Expiration Date"). In no event shall payments be made for work done or services performed after the Expiration Date. The Grantee may request in writing that the Expiration Date only of this Grant Agreement be extended. If a request for extension is granted, the extension shall be made by written agreement of the parties and subsequent approval by all appropriate State officials or their designees.

3. Grant Funding

A. The State shall fund this Grant Agreement in the amount of **\$1,000,000**. The approved Project Budget is set forth as **Exhibit C** of this Grant Agreement, attached hereto and incorporated fully herein. The Grantee shall neither spend more than the amount for each line item in the Project Budget without the prior written consent of the State, nor shall the Project costs funded by this Grant Agreement and those funded by any local and/or private share be changed or modified without the prior written consent of the State. This is the allocation for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

B. The disbursement of Grant funds to the Grantee shall not be made until all documentary materials required by this Grant Agreement have been received and approved by the State and this Grant Agreement has been fully approved by the State.

4. Audits

Grantee shall submit to an audit of funds paid through this Grant Agreement, and shall make all books, accounting records, and other documents available at all reasonable times during the term of this Grant Agreement and for a period of three (3) years after final payment, or until the date of the management letter if an audit is performed, for inspection by the State or its authorized

designee. Copies shall be furnished to the State at no cost.

If required by applicable provisions of the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR § 200.0 et seq., or if requested by the State, annually and following the expiration of this Grant Agreement, the Grantee shall arrange for a financial and compliance audit of funds provided by the State pursuant to this Grant Agreement. Such audit is to be conducted by an independent public or certified public accountant (or as applicable, the Indiana State Board of Accounts), and performed in accordance with Indiana State Board of Accounts publication entitled "Uniform Compliance Guidelines for Examination of Entities Receiving Financial Assistance from Governmental Sources," and applicable provisions of the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR § 200.0 et seq. The Grantee is responsible for ensuring that the audit and any management letters are completed and forwarded to the State in accordance with the terms of this Grant Agreement. Audits conducted pursuant to this paragraph must be submitted no later than nine (9) months following the close of the Grantee's fiscal year. The Grantee agrees to provide the Indiana State Board of Accounts and the State an original of all financial and compliance audits. The audit shall be an audit of the actual entity, or distinct portion thereof that is the Grantee, and not of a parent, member, or subsidiary corporation of the Grantee, except to the extent such an expanded audit may be determined by the Indiana State Board of Accounts or the State to be in the best interests of the State. The audit shall include a statement from the Auditor that the Auditor has reviewed this Grant Agreement and that the Grantee is not out of compliance with the financial aspects of this Grant Agreement.

5. Compliance with Laws

A. The Grantee shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances, and all provisions required thereby to be included herein are hereby incorporated by reference. The enactment or modification of any applicable state or federal statute or the promulgation of rules or regulations thereunder after execution of this Grant Agreement shall be reviewed by the State and the Grantee to determine whether the provisions of this Grant Agreement require formal modification.

B. The Grantee and its agents shall abide by all ethical requirements that apply to persons who have a business relationship with the State as set forth in IC § 4-2-6, et seq., IC § 4-2-7, et seq., and the regulations promulgated thereunder. **If the Grantee has knowledge, or would have acquired knowledge with reasonable inquiry, that a state officer, employee, or special appointee, as those terms are defined in IC § 4-2-6-1, has a financial interest in the Grant, the Grantee shall ensure compliance with the disclosure requirements in IC § 4-2-6-10.5 prior to the execution of this Grant Agreement.** If the Grantee is not familiar with these ethical requirements, the Grantee should refer any questions to the Indiana State Ethics Commission or visit the Indiana Inspector General's website at <http://www.in.gov/ig/>. If the Grantee or its agents violate any applicable ethical standards, the State may, in its sole discretion, terminate this Grant Agreement immediately upon notice to the Grantee. In addition, the Grantee may be subject to penalties under IC §§ 4-2-6, 4-2-7, and 35-44.1-1-3, and under any other applicable laws.

C. The Grantee certifies by entering into this Grant Agreement that neither it nor its principal(s) is presently in arrears in payment of taxes, permit fees, or other statutory, regulatory, or judicially required payments to the State. The Grantee agrees that any payments currently due to the State may be withheld from payments due to the Grantee. Additionally, payments may be withheld, delayed, or denied and/or this Grant suspended until the Grantee is current in its payments and has submitted proof of such payment to the State.

D. The Grantee warrants that it has no current, pending, or outstanding criminal, civil, or enforcement actions initiated by the State, and agrees that it will immediately notify the State of any such actions. During the term of such actions, the Grantee agrees that the State may suspend funding for the Project. If a valid dispute exists as to the Grantee's liability or guilt in any

action initiated by the State or its agencies, and the State decides to suspend funding to the Grantee, the Grantee may submit, in writing, a request for review to the Indiana Department of Administration ("IDOA"). A determination by IDOA shall be binding on the parties. Any disbursements that the State may delay, withhold, deny, or apply under this section shall not be subject to penalty or interest.

E. The Grantee warrants that the Grantee and any contractors performing work in connection with the Project shall obtain and maintain all required permits, licenses, registrations, and approvals, and shall comply with all health, safety, and environmental statutes, rules, or regulations in the performance of work activities for the State. Failure to do so may be deemed a material breach of this Grant Agreement and grounds for immediate termination and denial of grant opportunities with the State.

F. The Grantee affirms that, if it is an entity described in IC Title 23, it is properly registered and owes no outstanding reports to the Indiana Secretary of State.

G. As required by IC § 5-22-3-7:

(1) The Grantee and any principals of the Grantee certify that:

(A) the Grantee, except for de minimis and nonsystematic violations, has not violated the terms of:

(i) IC § 24-4.7 [Telephone Solicitation of Consumers];

(ii) IC § 24-5-12 [Telephone Solicitations]; or

(iii) IC § 24-5-14 [Regulation of Automatic Dialing Machines];

in the previous three hundred sixty-five (365) days, even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law; and

(B) the Grantee will not violate the terms of IC § 24-4.7 for the duration of the Grant Agreement, even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law.

(2) The Grantee and any principals of the Grantee certify that an affiliate or principal of the Grantee and any agent acting on behalf of the Grantee or on behalf of an affiliate or principal of the Grantee, except for de minimis and nonsystematic violations,:

(A) has not violated the terms of IC § 24-4.7 in the previous three hundred sixty-five (365) days, even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law; and

(B) will not violate the terms of IC § 24-4.7 for the duration of the Grant Agreement, even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law.

6. Confidentiality of State Information

The Grantee understands and agrees that data, materials, and information disclosed to the Grantee may contain confidential and protected information. The Grantee covenants that data, material, and information gathered, based upon, or disclosed to the Grantee for the purpose of this Grant Agreement, will not be disclosed to or discussed with third parties without the prior written consent of the State.

The Grantee will abide by all applicable statutes, regulations, directives, and mandates to protect the privacy rights and interests of individuals who apply for employment and training and related services. The Grantee specifically agrees to adhere to the provisions of IC § 22-4-19-6 and IC § 4-1-6-1 et seq. Grantee recognizes that it is subject to the penalties for disclosure of protected information under IC § 5-14-3-10.

The parties acknowledge that the services to be performed by the Grantee for the State under this Grant Agreement may require or allow access to data, materials, and information containing Social Security numbers or other personal information maintained by the State in its computer system or other records. In addition to the covenant made above in this section and pursuant to 10 IAC § 5-3-1(4), the Grantee and the State agree to comply with the provisions of IC § 4-1-10 and IC § 4-1-11. If any Social Security number(s) or personal information (as defined in IC § 4-1-11-3) is/are disclosed by the Grantee, the Grantee agrees to pay the cost of the notice of disclosure of a breach of the security of the system in addition to any other claims and expenses

for which it is liable under the terms of this Grant Agreement.

As required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 USC § 1232g, 34 CFR § 99.1, to the extent this Grant Agreement involves the use or transmittal of "personally identifiable information," as defined at 34 CFR § 99.3, the Grantee covenants that it will appropriately safeguard from unauthorized disclosure to third parties any "personally identifiable information" with respect to a student. 20 CFR § 603 regulates the disclosure of Confidential Unemployment Compensation Information ("CUCI"). To the extent this Grant Agreement involves the use or transmittal of CUCI, the parties agree to comply with 20 CFR § 603, and Grantee covenants that it will appropriately safeguard the CUCI from unauthorized disclosure to third parties.

Prior to allowing any non-DWD employee to access or utilize individual level records maintained within DWD's systems, Grantee shall require that individual to execute a copy of the Confidentiality Statement, pursuant to DWD Memorandum 2020-15, found at [2020-15-M Confidentiality Statement Requirement \(in.gov\)](#). Every non-DWD employee providing services under this Grant Agreement must execute the Confidentiality Statement prior to accessing or utilizing any individual record level data maintained within DWD's systems. Grantee shall keep copies of all executed Confidentiality Statements on record.

7. Drug-Free Workplace Certification

As required by Executive Order No. 90-5, April 12, 1990, issued by the Governor of Indiana, the Grantee hereby covenants and agrees to make a good faith effort to provide and maintain a drug-free workplace. Grantee will give written notice to the State within ten (10) days after receiving actual notice that the Grantee, or an employee of the Grantee in the State of Indiana, has been convicted of a criminal drug violation occurring in the workplace. False certification or violation of the certification may result in sanctions including, but not limited to, suspension of grant payments, termination of the Grant, and/or debarment of grant opportunities with the State of Indiana for up to three (3) years.

In addition to the provisions of the above paragraphs, if the total amount set forth in this Grant Agreement is in excess of \$25,000.00, the Grantee certifies and agrees that it will provide a drug-free workplace by:

- A. Publishing and providing to all of its employees a statement notifying them that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the Grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition;
- B. Establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform its employees of (1) the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; (2) the Grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace; (3) any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and (4) the penalties that may be imposed upon an employee for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- C. Notifying all employees in the statement required by subparagraph (A) above that as a condition of continued employment the employee will (1) abide by the terms of the statement; and (2) notify the Grantee of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction;
- D. Notifying in writing the State within ten (10) days after receiving notice from an employee under subdivision (C)(2) above, or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction;
- E. Within thirty (30) days after receiving notice under subdivision (C)(2) above of a conviction, imposing the following sanctions or remedial measures on any employee who is convicted of drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace: (1) take appropriate personnel action against the

employee, up to and including termination; or (2) require such employee to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency; and

F. Making a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace through the implementation of subparagraphs (A) through (E) above.

8. Employment Eligibility Verification

As required by IC § 22-5-1.7, the Grantee hereby swears or affirms under the penalties of perjury that:

A. The Grantee has enrolled and is participating in the E-Verify program;

B. The Grantee has provided documentation to the State that it has enrolled and is participating in the E-Verify program;

C. The Grantee does not knowingly employ an unauthorized alien; and

D. The Grantee shall require its contractors who perform work under this Grant Agreement to certify to Grantee that the contractor does not knowingly employ or contract with an unauthorized alien and that the contractor has enrolled and is participating in the E-Verify program. The Grantee shall maintain this certification throughout the duration of the term of a contract with a contractor.

The State may terminate for default if the Grantee fails to cure a breach of this provision no later than thirty (30) days after being notified by the State.

9. Establishment and Maintenance of Records, Cost Documentation, Reports, and Inspections

The Grantee and/or its fiscal agent shall utilize fiscal control and accounting procedures that permit the preparation of all required reports and the tracing of expenditures adequate to establish compliance with all applicable requirements. The Grantee shall prepare required reports that are uniform in definition, reasonably accessible, and comprehensible to all authorized parties, verifiable for monitoring, reporting, audit, and evaluation purposes, and in accordance with the specifications of the Statewide Management Information System as set forth by the State.

10. Funding Cancellation

When the Director of the State Budget Agency makes a written determination that funds are not appropriated or otherwise available to support continuation of performance of this Grant Agreement, it shall be canceled. A determination by the Director of State Budget Agency that funds are not appropriated or otherwise available to support continuation of performance shall be final and conclusive.

11. General Assurances and Certifications

The Grantee certifies that in connection with the activities undertaken pursuant to this Grant Agreement:

A. The Grantee shall modify the workforce development and employment and training services and activities as directed by the State in the event statutes or regulations require such modification;

B. The Grantee shall comply with all applicable policy and directives issued by the State;

C. No funds made available under this Grant Agreement may be used for lobbying activities in violation of 29 CFR § 93.100 et seq., or used for political activities in violation of 5 U.S.C. § 1501 et seq.;

D. It shall establish safeguards adequate to prohibit employees or other persons from using their position with the Grantee for improper private gain for themselves or others. The Grantee will adopt corporate bylaws that establish procedures to avoid improper conflicts of interest;

E. It shall maintain an affirmative action plan, written personnel policies, and grievance procedures for complaints and grievances from applicants, participants, and beneficiaries, subgrantees, employers, employees, and other interested persons, all in accordance with all applicable statutes and regulations;

F. In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970, 29 USC § 651 et seq., the Grantee will not expose participants to surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous; participants employed or trained for inherently dangerous occupations shall be assigned to work in accordance with reasonable safety practices;

G. The Grantee agrees to comply with the provision of veteran's preference consistent with the applicable law at 38 USC § 4215; and

H. The Grantee warrants that if there is any program income from activities funded by this Grant Agreement, the Grantee will comply with section 2 CFR § 200.307, Program Income of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

12. Governing Law

This Grant Agreement shall be governed, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana, without regard to its conflict of laws rules. Suit, if any, must be brought in the State of Indiana.

13. Indemnification

The Grantee shall indemnify, defend, save, and hold harmless the State, its agents, officials, employees, customers, consultants, and third-party service providers, (the "State Indemnities") from and against all claims, allegations, causes of action, or demands that are presented to, or brought against, one or more of the State Indemnities, and any losses, liabilities, damages, lost premium, fines, penalties, assessments, and/or related costs and/or expenses (including, but not limited to), reasonable attorneys' fees, expert fees, court costs, reasonable costs of investigation, litigation, settlement, judgment, appeal, interest, and/or penalties to enforce any right under this Grant Agreement) (the "Losses") arising out of, in connection with. Or relating to any act or omission of the Grantee and its fiscal agent if procured by the Grantee, regional operator, or service providers. The Grantee agrees to repay to State, from non-federal funding sources, the costs determined by law to be disallowed in accordance with applicable federal, state, or local laws, including rules or regulations. The State shall not provide such indemnification to, defend, or hold harmless the Grantee.

14. Independent Contractor

Both parties hereto, in the performance of this Grant Agreement, shall act in an individual capacity and not as agents, employees, partners, joint venturers, or associates of one another. The employees or agents of one party shall not be deemed or construed to be the employees or agents of the other party for any purposes whatsoever. Neither party will assume liability for any injury (including death) to any persons, or damage to any property, arising out of the acts or omissions of the agents, employees, or subgrantees of the other party.

The Grantee shall be responsible for providing all necessary unemployment and workers' compensation insurance for the Grantee's employees.

15. Information Technology Accessibility Standards

Any information technology related products or services purchased, used, or maintained through

this Grant Agreement must be compatible with the principles and goals contained in the Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards adopted by the United States Access Board under Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC § 794d), as amended. The Federal Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards can be found at: [Revised 508 Standards and 255 Guidelines \(access-board.gov\)](https://www.access-board.gov/508standards/).

16. Insurance and Bonding

A. The Grantee shall secure and keep in force during the term of this Grant Agreement, the following insurance coverages, covering the Grantee for any and all claims of any nature which may in any manner arise out of or result from Grantee's performance under this Grant Agreement.

1) The Grantee shall, at its sole cost and expense, provide comprehensive and general public liability insurance against claims for personal injury, death, or property damage occurring in connection with the Project. The limits of such insurance shall not be less than \$700,000 combined single limit per occurrence, \$5,000,000 aggregate, and shall contain a deductible clause not greater than Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000). All insurance required hereunder shall be with a responsible carrier acceptable to the State and shall name the State as an additional insured. Grantee shall, upon request, provide the State with a Certificate of Insurance evidencing such insurance. Failure to maintain such insurance shall result in the termination of this Grant Agreement.

2) The Grantee shall provide crime insurance including fidelity coverage in the amount of (i.) \$100,000, or (ii.) the highest single total disbursement planned pursuant to this Grant Agreement and all other State contracts or grants outstanding to Grantee, whichever is higher, and covering all persons responsible for or handling funds received or disbursed under this Grant Agreement. This bond must show the State of Indiana as the obligee. It shall be the Grantee's responsibility to see that all persons handling funds under this Grant Agreement are bondable. Failure to provide such evidence to the State shall result in termination of this Grant Agreement and any funds awarded hereunder.

3) If the Grantee is a department, division, or agency of the State of Indiana, or of a county, municipal, or local government, the foregoing insurance coverages shall not be required; however, Grantee may elect to provide such coverages.

B. The Grantee's insurance coverage must meet the following additional requirements:

1) The insurer must have a certificate of authority issued by the Indiana Department of Insurance;

2) Any deductible or self-insured retention amount or other similar obligation under the insurance policies shall be the sole obligation of the Grantee;

3) The State will be defended, indemnified, and held harmless to the full extent of any coverage actually secured by the Grantee in excess of the minimum requirements set forth above. The duty to indemnify the State under this Grant Agreement shall not be limited by the insurance required in this Grant Agreement; and

4) The insurance required in this Grant Agreement, through a policy or endorsement(s), shall include a provision that the policy and endorsements may not be canceled or modified without thirty (30) days' prior written notice to the undersigned State agency. Failure to provide insurance as required in this Grant Agreement may be deemed a material breach of contract entitling the State to immediately terminate this Grant Agreement.

17. Licensing Standards

The Grantee, its employees, and subgrantees shall comply with all applicable licensing standards, certification standards, accrediting standards, and any other laws, rules, or regulations governing services to be provided by the Grantee pursuant to this Grant Agreement. The State will not pay

the Grantee for any services performed when the Grantee, its employees, or subgrantees are not in compliance with such applicable standards, laws, rules, or regulations. If any license, certification, or accreditation expires or is revoked, or any disciplinary action is taken against an applicable license, certification, or accreditation, the Grantee shall notify the State immediately and the State, at its option, may immediately terminate this Grant Agreement.

18. Lobbying Activities

A. Pursuant to 31 USC § 1352, and any regulations promulgated there under, the Grantee hereby assures and certifies, and will require any subcontractor or subgrantee to assure and certify, that no federally appropriated funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress, in conjunction with the awarding of any federal grant, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

B. If any funds other than federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Grant Agreement, the Grantee and any subcontractor shall complete and submit "Standard Form LLL" ("Disclosure Form to Report Lobby").

19. Modification

The parties shall modify or extend this Grant Agreement consistent with applicable law and DWD policy. Such modification or extension shall be made by mutual written agreement of the parties and subsequent approval by all appropriate state officials or their designees.

20. Monitoring and Compliance

The State shall monitor the Grantee's compliance with the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement including all applicable statutes, regulations, directives, and mandates. The Grantee shall provide the State reasonable and adequate opportunity to conduct this monitoring, including providing the opportunity to review and audit all relevant documents, forms, reports, or any other records at any time during the term of this Grant Agreement and after the Expiration Date as may be reasonably necessary to monitor compliance with this Grant Agreement. The Grantee will be responsible for on-site monitoring of any sub-recipient.

21. Nondiscrimination

Pursuant to the Indiana Civil Rights Law, specifically including IC § 22-9-1-10, and in keeping with the purposes of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Grantee covenants that it shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment relating to the Grant with respect to the hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment or any matter directly or indirectly related to employment because of the employee or applicant's: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, ancestry, status as a veteran, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law ("Protected Characteristics"). Furthermore, the Grantee certifies compliance with applicable federal laws, regulations, and executive orders prohibiting discrimination based on the Protected Characteristics in the provision of services.

The Grantee understands that the State is a recipient of federal funds, and therefore, where applicable, the Grantee and any subgrantees agree to comply with requisite affirmative action requirements, including reporting, pursuant to 41 CFR Chapter 60, as amended, and Section 202 of Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 13672.

22. Notice to Parties

Whenever any notice, statement, or other communication is required under this Grant, it shall be sent by first class mail or via an established courier / delivery service to the following addresses,

unless otherwise specifically advised.

Notices to the State shall be sent to:
Indiana Department of Workforce Development
ATTN: Commissioner
10 North Senate Ave., IGCS, 3rd Floor
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Notices to the Grantee shall be sent to:
Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation
ATTN: Chris Price, President
200 South Meridian Street, Suite 410
Indianapolis, IN 46225

23. Order of Precedence

Any inconsistency or ambiguity in this Grant Agreement shall be resolved by giving precedence in the following order: (1) requirements imposed by applicable federal law or other controlling document described in Exhibit A, (2) this Grant Agreement, (3) Exhibits prepared by the State, (4) Exhibits prepared by Grantee, (5) Invitation to Apply for Grant, and (6) the Grant Application.

24. Payment of Grant Funds by the State

Payment of Grant funds by the State to the Grantee shall be made in accordance with the following schedule and conditions:

A. This Grant Agreement must be fully executed;

B. No funds that are transferred under this Grant Agreement shall be disbursed by the Grantee to another person to act as its agent or employee in performing the terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement without a written financial grant between the Grantee and that person;

C. All payments by the State to the Grantee for services rendered pursuant to this Grant Agreement shall be made on accrual basis and shall be accompanied with a detailed invoice that is required by the State. No cost shall be accrued prior to the starting date of this Grant Agreement;

D. All payments by the State are subject to the encumbrance of monies, to the prohibition against advance payments under IC § 4-13-2-20, and to all of the State's fiscal policies and procedures;

E. The State reserves the right not to honor requests for payment received more than 90 days after the Expiration Date. The State also reserves the right to withhold final payment until agency-required reports are received and accepted;

F. Failure to complete the activities described in this Grant Agreement and the strategic plan and to expend the funds in accordance with this Grant Agreement may be considered a material breach of this Grant Agreement and shall entitle the State to impose sanctions against the Grantee including, but not limited to, suspension of all grant programs and/or suspension of the Grantee's participation in grant programs until such time as all material breaches are cured to the State's satisfaction. Sanctions may also include repayment of all funds expended for activities which are not in the scope of this Grant Agreement or the Budget. The remedies described in this subparagraph are in addition to any other remedies the State may have at law or equity; and

G. All payments shall be made in arrears in conformance with State fiscal policies and procedures and, as required by IC § 4-13-2-14.8, by electronic funds transfer to the financial institution designated by the Grantee in writing unless a specific waiver has been obtained from the Auditor of State. No payment will be made in advance of receipt of the goods or services that are the subject of this Grant Agreement except as permitted by IC § 4-13-2-20 or by the statute

authorizing this Grant.

25. Penalties/Interest/Attorney's Fees

The State will in good faith perform its required obligations hereunder and does not agree to pay any penalties, liquidated damages, interest, or attorney's fees, except as permitted by Indiana law, in part, IC § 5-17-5, IC § 34-54-8, IC § 34-13-1, and IC § 34-52-2-3.

Notwithstanding the provisions contained in IC § 5-17-5, any liability resulting from the State's failure to make prompt payment shall be based solely on the amount of funding originating from the State and shall not be based on funding from federal or other sources.

26. Property Management

Title to all non-expendable personal property acquired with funds provided herein shall immediately become the property of the State upon delivery of such property by the vendor in accordance with the applicable Federal OMB circulars and the Property Management/Surplus Property Policy. The Grantee shall be responsible for the management and control of such property as defined in the Property Management/Surplus Property Policy.

27. Repayment

The Grantee and, if applicable, its Guarantor are responsible for the repayment of costs determined to be disallowed in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations, directives, or mandates. Repayment of such costs shall be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the final audit determination and, unless agreed to in writing by the State, shall be repaid from non-Federal funds. Responsibility of the Grantee, as set forth herein, shall not release any insurer or bonding company from any contractual duty to reimburse the insured, the State, or the obligee.

28. Representations and Warranties of the Grantee

A. The Grantee expressly represents and warrants to the State that it is statutorily eligible to receive these Grant funds and that the information set forth in its Grant Application is true, complete, and accurate. The Grantee expressly agrees to promptly repay all funds paid to it under this Grant Agreement should it be determined either that it was ineligible to receive the funds, or it made any material misrepresentation on its Grant Application.

B. The Grantee certifies by entering into this Grant Agreement that neither it, nor its principals, are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from entering into this Grant Agreement by any federal or state department or agency. The term "principal" for purposes of this Grant Agreement is defined as an officer, director, owner, partner, key employee, or other person with primary management or supervisory responsibilities, or a person who has a critical influence on or substantive control over the operations of the Grantee.

C. If the Grantee is a non-governmental unit, the Grantee shall file the Form E-1 annual financial report required by IC § 5-11-1-4. The E-1 entity annual financial report will be used to determine audit requirements applicable to non-governmental units under IC § 5-11-1-9. Audits required under this section must comply with the State Board of Accounts *Uniform Compliance Guidelines for Examination of Entities Receiving Financial Assistance from Governmental Sources*, <https://www.in.gov/sboa/files/guidelines-examination-entities-receiving-financial-assistance-government-sources.pdf>. Guidelines for filing the annual report are included in **Exhibit C**, attached hereto, and incorporated fully herein (Guidelines for Non-governmental Entities). This annual report is not to be confused with the periodic filing of the Indiana Secretary of State's Business Entity Report. Additional information concerning this annual financial report can be obtained using notforprofit@sboa.in.gov.

D. The Grantee certifies that it has verified the suspension and debarment status for all subcontractors receiving funds under this Grant Agreement and shall be solely responsible for any recoupments or penalties that might arise from non-compliance. The Grantee shall

immediately notify the State if any subcontractor becomes debarred or suspended, and shall, at the State's request, take all steps required by the State to terminate its contractual relationship with the subcontractor for work to be performed under this Grant Agreement.

29. Retention of Records

The Grantee shall retain and make available all financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, evaluation data, member information, and personnel records for three (3) years from the final Expiration Date of this Grant Agreement. If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, or other action involving the records has been started before the expiration of the 3-year period, the records must be retained until completion of the action and resolution of all issues which arise from it, or until the end of the regular 3-year period, whichever is later.

30. Statewide Case Management System

All the grantees and subgrantees are required to and hereby agree and consent to use the statewide case management system in accordance with DWD policy herein incorporated by reference.

31. Statutory Authority of Grantee

The Grantee expressly warrants to the State that it is statutorily eligible to receive the funds granted herein, and it expressly agrees to repay all monies paid to it under this Grant Agreement should a legal determination of its ineligibility be made by any court of competent jurisdiction.

32. Taxes

The State is exempt from most state and local taxes and many federal taxes. The State will not be responsible for any taxes levied on the Grantee as a result of this Grant Agreement.

33. Termination for Breach

A. Failure to complete the Project and expend State, local, and/or private funds in accordance with this Grant Agreement may be considered a material breach, and shall entitle the State to suspend grant payments, and to suspend the Grantee's participation in State grant programs until such time as all material breaches are cured to the State's satisfaction.

B. The expenditure of State or federal funds other than in conformance with the Project or the Budget may be deemed a breach. The Grantee explicitly covenants that it shall promptly repay to the State all funds not spent in conformance with this Grant Agreement.

34. Termination for Convenience

Unless prohibited by a statute or regulation relating to the award of the Grant, this Grant Agreement may be terminated, in whole or in part, by the State whenever, for any reason, the State determines that such termination is in the best interest of the State. Termination shall be effected by delivery to the Grantee of a Termination Notice, specifying the extent to which such termination becomes effective. The Grantee shall be compensated for completion of the Project properly done prior to the effective date of termination. The State will not be liable for work on the Project performed after the effective date of termination. In no case shall total payment made to the Grantee exceed the original Grant.

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.

Non-Collusion, Acceptance

The undersigned attests, subject to the penalties for perjury, that the undersigned is the Grantee, or that the undersigned is the properly authorized representative, agent, member, or officer of the Grantee. Further, to the undersigned's knowledge, neither the undersigned nor any other member, employee, representative, agent, or officer of the Grantee, directly or indirectly, has entered into or been offered any sum of money or other consideration for the execution of this Grant Agreement other than that which appears upon the face hereof. **Furthermore, if the undersigned has knowledge that a state officer, employee, or special state appointee, as those terms are defined in IC § 4-2-6-1, has a financial interest in the Grant, the Grantee attests to compliance with the disclosure requirements in IC § 4-2-6-10.5.**

Agreement to Use Electronic Signatures

I agree, and it is my intent, to sign this Contract by accessing State of Indiana Supplier Portal using the secure password assigned to me and by electronically submitting this Contract to the State of Indiana. I understand that my signing and submitting this Contract in this fashion is the legal equivalent of having placed my handwritten signature on the submitted Contract and this affirmation. I understand and agree that by electronically signing and submitting this Contract in this fashion I am affirming to the truth of the information contained therein. I understand that this Contract will not become binding on the State until it has been approved by the Department of Administration, the State Budget Agency, and the Office of the Attorney General, which approvals will be posted on the Active Contracts Database: <https://secure.in.gov/apps/idoa/contractsearch/>

In Witness Whereof, the Grantee and the State have, through their duly authorized representatives, entered into this Grant Agreement. The parties, having read and understood the foregoing terms of this Grant Agreement, do by their respective signatures dated below agree to the terms thereof.

Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation

Electronically Approved by:
By: 
2E66E373976D4C2...

Title: President

Date: 8/8/2023 | 05:28 PDT

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Electronically Approved by:
By: 
4E7087F50165477...

Title: Chief Financial Officer

Date: 8/8/2023 | 13:20 EDT

Electronically Approved by: Department of Administration By: _____ (for) Rebecca Holw erda, Commissioner	
Electronically Approved by: State Budget Agency By: _____ (for) Zachary Q. Jackson, Director	Electronically Approved as to Form and Legality by: Office of the Attorney General By: _____ (for) Theodore E Rokita, Attorney General

Exhibit A

Applicable Statutes and Regulations

- a. Indiana PL 201-2023; – State Biennial Budget - Sec. 6 Economic Development C. Employment Services; Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation;
- b. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC §1232g, 34 CFR §99.1; and
- c. 20 CFR §603 et seq.

Exhibit B

Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation

Statement of Work July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025

Mission:

The Mission of Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation ("ICRF") is to inform, encourage, and empower individuals to pursue a career in the construction industry and related fields, which will lead to a more sustainable workforce.

School Program:

We will continue our student program focusing on Ambassadors doing outreach to schools. We are creating regional teams where Ambassadors will have a stronger connection to the schools that they work with by establishing relationships with guidance counselors, career exploration and Career & Technical Education ("CTE") teachers, and administration. This will allow the school to have a better, more personal, and connected experience with the industry.

We are also working with schools to provide them with industry valued curriculum and to coordinate work-based learning experiences in the construction industry. The ICRF will be working with schools to establish registered apprenticeship program or state earn and learn ("SEAL") programs. The ICRF plans to provide training to teachers through the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER), as well as to help to coordinate the work-based learning for high school students.

BY Training Program:

The ICR Foundation is working to provide adults who are over the age of 18 with industry valued training through its Build Your Future ("BY") program. Students in this program earn their NCCER Core Credential along with their OSHA 10 card. Students in this program will participate in a hiring event upon completion. This program has completed or is scheduled to have classes in Indianapolis, Martinsville, Shelbyville, and Lafayette. The program is currently utilizing Next Level funding, along with outside grants to cover the cost of tuition for students. Employers also contribute to the funding of this program.

Job Placement Program:

Through our online construction career interest form, career fairs, BY Training Program and industry programs we will work to find 350 Hoosiers living wage paying jobs in the construction industry. We will work to connect the construction industry with education providers, both secondary and post-secondary, to create a workforce that is ready for construction careers are available.

Expected Outcomes:

Achieve growth in capacity AND increase the quality of workers entering the construction trades and related fields in Indiana.

We will achieve this by;

Changing the perception of construction and related fields and making it easier for people to access the construction industry, resulting in an increased enrollment for CTE, apprenticeship programs, and placement of people in construction jobs.

Measurable Outcomes:**1.1. Adult Job Placement**

- 500 adults placed in through ICRF's BY Training Program or career fairs over the 2 year period.

- Hold 4 entry level construction career fairs in different geographical areas across the state over the 2 year period.
- Have 50 employers, apprenticeship programs, and schools signed up as employer partners to the BY program and to receive interest forms over the 2 year period.

1.2. Work Based Learning

- Work with 3 school districts and provide 60 students with work-based learning opportunities (student internships) in the construction industry.

1.3. In- Person Student Contact

- Visit with 60,000 students through in person contact at events and in school conversations over the 2 year period

1.4. Website

- 25,000 individual users to our website over the 2 year period
- Register 30 different employers to receive interest forms from our website

1.5. Diversity

- Address the disparity studies in Indiana, and to have higher diversity (women and minorities) participation in our programs than our current industry averages

Payment/Invoice:

ICRF will submit their invoices to DWD twice per year (one half per invoice). ICRF invoices will be submitted electronically to WBL@dwd.in.gov with the title (Subject) *ICRF Invoice*.

Reporting Timeline:

The Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation shall provide quarterly reports to DWD's Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship electronically to WBL@dwd.in.gov with the title (Subject) *ICRF Quarterly Report* and will be due 15 days after the end of each quarter (see below table).

ICRF - Quarterly Report Due Date				
<u>Quarters</u>	<u>Quarter Begins</u>	<u>Quarter Ends</u>	<u>Quarterly Reports Due</u>	<u>Years</u>
July, Aug, Sept	July 1st	September 30th	October 15th	2023 and 2024
Oct, Nov, Dec	October 1st	December 31st	January 15th	2023 and 2024
Jan, Feb, March	January 1st	March 31st	April 15th	2024 and 2025
April, May, June	April 1st	June 30th	July 15th	2024 and 2025

Performance Reporting:

ICRF shall provide updates on their progression within all areas of their Statement of Work listed above.

DWD's Contact information for ICRF:

Jason Graves
Senior Director
Office of Work-Based Learning
And Apprenticeship (OWBLA)
(317) 407-6069
jgraves@dwd.in.gov

Chris Schmitt
Apprenticeship Grants Manager
Office of Work-Based Learning
and Apprenticeship (OWBLA)
(219) 240-7773
cschmitt@dwd.in.gov

Exhibit C

**Construction Roundtable
ICRF23897**

Description:	000000000000000000074953		
Unique Entity Identifier:	KZ3UKUFL4LC5		
Percent of Federal Funds:	0%	Percent Non-Governmental Funds:	0%
Sub-award Period of Performance:	7/1/2023 to 6/30/2025		
Source of Funding:	P.L. 201-2023; Sec. ,6 Economic Development; Sec. C, Employment Services for the Department of Workforce Development		
USDOL and DWD Proposed Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate for FY 2024: 11.78%			
PROJECT CODE	ACTIVITY	COST CATEGORY	BUDGET
5103070P23STATE	7160000	Program Costs	\$1,000,000
TOTAL			\$1,000,000

Guidelines for filing the annual financial report:

1) Filing an annual financial report called an Entity Annual Report (E-1) is required by IC § 5-11-1-4.

This is done through Gateway which is an on-line electronic submission process.

a. There is no filing fee to do this.

b. This is in addition to the similarly titled Business Entity Report required by the Indiana Secretary of State.

c. The E-1 electronical submission site is found at <https://gateway.ifionline.org/login.aspx>

d. The Gateway User Guide is found at www.gateway.ifionline.org/userguides/E1guide.

e. The State Board of Accounts may request documentation to support the information presented on the E-1.

f. Login credentials for filing the E-1 and additional information can be obtained using the notforprofit@sboa.in.gov email address.

2) A tutorial on completing Form E-1 online is available at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=87&v=nPpgtPcdUcs

3) Based on the level of government financial assistance received, an audit may be required by IC § 5-11-1-9.

Item 2

Indiana's WIOA State Plan:
Program Years 2024-2027

INDIANA PYS 2024-2027

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OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan— a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),
- the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II), and
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program (authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III),
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined State Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" (Sections II-IV of this document) where specified, as well as

the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) ¹

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development

system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.

- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
 - State Strategy Implementation,
 - State Operating Systems and Policies,
 - Assurances,
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.² States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations. Use of links to external websites and documents is permitted within the State Plan narrative submission, if such links remain active and adhere to Section 508 accessibility requirements.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

[2] Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a unified plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

No

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

Indiana At a Glance, Humble No More

Indiana is making significant investments in workforce, education, and health that are transforming the state and lives of Hoosiers.

With a population of 6.8 million and diverse urban, suburban and rural needs, this once humble Midwest state has firmly placed itself on the map for business in the U.S. and abroad. Indiana was recently recognized by Forbes as one of the premier states in which to start a business. We have been out in front with bold initiatives to attract jobs and capital investments and in 2023, Indiana secured another record-breaking year for economic development growth.

Indiana continues to strengthen its foundation of good government – low taxes, responsible fiscal stewardship, responsive leadership, and a business-friendly regulatory environment. Indiana has made major upgrades to roadways and trails and is making history with unprecedented investments in local communities for quality of place initiatives.

Coupled with continued improvements in the K-12 system – transforming high school, modernization of career-technical education and quality work experience – and a world-class network of nationally-acclaimed colleges and universities, Indiana is emerging as a model for embracing rapid change and building sustainable talent pipelines.

Strong Industry Sectors Driving Demand for Skilled Workers

Indiana has long been a leader in advanced manufacturing, engineering, agriculture, biopharma, and life sciences. The State is one of the highest producers of engineering graduates and is working hard to keep more of those students in-state and employed after graduation.

Three major federal infrastructure bills passed during the 117th Congress (2022) and are bringing an unprecedented influx of financial investment and workforce opportunity to Indiana. There will be new jobs and increased talent demand in emerging industries including microelectronics and semiconductors, electric vehicles and mobility systems, smart manufacturing and robotics, and clean and alternative energy production.

Key infrastructure projects, such as high-speed internet and enhancements to Indiana's roads, bridges, and waterways, are driving additional need for skilled tradespeople. Similarly, through programs established in this federal legislation, Indiana was awarded technology and innovation hubs in clean hydrogen energy through the Department of Energy, microelectronics through the Department of Defense, and biotechnology (building on the assets of Eli Lilly,

Elanco, and Corteva as a foundation) through the Department of Commerce. Each of these will build upon the State's existing economic strengths to create new sectors and they will spur the need for new training programs and strategies. To that end, each hub application submitted on behalf of the State by the Applied Research Institute included plans to expand workforce development efforts in these sectors. Coordination at the State level, among local partners and across industry sectors is critical, as these projects significantly increase the demand and competition for workers where there are already existing labor constraints. Meanwhile, the State remains committed to in-demand jobs that are critical to the well-being of our communities, including healthcare and social assistance, education, public safety, and more.

Most every sector has demand. Whether these jobs require a two- or four-year degree, a short-term certificate, work-based learning or apprenticeship, there is a pathway to a good job and opportunity for all Hoosiers. The State will continue to build upon recent legislation to promote work-based learning, increase high school graduation and college-going rates, and incentivize training enrollment in high-demand fields.

Hoosiers and the Supply Equation

When it comes to addressing the talent supply portion of the equation, there are two main challenges for Indiana – a decline in the number of workers available due to demographics shifts and a fundamental skills mismatch between workers and employer demand.

Like many states across the country, Indiana is facing demographic shifts that are fundamentally reshaping the workforce, and therefore the State's ability to meet employer demand for skilled talent. Historically low unemployment in Indiana continues to squeeze the labor force, along with decreased labor force participation due in part to the ongoing retirement of Baby Boomers. Despite these challenges, Indiana's unemployment rate is below the national average and its labor force participation rate is above the national average. There are more jobs and people working in Indiana today than at any other point in state history.

Indiana's labor force is already strained but the situation is compounded when workers lack the skills needed to remain competitive in the 21st century. Innovations in artificial intelligence (AI) and automation are radically altering the way the world works and are spurring demand for increased digital and technical skills across all sectors. The skills, knowledge, and abilities required for the modern worker necessitate a more technically skilled workforce, not less. Rapid change and disruption will remain the status quo and require on-going training and skills development for workers and higher levels of input, engagement and talent co-development from employers.

As more students question the value of higher education, Indiana has been focused on addressing and reversing its declining college-going rate – and with some early success. Since 2015, Indiana's postsecondary going-rate declined yearly from 65%, but the high school class of 2021—the most recent data available—was the first time the going-rate held steady year-over-year at 53%. In addition, the number of students enrolling in college increased by 2% compared to the fall of the 2022 school year, making 2023 the first-year enrollment in Indiana has increased in the past 13 years. According to the Lumina Foundation, 53% of working-age people in Indiana in 2022 have attained a high-value certificate or degree, up from 48% in 2019. There is more work to be done to meet our attainment goal of 60% by 2025 but we are arguably on track. Indiana is a national leader in helping individuals obtain high-quality, short-term

credentials for in-demand jobs because of the focus and efforts of more than a decade, but we lag in other areas, such as associate degrees.

Roughly 430,000 Hoosier adults lack a high school diploma or equivalency, while more than 671,000 other individuals have begun postsecondary programs but do not have a degree. State and federal resources are being optimized to reach these people and help put them on a forward path.

The skill gaps Hoosiers face are compounded by the increased and changing needs of employers. Job creators in Indiana continue to clamor for more workers across all skill levels, and the number of unfilled jobs is more than 100,000. Underemployment rather than unemployment is also a critical concern.

The silver lining of a tight labor market and influx of federal projects is the opportunity to engage audiences traditionally excluded from the workforce. Indiana has developed initiatives to engage untapped talent pools including veterans, justice-involved individuals, people with disabilities and others. There are ample opportunities for these groups to have access to meaningful work and a livable wage. A win-win for Hoosier workers and employers.

Indiana Governor's Workforce Cabinet: Setting a Shared Vision, Eliminating Silos, Driving Collaboration & Success

Indiana understands that every life stage impacts a person's ability to achieve eventual workplace success – from early childhood, secondary, and postsecondary education to work-based learning. As such, we take a broad “cradle to career” approach to workforce and bring a diverse group of partners to the table.

This approach is a reason that Governor Holcomb in 2018 designed, and the Indiana General Assembly codified, the structure for the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and charged it with the authority to direct the State agencies required to strategically address current and future workforce and education needs. The ongoing waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Labor – to enable this makeup of members to serve as the state's workforce board – has strengthened the Cabinet's ability to bring together Indiana's departments of workforce development, education, economic development, Hoosier employers, postsecondary training institutions, local workforce development boards, community partners, and legislators. GWC has worked to set a common vision, align strategies, eliminate silos, and develop innovative policies and programs while preserving the tenets of local control and employer guidance that are central to the spirit of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

GWC has made significant strides in improving stakeholder collaboration. Over the past two years, the Cabinet has prioritized meeting every other month in one of Indiana's twelve respective Economic Growth Regions. This has provided an opportunity for more local employers, workforce development board members, city/county leaders, and community partners to participate. We have taken a deep dive into the data of each Economic Growth Region by reviewing WIOA performance metrics, education attainment rates, labor market information, barriers to employment, and much more. We have heard from several employers, including Cummins, Stellantis, Cook Group and Gaylor Electric, who have shared their workforce challenges and potential solutions. Educators from K-12 and postsecondary institutions, including Vincennes University and the nation's largest single-accredited community college system, Ivy Tech Community College, are at the table. Even high school

students have joined to showcase their work-based learning successes and plans after graduation. Where opportunities exist to champion and replicate regional success, or identified barriers can be addressed, the Cabinet serves as a change agent.

In advance of the 2023 legislative session, outside of regional meetings, industry members worked closely with the GWC Chair and Executive Director to lead working groups, which culminated in the Cabinet's first formal set of administrative and legislative recommendations. These recommendations were prepared for the Governor and Indiana General Assembly and proposed solutions for helping employers find skilled workers, removing barriers to employment for potential workers, and preparing future skilled workers. This collection is the work of statewide Cabinet members and is based on many hours of collaboration, interviews with subject matter experts and review of programs, outcomes, and best practices both locally and nationally.

Many items championed or proposed in the Cabinet recommendations received legislative support. Examples of advanced priorities include increased adult education funding, tripling state funding for short-term certification programs, the expansion of early learning opportunities, increasing kindergarten readiness and third grade reading level proficiency, development of a career navigation network using intermediaries for in-school youth and select individuals, K-12 *Career Scholarship Accounts* to remove barriers related to work-based learning opportunities, scaling career technical education graduation pathways and funding, accelerating digital development, increased credential attainment and stack ability, on-the-job education opportunities, establishment of college funding formula for in demand STEM degrees, in state college retention incentives and more.

Another recent highlight of GWC leadership and collaboration includes the development and launch of a statewide workforce development campaign. On January 8, 2024, Governor Holcomb announced the launch of a statewide workforce development campaign, *One Stop to Start* (<https://onestoptostart.in.gov/>), aimed at connecting Hoosiers with existing workforce and job-related training programs and resources. The program offers Hoosiers and employers one-on-one assistance through a team of dedicated navigators. The goal of One Stop to Start is to ensure Hoosiers have awareness of and access to the programs that can get them on the path to realizing a high-wage career.

Potential opportunities include accessing tuition-free certification in high-demand sectors, becoming an apprentice or engaged in a work-based learning program, accessing college financial aid, supporting marginalized population groups without a high school degree, individuals who are disabled, or justice-involved, those in need of earning a high school diploma or equivalence, and more. The site serves to connect employers with business services resources available through State and federal grant programs, WorkOne business services functions, and skilled talent recruitment from veterans, justice-involved, and vocational rehabilitation programs via the community college systems.

The campaign is being led by the GWC and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), in partnership with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Local Workforce Development Boards, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE), Indiana Department of Corrections, Ivy Tech Community College, and Vincennes University. The initiative will also connect to Indiana's *Next Level Jobs* program (NLJ).

Strategic Elements

The vision of the State's workforce development system is to be a national workforce leader, connecting employers and skilled workers, supporting critical need jobs of today while preparing for emerging industries – to drive economic mobility and opportunity for all Hoosiers.

Empowered by this vision, Indiana has established the following pillars and corresponding goals for achieving the State's strategic vision for its Unified WIOA State Plan:

I: REMOVING BARRIERS FOR WORKERS

To meet Hoosiers where they are and help remove obstacles to work and learning.

- **Goal 1:** Harness opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which includes the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program (BEAD), the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) for populations that have been historically excluded from the labor force.
- **Goal 2:** Remove barriers for workers including providing affordable and accessible childcare.
- **Goal 3:** Create digital equity through digital skills training.

II: PREPARING FUTURE SKILLED WORKERS

To ensure Indiana can deliver the training and skills needed for a modern workforce.

- **Goal 1:** Prioritize for emerging industries specific to federal opportunities and strategic industries.
- **Goal 2:** Meet people where they are for career pathway planning to customize to their unique potential and experience.
- **Goal 3:** Develop additional workers with skills-based technical training and/or a high-quality credential, certification, or degree to fill in-demand jobs.

III: HELPING EMPLOYERS FIND AND/OR DEVELOP SKILLED WORKERS

To ensure employers have the talent needed for the economy of today and tomorrow.

- **Goal 1:** Deliver bespoke customer service and solutions to key employers.
- **Goal 2:** Increase quality job exposure and experience through apprenticeships, work-based learning, and employer supported training programs.
- **Goal 3:** Continue to champion and promote skills-based hiring practices through career coaching for underserved jobseekers and employer hiring and training models.

Indiana is excited to unleash the potential of the state's workforce system and over the next four years, will continue to monitor and measure success from these goals to ensure we sustain positive, sustainable, and scalable solutions across the Hoosier State.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. Where requirements identify the term "populations", these must include individuals with barriers to employment as defined at WIOA Section 3. This includes displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. Additional populations include veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include—

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Employment is projected to grow more slowly in Indiana between 2021-2031 than it has from 2011-2021. The most recent projections available indicate the number of jobs in the State will increase by just 5.11 percent between 2021 and 2031, from 3,072,578 to 3,229,597, or just over 15,700 jobs annually.[1] In contrast, employment grew by 6.78 percent between 2011 and 2021.[2]

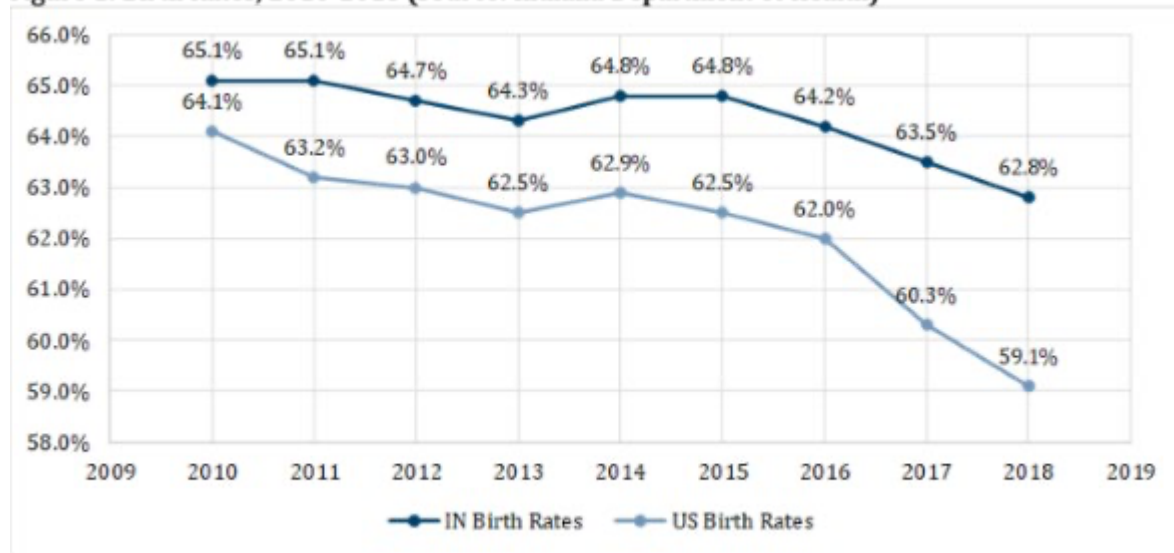
Like much of the nation, over the next several years, Indiana will experience an increase in the number of workers exiting the labor force due to retirement. Labor force availability is a direct impact limiting Indiana's potential for employment growth. As of 2020, the share of the workforce 45-64 years of age was 37.0%.[3] By 2030, the percentage of individuals 45-64 years of age that are projected to retire and begin exiting the labor force is 35.2%. The table below details Indiana's projected labor force share by age in 2030, organized by Economic Growth Region. Indiana has organized the 92 counties in Indiana into twelve EGRs.



Table 1: Labor Force Projections by Age, 2030 (source: STATS Indiana)

Area	16-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Economic Growth Region 1	13.0%	42.7%	37.5%	6.8%
Economic Growth Region 2	15.5%	41.5%	35.5%	7.5%
Economic Growth Region 3	15.5%	42.1%	35.1%	7.3%
Economic Growth Region 4	19.1%	40.8%	33.1%	7.0%
Economic Growth Region 5	11.9%	43.9%	37.3%	6.9%
Economic Growth Region 6	17.5%	40.6%	34.9%	7.0%
Economic Growth Region 7	17.6%	41.3%	33.7%	7.4%
Economic Growth Region 8	20.2%	40.6%	31.6%	7.6%
Economic Growth Region 9	12.9%	42.3%	37.2%	7.7%
Economic Growth Region 10	13.5%	42.3%	36.6%	7.6%
Economic Growth Region 11	15.0%	41.1%	35.8%	8.0%
Economic Growth Region 12 (Marion Co)	15.5%	47.0%	31.7%	5.9%

The decline in Indiana's birth rates has been a continual trend. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Hoosiers between the ages of 0 to 4 years has decreased by 0.6% from 2010-2018, an average of 2,569 individuals. The demand for future generations of workers is critical to filling the open positions left by the baby boomer generation.

Figure 1: Birth Rates, 2010-2018 (source: Indiana Department of Health)

Because Indiana's labor force will see an increasing number of retirements over the next decade, many industries in the State will have a high level of job openings even as they experience limited net increases in total employment. Other industries will see both increasing retirements as well as net increases in employment. It is these industries that face the greatest potential for labor shortages over the next decade. Thus, the workforce needs of the Indiana economy will be far greater than is apparent by a simple examination of net job growth numbers.

[1] Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development

[2] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Industry Table, 2-digit NAICS, 2011-2021

[3] Source: STATS Indiana, using data from the Indiana Business Research Center, IU Kelley School of Business

Existing Industry Demand (2-digit NAICS)

The ten sectors in Indiana by employment size at the 2-digit NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) in 2022, are listed in Table 2: Top Sectors by Employment in Indiana, 2022, 2-digit NAICS.

Table 2: Top Industry Sectors by Employment in Indiana, 2022, 2-digit NAICS (source: Quarterly Employment and Wage Statistics 2022)

Sector	2022 Employment	% of 2022 Employment	Average Annual Wage
Manufacturing	541,010	17.4%	\$72,420
Health Care and Social Assistance	444,982	14.3%	\$57,528
Retail Trade	315,597	10.1%	\$35,995
Accommodation and Food Services	266,222	8.6%	\$21,558
Educational Services	241,167	7.7%	\$49,939
Administrative and Waste Services	192,204	6.2%	\$44,406
Transportation and Warehousing	181,078	5.8%	\$55,884
Construction	156,366	5.0%	\$68,848
Professional and Technical Services	142,934	4.6%	\$83,707
Public Administration	129,625	4.2%	\$57,144
Wholesale Trade	127,644	4.1%	\$81,658
Finance and Insurance	103,319	3.3%	\$85,367
Other Services	89,261	2.9%	\$40,915
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	39,737	1.3%	\$39,737
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	37,315	1.2%	\$60,985
Management of Companies and Enterprises	35,706	1.1%	\$117,677
Information	32,766	1.1%	\$66,124
Utilities	15,990	0.5%	\$103,567
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	15,082	0.5%	\$47,268
Mining	5,350	0.2%	\$81,255
Total	3,113,394	100.0%	\$58,054

Table 3 benchmarks the share of employment in Indiana's top industry sectors to neighboring states in the Midwest. Manufacturing is significantly more important to Indiana's economy than at the national level, accounting for 17.4% of jobs compared to 8.7%. Indiana leads the nation in terms of manufacturing employment density. All other industries are within a percentage point of the national share of employment with the exception of Professional and Technical Services, which only accounts for 4.6% of Indiana's employment compared to 7.2% for the nation.

Table 3: Benchmark Comparison of Industry Employment Percentage, 2-digit SOC (source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2022)

	IN	IL	KY	MI	OH	WI	USA
Manufacturing	17.4%	9.7%	13.1%	14.0%	12.7%	16.6%	8.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	14.3%	13.7%	15.0%	14.8%	16.1%	14.7%	15.2%
Retail Trade	10.1%	9.7%	10.8%	10.6%	10.1%	10.2%	10.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	8.6%	8.1%	9.0%	8.4%	8.6%	7.9%	9.2%
Educational Services	7.7%	8.9%	8.2%	7.7%	7.8%	7.4%	8.5%
Administrative and Waste Services	6.2%	7.5%	6.3%	6.4%	6.1%	4.8%	6.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	5.8%	5.9%	7.3%	4.2%	5.2%	4.4%	5.0%
Construction	5.0%	3.9%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%	5.4%
Professional and Technical Services	4.6%	7.6%	4.5%	7.3%	5.3%	4.3%	7.2%
Public Administration	4.2%	4.2%	4.6%	4.0%	3.9%	4.6%	5.0%

Table 4 benchmarks growth rates in Indiana's top industry sectors from 2021-2022 to neighboring states in the Midwest. With the exception of Construction and Professional and Technical Services, Indiana's growth is slower than the nation's.

Table 4: Benchmark Comparison of Industry Percent Change, 2021-2022, 2-digit SOC (source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2022)

	IN	IL	KY	MI	OH	WI	USA
Manufacturing	1.7%	1.7%	3.6%	3.0%	2.6%	2.3%	3.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1.5%	2.3%	2.8%	1.1%	0.5%	-0.3%	2.4%
Retail Trade	0.5%	0.3%	<0.0%	1.3%	0.9%	-0.5%	0.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	7.4%	11.8%	7.7%	12.0%	6.3%	6.0%	10.3%
Educational Services	4.4%	3.6%	0.8%	6.3%	3.8%	2.9%	6.0%
Administrative and Waste Services	4.7%	6.6%	2.8%	5.4%	3.2%	2.2%	5.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	6.6%	7.2%	6.7%	7.7%	4.3%	6.4%	7.6%
Construction	4.5%	3.7%	5.0%	4.0%	4.2%	3.3%	4.0%
Professional and Technical Services	8.5%	4.5%	5.7%	4.7%	4.8%	3.8%	6.5%

- Manufacturing

The Midwest is synonymous with manufacturing and Indiana is no exception. In 2022, the manufacturing sector represented the greatest share of the Hoosier workforce with 541,010, or over 17% of all jobs. This represents a slight decrease of 692 jobs from 2018 but is projected to increase by 1.74% over the next ten years, adding over 9,100 jobs to the Hoosier economy. According to the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data, manufacturing jobs increased 3.1% from 2021-2022. In comparison, Wisconsin, which has the next highest percentage share of manufacturing jobs in the Midwest, had a 2.3% increase in manufacturing jobs from 2021-2022. Nationally, manufacturing employment had an increase of 3.7%, indicating a rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among the top five Indiana manufacturing subsectors in 2021, the following are projected to experience employment declines by 2031: Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing (-443 jobs); Machinery Manufacturing (-4,899 jobs); and Primary Metal Manufacturing (-2,426 jobs). However, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing, the largest manufacturing subsector in Indiana, is projected to add the most jobs by 2031 (+7,551 jobs).[1] The average annual wage for manufacturing in Indiana is \$72,420, which is significantly higher than the sector's national average of \$60,870.[2] This may indicate that Indiana's manufacturing workforce is highly skilled and specialized and operating in a competitive talent landscape.

With nearly a quarter of the manufacturing sector's workforce 55 years and older, Indiana is focused on adapting workforce training programs and technology to ensure small, medium, and large-sized manufacturers are equipped with the talent needed for the future of manufacturing.[3]

- Health Care and Social Assistance

Health care and social assistance is a rapidly growing sector in Indiana, due in part to Indiana's aging population, including those from the baby boomer generation. This sector, second largest to manufacturing, recorded 444,982 jobs in 2022 and is projected to add the most jobs of any sector by 2031 (+45,029 jobs). That represents a nearly 10.5% increase in jobs over a ten-year period. 2031 projections indicate that health care and social assistance subsector employment numbers will increase. Among the top include Ambulatory Health Care Services (+21,903 jobs);

Social Assistance (+12,922 jobs); Hospitals (+7,154 jobs); and Nursing and Residential Care Facilities (+3,050 jobs).[4]

Health care and social assistance has a strong talent pipeline, with nearly 66% of its workforce being between the ages of 25-54 years of age.[5] Retirement risk for this sector in Indiana is average in comparison to the national average. The national average for an area the size of Indiana is 104,688 employees 55 or older. In Indiana, there are 98,376 employees.[6] The average annual wage for health care and social assistance jobs in Indiana is \$57,528, which is less than the national average of \$63,710.[7]

- Retail Trade

Similar to national trends, retail trade in Indiana has remained among one of the top sectors in the State by employment count. The 2022 employment size for the sector was 315,597, however, by 2031, the number of jobs is projected to decrease by 4,749. This is the largest projected decrease in jobs between 2021-2031. Retail trade subsectors contributing to this decrease in jobs include Food and Beverage Stores (-4,728 jobs); Gasoline Stations (-1,105 jobs); Electronics and Appliance Stores (-857 jobs); Health and Personal Care Stores (-469 jobs); Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores (-282 jobs); and Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores (-140 jobs). Subsectors that are projected to add jobs include Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers (+45,341 jobs); and Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers (+32,814 jobs).[8]

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, retail trade experienced sharp declines in employment as many retailers and consumers engaged in contactless shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, growth in e-commerce, automation, and industry consolidation accelerated the long-term trends of less workers in retail trade.[9] Fewer workers will be required to meet the projected growth in output. The percentage of retail trade jobs in Indiana (10.1%) mirrors the national percentage share of jobs (10.5%). According to QCEW data, the average annual salary for retail trade jobs in Indiana is \$35,995, the second lowest among 2-digit sectors in the State. This is also lower than the national annual average salary of \$40,420.[10]

- Accommodation and Food Services

Accommodation and food services employed 266,222 Hoosiers in 2022. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of jobs in this sector dipped down to 247,947 in 2021. The sector has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels of employment (268,995 in 2018) but is on track to recover lost jobs. Over the next ten years, it is estimated that the sector will experience a 10% increase in jobs, however it is also associated with the lowest average annual salary of any other sector in the State at \$21,558.[11] For comparison, the annual median salary for Indiana is \$42,100.[12] The percentage of accommodation and food services jobs in Indiana is higher than all other Midwest states, with the exception of Wisconsin, but is six percentage points behind the national percentage. Retirement risk for this sector is low in Indiana. Accommodation and food services subsectors that are projected to contribute to employment growth include Food Services and Drinking Place (+22,265 jobs); and Accommodation, including Hotels and Motels (+4,153 jobs).[13]

- Educational Services

The educational services sector is comprised of establishments that provide instruction and training on a variety of subjects. Subsectors include elementary and secondary schools, junior colleges, colleges & universities, etc. In 2022, the sector employed 241,167 individuals and is projected to add another 13,585 by 2031. From 2018 to 2022, this sector lost 8,873 jobs, representing one of the larger declines in total jobs of all industries in Indiana over this five-year period. The pandemic played havoc on educational services resulting in a decline of nearly 14,000 jobs in 2020 alone.[14] The average annual wage for a job in the educational services sector in Indiana according to QCEW data is \$49,939, which is lower than the national average of \$69,190 for this sector.[15]

- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

The administrative and support and waste management and remediation services sector represents 6.2% of all Hoosier jobs (192,204 jobs total). The average annual salary for jobs in this sector in Indiana is \$53,811, which places it near the bottom of high-wage sectors in the State.[16]

- Transportation and Warehousing

In 2022, the transportation and warehousing sector employed 181,078 Hoosiers and is projected to add 18,310 jobs by 2031 – an 11.3% increase in jobs. The average annual salary for transportation and warehousing jobs in Indiana is \$68,818, which falls slightly below the State average of \$69,708.[17]

- Construction

The construction sector employed 156,366 Hoosiers in 2022 and is projected to add just over 1,500 jobs by 2031 (151,093 jobs). The average annual salary for jobs in this sector in Indiana is \$82,569, more than \$12,000 than the State average annual salary.[18] While the retirement risk is low for construction, it struggles to close the gender gap. The percent of construction jobs in Indiana held by males is 85.4% compared to 14.6% of females, as reported by Lightcast. By 2031, the construction subsector, Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction, is projected to experience a decline of 1,087 jobs. Meanwhile, Specialty Trade Contractors are projected to add 1,728 jobs.[19]

- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

With an employment size of 142,934 in 2022, the professional, scientific, and technical services sector is among the highest paid top sectors, earning an average annual salary of \$83,707 and has demonstrated continual growth over the last ten years. Jobs in this sector require a high degree of expertise and training and perform services such as architectural and engineering design services; computer services; legal advice and representation; accounting, bookkeeping, and payroll services; etc.

- Public Administration

Public Administration employment data, provided by Indiana Department of Workforce Development, excludes public sector education and hospital employment. The sector had 129,625 jobs in 2022, representing 4.2% of Hoosier jobs, but is projected to lose 1,611 jobs by 2031. That represents less than 1% decline in jobs over the ten-year period.

- [1] Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Analyzed by Indiana Department of Workforce Development
- [2] Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey, 2022
- [3] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- [4] Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Analyzed by Indiana Department of Workforce Development
- [5] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- [6] Note: Lightcast derives national average values by taking the national value for a sector and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Indiana. The values represent the national average adjusted for region size.
- [7] Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey, 2022
- [8] Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Analyzed by Indiana Department of Workforce Development
- [9] Source: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/btn/volume-11/retail-trade-employment-before-during-and-after-the-pandemic.htm>
- [10] Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey, 2022
- [11] Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey, 2022
- [12] Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey, 2022
- [13] Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Analyzed by Indiana Department of Workforce Development
- [14] Source: Quarterly Employment and Wage Statistics Survey, 2022
- [15] Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Survey, 2022
- [16] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- [17] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Industry Table
- [18] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Industry Table
- [19] Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Analyzed by Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Existing Occupational Demand (2-digit SOC)

The top occupations in Indiana by base employment in 2021 are detailed in Table 5: Occupations by Employment in Indiana, 2021, 2-digit SOC. Annual exits are defined as annual exits from the occupation, leaving the labor force. Annual transfers are defined as annual transfers from occupation to another. Annual openings are defined as the annual amount of openings for that occupation.

Table 5: Occupations by Employment in Indiana, 2021, 2-digit SOC (source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2022)

SOC	Occupation	2021 Employment	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Openings
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	375,641	20,094	24,693	43,392
51-0000	Production Occupations	365,463	15,723	25,984	41,823
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	348,145	18,737	30,499	52,032
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	289,296	16,902	21,923	38,462
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	259,697	23,697	27,404	53,455
11-0000	Management Occupations	251,496	9,887	12,831	23,679
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	195,256	6,198	5,919	13,843
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	152,520	7,116	7,104	15,279
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	143,603	4,571	8,597	14,234
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	142,996	5,382	8,728	14,905
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	142,764	4,960	9,110	14,398
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	114,117	8,069	10,131	19,866
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	101,643	6,462	7,640	14,637
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	66,382	4,952	7,281	13,066
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	65,359	1,560	3,402	5,976
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	63,278	2,659	3,765	7,062
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	58,693	3,102	3,696	6,932
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	50,588	1,440	2,367	4,142
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	45,254	2,044	2,891	5,207
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	21,262	501	1,621	2,319
23-0000	Legal Occupations	20,559	702	866	1,820
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	18,483	974	2,042	3,102
	Total	3,292,495	1,657,314	228,494	409,631

Rounding out the top five occupations in Indiana by employment size are:

- Office and Administrative Support Occupations

With 375,641 jobs in 2021, this occupation represents the largest share of jobs in Indiana at the 2-digit SOC level. In 2021, Office and Administrative Support Occupations had the second highest total of annual exits from the labor force and faced significant transfers, or movement to a different occupation. The total annual openings in 2021 for Office and Administrative Support

Occupations was 43,392, which was the third most of any occupational group. The typical entry-level education for Office and Administrative Support Occupations is a high school diploma or equivalent. Less than 5 years of work experience is typically required for this occupation and little to no on-the-job training is required. The national annual median salary for Office and Administrative Support Occupations was \$38,050 in May 2021, which was lower than the national annual median salary for all occupations of \$45,760 and lower than the State annual median salary of \$42,100.[1]

Office and Administrative Support Occupations in Indiana are concentrated in the following industry sectors: Government (56,850 jobs; 15.1% of total), Health Care and Social Assistance (55,619 jobs; 14.8% of total), Finance and Insurance (41,018 jobs; 10.9% of total), and Manufacturing (36,225 jobs; 9.6% of total).[2]

- Production Occupations

Production Occupations represented 365,463 jobs in 2021 in Indiana. Among the top five occupations, Production Occupations has the lowest number of annual exits from the labor force (15,723 workers). The annual number of transfers for Production Occupations was 25,984 workers. This represents the number of workers choosing to leave this occupation annually. The total annual openings for Production Occupations in Indiana in 2021 was 41,823. The typical entry-level education for this occupation group is a high school diploma or equivalent. Less than 5 years of work experience is typically required for this occupation and little to no on-the-job training is required. The national annual median salary for Production Occupations was \$37,710 in May 2021, which was lower than the national annual median salary for all occupations of \$45,760 and lower than the State annual median salary of \$42,100.[3]

Production Occupations in Indiana are concentrated in Manufacturing (306,657 jobs; 84.8% of total), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (17,817 jobs; 4.9% of total), Wholesale Trade (7,416 jobs; 2.1% of total), and Retail Trade (6,714 jobs; 1.9% of total).[4]

- Transportation and Material Moving Occupations

The 2021 employment size for Transportation and Material Moving Occupations was 348,145. With 30,499 workers, this occupation represents the largest number of annual transfers of any other occupation in Indiana and has the second greatest number of annual total openings (52,032 openings). The typical entry-level education for Transportation and Material Moving Occupations is a high school diploma or equivalent. Less than 5 years of work experience is typically required for this occupation and little to no on-the-job training is required. The national annual median salary for this group was \$36,860 in May 2021, which was lower than the national annual median salary for all occupations of \$45,760 and State annual median salary of \$42,100.[5]

Transportation and Material Moving Occupations in Indiana are concentrated Transportation and Warehousing (121,067 jobs; 34.9% of total), Retail Trade (55,839 jobs; 16.1% of total), Manufacturing (48,590 jobs; 14.0% of total), and Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (36,220 jobs; 10.5% of total).[6]

- Sales and Related Occupations

Sales and Related Occupations are the fourth largest occupation group at the 2-digit SOC level in Indiana in 2021 with 289,296 jobs. Among the top five occupations, Sales and Related Occupations had the lowest number of annual transfers, or movement to a different occupation (21,923 transfers). The annual total number of openings for this occupation group in 2021 was 38,462. The typical entry-level education for Sales and Related Occupations is a high school diploma or equivalent. Less than 5 years of work experience is typically required for this occupation and little to no on-the-job training is required. The national annual median salary for Sales and Related Occupations was \$30,600 in May 2021, which was lower than the national annual median salary for all occupations of \$45,760 and State annual median salary of \$42,100.[7]

Sales and Related Occupations in Indiana are concentrated in Retail Trade (162,928 jobs; 58.7% of total), Wholesale Trade (28,839 jobs; 10.4% of total), Finance and Insurance (20,344 jobs; 7.3% of total), and Manufacturing (14,565 jobs; 5.2% of total).[8]

- Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations

The 2021 employment size for Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations was 259,697 workers. This occupation group had the greatest number of annual exits (23,697) and second greatest number of annual transfers (27,404). Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations had the greatest share of annual total openings among all 2-digit SOC occupations in Indiana in 2021 (13.0%; 53,455 openings). The typical entry-level education for Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations is a high school diploma or equivalent. Less than 5 years of work experience is typically required for this occupation and little to no on-the-job training is required. The national annual median salary for Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations was \$28,400 in May 2021, which was lower than the national annual median salary for all occupations of \$45,760 and lower than the State annual median salary of \$42,100.[9]

Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations in Indiana are concentrated in Accommodation and Food Services (208,450 jobs; 80.4% of total), Health Care and Social Assistance (13,922 jobs; 5.4% of total), Government (10,962 jobs; 4.2% of total), and Retail Trade (10,574 jobs; 4.1% of total).[10]

[1] Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook

[2] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Inverse Staffing Patterns, Office and Administrative Support Occupations

[3] Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook

[4] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Inverse Staffing Patterns, Production Occupations

[5] Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook

[6] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Inverse Staffing Patterns, Transportation & Material Moving Occupations

[7] Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook

[8] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Inverse Staffing Patterns, Sales & Related Occupations

[9] Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook

[10] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Inverse Staffing Patterns, Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations

ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Emerging Demand in Existing Industry Sectors

The top projected industry sectors in Indiana by 2031 mirror those in 2021, with the top six sectors remaining the largest employed sectors in both years: manufacturing; health care and social assistance; retail trade; accommodation and food services; educational services; and administrative and support and waste management and remediation services.

Over the ten-year period, sectors that are projected to see greatest increase in employment include health care and social assistance (+45,029 jobs); accommodation and food services (+26,418 jobs); professional, scientific, and technical services (+20,845 jobs); transportation and warehousing (+18,310 jobs); and educational services (+13,585 jobs). The only sectors that are projected to see a decrease in employment in that time period are retail trade (-4,749 jobs); government (-1,611 jobs); and utilities (-879 jobs).

Sectors with the greatest percent change between 2021-2031 include professional, scientific, and technical services (+15.92%); arts, entertainment, and recreation (+14.27%); transportation and warehousing (+11.30%); accommodation and food services (+10.70%); and health care and social assistance (+10.42%).

Table 6: Top Industry Sectors by Employment in Indiana, 2031, 2-digit NAICS (source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages 2022)

NAICS	Sector	2031 Employment	2021-2031 Change	2021-2031 Change %
31	Manufacturing	533,653	9,141	1.74%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	477,021	45,029	10.42%
44	Retail Trade	309,217	-4,749	-1.51%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	273,415	26,418	10.70%
61	Educational Services	251,230	13,585	5.72%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	192,179	9,675	5.30%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	180,354	18,310	11.30%
90	Government	164,392	-1,611	-0.97%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	151,796	20,845	15.92%
23	Construction	151,093	1,501	1.00%
81	Other Services (except Government)	137,854	7,012	5.36%
42	Wholesale Trade	124,508	2,493	2.04%
52	Finance and Insurance	102,022	1,608	1.60%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	41,417	5,171	14.27%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	35,537	140	0.40%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	34,863	861	2.53%
51	Information	26,689	552	2.11%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	24,918	1,874	8.13%
22	Utilities	12,690	-879	-6.48%
21	Mining	4,749	43	0.91%
	Total	3,229,597	157,019	5.11%

Drilling deeper into the 3-digit NAICS level (i.e., subsectors), the top projected subsectors by employment in 2031 include educational services (251,230 jobs); food services and drinking places (250,079 jobs); administrative and support services (181,599 jobs); ambulatory health care services (177,952 jobs); and hospitals (155,361 jobs). Subsectors that are projected to see greatest increase in employment between 2021-2031 include food services and drinking places (+22,265 jobs); ambulatory health care services (+21,903 jobs); professional, scientific, and technical services (+20,845 jobs); educational services (+ 13,585 jobs); and social assistance (+12,922 jobs).

Table 7: Top 20 Industry Subsectors by Employment in Indiana, 2031, 3-digit NAICS (source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages 2022)

NAICS	Sector	2031 Employment	2021-2031 Change	2021- 2031 Change %	% of 2031 Occupations
611	Educational Services	251,230	13,585	5.72%	7.29%
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	250,079	22,265	9.77%	7.26%
561	Administrative and Support Services	181,599	9,483	5.51%	5.27%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	177,952	21,903	14.04%	5.16%
622	Hospitals	155,361	7,154	4.83%	4.51%
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	151,796	20,845	15.92%	4.40%
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	144,559	7,551	5.51%	4.19%
238	Specialty Trade Contractors	96,214	1,728	1.83%	2.79%
930	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	96,052	820	0.86%	2.79%
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	79,920	1,916	2.46%	2.32%
452	General Merchandise Stores	78,301	1,759	2.30%	2.27%
813	Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	74,947	3,453	4.83%	2.17%
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	73,701	3,050	4.32%	2.14%
624	Social Assistance	70,007	12,922	22.64%	2.03%
493	Warehousing and Storage	69,852	12,362	21.50%	2.03%
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	54,630	-443	-0.80%	1.59%
484	Truck Transportation	53,356	662	1.26%	1.55%
524	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	48,234	1,130	2.40%	1.40%
441	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	45,341	1,622	3.71%	1.32%
311	Food Manufacturing	43,417	1,731	4.15%	1.26%
Top 20 Industry Sub-Sectors Total		2,196,548	145,498	7.09%	

The top projected occupations at the 2-digit SOC in Indiana by 2031, as detailed in Table 8, include transportation and material moving occupations (376,107 jobs); production occupations (366,626 jobs); office and administrative support occupations (361,695 jobs); sales and related occupations (285,665 jobs); and food preparation and serving related occupations (283,240 jobs).

From 2021-2031, all occupation groups at the 2-digit SOC level are projected to experience an increase in jobs, with the exception of office and administrative support occupations (-13,946 jobs) and sales and related occupations (-3,631 jobs) – both of which are among the largest occupation groups in the State. Occupation groups with the largest projected increase in the ten-

year period include transportation and material moving occupations (+27,962 jobs); food preparation and serving related occupations (+23,543 jobs); healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (+17,263 jobs); healthcare support occupations (+16,663 jobs); and business and financial operations occupations (+10,662 jobs).

The automation index score is provided via Lightcast which analyzes the potential automation risk of occupations based on job task content, derived from O*NET. Index scores above 100 have an above average risk of automation while occupations with an automation index below 100 have a below average risk of automation.[1] Having a higher-than-average risk of automation means that a relatively high percent of workers' time and tasks will be spent using, managing, and maintaining computerized and/or automated processes and systems. Occupations in Indiana (at the 2-digit SOC level) that are at highest risk of automation include food preparation and serving related occupations (125.4); construction and extraction occupations (123.1); building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations (122.5); production occupations (113.6); and transportation and material moving occupations (111.0) – the occupational group with the greatest projected employment in 2031.

[1] Lightcast combines data with the Frey and Osborne findings at the occupation level and identifies which job tasks are 'at risk' and which are resilient. Lightcast incorporates data to identify where occupations cluster in industries facing disruption, and where workers' skills mean their nearest job options are also facing automation risk.

Table 8: Occupations by Employment in Indiana, 2031, 2-digit SOC (source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages 2022)

SOC	Occupation	2031 Employment	2021-2031 Change	2021- 2031 % Change	Automation Index
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	376,107	27,962	8.03%	111.0
51-0000	Production	366,626	1,163	0.32%	113.6
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	361,695	-13,946	-3.71%	98.3
41-0000	Sales and Related	285,665	-3,631	-1.26%	94.8
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	283,240	23,543	9.07%	125.4
11-0000	Management	261,109	9,613	3.82%	84.9
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	212,519	17,263	8.84%	88.4
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	163,108	10,588	6.94%	85.8
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	154,265	10,662	7.42%	89.4
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	150,945	7,949	5.56%	108.7
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	146,043	3,279	2.30%	123.1
31-0000	Healthcare Support	130,780	16,663	14.60%	95.0
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	106,997	5,354	5.27%	122.5
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	75,501	10,142	15.52%	83.4
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	74,708	8,326	12.54%	96.7
21-0000	Community and Social Service	69,656	6,378	10.08%	82.4
33-0000	Protective Service	60,034	1,341	2.28%	98.9
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	53,934	3,346	6.61%	87.0
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	47,970	2,716	6.00%	89.8
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	23,235	1,973	9.28%	84.7
23-0000	Legal	23,077	2,518	12.25%	84.0
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	19,348	865	4.68%	109.9

Table 9 details the top 20 projected occupations by employment in Indiana at the 6-digit SOC level. Top occupations at this level by employment in 2031 include laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand (103,717 jobs); fast food and counter workers (93,052 jobs); retail salespersons (81,988 jobs); miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators (80,980 jobs); and registered nurses (70,629 jobs).

Among all subsectors, those that are projected to see the greatest increase in employment between 2021-2031 include home health and personal care aides (+9,523 jobs); laborers and

freight, stock, and material movers, hand (+9,285 jobs); cooks, restaurants (+8,816 jobs); fast food and counter workers (+5,047 jobs); and registered nurses (+3,940 jobs). Fast food and counter worker occupations are projected to have the greatest number of annual openings among all subsectors (20,075), followed by laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand (14,811 openings). However, the latter is projected to experience the greatest number of exits annually from the workforce (9,816).

Over the ten-year period, DWD is also tracking the total number of annual transfers, or the number of estimated workers who leave an occupation to enter a different occupation. Occupations that are projected to have the greatest number of annual transfers from 2021-2031 include fast food and counter workers (9,754 transfers); laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand (9,082 transfers); retail salespersons (6,685 transfers); miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators (5,860 transfers); and cashiers (5,697 transfers). With the exception of miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators, each of these occupations require no formal educational credential or work experience. As these workers continue to gain on-the-job experience and upskilling opportunities, they become more qualified for more technical occupations that are associated with higher salaries.

Table 9: Top 20 Occupations by Employment in Indiana, 2031, 6-digit SOC (source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages 2022)

SOC	Occupation	2031 Employment	2021- 2031 Change	2021 Annual Exits	2021 Annual Transfers	2021 Annual Total Openings
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	103,717	9,285	4,801	9,082	14,811
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	93,052	5,047	9,816	9,754	20,075
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	81,988	-1,019	5,301	6,685	11,884
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	80,980	-1,281	3,569	5,860	9,301
29-1141	Registered Nurses	70,629	3,940	2,201	1,705	4,300
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	70,190	-3,203	4,529	4,518	8,727
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	69,889	-5,043	5,054	2,566	7,116
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	59,997	2,357	2,733	4,161	7,130
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	59,530	3,631	1,326	3,676	5,365
41-2011	Cashiers	58,381	-6,331	5,912	5,697	10,976
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	55,482	3,910	3,430	5,688	9,509
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	51,256	2,040	3,489	3,526	7,219
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	50,996	-1,677	2,857	4,427	7,116
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	49,316	9,523	3,612	3,120	7,684
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	43,388	3,090	3,540	4,943	8,792
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	40,110	1,866	1,607	2,179	3,973
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	35,121	8,816	2,120	2,594	5,596
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	33,255	1,362	1,119	2,154	3,409
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	32,491	1,218	2,087	2,699	4,908
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	29,835	-1,237	2,040	1,707	3,623

Emerging Demand based on Federal Investments

Indiana is expecting unprecedented levels of federal investment in infrastructure, transportation, clean energy, and semiconductor manufacturing from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (including the Broadband Equity Access & Deployment (BEAD) Program), and the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

While the exact funding levels and the resulting economic and workforce impact of these investments is still being evaluated, we know that we currently have a high baseline of demand for the workers that will be most critical to deploying these funds across the State even before factoring in the impact of these investments.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

There are currently over 450,000 workers in the industries that are most closely associated with infrastructure projects. The five most critical occupations for deploying infrastructure investments account for 56% of the employment in these industries. The infrastructure sector will need to compete with all other industries across the economy for these workers.

Table 10: Top Occupations Needed for Infrastructure Investments, Baseline Projections, 2022 - 2033
(source: Lightcast)

SOC	Occupation	2022 Jobs	Growth Rate	Prep. Needed	Average Annual Job Openings	Share of Workers Aged 55+	Higher than Average Risk of Automation
47-2061	Construction Laborers	30,769	9%	Some	3,058	17%	✓
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	10,286	8%	Some	1,007	26%	✓
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	15,532	4%	Medium	1,372	28%	✓
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	62,728	5%	Some	7,230	35%	✓
11-9021	Construction Managers	9,408	14%	Considerable	832	32%	X

These occupations account for a significant number of jobs and are projected to grow over the next decade, with the average number of job openings ranging from around 1,000 per year up to over 7,000. Retirement risk is relatively low among these occupations, but automation risk is higher than average. These occupations have minimal education and training requirements, but it is likely that employers would value soft skills and digital literacy training.

Indiana is also poised to receive part of a \$1 billion investment, via the BIL, into hydrogen production through the Midwest Alliance for Clean Hydrogen. The Midwest Hub includes Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan and these states could see additional investments from the private sector as well as 13,600 direct jobs. Indiana will produce hydrogen as a fuel source near BP's refinery in Whiting, Indiana. Technical occupations that will be critical to this project

include machinists, industrial machinery mechanics, industrial engineers, maintenance and repair workers, general, and industrial production managers.

CHIPS and Science Act

In the fall of 2023, and on behalf of the State, the Applied Research Institute (ARI) was awarded two technology and innovation hub designations through the CHIPS and Science Act. The first, Silicon Crossroads, is a three-state initiative focused on growing microelectronics production in the Midwest. It was one of eight Microelectronics Commons regional innovation hubs funded by the Department of Defense to help increase the production of semiconductor technologies and microelectronics. The second, Heartland BioWorks, is a biologics manufacturing hub that was one of 31 entities designated through the Economic Development Administration's Tech Hubs program.

While semiconductor manufacturing is still in its nascent stage in Indiana, the State's strong manufacturing identity and skilled workforce ensure it will be in a strong position to compete for semiconductor investment. Additionally, as Silicon Crossroads is physically located near Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane, which established the Microelectronic Commons program for the Department of Defense, it provides a strong link to supporting our national defense and potential for transitioning military veterans to the civilian workforce. In the first round of funding in 2023, Silicon Crossroads was awarded nearly \$33 million to grow the Midwest's semiconductor innovation ecosystem, with four future funding rounds currently anticipated.

There are currently nearly 389,000 workers in industries related to semiconductor manufacturing within Indiana. The top five occupations within these industries account for 33% of the current jobs. Many of these occupations are in high demand from other industry sectors as well.

Table 11: Top Occupations Needed for Semiconductor Investments, Baseline Projections, 2022 - 2033
(source: Lightcast)

SOC	Occupation	2022 Jobs	Growth Rate	Prep. Needed	Avg. Annual Job Openings	Share of Workers Aged 55+	Higher than Average Risk of Automation
51-2028	Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical Assemblers, Except Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	8,267	13%	Some	1,093	31%	✓
51-9141	Semiconductor Processing Technicians	174	67%	Some	37	34%	✓
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	20,363	3%	Some	2,560	28%	✓
51-2098	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	89,066	-2%	Some	10,141	20%	✓
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	11,706	15%	Considerable	883	26%	X

While semiconductor processing technicians are currently a relatively small occupation in the State, this occupation is projected to grow by 67% in the next decade. Furthermore, recent economic development announcements suggest this occupation will grow even more significantly in the coming years based on projects currently in development. Several of the other top occupations are expected to grow in the next 10 years, with significant average annual openings ranging from 900 to over 10,000. Retirement risk is high among these occupations which is expected to impact demand for replacement workers. Most of these occupations require minimal education and job training; however, due to their risk of automation and the future orientation of this cluster, digital and technical skills will be crucial to keeping up with employer's workforce needs. Industrial engineers are among the only top occupations to require a bachelor's degree, and it is the only one with a below average risk of automation.

In contrast to semiconductor manufacturing, Indiana has a rich history and mature economy built around the life sciences and biopharmaceuticals, and employment figures for this sector will be discussed later in this section. Heartland BioWorks currently has a pending application for implementation grant funding, which includes a proposal for a new biotech workforce training center in a historically disadvantaged neighborhood in Indianapolis. In partnership with Ivy Tech Community College, the training center would focus on training for in-demand advanced manufacturing and lab technician jobs within this sector.

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

There are currently an estimated 684,959 workers employed in clean energy industries across the State. Among the forty-four occupations that are most critical to clean energy, the top five account for 28% of employment.

Table 12: Top Occupations Needed for Clean Energy Investments, Baseline Projections, 2022 - 2033
(source: Lightcast)

SOC	Occupation	2022 Jobs	Growth Rate	Prep. Needed	Average Annual Job Openings	Share of Worker Aged 55+	Higher than Average Risk of Automation
47-2111	Electricians	15,920	10%	Medium	1,669	21%	✓
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	15,532	4%	Medium	1,372	28%	✓
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	13,306	4%	Medium	1,257	20%	✓
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	8,310	8%	Medium	804	19%	✓
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	3,779	13%	Some	375	17%	✓

The top 5 occupations are all experiencing growth, ranging from 4% to 13% over the next decade and are projected to have a significant number of job openings each year due to economic growth and job replacements due to churn and retirement. The clean energy sector will face competition from other sectors for these workers. Each of these occupations have a higher-than-average risk of automation, which means that a relatively high percent of workers' time and tasks will be spent using, managing, and maintaining computerized and/or automated processes and systems. This will likely result in an increased demand for technical and digital skills among these workers. Most of these occupations require a high school diploma or equivalent and short-term training or a registered apprenticeship. However, it is worth noting that although these occupations are at-risk of automation, they will not be going away anytime soon.

iii. Employers' Employment Needs

Table 13 details the educational attainment requirement, work experience requirement, and job training requirements for each of the top 20 projected occupations in Indiana. Most of the top occupations do not require any work experience, except for farmers, ranchers, and other agriculture managers; and general and operations managers which both require 5 years of experience or more. The occupational group, cooks, restaurant, requires less than 5 years of experience.

Additionally, nearly all occupations require some level of job training experience, whether that is short-term or moderate-term on-the-job training experience. Only registered nurses; farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; and general and operations managers do not require job training experience. It is worth noting, however, that registered nurses and general and

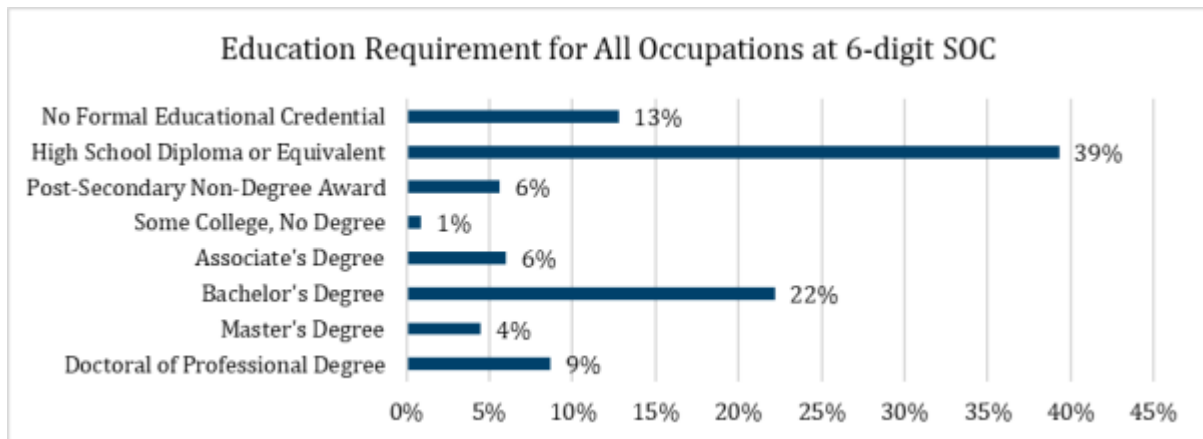
operations managers require additional training post-employment to attain competency in the skills needed in these occupations, which is why there are no job training requirements listed.

Table 13: Educational Attainment Requirement, Work Experience Requirement, and Job Training Requirement for Top 20 Occupations by Employment in Indiana, 2031, 6-digit SOC (source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages)

SOC	Occupation	2031 Employment	Education Value	Work Experience Value	Job Training Value
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	103,717	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	93,052	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	81,988	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	80,980	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
29-1141	Registered Nurses	70,629	Bachelor's degree	None	None
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	70,190	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	69,889	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	59,997	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term on-the-job training
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	59,530	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None
41-2011	Cashiers	58,381	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	55,482	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	51,256	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	50,996	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	49,316	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
35-3031	Walters and Waitresses	43,388	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	40,110	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	35,121	No formal educational credential	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	33,255	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	32,491	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	29,835	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training

Figure 2 details the educational attainment requirements for all occupations at the 6-digit SOC level in Indiana. Nearly 40% of all occupations in Indiana require a high school diploma or equivalent and 28% require a 2-year or 4-year degree. Only 6% of occupations require a post-secondary non-degree award compared to 1% that require some college, no degree. However, since the data do not include industry-recognized credentials, registered apprenticeships, or other short-term training that is not provided by a registered academic institution, the share of jobs that require technical training is likely undercounted. The percentage of occupations in the State that do not require any formal educational credential (even a high school diploma) is 13%.

Figure 2: Education Attainment Requirement for All Occupations at the 6-digit SOC level (source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages)



Indiana collected job posting analytics data provided by Lightcast's dataset of job posting profiles by employers.[1] Tables 14, 15, and 16 detail the top advertised specialized skills, commons skills, and qualifications for the top five industry sectors in Indiana at the 2-digit NAICS level in 2031. The skills and qualifications listed are associated with a percentage. This reflects the percent of job postings, collected, gleaned, and documented by Lightcast, that have those skills and qualifications listed for each respective industry sector (Tables 14, 15, and 16) and occupations (Tables 17, 18, and 19) from January 2021 to January 2023.

[1] Data Methodology: <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957446-job-posting-analytics-jpa-methodology>

Table 14: Top Advertised Specialized Skills for Top 5 Industry Sectors in Indiana, 2031 (source: Lightcast)¹

NAICS	Sector	Specialized Skills
31	Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management (10%) • Auditing (9%) • Forklift Truck (9%) • Warehousing (9%) • Good Manufacturing Practices (7%)
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing (26%) • Nursing Care (7%) • Medical Records (6%) • CPR (6%) • Caregiving (5%)
44	Retail Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merchandising (39%) • Selling Techniques (15%) • Cash Register (14%) • Product Knowledge (10%) • Inventory Management (9%)
72	Accommodation and Food Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurant Operation (43%) • Food Safety and Sanitation (13%) • Cash Handling (8%) • Food Preparation (8%) • Food Services (8%)
61	Educational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing (8%) • Student Services (6%) • Nursing (6%) • Lesson Planning (6%) • Project Management (5%)

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Job Posting Analytics, January 2021 – January 2023

Table 15: Top Advertised Common Skills for Top 5 Industry Sectors in Indiana, 2031 (source: Lightcast)¹

NAICS	Sector	Common Skills
31	Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications (39%)• Management (27%)• Operations (23%)• Leadership (21%)• Problem Solving (20%)
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications (29%)• Customer Service (16%)• Management (13%)• Leadership (11%)• Planning (9%)
44	Retail Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Service (59%)• Sales (48%)• Communications (39%)• Management (32%)• Leadership (21%)
72	Accommodation and Food Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Service (37%)• Communications (31%)• Management (24%)• Cleanliness (17%)• Operations (16%)
61	Educational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications (40%)• Teaching (27%)• Management (18%)• Leadership (18%)• Writing (17%)

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Job Posting Analytics, January 2021 – January 2023

Table 16: Top Advertised Qualifications for Top 5 Industry Sectors in Indiana, 2031 (source: Lightcast)¹

NAICS	Sector	Common Skills
31	Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid Driver's License• Security Clearance• Master Of Business Administration (MBA)• Forklift Certification• Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registered Nurse (RN)• Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification• Valid Driver's License• CPR Certification• Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
44	Retail Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid Driver's License• Certified Pharmacy Technician• Registered Pharmacist (RPh)• Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification
72	Accommodation and Food Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CDL Class A License• Valid Driver's License• ServSafe Certification• Food Safety Certification• Food Handler's Card• CPR Certification
61	Educational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid Driver's License• Teaching Certificate• Registered Nurse (RN)• CPR Certification• Board Certified/Board Eligible

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Job Posting Analytics, January 2021 – January 2023

Drilling deeper, Tables 17, 18, and 19 detail the top advertised specialized skills, common skills, and qualifications for the top five occupations in Indiana at the 6-digit SOC level in 2031.

Table 17: Top Advertised Specialized Skills for Top 5 Emerging Occupations in Indiana, 2031 (source: Lightcast)¹

SOC	Occupation	Specialized Skills
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehousing (66%) • Forklift Truck (27%) • Palletizing (17%) • Pallet Jacks (13%) • General Mathematics (9%)
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurant Operation (38%) • Food Services (24%) • Food Safety & Sanitation (22%) • Cash Register (13%) • Food Preparation (13%)
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merchandising (48%) • Selling Techniques (26%) • Cash Register (18%) • Cash Handling (14%) • Stocking Merchandise (13%)
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand Tools (24%) • Assembly Lines (16%) • Power Tool Operation (13%) • Machinery (8%) • Warehousing (7%)
29-1141	Registered Nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing (52%) • Nursing Care (17%) • Intensive Care Unit (11%) • Medication Administration (9%) • Home Health Care (8%)

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Job Posting Analytics, January 2021 – January 2023

Table 18: Top Advertised Common Skills for Top 5 Emerging Occupations in Indiana, 2031 (source: Lightcast)¹

SOC	Occupation	Common Skills
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loading & Unloading (29%) • Lifting Ability (29%) • Communications (19%) • Detail Oriented (13%) • Packaging & Labeling (13%) • Customer Service (44%) • Communication (26%)
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanitation (21%) • Cleanliness (15%) • Management (14%) • Sales (78%) • Customer Service (72%) • Communications (38%) • Retail Sales (28%) • Management (25%) • Lifting Ability (23%)
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail Oriented (16%) • Communications (15%) • Operations (12%) • Packaging And Labeling (9%) • Communications (18%) • Planning (10%) • Management (9%) • Coordinating (8%) • Teaching (8%)
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	
29-1141	Registered Nurses	

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Job Posting Analytics, January 2021 – January 2023

Table 19: Top Advertised Qualifications for Top 5 Emerging Occupations in Indiana, 2031 (source: Lightcast)¹

SOC	Occupation	Common Skills
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Driver's License • Forklift Certification • Commercial Driver's License • Security Clearance • CDL Class A License
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Driver's License • Food Handler's Card • ServSafe Certification • Food Safety Certification • CPR Certification
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Driver's License • Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification • Cosmetology License • Esthetician License • Registered Nurse (RN)
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Driver's License • Security Clearance • Forklift Certification • Linux Certified Instructor • Commercial Driver's License (CDL) • Registered Nurse (RN)
29-1141	Registered Nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification • Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) Certification • CPR Certification • Advanced Life Support

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Job Posting Analytics, January 2021 – January 2023

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce in the State and within various state regions. Provide key analytical conclusions in aggregate as well as disaggregated among populations to identify potential disparities in employment and educational attainment and understand labor force conditions for items (i)-(iii) below. Populations analyzed must include individuals with barriers to employment described in the first paragraph of Section II. Analysis must include—

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

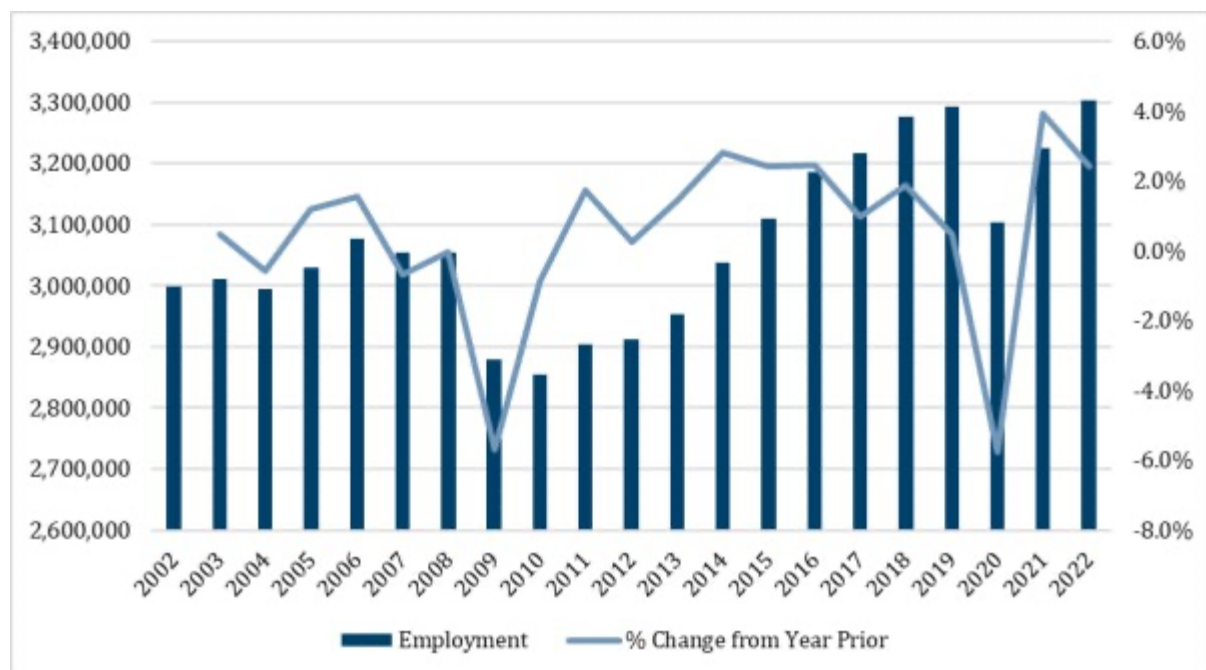
III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

i. Employment and Unemployment

Employment size in Indiana has continually increased over the last ten years, with the exception of 2020 amid the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The average annual employment size in Indiana in 2022 was 3,302,632, a 2.4% increase from the year prior.

Figure 3: Average Annual Employment Size in Indiana, 2002 - 2022 (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)



The employment-population ratio represents the number of employed people as a percentage of the civilian noninstitutional population. In other words, it is the percentage of the population that is currently working, calculated as: $(\text{Employed} \div \text{Civilian Noninstitutional Population}) \times 100$. From 2012 to 2018, the employment-population ratio steadily increased, demonstrating an

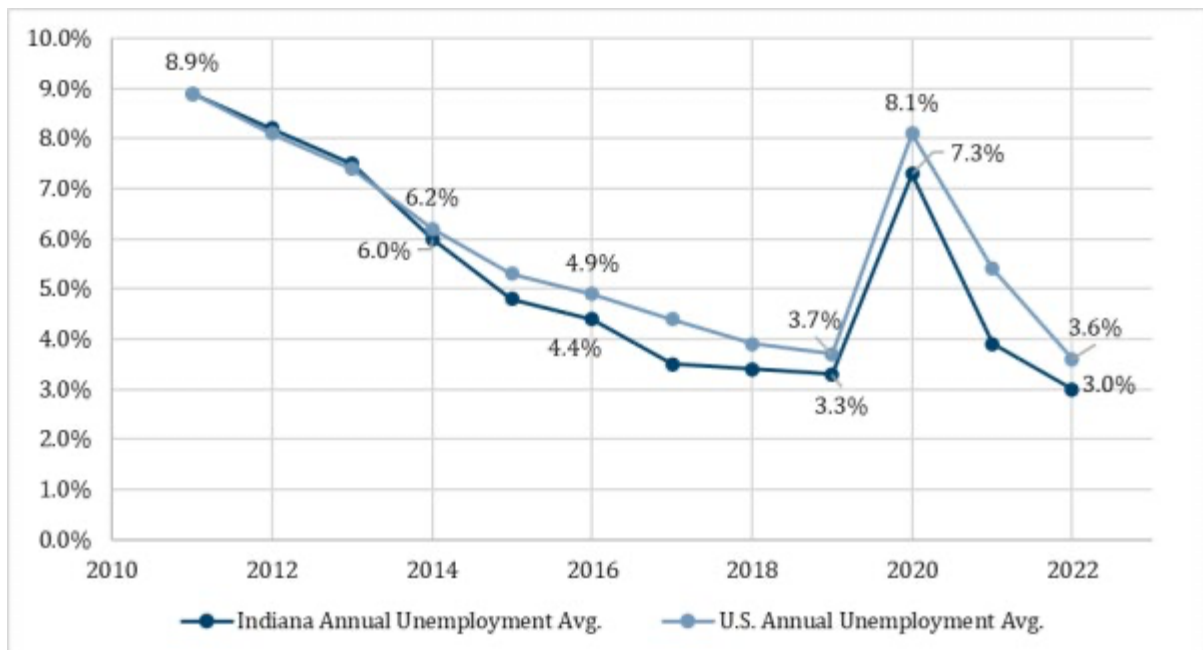
increase in employment by the State's population. However, the ratio dipped significantly in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic but is on track to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 4: Employment-Population Ratio in Indiana, 2011 - 2022 (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)



The average annual unemployment rate in Indiana has followed national trends. Since 2014, the State's average annual unemployment rate has been slightly lower than the national average annual unemployment rate, even amid the COVID-19 pandemic when it peaked at 7.3% compared to 8.1% nationally.

Figure 5: State & National Unemployment Rate, 2011 - 2022 (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)



As depicted in Table 20, the lowest annual unemployment rate in 2022 was in Indiana Economic Growth Region (EGR) 5 at 2.4% which encompasses the “donut counties” surrounding Indianapolis and Marion County (Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison,

Morgan, and Shelby). The highest annual unemployment rate was in EGR 1 (4.1%) which encompasses the northwestern counties of Jasper, Lake, LaPorte, Newton, Porter, Pulaski, and Starke. For a full map of the EGRs, please see <https://www.in.gov/dwd/about-dwd/regional-maps/>.

The labor force participation rate $((\text{Labor Force} \div \text{Civilian Noninstitutional Population}) \times 100)$ is highest in EGR 12 (52.6%), EGR 5 (52.0%), and EGR 11 (51.7%). This reflects the percentage of the population in those EGRs that are either working or actively working for work.

Table 20: Regional Labor Force Data by Indiana Economic Growth Regions, 2022 (source: STATS Indiana)¹

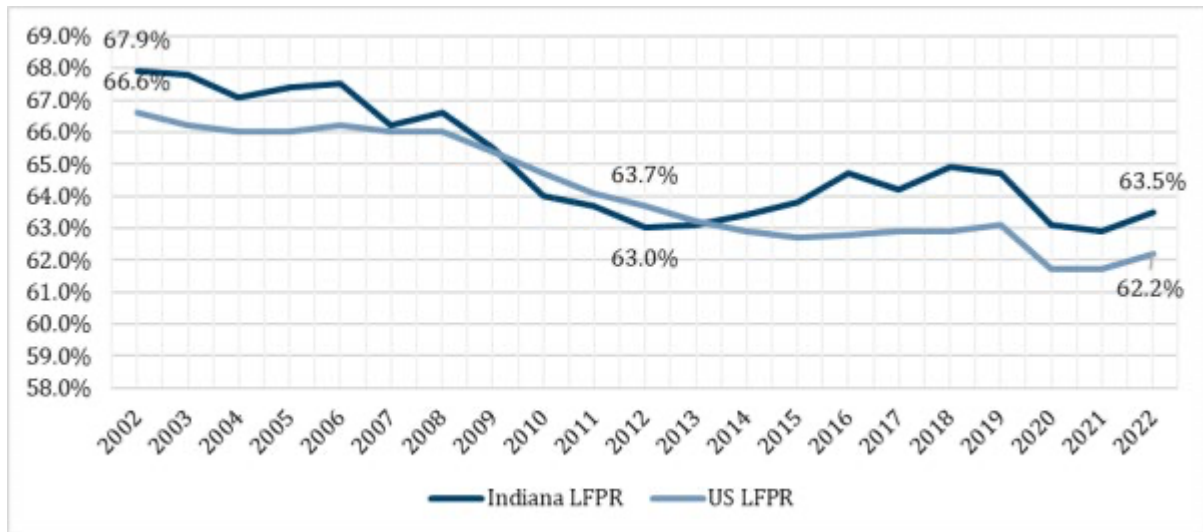
Indiana Economic Growth Regions	2022 Labor Force	2022 Employed	2022 Unemployed	2022 Annual Unemployment Rate
EGR 1	400,235	383,953	16,282	4.1%
EGR 2	324,736	315,350	9,386	2.9%
EGR 3	390,403	379,789	10,614	2.7%
EGR 4	248,537	240,708	7,829	3.2%
EGR 5	1,091,241	1,061,118	30,123	2.8%
EGR 6	149,924	145,040	4,884	3.3%
EGR 7	96,515	93,209	3,306	3.4%
EGR 8	153,754	149,170	4,584	3.0%
EGR 9	169,694	165,183	4,511	2.7%
EGR 10	155,135	150,970	4,165	2.7%
EGR 11	224,267	218,141	6,126	2.7%
EGR 12	581,768	567,713	14,055	2.4%

¹ Region 5 EGR data in this table includes Marion County, Region 12

From 2002 to 2009, Indiana's labor force participation rate was higher than the national labor force participation rate, however 2009's Great Recession impacted the State's labor force greater than the nation. In 2013, Indiana mirrored national labor force participation rates and it has had a higher labor force participation rate than the nation ever since. Even during the

COVID-19 pandemic, Indiana's labor force participation rate remained more resilient than the nation's labor force participation rate. In 2022, Indiana's labor force participation rate was 63.5% compared to the national rate of 62.2% - a difference of 1.3 percentage points.

Figure 6: Labor Force Participation Rate, 2002-2022, Indiana & U.S. (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)



Ensuring opportunities for populations with barriers to employment is critical to ensuring Indiana has a strong labor market and economic opportunities for all. The next section focuses on identifying demographics that are more likely to be unemployed or to have dropped out of the labor force.

Table 21 shows labor force demographics by sex and race/ethnicity. In 2022, 70.3% of civilian non-institutionalized men were in the labor force, compared to 57.6% of civilian non-institutionalized women.[1] Employment within a population group by race/ethnicity is highest among Hispanic or Latino men (77.4%), followed by Black or African American men (70.4%). Employment within a population group by race/ethnicity is lowest among White women (55.2%), however the unemployment rate for White women (and White men) is 2.8%, respectively, compared to 4.0% for Hispanic or Latinos and 5.6% for Black or African Americans.

[1] Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2022

Table 21: Indiana Labor Force Demographics by Sex within Race/Ethnicity Cohorts, 2022 (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey)

Population	% of Population Group in the Labor Force, 2022	2022 Employment to Population	2022 Unemployment Rate
White	63.1%	61.3%	2.8%
White, men	69.6%	67.6%	2.8%
White, women	56.9%	55.2%	2.8%
Black or African American	69.3%	65.5%	5.6%
Black or African American, men	73.7%	70.4%	4.4%
Black or African American, women	65.3%	60.9%	6.9%
Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity	68.5%	65.8%	4.0%
Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, men	80.4%	77.4%	3.7%
Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, women ¹	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ Note: data for this population group is unavailable due to small sample size. (DWD)

Using a different dataset, the U.S. Census' American Community Survey allows for another cut of employment statistics by demographic, including populations more likely to face barriers to participating in the labor force. Overall, the labor market is tight, with the vast majority of working aged adults already participating in the labor force. There are pockets of workers in the

labor force, including among disadvantaged and underserved populations, that would benefit from targeted programs to remove barriers and provide opportunities to work, including teens and young adults, individuals who have not earned a high school diploma or equivalent, individuals below the poverty line, and individuals with disabilities. Note this data cannot be cross-tabulated as the population included varies (e.g., full population 16 + or just the population aged 25 – 64) and individuals may fall into multiple categories (i.e., an individual who is not participating in the labor force may identify as male, two or more races, and below the poverty line, with no one of those identities explaining why that person is not employed).

Figure 7 shows Indiana's employment by age for the civilian population over the age of 16. The overall employment rate is 62% with 36% of the population 16 years and older not participating in the labor force, but it varies widely by age. Overall, unemployment is low, but tends to be highest among young adults. Among the prime working age population (25 to 54), 81% are employed, 3% are unemployed, and 16% are not participating in the labor force. This relatively low share of adults not participating in the labor force are likely not participating by choice (e.g. stay at home parents) or have high barriers preventing them from participating. Over half of teens and nearly a quarter of young adults under the age of 25 do not participate in the labor force, reflecting long-term national trends prioritizing education and college. Only 38% of seniors and those likely to retire in the next ten years (55 years and older) are currently employed, and the 61% who are not participating in the labor force are likely doing so due to retirement.

Figure 7: Employment by Age, Civilian Population Aged 16+, 2022 (source: US Census, American Community Survey)

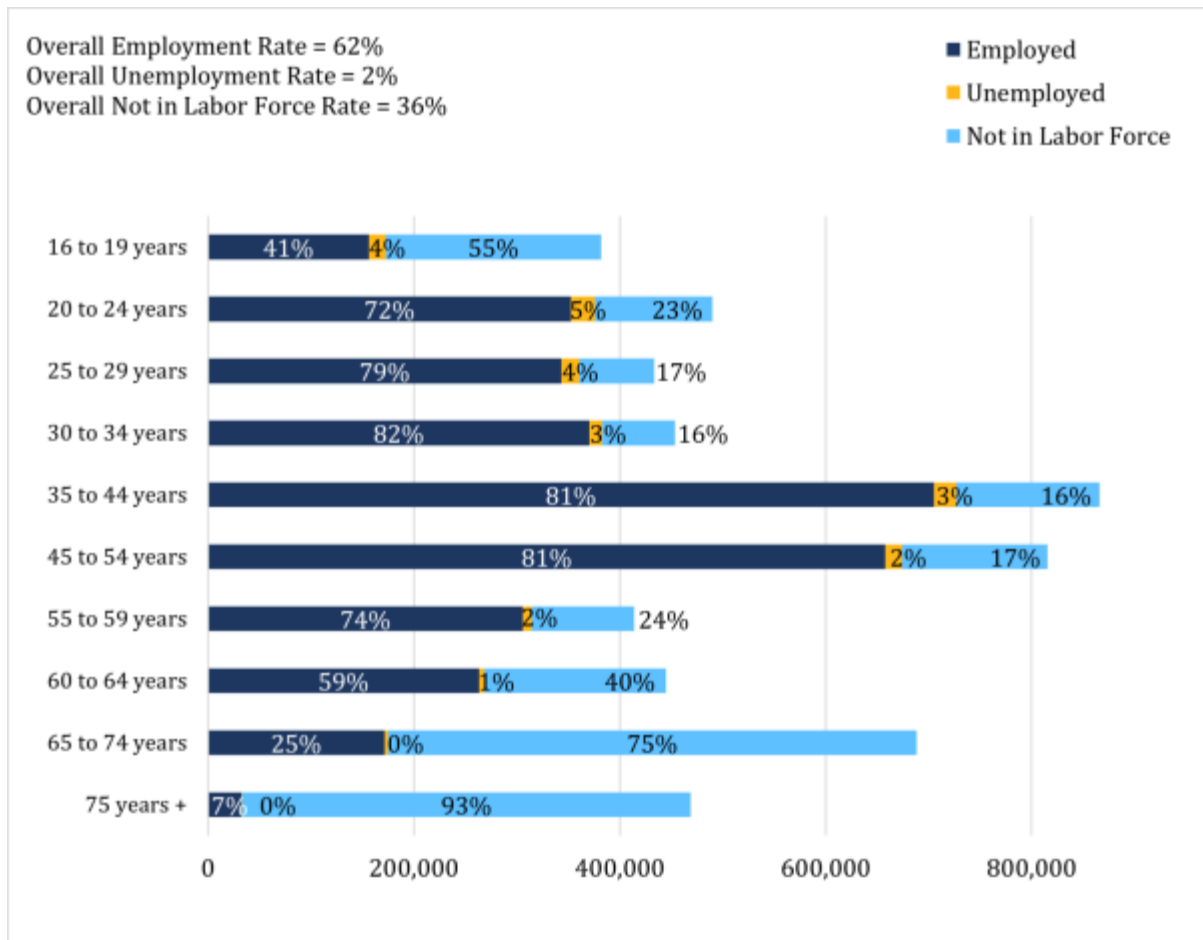
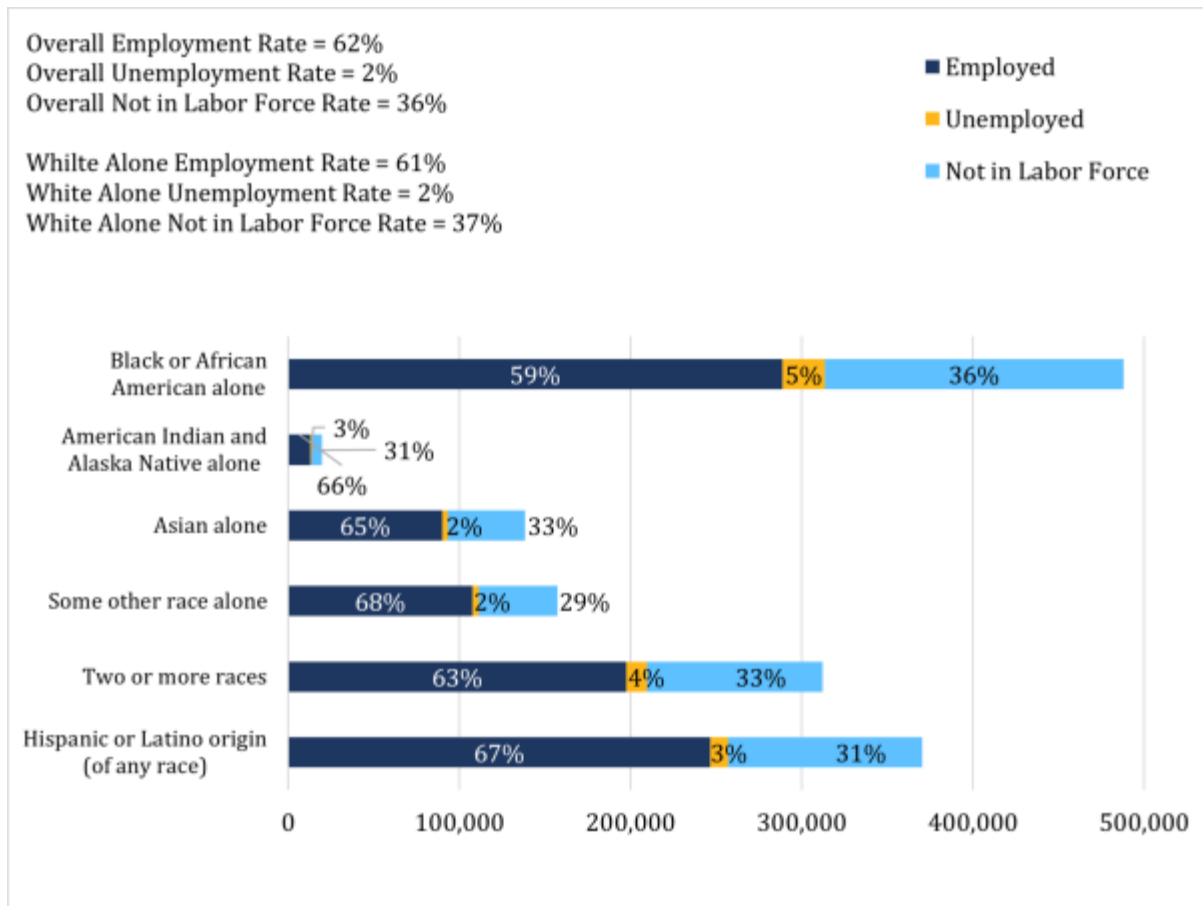


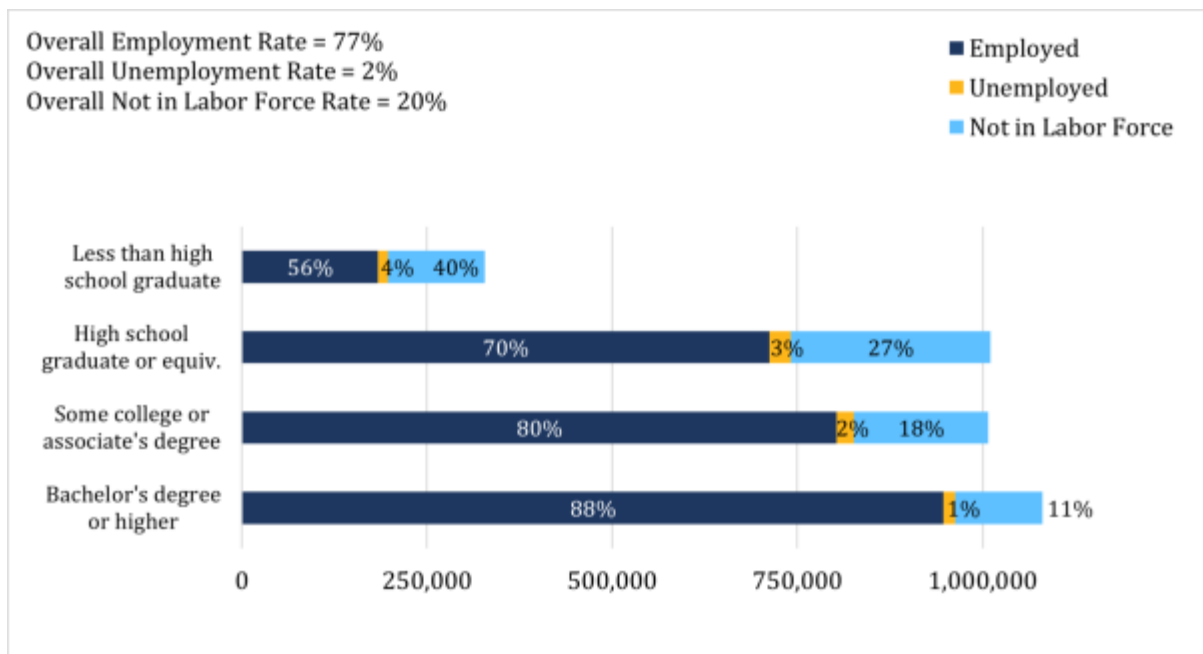
Figure 8 shows Indiana’s employment by race for the civilian population over the age of 16. The vast majority of the population and workforce in Indiana identifies as White alone (not shown in the figure due to significant differences in scale), accounting for 79% of those employed, 63% of those unemployed, and 81% of those not participating in the labor force. With the exception of people who identify as Black or African American alone, members of other racial groups have higher employment rates, and all other racial groups have a lower share of people not participating in the labor force than those who identify as White alone. Unemployment rates are highest among people who identify as Black or African American alone or as two or more races.

Figure 8: Employment by Race, Civilian Population Age 16+, 2022 (source: US Census, American Community Survey, S2301, 1-year estimates)



Employment statistics by educational attainment for the civilian population between the ages of 25 and 64 are shown in Figure 9. Overall, 77% of the population aged 25 – 64 are employed, 2% are unemployed, and 20% are not participating in the labor force. About 10% of this population have less than a high school diploma, while 29% have earned a high school diploma or equivalent. Another 29% have completed some college or two-year degree, and 32% have a four-year degree or higher. Labor force participation increases, and unemployment decreases as educational levels rise. Nearly half of individuals that did not graduate high school are either unemployed or not participating in the workforce.

Figure 9: Employment by Educational Attainment, Civilian Population Aged 25-64, 2022
 (source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, S2301, 1-year estimates)



Employment by sex is shown in Figure 10 for the population between the ages of 20 and 64. While males and females each account for 50% of the population in this age range, males account for a slightly larger share of the employed (52%). Women have slightly lower unemployment, but they participate in the labor force by 6 percentage points less than men.

Figure 10: Employment by Sex, Civilian Population Aged 20-65, 2022 (source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, S2301, 1-year estimates)

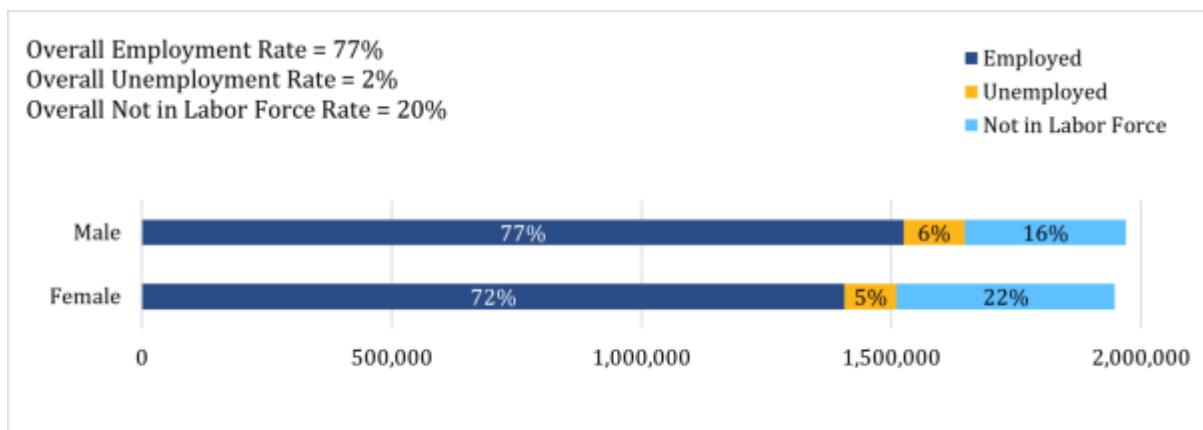


Figure 11 shows employment statistics by parental, poverty, and disability status for the population aged 20 to 65. Females living with their own children account for about 26% of the female population, and counter to conventional thinking about females in the workforce, they are more likely to be participating in the labor force than the broader population of females (17% are not in the labor force compared to 22% for females overall as shown in Figure 11 and compared to 20% for the overall population aged 20-65). However, having younger children under the age of 6 does appear to impact labor force participation among females compared to having older children, although this group accounts for a relatively small number of people. Individuals below the poverty line have the highest unemployment rates of any demographic at 16%. They also have one of the highest rates of not participating in the labor force at 52%. Half

of individuals with any type of disability do not participate in the labor force, likely in part due to the risk of losing disability benefits.

Figure 11: Employment by Other Demographics, Civilian Population Aged 20-65, 2022
(source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, S2301, 1-year estimates)

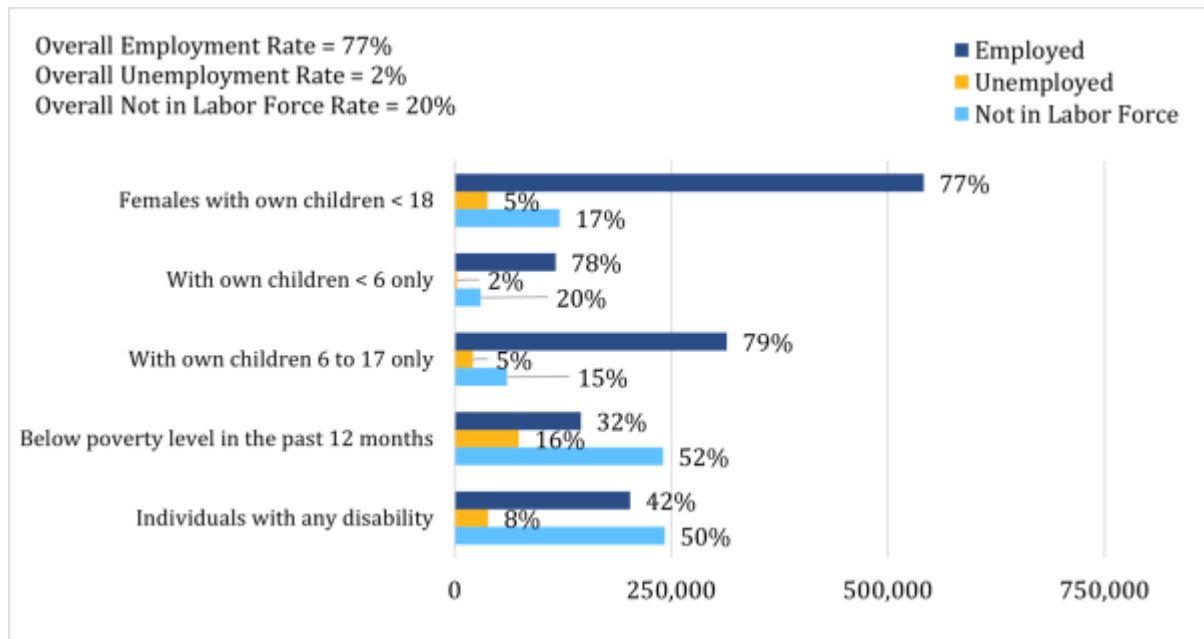


Figure 12: Indiana Veterans by Gender and Age, Male

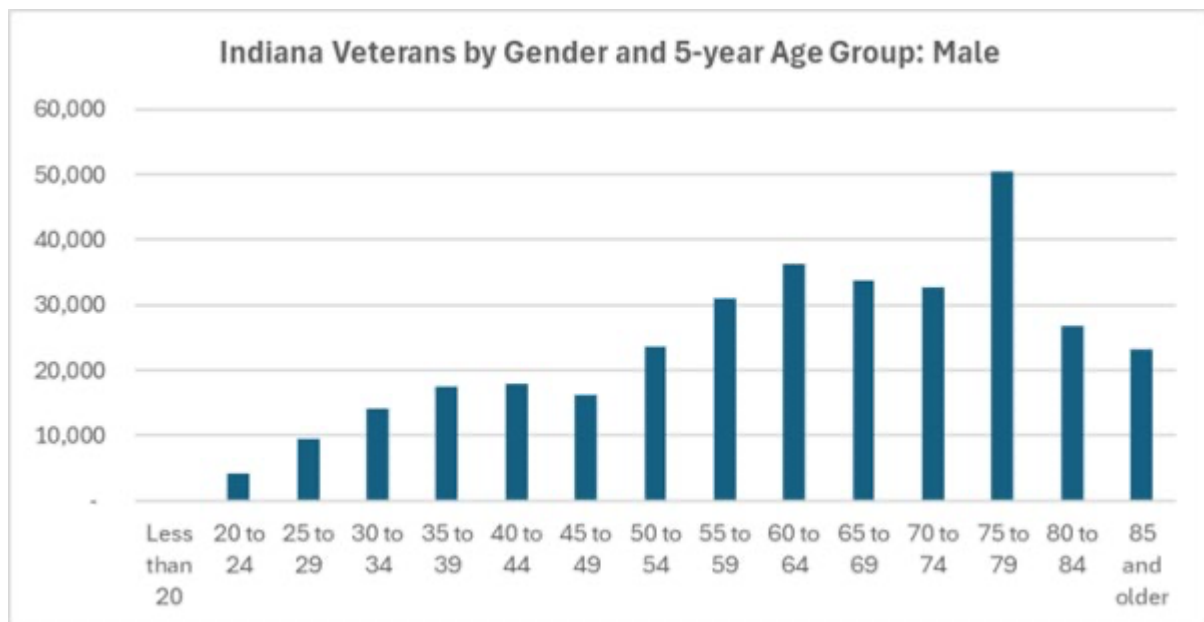
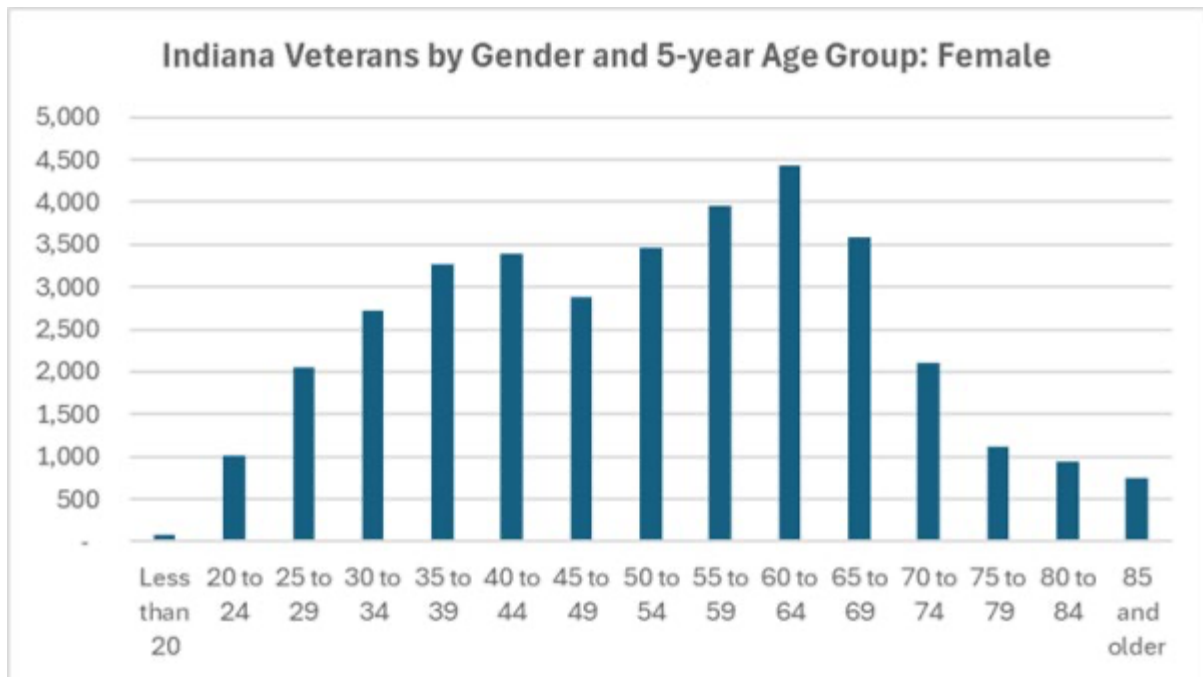


Figure 13: Indiana Veterans by Gender and Age, Female



Source: US Department of Veterans Affairs, Living Veterans Projections by State, 2024

In 2024, 372,484 Veterans are estimated as living in Indiana, which is 7% of the state's adult resident population. 2.9% was the annual average unemployment rate for Veterans in 2023. Female Veterans make up 10% of total Veterans. Male Veterans aged 60+ make up 55% of the total Veteran population in Indiana.

ii. Labor Market Trends

The workforce demographics of Indiana's labor market have changed since 2000. The greatest percentage increase of any population cohort was concentrated in Asian populations (+212.3%), followed by two or more race populations (+187.9%), and Hispanic or Latino populations (+149.3%). While Indiana's population has become more diverse over the past two decades, white populations continue to represent the greatest share with 84.0%.

Table 22: Indiana Population by Race in 2022 (source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Population	Total	% Change from 2000	% Distribution
White	5,736,944	5.5%	84.0%
Black	704,235	35.9%	10.3%
Asian	192,821	212.3%	2.8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	30,332	80.0%	0.4%
Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5,162	116.0%	0.1%
Two or more races	163,543	187.9%	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino	541,749	149.3%	7.9%
Not Hispanic or Latino	6,291,288	7.1%	92.1%

Table 23 details the population share by age statewide and nationally in 2002 and 2022, respectively. Indiana's population by age composition closely mirrors that of the nation. According to U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, individuals between the ages of 55-64 represent nearly 17% of the State's total population in 2022.[1] As

this population cohort prepares to exit the workforce in the next five years (due to retirement), it will be critical to ensure a pipeline of talent is generated to backfill the workforce demand by employers.

[1] Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table S0101, 2022

Table 23: Population Share by Age (source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Population	% of 2002 Population		% of 2022 Population	
	Indiana	USA	Indiana	USA
0 to 4	6.9%	6.8%	5.9%	5.6%
5 to 17	18.8%	18.6%	17.0%	16.2%
18 to 24	10.3%	9.9%	9.9%	9.4%
25 to 44	28.4%	29.2%	25.7%	26.8%
45 to 64	23.3%	23.2%	24.5%	24.8%
65 and older	12.3%	12.4%	16.9%	17.3%

Manufacturing employs the largest share of workers over the age of 55 (31%), followed by the public services sector (26%); and health care and social assistance sector (25%). For individuals between the ages of 25-34 (i.e., recently graduated from post-secondary education and/or been engaged in the workforce post high school), the top sectors for employment still include manufacturing and health care and social assistance, but not as great of a share as older population cohorts in Indiana. For this age group, we see more individuals employed in administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (7%) and accommodation and food services (7%) than for those ages 55-64 (5% & 4%, respectively).

Table 24: Workforce Demographics by Age, Industry (2-digit NAICS), 2022 (source: Lightcast)

Sector	14-18	19-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65+
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Utilities	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	0%
Construction	2%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Manufacturing	5%	12%	16%	18%	19%	12%
Wholesale Trade	1%	2%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Retail Trade	20%	15%	9%	7%	8%	12%
Transportation & Warehousing	2%	6%	6%	5%	6%	5%
Information	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Finance & Insurance	<1%	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	<1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	1%	3%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Admin. & Support & Waste Mngt & Remediation Services	3%	7%	7%	6%	5%	6%
Educational Services	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	4%	11%	14%	13%	13%	12%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Accommodation & Food Services	46%	15%	7%	5%	4%	5%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	8%
Public Services	3%	9%	12%	14%	14%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 25 details the top 20 occupations by employment in Indiana and the age cohorts that make up each occupational group at the 5-digit SOC level. The percentage share depicts how each population cohort stacks up among the top 20 occupations.

Among the top 20 occupations, retirement risk (a large share of the workforce above the age of 55) is highest among office clerks, general (16.4%), heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (15.8%), and retail salespersons (15.7%). In comparison, prime working age individuals (between the ages of 25-54) are largely concentrated in laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand (19.8%), Miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators (18.3%), and registered nurses (14.2%), all of which tend to be physically demanding jobs.

Table 25: Workforce Demographics of Top 20 Occupations by Employment in Indiana, 2022, 5-digit SOC (source: Lightcast)

Occupation	14-18	19-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65+
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	5.6%	12.1%	11.2%	8.6%	7.0%	5.2%
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	1.6%	6.6%	9.4%	8.9%	7.6%	4.1%
Retail Salespersons	9.1%	11.2%	6.8%	5.4%	6.9%	11.6%
Office Clerks, General	2.5%	5.4%	5.4%	6.3%	7.5%	8.9%
Registered Nurses	<0.1	1.6%	6.3%	7.9%	7.7%	4.7%
Fast Food and Counter Workers	40.0%	14.2%	6.4%	3.8%	2.9%	4.2%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	0.3%	1.5%	4.5%	6.6%	8.3%	7.5%
General and Operations Managers	0.0%	0.7%	4.5%	7.5%	5.9%	3.8%
Customer Service Representatives	1.9%	4.7%	6.3%	5.0%	4.6%	3.6%
Cashiers	15.7%	9.6%	4.9%	3.7%	3.9%	5.3%
Stockers and Order Fillers	6.0%	7.4%	5.4%	4.3%	4.2%	4.3%
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1.7%	2.8%	3.3%	4.6%	5.4%	6.4%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	0.6%	3.3%	4.0%	4.2%	4.5%	6.4%
Postsecondary Teachers	0.1%	2.1%	3.4%	3.6%	4.2%	5.2%
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	0.3%	1.2%	2.7%	4.2%	4.9%	4.1%
Waiters and Waitresses	12.5%	8.4%	4.5%	2.3%	1.3%	1.6%
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	0.2%	0.8%	2.8%	3.8%	4.2%	4.1%
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	0.2%	0.9%	1.9%	3.3%	4.6%	5.5%
Construction Laborers	1.1%	2.6%	3.2%	3.1%	2.1%	1.6%
Nursing Assistants	0.8%	3.0%	2.9%	2.8%	2.3%	1.9%

In 2020, Indiana had 148,169 individuals employed in the State but living outside the State. In comparison, 189,046 individuals lived in the State but were employed outside of the State, making Indiana a net exporter of talent (-40,877 workers).[1] A majority of Indiana's outflow workers were between the ages of 30-54 (54.0%), followed by 55 years or older (24.2%), and 29 years or younger (21.9%). A majority of workers in-flowing into Indiana were between the ages of 30-54 (50.7%), followed by 29 years or younger (25.2%), and 55 years or older (24.1%). For comparison, the majority of workers that live and work in Indiana are between the ages of 30-54 (51.4%), 29 years or younger (25.0%), and 55 years and older (23.6%).

Leveraging commuting data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, workforce migration in each of the Economic Growth Regions is detailed in Table 26.

[1] Source: OnTheMap, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 (most recently available data)

Table 26: Commuting Patterns in Economic Growth Regions, 2020 (source: Indiana Business Research Center)

EGR	Commuting FROM this Region TO	Commuting TO this Region FROM
EGR 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook, IL (14.04%) • Will, IL (1.65%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White, IN (9.60%) • Benton, IN (8.31%)
EGR 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Joseph, IN (1.20%) • Berrien, MI (0.83%) • LaGrange, IN (0.62%) • Cass, MI (0.61%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulton, IN (5.99%) • Cass, MI (39.44%) • Starke, IN (29.99%) • LaGrange, IN (26.25%)
EGR 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elkhart, IN (1.96%) • Kosciusko, IN (1.49%) • Marion, IN (0.34%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackford, IN (28.23%) • Paulding, OH (21.20%) • Jay, IN (12.30%)
EGR 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion, IN (2.09%) • Hamilton, IN (1.63%) • Boone, IN (1.25%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulaski, IN (14.86%) • Parke, IN (8.47%) • Newton, IN (6.26%)
EGR 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion, IN (34.95%) • Bartholomew, IN (1.06%) • Delaware, IN (0.75%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rush, IN (30.88%) • Tipton, IN (26.78%) • Henry, IN (21.66%)
EGR 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madison, IN (3.81%) • Marion, IN (3.16%) • Hancock, IN (1.81%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preble, OH (8.33%) • Madison, IN (6.91%) • Franklin, IN (5.64%)
EGR 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion, IN (3.16%) • Hendricks, IN (2.42%) • Montgomery, IN (0.95%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark, IL (12.33%) • Greene, IN (11.68%) • Edgar, IL (9.67%)
EGR 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion, IN (2.47%) • Dubois, IN (1.82%) • Bartholomew, IN (1.22%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pike, IN (7.57%) • Crawford, IN (7.55%) • Morgan, IN (6.20%)
EGR 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton, OH (7.51%) • Boone, KY (1.73%) • Marion, IN (1.48%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, IN (20.17%) • Trimble, KY (18.94%) • Scott, IN (18.83%)
EGR 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jefferson, KY (26.43%) • Jackson, IN (1.18%) • Orange, IN (0.50%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange, IN (8.37%) • Jefferson, IN (7.60%) • Meade, KY (3.45%)
EGR 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henderson, KY (0.87%) • Daviess, KY (0.81%) • Daviess, IN (0.60%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wabash, IL (31.08%) • Henderson, KY (24.77%) • Lawrence, IL (24.47%)
EGR 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton, IN (6.74%) • Hendricks, IN (4.38%) • Johnson, IN (2.75%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hendricks, IN (42.87%) • Hancock, IN (41.86%) • Johnson, IN (39.88%)

Indiana is tracking the potential risk automation may have on occupations across the State. Using Lightcast’s U.S. Automation Index analysis, occupations that are “at risk” have an automation index score above 100, whereas those “below risk of automation” have an index score below 100.[1]

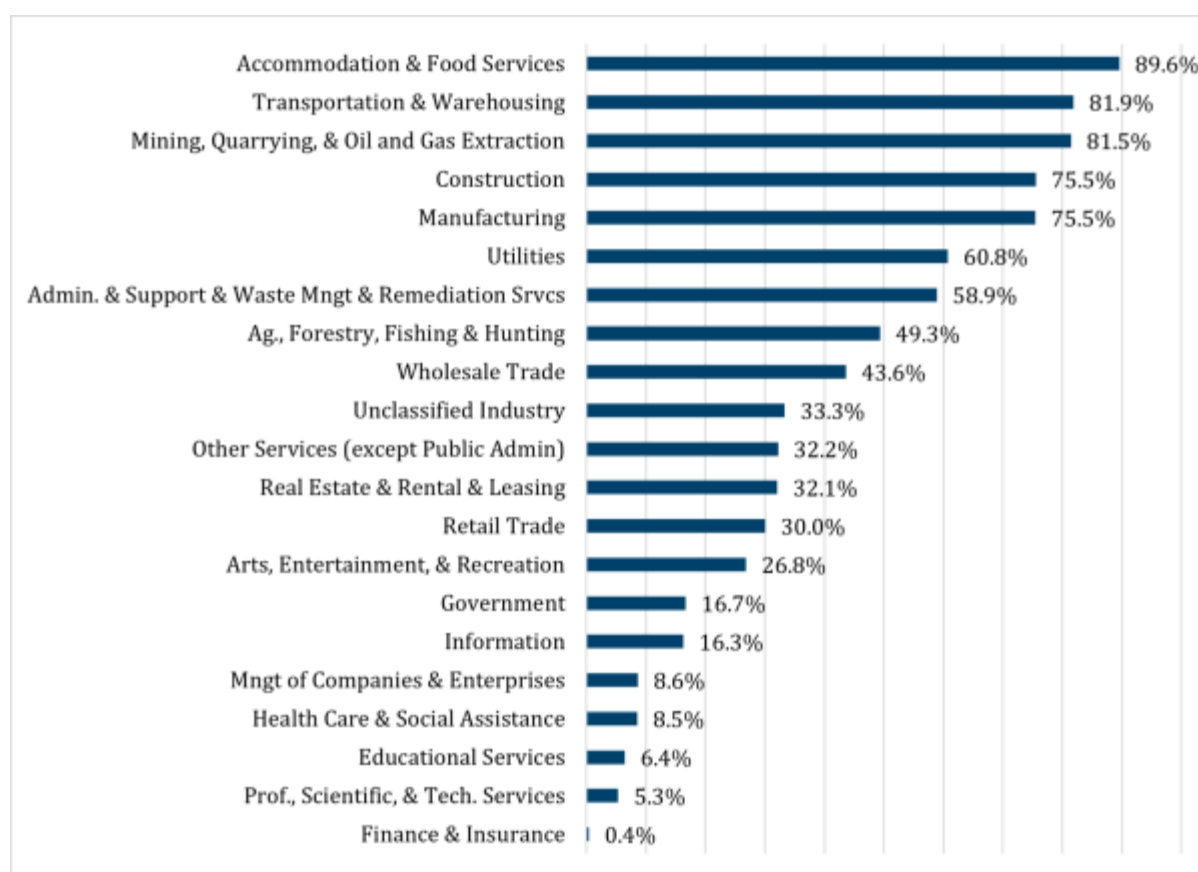
At the 2-digit SOC level, occupations most at risk of automation include Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (125.4); Construction and Extraction Occupations (123.2); Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations (122.5); Production Occupations (113.6); Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (111.0); Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations (109.9); and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations (108.8).

The impact that these occupations have on Indiana’s industries is significant. The industries most impacted by occupations at-risk of automation include Accommodation and Food Services

(89.6% of jobs); Transportation and Warehousing (81.9% of jobs); Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas (81.5% of jobs); Construction (75.5% of jobs); and Manufacturing (75.5% of jobs).

It is worth noting, however, that automation does not necessarily equate to job losses. Job displacement may occur during the transition to automation; however, there will be a need to upskill the workers in impacted industries and occupations to be able to monitor, troubleshoot, and repair the automated processes they oversee. The greatest risk, as it relates to automation, is that the workforce may not be ready to perform the required tasks – not that jobs will disappear entirely. The State of Indiana recognizes that social benefits may occur with automation trends. For example, some of the sectors that have higher likelihood of automation (e.g., Accommodation and Food Services, Transportation and Warehousing, etc.) do not pay living wages. These are the jobs employers struggle to fill and most likely to be disproportionately staffed by underserved communities and women. Indiana is driven to ensure workers have the foundational skills needed for a new kind of entry-level job, one that likely requires more technological skills.

Figure 14: Percent of Total Jobs by Industry At-Risk of Automation (source: Lightcast)[2]



[1] Lightcast combines data with the Frey and Osborne findings at the occupation level to identify which job tasks are “at risk” and which are resilient. Lightcast also incorporates data to identify where occupations cluster in industries facing disruption, and where workers’ skills mean their nearest job options are also facing automation risk. This is a 100-based index.

[2] Source: Lightcast 2023.2, Inverse Staffing Patterns with manual calculation & analysis

When considering the future workforce that may be impacted by occupations most at-risk of automation (ages 14-34), Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations poses the greatest risk. These entry-level occupations do not require extensive training or experience. While these occupations have not traditionally provided competitive wages, they have provided younger workers with initial workforce experience. With automation impacting these occupations, Indiana will need to align with workforce and education and training partners to get younger populations into a work-based learning experience (e.g., registered apprenticeship program, internship, etc.) where they can earn hands-on experience and industry-recognized credentials into Indiana's emerging and existing industries.

Table 27: Age of Current Workforce of Occupations Most At-Risk of Automation, 2022 (source: Lightcast)¹

SOC Code	Occupation At-Risk of Automation	Age 14-18	Age 19-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-54	Age 55-64	Age 65+
35-0000	Food Preparation & Serving Related	21.4%	22.3%	18.9%	25.0%	8.2%	4.3%
37-0000	Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	2.9%	10.7%	17.2%	41.0%	18.9%	9.3%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	6.0%	10.6%	22.1%	36.9%	15.3%	9.0%
47-0000	Construction & Extraction	1.3%	10.4%	21.9%	45.3%	16.2%	5.0%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	1.1%	8.0%	19.5%	45.1%	20.3%	6.0%
51-0000	Production	1.1%	9.2%	20.9%	44.6%	19.3%	4.9%
53-0000	Transportation & Material Moving	3.6%	16.5%	25.7%	24.0%	21.2%	8.9%

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.2, Occupation Demographics Table

iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

In 2021, Indiana's educational attainment followed national trends with a few notable exceptions. The State lags behind the nation in the share of residents with a graduate degree or

higher, 17.7% compared to 20.4%, and it had a slightly smaller proportion of its population end their education prior to completing high school. However, the share of Indiana residents that have some college, but no degree (which includes formal credentials or certificates) exceeds national figures by over six percentage points. This indicates that Indiana has a large share of “middle skill” workers, which is in keeping with its strong manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and health care industry base.

Aligning with trends related to “middle-skill” job growth, Ivy Tech Community College’s statewide Skills Training (or industry-aligned, non-credit courses) courses have witnessed a rapid increase in employer demand for custom training. As of 02/12/2024, 15,049 students are currently enrolled in Skills Training courses, which is a 43% point in time increase from the same time period in 2023. The increased demand for Skills Training follows ongoing employer Skills-Based Hiring trends as well.

Table 28: 2021 Educational Attainment (source: Lightcast)¹

	% of Indiana Population in 2021	% of National Population in 2021
Less Than High School Diploma	3.6%	4.9%
High School Diploma, GED, or Equivalent	6.8%	6.5%
Some College, No Degree	33.0%	26.5%
Associate's Degree	19.8%	20.0%
Bachelor's Degree	8.9%	8.7%
Graduate Degree or Higher	17.7%	20.4%

¹ Source: Lightcast 2023.2, Educational Attainment Snapshot

- English Learners: increased from 82.8% to 85.0%
- Special education students: increased from 74.5% to 76.4%
- Students receiving free and reduced-price meal: increased from 82.8% to 83.7%

Despite these successes, Indiana recognizes the need to increase the statewide high school graduation rate and propel students toward a career path beyond high school.

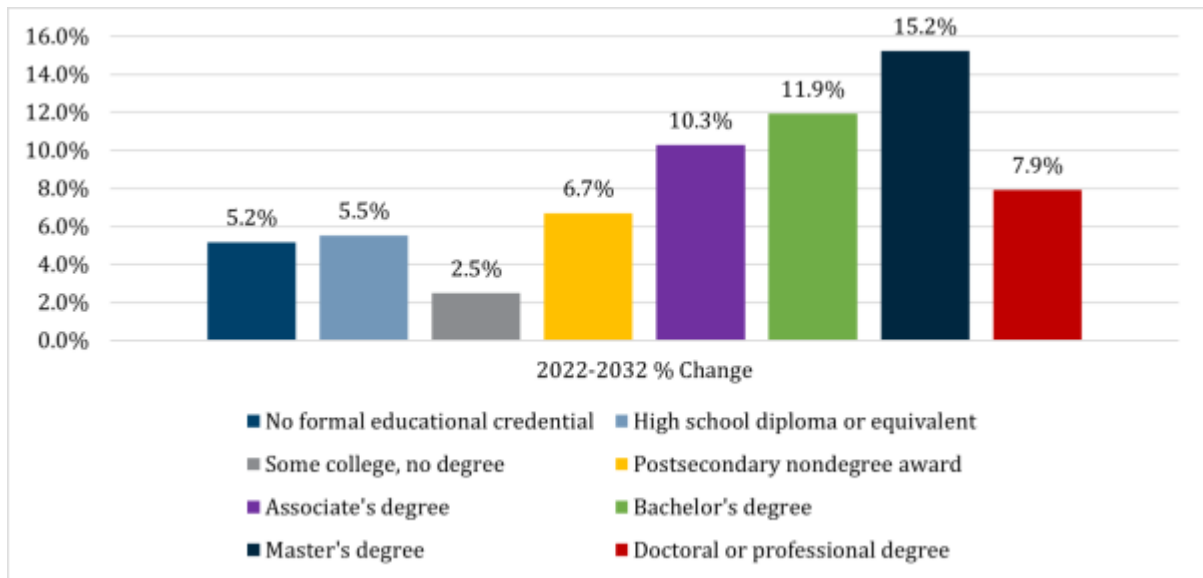
Education requirements by employers vary among industry sectors. In June 2022, Conexus Indiana released its *State of Indiana's Advanced Manufacturing Workforce* report. Upon surveying hundreds of advanced manufacturing organizations of varying sized across the State, they discovered 77.0% of organizations require a high school diploma or equivalent for positions. These positions were concentrated in production and machine operators. Just 16.6% of positions require a bachelor's degree or higher, with many of these positions in engineering, IT, administration, and leadership, followed by 4.8% of positions requiring a two-year degree, and 1.6% of positions requiring a vocational trade certificate.[3]

The life sciences industry, like manufacturing, is an economic driver for the State of Indiana, especially with pharmaceutical giant, Eli Lilly, Inc. headquartered in Indianapolis. BioCrossroads, a life sciences initiative that advances Indiana's signature strengths in the life sciences by connecting with corporate, academic, and philanthropic partners, developed a 2022 report titled, *BioCrossroads and the Indiana Life Sciences Ecosystem: Tracking Two Decades of Progress and Charting a Path for Sustained Success*. Through data research and analysis via Lightcast, BioCrossroads discovered that Indiana's life sciences sector remains heavily oriented around not only well-educated scientists and medical doctors, but also many in production and technician positions that are considered "middle-skill" occupations. Life sciences companies rely heavily on a workforce of skilled technicians (both in engineering and scientific domains), production workers with varied skills, transportation and material moving occupations, and others, such as installation, maintenance, and repair. These middle-skill occupations represent well over one-third of jobs in the life sciences sector (42%), compared to just 32% for all other industries in the State.[4]

According to BioCrossroads 2020 Report, the number of graduates with an Associate's degree or higher in health and clinical sciences fields was 10,331. The number of bioscience graduates in 2020 was 1,617 and the number of enrolled medical students was 365 in 2020.[5]

As Indiana rebounds from the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for post-secondary credentials increases. As detailed in Figure 13, over the next ten years (2022-2032), jobs that require an Associate's degree (10.3%), Bachelor's degree (11.9%), Master's degree (15.2%), and Doctoral or professional degree (7.9%) are projected to increase.[6] Jobs that do not require postsecondary education remain critically important to the Hoosier economy, however, an increasing share of jobs will require a postsecondary credential as an entry-level requirement.

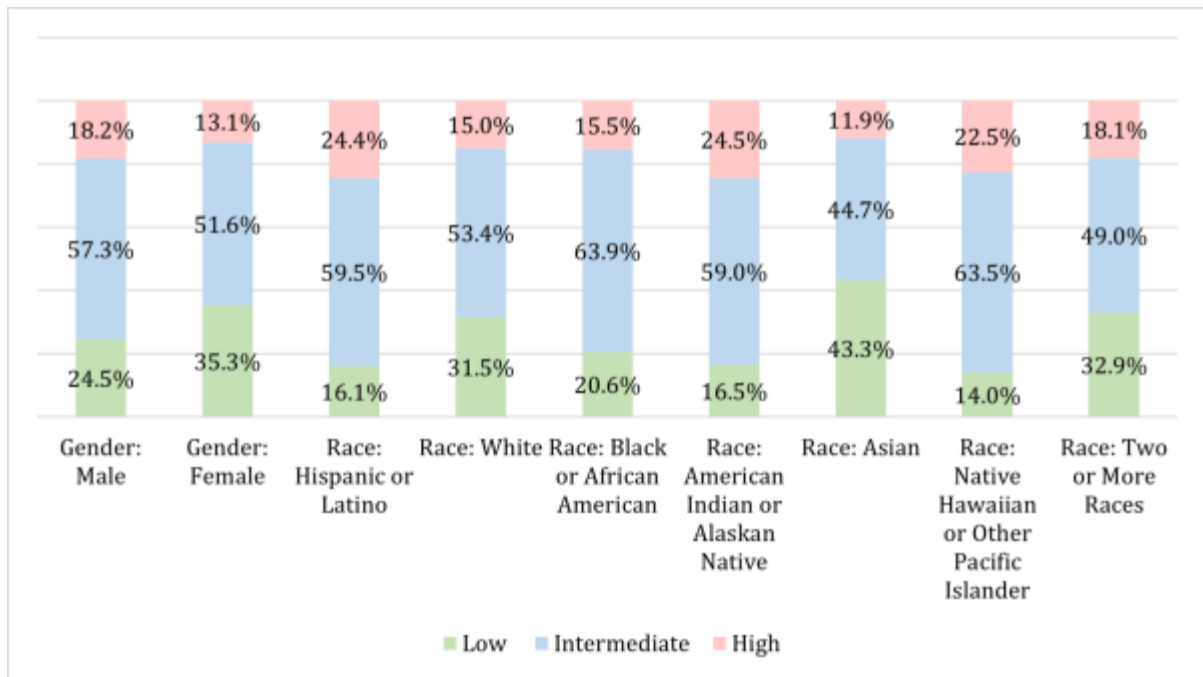
Figure 15: Percent Jobs Change by Education Levels in Indiana, 2022-2032 (source: Lightcast)



Jobs with lower education requirements are more susceptible to disruption from automation than jobs requiring bachelor's and graduate degrees. Because Indiana's Black and Hispanic/Latino residents earn postsecondary credentials at lower rates and disproportionately work in jobs with lower educational requirements, it follows that Hispanic/Latino and Black workers would be at greater risk for automation than White or Asian workers.[1] The available data on automation risk, when broken out by race/ethnicity, shows this to be the case for Indiana's Hispanic/Latino workers, American Indian or Alaskan Native workers, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander workers, Black workers, and male workers. This data was compiled by occupation employment numbers in Indiana by demographics (gender and race/ethnicity) and calculated to determine automation risk. Automation risk is categorized as Low (72-94), Intermediate (95 - 116), and High (117 - 139).

[1] Note: data provided for Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and Two or More Races was a small sample size.

Figure 16: Employment Demographic in Jobs by Automation Risk, Indiana, 2022-2032 (source: Lightcast)



[1] Source: Indiana Department of Education, 2022 Federal Graduation Rate Data

[2] Source: Indiana Department of Education, 2022 Federal Graduation Rate Data

[3] Source: <https://www.conexusindiana.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/AMW-FINAL-PDF-1.pdf>

[4] Source: <https://www.cicpindiana.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/BioCrossroads-Ecosystem2022-webready.pdf>

[5] Source: <https://www.cicpindiana.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/BioCrossroads-Ecosystem2022-webready.pdf>

[6] Source: Lightcast 2023.3, Occupational Staffing Patterns by Entry-Level Education Requirements

With the continued incorporation of automation into the workplace comes with it the demand for increased digital skills among Hoosier workers. TechPoint, the growth initiative for Indiana's digital innovation economy, released a 2023 report titled *Seismic Shifts in the Talent Landscape: 2023 TechPoint Indiana Tech Workforce Report*, which revealed hiring trends by employers seeking tech talent across all industries. The most in-demand technical skills sought after by employers include agile methodology, automation, software development, and software engineering.[1] SQL programming language remains the most referenced technical software skill, but Python programming language and Amazon Web Services have increased significantly since 2021.

Indiana employers continue to significantly restrict their talent pools by over relying on bachelor's degrees and years of experience as a proxy for skills and competency. Across tech roles, 47.6% of job listings called for a bachelor's degree in 2022 and 24.6% called for an associate degree. Only 33.6% of job descriptions in 2022 did not call for a specific degree requirement or accepted a high school diploma as a minimum requirement. By focusing on degrees and years of service, companies significantly reduce their pools of candidates,

eliminating many who have the skills and competencies to fill the positions, but get screened out. In 2022, 29.8% of descriptions listed no specific number of years required. Nearly 8 percent required one year of experience.[2] Through the collaborative partnerships of TechPoint, the Markle Foundation, and other TechPoint partners, TechPoint has begun reducing Indiana tech employers' reliance on degrees, credentials, and year of experience.

[1] Source: <https://techpoint.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-TechPoint-Tech-Workforce-Report.pdf> (Job Postings Analysis)

[2] Source: <https://techpoint.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-TechPoint-Tech-Workforce-Report.pdf> (data collected via Lightcast)

C. COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSION. DESCRIBE AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MEETING HIRING, EDUCATION, AND SKILLS NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ECONOMY COMPARED TO THE ASSETS AVAILABLE IN THE LABOR FORCE IN THE STATE.

The State of Indiana, like other states, is grappling with the challenges of developing talent for the increasing and changing demands of a nimble workforce. Advances in technology and a rapidly evolving economy have led to historically low unemployment rates coupled with urgent questions about whether K-12 and postsecondary systems are truly preparing learners for the careers of today and tomorrow. Indiana is facing workforce challenges on multiple fronts, including a tight labor market, the ongoing retirement of the Baby Boomers, the relatively high and persistent demand in industries and occupations that do not require formal training beyond high school balanced with the need to upskill workers to compete for jobs that increasingly require digital skills, and competing demand for the skilled trades due to a once in a generation investment from the federal government. However, these challenges also present the State with opportunities. For example:

- As employers invest in automation to increase efficiency and mitigate long-term demographic shifts in the labor market, the State has the opportunity to focus on skill transformation to move workers into quality, family-sustaining jobs.
- The tight labor market and federal investment requirements will continue to incentivize employers to think outside the box in terms of activating disconnected and underserved workers and redefining what a “good job” looks like, including benefits, opportunities for advancement, and flexibility.
- Indiana’s emerging industries and the workforce demand generated by new federal investments will necessitate a “yes, and...” approach to providing education and training to meet the full range of jobs that will be in demand, including the skilled trades, the social services sector, and STEM. The State will continue to build upon recent legislation to promote work-based learning, increase high school graduation and college-going rates, and incentivize training enrollment in high-demand fields.

The State is well-positioned to provide the education and skills in demand now and in the future due to its nationally recognized postsecondary education system, forward thinking sector and community partnerships, and state-level coordination around workforce planning to meet the demand generated by emerging opportunities and federal investments.

For example, key institutions and partnerships within the State have laid the foundation to provide a skilled semiconductor workforce to help the country's urgent need to re-shore semiconductor manufacturing and research:

- **Purdue University**, an 'R1' research institution, is an established leader in the nascent field of microelectronics. It offers a full suite of degrees and credential options in semiconductor fields including a recently created master's program – the first of its kind among the top five engineering schools. The program offers instruction in all major elements of semiconductor production from raw materials and software/hardware to chip design, and manufacturing & packaging.[1] Purdue is leading a national consortium of 18 universities for the *Scalable Asymmetric Lifecycle Engagement* (SCALE), a five-year, U.S. Department of Defense-sponsored program aimed at addressing the urgent need to develop a highly skilled U.S. microelectronics workforce. The University manages SCALE in partnership with the **Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane Division**, another Indiana asset. Purdue is also one of four Midwestern R1 universities that are exclusively committed to the Silicon Crossroads regional innovation hub through the Defense Department's Microelectronic Commons program and serve on the Silicon Crossroads board. They received \$10 million in Microelectronic Commons funding through the hub to expand the capabilities at their Birck Center.
- **Indiana University (IU)**, an 'R1' research institution, is diving headfirst into the world of high-tech and national defense by supporting the talent pipeline dedicated to the manufacturing of microelectronics and semiconductors. With an \$111 million investment, IU aims to not only fuel the microelectronics industry within Indiana and beyond, but also accelerate innovative solutions for critical national security challenges through deepened collaboration with the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane Division. IU's comprehensive plan tackles multiple areas: emerging semiconductor technologies, talent development, and critical defense needs. From new faculty hires to cutting-edge facilities and strategic initiatives, the university is pouring resources into advancements in microelectronics, nanotechnology, AI, machine learning, and cybersecurity. Aligning with the IU 2030 Strategic Plan's focus on business and industry engagement, the investments will also forge partnerships with defense contractors and companies developing dual-use technologies - solutions with both civilian and defense applications. In addition, the EDGE Consortium aims to reduce gender and racial barriers by doubling the number of qualified women and people of color entering the world of semiconductors. Led by female leaders from top research universities, EDGE unites public and private sector leaders to solidify US leadership in this crucial field, driven by the vision to foster cutting edge solutions that ignite innovation, economic prosperity, and national security. IU is also a member of the Silicon Crossroads hub.
- **The University of Notre Dame**, an 'R1' research institution, is engaged in cutting-edge research in computer engineering, chemical and biomolecular engineering, and nuclear physics. It leads ASCENT, a microelectronics research center funded by the Semiconductor Research Corporation (SRC) and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). They are also a member of the Silicon Crossroads hub and received \$4 million from the Microelectronic Commons program through the hub to build a high frequency RF Test and Evaluation laboratory.

- **Ivy Tech Community College** (Ivy Tech), the State's largest public postsecondary institution and the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system, is partnering with **Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology**, one of our nationally recognized engineering schools, to develop a two-year semiconductor manufacturing degree with hands-on cleanroom experience.[2] Additionally, Ivy Tech is currently partnering with Purdue University to co-develop a high-school recruitment pipeline and Custom Contract Skills Training to address workforce & talent needs in the Lafayette region. Ivy Tech is also a member of the Silicon Crossroads hub, and they received \$2 million from the Microelectronic Commons program through the hub to build a Microelectronics Training Center near NSWC Crane to support the workforce development need of Crane and the microelectronics companies who are locating in the region.
- Indiana's **Accelerating Microelectronics Production and Development Task Force** (AMPD) is an initiative that brings together industry veterans, academic partners, non-dilutive federal funding consultants, construction and site selection experts, and strategy consultants to leverage Indiana's advantages in microelectronics. The task force, led by the Indiana Secretary of Commerce, is focused on attracting capital investments by connecting semiconductor companies with local opportunities, including skilled talent, shovel-ready real estate, and competitive investment packages.
- The **Governor's Workforce Cabinet** is partnering with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to incorporate emerging semiconductor cluster growth and the resulting workforce demand. The results are being used to guide decision making around Indiana's in-demand occupations related to training funding at both the secondary and postsecondary levels.

While not directly tied to the State's efforts to nurture a semiconductor ecosystem and workforce, Indiana's efforts to coordinate around future demand for a highly educated and skilled workforce training will benefit all of the State's existing and emerging industries. During Indiana's 2023 legislative session, lawmakers sought to leverage current **collaborative efforts among State government, K-12 education, higher education, business/industry, and other key partners** to provide more opportunities to students via Indiana House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1002. HEA 1002 establishes the concept of a *Career Scholarship Account* (CSA) and gives the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) the ability to approve career courses and apprenticeship programs. For the 2024-2025 school year, certain school corporations must include instruction for all students regarding career awareness, including Career Navigation and Coaching (CNC). To support this, all public high schools are also mandated to hold at least one career fair during school hours. There is also a new mandate to have 30-minute meetings with schools and third parties, which may be waived if schools participate in a CNC.

The collaborative spirit of workforce system partners contributes to the coordinated hiring, training, and placement of all Hoosiers. To strengthen this collaboration, additional areas for opportunity include:

- **Data Sharing:** allowing for better understanding of who the State serves, where they are being served, and how the State serves them.
- **Co-Enrollment:** packaging services that work together to meet Hoosiers' unique needs.

- **Co-Location:** improving customer service by strategically locating staff to help break down barriers for individuals when they access State services.
- **Cross-Training:** increasing State, local, and front-line staff knowledge across Indiana's talent development system to better serve Hoosiers.
- **Employer Engagement:** sharing information with Hoosier businesses about the benefits of Indiana's talent development system and encouraging them to engage with underserved and underrepresented populations.

[1] Source: IEDC June 2022 Newsletter

[2] Source: IEDC June 2022 Newsletter

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required ⁶ and optional one-stop delivery system partners.⁷

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

Indiana's workforce system continues to operate in 12 geographically defined regions. These regions are continuing to be evaluated based on strategies determined by WIOA for most effective funding and service delivery. To date, there are 20 comprehensive offices known as WorkOne Centers (Indiana's term for American Job Centers) throughout the State. In addition to the comprehensive offices, Indiana has more than 70 WorkOne affiliate sites and access points across the State. Some counties with lower population totals utilize mobile services and rotating staff, which strategically travel across regions to best reach the individuals in need of services.

Each region has a local workforce development board (LWDB) with a designated regional chief elected official. The board in each region oversees regional programs and funding needs and manages allocations and programs to meet the needs of their specific region. One goal of the LWDBs is to use the funding and services across Core and Partner Programs in the most efficient manner to best provide individuals with a quality outcome. The LWDBs also serve employers within the region by helping meet their talent needs. LWDB training was developed by Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and implemented as a mandatory requirement for newly appointed local board members. This training requirement became effective during the summer of 2022. The training is reviewed and refreshed as necessary, with the next update anticipated by early 2024. This allows LWDB members to better understand the potential of their role and the responsibilities the board holds within the workforce system.

In 2018, Governor Holcomb worked with the Indiana General Assembly to create the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) with the goal of bringing together State agencies, employers, education and training providers, and other interested stakeholders to break down the bureaucratic silos that existed around some of these programs with the intention of providing opportunities to move all Hoosiers to the "Next Level." Indiana is uniquely positioned to transform the various systems and programs into a singularly unified system, and this Plan supports progress towards unification. Each of the State agencies responsible for implementing partner programs are included as representatives on the GWC. Additionally, the GWC established a steering committee to provide input and drive Plan development. The steering committee had representation from partner programs, and they were each able to discuss how each of those programs could be better supported through more strategic alignment across the talent development system.

There are a number of regional and local programs that also operate within the workforce system and broader talent development system as a whole. By modeling better cross-agency collaboration and program integration at the State level, it is our goal for there to be better awareness and seamless delivery of the various activities and programs for individuals and employers at the local level.

Core Programs: A brief overview of each core program is outlined below. Additional information on each program can be found throughout the plan.

- **Title I – Adult:** Adult services funding is allocated to Indiana's 12 LWDBs, and services are provided in three categories: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services. Based upon the needs of the individual, the State of Indiana uses the appropriate activities to engage and/or re-engage a person into the workforce system. The adult program is available to anyone 18 years and older, with priority service given to those with barriers to employment (e.g., low income, long-term unemployment, ex-offender, public assistance recipient, etc.).

- Title I – Dislocated Worker: Dislocated Workers include workers that have been terminated or laid off, or have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment; are eligible for or have exhausted unemployment insurance; have demonstrated an appropriate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment insurance and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; have been terminated or laid off or received notification of termination or layoff from employment as a result of a permanent closure or substantial layoff; are employed at a facility where the employer has made the general announcement that the facility will close within 180 days; were self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community or because of a natural disaster; or are a displaced homemaker who is no longer supported by another family member.
- Title I – In-School Youth: In-school youth are classified as youth who are attending secondary or postsecondary schools, not younger than the age of 14 and not older than 21 (unless an individual with a disability who is attending school under State law) at time of enrollment. These youth are from low income backgrounds and may be basic skills deficient, an English language learner, an offender, a homeless individual or runaway, an individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system, or has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under the social security act, an individual who is pregnant or parenting, an individual with a disability or an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.
- Title I – Out-of-School Youth: Out-of-School youth are classified as youth who are not attending any school (as defined under State law), not younger than 16 nor older than 24 at the time of enrollment. These youth may be a school dropout, a youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter; a recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner; an offender; a homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, or a runaway; an individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under the social security act, or in and out-of- home placement; an individual who is pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; or a low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.
- Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act: Adult education in Indiana ensures individuals have access to educational and career services. Through foundational skills development, adult education provides the remediation and advancement in academic competencies that allow Hoosiers the prospect of social and economic mobility.
- Title III – Wagner-Peyser: Wagner-Peyser funds provide State staff in the WorkOne Centers to support jobseekers, to provide employer engagement and recruitment services, and to fund the labor exchange/job matching system. Employer services are also provided through an online labor exchange system or through business service staff

in WorkOnes. The goal of the Wagner-Peyser program is to bring together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers.

- Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation: Vocational Rehabilitation services provide quality individualized services to enhance and support people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain or retain employment. Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a program for high school students and adults with disabilities. VR counselors can help eligible individuals with an identified disability (IEP or a 504 plan or with other physical, mental health, or learning concerns) gain skills, find a job, and start a career.

Partner Programs: A brief overview of partner programs is outlined below. Additional information regarding Core and Partner program collaboration is included throughout the Plan.

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Participants must be at least 55 years old, unemployed, and have a family income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level. Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses, then to individuals who are over 65 years of age, have a disability, have low literacy skills or limited English proficiency, reside in a rural area, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, have low employment prospects, or have failed to find employment after using services through the WorkOne.
- Carl D. Perkins: Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Educational Act and is a funding pool provided to secondary and post-secondary career and technical education programs. Recipients in Indiana are Career and Technical Education (CTE) Districts, Vincennes University, and Ivy Tech Community College.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)[1]: TAA assists workers who have been dislocated due to foreign trade impacts. The goal of the TAA program is to help each worker participating in the program obtain suitable employment whenever possible and return to employment as quickly as possible. The TAA Program provides trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become reemployed in a good job. Together with its workforce development partners in the one-stop delivery system authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the TAA Program helps retrain, retool, and rebuild the American workforce.
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant Programs (JVSG): JVSG funds are provided to states to fund two staff positions: the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) and the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER). These positions are fully integrated into the WorkOne offices. The DVOP's role is to provide individualized career services to veterans and other eligible persons with significant barriers to employment through case management. The LVER's role is to facilitate employment opportunities and advocate on behalf of veterans with employers.
- Unemployment Insurance (UI): In the State of Indiana, an individual is eligible for UI after submitting a claim through either the internet or through the nearest full service

WorkOne Career Center. Information required to complete a claim includes the last employer's name, mailing address, phone number, and the dates of employment. Additionally, an individual must submit their address, social security number, and a telephone number.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program: TANF provides financial assistance to families in need. To receive TANF benefits you must be a family in-need with a dependent child (a person under the age of 18, or 18 if a full-time student in secondary school). These individuals/families must meet income requirements which vary dependent on the size of the assistance group. Individuals must meet State residency, citizenship/immigration status, employment, and child support assignment requirements.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP E&T) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Indiana Manpower Placement and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) provides services designed to help recipients of SNAP and TANF achieve economic self-sufficiency through education, training, job search and job placement activities. IMPACT offers much more than a job training services because it seeks to address a broad range of barriers that may inhibit individuals from seeking and maintaining employment. Over the next two years, we will evaluate potential duplicative services between IMPACT and our WorkOnes for value and outcomes.

[1] Note: As of June 30, 2022, the TAA program entered into Sunset termination provision (TEGL 14-22). Under the phased termination of the TAA program, the State is only able to serve and conduct outreach to individuals who had a TAA certification occurring prior to the termination of the program.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Strengths:

Indiana's workforce system has many strengths, including how it is uniquely structured under the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to allow for flexibility to respond to the ever-changing economy to serve individuals and employers.

State Board Structure Supports Alignment and Integration

Since 2018, the Indiana Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) has championed greater alignment of the State's workforce system with the broader workforce activities throughout the State. As the State Workforce Development Board, the GWC not only oversees WIOA-related efforts but serves as the convener of business and community leaders, education representatives from K-12 and postsecondary institutions, Indiana lawmakers, and experts from State agencies and members are geographically diverse, representing Indiana's 12 economic growth regions. The composition of the Cabinet fosters a holistic approach for strategic alignment for workforce development spanning from early childhood through K-12, post-secondary, and adult learners in partnership with industry. Regular convenings by the GWC throughout the State inform the State's workforce development leaders of the existing and emerging workforce challenges and opportunities in Indiana's diverse communities. Regional data profiles including labor market information, education and workforce program metrics, top employers, real time job postings, and built environment measures are generated for each

meeting to information members and the public, and speakers highlight best practices and innovation in Indiana's workforce, talent, and economic development ecosystem. These meetings help foster talent development and growth statewide by informing policy and decision making and scaling best practices.

Perhaps no strength is greater in Indiana than the ability for State leaders from workforce development, K-12 and postsecondary education, vocational rehabilitation, industry leaders, employers and more to come together to solve the State's workforce challenges. As the convener of workforce development, the GWC strives to identify and elevate programs, activities, and enacted legislation that can be integrated across State agencies to ensure employers have access to a skilled and diverse workforce and Hoosiers have access to good jobs with livable wages without barriers. In advance of the 2023 legislative session, the Cabinet, along with additional subject matter experts in social services, workforce, education and business representatives came together to form working groups to address Indiana's most pressing issues. What culminated was a list of recommendations to the Governor and Indiana General Assembly <https://www.in.gov/gwc/home/gwc-recommendations/>.

Some related outcomes include:

- **Increased Access to Early Learning Services:** Income eligibility for the *On My Way Pre-K* program was raised from 127% to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. An additional \$5 million in funding was allocated to cover increased program enrollment. The State is calibrating operations with the intent of expanding eligibility. In October 2023, the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), a board member of the GWC, announced the *Employer-Sponsored Childcare Fund*, part of Governor Holcomb's 2023 *Next Level Agenda*, to mobilize employers and communities to create or expand childcare offerings that address the needs of working Hoosiers. The \$25 million program, in partnership with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, uses a portion of the State's remaining federal relief funds from the COVID-19 pandemic and is part of the State's broader efforts to strengthen the early care and education sector. The legislature invested \$5 million over the biennium in a new tax credit for small and mid-sized businesses that provide employer-sponsored or subsidized childcare.
- **Focus Early Childhood Education Programs on Educational Results:** The legislature adopted language codifying the Early Learning Advisory Committee's ongoing work to update the Paths to QUALITY, Indiana's Quality Rating Information System (QRIS) for childcare providers, with an eye to education, transparency, and accountability.
- **Increase Kindergarten Readiness by Establishing a Dolly Parton Library of Indiana:** HEA 1001 appropriated \$6 million for a statewide Dolly Parton Imagination Library as part of Governor Holcomb's 2023 *Next Level Agenda*. The funding provides a 50% state match with local support. This state-local initiative, led by the Indiana State Library, will increase local participation and fundraising to ensure in the near future that every Hoosier parent has the opportunity to enroll their child, age birth-to-five, to monthly receive a free high-quality, age-appropriate book in the mail. Building home libraries at such an early age will complement many other efforts to promote early literacy.

- **Ensure Students Can Read by the End of Third Grade:** Governor Holcomb's 2024 *Next Level Agenda* included multiple items to accelerate progress towards his goal that 95% of Indiana third graders are reading proficiently by 2027. HEA 1590 bolsters existing policies geared toward ensuring students can read by the end of third grade. HEA 1001 also contains requirements related to literacy and the science of reading. These literacy-related bills are designed to (1) Require all school corporations adopt curriculum aligned to the science of reading; (2) Require schools with an IREAD-3 pass rate below 70% to employ an instructional coach trained in the science of reading; (3) Require K-5 teachers licensed after June 30, 2025 to obtain a literacy endorsement; (4) Require teacher preparation programs and licensure to include curriculum aligned to the science of reading and prepare participants to obtain the literacy endorsement; (5) Require school corporations to differentiate pay of teachers obtaining the required literacy endorsement, thereby incentivizing teachers to participate in literacy training; (6) Provide the IDOE with an appropriation of up to \$20 million to support literacy initiatives; and (7) Provide IDOE with an appropriation of \$10 million to obtain an additional \$10 million in matching philanthropic support (Lilly Endowment Inc) toward Science of Reading programs in schools and teacher preparation programs. In addition, HEA 1558 (Science of Reading) will inform baccalaureate curriculum in education. The Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) will establish content area license and endorsement requirements for elementary school math and science teachers. Education majors may be required to pass a designated sequence of courses to receive the endorsement.
- **Increased Adult Education Funding:** State agencies overseeing adult education (AE) programs received additional funding via HEA 1001 of \$12 million over the biennium (\$4M / \$8M) to provide more services and accommodate people on waiting lists. HEA 1609 replaced the Work Indiana Program with a revised incentive program that enables employers to receive \$1,000 per eligible employee who obtains a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma.
- **Work-Based Learning:** Indiana House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1002 in the 2023 session made significant improvements to expanding work-based learning in Indiana high schools, such as apprenticeships and internships. Under the new framework, students will be able to earn a post-secondary credential before leaving the K-12 system. Additionally, with the Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) being moved from the GWC to the Commission for Higher Education (CHE), new high school career courses, modern youth apprenticeships, and other related programs will be approved. The integration and blurring of the lines for students will be intentional so that they seamlessly become prepared for the workforce post high school graduation.
- **Career Navigation Network:** HEA 1002 will help shape a career navigation network, with the establishment of approved intermediaries. These intermediaries will meet with students and select individuals for thirty minutes to provide early career information, help establish job connections and advise on industry jobs, demand, and training requirements. HEA 1002 provides a one-time allocation of \$5 million for intermediary capacity building grants to help select intermediaries scale to meet the meeting demand.

- **Provide Monetary Support to Remove Student Barriers:** The establishment of a student *Career Scholarship Account* via HEA 1002 will help provide monetary support for career coaching, dual enrollment costs, transportation to/from work and other barriers that might prevent a student from working. *Career Scholarship Accounts* fund transportation options, which designates transportation to/from work as an allowable expense.
- **Require High School Students to File the FAFSA:** Indiana Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 167 requires all Indiana students, with exceptions, to submit the FAFSA during their senior year of high school. This empowers students through the discovery of post-secondary education opportunities and available funding. Indiana students missed out on tens of millions of dollars in grants annually by not filling out the FAFSA. In the most recent school year, only 36% of high school seniors filed a FAFSA.
- **Auto-Enroll Financially Eligible Students in 21st Century Scholars:** HEA 1449 requires the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) to work with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) to identify and auto enroll students who qualify for the statewide grant program that funds lower income student attendance at two- and four-year post-secondary schools. Students and parents must be notified about their eligibility into the program. While they are auto-enrolled, students and parents have the option to participate and can opt out at any time.
- **Restored Frank O'Bannon Grant Funding to Pre-Recession Levels:** The State Budget Committee in Fall 2022 approved a 35% increase to the maximum base-award amounts for the Frank O'Bannon Grant. The grant is designed to provide access for Hoosier students to attend eligible public, private, and proprietary postsecondary institutions. Eligibility for the grant is based on financial need as determined by the FAFSA. The maximum award for a student attending a public institution increased to \$6,200 and \$12,400 for a student at a private institution. The new award amounts went into effect during the 2023-24 academic year.
- **Connectivity:** Leveraging technology to create solutions has picked up momentum in a post-COVID world. Like many states, Indiana has examined and studied how best to use artificial intelligence and other tech tools to increase the connectivity among State agencies and partners so that information and services are delivered more effectively and efficiently. In 2023, Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) officially launched an AI-powered tool, the *Workforce Recommendation Engine*, to connect Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to career and training recommendations based on the data already collected by the State. In other areas of State government, resource sharing through technology-enabled solutions is generating more attention and interest.
- **Digital Equity:** Digital equity is achieved when all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in society, democracy, and economy. It is critical for employment, lifelong learning, civic and cultural participation, as well as accessing essential services (e.g., food, shelter, transportation, etc.). Local workforce development boards provide Indiana residents, employers, and training providers with *WIN Career Readiness*, a fundamental workplace skills training system.

Users can access the digital skills assessment to measure their digital literacy (basic computer and internet skills, online safety and security skills, digital content creation skills, etc.). In addition, as part of Governor's Holcomb's agenda, HEA 1609 added digital and computer literacy to Indiana's Adult Education programming eligible for state funding alongside WIOA federal funds.

- **Increase Access to Credentials of Value:** Governor Holcomb's 2024 *Next Level Agenda* tripled annual funding, from \$4 million to \$12 million, for the Workforce Ready Grant, which covers the tuition and fees for short-term certificate training programs, both credit and noncredit bearing. Since its creation in 2017, the Workforce Ready Grant has invested nearly \$120 million in helping over 47,000 Hoosiers complete credential training in high-wage, high-demand careers. As part of his 2025 Next Level Agenda, Governor Holcomb administratively added early childhood education and child care to both Next Level Jobs programs, the Employer Training Grant and Workforce Ready Grant to respond to this critical need. Under HEA 1002, the *Career Scholarship Account* Program provides students access to funds for qualified expenses, including costs associated with enrolling in and attending IDOE-approved course sequences, career courses, apprenticeship programs (including modern youth apprenticeships) and programs of study leading to industry recognized credentials. The department has limited approval to course sequences and programs of study that culminate in a "credential of value" to ensure the programs are tailored to increase access to credentials of value, expand access to quality work-based learning, and satisfy Indiana high school graduation requirements.
- **Incentivize Completion of Credentials of Value in High School:** The legislature restructured the existing Career and Technical Education (CTE) Grant under state tuition support to K-12 schools to incentivize completion of credentials of value in high school. The state's school funding formula now consists of two separate components: the CTE Program Enrollment Grant, based on enrollment in high-, moderate- and less-than-moderate value programs; and the newly established Credential Completion Grant.
- **Strengthen the Educator Pipeline in STEM-Related Subjects:** HEA 1001 allocates up to \$1.2 million in grants to postsecondary institutions that support programs and initiatives dedicated to increasing student enrollment and improving student scores in math and science AP courses. Via HEA 1590, professional learning opportunities for educators regarding digital learning are now eligible by way of David C. Ford technology funds. That legislation also expanded grant eligibility under the Next Level Computer Science Grant Program to allow state-accredited schools to apply directly, in addition to providers and vendors, for teacher professional development grants.
- **Advocate for Employment-Based Immigration Reform:** Governor Eric Holcomb, along with Utah Governor Spencer Cox, called on Congress to end its two-decade standoff on setting immigration policy and to support immigration sponsorship by the states. Similar to visa sponsorship authority employers and universities have already, this policy would allow each state to sponsor the desired number of visas each year – up to a limit set by Congress – for the specific types of jobs they need to fill. Immigration sponsorship would give states a dynamic means to attract new residents both from a pool of new applicants and from the ranks of current asylum seekers. The policy would

also expand the states' responsibility for the contributions and success of immigrants in American life.

The GWC continues to work with board members and partners to ensure stronger alignment across the State's workforce activities in the years to come.

Indiana's Nationally Acclaimed Colleges and Universities

Indiana is home to seven public postsecondary institutions, comprised of nationally recognized research institutions, including three 'R1' designated research institutions, affordable four-year colleges and universities, and the state's oldest public institution, Vincennes University, which offers both two- and four-year degrees. Indiana also contains the nation's largest singly accredited community college system, Ivy Tech Community College. Alongside public institutions, the state is home to over 30 private colleges and universities.

Affordability is a cornerstone of Indiana's postsecondary system. Each year, the state makes available over \$400 million in financial aid. Indiana is ranked first in the Midwest and fifth in the nation in providing need-based aid. The state ranks sixth in the nation in holding the line on tuition and mandatory fee increases.

Promoting Skill Development and Removing Barriers through Complementary Programs

The State's commitment to developing the in-demand skills of Hoosiers is demonstrated through several state-supported workforce programs that complement existing and required Core Programs and Partner Programs. This is driven in large part by the *Next Level Jobs (NLJ)* initiative (<https://nextleveljobs.org/>). NLJ is part of Governor Holcomb's *Next Level Indiana* agenda to continue the positive momentum of the State and provides Hoosiers with the resources needed to secure a short-term credential, via tuition-free training in one of Indiana's high-demand job fields. The interconnectedness of the following programs and services support barrier mitigation, co-enrollment, and wraparound services.

Under NLK, the *Workforce Ready Grant (WRG)* allows residents who have earned a high school diploma but not a postsecondary degree to enroll in no-cost training programs in certain high-demand fields through approved training providers. The grant may be used only for certain high-value certificate programs in priority industry sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, building and construction, health and life sciences, IT and business technology, and logistics.

Supporting employers, the NLJ initiative provides *Employer Training Grants (ETG)*. This program reimburses employers in high-demand business sectors up to \$5,000 for each newly trained (new or incumbent) employee that is trained, hired, and retained for at least six months. A \$50,000 maximum annual reimbursement is available for each employer. The grant is dispersed regionally through Workforce Development Board Business Services teams but administered by DWD. Trainee participants must be associated with high-demand, high-wage jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less than an associate degree. Since the inception of the program in 2017, over 1,400 Hoosier businesses have accessed training dollars to upskill their new and existing workforce to keep their businesses and workers thriving in Indiana. Over \$75 million has been invested into this skill advancement program that continues to result in higher wages for Hoosiers and a sustainable workforce for Hoosier businesses.

As Indiana develops an implementation strategy to leverage federal workforce programs (BIL, CHIPS, IRA, etc.) to support emerging and growing sectors across the State, the impact the

Indiana Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA) plays a critical role in developing and implementing a framework of work-based learning to develop a skilled and ready workforce among Hoosier youth and adult populations to capitalize on this unprecedented opportunity for Hoosiers to access good jobs. The Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship concentrates on three objectives: (1) Coordinating efforts and partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor to expand registered apprenticeships; (2) Developing flexible and scalable programs that focus on the State's key economic sectors and regional high-wage, high-demand occupations; and (3) building public-private partnerships to increase business and industry engagement with education systems.

Perhaps no other program in the State (or country) has more success with helping secondary school aged students with serious barriers to graduation and employment from dropping out than Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG). In 2023, Governor Holcomb announced the goals to expand JAG Indiana to 250 programs in Indiana by the 2024-2025 school years. DWD, in partnership with the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), (i.e., vocational rehabilitation's pre-employment training services (Pre-ETS)), will invest more than \$23.1 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants to realize this expansion from 125 to 250 programs in the State. JAG programming provides a structured bridge to successful post-secondary education and workforce opportunities. Administered by DWD, JAG Indiana has served 40,000 Hoosier youth and graduated more than 95% of its students from high school since its inception in 2006.

Workforce development activities in Indiana extend beyond those delivered through DWD. Strong partnerships with other State agencies help to deliver robust workforce services to all Hoosiers. The following State-supported programs reflect the strengths of Indiana's workforce system:

- **Indiana Career Scholarship (CSA) Program:** Passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 2023, the CSA Program provides \$5,000 annually through quarterly disbursements (\$1,250 per quarter) to eligible 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students enrolled in eligible programs to pursue apprenticeships, applied learning experience, work-based learning, and credentials attainment experience. CSA program funds the eligible costs of career coaching and navigation services, postsecondary education and training, transportation and equipment, and certification and credentialing examinations. Through a cross-agency coordinated effort with Indiana Treasurer of State (TOS), IDOE, and CHE, IDOE approves the eligible programs, CHE approves the eligible providers, and the TOS approves eligible students and expenses.
- **Adult Student Grant:** Offered by CHE, the program is specifically designed to meet the unique needs of working adults starting or completing an associate degree, bachelor's degree, or certificate by providing a \$2,000 grant. The grant may be used toward tuition and regularly assessed fees.
- **Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE):** Offered by Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC), the HIRE is an employment-focused program that works through both in and out of facility clients to upskill their career readiness and to place them into full-time, benefitted employment opportunities that offer a livable wage. The HIRE program focuses on three pillars for success:

- Direct Client Services:
 - One-on-one and group sessions to upskill the client base for career readiness, focusing on both pre- and post- release services.
 - Minimum of one-year follow-up with each active client
 - Over 18,000 Hoosiers placed into full-time, benefitted careers since 2012
 - Current average hourly wage for HIRE clients (as of December 2023) is \$16.22 for pre-release, \$15.97 for post-release, and \$16.00 statewide.
- Employer Recruitment
 - Recruiting businesses in Indiana and bordering states that will offer the client base an opportunity to work for higher-paying wages.
 - Offering virtual job fairs and business promotional videos in facility for business convenience and to upload on the client base tablets for pre-release placement.
 - Working to assist on WOTC and Federal Bonding opportunities.
- Community Outreach
 - Creating a network of community entities to assist with barrier busting services to alleviate stress during job search and employment placement.

Philanthropic and Sector Partnerships

Another unique strength of Indiana's workforce development activities is the philanthropic and sectoral partnership that exist, providing Indiana with an opportunity to leverage public-, private-philanthropic partnerships in a way that few states can. This provides Indiana the ability to better understand national best practices, innovate through pilot programs, and braid resources to scale promising practices. These partnerships allow for Hoosiers across the State, regardless of if they live in rural, suburban, and urban areas, additional opportunities to receive the support necessary to better their lives.

The GWC can provide these philanthropic and sector partnership organizations with a single-entry point into the talent development system. Listed below are just a few that the State works with to continually strengthen the statewide workforce development system:

- The **Lumina Foundation** is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school clearer and more accessible for everyone. Lumina Foundation works in partnership with education and business leaders, civil rights organizations, policymakers, and individuals who want to reimagine how and where learning occurs. The foundation envisions a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. Working with governmental, nonprofit, and private-sector organizations to bring about change, Lumina relies on communications outreach, meetings, and events that engage and mobilize people, State and Federal policy outreach, investments in proven and promising practices, and targeted efforts to measure and evaluate progress. Through extensive and abundant research and

evidence, the Lumina Foundation believes that in order to increase postsecondary attainment to the levels needed by the State, a robust group of partners must work together to build an equitable postsecondary learning system.

- The **Lilly Endowment Inc.** is a private philanthropic foundation based in Indianapolis, created by pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly and Company. The Endowment helps organizations realize their community development and education potential by providing funding, consulting and technical assistance, research and evaluation support, and connections to other organizations with relevant aims and experience. State workforce development efforts are greatly impacted by the investment and support of the Endowment. Since 1990, the Endowment has allocated over \$800 million in its GIFT initiative for Indiana community foundations, continual support for United Ways through periodic grants to Indiana United Ways, continual support of six regional initiatives around the State totaling over \$200 million, and its long-standing support of all of Indiana's colleges and universities under the first round of the College and Community Collaboration Initiative. During the 2024 State of the State Address, Governor Holcomb announced that the Endowment would provide the State with a \$250 million grant (via READI 2.0) to support quality of place projects across fifteen regions in the State.
- **Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP)** fosters growth and innovation in crucial sectors in Indiana's economy and brings together leaders from many of the State's corporations, foundations, and universities while encouraging conversation and collaboration. CICP has identified and supports five talent and industry sector initiatives, focused on agbiosciences, talent and workforce development, life sciences, advanced manufacturing and logistics, and technology. CICP has created an advanced industry initiative for each of these sectors and each initiative supports the growth of its respective industry. Lilly Endowment Inc. provides financial support for the CICP Foundation's charitable, educational, and scientific activities:
 - **AgriNovus Indiana** is a nonprofit coalition of leaders across industry, academia, and government focused on growing Indiana's agbioscience economy across food, animal health, plant science, and agtech.
 - **Ascend Indiana** is committed to making Indiana a place of economic opportunity for all. It connects jobseekers to good and promising career opportunities through an innovative job matching platform, the *Ascend Network*; catalyzes partnerships with universities and employers, provides consulting services to meet high-demand workforce needs; and conducts research to enable systems-level change that positively impacts individuals throughout the State. In partnership with EmployIndy, Ascend received a \$6 million grant from the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation in 2022 to support the scaling of *Modern Youth Apprenticeships (MAP)* in Marion County. MAP is a three-year work-based learning experience starting in high school that combines paid employment, on-the-job learning, related academics, aligned college credit, and industry-recognized credentials.
 - **BioCrossroads** is Indiana's initiative to grow the life sciences, a public-private collaboration that supports the region's research and corporate strengths while

encouraging new business development. BioCrossroads provides funding and support to life science businesses, launches new life science enterprises, expands collaboration and partnerships among Indiana's life science institutions, expands science education, and markets Indiana's life sciences industry. The initiative has formed several new nonprofit organizations including Indiana Health Information Exchange, BioCrossroadsLINX, OrthoWorx, Datalys Center, and the Indiana Biosciences Research Institute. In 2023, OrthoWorx received a 2-year, \$30 million State budget appropriation.

- **Conexus Indiana** maintains and grows Indiana's competitive advantage as a global advanced manufacturing powerhouse and logistics hub. Since 2007, Conexus Indiana has engaged thousands of industry, academic, public- sector and philanthropic leaders to develop skilled talent, as well as identify and create opportunities for future business growth. Conexus has developed and delivered several programs, such as high school curriculum, internship programs, and convened industry councils to move the needle forward in the manufacturing industry.
- **TechPoint** is the industry-led growth initiative for Indiana's digital innovation economy and overall tech ecosystem. The team is focused on working with public, private and industry partners to expand tech talent pipeline, enhance resource connectivity for enterprise organizations and startups alike, and elevate the industry by activating the community and amplifying stories of success. TechPoint recently launched Mission41K, a collaborative movement to address tech employer talent needs through skills-based hiring, inclusive pathways, and apprenticeships to grow Indiana's tech workforce by 41,000 workers by 2030.
- **Credential Engine** aims to ensure the economic stability and prosperity of Indiana. Through analyzing the workforce needs of Indiana employers, as well as the skills necessary for individuals to find living-wage employment, Credential Engine provides the foundation for important tools for both employers and students to obtain the information they need to make strategic decisions about credential and career pathways. One of the most important aspects of Credential Engine has been the construction of agreed-upon competencies between postsecondary institutions. This has led to a statewide general education core, where, if a student earns the required courses, those courses are accepted to any Indiana postsecondary institution. Collaborative data sharing agreements from the Eligible Training Provider List and *Next Level Jobs* through the Indiana Department of Workforce Development have expanded the credential engine database to include additional skills-based credential offerings.
- **Rework America Alliance** is a nationwide partnership of civil rights groups, nonprofits, private sector employers, labor unions, educators, and others, working to get people without a college degree into better-paying jobs with opportunities for career growth, particularly women, Black, and Latino workers. In 2023, Jobs for the Future (JFF) acquired this program from the Markle Foundation. Under JFF, the Alliance will provide opportunities for career growth and advancement into quality jobs for people without a college degree, particularly women of all racial backgrounds, and Black and Latino

people. The Alliance will continue to partner with Indiana to support this work by (1) providing free access to a full virtual training program for career coaches focused on human-centered, equity-driven, and skills-based practices, (2) providing access to skills-based tools for jobseekers, including the Skill My Resume and Job Progression tools, and (3) continuing its partnership with the Indiana Chamber to provide support to employers transitioning to skills-based talent management through the Skillful Talent Series. The work of the Alliance will strengthen existing partnership JFF has in Indiana, including the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Site with Horizon Education Alliance, the Job Quality Academy with EmployIndy and Northern Indiana Workforce Board, the Community College Workforce Consortium member of Ivy Tech Community College, and more.

- **Central Indiana Community Foundation** mobilizes people, ideas, and investments to make this a community where all individuals have equitable opportunity to reach their full potential. The foundation has existed for more than 100 years. In that time, they have created lasting and truly meaningful change in (central) Indiana. They continue to study and focus on: wage disparity; breaking the cycle of generational poverty by supporting youth; and equitable access to opportunities. CICF administers general grant application rounds each year. During these open application windows, eligible 501(c)(3) organizations may submit a request for consideration. Each request submitted will be assigned to a community leadership officer, assessed, and then aligned with the fund or funds deemed most appropriate for consideration. These may include community endowed funds, donor-advised funds, field-of-interest funds, or major funds held at CICF. Alignment will be determined by staff and only after an application has been fully completed and submitted for consideration.
- The **Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL)** at the University of Indianapolis is a leader in partnering with secondary and postsecondary schools to provide early college models for students. The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis provides leadership that is both cutting-edge and action oriented. CELL currently has a network of 100+ high schools across the state trained in the Early College model and in varying degrees of implementation. CELL is establishing a Rural Early College Network (RECN) through a federal Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. The RECN will help rural Indiana schools more quickly implement the Early College (EC) high school model. Early College targets underserved students and allows them to earn both high school diplomas and up to two years of credits toward bachelor's or associate degrees through rigorous dual credit classes supported by wrap-around services.
- **Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana's Excel Center's** mission is to change lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health, and employment. The Excel Center is operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc., a not-for-profit organization formed by Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. Recognizing that nearly a half million working-age Hoosiers lack a high school diploma, Goodwill opened The Excel Center for adults in 2010. The Excel Center is a tuition-free public high school for adults offering an Indiana Core 40 high school diploma. There are currently sixteen locations throughout central and

southern Indiana, serving more than 4,200 students annually. Students at The Excel Center have “coaches” who help address challenges with transportation, childcare, health, and family situations — circumstances that can hinder progress in school. Free childcare is provided on-site for the young children of students while they are in class. The Excel Center’s locations are open year-round, mornings through evenings.

- **Strada Education Foundation** supports programs, policies, and organizations that strengthen connections between postsecondary education and opportunity nationally and in its home State of Indiana, with a focus on helping people who face the greatest challenges. Strada advances its mission through research, grantmaking, and social impact investments, public policy solutions, and Strada-supported nonprofit organizations, including:
 - CAEL: helps organizations succeed among accelerating changes reshaping education and employment landscapes. We build and lead inclusive partnerships that result in agile, responsive pathways linking learning and work. By helping diverse organizations find common cause in adult learners and workers, we keep education and training providers aligned in real time, sustain healthy talent pipelines, and support enrollment in education and training programs, from badges and micro credentials to certificates and advanced degrees.
 - Education at Work: helps students graduate with less debt and more skills, connections, and confidence by connecting them with flexible, paid employment opportunities. We help high-achieving college students gain the career-ready skills and financial stability needed to succeed after graduation
 - InsideTrack: partners with higher education institutions, workforce partners and employers to empower individuals to overcome educational and career barriers, close the widening post-secondary completion gap, bring stopped-out learners back to school, and reskill and upskill workers.
 - Roadtrip Nation: creates and distributes best-in-class career exploration content, products, and experiences to help individuals pursue fulfilling careers based on what’s important to them.
- **Applied Research Institute (ARI)** is a non-partisan leader in technology innovation and strategy. As a neutral, third-party innovation ecosystem orchestrator, ARI collaborates with cross-sectional partners from State and Federal government, industry, and academia, across a wide spectrum of technology focus areas. It specializes in creating robust ecosystems, facilitating partnerships, and managing complex technology projects from start to finish – all with the goal of transforming ideas into game-changing results. Through its network of 200+ partnerships across government, industry, and academia, ARI is positioned to solve emerging technical and national security challenges in key advanced technology areas.

Weaknesses:

Indiana aspires to continually improve how workforce activities are being carried out across the State. Some of the most prevalent weaknesses and contributing hurdles include the following:

Barriers to Alignment and Integration Across Programs & Systems:

- Data system non-integration in case management systems in part due to information privacy standard protections.
- Unfamiliarity with, and/or limited collaboration between, partner programs and systems, contributing to disconnected jobseeker referrals within the one-stop system.
- Limited opportunities for one-stop staff and partner cross-training to increase capacity, expertise, and efficiency.

Limited Awareness of Workforce System Activities & Services:

- Identified need to promote a statewide marketing campaign to (1) inform Hoosiers of available workforce and supportive services and (2) elevate local best practices for statewide replications due limited dedicated state and regional allocated funding for marketing purposes.
- Difficulty reaching “untapped” populations, especially during low unemployment, to get them upskilled and placed in a self-sustaining career.

Low Enrollment in Postsecondary Education & Training Programs:

- Limited capacity and awareness challenges of training grants to many eligible Hoosiers to help offset the cost of training. Addressing issues via statewide marketing program that connects potential clients to a Career Navigator that will connect them to state and locally funded training and career resources.
- Misconceptions about job quality for high-demand, high-wage occupations including socio-economic benefits for training and education beyond high school such as increased lifetime earnings, job stability, resiliency to economic downturns, and adaptability to changes in technology disruption, and more.
- Traditional training program structures that struggle to accommodate adults balancing work and life activities.
- Indiana’s strong manufacturing sector may adversely affect the degree-seeking rate of Indiana high school students due to available opportunities upon high school graduation. Indiana is ranked Top 10 in the nation for secondary outcomes yet ranks in the Bottom 10 nationally for residents 25-64 holding an associate degree or higher.

Stagnant Labor Force Growth Due to Baby Boomer Retirements and Declining Birth Rate:

- As Baby Boomers age out of the workforce, Indiana will struggle to replace these workers, particularly in critical need industries such as education and healthcare & social assistance. As the population ages and lives longer, workforce shortages in Indiana’s healthcare and social assistance industry, for example, will be felt more profoundly.
- The State must adequately embrace automation to increase productivity.
- Retention strategies and development of meaningful connections with employers for K-12 and post-secondary students, increasing attraction strategies for in-migration of new

workers, as well as barrier assistance strategies to help historically marginalized population groups and under employed individuals to enter or reenter the labor force will bolster labor force participation.

Indiana is working to address weaknesses through our defined goals and strategies, as detailed in Section II.b. and c.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

The strength of Indiana's workforce system is exemplified through the collaboration among partners, including those from Core and Partner Programs. In keeping with the vision of WIOA, State entities work together to increase access and opportunities to employment, education, training, and support services to employment. Indiana has championed stronger alignment of workforce, education, vocational rehabilitation, and other human services systems to improve the structure and delivery of services to Hoosiers.

Collaboration in Indiana has never been better – State agencies, industry, education, community and philanthropic partners are working together more than ever before. The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) has challenged partners to think globally, plan regionally, and act locally when delivering workforce development activities.

Indiana has identified specific partners and stakeholders who will champion specific action steps for each goal identified in this plan (see Section II.b. and c.). The coalition of partners driving the State's workforce system will continue to work with one another to achieve successful outcomes. The GWC will allocate resources and capacity as needed to implement action steps to ensure every Hoosier individual and employer has access to the services and activities available in the statewide workforce system.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

1. VISION

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

2. GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment⁸ and other populations.⁹

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster

care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Using the tables provided within each Core Program section, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

4. ASSESSMENT

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment, which may include evaluation findings, and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

1. Vision

Indiana will be a national workforce leader, connecting employers and skilled workers, supporting the critical-need jobs of today while preparing for emerging industries – to drive economic mobility and opportunity for all Hoosiers.

2. Goals

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations.

Indiana has established the following pillars and corresponding goals for achieving the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system. Specific action steps, populations served, and participating partners are detailed in Section II.c. 2.

PILLAR I: REMOVING BARRIERS FOR WORKERS

Goal 1: Harness opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which includes the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment program (BEAD), the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) for populations that have been historically excluded from the labor force.

- Develop employer-based recruitment, training, and retention incentives and barrier mitigation support strategies to increase hiring of traditionally underserved populations
- Deliver supportive services and direct assistance to address barriers to employment such as childcare, transportation, and work-based learning costs

- Coordinate strategic alignment across all impacted programming from K-12 through workforce initiatives for target population groups

Goal 2: Remove barriers for workers including providing affordable and accessible childcare.

- Develop a cross-system, one-stop referral process for individuals experiencing childcare and other barriers, including, but not limited to: adequate housing; clothing; food; transportation; limited English-speaking ability; lack of education, work experience, credentials; involvement in the justice system; Veterans with barriers (such as recent separation or disability).
- Provide low- or no-cost training for childcare workers to increase talent development in the caregiver economy
- Support development of employer-based childcare solutions

Goal 3: Create digital equity through digital skills training.

- Increase access to digital skills training for at-risk population groups to mitigate the digital divide
- Increase work-based learning and information technology apprenticeships in collaboration with employers to provide accessible entry points into high growth careers
- Adopt digital literacy screening and training referrals as a common practice during case management across Core and Partner programs

PILLAR II: PREPARING FUTURE SKILLED WORKERS

Goal 1: Prioritize for emerging industries specific to federal opportunities and strategic industries.

- Coordinate cross agency workforce strategy, marketing, and implementation planning
- Develop a supply and demand model for workforce investments in partnership with employers
- Create career pathway models for critical need, middle- to high-skill, good jobs requiring K-16, workforce training, and/or apprenticeships

Goal 2: Meet people where they are for career pathway planning to customize to their unique potential and experience.

- Increase career navigation resource access and provide unique-to-the-individual career pathway mapping within youth, adult, and dislocated worker education and training programs
- Increase 1:1 contact between students/jobseekers and career navigators
- Deliver a marketing campaign to promote awareness of education and training availability within a one-stop, web-based portal

Goal 3: Develop additional workers with skills-based technical training and/or a high-quality credential, certification, or degree to fill in-demand jobs.

- Revise Indiana's in-demand occupational rankings for career awareness, policy, and funding alignment to critical need, in-demand jobs
- Promote and provide no cost, high quality, skills-based training and credentials to eligible Hoosiers
- Identify and provide outreach to unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers including those at risk of displacement due to automation, with high quality education and training aligned to in-demand jobs

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

PILLAR III: HELPING EMPLOYERS FIND AND/OR DEVELOP SKILLED WORKERS

Goal 1: Deliver bespoke customer service and solutions to key employers.

- Establish a dedicated Talent Agency offering
- Support sector partnerships for the BIL including BEAD, the CHIPS & Science Act, the IRA, and other critical needs jobs
- Develop an improved system for employer-based feedback to validate, in-demand skills, credentials and career pathway progression for increased employer to education and training provider alignment

Goal 2: Increase quality job exposure and experience through apprenticeships, work-based learning, and employer supported training programs.

- Develop and promote an employer toolbox for off-the-shelf work-based learning programming for the youth through adult continuum
- Identify preferred apprenticeship and work and learn models based on employer input
- Increase employer outreach, participation, and successful employment placement

Goal 3: Continue to champion and promote skills-based hiring practices through career coaching for underserved jobseekers and employer hiring and training models.

- Establish common skills language library
- Increase number of career coaches and business services teams trained in skills-based hiring practices
- Deliver no-cost employer / HR training and virtual resources for skills-based talent development strategy

3. Performance Goals

WIOA mandates six performance measures for its Core Programs. Performance measures are calculated using the following methodology:

- **Second Quarter Employment after Exit:** Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For youth, the measure also includes the percentage who were in education or training activities during the second quarter after exit.
- **Fourth Quarter Employment after Exit:** Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program. For youth, the measure also includes the percentage who were in education or training activities during the fourth quarter after exit.
- **Median Earnings for Second Quarter after Exit:** Measures the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- **Credential Attainment Rate:** Measures the percentage of participants who obtained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year of exit from the program.
- **Measurable Skill Gains:** Measures the percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, which are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment.
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** Measures the State workforce system's effectiveness in serving employers by evaluating the employee retention, employer penetration, and repeat business customer rates

See the Performance Indicator Appendix / Core Program tables for Indiana's performance goals.

4. Assessment

Indiana will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State through the following resources, ensuring data is captured, evaluated, and used to make continuous improvements:

Management Performance Hub

Indiana has been at the forefront of administrative data collection, data sharing, governance, and linked records access to allow for outcomes-based program research and evaluation through the Management Performance Hub (MPH). In addition to assessing program metrics related to federal performance goals, wages, employment, and post-secondary enrollment, industry and occupation-based students can be performed leveraging the MPH.

Defined Metrics

Shared, defined metrics across programs with shared goals will allow for enhanced alignment and improved performance. Indiana is currently developing a shared metrics template for Adult Education programs statewide to better align data collection and share progress toward State goals amongst the Department of Workforce Development, charter high schools, and online providers, as an example.

Labor Market Information

Indiana will use labor market indicators related to employment, unemployment, labor force participation, barriers to employment, industry growth, job postings and openings, and median wage earnings for high-level business intelligence to measure progress towards each of the three pillars.

Employer Feedback

Indiana will increase existing efforts to verify employer demand and talent pipeline fulfillment through direct contact with employers within sector partnerships, focus groups, business services metrics, and economic development partners to develop increased efficiencies through a systematic approach.

WIOA Steering Committee

A WIOA Steering Committee will be established to monitor progress, establish benchmark goals, and provide continuous quality improvement to meet the Plan's strategic vision and goals. Updates will be shared with the Governors Workforce Cabinet (GWC) at regularly scheduled public-facing meetings so that GWC members, attendees, and guests can better understand the State's progress towards accomplishing the goals and strategies outlined in this plan. If necessary, corrective action may be instituted at the discretion of the GWC or Governor's Office.

C. STATE STRATEGY

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). "CAREER PATHWAY" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23)

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2)

1. Strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and

includes registered apprenticeship. “In-demand industry sector or occupation” is defined at WIOA section 3(23).

Upward mobility of Hoosier jobseekers and incumbent workers advances independent financial security, self-sustainability, and economic growth. Indiana is focused on addressing barriers for individuals including traditionally underserved populations, low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with disabilities (as prescribed in WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B)) while providing no cost or affordable career training pathways through registered apprenticeships and work and learn programs, skills-based training, career technical education, adult education, and post-secondary credentials. While there is no single state pathway for success, Indiana promotes high quality credential attainment as the primary driver of broad-based upward mobility. In addition, it is imperative that sector partnerships and employer signaling inform education and workforce training programs to keep pace with rapidly changing industry needs.

Career Pathways

Indiana recognizes the significant role of career pathway planning in helping Hoosier workers advance to better paying jobs by earning in-demand postsecondary credentials. Indiana prioritizes and encourages individuals to make informed decisions about their career pathway that (1) align with the skill needs of industry, (2) prepare them for work-based learning, skills-training or postsecondary education, (3) support their individual interest and aspiration, and (4) help them enter or advance within a specific occupation.

Over the last several years, workforce partners across the State have designed, coordinated, and launched successful career training pathway programs and resources, including but not limited to:

- Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) provides Hoosier students, jobseekers, and incumbent workers with tools and resources to help guide them toward an appropriate career pathway, through tools such as ***Indiana Career Explorer*** (INCE) and ***INDemand Jobs*** (<https://www.in.gov/dwd/job-seekers/explore/>). INCE is a career and education and training navigator, career assessment, and graduation planning resource for K-12, young adults aged 16-24, and adults. Within INCE, individuals can take career interest and aptitude assessments, locate education and training providers by industry and occupation, and map graduation requirements needed for K-12 graduation pathways. Labor market information, including occupational demand, is embedded throughout the platform to quickly communicate Indiana’s most in-demand jobs. ***INDemand Jobs*** focuses on current and future high-demand, high-wage jobs. Individuals can access this online tool to determine which industries and occupations are most in-demand at the State, region, and county level. ***INDemand Jobs*** determines which occupations are to be included by looking at five categories: total openings, growth openings, percentage change, real time labor market information, and wages for both short- and long-term outlook. The demand indicator (or “flames”) used is based on a methodology that ranks all Indiana jobs by each input category using short- and long-term job projections. An occupation is assigned a value of between 1 and 5 flames depending on how in-demand that occupation is in the selected geographic region, or in the State. Skills engine data supplements each occupational profile using national skills data from employers, coupled with Indiana-based employer validation to show the skills needed to be successful in an ***INDemand*** occupation. An example of a career pathway

mapping for *INDemand Jobs* can be viewed at <https://indemandjobs.dwd.in.gov/>. Individuals can refer back to the *INDemand Jobs* tool to map out their career pathway while identifying the on- and off-ramps for additional education and skill development needed to progress. Indiana is currently updating the in-demand ranking methodology for the first time since its inception in 2017. A future iteration may include additional emphasis on job quality, including upward career mobility, livable wage, job stability and skill disruption potential. In addition, emerging economic growth industries may be included as a subscore input. Currently, funding and policy decisions related to education and training for the Eligible Training Provider List, Workforce Ready Grant, and Career Technical Education course level funding are informed by the *INDemand Jobs* ranking. Jobs are also listed by in-demand STEM-related fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

- In 2018, Governor Holcomb created the **Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship** (OWBLA) which coordinates efforts with the U.S. Department of Labor to develop and implement comprehensive work-based learning programs for youth and adults. As of December 2023, Indiana had 880 federally registered apprenticeship programs in high-demand sectors, including advanced manufacturing, construction, and building trades, as well as emerging sectors like cybersecurity and IT. OWBLA also coordinates a network of partners that support and impact work-based learning programs and has managed more than \$9.6 million in U.S. Department of Labor funding since its inception. Since 2018, Indiana has ranked, on average, in the Top 6 for the number of total apprentices, new apprentices, and completions among all states and territories. In fact, Indiana has ranked as high as #2 for both new apprentices and completions and is currently the #1 state for number of apprentices per capita.
- **Work and Learn Indiana** is a program that acts as a bridge connecting employers, learners, and educational institutions. It offers a user-friendly database, matching system, and reporting tools, along with valuable resources and expert guidance to support and empower Hoosiers to explore and pursue enriching work-based learning programs. *Work and Learn Indiana* is led by the Institute of Workforce Excellence, a subsidiary of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.
- **Comprehensive Employer Consulting, Skills Training & Career Development Hub** – Established in 2018, Ivy+ Career Link operates workforce partnership and student support teams on each of Ivy Tech Community College's 19 statewide campuses. Each campus department is staffed with Executive Directors, Employer Consultants, Talent Connection Managers, Career Coaches and more. Career Link teams aligned Skills-Based hiring supports and training that enables employers to match with interested students and/or to develop incumbent training strategies to promote staff retention and advancement. Key employer partnerships at scale include collaborations with Lippert Components in South – Elkhart and Fort Wayne regions, Allison Transmission in the Indianapolis region, the TASUS Corporation in the Bloomington region and many more.[1]
- **Industry 4.0** is a term used to acknowledge the fourth industrial revolution in advanced manufacturing and logistics (AML), signifying the adoption of machine learning, cloud computing, AI, and “smart” systems that refine and optimize processes. Conexus Indiana

is working with Hoosier manufacturers to support their workforce and be a global leader in AML. Through its **Catapult Indiana** program, Conexus Indiana provides students with the opportunity to explore real-world programs in the AML sector. During the 160-hour programs, participants learn about and prepare for new careers through classroom work and hands-on simulations. Catapult Indiana is available to unemployed, underemployed adults and high school students. In addition, Ivy Tech Community College successfully developed and scaled **Smart Manufacturing & Digital Integration** non-degree and degree programs statewide, utilizing several best-in-class 3rd-party industry recognized credentialing entities such as the Smart Automation Credentialing Alliance and more. In addition to offering short-term certificates and associate degrees in SMDI, Ivy+ Career Link departments also offer custom contract training programs to manufacturing employer partners ranging from robotics training, Programmable Logic Controls (PLC) training to even vendor specific robotic training on equipment types such as Allen Bradley, Fanuc and more.[2]

- **Modern Apprenticeship (MAP)** is a three year-program designed to prepare Central Indiana high school students for the workforce with paid, hands-on experience that complements their traditional coursework. Apprentices begin their journey in their junior year and pursue jobs in growing fields, such as business, advanced manufacturing, and IT, propelling them on a pathway to continue their skill development either through postsecondary education or directly in the workforce. MAP is spearheaded by EmployIndy in partnership with Talent Bound and Ascend Indiana.
- The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is partnering with educators and schools across the state to implement **Indiana's Priorities for STEM Education** in an effort to integrate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics through an engaging and motivating, student-centered pedagogy and curriculum. Students are engaged in solving real-world problems using inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, and engineering design practices, which require critical thinking and collaboration. Integrated STEM Frameworks, or pathways, are available to students K-12.
- **Rethinking High School** In 2023, HEA 1002 included provision for \$5,000 student Career Scholarship Accounts (CSA) to reduce work-related barriers for increased participation in work-based learning and training to promote career preparation during high school. CSAs via HEA 1002 help provide monetary support for career coaching, dual enrollment costs, transportation to/from work and other barriers that might prevent a student from working. Indiana already has a requirement that students show “demonstrable employability skills” as a graduation pathway standard to graduate from high school, but new requirements will be more work and skills focused. The CSA Program will also cover costs associated with enrolling in and attending IDOE-approved course sequences and career courses and programs of study leading to industry recognized credentials. Ultimately, IDOE can limit approval to course sequences and programs of study that culminate in a “credential of value” to ensure the programs are tailored to increase access to credentials of value rather than increase access to credentials generally. HEA 1002 will help shape a career navigation network, with the establishment of approved intermediaries. These intermediaries will meet with students and select individuals for thirty minutes to provide early career information, help

establish job connections and advise on industry jobs, demand and training requirements.

Sector Partnerships

Indiana has a long history of coordination and cooperation among industry and workforce partners to meet the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers. Currently, Indiana is working on a coordinated, interdepartmental effort to help implement a cohesive State strategy to estimate the workforce impact stemming from federal workforce investments as well as other critical needs and high-growth sectors. Industry growth spurred by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (including the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program), and CHIPS and Science Act, specifically, will generate an increased demand for workers with technical skills in semiconductor manufacturing, bio/life sciences, electric vehicle manufacturing, and clean energy.

Indiana has begun to experience growing demand for talent from semiconductor manufacturing, bio/life science, electric vehicle manufacturing, and clean energy industries. Within the last couple of years, several major companies announced plans for significant investment into the Hoosier State, including but not limited to:

- **Eli Lilly**, the State's largest pharmaceutical company, announced in May 2022 a \$2.1 billion investment in Boone County's Limitless Exploration Advanced Place (LEAP District) – the largest investment in a single site in Lilly's history. Modeled after the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, the district will be a Midwest hub for global innovation. The site will create nearly 700 jobs, many of which will be manufacturing. While this project will take three and half years to complete, Indiana's workforce system partners are in regular communication with Eli Lilly to begin the developing the necessary talent pipeline to fuel these jobs, which includes ensuring training is in place, a recruitment plan developed, and talent placement achieved.
- **Stellantis**, the maker of Chrysler and Jeep products, announced in October 2023 the expansion of its electric vehicle battery manufacturing presence in Indiana. The automaker's joint venture with Samsung involves an investment of more than \$3.2 billion to build a second battery plant in Kokomo. The investment is expected to create 1,400 new jobs according to a news release from Governor Holcomb. Once completed, 2,800 people will be employed at the two plants. This will be the second StarPlus Energy gigafactory in Kokomo, growing the joint venture company's total investment to more than \$6.3 billion. The second next-generation electric vehicle manufacturing facility will be built adjacent to the first gigafactory in Kokomo first announced in May 2022, which is currently under construction and targeted to launch in the first quarter of 2025 with an annual production of 33 gigawatt hours (GWh). This second battery manufacturing facility is expected to start production in early 2027 and aims to have an initial annual production of 34 GWh, significantly increasing the joint venture's U.S. capacity and accelerating Stellantis' transition to electric vehicles.[3]
- In June 2023, **General Motors** selected a site in New Carlisle, Indiana to build its fourth battery cell plant to support its production of electric vehicles, which is slated to open in 2026. The new plant will build nickel-rich battery cells used in EVs, which is expected to help significantly increase the accessibility and affordability of EVs.[4]

- In October 2022, **EnPower**, a lithium-ion battery maker based in Phoenix, announced plans to launch a battery manufacturing facility in Newberry, Indiana near the Naval Surface Warfare Center – Crane Division. Plans are for the creation of 151 new jobs.[5]

In response to recent federal workforce investments, Indiana's industry partners have initiated the following strategies to meet employer needs and prepare a skilled and trained workforce:

CHIPS & Science Act

Silicon Crossroads Microelectronics Commons Hub, a three-state endeavor led by the Indiana-based Applied Research Institute, was one of eight regional innovation hubs funded by the Department of Defense through the Microelectronic Commons program to help increase the production of semiconductor technologies and microelectronics. Silicon Crossroads was awarded nearly \$33 million in the first round of hub funds which includes \$8M for Midwest workforce development initiatives. The Silicon Crossroads hub will continue to compete for additional funding through future government calls for projects and calls for operations.

Heartland BioWorks, a biologics manufacturing initiative also led on behalf of the State of Indiana by the Applied Research Institute, was one of thirty-one Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs designated through the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration's Tech Hubs program. Heartland BioWorks currently has an application pending for an implementation grant of up to \$75 million, the majority of which is focused on workforce development and the creation of a new training center in Indianapolis focused on this sector. The Tech Hub designation supports the acceleration of workforce development and helps dismantle barriers to success for entrepreneurs and small business owners with new biotech products by filling gaps identified by the EDA.

Inflation Reduction Act Since President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act in August 2022, investment in **electric vehicle manufacturing** has increased to Indiana's benefit. General Motors is now investing \$491 million in a Marion, Indiana metal stamping plant to make parts for electric vehicles, and \$45 million in a Bedford, Indiana aluminum die-casting foundry that will supply electric vehicle plants in Michigan. General Motors and Samsung also have chosen New Carlisle, Indiana for a new \$3 billion electric vehicle battery manufacturing plant. Other clean energy investments across the State include the new Bila Solar plan and headquarters in Indianapolis and the Entek lithium battery plan in Terre Haute. In total, these projects are expected to create more than 1,400 new jobs. While for decades Indiana has been a top State for traditional, internal combustion-powered transportation manufacturing, the State is now pivoting its current and future assets toward electric and renewable-powered.

- After the passage of the IRA, Indiana submitted its plan for creating an **electric vehicle charging infrastructure network: *Charging the Crossroads***. Though funded through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program, it directly correlates to the IRA's investment in clean energy and EV production. *Charging the Crossroads* calls for the requirement of electricians installing, operating, or maintaining an EVSE to either be certified through the federally recognized *Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program* or be a graduate or certificate earner from a registered apprenticeship program for electricians that includes charger-specific training and is developed as a part of a national guideline standard approved by USDOL in consultation with the Department of Transportation.[6]

- Additionally, funding from the IRA resulted in the creation of Indiana University's **Indiana Resilience Funding Hub**, a program to connect small towns with IRA and IIGA funding for sustainability and climate-change mitigation focused projects.

Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

- Indiana is part of a \$1 billion investment, funded by the BIL, into hydrogen production through the Midwest Alliance for Clean Energy. The **Midwest Hub or MachH2**, is one of seven across the country that will produce hydrogen as a fuel source for the region's industrial and manufacturing sectors. This hub, to be located near BP's refinery in Whiting, Indiana, is positioned to create a "hydrogen mobility corridor" in Indiana and across neighboring states. The hub consists of more than seventy public and private partner organizations from Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Partners from Indiana include the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Purdue University, BP, Energy Systems, and more. Embodying our moniker as the "crossroads of America", the hub will be strategically located to a key U.S. industrial, manufacturing, and transportation corridor. The hub will accelerate Indiana's clean energy efforts, cultivate new sources of energy for industry and residents alike while making Indiana, and the Midwest, a destination of excellence in hydrogen technology.
- Indiana will receive more than \$868.1 million in federal funding from the **Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD)** program under the BIL. Funding will be used to administer grant programs deploying or upgrading broadband networks to ensure equitable access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet service. Under the Office of Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, the Indiana Broadband Office developed the *Steps to Success*, crafted to help encourage and lead communities through the process of expanding connection. One of the steps in this plan is to "engage with partners to increase local workforce in anticipation of buildout." Broadband brings more opportunities than just the internet – it brings new jobs, new residents, and new businesses. Communities are tasked with creating new or identifying existing career pathways that can be modified to support the installation of connectivity. Communities are encouraged to work with designated 21st Century Talent Regions to attract, develop, and connect Hoosier workers to these opportunities. Federal funding through the BEAD program will build upon \$580M combined public and private investment through Governor Holcomb's Next Level Connections Broadband Program.

In addition to these federal programs, in 2022, Governor Holcomb leveraged \$500 million from the Biden Administration's stimulus package, American Rescue Plan, to launch the statewide economic development initiative, **READI (Regional Economic and Acceleration and Development Initiative)**. The intent of READI was for neighboring counties, cities, and towns to come together and identify their region and outline strategies to make positive developments in talent attraction and development, among other areas such as quality of place, quality of life, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Regions were encouraged to involve a broad, diverse group of stakeholders including private employers, anchor institutions, higher education institutions and other educational entities, economic development, philanthropic partners, workforce partners, and elected officials. Seventeen READI regions were developed and awarded funds ranging from \$5 million to \$50 million. Regional workforce projects include (but are not limited to):

- Workforce housing
- Creation of an education and innovation center
- Work-based learning expansions
- Creation of youth entrepreneurship ecosystems
- Development of new experiential learnings for emerging jobs and sectors
- Creation of a regional high education talent pipeline and partnership consortium
- Launch of regional talent attraction campaigns
- Development of a microelectronics campus
- Expansion of computing coding and IT bootcamps

In 2023, the Indiana General Assembly announced an additional \$500 million from State general funds for a second phase of READI, **READI 2.0**, to maintain Indiana’s long-term competitiveness and growth, reliant on the State’s ability to attract and people talent in communities across the State. Applications were due in February 2024 and projects are anticipated to start in May 2024.

Additionally, the Indiana General Assembly allocated \$30 million toward the **Orthopedic Industry Retention Initiative**, operated by OrthoWorx, a non-profit organization based in Warsaw, Indiana, to attract and retain talent in the “Orthopedic Capital of the World” in Kosciusko County. The county represents about half of the \$60 billion global orthopedics market and the industry accounts for more than 22,000 jobs in the region and approximately \$19 billion in revenue, according to the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership. OrthoWorx embodies the spirit of an industry sector partnership, working with orthopedic industry members, academic partners, and community leaders to capitalize on the resources and expertise in the region and industry to achieve its workforce goals.

Workforce ecosystem partners must serve as trailblazers in partnership with the State and employers to prepare Hoosiers now for the economy of the future through sector-based strategies that connect K-12 and education and training providers with relevant training responsive to industry needs.

[1] [Source: https://www.wboi.org/news/2024-01-29/employers-and-ivy-tech-partner-for-affordable-free-college-and-skills-training](https://www.wboi.org/news/2024-01-29/employers-and-ivy-tech-partner-for-affordable-free-college-and-skills-training)

[2] [Source: https://www.ivytech.edu/programs/all-academic-programs/school-of-advanced-manufacturing-engineering-applied-science/smart-manufacturing-digital-integration/](https://www.ivytech.edu/programs/all-academic-programs/school-of-advanced-manufacturing-engineering-applied-science/smart-manufacturing-digital-integration/)

[3] <https://www.indystar.com/story/news/environment/2023/10/11/stellantis-electric-vehicles-kokomo-indiana-3-billion-battery-plant-united-auto-workers-strike/71140099007/>

[4] <https://gmauthority.com/blog/gm/gm-facilities/ultium-cells-battery-plants-global/ultium-cells-usa-battery-plants/gm-new-carlisle-indiana-battery-plant/>

[5] <https://www.ibj.com/articles/enpowers-pivot-to-battery-making-leads-company-to-indianapolis>

[6] Source: *Charging the Crossroads* plan, <https://chargingthecrossroads.com/>

2. Strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).

PILLAR I: REMOVING BARRIERS FOR WORKERS

Goal 1: Harness opportunities through the BIL including BEAD, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the IRA for populations that have been historically excluded from the labor force.		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Develop employer-based recruitment, training and retention incentives, and support to increase hiring of the traditionally underserved populations	GWC, IN DWD, IN DOT, IN Office of Broadband, IEDC, Indiana Chamber	WIOA Targeted Populations
Deliver supportive services and direct assistance to address barriers to employment such as childcare, transportation, and work-based learning costs	GWC, IN DWD, IN DOT, IN Office of Broadband, IEDC, Indiana Chamber, IN FSSA	WIOA Targeted Populations
Coordinate strategic alignment across all impacted programming from K-12 through workforce initiatives for target population groups	GWC, IN DWD, IN DOE, IN CHE, IN FSSA, IN DOC	WIOA Targeted Populations

Indiana anticipates an unprecedented influx of federal dollars to fund infrastructure projects via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) which includes broadband infrastructure via the Broadband Equity and Deployment program (BEAD), research and manufacturing for biotech and semiconductors via the CHIPS and Science Act (CHIPS), and clean and renewable energy via the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These federal acts allow – and in some instances require – certain workforce development initiatives to be grant-funded; however, the specific dollar amount and use of funds has not been explicitly stated. The potential for braided funding through this influx to support workforce training and wrap-around resources in combination with WIOA funding could bolster workforce system offerings.

Given the State’s overall workforce shortage, but particularly in the skilled trades – which will likely comprise a significant share of workforce demand – Indiana must develop a targeted workforce strategy to support these sectors and others to help meet the demand for skilled workers for these critical projects.

Indiana, much like other states, is at full-employment and experiencing workforce shortages and challenges across all sectors. It is likely other industries will experience a ripple effect of additional staffing shortages as a result of the infrastructure projects. In addition, these opportunities compel Indiana to better serve target populations, such as the unemployed,

underemployed, and out of the labor force populations that have been historically underrepresented in the labor market. By developing strategic initiatives to draw in and support individuals who may have faced barriers to employment, Indiana can expand its available talent pool, support employer demand, and provide a pathway to increased prosperity for Hoosiers.

Goal 2: Remove barriers for workers including providing affordable and accessible childcare		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Develop a cross-system referral process for individuals experiencing childcare and other barriers	IN DWD, IN FSSA, and other partners as identified through the process	WIOA Targeted Populations
Provide low- or no-cost training for childcare workers to increase talent development in the caregiver economy	IN DWD, IN CHE, IN DOE, IN FSSA, Local Boards	WIOA Targeted Populations
Support development of employer-based childcare benefits	GWC, IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN Chamber, Local Boards	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.

Despite low unemployment after the pandemic, there remain individuals on the sidelines who have not yet returned to the labor market, impacting workforce availability for employers who are seeking to fill in-demand jobs. Too many Indiana workers continue to face barriers and challenges to enter, or re-enter, the workforce since the pandemic. Common barriers, as identified by a 2023 GWC survey to workforce partners and employers, included access to affordable childcare, lack of technical skills, mental health, access to affordable housing, and transportation. In addition, Veterans face unique readjustment to civilian life barriers, including translation of military career to civilian skills and credential alignment, employer bias, and relational and systemic supportive services needed to make successful employment connections. To ensure every Hoosier can fully participate and compete in the labor market, Indiana aims to knock down those barriers and provide equitable access to jobs, training, and funding opportunities.

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) has been a key partner helping Hoosier families access childcare, the most identified workforce barrier. In addition to Head Start, Early Head Start, and Childcare Development Fund (CCDF) vouchers, the state's *On My Way Pre-K* program awards vouchers to 4-year-olds from low-income families to access a high-quality prekindergarten program the year before school entry. In 2023, income eligibility for the program was raised from 127% to 150% of the federal poverty level, increasing the number of families eligible for this voucher. Additionally, the State approved new tax credits for small- and mid-sized businesses that provide employer-sponsored or subsidized childcare to incentivize more employers to offer childcare options. In 2023, FSSA awarded \$25M in its Employer Sponsored Childcare Fund to provide seed funding for employers and local communities to expand employer-subsidized childcare benefits to address growing local childcare needs. Through the effort, the state hopes to increase childcare access and support for working Hoosier families. As the GWC travels across the state and meets with workforce system partners, it will aim to identify, collect, and elevate best practices and lessons learned from businesses to help foster and support an ecosystem for employers who sponsor or subsidize childcare.

As the Baby Boomer generation grows older, the demand for workers to support the care economy also grows. Currently, 17% of the State's total population is 65 years and older, while over 25% of current workers in the health care and social assistance industry are 55 years and older. Indiana offers workers several options to enroll in a healthcare and social assistance training or other occupational program. It is important that front-line and partner staff are aware of these programs so they can guide workers in making informed career decisions, including where demand and pay is highest. However, there are also opportunities to position individuals on a healthcare and social assistance career pathway, beginning with an entry level job as a home health and personal care aide. Many entry-level healthcare and social assistance occupations, like home health and personal care aides, require only a high school diploma. Through additional education and training, these workers can progress through their career pathway journey to become a nursing assistant and registered nurse. Indiana FSSA, which administers Vocational Rehabilitation, developed the State's *Direct Service Worker Investment Strategy* to improve workforce retention, ensure quality of long-term services and support, and support the well-being of the workforce and the individuals they serve.

Even before the pandemic, access to transportation was a challenge for many workers. Indiana's influx of new Americans, including legal immigrants and refugees, led to the creation of a driving privilege card to help these individuals travel to and from work. The *Career Scholarship Account* program also provides funding to support transportation to and from work as an allowable expense to eligible 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students who are pursuing apprenticeships, applied learning experiences, work-based learning, and credential attainment programs.

Paying exam fees to earn certifications on Indiana's promoted industry certification list has been a significant challenge for Hoosiers eager to enter the workforce. Under Governor Holcomb's *Next Level Programs of Study* initiative, students are now eligible for reimbursement of those fees, enabling quicker placement into the workforce.

Goal 3: Create digital equity through digital skills training.		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Increase access to digital skills training for at-risk population groups to mitigate the digital divide	GWC, IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOC	WIOA Targeted Populations
Increase work-based learning & IT/digital skills apprenticeships	GWC, IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOC, IN CHE, IN DOE, TechPoint, Postsecondary Educational Institutions	WIOA Targeted Populations
Adopt digital literacy screening and training referrals as a common practice during case management	IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOC, Regional Boards, Community-Based Organizations	WIOA Targeted Populations

Brookings reported that more than 75% of jobs in the U.S. now require medium or high levels of digital skills.[1] As noted by Brookings, two distinct priorities are needed to ensure society makes the best use of new technologies, especially without further expanding income disparities: (1) the collaboration of firms, industry associations, educational institutions, and government to expand the high-skill IT talent pipeline and (2) the expansion of basic digital

literacy, particularly among underrepresented populations. At a State level, Purdue University estimates that 85% of all jobs in Indiana between 2010 and 2019 required some level of digital skills and all job gains during that period were among those requiring medium or high skills.

The State's 2023 Legislative Session both sustained and increased Governor Holcomb's signature *Next Level Jobs* (NLJ) workforce training programs, maintaining sustained \$17 million per year for the NLJ *Employer Training Grant* and tripling funding to \$12 million per year for the NLJ *Workforce Ready Grant* for credit and non-credit bearing short-term certificate programs. Moreover, reforms to state funding for adult education, which was increased \$12 million over this biennium, was expanded to cover all WIOA-eligible purposes, including digital and computer literacy. Though funds from this session were not explicitly appropriated for digital equity and literacy, the State will monitor prioritization of funds should they be directed to support digital equity and literacy in the 2024 Legislative Session. The GWC is reviewing criteria for FY25 using updated IN Demand Rankings Methodology and reviewing the preferred training provider list to support digital workforce readiness across multiple industries by offering digital, tech-infused curricula and advanced industry certification programs.

During the pandemic, it became clear that equitable, widespread access to broadband was a necessity not only for business, but for individuals to learn, train, and engage. Indiana is working to expand broadband access across the entire State, recognizing its vital role in economic development, education, healthcare and social assistance (including mental health and substance abuse), and overall quality of life. The State implemented numerous initiatives and programs to enhance broadband infrastructure and connectivity, guaranteeing that all residents can enjoy reliable and affordable high-speed internet services. Governor Holcomb has shown a strong commitment to this effort by investing over \$268 million in broadband infrastructure through the *Next Level Connections* program, benefiting more than 74,800 homes and commercial locations. These initial investments have yielded valuable insights on encouraging private investment, resulting in a total leverage of over \$580 million.

In 2023, Indiana was awarded more than \$868.1 million in federal high-speed internet funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce's telecommunications wing. Funding will be deployed to upgrade broadband networks across the State so that every Hoosier has access to reliable, affordable, high-speed internet service. The Indiana Broadband Office is planning and currently determining exactly how BEAD funds will be allocated and awarded to Internet Service Providers.

[1]https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021.02.10_BrookingsMetro_Indiana-State-of-renewal.pdf

PILLAR II: PREPARING FUTURE SKILLED WORKERS

Goal 1: Prioritize for emerging industries specific to federal opportunities and strategic industries		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Coordinate cross agency workforce strategy, marketing, and implementation planning	GWC, IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOT, IN Office of Broadband, IEDC, Indiana Chamber of Commerce	WIOA Targeted Populations
Develop a supply – demand model for workforce investments in partnership with employers	GWC, IN DWD, IEDC, IN Chamber, Philanthropic Organizations	WIOA Targeted Populations
Create career pathways models for critical need, middle- to high-skill, good jobs requiring K-16, workforce training, and/or apprenticeships	GWC, IN DWD, IN DOE, IN CHE, IN FSSA	WIOA Targeted Populations

Indiana envisions a future where all Hoosiers, inclusive of population groups that have been historically marginalized, have access to education and training pathways that lead to high quality, good jobs that promote economic security and upward mobility. Technology disruption and advances in globalization spur an urgency for policy and programming focused on ensuring Hoosiers can remain agile and resilient to economic and labor market changes.

Indiana’s high concentration of manufacturing employment puts nearly 1 in 5 workers at risk of job disruption due to robotics and automation. Increased specialized technical skills are needed now and in the near future to support advanced manufacturing, among other industries. While jobs may not be eliminated, job tasks are being transformed and will require continued employer feedback on the future-forward skillsets they most need, thus automation-proofing workers capable of pivoting to new challenges.

Today’s workers will need to adopt a continuous learning mindset throughout their career progression. Developing digital readiness and technical skills that will build resiliency and agility for the Hoosier workforce within a rapidly changing economy is imperative. High-quality credential attainment can provide workers with economic security, industry-relevant skills, and can help propel workers along an intentional career pathway. Stackable pathways beginning with K-12 through post-secondary credit-bearing programs or directly into a work-based learning or skills-based training progression provide more than one pathway to success. Simultaneously, credit for prior learning initiatives can help individuals progress more seamlessly through their education and career goals. This topic of rethinking high school diploma requirements generated much attention across the State as reports highlighted the college-going and credentialing rates of Hoosiers following the pandemic. Indiana’s postsecondary-going rate fell to 53% for the high school classes of 2020 and remained flat in 2021 – a 6-point drop from 2019 and 12-point drop from 2015. This is the lowest rate in at least a generation. Progress has been made recently in this space as the number of students enrolling in college increased by 2% compared to the fall of the 2022 school year, making 2023 the first-year collegiate enrollment in Indiana has increased in the past 13 years. The plan focuses on high school diploma requirements that are more flexible and relevant to students, employers, and communities, as well as improving access to high-quality work-based learning opportunities and increasing the number of postsecondary credentials earned by students before they graduate from high school. Changes are expected to go into effect by the 2024-25 academic year.

Goal 2: Meet people where they are for career pathway planning to customize to their unique potential and experience.		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Increase career navigation resource access and provide unique-to-the-individual career pathway mapping within youth, adult, and dislocated worker education and training programs	IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOC, IN CHE, IN DOE, LWDB	WIOA Targeted Populations
Increase 1:1 contact between students/jobseekers and career navigators	IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOE, IN CHE, IN DOC, LWDB	WIOA Targeted Populations
Deliver a marketing campaign to promote awareness of education and training availability within a one-stop, web- based portal	GWC, IN DWD, IN CHE, IN DOE, IN FSSA, IN DOC, LWDB	WIOA Targeted Populations

Indiana is committed to increasing access to credentials of value through the *Career Scholarship Account* program, which provides students with access to funds for qualified expenses, including costs associated with enrolling in and attending approved course sequences, career courses, apprenticeship programs (including modern youth apprenticeships), and programs of study that lead to an industry recognized credential. To ensure programs are tailored to increase access to credentials of value, Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has the authority to limit approval of course sequences and programs of study.

To help inform career awareness of students before graduation, the Indiana General Assembly allocated funding in HEA 1002 to the IDOE, in consultation with the Commission for Higher Education (CHE), for intermediaries to support the career navigation network. These intermediaries will meet with students and other select individuals for thirty minutes to provide early career information, help establish job connections, and advise on industry jobs, demand, and training requirements.

Indiana is positioned to shepherd in a new era for higher education and workforce development. In 2023, State lawmakers adopted a two-year budget that includes \$120 million for new buildings envisioned as part of the uncoupling of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), giving both Indiana University and Purdue University their own identities in Indianapolis. The spending plan includes \$60 million for Indiana University to construct a school of science instructional and research building and \$60 million for Purdue to build an academic and student success building. GWC members are actively working with both universities on a bold 50-year strategic plan aimed at bolstering the number of STEM graduates to meet the growing demand for talent. It is worth noting that in 2023, the State legislature restructured the existing *CTE Grant* to incentivize completion of credentials of value in high school. The tuition support formula now consists of two separate components: (1) the CTE Program Enrollment Grant based on enrollment in high-, moderate- and less-than-moderate value programs and (2) the newly established *Credential Completion Grant*.

The federal government recognized that since the pandemic many displaced American workers were still on the sidelines, cautious to re-enter the workforce. In July 2022, the Employment and Training Administration, under the U.S. Department of Labor, announced funding for Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker (DWG) grants. The objective of this funding was to enable individuals who have been adversely

affected by the COVID-19 pandemic – and the social and economic inequities that the pandemic exacerbated – to enter, return to, or advance in high-quality jobs in growth industries including infrastructure, environment and climate, the care economy, and other critical sectors.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) was awarded \$10.8 million from this grant program for “advanced data analytics, community outreach, and stakeholder partnerships to define an outreach strategy to connect with and engage the target population in education and training activities while also connecting them to employers willing to invest in upskilling of talent through high-quality work-based learning models. Business engagement activities focus on the State’s critical economic sectors, particularly renewable energy, electric vehicle technologies, and semiconductor production.”

DWD used QUEST funds to create the *Workforce Recommendation Engine* (WRE). The WRE is a tool designed to help workers increase their educational attainment and pursue a career in an in-demand job that aligns with their interests and work experience, resulting in higher wages. It centralizes workforce services by leveraging longitudinal data and artificial intelligence technologies to connect workers to workforce resources and programs. WRE recommends individualized occupational training and career paths based on real-time, real-world data insights from similar individuals who have had positive workforce outcomes. It also combines employer demand/opportunities with customized avenues for consideration, guiding individuals toward a career that provides employment stability, upward mobility, and fulfillment.

Coordination among workforce partners and State agencies contributes to the WRE’s effectiveness. The WRE leverages data the State already collects during daily governance activity to better serve workers. The goal is to use data that already exists in the algorithm to identify training programs and career pathways that align with users’ educational and work background and desired future state (e.g., increased wages, length of training, cost of training, distance willing to travel for training, etc.) rather than asking them to take yet another assessment. By streamlining this approach, Indiana hopes to reduce duplication of services among program partners and make coordinated recommendations using technology and data from unemployment insurance claims.

Sharing knowledge and information among WIOA partners makes the public workforce system operate more efficiently and effectively. While the customer satisfaction rates at Indiana WorkOne Centers are high, more can be done to ensure that customers walking through the front doors of a WorkOne Center, or through the virtual front doors online, receive high-quality and informed services, including awareness of training programs and eligible workforce training grants.

Goal 3: Develop additional workers with skills-based technical training and/or a high-quality credential, certification, or degree to fill in-demand jobs.		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Revise the in-demand occupational rankings for career awareness and funding alignment to critical need, and in-demand jobs	GWC, IN DWD, IN CHE, IEDC, Indiana Chamber of Commerce	K-16 Students, School Counselors, Education & Training Providers, and WIOA Targeted Populations
Promote and provide no cost, high quality, skills-based training and credentials to all eligible Hoosiers	GWC, IN DWD, IN CHE, IN DOE, IN FSSA, IN DOC, Community-based Organizations, LWDB	K-16 Students, School Counselors, Education & Training Providers, and WIOA Targeted Populations
Identify and provide outreach to unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers including at risk of automation workers with high quality education and training aligned to in-demand jobs	IN DWD, IN FSSA, IN DOC, LWDB	WIOA Targeted Populations

To help workers pursue training for entry-level jobs that feed into a career pathway progression, Indiana is currently developing an occupational demand ranking that will include inputs to help identify foundational skills needed for career progression, as well as upwardly mobile career pathways using labor market information, job posting and scraped resume/profile data. These developments can be used to help maximize an individual's long term career progression and earning potential and will create State and Federal funding prioritization alignment with good jobs. In addition, sector partnerships will develop additional feedback for curriculum development to develop talent pipelines for entry level, good jobs that will provide career progression. Informing Hoosiers of new funding opportunities to support their skill development and/or education will also be key to developing the future talent pipeline.

Fortunately, existing grant programs have seen increased funding to support the current demand. For example, the *Frank O'Bannon Grant* program received a 35% increase to the maximum base-award amount. The maximum award for a student attending a public institution increased to \$6,200 and to \$12,400 for a student at a private institution. The grant is designed to provide access for Hoosier students to attend eligible public, private, and proprietary postsecondary institutions. Eligibility for the grant is based on financial need as determined by the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). The grant may be used toward tuition and regularly assessed fees. The new award amount goes into effect during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Indiana enacted a requirement for all Indiana students (with some exceptions) to submit a FAFSA during their senior year of high school, beginning in the fall of 2023. Hoosier students miss out on tens of millions of dollars in grants annually by not filling out the FAFSA. In the most recent school year, just 36% of high school seniors completed a FAFSA. Indiana hopes that through this legislative mandate, students will be empowered to discover post-secondary education opportunities and funding.

Additionally, Indiana recently began auto-enrolling financially eligible students in the *21st Century Scholars* program. For over 30 years, the *21st Century Scholarship* has played a

transformative role in getting more Hoosiers prepared to enroll and succeed in college. Automatically enrolling income-eligible students will lead to greater levels of educational attainment, stronger communities, and a globally competitive workforce. For reference, the college-going rate for students from low-income households who are not part of the *21st Century Scholars* program is 30%. Considering their on-time college completion rate of 27%, students from low-income households have only an 8% likelihood of graduating from high school and completing college on time. The graduation rate for students enrolled in a *21st Century Scholars* program was 81%.

Indiana has also placed a priority on ensuring a strong pipeline of educators in STEM-related subjects. The Indiana State Board of Education is in the process of establishing content area license and endorsement requirements for elementary school math and science teachers. The 2023 legislative session allocated up to \$1.2 million in grants to postsecondary education institutions that support programs and initiatives dedicated to increasing student enrollment and improving student scores in math and science AP courses. Professional learning opportunities for educators regarding digital learning are now available via *David C. Ford technology funds*.

Ivy Tech Community College recently re-branded and modernized its definition of non-credit courses now titled Skills Training. Skills Training refers to noncredit courses that prepare learners for occupations and careers within high-demand, high-wage industry sectors related to regional, state, and national economies. Skills Training also refers to occupations within high-demand employment sectors (e.g., Healthcare, Manufacturing, Information Technology), that are critical to regional and state economies. The Skills Training courses can be delivered across various delivery formats, including virtual, in-person and hybrid. The college recruits, high-quality full-time and adjunct instructors from industry to design and facilitate courses in partnership with some of the state's largest employers including Cummins, Toyota, Fort Wayne Metals, and more. Skills Training partnerships are also commonly utilized by small and medium sized businesses as well. As of 02/12/2024, 15,049 students are currently enrolled in Skills Training courses, which is a 43% point in time increase from the same time period in 2023.

Early childhood education is vital to preparing future skilled workers. Earlier this year, the State Legislature adopted language requiring the Early Learning Advisory Committee to update the *Paths to Quality* rating system for providers, with an eye towards education, transparency, and accountability. Additionally, in Governor Holcomb's 2024 State of the State Address, he announced that the State will add early childhood education credential training to the State's *Workforce ReadyGrant* and *Employer Training Grant* programs.

Led by the Indiana State Library, \$6 million was recently appropriated for the *Dolly Parton Imagination Library of Indiana* to increase kindergarten readiness. The mission of the *Imagination Library of Indiana* is to foster a love of reading among young learners by ensuring equitable access to free high-quality, age-appropriate books mailed monthly to their homes from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. The vision is that all early learners will develop a home library that inspires individual and family reading time. Parents and guardians are a child's first and best teachers, but access to books should never be a barrier. The *Imagination Library of Indiana* will increase childhood literacy rates, fosters a love of books, and promotes a culture of reading among all families in Indiana. Coupled with the state's other early learning efforts, this program will improve statewide kindergarten readiness.

Indiana also established requirements related to literacy and the science of reading to ensure that all students are able to read by the end of the third grade.

PILLAR III: HELPING EMPLOYERS FIND & DEVELOP SKILLED WORKERS

Goal 1: Deliver bespoke customer service and solutions to key employers.		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Create the Indiana Talent Agency	GWC, IN DWD, LWDB, Indiana Chamber of Commerce	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses
Support sector partnerships for BIL including BEAD, CHIPS & Science Act, IRA, and critical need jobs	GWC, IN Dept. Of Workforce Development, Local Boards, Commission for Higher Education, IN DOE, IN FSSA, IN DOC, Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, Indiana University, Purdue University, Indiana Chamber	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses
Develop an improved system for employer-based feedback to validate in-demand skills, credentials, and career pathway progression for increased employer-education-training provider alignment	GWC, IN DWD, Local Boards, Indiana Chamber	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses

Indiana’s talent development system must be responsive to the needs of employers, remain innovative, and provide real-time solutions to complex and pressing problems. Indiana faces a defining moment as it contemplates the future of work. The State’s economy must respond to employer demand for a technically skilled, adaptable workforce. The GWC is embracing new approaches to serving Hoosier employers amid these changes in the labor market. Currently, it is determining existing resources, potential service gaps, and the functional properties of a statewide Talent Agency offering, designed specifically as a service to employers. The inspiration for this agency reflects feedback from employers and successful outcomes from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s *Talent Pipeline Management* business model. The identified need to create a framework for direct and ongoing industry feedback regarding employer-backed credentials, in-demand skills, and emerging industry hiring needs will allow for better workforce and education system alignment.

Goal 2: Increase quality job exposure and experience through apprenticeships, work-based learning, and employer supported training programs.

Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Develop and promote an employer toolbox for off the shelf work-based learning programming for the youth through adult continuum	GWC, IN DWD (lead agencies), IN DOE; IN CHE, Career Technical Education; IN FSSA, Youth, VR, LWDB	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.
Identify preferred apprenticeship and work and learn models based on employer input	GWC, IN DWD, IN Chamber, LWDBs	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.
Increase employer outreach, participation, and successful employment outcomes	GWC; IN DWD; JAG Indiana; IN DOE; IN CHE, Career Technical Education; IN FSSA, Youth, VR, LWDBs, Intermediaries	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.

Work-based learning (e.g., pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, etc.) also offer additional pathways to success for individuals and employers. These programs allow employers to invest in Hoosiers while benefiting from increased skills and higher retention rates. With continued unemployment rates under 4%, meeting employer demand will require connecting population groups such as returning citizens, veterans, refugees, immigrants, new Americans, individuals not participating in the labor force, and underserved individuals to good jobs available both now and in the future.

Indiana maintains a strong foundation for increasing the number of apprenticeships and work-based learning programs but will need to increase awareness and enrollment. Through the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's 501(c)3 subsidiary, The Institute for Workforce Excellence, the *Work and Learn Indiana* program links employers, learners, high schools, colleges and universities to a searchable database, matching, and reporting system that provides resources and guidance on work-based learning opportunities. This, paired with the statewide Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship, will help generate a skilled and ready talent pipeline.

In 2022, based on the GWC's recommendation, legislation was passed to assist in the development of a network of approved intermediaries, which may include staffing agencies, local workforce development boards, and employers. This network provides high school students with early career exposure and navigation, job connections, and advising on various industries, current and future demand, career options, and associated training to help with job placement. In addition, Indiana is the first state in the nation to implement *Career Scholarship Accounts* (CSAs) for students engaged in work-based learning, applied learning experiences, apprenticeships, and credential attainment. These accounts remove potential barriers related to eligible costs of career coaching and navigation services, postsecondary education and training, transportation and equipment, and certification and credentialing examinations. With only 53% of students going on to college immediately after graduating from high school, Indiana must work alongside employers to transform the high school experience to ensure today's students are aware of, prepared for, and driven toward occupations that meet the State's most in-demand and critical needs.

Work-based learning provides all Hoosiers, including youth and adults, with opportunities for skill development, career exposure, and the ability to earn income. These experiences are key to

building intentional, early connections between employers and future prospective workers. These relationships can help bridge the skilled labor gap and improve State talent retention.

Goal 3: Continue to champion and promote skills-based hiring practices through career coaching for underserved jobseekers and employer hiring and training models.		
Actions	Partners & Key Stakeholders	Populations Served
Establish a common skills language library	GWC, IN DWD, Indiana Chamber of Commerce	WIOA Targeted Populations
Increase the number of career coaches and business services teams trained in skills-based hiring practices	GWC, IN DWD, IN FSSA Indiana Chamber of Commerce, intermediaries, Community-based organizations, Ivy Tech Community College, LWDB	WIOA Targeted Populations
Deliver no-cost employer / HR training and virtual resources for skills-based talent development strategy	GWC, IN DWD, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, IN FSSA, LWDB	Employers including women and minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.

Employers are increasingly looking to and finding success utilizing alternative talent pipelines, on-the-job training and apprenticeships, and skills-based hiring practices to help shape their talent pool within a tight labor market. Indiana must develop clear pathways for individuals with barriers to employment that work in lock step with employers to open doors to economic sustainability and fill needed jobs so that employers become “talent producers” rather than just “talent consumers.” Skills-based hiring practices are one avenue that can be utilized to level playing fields for individuals who can do the work but may not have a previously required credential. While Indiana remains laser-focused on meeting the goal of 60% of Hoosiers holding a post-secondary credential beyond high school by 2025, it is recognized that, for many individuals, getting a job can be the first step toward increased access and stability, on-the-job training, and future skills-based or credential attainment.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the State’s strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

The Indiana Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (i.e. state workforce development board; GWC) is comprised of leaders from business, workforce, education, and lawmakers who represent key industries and programs throughout the state. Members of the GWC are appointed by the Governor and serve two (2) year terms. The terms are staggered so that half of the members

turn over each year. If necessary, the Governor will make an appointment to fill any vacancy on the cabinet, but only for the duration of the unexpired term.

The GWC meets bimonthly to discuss key workforce initiatives, strategies, opportunities, and challenges occurring in the State. The GWC intentionally convenes its meetings in communities throughout the State, hosted by a workforce partner. Not only does this shed greater visibility and transparency into the actions of the GWC, but it enables members to see the workforce efforts across the State of Indiana and to engage in coalition building with regional partners who might not otherwise be engaged.

The GWC is driven by its mission to ensure the workforce development system helps grow the State's economy. In addition to performing the duties set forth under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the GWC:

- Assists the Governor in creating a unified or combined statewide plan for workforce development that links workforce policies and education programs to the economic needs of the State and its regions in alignment with the vision and goals of the State strategic plan
- Creates policy recommendations for the Governor related to the establishment and continuous improvement of an efficient, effective, and integrated State workforce development system
- Oversees the progress of the State's implementation of the unified or combined statewide plan for workforce development and achievement of the plan's goals and strategies
- Secures accurate and current data to evaluate all goals
- Engages employers to invest in and upskill employees to strengthen the skills of the labor market
- Ensures Indiana's two-year colleges are structured and incentivized to significantly increase completion rates for the most in-demand certificates, credentials, and degrees for students
- Encourages continual communication with local workforce development boards (LWDBs) to inform them of available resources and incentivize goal achievement
- Aligns State agencies' goals and priorities

Although the Governor has primary authority in WIOA local area governance, both the GWC and Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) have approval and signatory authority on behalf of the Governor for various WIOA local area governance activities. For local area governance activities requiring Governor-level approval:

- If activities are specifically outlined within U.S. Department of Labor regulation or guidance as State Board functions, the GWC is authorized to approve/sign on behalf of the Governor (e.g., WIOA Local Plan approvals, Designation of Local Workforce Development Areas, etc.).

- If activities are operational or compliance-based, the DWD Commissioner is authorized to approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. DWD will issue guidance on, review, and make decisions regarding these activities, consulting with the GWC as appropriate (e.g., WIOA Single Entity/Multiple Role structures, local WDB certifications, submission of bi-annual Nondiscrimination Plan, etc.).
- For any activities that may overlap the above designations of signatory authority, the GWC and DWD collaborate and EITHER may approve/sign on behalf of the Governor. For example, the review process for Local Plans is conducted by DWD, with a recommendation provided to the GWC for final approval. Written approval may then be signed/issued by DWD, on behalf of the GWC, or may be issued directly from the GWC.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

In alignment with the goals and strategies outlined in Section II.B., Indiana has identified specific action steps where core and partner programs play a significant role in achieving successful outcomes over the next four years.

Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC)

In 2024, the governor's office announced the launch of a statewide workforce development campaign, One Stop to Start, with the goal of connecting Hoosiers with existing workforce and job-related training programs and resources. It includes an online navigation system for Hoosiers and employers, offering low-barrier, one-on-one assistance for both through a team of dedicated navigators (<https://onestoptostart.in.gov/>). The overall goal of One Stop to Start is to ensure Hoosiers have awareness of good job opportunities and access to the programs that can get them on the path to realizing a high-wage career. Examples include accessing tuition-free certification in high-demand sectors, becoming an apprentice or engaged in a work-based learning programs, accessing college financial aid, supporting marginalized population groups who have been historically excluded in the labor market including English language learners, adult learners without a high school degree, individuals who are disabled, or justice-involved, those in need of earning a high school diploma or equivalency, and more. In addition, the site serves to connect employers with business services resources available through State and Federal grant programs, WorkOne business services functions, and skilled talent recruitment from veterans, justice-involved and vocational rehabilitation programs and via the community college systems.

The campaign will be led by the GWC and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, in partnership with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE), the Indiana Department of Corrections, Ivy Tech Community College, and Vincennes University. The initiative will also connect to Indiana's *Next Level Jobs* Program (NLJ).

The GWC will continue to serve as lead convener for workforce and talent development across the State. In doing so, the GWC will engage State workforce and education partners, including representatives of business & industry and community- and faith-based organizations, etc. to identify areas for stronger coordination so that jobseekers have access to high quality, accessible training, and supportive services (food, transportation, clothing, childcare, shelter, translation services, etc.), and employers have a constant pipeline of skilled talent without barriers to employment.

Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD)

DWD oversees five of the six WIOA core programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education & Family Literacy, and Employment Service/Wagner Peyser. As such, DWD will have a lead role in implementing Indiana's strategic vision. In 2023, DWD established agency goals and Workforce Operations objectives that align with the Pillars and Goals set forth in this Plan. DWD will continue to fund core program required activities and will strategically design complementary activities from a variety of funding streams to carry out or support the Plan's key action steps.

DWD prioritizes alignment across partners, programs, and funding streams. DWD will continue to emphasize the importance of such alignment in the implementation of the State's workforce development strategies. The examples below exhibit this alignment, both in current projects and in projects that will be operationalized under this Plan.

As discussed in II.b.:

QUEST Dislocated Worker Grant. DWD was awarded \$10.8M in Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Dislocated Worker Grant funding in 2022. DWD has utilized this funding to support multiple initiatives, including:

- Development and implementation of the Workforce Recommendation Engine (WRE, now known as PIVOT)
- Piloting an alternative funding strategy for participant enrollment to support improved outcomes related to co-enrollment between Title I and Title II programs
- Partnerships outside of WIOA Core to ensure successful outreach and marketing
- Focus on building pathways and engaging participants and employers in priority industries, such as infrastructure and the care economy

Indiana's work with the QUEST DWG demonstrates effective cross-collaboration between multiple programs and partners, including Title I, Title II, Unemployment Insurance, local workforce development areas (LWDAs), and employers. Work in this area also contributes to the State's goals and strategies related to harnessing opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (including the Broadband

Equity Access & Deployment Program), the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act to increase talent development for the care giver economy, creating career pathway models for critical need sectors, and many of the other strategies outlined in II.b.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Expansion. Through cross-agency partnership between DWD and the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Indiana plans to expand JAG from 125 to 250 programs by the 2024-2025 school year. FSSA will invest over \$23.1 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants to support the expansion. Additionally, FSSA's Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services Vocational Rehabilitation program, in partnership with DWD, will continue to contribute federal funding to support JAG students with disabilities.

For several years, DWD's WIOA Youth program has operated under the flexibility afforded by the out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure waiver, which has helped strengthen drop-out prevention strategies, such as JAG, for in-school youth with significant barriers to graduation. WIOA Youth and JAG programs have significant overlap, with aligned performance goals to achieve positive outcomes with a focus on credential attainment and placement in higher education or training, employment, or military service. Indiana seeks to continue its implementation of waiver flexibility during PY24 and PY25, to support:

- Implementation of evidence-based programs and strategies
- Progress toward closing the economic inequity gap
- Placing more Hoosier youth on the path to high-wage skills
- Increasing college readiness

Alignment of DWD's WIOA Youth and JAG programming, along with FSSA's partnership, allows Indiana to proactively decrease the number of out-of-school youth, while simultaneously increasing the number of youth who enter the workforce and/or post- secondary education.

Systems Alignment and Integration. DWD will continue to analyze the structure and function of its various systems to support alignment and integration. Significant progress has been made in systems alignment across programs through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, where WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV have common access to track employer engagements. System integrations have also occurred between DWD's Unemployment Insurance and CRM systems for targeting outreach and tracking referrals. DWD will continue to explore opportunities and projects that will support the State's strategies toward systems alignment and integration. For example, DWD anticipates utilizing QUEST DWG funds to continue progress with the WRE, as well as to fund an Application Programming Interface (API) between the Title I and III case management system and the Title II Adult Basic Education systems. The API will assist with measuring existing co-enrollment and identifying opportunities for co-enrollment. Integration will also align data sources for more efficient access and analysis.

Digital Equity. DWD will assist with various strategies to support the State's digital equity goals. Some resources are already funded and available for use across core partners, such as the WIN Career Readiness System's digital literacy course modules paid for by DWD's Title II program. WIN is currently available to DWD programs (including core programs Titles I, II, and III), and can also be utilized by the LWDAs. Title II providers are available to support jobseekers

in digital skill development. WIN is available to jobseekers and includes a digital literacy assessment and curriculum that could be utilized by other partners to assess and strengthen digital literacy. DWD will explore additional tools to support the State's strategy related to standardization of digital literacy assessments. Some of Indiana's LWDAs already utilize certain other digital assessments to help identify skill deficiencies for WIOA participants, but these assessments are not required or standardized across programs. DWD will also collaborate with the GWC and CHE to support digital workforce readiness across industries through targeted use of *Next Level Jobs* (NLJ) *Employer Training Grant* (ETG) and *Workforce Ready Grant* (WRG) programming. Additionally, DWD was a member of Indiana's Digital Equity Taskforce, which created the first digital equity (DE) plan for Indiana. DWD will align work and activities to support implementation of the DE Plan's recommendations. Further, through DWD's work with the QUEST DWG and other partner collaborations, such as the Indiana Broadband Office, DWD will assist with digital equity work in the broadband space as funds come to the State.

Removing Barriers. Through coordination of funding streams, alignment in service delivery, and targeted use of funds, DWD will support the State's goals in removing barriers for workers. Indiana Adult Education, for example, now covers high school equivalency (HSE) testing fees for students enrolled in adult education programs, eliminating the barrier HSE testing fees impose on adult learners. This began as a pilot project during the pandemic in PY 2020. The response was so great that it was, and will be, continued in subsequent years using the non-match State adult education allocation, exhibiting coordination between Federal and State funding through complementary service approaches. The *Workforce Education Initiative* (WEI) is another example of continuing coordination and alignment. Many individuals who need adult education services must make the difficult choice between earning an income and returning to school. Through WEI, funding is made available to adult education providers to offer classes at employer work sites.

DWD will also target funding to remove barriers through the ETG and WRG programs (under the *Next Level Jobs* initiative). This targeted funding will support the State's goals in multiple areas, such as digital workforce readiness discussed above. Another area DWD will target is talent development in the care giver economy. For example, Indiana intends to expand ETG and WRG program options to include childcare training options. DWD, through collaboration with the GWC and FSSA, will pilot this expansion by adjusting its program offerings and preparing its systems to promote and track promotion of childcare occupations. Through alignment with WIOA core programs and the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), programs like ETG and WRG often lead to comprehensive talent strategies throughout Indiana's workforce system. The result is more aligned service delivery for both participants and employers.

Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship. DWD will continue to align initiatives to address employer talent needs and develop career pathways for workers in high growth sectors through continued ETG and WRG funding opportunities. DWD will continue to encourage the use of ETG funds toward State Earn and Learn (SEAL), pre-apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeship (RAP) programs. These models create a training system based on employer needs that prepares a skilled workforce for career pathways in high growth sectors. The Indiana Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA) will also continue coordination of a partner network that supports and provides work-based learning programs, amplifying the impact of the workforce system through strategic collaboration and marketing. OWBLA manages and implements U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship funding. Through this funding, OWBLA

provides resources and encourages co-enrollment and braided funding opportunities to serve more individuals as they enter strong career pathways.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR)

In partnership with DWD, FSSA will continue to enhance collaboration opportunities to improve employment outcomes for Hoosiers with disabilities. This includes increased opportunity to serve students with disabilities through the JAG program by expanding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between VR and DWD, refining the role of VR WIOA Navigators in workforce regions to support individuals with disabilities more fully in accessing all workforce programs, and continuing to develop cross-training opportunities with staff. Several VR initiatives – including provider performance incentive payments implemented in July 2023 and a shift in VR Counselor roles to identify dedicated VR Counselors to work with participants enrolled in postsecondary training – align directly with strategies outlined in this plan. Several goals and strategies outlined in the VR section of the State Plan are strategically aligned with overall goals and strategies (e.g., increasing postsecondary enrollment for VR participants, providing increased opportunity for work-based learning, increased engagement of eligible individuals in the VR program, and targeted outreach to students with disabilities to enroll more students in VR services).

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

Indiana has a talent development system comprised of wide-ranging and broad workforce development and education programs spanning Federal acts, State initiatives, and private investments. This has been beneficial for Hoosiers and Indiana employers, as there are multiple resources and supports available. Indiana will leverage work being done by and between our Core, required, and optional partners to drive our initiatives and coordinate alignment of new projects among partners.

Indiana recognizes that coordinated alignment among partners and activities is vital to ensuring an effective workforce system where activities are not duplicated. As a primary convener of Indiana's workforce system, the GWC will drive collaboration and alignment among and across the State agencies and key stakeholders involved in carrying out the activities identified in this Plan. A WIOA steering committee, comprised of core program partners, will convene regularly throughout the four-year lifespan of the plan for continuous improvement, progress tracking and implementation. DWD and FSSA (i.e., VR), as the entities administering the core programs, will assist in cascading the Plan's goals, strategies, and action steps to their own partners, including partners within the LWDAs. Alignment will be achieved through a variety of strategies requiring cross-program and cross-partner collaboration, including:

- Cross-training
- Strategic co-enrollment

- Co-location
- Data sharing
- Cohesive outreach and engagement with individuals and employers

Several of the activities listed in III.a.2.A., along with the goals and strategies identified in Section II.b., involve significant alignment across a variety of partners and key stakeholders. Some examples include:

PIVOT (previously known as the Workforce Recommendation Engine or WRE): Coordination among workforce partners is vital for the effectiveness of PIVOT. PIVOT leverages data the State already collects during daily governance activity to better serve workers. The goal is to use data in an algorithm to identify training programs and career pathways that align with an individual's educational and work background and desired future state (e.g., increased wages, length of training, cost of training, distance willing to travel for training, etc.) rather than asking citizens to take an assessment to provide us with this data. By streamlining this approach, Indiana hopes to reduce duplication of services among program partners and make coordinated recommendations using technology and data from unemployment insurance administrative records.

Digital Equity: Alignment across partners and activities outside the Plan is also a necessary component for the State's digital equity goals and strategies. As noted earlier, for example, Title II already has WIN as a resource available within DWD and the LWDAs. Some LWDAs also have separate digital literacy tools to assess and assist their customers. In the space of digital literacy and readiness, it is important that Indiana's partners are mindful of current projects and efforts to determine where activities could be expanded or aligned. Additionally, various stakeholders, including DWD, were members of Indiana's Digital Equity Taskforce, which created the first digital equity (DE) plan for Indiana. DWD will align work and activities to support implementation of the DE Plan's recommendations. Further, through DWD's work with the QUEST DWG and other partner collaborations, such as the Indiana Broadband Office, DWD will assist with digital equity work in the broadband space as funds are made available to the State.

Childcare Barriers and Childcare Employment Pathways: Meeting the State's goals toward affordable and accessible childcare will involve multiple partners implementing specific segments of the work, from DWD and FSSA cross system referrals for customers with childcare barriers, to low or no cost training in childcare occupations, to supporting the development of employer-based childcare benefits.

High School Equivalency (HSE) Testing: To eliminate the barrier HSE testing fees impose on adult learners, Indiana Adult Education now covers HSE testing fees for students enrolled in adult education programs. This began as a pilot project during the pandemic in PY 20. The response was so great that it was continued in subsequent years using the non-match State adult education allocation. Efforts to remove this barrier for adult learners exhibits coordination between Federal and State funding through complementary service approaches.

Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Apprenticeship: Multiple partners are involved in successfully implementing WBL and apprenticeship throughout Indiana. DWD's Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA), for example, drives initiatives such as providing education and training to one-stop business service professionals and providing guidance and

tools to assist with apprenticeship creation. Career coaches, counselors, and others involved in case management can access OWBLA training and resources to determine individual needs and offer WBL options and capture data and outcomes. Further, as DWD is the recipient of both WIOA Core Program funding and U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship funds, strategies are aligned across programs and partners to encourage co-enrollment and provide funds for on-the-job training (OJT), related technical instruction (RTI), as well as to address supportive service needs.

Workforce Education Initiative (WEI): DWD's Title II Adult Education team continues to partner with adult education providers and employers to implement the WEI program. Additionally, Title II staff are also working with Erskine Green Training Institute (EGTI) to assist more individuals with disabilities to enter the workforce using our WEI program. Manufacturing employers are encouraged to upskill incumbent workers using the Employer Training Grant or another funding source, backfilling the vacant position with a candidate from Erskine Green. EGTI partners with Title II to offer onsite training for these new employees. Title IV services are accessed as well when needed.

One Stop to Start: The GWC launched a marketing campaign in early 2024 to build awareness of the State's programs for individuals and employers; to connect workers to training that aligns with critical need and emerging employer demand industries; and to assist employers in connecting with training resources and skilled workers. A targeted ad and marketing campaign will direct traffic to a web-based portal which will serve as the State's one-stop hub for individuals and employers to learn about workforce, education, and training programs the State offers. It will also provide real-time, personalized help via one-on-one navigators. These navigators will help individuals and employers connect to the resources that best fit their needs through direct handoffs to the appropriate workforce, higher education, family and social services, or corrections agencies, local workforce development boards, or community college systems.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

High quality service delivery is implemented through various coordination and alignment activities among Indiana's WIOA Core and Partner programs. Through Indiana's workforce system partners, individuals have access to an array of customizable services, designed to meet them where they are according to their eligibility, needs, training, and/or employment goals.

Local Operations: A foundational component for ensuring coordination and alignment in service delivery starts at the local level. Each local workforce development area (LWDA) drives development and implementation of partner memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and infrastructure funding agreements (IFAs). MOUs are the avenue for local system partners to outline their collective vision for the one-stop system and commit to partnership under that vision. IFAs further solidify those partnerships through development of negotiated budgets

describing each partner's financial share of system costs. Each comprehensive and affiliate WorkOne center (Indiana's term for 'American Job Centers') is certified every three years via a thorough review process. These center certifications provide an additional layer of assurance for successful system operations on an office-by-office basis.

Service Navigation: Although Indiana's talent development system includes a broad range of programs and partners offering resources and opportunity for Hoosiers, it is vital that the system be navigable for those it serves. Ideally, there should be no wrong door for individuals to enter the system and receive customized services. Further cross-training of staff, increased and streamlined referrals, and co-location of partner staff, where feasible, will not only reduce potential duplication of services, but will also increase funding efficiency. Ultimately, these strategies will assist with a holistic view of individuals' needs.

When an individual connects with Indiana's workforce system, they are triaged to determine service level needs. Whether accessing self-services or seeking more in-depth assistance, and whether engaging virtually or in-person, individuals are met upfront with next steps. Veterans and eligible spouses are given service priority, and, when connecting to Title I Adult services, Adult Priority of Service provisions are implemented as appropriate.

Accessibility: Staff are trained to use multiple tools and resources to ensure accessibility to services when serving clients on-site. WorkOne offices, as well as DWD and LWDA websites and virtual service options, prioritize language, programmatic, and physical accessibility, with Equal Opportunity (EO) notices and related information prominently posted for Title I financially assisted programs and services. Indiana's WIOA State EO Officer and the twelve LWDA Local EO Officers routinely educate and train staff regarding nondiscrimination provisions. Further, DWD and Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) have partnered on several occasions to cross-train staff on multiple disability-related topics. Most recently, DWD and VR, in partnership with U.S. Department of Labor, acquired a Learning Management System (LMS) to support cross agency training. Two modules have since been developed and successfully rolled out to staff focusing on workforce collaboration and integration: (1) Co-enrollment and Joint Case Management and (2) Indiana's Workforce System and WIOA Program Partners. DWD and VR have also collaborated to hire VR Navigators, who serve as liaisons between WorkOne AJCs, VR staff, and shared customers.

Cross-training: Indiana will explore additional opportunities for cross-training among partners and programs to boost awareness and familiarity with program offerings and will encourage staff co-location when feasible. These strategies will support the State's goals by removing barriers for workers through enhancing referral processes and boosting co-enrollments. One of the State's goals is to develop a cross-system referral process for individuals with barriers to employment. To do this, partners must analyze current referral processes and collaborate to determine where efficiencies can be gained while working toward a consistent, more uniform process for cross-system referrals.

Co-enrollment: Similarly, co-enrollment will be emphasized across programs. Strategic co-enrollment is customer-centered and should be driven by the individual's unique barriers to employment. With adequate cross-training, staff will have the knowledge needed to review options with individuals and offer enrollment recommendations based on any programs for which the individual is eligible. Indiana's co-enrollment approach facilitates service delivery alignment and encourages braiding of resources to address the training and employment needs

of jobseekers and business customers at the local level. Expanding co-enrollment efforts will help to maximize each program's efficiency and impact. Serving individuals through the programs most appropriate for their needs can reduce duplication of services, improve outcomes, and increase the number of participants that can be served through each funding stream.

Supportive Services: As individuals are enrolled in various programs, staff assess supportive service needs, and for co-enrolled participants, identify which program will fund supportive services. To effectively serve each individual and mitigate their barriers, staff document barriers and supportive services in participant files. Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker supportive services, as an example, must include file documentation of barriers, the plan for addressing those barriers, and information demonstrating need for any supportive services rendered. LWDA's have flexibility to establish limits on supportive services amounts and timeframes, so long as the services are reasonable and necessary.

Co-location: Staff co-location, when feasible, is another opportunity to reduce barriers for those accessing State services. Strategically locating staff will facilitate referrals and increase awareness and partnership among various programs. Whether this be through physical sharing of space or from partner staff presence on certain days and times in certain locations, through mobile services, or otherwise, co-location serves to increase variety and flexibility as to where, when, and how an individual can connect with our programs. Co-location also facilitates real-time information sharing, allowing staff to better align activities, leverage existing resources, and increase opportunities for collective innovation that may lead to better service delivery approaches.

Workforce Education Initiative (WEI): Another strategy in meeting individuals where they are is the WEI. Many individuals who need adult education services must make the difficult choice between earning an income and returning to school. Through WEI, funding is made available to adult education providers to offer classes at employer work sites. Last year adult education programming was offered in partnership with 180 employers serving close to 3,000 students. These classes varied in form and included HSE prep, English Language Acquisition, and Integrated Education Training. Each curriculum was developed in partnership with and to meet employer needs. Offering classes at employer work sites also assists in reducing transportation concerns. When classes can be scheduled in alignment with an individual's work schedule, it reduces the need to arrange transportation to multiple locations.

Virtual Client Engagement: Indiana has made several tools available to virtually engage with individuals seeking services. For example, adult education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programming are fully available online. Additionally, individuals interested in workforce resources can connect with a live DWD agent through a phone call or chat function. The live agent will not only connect them to available resources, but also ensure that an appropriate referral is made should the individual like to receive additional assistance from a One-Stop Center. Further, DWD utilizes a web-based application that Hoosiers can use to schedule appointments, participate in meetings, transmit and sign documents, and track their engagements. This technology allows staff to deliver services virtually without a client necessarily needing to step foot into a One-Stop center. These tools are critical to engaging Hoosiers in this new workforce climate. Indiana will continue to assess and evaluate these tools

and their effectiveness with a focus on investment in tools that are maximizing engagement and connectivity with One-Stop Centers.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

To create a more robust talent development system and advance Hoosiers toward economic mobility, Indiana must continue to foster action-oriented relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies. Indiana will continue to attract and support businesses of all sizes to our State. Our focus, however, is on identifying and developing the skilled workforce needed to maintain these businesses and the businesses already here. To accomplish this, we engage with businesses holistically rather than focusing solely on their current needs. We must also look for ways to diversify hiring practices, access untapped populations, and develop strategic talent pipelines.

Building better connections to employers alongside our partners is a critical component of addressing the workforce challenges facing Indiana businesses. There is a need now, more than ever, to align resources and work strategically to develop talent pipelines. The following strategies outline how Indiana will continue coordinating activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs.

One Stop to Start: The GWC launched a marketing campaign in early 2024 to promote awareness of State resources for employers, including assistance in connecting with training resources and skilled worker pipelines. A targeted ad and marketing campaign will direct employers to a web-based portal which will serve as the State's one-stop place for individuals and employers to learn about the workforce, education, and training programs the State offers. It will also provide real-time, personalized help via one-on-one navigators. These navigators will help employers and other individuals connect to the resources that best fit their needs through direct handoffs to the appropriate State and local workforce and economic development program managers. The initiative may evolve to include additional technical components including employer to jobseeker talent recruitment and screening.

Employer Talent Agency: Indiana's talent development system must be responsive to the needs of employers, remain innovative, and provide real-time solutions to complex and pressing problems. Indiana faces a defining moment as it contemplates the future of work and the State's economy must respond to employer demand for a technically skilled, adaptable workforce. Amid a quickly evolving digital skills landscape with changing job requirements, and a limited labor market due to shifting demographics, there will be a need for a structured, unified framework for education and workforce alignment with employers in regard to skills, credentials and hiring needs that will build upon existing employer engagement. The GWC is embracing new approaches to serving Hoosier employers amid these changes in the labor market. Currently, it is determining the functions needed for a statewide Talent Agency offering,

designed specifically as a service to employers. The inspiration for this offering reflects feedback from employers and successful outcomes from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Talent Pipeline Management business model. An analysis could include asset mapping of existing business service models located regionally through local workforce development boards, community college systems, and state and local chambers, and state agencies to determine best practices, where gaps in service may exist, as well as how to best leverage existing networks towards a statewide approach for an employer-centered workforce system.

Engagement, Technical Assistance and Staff Training: Indiana will continue providing employer service-focused technical assistance and staff training through development opportunities for State staff and partners, such as LWDA staff and local workforce development board (LWDB) members. Specific board training, as an example, has been developed and is available for LWDB members and staff to enhance knowledge, duties, and understanding of their responsibilities as to how the talent development system can connect with employers. Another example is continued evaluation of Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) integration with WorkOne AJC Employment / Business Services Teams (BSTs). Indiana aims to ensure that veterans are adequately represented in local employer engagement activities, with the LVER leading those efforts through advocating for all veterans for employment and training opportunities with businesses, industries, unions, and apprenticeship programs.

Starting in 2024, VR will enhance its capacity to provide technical assistance to businesses through a pilot project with one of the largest counties in the State, Hamilton County. Through this partnership, Hamilton County will leverage its business networks to create more opportunities with local businesses to offer work-based learning and hiring opportunities for jobseekers with disabilities, including youth. Businesses will receive support with onboarding and training to promote a successful experience for both the employer and the jobseeker.

While tremendous progress has been made in communication and coordination with partners, such as using technology to track and record employer engagements and activities, the landscape of workforce development has significantly changed in recent years. It is critical that Indiana reassess our coordinated employer service delivery approaches across core programs and partners. A better understanding of all resources – whether provided by WIOA core programs and offered within our WorkOnes, or through State funded programs such as Next Level Jobs, or via other services funded by Partner Programs – will allow State, partner, and local workforce staff to better connect resources and programs to the employers they serve in their communities. All workforce system staff and partners should be well-versed in the leading industry sectors in their region and the resources available to help employers develop the talent they need.

Economic and Employer Data: DWD Research and Analysis staff have developed regional dashboards for use by workforce and economic development partners, including the Management Performance Hub (MPH). MPH helps stakeholders identify and analyze data sets necessary to understand the intersection between the education, workforce development, and social service systems. These tools are designed to increase awareness of economic and employer data with the goal of reaching a united understanding of the unique needs within each region. This data can be shared with partners across the workforce system to support the alignment of strategies and initiatives to support employers.

Current labor market analysis shows that Indiana is preparing to fill more than 4 million jobs by 2031, 154,000 of which are from growth, while 1.6 million represent labor force exits and 2.3 million from transfers. To prepare to meet this upcoming demand and secure a successful future for Hoosiers, DWD plans to create more opportunities for discussions and joint presentations with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. By looking towards the future, our efforts will be focused on promoting increased dialogue and action around increasing the number of good jobs, diversifying the economy, and continuing to grow the State's global competitiveness. As a result, State and local partners will have more targeted and coordinated talent and business development strategies moving forward. The GWC, DWD, and LWDAs will collaborate in these efforts to drive awareness and identify any workforce policy changes that may be necessary.

Infrastructure: Supporting the State's initiatives relative to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), will be a key focus of DWD over the next four years. Coordinating partnerships at the State and local level between BIL infrastructure programs, core partners, and one-stop partners will play a critical role in meeting the demands of these new projects and activities. To foster the development and sustainability of partnerships around infrastructure, DWD intends to dedicate staff to this work to stay abreast of the various projects, activities, and resources as they become available to our State and to ensure the appropriate core programs and one-stop partners are informed and leveraged to support a coordinated response to the needs. Implementation of the QUEST DWG has been a foundational support in this area, enabling DWD to build the framework from staff's infrastructure work can grow and expand.

Training Resources for Employers: Another key strategy for Indiana is the deployment of our Next Level Jobs Program, specifically the Employer Training Grant (ETG). Focused on businesses, the ETG program uses a coordinated service delivery strategy that brings State and local partners together to inform areas of need for employers. Since the inception of the program in 2017, over 1,400 Hoosier businesses have accessed training dollars to upskill their new and existing workforce to keep their businesses and workers thriving in Indiana. Over \$75 million has been invested into this skill advancement program that continues to result in higher wages for Hoosiers and a sustainable workforce for Hoosier businesses.

Also valuable for employers is the Workforce Education Initiative (WEI), as discussed throughout Section III.a.2., where adult education classes are offered at employer work sites. Each curriculum was developed in partnership with employers to meet their specific needs. Last year, adult education programming was offered in partnership with 180 employers serving close to 3,000 students.

Work-Based Learning: Work-based learning (WBL) remains a high priority strategy for Indiana as these activities allow our target populations to gain knowledge, skills, and experience as they earn an income, thus alleviating the education and life expenses tug-of-war that prevents individuals from pursuing educational opportunities. Seamlessly integrating the full WBL continuum into the Indiana talent development system will allow for both businesses and constituents to find sustainable success. Through coordinated efforts with State and local partners and employers much progress has been made on these efforts.

Hoosier workforce regions have utilized WBL models for many years. Through the VR program, for example, students receiving pre-employment transition services can access paid internships

or work-experiences. Over 4,000 stipends have been issued to students in FY2023 for WBL experiences and VR recently updated written guidance and training for VR staff on opportunities to expand WBL opportunities, including paid opportunities, for VR participants.

On-the-job and customized training programs, like those mentioned, have been widely used and are very effective tools. Indiana's policies are developed to ensure that our partners continually evaluate and improve their work and learn strategies. Specifically, Indiana's workforce partners are required to review all WBL programs with each company to ensure the training received truly provides a high-quality experience for the participant and helps them either advance at that company or pursue work at another company. Additionally, Indiana's policies require a review of the employment and advancement trends at employers that utilize WBL models to ensure participants are completing training, finding employment, and then persisting in that employment.

DWD's Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA) continues its scalable framework for State level apprenticeship programs, State Earn and Learn (SEAL). As a comprehensive program, SEALs provide more flexibility than a registered apprenticeship program, while maintaining a high level of quality and consistency, and are State certified through OWBLA. The SEAL model strategically incorporates related instruction, on-the-job training, and rewards for skill gain, all leading to at least one industry recognized credential, college credit, and developing a highly trained employee to meet the talent needs of Hoosier employers. These models are easily scaled across the State and have been developed for both the youth and adult populations. The State is actively involved in continuous evaluation of its full strategy for the implementation of registered apprenticeships throughout the State.

By coordinating with local partners, employers, and sector organizations to mitigate employer challenges, the State has been able to generate employer support for broader participation in WBL statewide. The State continues to work with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship in Indiana to coordinate information, expansion, and eligibility of apprenticeships in Indiana. Since 2018, OWBLA has been awarded and managed more than \$9.6 million in U.S. DOL apprenticeship expansion funding. Further development of registered apprenticeships will play an increasingly important role with businesses across all industries by providing a pipeline of skilled workers to help them remain competitive. Indiana has over 800 active apprenticeship programs and over 18,000 active apprentices in FY2023. Since 2018, Indiana has ranked, on average, in the Top 6 for the number of total apprentices, new apprentices, and completions among all states and territories. In fact, Indiana has ranked as high as #2 for both new apprentices and completions and is currently the #2 state for number of apprentices per capita. Yet, like the rest of the nation, Indiana currently lacks much needed diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and business sector roles. DWD received the 2023 U.S. Department of Labor State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant and the 2022 Apprenticeship Building America Expansion (ABA) grant to grow the foundational apprenticeship support ecosystem and increase apprenticeships throughout the State. Through the support of these grants, the DWD has worked with Indiana's U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeships and other key stakeholders to:

- Identify ways to integrate registered apprenticeship into State education and workforce systems (i.e. WIOA)

- Engage industry and other partners to expand apprenticeship to new and critical sectors, such as IT, healthcare and social assistance, cybersecurity, and business services and to new non-traditional populations at scale, including through career and technical education programs of study design
- Conduct outreach and work with national, State, and local intermediaries, as well as employers, to design and scale quality WBL programs
- Identify ways to promote greater inclusion and diversity in apprenticeship, such as subgrants with The Indiana Plan and partnerships with organizations such as the Urban League, the Latino Institute, etc.
- Conduct research and design pathways in partnership with key stakeholders for Youth Registered Apprenticeship programs
- Incorporate Registered Apprenticeship programs onto the State's Education, Training and Provider List (ETPL)
- Expand the State's current apprenticeship model using SEAL programs and Certified Pre-Apprenticeship (Pre-RAP) programs

To provide alignment with the workforce system, the LWDBs serve as Registered Apprenticeship Intermediaries to assist in the expansion and facilitation of all Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programming across the State. Indiana will continue to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs as well as the number of apprentices enrolled in these programs.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges, adult education providers, area career and technical education schools, providers on the State's eligible training provider list, and other education and training providers, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv). Include how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments to enhance access to workforce development programs at these institutions.

Indiana's strategies (as detailed in Section II.c.1 and II.c.2). require the engagement of education and training partners throughout the State. The talent developed by these partners is critical in preparing individuals with the knowledge and skills needed for success in the economy and for fulfilling personal goals.

Higher Education: Indiana's Commission for Higher Education (CHE) 2023 Hoosier Opportunities & Possibilities through Education (HOPE) agenda establishes a foundation whereby all Hoosiers have opportunities for access to higher education, employers have access to a better-prepared workforce, and communities will be stronger (<https://www.in.gov/che/strategic-plan/reaching-higher-in-a-state-of-change/>). The HOPE Agenda targets three key pillars (enrollment, completion, and graduate retention) and calls for Indiana to be a top 10 state in the nation by 2030 in the following areas:

- Post-high school training and education going rates for youth and adults, across all demographics by leveraging tools such as the Frank O'Bannon Grant, 21st Century Scholars program, the Indiana College Core, FAFSA completions, the Workforce Ready Grant, our low tuition and fees, and our continuous focus on high quality
- Postsecondary attainment for veterans, individuals with disabilities, and the justice-involved
- Utilization of credit for prior learning to honor the work, training, and education already achieved by adult learners
- The rate at which Hoosiers successfully complete their chosen areas of study
- Retaining talent once someone has graduated from a postsecondary training or education program
- Measurable distinction in economic and social mobility and prosperity outcomes
- The state for growing or starting a business based upon the strength of human capital

CHE has spearheaded efforts to increase transparency around transferable credits. They have led a Credit for Prior Learning Taskforce over the past year to catalogue the credits that various state institutions, both public and private, offer for prior learning experiences and non-credit credentials (such as industry certifications). These efforts will aid the State in the transparency needed to motivate students and jobseekers alike to stack credentials and continue along a career path. Adult learners are more apt to continue along their career paths and to extend their education if they are awarded appropriate credit for industry certifications. Full transparency regarding credit for prior learning will lead to higher educational attainment for Hoosiers.

Higher education partners are critical to Indiana's talent development system and are key stakeholders in carrying out the goals and strategies in this Plan. The need to engage with all institutions of higher education – including Indiana's community college system, training providers, and four-year colleges and universities – stems from the recognition that higher education is no longer episodic for Hoosiers, but rather it is continual. In today's economy, workers must engage in continual learning to adapt to innovations in every employment sector. The result is a higher learning system where completion is comprehensive – including everything from micro-credentials and short-term certificates to associate, bachelor, and graduate degrees – allowing learners to build, expand, stack, and show what they know throughout their careers. To attain personal and economic success requires Hoosiers to embrace lifelong learning as they navigate and advance in their careers. Higher education remains a powerful force to address income disparities, close equity gaps, provide personal prosperity, drive economic growth, promote civic engagement in our society, and enhance the quality of life in our Indiana communities.

Career and Technical Education (CTE): Indiana fully launched new secondary career and technical education courses in the 2022-2023 school year. This initiative, called Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS), aims to improve the consistency, quality, and intentionality of CTE instruction across Indiana. The CTE team, now part of CHE, developed the NLPS to align with Indiana's high wage/high demand sectors and to increase the attainment of dual credits and the conferring of technical certifications which transfer directly into associate degrees. The design,

structure, and dollars associated with the NLPS are intended to directly incentivize and monetize schools to enroll more students in CTE courses and to support them through completion so that they can graduate high school with significant credits toward a degree.

Eligible Training Providers: While Indiana's institutions of higher education offer a wide-variety of credit-bearing opportunities, the State also offers numerous non-credit options for individuals looking to upskill and/or earn credentials through a different route than college. Rising college costs have led many students and adult jobseekers to pursue alternatives to a four-year degree, but it is important that any alternative still leads to a quality credential that holds currency in the workforce. To promote credentials of value for shorter-term training programs, steps have been taken to ensure that programs on the ETPL lead to an approved credential, including degrees, Registered Apprenticeships, licensures, and industry recognized certifications which appear on Indiana's Promoted Industry Certification List, a list that is validated by Indiana employers. Training providers can only maintain their presence on the ETPL by meeting performance measures based on one of three criteria: completion, job placement, and median wages. One way Indiana has merged other types of education and training programs is through partnerships between apprenticeships and our community colleges. Ivy Tech Community College (ITCC) partners with registered apprenticeships to provide comparable college credits and confer degrees. Vincennes University works with non-unionized organizations to provide college credits and degrees for their registered apprenticeship programs. Based on the ETPL, our LWDBs spearhead the work and partnerships with local postsecondary trainers and partners to ensure Hoosiers are gaining the skills and knowledge necessary for career advancement.

Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship: DWD's OWBLA is creating alignment of CTE, DOE, and ITCC training programs to U.S. Department of Labor skill standards creating universal alignment and training plans. OWBLA is actively expanding pre-apprenticeship and SEAL workforce solutions with Adult Education and CTE, to provide access to high-growth career pathways. In Indiana, all certified or registered WBL programs are encouraged to collaborate with INTraining/ETPL in demonstrating quality and consistency of comprehensive programs.

Adult Education: DWD meets regularly with ITCC to discuss adult service delivery including strategies to connect jobseekers into emerging industries. One area of focus involves workforce needs for infrastructure projects. Agency conversations include adult education, CTE, community college partners, as well as agencies receiving funding for infrastructure development. A priority has been ensuring entry level training, such as adult education Integrated Education and Training (IET), becomes credit for prior learning at post-secondary institutions. This is a priority area for CHE as well, and DWD participated in a taskforce to develop policy and procedures for Prior Learning Assessments. To encourage transition to post-secondary after completion of the secondary diploma, DWD is incentivizing adult education providers to have students complete FAFSA applications prior to graduation.

Other Education and Training Providers: The State's priorities and strategies for advancing partnerships with other education and training providers include:

- Ensuring the transferability of learning and certifications where there are gaps among training providers, institutions of higher education, and employers, as well as in career-technical education courses in the K-12 space; and between the K-12 and higher education sectors, particularly for CTE courses. Efforts by CTE to create the Next Level

Programs of Study, aligned with community college curriculums at ITCC and Vincennes University, are aimed to increase dual credit attainment by high schoolers in the CTE space.

- Developing a digital, easily sharable student-owned Learning Employment Record (LER) to track education and career achievements paired with Credential Engine's credential directory and encouraging widespread use of LERs to help match jobseekers to employers.
- Continuing to build upon CHE's work with institutions of higher education to develop a system for recognizing non-credit credentials and other types of prior learning as college credit that can transfer and count towards postsecondary programs. CHE currently leads a Credit for Prior Learning taskforce to assist in these efforts.
- Redesigning career and employment services offered by training providers to support learners throughout their educational experience and connect them to relevant career opportunities.
- Using predictive analytics to identify student needs and tailor individualized support to ensure student success.
- Increasing the number of employers partnering with education and training providers to develop "grow your own" programs for their employees.

Leveraging Resources: As noted in Section II.c.1, Indiana has developed strategies that the State will implement to support in-demand industry sectors, occupations, and career pathways. These strategies leverage Federal, State, and local investments to enhance access to education and training partner programs.

Federal investments beyond WIOA, such as the CHIPS and Science Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (also known as the Infrastructure Investment Act), are bringing the State's education and training partners to the table to not only re-examine existing training curriculum but also develop new training based on industry demand, especially in new and emerging sectors like semiconductor technologies. Indiana's robust partnerships allow for collaboration on leveraging federal investments. For example:

- Purdue University is the leading university partner for Indiana's Silicon Crossroads Hub and will leverage relationships with consortium partners to support industry's increased production of semiconductor technologies.
- Under the Tech Hub program, education, and training partners – including Purdue University, the University of Notre Dame, Ivy Tech Community College, and Indiana University – are leveraging strengths to drive innovation and production of bioproducts invented domestically.
- Purdue University is playing a major role in the cross-state Midwest Hub (i.e., MachH2) to accelerate the State's clean energy efforts around hydrogen.
- Indiana University's Indiana Resilience Funding Hub will be leveraged to provide communities across the State with access to federal investment funding for sustainability and climate-change mitigation focused projects.

State and local investment supported the increased awareness and access to training programs to support key populations in their career journeys. Under the Regional Economic and Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI), communities leveraged existing resources via match funding to secure READI grants from the State to support regional talent development and attraction. The workforce needs varied across the State whether it was Stellantis announcing the expansion of manufacturing operations in Kokomo to build a second battery plant, or Eli Lilly breaking ground to support its manufacturing operations in Lebanon.

VR continues to facilitate a Transition Advisory Council in close partnership with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), DWD, CTE, local schools, and a wide range of other State agencies, advocacy groups and stakeholders. This council serves in an advisory capacity for statewide pre-employment transition services; however, the group also focuses heavily on sharing of resources, information, and best practices on transition from school to work services across partners. Additionally, VR maintains MOUs with IDOE and DWD to support collaboration in serving students.

F. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

Describe how the State’s strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

Indiana recognizes that the path to graduation is not a one-size-fits-all and instead, provides many pathways for students to earn a high school diploma. The Indiana Graduation Pathways empower students to individualize their graduation requirements to align with their postsecondary goals in one of three paths: Enrollment, Employment, and Enlistment leading to military service. No longer must students fit into the same academic mold, but rather, they can choose the high school options that best meet their postsecondary goals and aspirations. Beginning with the Class of 2023, students must meet (1) diploma requirements, (2) learn and demonstrate employability skills, and (3) at least one postsecondary-ready competency (e.g., honors diploma, SAT, ACT, ASVAB, industry certification, apprenticeship, CTE concentrator, AP/IB/Dual Credit/Cambridge International/CLEP, locally created pathway – approved by the State Board of Education, or a waiver). Indiana’s “re-thinking of high school” aims to expand access to intentional college credit opportunities that allow students to earn transferable, stackable credentials before graduation, as well as high-quality work-based learning experiences. The future of our students, our communities, and our State depend on a K-12 system that helps everyone succeed, whether their post-graduation plans include employment, enrollment, or enlistment leading to service. Progress will continue to be tracked in the Indiana Graduated Prepared to Succeed dashboard (Indiana GPS: <https://indianagps.doe.in.gov/>).

In 2023, the Indiana General Assembly passed House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1002 which, at its core, sought to implement new high school diploma requirements that are more flexible and relevant to students, employers, and communities while also improving access to high-quality work-based learning opportunities and increasing the number of postsecondary credentials earned by students before they graduate high school. From HEA 1002, the State also established Career Scholarship Accounts (CSA) which enable students in grades 10-12 to access funding to pay for career training beyond the classroom. This expansion of work-based learning will enable Hoosier students to earn a post-secondary credential before graduating from high school.

Indiana's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials. Through programs like the CHIPS and Science Act, Tech Hubs, and more, Indiana is poised to make strong investments in talent development to support the in-demand occupations of growing industry clusters like semiconductor manufacturing, clean energy, electric vehicle manufacturing, biolife sciences, etc. State workforce partners will continue to meet with industry leaders to determine their staffing needs in these fields and to coordinate on training, work-based learning experiences, and stackable credentials in order to meet employer demand.

The additional strategies outlined below further support the State's strategies:

Establishing Shared Definitions: Indiana's Department of Education (IDOE), in coordination with Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE), Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC), has led statewide efforts in establishing shared definitions of high-quality work-based learning and credentials of value. IDOE conducted a Graduation Landscape Analysis in 2023, where it evaluated evolution of graduation pathways and diploma requirements and engaged stakeholders to help focus Indiana's work into three key areas¹:

- **Diploma Requirements:** making high school diploma requirements are more flexible and relevant to students, employers, and communities
- **High-Quality Work-Based Learning:** improving access to and the number of students completing high-quality work-based learning opportunities
- **Credentials of Value:** increasing access to and the number of students completing high-value postsecondary credentials before high school graduation

These definitions aim to ensure that students graduate with knowledge, skills, and experiences that align with the needs of employers, communities, and our State. They also help to prioritize State funding efforts. A statewide advisory group with representation from all the major partners – IDOE, CHE, DWD, and Indiana Office for Career and Technical Education (CTE) – is outlining a process to evaluate credentials and to categorize them from 'foundational' all the way to 'premium' based on the mastery of technical skills leading to the highest wages. All the industry certifications that appear on Indiana's Promoted List of Industry Certifications, for example, will be categorized as either a foundational, advanced, or premium credential. Efforts to identify Credentials of Value will allow the State to better incentivize the attainment of credentials that offer the greatest return on investment.

Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship: Indiana's strategies specific to work-based learning and apprenticeship will further support improved access to postsecondary credentials. For example, the work DWD's Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA) has completed to align CTE, IDOE, and Ivy Tech Community College training programs to U.S. Department of Labor skill standards creates universal alignment and training plans across multiple industries.

Led by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Workforce Excellence, Work and Learn Indiana helps Indiana employers and community partners develop and retain Hoosier talent through relevant work and learn experiences that drive a highly skilled and equitable workforce. The program is a free work-based learning matching marketplace connecting

Indiana employers, anyone seeking a work-based learning experience, high schools, colleges, and universities. Work-based learning experiences through this program include internships (12-16 weeks), externships (a day to a week), volunteering/service learning (no specified timeline), cooperative education (multi-semester), and apprenticeship (at least one year). Some work-based learning experiences may be eligible for academic credit; however, requirements vary by school and department.

Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant (ETG): DWD's implementation of the ETG program continues to prove critical in catalyzing relationships that drive recognized post-secondary credential attainment. In 2023, over 400 employers utilized the ETG, and 3,736 employees received job-relevant training in demand occupations. Nearly 50% of employers participating in ETG were small businesses with 50 or fewer employees, and apprenticeships are proven to help these businesses grow. Employers are increasingly utilizing ETG to upskill existing employees by creating new apprenticeship opportunities in Indiana. Benefits to Hoosier businesses are abundant, a few include growing their own talent through work-based learning, improving profitability by lowering recruiting costs in creating a pipeline of skilled employees, and retention gains of 93% in employees completing training.

Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant (WRG): DWD's implementation of the WRG program has continued to support individuals who are seeking training and skills necessary to succeed in the 21st Century economy. During Program Year 2022, WRG had 740 enrollments with an 89% completion rate and an 83% credential rate. Midway through PY2023, the program has 342 enrollments, with a 91% completion rate and 68% credential rate to date.

G. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

GWC and DWD work closely with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce to ensure the alignment of efforts and strategies spanning workforce and economic development. DWD's Workforce Solutions and Engagement Team often partners with IEDC, for example, on attraction and retention projects across the State. As federal funding is brought to Indiana, we will work to align economic development strategies with apprenticeship opportunities, which will support career pathway development in high growth sectors.

At the local level, economic development partners are members of and/or engaged in the work with the LWDBs. As discussed in III.a.2.D, to prepare for the future state of the workforce, workforce development partners such as GWC, DWD, and LWDBs will work toward creating more opportunities for discussions and joint presentations with IEDC and the Chamber. This will promote action around increasing the number of good jobs, diversifying the economy, and continuing to grow the State's global competitiveness. As a result, State and local partners will have more targeted and coordinated talent and business development strategies.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section **II Strategic Elements**. This includes—

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGIES (E.G., LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, JOB BANKS, ETC.).

DWD utilizes and/or makes available to its constituents a variety of tools and systems to aid in service delivery to help them find or transition back into suitable employment. Some of these tools and systems include:

1. **JOBS Program.** This is a program that utilizes the ACT WorkKeys job profiling and assessment system to help employers identify the workplace skills needed for their profiled jobs. Using the WorkKeys assessments, employers ensure an applicant's skill level is an appropriate match for success in the job. Approved JOBS Program applications receive WorkKeys job profiling services and assessments at no cost.
2. **WorkKeys.** These assessments measure foundational skills required for success in the workplace. Prior to accepting application for employment, employers that participate in WorkKeys job profiling can require applicants to demonstrate or document a certain level of skill determined by the job profile. In addition, WorkOne constituents can complete select WorkKeys assessments (applied math, graphic literacy, and workplace documents) to document their skills for the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) a credential that verifies a participant's skill at bronze, silver, gold, or platinum levels.
3. **WIN Learning.** This is an online Career Readiness courseware comprised of workplace hard and soft skills. Modules focus on digital literacy, career readiness 2.0, college readiness, and supplemental skills aligned to the WorkKeys assessments. The soft skills curriculum consists of four modules that include communicating effectively, conveying professionalism, promoting teamwork and collaboration, and thinking critically and solving problems. The five digital literacy modules include computer operations, internet browsing, digital communication, digital documents, and digital security. The career readiness 2.0 modules include applied math, graphic literacy, and workplace documents and there are college readiness modules that include: pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, and reading, writing, and English. Additionally, the courseware offers supplemental skills that includes business writing, applied technology, and workplace observation. As part of the suite of WIN products, constituents have access to the Academic Skills courseware which includes work ready math, work ready reading, and work ready data. WIN courseware offers placement tests and is adaptive to align to the WorkKeys skills and provides preparation and remediation for the WorkKeys assessments.
4. **Indiana Career Connect (ICC).** ICC is Indiana's official workforce services delivery system and database of record. ICC provides online labor exchange and case management tools available to employers, jobseekers, and case managers. Using the online labor exchange tools available in ICC, constituents can register for work, create, and send resumes, complete work-readiness assessments, access training provider resources and regional labor market information. Additionally, case managers use the system to document eligibility, activities, and notes related to participants. Activities include the required joint development of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), recorded assessments, scanned documents, reports, and copies of individual credential

attainments. As the database of record, ICC contains reporting functionality for WIOA, TAA and various local programs as well as functionality that assists case managers with making referrals, connecting constituents to training and education, managing job placement and retention as well as reporting for performance management.

5. **Career Interest & Aptitude Assessments/Indiana Career Explorer.** This is an online career planning system with aptitude assessments for Indiana students (grade 6 and above), postsecondary students, and any adult resident of Indiana. By accessing *Indiana Career Explorer*, Hoosiers can complete a research-based career assessment that helps match interests with their occupational goals. Additionally, the site links resources for education planning to help individuals visualize which industry or career path, field of study, or school to pursue next in life.
6. **Hoosiers by the Numbers.** This is Indiana's primary website for Labor Market Information (LMI), which provides multiple types of data outputs, including dashboards, profiles, radius tools, and Tableau visualizations. The website allows Indiana to disseminate critical labor market information to meet Federal and State objectives. Local areas can use this dashboard to define local priorities and areas for growth. The core of *Hoosiers by the Numbers* is strong navigation geared to people looking for their county or region or a specific piece of data on a workforce related topic. The site is powered by more than 7 billion records in the joint databases of the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) and DWD and is meant to serve as a leading informational site for business developers, researchers, and the public alike.
7. **INDemand Jobs.** *INDemand Jobs* focuses on high-demand, high-wage jobs for today and tomorrow. The demand indicator (or "flames") used is based on a methodology that ranks all Indiana jobs based on future growth and wages. Individuals can access this online tool through DWD's website to determine which industries and occupations are most in-demand in their metropolitan area or county. This tool is a useful resource for individuals at any point in their career path, whether searching for their first job, changing jobs, re-entering the workforce, or planning a career change. *INDemand Jobs* determines which occupations are to be included by looking at specific categories including total openings, growth openings, percentage change, real time labor market information, and wages for both short-term and long-term outlook. An occupation within an industry cluster will be assigned between 1 and 5 flames, depending on how in-demand that occupation is in the selected geographic region in the State. The skills engine uses national skills data from employers, coupled with Indiana-based employer validation in creating data, in order to show the skills needed to be successful in an *INDemand* occupation.
8. **Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE).** TABE is primarily a web-based assessment of basic and secondary education knowledge foundational for the workplace. Constituents and case managers utilize TABE to identify potential basic skills deficits and challenges prior to enrolling individuals in an occupational training program or postsecondary education.
9. **Credential Engine.** DWD has partnered with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in its support and utilization of *Credential Engine*, an international registry of available credentials that provides Hoosiers more transparency in the spectrum of

credentials available in Indiana. This tool will be comprised all credentials from Indiana's postsecondary institutions, as well as those found on the ETPL, allowing Hoosiers to better analyze their options for potential credentials in the Indiana marketplace and select the training option that best meets their needs.

10. **PIVOT (Workforce Recommendation Engine).** DWD launched the Workforce Recommendation Engine (WRE) in 2023. (The WRE is being rebranded as PIVOT in 2024.) PIVOT is an AI-based software in Uplink, Indiana's Unemployment Insurance system, that provides a list of suggested jobs that best align with the user's work history and skill set. This new tool is not a job board but serves as an additional method for filling talent needs while increasing awareness of the types of jobs employers are seeking to fill. As Hoosiers continue to use PIVOT, the data collected will be shared with employers in hopes of adjusting occupations, requirements, or benefits to make listings more attractive to jobseekers. DWD continues to evaluate PIVOT to determine broader applications outside the Uplink system (e.g., with WorkOne clients).
11. **Learning Management System.** In partnership with U.S. Department of Labor, DWD and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) developed a training program to cross-train staff within the WorkOne centers (Indiana's term for American Job Centers) and VRS field offices to better coordinate and deliver services to joint customers. Two training courses were developed regarding Workforce Collaboration and Integration: (1) Co-enrollment and Joint Case Management and (2) Indiana's Workforce System and WIOA Program Partners. The training was launched to DWD and VRS field office personnel in PY22.
12. **Next Level Jobs.** *Next Level Jobs* (NLJ) is an online portal for both jobseekers and employers promoting the NLJ initiative's Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant programs, as well as connecting to other tools such as *Indiana Career Connect*, *Indiana Career Explorer*, and *INTraining*.
13. **INTraining.** *INTraining* presents a broad and diverse selection of occupational training programs that support the employment goals of Indiana's workforce. *INTraining* is comprised of two lists: *INTraining* list and the ETPL. The *INTraining* list contains all training provider applicants whose training programs meet the basic application standards set by DWD. The ETP list contains a subset of the *INTraining* providers whose training programs meet additional demands and performance criteria set by DWD per WIOA. These training programs are eligible for WIOA funding through the local WorkOne office.

DWD also maintains and continues to expand the Workforce Information Database (WID) with State and local data that cover at least the most recent ten-year period, as well as any federally applicable changes mandated. The WID serves as a primary source for Indiana's Labor Market Information website (www.hoosierdata.in.gov) and is supplemented by the STATS Indiana databases, which have been built and maintained by DWD's university partner, Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC), for more than 30 years. Today, both the WID and STATS databases power Hoosiers by the Numbers and STATS Indiana through our partnership with the IBRC. The data covers counties, metropolitan statistical areas, economic growth regions, and a balance of State areas, in addition to statewide estimates and aggregates and small area data for

census tracts, zip codes, and radii. The STATS databases also include data for other states, which powers our tools for those needing bordering county/State data.

In the PY2023, the website platforms supported by DWD Research and Analysis tallied nearly half a million unique users. Nearly 1.5 million web pages were viewed during that 12-month period. The primary website for LMI is *Hoosiers by the Numbers* website, which provides multiple types of data outputs, including dashboards, profiles, radius tools, Tableau visualizations, and more.

In addition, the DWD Performance Reporting and Data Integrity unit builds upon data made available through Research and Analysis Data Warehouse (RADW, formerly Indiana Workforce Intelligence System or IWIS) and our case management system to deliver enhanced, customized performance metrics and to provide research request responses related to Title I and Title III, as well as additional State and Federally funded workforce programs. Examples of this work using UI wage record data for Federal performance metrics can be found here:

<https://www.in.gov/dwd/performance/>. Additional programmatic evaluations are performed upon request. Regional Analysts work in conjunction with locals to provide and analyze labor market information. The level of collaboration between State and local staff does vary by region. Business Intelligence State staff funnels information through the local business services reps as opposed to working directly with employers. One area of opportunity Indiana will explore through this Unified Plan is to develop a more coordinated approach with other agencies and our local workforce development boards to serving and sharing information with employers to avoid employer fatigue.

RADW (formerly IWIS) was developed as the State's longitudinal data system in 2007 as a joint project of DWD, Indiana Business Research Center of Indiana University (IBRC), Indiana Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). Except for Career and Technical Education data, the database currently does not have other IDOE data, but the system has continued to serve both as DWD's data warehouse as a means of connecting higher education and workforce records for ROI reporting and to deepen understanding of the education-to-workforce continuum. In 2014 the decision was made to request proposals to conduct an analysis of the current system and its capabilities to design a production-level system to augment or replace it as the State's student (P-20W) longitudinal database. IWIS was renamed the Indiana Network of Knowledge (INK) by legislative action and a broader governance committee (including the Commissioners of DWD, CHE, and IDOE) headed by the Governor was established. As of July 1, 2017, INK underwent yet another change and was renamed the Education and Workforce Data (EWD) warehouse now housed under the Management and Performance Hub (MPH) reporting to the governor's office. However, to sustain continuity of available data, DWD continues to maintain its workforce warehouse (RADW) of existing data series and seeks to expand and enhance it with data series useful for labor market and training research, in collaboration with, and potentially outside the scope of MPH. The RADW currently houses over 725 million records.

Many data requests continue to be fulfilled through the, using data from BLS programs, unemployment claims, Indiana Career Connect, and the case management systems, as well as reports combining wage data and higher education data. The data stored in RADW has been used in different studies ranging from post-graduation employment and wage outcomes, effects and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic and health status of the population, etc.

Several outreach programs have been developed in conjunction with the governor's office and MPH as well as the Region 12 service provider. These programs reach out to the unemployed who have filed for unemployment benefits to offer further services upon qualification. Additionally, DWD has provided data to various higher education institutions and for a data hack with Purdue University.

In the past, DWD has provided data to inform improving of veteran services, apprenticeship programs at a community college, and KPIs for the governor's office. Staff are in constant communication with MPH, which displays the final KPIs created by DWD and is available for data alterations and verification as required. Additionally, the RADW staff has continued to develop skills in data visualization tools such as Tableau and open-source coding languages (Python and R). Dashboards are in progress to provide further information to stakeholders as available. The RADW continues to operate in a secure environment called the "protected zone", a semi-virtual machine environment with SQL Server installed.

A data hub has been created by MPH for users to access public facing data sets and is currently published on MPH's website. Datasets are also available through a request process at MPH. Data from DWD are also available in dashboard format on DWD's website and include Occupational Employment Estimates (OES), Occupational Projections, Funded Eligible Training Programs, and data for the Indiana Composite Education Score, which provides the most common education attainment level needed for an occupation based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, O*NET, American Community Survey, Current Population Survey data, and job postings by county. Data sets for this hub have been contributed by other agencies and partners, such as IBRC, Indiana Department of Homeland Security, CHE, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and several other agencies.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (FOR EXAMPLE. CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ONE-STOP PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS.

Several State policies have been issued or updated to ensure successful implementation of WIOA, and others will be developed to support the strategies identified in this Plan. A sampling of such policies is listed below. Current DWD policies and guidance referenced below can be accessed via DWD's active policy webpage at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>.

- **Co-enrollment:** Based upon an individual's eligibility criteria and services for which they qualify, WorkOne offices offer Hoosiers a package of potential programs and services. Frontline staff work with the individual's aspirations to determine which programs meet the individual's needs, which may include more than one or two programs. Co-enrollment can range from being a reportable individual in a specific program up to and including full activation as a participant in the program. DWD has developed policy regarding Indiana's co-enrollment and common exit strategies. While co-enrollment is not mandated for most programs, it is highly encouraged. See DWD Policy 2021-08.

- **Partner Shared Costs:** DWD issued guidance and technical assistance in the development of partnership and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and infrastructure funding agreements (IFAs) between local workforce development areas (LWDAs) and partners of the one-stop delivery system. This guidance promotes a locally driven, locally negotiated process for partnering and sharing costs within each LWDA. MOUs must be completed at least every three years and budgets for IFAs must be completed on or before July 1st of each program year unless an extension is granted for additional time to reach agreement. See DWD Policy 2018-04, Change 1.
- **WIOA Adult Priority of Service:** DWD's WIOA Adult Priority of Service guidance emphasizes that, if a participant is a public assistance recipient, a low-income individual, or a basic skills deficient individual, then the participant must be categorized under the applicable priority population in addition to any locally established priority groups. This guidance also provides information on U.S. Department of Labor priority of service benchmarks and includes a form through which local areas may submit requests to create locally established priority groups. LWDAs must have written policies that delineate how they will give priority of service and must adhere to these policies. DWD will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately and will provide technical assistance as needed. See Policy 2019-04, Change 2.
- **Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning Experiences:** Expanding access to apprenticeships and work-based learning experiences is a key focus for Indiana. DWD developed guidance to assist with the implementation of any federal apprenticeship grants the State may receive. DWD Policy 2022-09, Change 1, provides local workforce development boards and other stakeholders with an overview of grant requirements and basic grantee responsibilities for U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship grants. The policy is designed to provide high-level, general information that applies to all U.S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship grants (key definitions, eligibility, co-enrollment, grant performance management, etc.). This policy was issued with technical assistance discussing how apprenticeship data is recorded in Indiana's case management system (DWD TA 2022-10, Change 1). Additionally, DWD often develops technical assistance specific to each grant that Indiana may receive. For example, DWD issued technical assistance regarding the Apprenticeship Building America Grant (DWD TA 2022-17).
- **Training Programs:** Related to Indiana's goal to prepare future skilled workers and connect them with employers, DWD policy outlines the criteria to qualify for Indiana's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as well as INTraining. See DWD Policy 2020-16, Change 1, and DWD TA 2020-17, Change 1. Training programs on Indiana's Eligible Training Provider List may be funded through Individual Training Accounts, which are described in DWD Policy 2017-09, Change 1. This policy creates a uniform process for issuing individual training accounts (ITAs), identifies the parameters for development of a local area ITA policy, and standardizes the delivery of ITAs in order to allow local areas to consistently provide training opportunities to participants leading to employment for an in-demand occupation. On-the-job training also offers opportunities for Hoosiers to upskill for in-demand jobs. DWD Policy 2022-02, Change 1, provides guidance on the implementation and operation of regional on-the-job training programs funded by the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

- **Growing Good Jobs:** Indiana understands the need to connect Hoosiers to high-wage jobs that lead to upward economic mobility. DWD has considered the provisions in TEGL 07-22 and anticipates further discussion and strategy development to emphasize the importance of job quality and how Indiana's workforce system can integrate good job strategies into its employer partnerships and workforce training. Many DWD programs already reflect the importance of connecting individuals with good jobs. For example, the *Employer Training Grant* requires funded training to result in a minimum 3% wage gain for any participant in the program, and all training must focus on job skills tied to an in-demand occupation. By enhancing strategy and developing tools and guidance on good jobs, Indiana can provide a framework for our workforce system to prepare skilled workers and connect them with employers seeking talent.
- **Customer Experience:** To improve the quality of training and career coaching, it is vital for our workforce system to be responsive to customer feedback. DWD Policy 2023-04 outlines guidance regarding the use of the automated check-in system, VOSGreeter®, in WorkOne offices. Statewide implementation of this tool allows Indiana to collect data on what motivates Hoosiers to visit a WorkOne. DWD also anticipates developing guidance to ensure uniform administration of the Customer Satisfaction Survey to support 34 CFR 463.800(a)(2). Both VOSGreeter® and the Customer Satisfaction Survey collect important data that can help Indiana provide high-quality, transparent service that meets Hoosiers' needs.
- **Equal Opportunity:** In accordance with 29 CFR Part 38 and Indiana's strategic initiatives to ensure high-quality service for protected populations, DWD Policy 2016-09 provides initial guidance regarding the observance and enforcement of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, specifically WIOA Section 188 and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR 38. In addition to DWD Policy 2016-09, DWD has issued DWD TA 2021-07, which describes the complaint procedures for Equal Opportunity and nondiscrimination violations. Equal Opportunity provisions are also embedded in other program guidance such as DWD Policy 2020-09, Change 1, which covers the one-stop certification process and requires that center certifications include reviews of programmatic and physical accessibility. DWD anticipates the development of language accessibility guidance to further enhance tools and resources available for partners and programs.
- **Supportive Services:** Ensuring access to supportive services is a crucial step in mitigating the barriers that prevent Hoosiers from participating in training programs or finding employment. From assistance with child and dependent care to assistance with transportation, supportive services give participants the tools to overcome obstacles and achieve upward mobility. In alignment with 20 CFR 680.900, DWD Policy 2021-02 includes guidance and context regarding supportive services for WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Workers including individuals participating through Dislocated Worker Grants.
- **Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs):** In support of Indiana's strategy to ensure service to protected populations, DWD Policy 2022-19, Change 1, provides guidance to Indiana's workforce system regarding the mandated requirements for the Monitor Advocate System and the provision of services to MSFWs. DWD has also issued

a desk guide to assist WorkOne offices as they serve MSFWs, which is available through 2022-19, Change 1, Attachment B.

- **Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses:** To ensure Veterans and Eligible spouses receive service in alignment with federal regulations, Title 38 U.S.C., VPL 07-09, and TEGL 10-09, DWD Policy 2015-08 addresses Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses under WIOA. With respect to any qualified job training program, a covered person (Veterans and Eligible Spouses) shall be given priority over a non-covered person for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provisions of the law. This policy supports Indiana's strategy to mitigate barriers for protected populations and provide high-quality service.
- **Center Certifications:** Title I of WIOA requires the State Workforce Development Board, in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and local boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures for the local boards to evaluate and certify the comprehensive and affiliate one-stop centers located within their Local Workforce Development Areas. DWD Policy 2020-09, Change 1 describes Indiana's criteria for center certification and the process for identifying whether one-stop centers are eligible for certification. This policy also includes the review form that certification teams use when evaluating one-stop centers.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) reports to the Governor's Office. The GWC helps inform policy and advises the Governor on workforce initiatives. It serves as a cross-agency convener and works collaboratively with key agency partners towards a statewide vision to connect education, workforce, social services, corrections, and economic development initiatives. The GWC also sets policy for workforce activities managed regionally by the local workforce development boards (LWDBs). The GWC and its cabinet members have a mission to address current and future education and employment needs of both individuals and employers, strengthen Indiana's economy by integrating and aligning State and Federal resources, ensure a talent-driven education and workforce system, and complete other duties as directed by the Governor or legislature. The GWC works with all agencies in the workforce ecosystem to drive policy recommendations through regular cabinet meetings or through the Unified Plan.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is the state agency responsible for administering and overseeing all WIOA programs under Titles I, II, and III. DWD oversees operations managed regionally by the LWDBs. The Family and Social Services Administration, through its Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV.

The GWC operates as the state advisory body for the programs contained in this Unified State Plan (see IC 4-3-27). On behalf of the Governor and in collaboration with the GWC, DWD

operates as the designated administrative entity for WIOA Titles I, II, and III, the Unemployment Insurance system, and other federal and state programs. As such, DWD is named the sole agency to plan, coordinate, implement, monitor, and make recommendations regarding initiatives designed to prepare Indiana's workforce for effective participation in the competitive and global economy (see IC 22-4.1).

Indiana has a total of twelve (12) designated local workforce development areas with a LWDB in each. LWDBs are responsible for the oversight of funds and activities, delivering career assessments, job search, and education and training related services through WorkOne offices (Indiana's term for American Job Centers) established by the local board. Indiana has identified regions 5 and 12 as a planning region in the state.

Indiana, along with Kentucky, created the first Bi-State Planning Region by resolution of the Cabinet and Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. Indiana's Region 10 Workforce Board created the Bi-State Plan with Kentuckiana Works to advance the regional workforce. This Plan is the first of its kind to merge interstate regions into one designated workforce hub. This significant collaboration exists between local areas Indiana Region 10 and Kentuckiana Works in order to develop the regional plan around the Louisville metropolitan area, which includes urban and rural sprawl in southern Indiana. The Bi-State Regional Plan creates an innovative picture of the region's economy and workforce environment through joint Indiana-Kentucky strategies to attain regional goals and objectives.

Workforce, education opportunities, and other needed individual services and resources are delivered on a local level through a WorkOne established by the LWDBs and managed by Executive Directors and One-Stop Operators. The WorkOne operations are engaged and reviewed by the GWC, DWD, and the coordinating LWDB. Local boards and Wagner-Peyser staff assist DWD with the administration of the workforce system. Other crucial partners in the workforce system include employers, our public and private institutions for higher education, school districts, CTE districts, community action centers, and local organizations providing adult education and other services. Indiana is driving a focused effort on technical assistance, training, and coordination for services leading to a comprehensive system that is better equipped to serve Hoosiers effectively.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet Executive team can be found at:
<https://www.in.gov/gwc/2332.htm>.

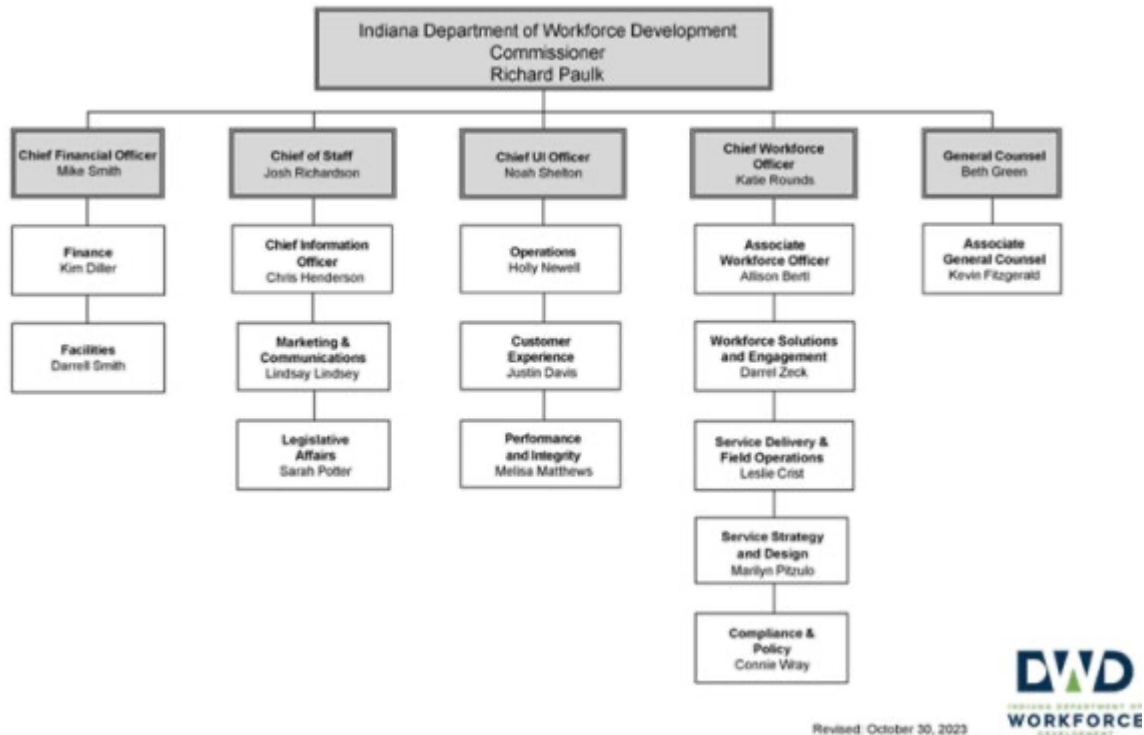
- Executive Director, Whitney Ertel
- Chief Business Intelligence Officer, Fran Valentine

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development Executive Team can be found at:
<https://www.in.gov/dwd/about-dwd/leadership>. DWD's Executive Team consists of:

- Commissioner, Richard Paulk
- Chief of Staff, Josh Richardson
- General Counsel, Beth Green
- Chief Information Officer, Chris Henderson
- Chief Financial Officer, Mike Smith

- Chief Unemployment Insurance Officer, Noah Shelton
- Chief Workforce Officer, Katie Rounds

DWD's Organizational Chart showing additional leadership staff structure is below:



The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), through its Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV. An organizational chart of FSSA leadership can be viewed at: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/4829.htm>.

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively. Also, provide a membership roster for the State Board consistent with 20 CFR 679.110-120, including members' organizational affiliations and position titles.

During the 2018 Legislative Session, the Indiana General Assembly created the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC or Cabinet) and designated it with the responsibilities of the state workforce board in addition to assigning the authority to direct the state agencies required to strategically address current and future workforce and education needs. Since that time, Indiana has operated under an approved waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor to maintain an alternative board membership structure rather than the structure identified within 20 CFR 679.110-120, while carrying out the responsibilities of the State Board under 20 CFR 679.130. Indiana is requesting continued approval of this membership structure through a waiver request submitted with this Plan.

The Cabinet brings together key partners, determines strategy and drives change for individuals and employers. The Cabinet is comprised of 34 total members with 29 voting members representing different geographic areas of the state, and includes business and community leaders, K-12 and Career and Technical Education representatives, appointees from postsecondary institutions, Indiana lawmakers and experts from state agencies. This unique structure allows for a comprehensive view of the workforce from early childhood, K-12, post-secondary, and adult education to the world of work. During PY22, seven board members were appointed to address term limits or vacancies. Per DOL's request, two individuals were appointed to represent Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation. With additional Cabinet appointments, industry/employer representatives continue to remain a majority.

2024 GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET MEMBER ROSTER & ROLES

1. A chairperson appointed by the Governor. *(Ryan Kitchell)*
2. The secretary of career connections and talent, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Vacant; this agency/role no longer exists.)*
3. The commissioner of the department of workforce development. *(Richard Paulk, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Workforce Development)*
4. The secretary of commerce or the secretary of commerce's designee, serving as a nonvoting member *(David Rosenburg, Secretary, Indiana Economic Development Corporation)*
5. The commissioner of the Indiana commission for higher education. *(Chris Lowery, Commissioner, Indiana Commission for Higher Education)*
6. The secretary of education *(Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education)*
7. The president of Ivy Tech Community College *(Dr. Sue Ellspermann, President, Ivy Tech Community College)*
8. The president of Vincennes University *(Dr. Chuck Johnson, President, Vincennes University)*
9. One (1) member representing a research university appointed by the governor *(Todd Richardson, Chief HR Officer and VP Human Resources, Indiana University)*
10. One (1) member representing a comprehensive university or an independent college, appointed by the governor. *(Rob Coons, President, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology)*
11. A member appointed by the governor who is an apprenticeship coordinator of a joint labor-management apprenticeship program approved by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Apprenticeship. *(Mark Kara, Assistant to the Coordinator for Local 150 Operating Engineers)*
12. A member representing high school career and technical education educators or directors appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education Districts. *(Dr. Steve Rogers, Director, Walker Career Center)*
13. Either:

- a. A member representing manufacturing appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Manufacturers Association; or *(Dan Peterson, Vice President of Industry and Government Affairs, Cook Group Incorporated)*
 - b. An employee of the Indiana Manufacturers Association appointed by the governor
14. A member representing a minority business enterprise appointed by the governor. *(Amish Shah, CEO, Kem Krest)*
15. A member representing a women's business enterprise appointed by the governor. *(Jaqueline Barton, President and Founder, Specialized Staffing Solutions)*
16. A member representing a veteran owned business appointed by the governor. *(Tony Vespa, Founder, Vespa Group)*
17. A member representing the nonunion and construction trades appointed by the governor in consultation with the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., and the Indiana Builders Association. *(Steve Schreckengast, President and Co-Founder, Citation Homes, Inc.)*
18. Either:
 - a. A business owner appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. *(Micah Vincent, Chief Operating Officer of Heritage Growth, The Heritage Group)*
 - b. An employee of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce appointed by the governor
19. A small business owner appointed by the governor in consultation with the National Federation of Independent Businesses. *(Loren King, President/CEO, Trinitas)*
20. A member of a community-based organization appointed by the governor. *(Fred Payne, President and CEO, United Way of Central Indiana)*
21. Three (3) at-large business owners appointed by the governor, one (1) of whom is a business owner who employs less than fifty (50) employees. One (1) member appointed under this subsection shall be from an organization representing technology.
 - *(Rebecca Schroeder, President of Whiteshire Hamroc)*
 - *(Megan Glover, CEO of 120WaterAudit)*
 - *(Chris LaMothe, Ascendanci Ventures)*
22. A school principal, appointed by the governor *(Jody French, Principal, Perry Central Jr./Sr. High School)*
23. A school superintendent, appointed by the governor *(Paul Ketcham, Superintendent, Batesville Community School Corporation)*
24. The commissioner of the department of correction, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Christina Reagle, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Corrections)*

25. The secretary of family and social services, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Dr. Dan Rusyniak, Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration)*
26. A member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives who serves as a nonvoting member. *(Representative Bob Behning, House Education Chair)*
27. A member of the senate appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate who serves as a nonvoting member. *(Senator Jeff Raatz, Senate Education and Career Development Chair)*
28. Any additional members designated and appointed by the governor.
 - *(Joyce Irwin, President, Community Health Network Foundation)*
 - *(Becca McCuaig, Legal Counsel for Accelerate Indiana Municipalities, a statewide non-partisan advocacy organization for Indiana municipalities)*
 - *(Dave Shane, Lilly Endowment Inc. Board Member, former CEO of Lacy Diversified Industries)*
 - *(David Adams, Principal, Adams Advisors LLC)*
 - *(For Adult Education – Marilyn Pitzulo, Associate Chief of Workforce Strategy and Design – Indiana Department of Workforce Development)*
 - *(For Vocational Rehabilitation – Theresa Koleszar, Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration)*

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS.

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

DWD utilizes a variety of processes and reporting tools for regular monitoring of program performance to drive quality improvement and effectiveness. Some of the methods utilized are outlined below:

Federal Performance Metrics. DWD currently follows the six primary indicators of performance described under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. For the PY22/PY23 local performance negotiation cycle, DWD issued Local Performance Negotiations Guidance (Memorandum 2021-25, available at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>). DWD utilized the average of PY21 actuals and PY21 negotiated goals as the basis for conducting local area negotiations. DWD is currently developing a local Statistical Adjustment Model (LSAM) and intends to utilize this model for future negotiation and adjustment cycles. Additionally, DWD also developed and maintains a Federal Performance Measures dashboard that enables staff and workforce partners to efficiently analyze years'

worth of Local Area Reports in one location. This information is available on the DWD Performance Portal at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/performance/federal/>.

In addition to negotiations, DWD also conducts a year end assessment following each program year where an adjustment is made based on the negotiated rates of performance and what actually took place over the program year. Each local area is provided with a local area performance assessment and is required to meet a 50% threshold for each individual WIOA measure and a 90% threshold for each overall program measure. In the event a local area fails to meet these required thresholds once the adjustment has been applied, DWD will take steps to provide formalized technical assistance that could include or require the development of a performance improvement plan or reorganization of the local board.

Programmatic and Fiscal Compliance Monitoring. DWD conducts regular monitoring of each local workforce development area (LWDA) to examine compliance with statutory, regulatory, and policy-driven requirements, as well as identify areas in need of administrative, financial management, programmatic, and/or systemic improvement. WIOA Title I programs are monitored on an annual basis and formal reports are issued identifying compliance findings, areas of concern, and best practices.

Additional information regarding the DWD monitoring process is available at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/monitoring/>. In 2021, DWD developed an Oversight and Monitoring Strategic Plan (OMSP) to assist in streamlining and modernizing workforce program and grant oversight activities. The OMSP communicates a consistent vision and approach for oversight and monitoring across all workforce program areas, while remaining agile as structure and priorities evolve. The OMSP highlights four priority areas:

- Priority 1: Adequate monitoring and oversight of workforce programs
- Priority 2: Culture of continuous improvement through oversight and monitoring
- Priority 3: Manage performance and grantee support
- Priority 4: Strengthen fiscal efficiency across all workforce programs

To carry out the strategies and focus areas of the OMSP, DWD established a standing Quality Workgroup consisting of staff responsible for program monitoring in various workforce areas. The Quality Workgroup is tasked with ensuring continuous improvement through sharing of best practices and identification of technical assistance and training needs. For example, following compliance monitoring conducted in PY2021 and PY2022, DWD developed the Year-In-Review (YIR) with aggregated WIOA compliance review outcomes, including noteworthy practices, from across the twelve LWDA's. The purpose of the YIR was to help regions identify their performance relative to their peers, and to provide focus areas for training staff and to support their own monitoring activities. Aggregated monitoring information has helped inform new and updated DWD policies/technical assistance as well as impact DOL-DWD technical assistance roundtable topics. DWD anticipates continued expansion and utilization of the YIR in future years.

DWD continues to work toward a more unified, consistent approach to monitoring across all of its workforce programs. Many workforce programs now participate in concurrent reviews during the Title I review process. DWD works with the LWDA's to develop a comprehensive

schedule of review activities for the week with each program conducting their own interviews with LWDA staff. The full team of DWD monitors participates in entrance and exit conferences with LWDA leadership and programs use a consistent framework for sharing results of their monitoring activities.

Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs. Many partner programs are reviewed at the local level through DWD's routine annual compliance reviews in each of the twelve LWDAs (see above), or through program-specific grant oversight, assessment, and monitoring conducted by individual programs. Over the past few program years, DWD's Compliance Team has incorporated concurrent monitoring of several Federal and State programs into its annual review process. As an example, during PY2023-2024, several programs are included in the LWDA review process, such as Title I, Equal Opportunity, RESEA, Apprenticeship grants, Performance Support Grants, QUEST DWG, MSFW, Employer Training Grants, and Workforce Ready Grants. DWD utilizes available performance data along with detailed monitoring activities to comprehensively assess these programs. Each LWDA monitoring review includes analysis of local-level strategy and progress against the State and Local Plans. Comprehensive reports and corrective action plans, as applicable, are issued for each LWDA.

Partner programs such as Unemployment Insurance, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Trade Act Programs, and Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) are housed within DWD and conduct independent oversight, assessments, and monitoring.

DWD conducts ongoing assessments through a program dashboard tool designed to monitor the volume of ongoing activities in our various workforce programs. This dashboard provides a look at both quarter-by-quarter data, as well as a historical year-over-year perspective. The historical perspective is critical and provides long term insight into patterns and trends in activities, and the quarter over quarter perspective supports our efforts to impact activities throughout the year. A sample of this dashboard is included in 4.B.

Indiana's Legislative Services Agency (LSA) also conducts an annual review, analysis, and evaluation of Indiana's workforce-related programs to provide the general assembly with the information it needs to make informed policy choices about the efficacy workforce related programs. Specifically, IC 2-5-42.4-3 requires the LSA to conduct a systematic and comprehensive review, analysis, and evaluation of workforce related programs that includes information about each program that is necessary to determine if the goals of the program are being achieved. The annual review is to be conducted over a five-year cycle during which each program will be reviewed at least once on a schedule determined by the Office of Fiscal and Management Analysis, Legislative Services Agency (LSA). Additional evaluation requirements for the evaluation are outlined in IC 2-5-42.4-3(b). The 2023 Workforce Program Review includes information about JVSG, Next Level Jobs WRG and ETG, and other workforce programs outside of DWD.

Adult Education Assessment Strategies. To monitor and evaluate the quality of adult education activities, program management, fiscal management, data management, and performance measures are continuously assessed. Informal and formal monitoring, desk audits, data checks, and program visits are conducted by state central office staff, adult education coordinators, and the InTERS data team. Low performing programs are identified, in part, based on the accountability results described in section 116(b) of WIOA. Visits are made to low performing programs by a state team. Local programs develop professional development plans,

target measurable skill gains to increase academic gains, and develop strategies to reduce student separations. Technical assistance and professional development are provided to further increase student success. Likewise, a comprehensive risk assessment is performed on all successful grantees from the Multi-Year Adult Education Competitive Grant Application (Request for Application) and the Multi-Year Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education Competitive Grant Application (Request for Application).

Based on these results, a number of adult education programs are selected for formal monitoring each year by a state monitoring team. Virtual and on-site monitoring visits are made to view records and classes, and to interview personnel. Formal reports are forwarded to local providers after site visits, and programs out of compliance are placed on corrective action plans. Programs are not released from corrective action plans until compliance is achieved and satisfactory progress is reached. Technical assistance is provided, and professional development is customized for programs identified as low performing.

States negotiate yearly performance targets with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education with respect to the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an adult education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward a credential or employment. Indiana requires providers of adult education to meet similar state negotiated WIOA metrics. Additionally, the state reviews the percentage of adults who are post-tested; the percentage of adults who exit the program without measurable skill gains; the percentage of adults who achieve measurable skill gains in distance education; and the percentage of adults who attain a high school diploma or equivalency.

At a minimum, State staff reviews program performance monthly and communicates to area providers efforts toward meeting local, regional, and State performance targets. The goal is continuous improvement. Performance is also monitored daily by the InTERS data team. Each provider and region see how they perform compared to the State and to the same time a year ago. To provide further transparency, the State broadcasts a monthly webinar that extensively covers these metrics and related performance standards. A coordinated series of professional development and technical assistance opportunities are offered to support these efforts. Funded programs employ professional development facilitators (lead teachers) who support and promote these targets. Lead teachers are required to monitor goals and provide quarterly reports to the professional development state team who analyze Indiana's strategies to meet these objectives.

In grant renewal years, funding is determined by past performance. A yearly performance schedule is released at the start of each program year. The schedule outlines state priorities and performance accountability standards for future grant awards. Recent performance metrics included enrollment; measurable skill gains; high school diploma or equivalency; and certifications as core areas. Additionally, a companion schedule included Integrated Education and Training performance as a metric with focus on enrollments, completions, and certifications.

B. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

For each four-year state plan and state plan modification, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined

State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle), in accordance with methods described in 4(A). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

As discussed in 4(A), DWD utilizes a variety of assessment methods. Results of some of those assessments are discussed below:

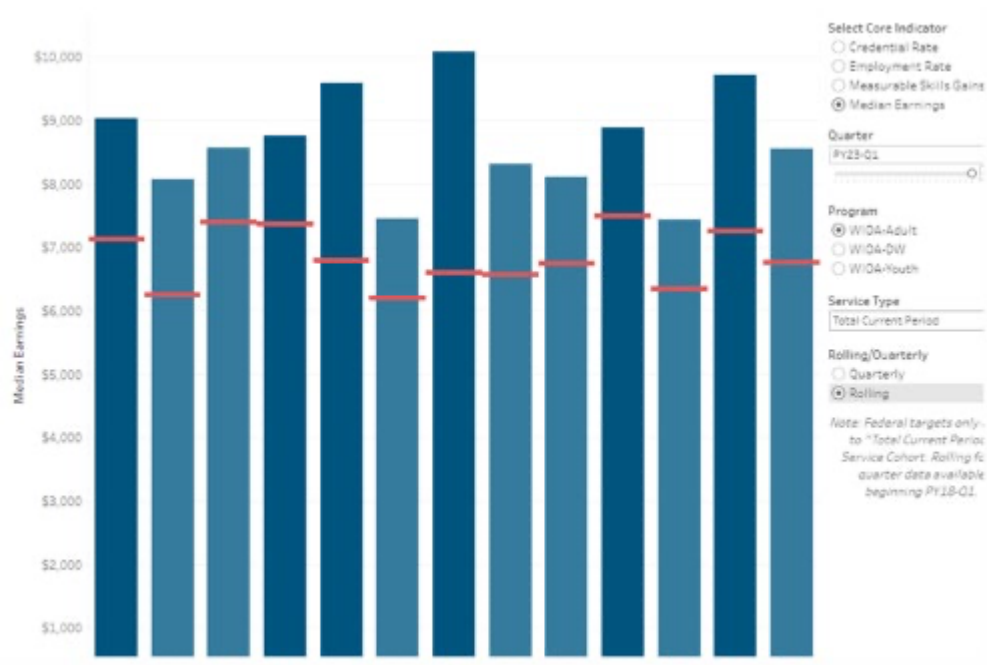
Performance Assessments. Following the close of each program year, a performance assessment is completed to compare the estimated performance outcomes to the actual performance results for core programs. For the previous two years, the model that has been used to conduct this assessment is an average of the negotiated performance measure with the actual performance of the performance measure.

As we continue to refine our performance assessment processes, the implementation of the LSAM for the PY24/25 performance cycle will provide for a more real-time understanding of how performance estimates compare to actuals, using variables such as economic conditions and participant characteristics. In partnership with our local university partner, the Indiana Business Research Center, a model has been developed using a combination of economic and participant data sets that will help shape more realistic targets for local areas and understand where the impacts in performance may come from.

Monitoring Year-in-Review (YIR). The results of the PY21-22 and PY22-23 YIRs indicated several trending outcomes, both in opportunities for improvement and in noteworthy practices across the state. The YIRs provide a snapshot of aggregated data collectively for all twelve LWDAs for various review areas, such as participant file integrity, case management practices, financial accounting, local WIOA governance, and equal opportunity. DWD agency and program leadership utilize the results of the YIR to assess areas in need of targeted technical assistance, policy development, or internal program improvement. LWDAs are expected to utilize the YIR to assess the same in local area practices, along with learning from other LWDAs and sharing best practices.

Federal Performance Assessment. The Federal Performance Measures are made available on the DWD Performance Portal at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/performance/>. The results of these performance measures drive conversations and collaboration among state and local partners to identify areas for improvement, to prioritize technical assistance, and to inform funding (e.g., funding to target specific metrics or state priority areas). The State met all its negotiated performance measures for PY22 and saw overall improved performance from the previous two years. While there were local regions that did not meet the negotiated metrics, DWD will work with local boards to identify areas for improvement.

As the State moves forward with its Unified WIOA Plan, it will continue to look for opportunities to address performance across partner programs. Below is a depiction of how our local areas can see their performance as compared to others and as compared to our statewide performance.



In addition to evaluating these core programs, the state assesses performance across various programs. This is done by looking at a four-year snapshot that assesses participants served and services provided. The quarterly dashboard discussed in 4.A. identifies trends in participants and service delivery both by region and statewide. A snapshot of this dashboard can be seen below, depicting an assessment of several programs and areas. The efforts here will provide details on how services can be tailored to areas where improvement may be needed.

WIOA - Adult/Youth Participants					WIOA - Youth Participants					WIOA - Placements					Adult Education (WIOA II)					Employee Engagement 20				
Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	Region	2019	2020	2021	2022
1	1,498	1,381	1,384	1,332	1	559	518	518	568	1	1,418	1,498	1,334	1,394	1	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	1	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
2	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	2	176	165	165	165	2	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	2	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	2	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
3	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	3	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	3	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	3	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	3	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
4	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	4	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	4	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	4	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	4	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
5	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	5	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	5	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	5	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	5	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
6	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	6	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	6	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	6	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	6	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
7	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	7	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	7	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	7	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	7	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
8	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	8	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	8	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	8	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	8	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
9	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	9	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	9	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	9	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	9	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
10	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	10	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	10	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	10	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	10	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
11	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	11	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	11	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	11	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	11	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
12	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	12	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	12	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	12	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	12	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498
TOTAL	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	TOTAL	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	TOTAL	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	TOTAL	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498	TOTAL	1,498	1,498	1,498	1,498

C. EVALUATION

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects of activities carried out in the State under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA (WIOA Section 116(e)).

STATE EVALUATION PROJECTS

Legislative Services Agency (LSA) Reviews. As discussed in 4.A., Indiana’s LSA conducts an annual review of workforce programs on a rotating five-year cycle. Although the 2023 report focused on non-core programs, the LSA reviews cover each WIOA core program at least once every five years. For example, Wagner Peyser and WIOA Youth were reviewed in 2021; Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Vocational Rehabilitation were reviewed in 2020; and Adult Education reviewed in 2019. These reviews offer insight into each workforce program that can be utilized by all stakeholders to ensure success of each program and can be accessed at: <https://iga.in.gov/publications/2023/agency-reports>.

DWD EVALUATION PROJECTS

Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort. In 2023, Indiana was selected to participate in the 2023-2024 U.S. Department of Labor Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC). Through this initiative, Indiana learned from peer states, experienced evaluators, and state and national subject matter experts. Indiana’s participation focused on capacity and foundation building for conducting formal evaluations of workforce programs. Indiana’s EvalPLC project team was designed to include a specific group of cross-divisional DWD and LWDA representatives with broad ranging WIOA experience touching all WIOA core programs. Individually, these representatives hold subject matter expertise in state and local strategy, policy, program operations, service delivery, data science, performance and quality, and partner collaboration. Experience with this project will allow DWD to build and solidify a framework for continued collaboration in these areas, better positioning DWD to design, initiate, and complete formal evaluation projects.

WIOA Title I Evaluations. Following the completion of the EvalPLC work, DWD will identify opportunities to conduct evaluations that are focused on various program strategies identified throughout this Plan. To better inform these strategies, DWD will conduct Title I evaluations in coordination with local workforce boards and other state agencies, where applicable. In prior years, DWD has focused evaluation efforts primarily on training services and employment. We are looking at opportunities to both expand on this work and also consider evaluation in other areas such as barriers to employment; effectiveness in service delivery; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).

DWD anticipates proposing an extension of the QUEST Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) to use funds for an evaluation of the grant’s various strategies, which may include an analysis of the benchmark “payment point” model. The model was utilized as an alternative funding strategy to disburse grant funds with an aim to increase participation and co-enrollment across Title I (standard and QUEST) and Title II. The proposed evaluation may also include an implementation review of PIVOT, formerly called the Workforce Recommendation Engine, which aims to reduce duplication of services and make coordinated recommendations to UI claimants through technology and data.

Wagner Peyser (WP) Service Delivery Model Analysis. DWD is also focusing efforts on evaluating its Wagner Peyser program as we work to implement the Final Rule. Beyond assessing compliance against any new requirements, we are also looking to enhance our WP service delivery model overall. In early 2024, DWD initiated work with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)’s Workforce Information Technology Support Center (WITSC) to assist with assessing Indiana’s WP service delivery model.* The project includes conducting a current-state assessment and gap analysis, with the end deliverable being

recommendations for evolving DWD's service delivery model. The goal of this work is to ensure a customer centric model with services delivered in the most effective and efficient manner.

Note: This project also involves analysis of the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, which is undergoing a concurrent formal Evaluation pursuant to RESEA requirements.

Title I Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Data Analysis. Indiana's State Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer participates in DWD's WIOA Title I annual compliance reviews. The State EO Officer conducts annual compliance monitoring of each LWDA's progress in implementing and administering WIOA's Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination provisions, part of which includes an analysis of data and subsequent investigation, as necessary, of significant differences in populations receiving services. DWD conducts analysis of the standard deviation of U.S. Census workforce data compared to the population of WIOA enrolled participants the LWDA served in the prior program year.

The purpose of this analysis is to identify if the LWDA is serving protected groups in its population to the level expected given the demographics of the communities it serves. The expectation is that the LWDA will investigate if the analysis identifies a large difference between numbers of people accessing WIOA Individualized Career Services (ICS) or Training Services (TS) in the LWDA's WorkOne offices, and numbers in the community.

The formula used to conduct this EO data analysis identifies the standard deviation (SD) which is a measurement for how likely an outcome is due to random chance. The State EO Officer would expect the breakdown of individuals the LWDA serves to be representative of the breakdown of individuals in their communities. For the formula, a zero indicates the expected outcome. We can assume that small changes (or a small SD) are due to random chance and that large changes are due to outside factors, such as potential discrimination. For this analysis, if the SD is greater than +2.0, we can assume that there is something influencing this difference because there is a less than 5% probability that this difference is due to random chance.

The State EO Officer's data analysis process includes review, discussion, and comparison with each LWDA as to the results of both state analysis and any analysis conducted locally. The following information and table below show an example of DWD's analysis for PY22 on a single local area. This LWDA's local results showed a high standard deviation, or the older population (55+) potentially being underserved in WIOA services. Similarly, the State EO Officer's analysis also showed the same category as having a high standard deviation or potentially being underserved.

The left side of the chart provides the standard deviation between the region's PY2022 WIOA participants with the region's overall labor force as indicated by census estimates of employed and unemployed individuals. The right side of the chart compares the region's PY2022 WIOA participants with census estimates of numbers of unemployed individuals in the region. For this analysis, if the SD is greater than +2.0, we can assume that there is something influencing this difference because there is a less than 5% probability that the difference is due to random chance. For more information on how this analysis was conducted and what standard deviation is, refer to the appendix.

EO Data Analysis (LWDA Sample)				
PY22 Labor Force Data		Category	PY22 Unemployment Data	
Deviation	Probability of Potential Discrimination		Deviation	Probability of Potential Discrimination
-15.81	No	Race: Black/African American	-11.08	No
-0.32	No	Race: Asian	-1.78	No
-0.14	No	Race: Other	0.45	No
1.63	No	Ethnicity	-0.47	No
2.45	Yes	Age	4.46	Yes
-9.10	No	Disability	-2.61	No
-2.23	No	Gender	-3.84	No
-0.74	No	LEP*	-0.74	No

*Census data provided by the 2021 American Community Survey 5 Year estimates; Census data does not break down this population into labor force and unemployment and so this is the entire population 18+

Key takeaways from the above chart:

1. Black/African Americans participated in WIOA at a higher rate than expected when compared to both labor force and unemployment census data.
2. Older populations (55+) participated in WIOA at a lesser rate than expected when compared to both labor force and unemployment census data.
3. Individuals with disabilities participated in WIOA at a higher rate than expected when compared to both labor force and unemployment census data.

Federal Measures Dashboard. As discussed throughout this section, DWD also maintains a Federal Quarterly Performance Measures dashboard that enables staff and workforce partners to quickly analyze years' worth of Local Area Reports in one location. This can also be viewed on the DWD Performance Portal at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/performance/>. This dashboard provides support to DWD's assessment and evaluation efforts.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES EVALUATION

The Indiana VR program has developed a series of Tableau dashboards that are available to VR leadership and field management level staff. The data provides up-to-date information to support evaluation of compliance with federal and program standards, as well as review of progress on priorities and initiatives. Data can be reviewed at a statewide, regional, and individual staff performance level. Some examples include evaluation of rapid engagement efforts through review of the length of time between application and eligibility, and between eligibility and plan development; status of order of selection releases including the percent of cases entering into service plans; evaluation of discretionary grant and model demonstration projects; participant service spending trends; customer satisfaction; outcome data; state plan goals; pre-ets trends; and a variety of other case statistics.

The VR program is conducting an evaluation of the Supported Employment Plus (SE+) model carried out through the Disability Innovation Fund Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment model demonstration grant. This discretionary grant was awarded to Indiana in late 2022 by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Indiana University, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is serving as the contracted evaluator. The SE+ model establishes fidelity of supported employment services, and wraps around interventions of peer support services, family engagement, and enhanced benefits and work incentives counseling to individuals with disabilities pursuing competitive, integrated employment. VR is also collaborating with Mathematica who is serving as national SWTCIE evaluator under contract with RSA. VR provides regular reports of progress to the assigned RSA SWTCIE state liaison, along with regular updates to the Indiana Commission on Rehabilitation Services.

Additionally, VR is engaged with Public Consulting Group to evaluate provider performance incentive payments implemented in August 2023. The evaluation will examine the effectiveness of incentive payments in increasing the quality and quantity of employment outcomes for VR participants served through community rehabilitation programs. Outcome data regarding the incentive payments is shared with stakeholders approximately quarterly, including through presentation to the Commission on Rehabilitation services.

Finally, VR has also engaged PCG to support the development of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. Survey instruments and focus groups have been developed and distributed to obtain feedback from individuals with disabilities, staff, and stakeholders regarding areas of improvement and service gaps. RSA-911 data will also be reviewed to assess VR performance over the last three years to identify areas of strength and areas that could be improved. The CSNA will be completed by January 2025 and will be shared with RSA. The Commission on Rehabilitation Services has provided input on the CSNA process and survey instruments and will continue to receive updates on the CSNA progress. They will also be provided with an opportunity to identify themes and priorities upon receipt and review of all data collected through surveys, focus groups, and RSA-911 data analysis.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

Provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The State follows section 128(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGl 15-22 to formula allocate funding for youth activities. DWD communicates formula allocations on an annual basis. The most recent allocations memo (DWD Memo 2022-15), along with prior allocations memos, can be found at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. The data used in computing allotments includes:

- The number of unemployed for Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) averages for 12-month period immediately preceding new program year as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- The number of excess unemployed individuals or the ASU excess (depending on which is higher), averages for the same 12-month period as used for the ASU unemployed data; and
- The number of economically disadvantaged youth (age 16-21, excluding college students in the workforce and military) from special tabulation data available from the American Community Survey (ACS).

The State applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii).

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The State follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 15-22 to formula allocate funding for adult activities. DWD communicates formula allocations on an annual basis. The most recent allocations memo (DWD Memo 2022-15), along with prior allocations memos, can be found at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. The data used in computing allotments includes:

- The number of unemployed for Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASU's) averages for the 12-month period immediately preceding new program year, as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- The number of excess unemployed individuals or the ASU excess (depending on which is higher), averages for the same 12-month period as used for the ASU unemployed data; and
- The number of economically disadvantaged adults (age 22-72, excluding college students in the workforce and military) from special tabulations of data available from the American Community Survey (ACS).

The State applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, section 133(b)(2)(A)(ii).

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

The State follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 15-22 to formula allocate funding for Dislocated Worker activities. DWD communicates formula allocations on an annual basis. The most recent allocations memo (DWD Memo 2022-15), along with prior allocations memos, can be found at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. The following data is used in computing these allotments:

- Insured Unemployment Data for the preceding Calendar Year (30% weight);
- Unemployed Concentration Data for the preceding Program Year (30% weight);

- Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data for the preceding Calendar Year (15% weight);
- Declining Industries Data for the preceding Calendar Year (10% weight);
- Farmer/Rancher Economic Hardship Data for the preceding Calendar Year (2% weight);
- Long-term Unemployment Data for the preceding Calendar Year (13% weight).

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet will examine how this weighting impacts local distribution and if adjustments are needed. The State applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, section 132(b)(2)B(iii).

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE THE METHODS AND FACTORS THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL USE TO DISTRIBUTE TITLE II FUNDS.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) solicits applications and proposals from entities eligible to receive WIOA Title II funds. Applicants can apply for funding in several areas that include adult education and literacy activities – WIOA Title II (per 29 USC §3272); adult high school credit program/competency-based high school diploma program/adult secondary credit (ASC); corrections education and education for institutionalized individuals; integrated education and training activities (IETs); workforce education initiative (WEI); and/or Indiana online only distance education.

An eligible individual is an individual who is 16 years of age or older; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

DWD competes funds in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 Subpart C.

To be awarded WIOA Title II funds in Indiana, applicant organizations must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA (per 29USC §3272). An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before the applicant can be considered an eligible applicant. Data which demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services include evidence of eligible individuals' academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, or English language acquisition), employment outcomes, family literacy, attainment of secondary credentials, transitions to postsecondary education, and workforce training.

Application materials include a separate data collection tool to ensure how past effectiveness is determined so that all eligible providers are treated fairly in grant competitions. Applicants that do not have performance data under WIOA section 116 may demonstrate previous effectiveness in servicing basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving the outcomes listed above. In the case of applicants applying as a consortium, each member of a consortium must provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness. Application materials clearly identify how many years of demonstrated effectiveness data an applicant must submit in the application.

Indiana conducts its review of applicant eligibility to determine if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness by utilizing a “yes” or “no” determination. The State screens each application to determine if it is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness and only applications that are determined to be from eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding. Similarly, all sub-recipient members must be determined to be an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the consortium application to be forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding.

Applicants that are determined to be ineligible for funding because they were not determined to be eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are notified.

In the State’s multi-year adult education competitive grant application (request for application), all applicant organizations should complete all questions listed under each consideration (I-XIII, XIV) regardless of the type(s) of funding the applicant is seeking. All applicant organizations should address Consideration XIV [General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)]. Considerations I-XIII represent the thirteen statutory considerations DWD must consider when awarding WIOA Title II funds, while Consideration XIV, which is state-imposed, is used to meet the statutory GEPA plan required for all AEFLA funded sub-recipients. The State may also require additional State considerations to be completed. Failure to provide answers for the narrative portion of the application is grounds for non-consideration.

To fund eligible providers, a rubric is utilized to score the narrative section for the thirteen considerations. Review teams utilize a 0–5-point Likert Scale to score the quality of each response. Reviewers provide notes or commentary to justify the score, provide brief details of what the applicant omitted or missed, and brief descriptions of anything “positive” about the application.

5 – Excellent; Applicant’s response clearly demonstrates an understanding of the question, the consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

4 – Good; Applicant’s answer does a good job of generally providing support for its claims and demonstrates what would be expected out of a good adult education provider.

3 – Adequate; Applicant’s response demonstrates some understanding, though this understanding may have to be inferred, of the question, consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

2 – Poor; Answer is not well supported and does not demonstrate what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

1 – Bad; Answer lacks any context or support, and in no way demonstrates what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

0 – Incomplete; Applicant made no attempt to answer the question.

DWD utilizes overall scores, quality of grant submissions, and responses to the thirteen considerations and any State considerations to fund eligible providers. Additionally, the State reviews funding requests and proposed service delivery areas to ensure that every county in the State is covered.

DWD awards multi-year adult education grants on a competitive basis, beginning with program year 2024 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025), and ending PY2029 (July 1, 2029, through June 30, 2030). After the initial year of this multi-year adult education grant award (PY2024), DWD requires sub-recipients apply for the renewal of funding through a non-competitive grant continuation for the following program years: PY2025; PY2026; PY2027; PY2028; PY2029.

Funding is allocated and distributed at the state level as prescribed by Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA):

1. Not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds are dedicated for awards under section 231 and to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 20 percent is available to carryout section 225;
2. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds are applied to carryout state leadership activities under section 223; and
3. Not more than five percent of the grant funds are set aside for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

In making initial award determinations during the first year of a multi-year grant, DWD will take into consideration each applicant's:

1. Accomplishments and progress toward goals;
2. Capacity and efficiency in service delivery;
3. Gaps and barriers that limit participation; and
4. Employment and labor market demands.

Based on state priorities, funding is prioritized and grants are awarded, in part, to:

1. Organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially participants who have low levels of literacy;
2. Organizations with services that are aligned with local workforce strategies, priorities, and partners; and
3. Organizations with services that are responsive to the needs of persons with barriers to employment.

Data is aggregated at the economic development regional level to determine the total amount of funds available for the region. Applicants apply for a region or a portion of the funds available in each region they intend to serve. To award funds, DWD considers the score and rank of proposals in a regional workforce area to allow for a diversity of programs geographically.

Total funding requested may vary depending upon program size, population (anticipated enrollment), demonstrated need, capacity, and number of subgrants within a service area. DWD distributes funding based on this review, attempting to fund as many applicants meeting minimum benchmarks in each area. State statute requires that at least 25 percent of the funding appropriated by the general assembly for adult education and literacy activities be used for workforce programming.

DWD reserves the right to award grant funds in amounts different from the applicant's initial budget request. Adjustments may be based on how the proposed budget and budget narrative covers program expenses and whether the requested amount is proportionate to the number of participants projected or previously served based on previous performance.

For DWD to maintain the federally required Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Indiana requires that WIOA-funded Adult Education providers contribute a local match.

In continuation years, the allocation of funds takes into account past performance as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Considerations include enrollment, measurable skills gains, high school equivalency attainment, and the number of industry-recognized credentials attained by students. Providers that achieve all or a percentage of state-defined performance goals may also qualify for additional funding for outstanding performance during a program year.

DWD reserves the right, prior to the finalization of awards, to make adjustments that support fair and equitable access to services. Applicants may be provisionally awarded funds. Providers may also receive technical assistance and professional development to improve program performance and may be required to submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

Final budgets may be negotiated and all subgrants are contingent and may change based on federal and state appropriations.

Other Requirements: Increased collaboration between Indiana Adult Education grant recipients and the local workforce development boards (LWDBs) is encouraged. The grant requires that LWDBs have an opportunity to review all applications submitted to DWD that propose to offer services within the local workforce development area. In Indiana's RFA, entities must describe how the applicant plans to continually align its services with the workforce development regional plans (local plans) must also be included. The applicant organization's relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities where it is applying for funding and how the applicant organization intends to work with one-stop partners to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals must be addressed. This includes plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs.

Any recipient of funds awarded must provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals (both employees and students) with disabilities unless that accommodation would represent an undue burden in the exercising of the responsibilities of the sub-recipient to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Accepting an award is an acknowledgement that the grant recipient is following the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants are also required to acknowledge compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.

DWD ensures equitable access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in Indiana. The processes used for announcing the availability of federal funds under Section 231, 225, and 243, and is designed in such a way that no distinction is made in the type of eligible provider.

Announcements about the grant process are posted to DWD's website and email notifications are sent to current providers and a mailing list of interested contacts, including entities requesting further information. Announcements are made about the competitive grant Request for Applications (RFA) on monthly statewide webinars and posted on DWD's website for further review. Town hall meetings take place regionally to inform potential applicants of the grant process and timelines. The PowerPoint from town hall meetings is posted along with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). FAQs ensure that all parties have equitable access to view questions and responses. FAQs are further highlighted in a statewide webinar and posted to DWD's website.

Within the grant application, eligible agencies must submit metrics regarding their ability to effectively serve the Title II target population. For current Title II providers, this must be WIOA metrics. For eligible providers not currently WIOA Title II providers, metrics must be submitted that align as closely as possible to WIOA performance outcomes. Levels for demonstrated effectiveness are set by Title II staff and are set as a percentage of current performance expectations. The application process used to award funds for comprehensive adult education providers is the same for all eligible applicants.

Non-adult education staff are included in the scoring process as grants are reviewed. Where possible, other adult education staff from other states may serve as evaluators as well. LWDBs review eligible providers' application materials to determine whether the applications are consistent with local plans. Upon completing this review, the LWDB submits a recommendation to DWD to promote alignment with the local plan. Prior to awarding contracts, DWD may require applicants to revise the sub-recipient proposals, including changes that better align services provided by the sub-recipient with LWDBs.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

N/A

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

Describe data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including the State's process to collect and report data on co-enrollment, and for those present in the one-stop centers.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The Education & Workforce Development (EWD) database, housed within Indiana's Management Performance Hub (MPH) creates enhanced opportunities to combine workforce and education data (K-12 and higher education) to examine employment outcomes, retention of graduates, differential outcomes based on degree type and area of study and a wide range of other research to better understand the linkages between education and the workforce. This longitudinal dataset, supported by the NCES State Longitudinal Data Systems Grant, is combined to answer key questions about the education and workforce pipeline. It allows stakeholders such as education professionals, employers, policymakers, students, community leaders, and the public to use data and information previously not available. Partner agencies include the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE), the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA). EWD does not replace agency data collection and administration responsibilities; rather, it serves as a clearinghouse where specific data elements are linked across the four agencies. With the solid foundation of Indiana's EWD system resting on the collaboration of multiple State agencies, the mandate for cross-agency data management and analysis that is part of MPH's charter, MPH's human capital and expertise, and a system that has been refined over the last few years, Indiana is in a good position to take its P-20 data system to the next level.

An example of this work involves a collaborative project where the GWC, the Indiana Charter School Board (ICSB), and DWD are working to develop a secondary shared data template to have longitudinal reporting on adult secondary providers. This will involve MPH EWD reporting for Workforce Diploma and Adult High Schools.

In 2023, the Indiana Department of Education launched the Graduates Prepared to Succeed Dashboard². The dashboard includes metrics from Pre-K to high school graduation and beyond. Education and workforce data housed within the dashboard use data powered by the EWD to provide increased transparency with the goal of empowering Indiana's educators, families, communities, and employers. The Indiana GPS dashboard seeks to: provide educators with a variety of essential data points to support continuous improvement of student learning across the K-12 continuum, support families and community stakeholders by providing meaningful, relevant, and transparent information about school progress and performance, and elevate the highest-performing schools as models of excellence and identify other schools for additional support.

As evidenced by its use from policy makers and researchers, the MPH EWD has achieved a critical mass of linked data that can be usefully mined for insights regarding trends and outcomes to support assessment and evaluation of core programs. The secondary shared data template will provide leadership the ability to apply performance measures that align across agencies and programs, providing the State the ability to track outcomes not currently reported like completion of employability skills curriculum or levels of credential attainment.

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN

It is Indiana's goal to continue to evaluate service delivery systems, seeking opportunities to streamline intake and track participation where possible to improve the overall experience and efficiency with which Hoosiers receive workforce services. While there are benefits to a unified system for intake and tracking of participation, at current state there are complex systems already in place across core partners to process, track and report participate level data. As opposed to a fully unified system for intake and tracking of participation, we are rather exploring a series of systems that are built with integrations designed to share the appropriate data, at the appropriate time, to enhance referrals, opportunities for co-enrollment and ultimately program outcomes.

As evidence of this forward progress, Indiana is pursuing a system integration between our Title I & III Case Management System and our Title II Adult Basic Education System. This integration is being designed to send participant level data from our Title II Adult Basic Education System to our Title I & III Case Management System. This will help us to identify where co-enrollment is already present as well as where there may be opportunities for co-enrollment where there are not. In addition to co-enrollment, this integration also aligns the data sources for quicker access and analysis.

Indiana has already taken significant steps toward system alignment in our services to employers. Core partners across Title I, II, III, and IV have a single source of access to a system that tracks engagement with employers. This approach ensures that a unified approach to serving employers across programs can be taken. Additionally, it supports a historical view on activities with employers and their engagement with WIOA programs. The single source of access for reporting and tracking engagement allows for greater efficiency in accessing and analyzing data across programs. As we look ahead to the next four years, our goals will be focused on enhancements to policies and procedures across programs that support data entry and service delivery.

In addition to the above examples, Indiana has also done system integrations between our UI systems and our Customer Relationship Management System that are designed to target outreach and track referrals for programs such as VETS and TAA. These integrations foster greater connectivity and allow us to deploy strategies that might traditionally be more manual processes. With these integrations in place, we are also able to track elements like success of referral.

While system integrations have been a priority for Indiana to better align data sources and conduct analysis, we are also focused on a learning management system designed to house training modules that support the transfer of knowledge among the core WIOA programs. All WIOA core programs have access to this platform where content can be shared and accessed.

**III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING
TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS
(INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.)
AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS,
INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS**

The GWC will continue to support ongoing work surrounding the comprehensive longitudinal data system within MPH's Education & Workforce Development (EWD) database. Indiana will continue to make improvements on the data elements that are a part of the EWD and more

broadly within MPH with the long-term goal for comprehensive reporting with streamlined data governance and accessibility through one State agency rather than through multiple partner agencies and programs. Intake processes and systems are being reviewed to ensure that Hoosiers are being served in the most advantageous way utilizing the strategies in the plan to ensure alignment of activity and resources while meeting information privacy standards where applicable.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S DATA SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES TO PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2)).

The State's current infrastructure is positioned to meet WIOA reporting requirements. Through collaboration with the vendor of Indiana's case management system, necessary data files are configured on a quarterly basis for federal reporting and submitted to DOL's Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). Prior to submission, files are analyzed for data consistency and vetted using internal queries and tracking reports. All reports are approved by DWD for certification and reviewed by DWD staff.

Indiana core partners continue to work toward improving the process via modified data sharing mechanisms and reporting protocols. There are multiple State agencies in Indiana that have administrative responsibility for the WIOA core programs. These include both the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). While each of these entities maintains separate participant and financial information systems, the agencies continue to work collaboratively to integrate data across Indiana's workforce development system.

Indiana's CMS is based on federal requirements to collect the data for reporting for Title I and III programs. Each week, the PIRL files are produced. On a quarterly basis, DWD reviews the data in the files and checks for data issues. A list of issues or missing data is sent to the respective regions to be corrected in the CMS. The State publishes final reports online to provide multiple years of historical performance data. DWD submits the Employer Indicators for both IDOE and DWD to WIPS. IDOE provides the required information to DWD which is combined with DWD's data and then submitted through WIPS.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs: All program participants receive follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months after exit, as follow-up services may continue to be provided beyond that time at the State or local Board's discretion. Follow-up allows staff to continue the relationship with the participant by offering additional services and collecting valuable information related to the participant's progress after exiting the program, including employment status, educational progress, need for additional services, and problems and challenges occurring, and assistance needed to address them. The details from these follow up engagements are captured in the case management system and can be extracted and analyzed to better understand post program success of participants.

Youth Program Follow Up: All youth program participants receive follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months after exit, as follow-up services may continue to be provided beyond that time at the State or LWDB's discretion. Follow-up allows staff to continue the relationship with the youth by offering additional services and collecting valuable information related to the participant's progress after exiting the program, including employment status, educational progress, need for additional services, and problems and challenges occurring, and assistance needed to address them.

Adult Education: The State's adult education coordinators host regional consortium meetings to discuss goals toward meeting performance accountability standards and to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education or entering or remaining in employment.

Consortium meetings bring together partners, including LWDBs, WorkOnes, training providers, and adult educators, to establish goals, review progress, and follow-up on items as needed. The State is required to report employment in the second and fourth quarter after exit for all providers, as well as postsecondary credential and/or degree attainment. In addition to local program reports, the State data match employment from wage records from DWD and postsecondary attainment from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) to determine and evaluate success.

The State requires that adult education applicants employ one or more academic and career coaches who hold at least a bachelor's degree. Adults often enter programs with multiple barriers and student persistence can be erratic. Academic and career coaches help students overcome their barriers by offering a greater chance that their experience in adult education and beyond is successful. While career pathways should offer multiple on and off ramps, students have greater opportunities within this framework to improve skills in reading, mathematics, and language; attain a high school or equivalency diploma; earn an occupational certificate for employment; and prepare for college and further training.

In adult education, Integrated Education and Training provides opportunities for short-term training and certifications in in-demand industries for employment. Indiana reviews and approves each application separately to ensure it meets these priorities. Integrated Education and Training is defined as a service approach which provides adult education and literacy activities simultaneously and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupational cluster. Additionally, Indiana will require adult education providers applying for funds to address whether and to what extent a program plans to provide access to pre-apprenticeship programs and how the program plans to connect students exiting adult education with access to apprenticeship programs.

Meanwhile, the Workforce Education Initiative targets employers with workers who possess basic skill deficiencies and desire to maintain their jobs or improve performance. Indiana and local adult education programs will continue to frame a coordinated workforce basic skills system that is worker-centered, customized, and provided at the workplace or off-site. This project continues to support employers in hiring and retaining workers who will be able to meet demands for productivity, safety, and advancement, as well as serve as an additional assessment of participants' post-program success.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Indiana's Research and Analysis Data Warehouse and longitudinal data systems currently integrate and match UI wage records for employment outcomes and performance accountability reporting. This same system (RADW) has been used for additional labor market information analysis supporting the Bureau of Labor Statistics programs and to inform the labor market information website, tools, and ad hoc research questions. The DWD Performance Reporting and Data Integrity unit also uses UI Wage Record Data for Federal Performance Metrics and other programmatic evaluations and analyses upon request.

Only individuals within the allowed categories are allowed to see individual confidential UI data and only aggregate UI data is shared with anyone not allowed by UI Confidentiality laws to access. This is accomplished in part by use of SWIS Agreement in allowing access and the sharing of UI data.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

Indiana recognizes that a key element to utilizing data across agencies for either improved customer service or improved measurement and tracking of outcomes is ensuring the integrity of all data. This is accomplished with various technical safeguards and ensuring personnel handling this data are properly trained in all relevant regulations and the fundamentals of handling personal and confidential data. Technical safeguards include:

- Approved processes that limit access to the data to only those personnel who require access to carry out their daily job functions;
- Network security, monitoring, firewalls, etc. to prevent unauthorized access to data from entities outside of State government;
- Encryption technology; and
- Secure data transport mechanisms.

All State personnel undergo annual training on the proper handling of confidential data. This training is updated to reflect the most current statutes and interpretations of confidentiality statutes and regulations. Those specifically involved in reporting are trained regarding the various de-identification and aggregation rules that apply. All individuals with access to protected information must also follow agency guidance on appropriate sharing and storage of data.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT THE PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR COVERED PERSONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT, CODIFIED AT SECTION 4215 OF 38 U.S.C., WHICH APPLIES TO ALL

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MONITOR PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR
VETERANS.

C. DESCRIBE THE TRIAGE AND REFERRAL PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND OTHER
POPULATIONS DETERMINED ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM THE JOBS FOR
VETERANS STATE GRANTS (JVSG) PROGRAM'S DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM
(DVOP) SPECIALIST/CONSOLIDATED POSITION.

A. Describe how the State will implement the priority of service provisions for covered persons in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor.

Indiana's WorkOne offices are required to ensure that Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses is observed. DWD's policies and guidance support federal requirements, including but not limited to those outlined in federal regulations, Title 38 U.S.C., VPL 07-09, and TEGL 10-09. DWD's current policies can be found at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. DWD Policies 2019-03, 2019-04 Change 2, and 2015-08 provide additional definitions of the populations of eligible veterans to be served by the one-stop delivery system partners.

It is important to note that the definition of a veteran in the Jobs For Veterans Act (JVA), the Priority of Service regulations and TEGL 10-09 differs from the definition of veteran that applies to reporting of Wagner-Peyser services and to eligibility to receive services from a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist. The veteran definition that requires the individual to have over 180 days of active service still applies to Wagner-Peyser reporting and to eligibility for DVOP but does not apply to priority of service. It is the responsibility of the program operator to ensure that policies and procedures and staff training reflect the correct eligibility definition.

B. Describe how the State will monitor priority of service provisions for veterans.

The JVSG State Veteran Program Director (SVPD), Veteran Program Support Specialists (VPSS), and WorkOne management hold monthly meetings to ensure services to veterans are provided in accordance with the law and that priority of service provisions are appropriately implemented. DWD Policy 2015-08 specifically describes priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in Indiana's WorkOne/AJCs, and monitoring reviews ensure that all offices adhere to this policy.

The JVSG SVPD conducts regular monitoring reviews to assess compliance with DWD Policy 2019-04, Change 2 and DWD Policy 2015-08. In doing so, the JVSG SVPD communicates regularly with the DWD Compliance Team to help inform DWD's annual WIOA compliance reviews of each LWDA. These reviews include testing the LWDA service provider staff's knowledge on how to identify veterans and their eligible spouses and ensure that they receive priority of service as prescribed in policy.

The DWD Compliance Team interviews service provider staff working as greeters in WorkOne/AJCs about how they assess individuals coming into the office and the kinds of

questions the staff asks to identify veterans/eligible spouses. Case managers are also interviewed as part of the review process and asked about how they assess individuals' eligibility for services and how veterans/eligible spouses' service plans differ from non-priority of service groups. These conversations include asking about how case managers coordinate with Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and how referrals are made for individuals identified as experiencing significant barriers to employment who would benefit from co-enrollment in WIOA and JVSG programs. Additionally, the DWD Compliance Team asks where the DVOP is physically located and how to best communicate with them.

Aside from interviewing staff members, program monitors also walk through the WorkOne offices and check for the required signage notifying veterans/eligible spouses that they should receive priority of service. Finally, program monitors use the state's web-based case management system, Indiana Career Connect, to select and review a sample of veterans/eligible spouses proportionate to the number of veterans/eligible spouses receiving services in that particular region. Program monitors then validate those veterans/eligible spouses' eligibility documentation. Issues identified through any of these review activities are incorporated into WIOA compliance review reports with recommendations for improved service delivery and required actions for identified violations of regulations or DWD/local policy (i.e., findings). LWDAs are required to provide resolutions for all findings, which are validated in the next monitoring review.

Additionally, DWD supports further coordination with other veteran-focused and veteran-community service organizations, including the Indiana Department of Veteran Affairs (IDVA), which serves as a coordinating body across the local government for resources and supports available to veterans.

C. Describe the triage and referral process for eligible veterans and other populations determined eligible to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist/Consolidated Position.

In triaging and referring veterans and other populations determined eligible to receive services from JVSG's DVOP specialists, DWD adheres to priority of service requirements outlined in federal regulations, Title 38 U.S.C., VPL 07-09, and TEGL 10-09. These requirements are also included in DWD Policies 2019-03, 2019-04 Change 2, and 2015-08.

With respect to any qualified DOL employment and job training programs, veterans and other eligible populations shall be given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services, notwithstanding any other provision of the law. If services or resources are limited, the veteran or member of an eligible population receives access instead of or before the non-covered person. All WorkOne/AJC staff have been trained in federal requirements and local/state policy, which informs the triage and referral process.

Upon entering a WorkOne/AJC, customers have access to signage and resources explaining priority of services requirements. A staff member working as a greeter then asks the customer if they are a veteran or a member of an eligible population and provides information on priority of service requirements as needed. Priority of service requirements are also included in WorkOne/AJC marketing materials.

If a customer identifies as a veteran/member of an eligible population, they receive an initial assessment to determine if they will be referred to a DVOP and/or a WP/WIOA staff member for

service delivery. All veterans who at the time of assessment self-attest to any of the identified Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) mentioned in the various Veteran Program Letters (VPL) will be referred to a DVOP staff for further assistance.

All eligible veterans and covered persons will receive priority of service and be granted full access to any WorkOne program, workshop, resource and or funding in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and state/local policies.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (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, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Indiana's WIOA State-level Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer, appointed by the Governor, works within DWD's Compliance and Policy Division with 100%-time commitment to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in workforce programs. One of the primary duties of the State EO Officer is to develop and implement the federally mandated Nondiscrimination Plan (NDP). The NDP is a statewide plan for ensuring equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in the availability, access, and service delivery of WIOA Title I funded programs and services. The NDP must be updated and resubmitted to the U.S. Department of Labor Civil Rights Center (CRC) every two years, with Indiana's latest submission in September 2022. Indiana's NDP provides detail on physical and programmatic accessibility and can be found at:

https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/State_of_Indiana_Nondiscrimination_Plan_2020.pdf. The next NDP updates are due to the U.S. Department of Labor CRC in September 2024.

Annually, the State EO Officer conducts subrecipient monitoring and data analysis regarding race, disability status, age, ethnicity, gender, and limited English proficiency. The data analysis compares participants to population data to evaluate potential under-service of a group. This process has promoted discussions between DWD and the LWDA's on how to increase services and outreach to under-served populations, including individuals with disabilities. As a result, new partnerships are targeted for the LWDA's to connect wrap around services. Further, the data analysis process has assisted the LWDA's in evaluating internal processes that may be prohibiting certain groups, such as those with disabilities, from participating in programs provided at the WorkOne Centers.

The State EO Officer ensures Indiana's LWDA's, sub-recipients, and workforce system partners are aware of, and in compliance with, the NDP and all section 188 responsibilities. Similarly, each LWDA has designated a LWDA EO Officer (Local EO Officer) to carry out these duties at the local level. All Local EO Officers also functionally report to the DWD State EO Officer on matters pertaining to Section 188.

Together, the State and Local EO Officers implement the NDP and continually review policies and practices. DWD Policy 2016-09, Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Guidance Letter

(see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/activepolicies/2016-09-P_EO_Nondiscrimination_Guidance.pdf) outlines the major provisions of section 188 and 29 CFR 38. The agency has designed several training modules for Local EO Officers and staff, which can be found at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/equal-opportunity/training-resources/>. Training modules relevant to physical and programmatic accessibility include, for example, the EO 101 and Compliance with Disability Nondiscrimination Requirements modules. In addition, training and resources are provided through Workforce GPS, an online technical assistance website sponsored by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor. Resources and training on disability, employment, accessible technology, and inclusion provide workforce development professionals (i.e., front-line staff) information and training on serving people with disabilities.

In August 2023, the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) and DWD, along with several other agencies, participated in the first Indiana Employment First Cross-Council Summit. DDRS is currently undertaking a significant employment systems transformation effort with the goal of increasing competitive employment outcomes for Hoosiers with disabilities served by the division from 22% in 2022 to 37% in 2027. This represents a 60% increase in competitive integrated employment outcomes over the 5-year period. The goal also supports Indiana's First policy, passed in 2017, which in part mandated State agencies collaborate to support employment as the first and preferred outcome for individuals with disabilities. The goal will require collaboration and coordination between relevant State agencies, community rehabilitation providers, key advocacy groups, the business community, self-advocates, and families.

In late 2022 and continuing throughout 2023, DDRS's Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) hired VRS Navigators. These Navigators serve as a liaison between WorkOne centers (i.e., American Job Centers), VRS staff, and shared customers to deliver employment and training services. Through referral processes between the two agencies and connecting customers with partner agency services, customers will have the resources available to assist and build their pathway to entering the labor force. Early in 2024, VRS and DWD will evaluate the VRS and DWD field offices' continuation of training services to determine and share best practices of the DWD regions that have VRS navigator staff.

Also in 2022, DWD acquired a Learning Management System (LMS) to support cross agency training with VRS. DWD and VRS, in partnership with U.S. Department of Labor, developed a training program to cross-train staff within the WorkOne centers and VRS field offices to better coordinate and deliver services to joint customers. There were two training courses developed and successfully rolled out to staff:

- Workforce Collaboration and Integration: Co-enrollment and Joint Case Management.
- Workforce Collaboration and Integration: Indiana's Workforce System and WIOA Program Partners.

Programmatic Accessibility: Cross-training sessions have also occurred between DWD and VR covering topics such as disability etiquette, Order of Selection, and service coordination. Accessibility workstations are in place in WorkOne offices throughout the State. Title II pays for one-on-one interpreters for visual and hard of hearing individuals attending adult education programming. Testing accommodations are available for assessments as well.

The Equal Opportunity tagline is included on all external marketing and communication materials to allow people who are deaf and hard of hearing to make calls to each other, and with the assistance of the relay systems, users can communicate with people who do not have TTY systems. DWD and partner staff are knowledgeable on more advanced systems such as Video Relay Services and Video Remote Interpreting. The following sample tagline is below, and when necessary is translated into other languages:

The WorkOne System is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in the programs and services offered. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. The TDD/TTY number is 1-800-743-3333.

El Programa de Financiamiento asistido de acuerdo con el Título 1 de WIOA es un programa de Igualdad de Oportunidades de Empleo. Ayuda y servicios auxiliares están disponibles a solicitud para personas con discapacidad. El número de TDD/TTY es 1-800-743-3333.

Additionally, DWD will continue to enhance the Jobseekers with Disabilities website (<https://www.in.gov/dwd/job-seekers/job-seekers-with-disabilities/>) to include resources for both jobseekers and employers. DWD intends to issue technical guidance to facilitate the creation of accessible. This guidance explains the importance of meeting the standards set in the American with Disability Act, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and WIOA Section 188. The guidance encourages DWD employees and partners to use alternative text, check the accessibility of their fonts and colors, as well as implement Adobe and Microsoft's built-in accessibility checkers. Adhering to the best practices listed in the technical assistance as well as continuing to research new strategies for creating accessible documents will help ensure that all agency generated documents are accessible to every user, regardless of background. The DWD Communications team regularly updates content to be more accessible on the website and works to ensure that State staff are creating content that is more accessible. The team reviews older content for any accessibility updates. This includes educating and providing training on document accessibility on an as needed basis. for LWDA staff.

Within the WorkOne centers, staff have been, and will be further, trained to follow established procedures to ensure inclusion and compliance. Starting with intake, staff are trained to ask every customer if accommodations are needed. Customer and WorkOne office staff orientations include a discussion of Equal Opportunity (EO) and the right to file a complaint. Following orientation, services should be reviewed with the customer by determining the client's eligibility and need for services in an integrated setting. Ongoing training will need to occur to educate staff on the services, funding, and the resources available to determine when it is appropriate to refer to partner agencies and co-enroll individuals in multiple programs, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, to access a greater service array to meet the individual's needs. Agency partners will seek to coordinate efforts and leverage funding between partner agencies to meet the employment and training needs of the customer.

Staff will also be trained to use multiple resources and tools to ensure accessibility to services. One such resource is the Guidepost for Success, which is a set of key educational and intervention strategies for youth, including those with disabilities, developed by the Center for Advancing Policy on Employment (CAPE) for Youth. Additionally, one-stop assessments, Individual Education Program (IEPs), and Academic and Career Planning (ACPs) tools will continue to be utilized to identify career paths, barriers to employment, training or service

needs, and employability skills. These assessments will also assist with identifying hidden disabilities and the potential need for accommodations.

All Comprehensive and Affiliate WorkOne offices undergo One-Stop Center Certifications every three years, with the next certification cycle due to be completed in the Spring of 2024. Certifications are conducted in accordance with DWD's One-Stop American Job Center Certification policy, which can be found on DWD's policy website at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. Local EO Officers conduct accessibility compliance reviews of WorkOne operations and offices, including programmatic accessibility. Further, programmatic accessibility is evaluated on an annual basis by the State EO Officer and DWD's Compliance Team during routine WIOA monitoring.

Physical Accessibility: The One-Stop Center Certification process also includes evaluation of physical accessibility. Local EO Officers conduct accessibility compliance surveys of WorkOne offices checking the accessibility of various areas, such as parking, accessible routes, ramps, entrances and doors, signage, and restrooms. Accessibility compliance surveys are also conducted upon new office openings/moves and physical accessibility is a regular component of annual monitoring by the State EO Officer and DWD's Compliance staff.

WorkOne offices have some features to increase accessibility and availability of resources. WorkOnes have accessibility workstations with ergonomics, braille keyboards, and enlarging document capabilities (Ultra Magnifier) for the visually impaired. Workers also have capabilities with Microsoft Accessibility software for speech, hearing, and vision on all DWD computers, including read screens with a text- to-speech or braille displays. UI handbooks are accessible via computer on the DWD website and can be accessed with Microsoft's speech recognition and Magnifier. DWD is currently examining all of the regions' websites to ensure capabilities for Browse Aloud services. Additionally, the State EO Officer conducts quarterly meetings with all Local EO officers providing training, technical support, and best practices.

For further details regarding physical and programmatic accessibility, please refer to the NDP and DWD Policy referenced above.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials. Describe how English language learners will be made aware of the opportunity to enroll and/or co-enroll in all the core programs for which they are eligible.

To help all clients better understand how to receive benefits and interact with the WorkOne system, DWD and its partners work to provide meaningful access to programs and activities by continually reviewing policy and practices to support limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. DWD Policy 2016-09, Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Guidance Letter (see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/activepolicies/2016-09-P_EO_Nondiscrimination_Guidance.pdf) outlines the major provisions of section 188 and 29 CFR 38. The agency has designed several training modules for Local EO Officers and staff, which can be found at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/equal-opportunity/training-resources/>. Training modules relevant to EL services include, for example, the Notice and

Communication and Affirmative Outreach modules. Indiana's Nondiscrimination Plan (NDP) also covers EL service efforts (see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/State_of_Indiana_Nondiscrimination_Plan_2022.pdf).

English Language Learners are made aware of free interpreting services upon entry into the WorkOne/AJC. Free interpreting service posters are posted at all entry points of the WorkOne locations in 35 languages for all core WIOA programs. Interpreting services are also made available in information sessions such as Rapid Response, Unemployment Insurance, RESEA, and WIOA Orientations. Job Postings are provided in English and Spanish and can be made available in all other languages.

Annually, the State EO Officer conducts subrecipient monitoring and data analysis regarding race, disability status, age, ethnicity, gender, and limited English proficiency. The data analysis compares participants to population data to evaluate potential under-service of a group. This process has promoted discussions between DWD and the LWDAs on how to increase services and outreach to under-served populations, including LEP individuals. As a result, new partnerships are targeted for the LWDAs to connect wrap around services. Further, the data analysis process has assisted the LWDAs in evaluating internal processes that may be prohibiting certain groups, such as those with limited English proficiency, from participating in programs provided at the WorkOne Centers.

WorkOne customers have access to interpreter services through an Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) contracted language interpretation provider. The contract allows for in-person interpretation of dozens of the primary languages spoken in Indiana. The contract also allows for phone interpretation services for additional languages not provided by in-person interpretation. In addition, Google Translate is now on the DWD website and on the Indiana Career Connect system.

The required "Equal Opportunity is the Law" notice (the EO Notice) is available in both English and Spanish, as Spanish is the most prominent non-English language throughout the State. In addition, copies of the EO Notice in both languages are typically posted in all WorkOne offices. Other languages available are Vietnamese, Burmese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hakha Chin, Marshallese, Swahili, Arabic, Bosnian, Cambodian, French, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Russian and Braille. The EO tagline, as well as copies of the EO Notice and additional State and federal posters, such as the Unemployment Insurance and Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection, are provided in English and Spanish on DWD's website. Additionally, DWD has the Unemployment Insurance handbook available in Spanish, Burmese, and Arabic. This handbook is a great resource which explains the process for applying for Unemployment Insurance and what to expect when filing.

Additional EL services are provided at the LWDA level. Examples include, but are not limited to, bilingual staff, hand-held translators, English as a Second Language classes (offered through Title II), Google Translate, and specialized software such as Rosetta Stone. To help EL Hoosiers better understand how to receive benefits and interact with the one-stop system, Babel notices are provided along with communication of vital documents. Section 188 requires that a Babel notice be given when a client encounters a vital document, whether hard copy or electronic. A Babel notice is a short notice included in a document or electronic medium in multiple languages informing the reader that the communication contains vital information and explains

how to access language services to have the contents of the communication provided in other languages. The Babel notice is now on the ICC system along with Google Translate.

Sample language for the Babel notice is below in English:

IMPORTANT! This document or application contains important information about your rights, responsibilities and/or benefits. It is critical that you understand the information in this document and/or application, and we will provide the information in your preferred language at no cost to you. Please contact your local Indiana WorkOne Office near you for assistance in the translation and understanding of the information in this document and/or application.

Other opportunities for EL services include classes offered through Title II Adult Education providers to help address language goals. One-stop partners are able to refer and co-enroll these constituents in the local Adult Education program for assistance.

In 2023, DWD established an Access Workgroup, with membership spanning across the agency in areas such as: Equal Opportunity, Legal, Adult Education, Unemployment Insurance, Marketing and Communications, and Workforce Compliance and Policy. This workgroup will look at ways to enhance and improve agency wide access.

In early 2024, DWD issued Policy 2023-07: Language Accessibility and Language Access Plans (see https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/activepolicies/DWD_Policy_2023-07_Language_Accessibility_and_Language_Access_Plans.pdf), setting the foundation for an agency-level Language Access Plan that will provide guidance to each Program within DWD and any DWD sub-recipients (partners) to ensure compliance with all relevant federal requirements involving LEP applicants/recipients of Program information, benefits, and services. All programs and partners are required to ensure that LEP individuals have meaningful access to programs and activities within the WorkOne system and its partners.

In efforts to continually enhance access to programs and services, DWD created a specialized Access Coordinator position. The position will coordinate all language and disability accessibility service requests for Workforce Services and Unemployment. This position will also provide input, guidance, and recommendations to DWD and its partners on ways to improve access and success for individuals with disabilities, Limited English proficiency, and/or other barriers to access programs and services.

For further details regarding EL services, including Babel notice information, please refer to the NDP referenced above.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

Throughout the development of the Unified State Plan, the State has used a variety of methods to ensure coordination across agencies that administer programs and activities in our Unified Plan. State agencies, non-profit & private organization partners, and the general public have provided input throughout the Plan development process, all committed to a shared goal of creating a more integrated and effective workforce system that works for all Hoosiers. By having the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) spearhead efforts on the plan, the GWC has

been able to bring together the seven State agencies represented on the Cabinet to ensure greater collaboration on the State Workforce Plan. In the summer of 2023, GWC convened a steering committee with State agency partners to generate support for the development of the Plan and to chart a plan of action towards submission of the Plan in the Spring of 2024.

Engagement among core program partners and business partners was achieved through online surveys. The GWC developed surveys to better understand the strengths and challenges of the state's workforce development system. Surveys were distributed through the networks established by the local workforce development areas (LWDAs) and local workforce development board (LWDB) leaders were tasked with disseminating the surveys to their local core program partners and business partners. An additional request for input was made through the support of the Indiana Workforce Board Alliance (INWBA) to LWDB directors and members. Identified survey participants included required one-stop partner programs and other programs, such as not-for-profit organizations, LWDB members, adult education providers, community-based organizations, local & State government agencies, career & technical education, K-12 education, apprenticeship and work-based learning organizations & intermediaries, institutions of higher education, eligible training providers, healthcare and social services provider, labor organizations, chief elected officials, and corrections and rehabilitation providers.

Customer satisfaction surveys were collected by DWD of individuals who visited and or received services at any of the WorkOne Centers (i.e., American Job Centers) during PY22 and PY23. Personal and/or identifiable information was kept confidential and not provided with any information associated with development of this Plan.

Some of the common themes unearthed through this engagement included removing barriers to employment from Hoosiers in a post-COVID environment, including access to affordable childcare and transportation, increased connectivity (i.e., broadband and internet), increased access and awareness to workforce development services and programs, including virtual service delivery, and access to relevant training and education programs in the local area that aligns with in-demand jobs that pay self-sustaining wages. Specifically, core program partners expressed the need for greater coordination across programs to avoid duplication of services and ensure positive outcomes for displaced workers and jobseekers.

Survey findings, paired with new quantitative data from the economic and workforce analysis of the Plan, were presented to the steering committee and partners at the Strategic Planning Retreat in October 2023. This group consisted of core partners, employers, education & training providers, advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders. A framework was established around the WIOA State Planning ICR Goals:

1. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations.
2. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

The GWC worked with planning retreat attendees to determine how these goals aligned with the GWC's November 2022 recommendations to the Governor and State Legislature, and, more importantly, how they responded to the current and future workforce development needs of the state:

1. Help employers find workers and develop a skilled talent pipeline.
2. Remove barriers keeping people out of the labor force.
3. Prepare Indiana's future workforce.

The breadth of individuals that were represented at the planning retreat allowed for the State to draw from specific areas of expertise when drafting the various sections of the Plan. Steering committee members, particularly State agency staff, also had the opportunity to share sections of the Plan with relevant individuals outside of the committees and report back to their committee with feedback. These and other efforts ensured that each section of the Plan incorporated substantial feedback from multiple sources before reaching a completed state.

The draft Plan was published on the GWC website and distributed in January 2024 to various stakeholder groups, including, but not limited to regional partners who had provided response to surveys during the planning process. During the public comment period, the GWC hosted a virtual town hall to highlight the Plan's pillars and goals and to offer a live forum for questions. Slides from the town hall and transcript were made available upon request. Following the public comment period, final revisions were made to the Plan in preparation for timely submission. Upon the Plan's submission, a marketing package highlighting key points, including the executive summary and strategic planning elements, will be added to the GWC website, and shared with stakeholders.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
the needs of the populations served by such programs;	
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

Indiana's structure consists of twelve (12) regions and twelve (12) local workforce development areas (LWDAs), which are aligned in geographic composition, with "Region" and "LWDA" used interchangeably when referencing either.

Indiana's LWDAs consist of the following counties:

- Region 1: Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Newton, Jasper, Pulaski, Starke
- Region 2: St. Joseph, Elkhart, Marshall, Kosciusko, Fulton

- Region 3: LaGrange, Steuben, DeKalb, Whitley, Allen, Wabash, Huntington, Wells, Adams, Grant
- Region 4: Benton, White, Cass, Miami, Carroll, Howard, Tippecanoe, Warren, Fountain, Montgomery, Clinton, Tipton
- Region 5/12: Marion, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, Hendricks
- Region 6: Jay, Blackford, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union
- Region 7: Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Vigo, Clay, Sullivan
- Region 8: Brown, Monroe, Owen, Greene, Lawrence, Daviess, Martin, Orange
- Region 9: Bartholomew, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jennings, Ripley, Dearborn, Jefferson, Switzerland, Ohio
- Region 10: Crawford, Washington, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Harrison
- Region 11: Knox, Gibson, Pike, Dubois, Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer, Perry
- Region 12: Marion

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND POLICY USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR “PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY” AND “SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY” IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS

Indiana’s local areas received initial designation approval from the Governor to maintain current local area designations during WIOA implementation in 2015 (WIOA Implementation Guidance WIOA T1-(107) P1) following written requests for designation pursuant to WIOA 106(b)(2) and TEGL 27-14.

In determining current local area (and regional) designations under WIOA, the State took part in a taskforce of the Indiana Career Council, which was focused on assessing system alignment. This taskforce thoroughly reviewed and discussed the workforce development board areas to determine if the 12 areas should be modified. After several meetings, which included input from local boards, the recommendation of the task force was to have the standing (WIA) local areas remain intact.

For initial designation, all 12 of the existing local areas met the criteria for performing successfully and maintaining fiscal integrity, as outlined in WIOA section 106(b)(2) and (3). Indiana verified, and continues to verify on an ongoing basis, these requirements through data reporting and monitoring efforts. Indiana has continued this structure through the State and local planning process, aligning its twelve local areas with its twelve WIOA regions. Indiana’s policy and criteria for identifying regions and designating local areas is available

at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/activepolicies.htm>. Currently, Regions 5 and 12 participate in joint planning, and Region 10 participates in bistate planning with Kentucky.

*Since initial designations were approved, there have been no requests to retract or change designation status, and thus, the local areas and CEOs are considered to have requested continued designation pursuant to 20 CFR 679.250(e).

Consistent with 20 CFR 679.230 - 290 and other federal guidance, Indiana's local area designation process is summarized below:

General procedural requirements for designation of local areas: The Governor will consult with the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and affected local workforce development boards (LWDBs). The process will include a public comment period before approval of a local area designation.

New requests for designation: Designation or redesignation will take into consideration the extent to which the proposed area:

- is consistent with the labor market;
- is consistent with regional economic development within the State; and
- Has available Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities and provisions required by WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

The Governor may approve a request at any time for designation as a workforce development area from any unit of general local government, including a combination of such units, if the GWC determines that the area meets applicable designation requirements and recommends designation.

Regardless of whether a local area has been newly designated, or designated via initial or subsequent designation, the Governor may re-designate a local area if the re-designation has been requested by a local area and the Governor approves the request.

Subsequent designations: The Governor may review a designated local area at any time to evaluate whether the area continues to meet the requirements for subsequent designation under that paragraph. After initial designations, if the chief elected official and LWDB in local area submits a request for subsequent designation, the Governor must approve the request if the following criteria are met for the two most recent program years of initial designation:

- The local area performed successfully;
- The local area sustained fiscal integrity; and
- In the case of a local area in a planning region, the local area met the regional planning requirements described in WIOA 106(c)(1)

Regarding subsequent designation, as part of the bi-annual local board certification process, DWD Policy 2019-02 requires local areas to assure that they have performed successfully and have sustained fiscal integrity for the preceding two program years. These assurances are also

reviewed as part of the State and Local Planning processes. *For purposes of subsequent designation, the local area and chief elected official must be considered to have requested continued designation unless the local area and chief elected official notify the Governor that they no longer seek designation. The following definitions apply to “performed successfully” and “sustained fiscal integrity”:

- *Performed successfully* – means the local area met or exceeded all levels of performance and the local area has not failed any individual measure for the last two (2) consecutive program years
- *Sustained fiscal integrity* - as defined in WIOA sec. 106(e)(2), means that the Secretary has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under subtitle B due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

Any units of general local government or grant recipients that request but are not granted initial or subsequent designation as a local area will have the opportunity to submit an appeal to the State Workforce Board (the GWC) in alignment with WIOA 106(b)(5), 20 CFR 683.630-640, and the Appeals process outlined in VI.a.1.C.

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

Appeals Process. In alignment with WIOA 106(b)(5), a denied request for local area designation by the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) may be appealed (see DWD Policy 2023-14 re: Identification of Regions and Designation of Local Areas at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>). An appeal must be submitted in writing (within 30 days of the denial) and must include the reason for appeal, all material originally submitted for consideration, and any additional relevant material responding to the denial from the GWC. An opportunity for a hearing must be provided.

In the event of a hearing, it will be scheduled within 60 days of receipt of the appeal. If a decision on the appeal for designation has not been rendered in 90 days (from receipt of appeal) or if designation is denied, the requesting entity may request review by the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary may require that the area be designated as a workforce development area if the Secretary determines that the entity was not accorded procedural rights under the State appeals process, or if the area meets the designation requirements.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

The appeals process relating to determinations for infrastructure funding is outlined within the MOU/IFA and State Funding Mechanism Policies, which can be accessed at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. If the LWDB is unable to reach an agreement on the funding of infrastructure costs with all partners on or before July 1st of each year (or after the applicable extension of time deadline, if granted), the LWDB or affected partner must notify DWD that an agreement cannot be reached. Once notified, the Governor must administer the State funding formula to determine the appropriate share of infrastructure

contributions for all partners for the program year impacted. A required partner may appeal the Governor's determination on the basis of a claim that:

- The Governor's determination is inconsistent with the proportionate share
- The Governor's determination is inconsistent with the cost contribution caps

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

GWC, in consultation with the DWD, develops policy and guidance for the statewide workforce development system. Policies for Title I, Title II, and Unemployment Insurance can be found at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/activepolicies.htm>. This guidance covers, but is not limited to, participant eligibility, priority of service; program standards; performance measures; staff qualifications, roles, and responsibilities; data collection, reporting, and validation; confidential and privileged information; monitoring; property/asset management; funding, allocation, and MOUs; State and local board governance; veterans' services; equal opportunity and nondiscrimination; etc. Specific program guidance can be found at the link provided above.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING FOR MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HOW THE STATE WILL CONDUCT EVALUATIONS OF TITLE I ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES.

DWD will collaborate, as applicable, with the GWC for use of the Governor's set aside funding during the four-year plan cycle. Indiana has previously utilized set aside funding for innovative projects supporting statewide activities in alignment with 20 CFR 682.210. In past program years, for example, DWD issued Performance Support Grants to local areas seeking to conduct allowable activities supporting the State's focus on areas such as: employer needs, strategies for serving individuals with barriers, increasing number of participants in training, etc.

DWD may also utilize set aside funding to support work in systems, systems alignment, performance improvement strategies across WIOA titles. In addition to these priorities, DWD will utilize set aside funds to conduct Title I evaluation projects in alignment with 20 CFR 682.200(d) and 682.220. Indiana is a current participant in the EvalPLC peer learning cohort with fellow states and DOL. The team's focus during the cohort project is to foundation-set and build a framework for future evaluation work, particularly for Title I. Indiana's EvalPLC team is led by DWD's WIOA Title I Strategy staff, with cross-divisional and cross-organizational members with specific Title I expertise. Following the completion of this work, Indiana will identify WIOA Title I evaluations that are focused on evaluating various program strategies. This work will aim to promote continuous improvement, research and test innovative services and strategies, and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes which strategically align with the WIOA State Plan.

C. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS.

Indiana uses Rapid Response funding to market and host Rapid Response Orientations, Job Fairs and Workshops in response to a Worker Adjustment Retaining Notification (WARN) being submitted, as well as in lieu of a WARN being submitted to reach dislocated workers not affected by a company required to submit a WARN for layoff, closure, or reduction in hours. Local workforce development boards can apply for a Rapid Response Grant from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to assist with Rapid Response activities. If Indiana has exhausted all WIOA funding allocated for Rapid Response, Indiana may pull from the Governor Discretionary fund for Dislocated Workers. Our goal is to use Rapid Response funding to reach any dislocated workers that may be affected by a WARN or Non-WARN, and to upskill where necessary to ensure an individual's swift return to employment. To further support our efforts to connect with businesses that may be looking at imminent layoff, DWD utilizes Dun & Bradstreet's "Market Insight" desktop data in evaluating, and ranking, Hoosier businesses based on financial risk. This critical insight allows DWD to use intelligence from companies in a proactive manner by providing a solutions-based approach to manage economic transitions. This program applies a blend of real time financial fitness and material change data analytics, for our ongoing evaluation. With this analysis, DWD supplies leads to local areas for consultation before a business catastrophe occurs and before a business and its workers become at risk. This software is in partnership with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and is used to:

- Consistently analyze labor market data to drive proactive local engagement,
- Approach education and career upskilling in talent fluidly,
- Tap innovative funding sources, and
- Embrace ongoing talent evaluation.

Use of these analytics across Indiana was delayed by the pandemic, however DWD implemented a pilot to develop best practices in several regions. Both State and local business services teams are determining how this information will be utilized and implemented, consistently, statewide. Currently, DWD works closely with three (3) local areas to develop a method and processes to use this information, offer technical assistance, and coordinate with employers to avoid layoffs at the community level. Indiana recently used this tool to analyze the recent layoffs at a local trucking company to evaluate other employer impacts.

Indiana DWD partners with local areas to build and implement Layoff Aversion strategies using the Dun and Bradstreet tool. These strategies leverage Rapid Response funding to support the cost of upskilling workers with their current employer, as well as upskilling of dislocated workers looking for new employment opportunities. Indiana is seeking to expand on this work over the next four years to implement practices that provide early intervention to support businesses and their employees. DWD team align with local areas to review and determine prospects for layoff aversion by analyzing the current level of engagement in the Client Relationship Manager (CRM) system and confirming the outreach strategy based on the plan within the local area. Discussions and strategies include addressing:

- The proposed layoff schedule and the employer's plans to assist the dislocated workers, including the status of any collective bargaining negotiations affecting layoff benefits,

- The need for a voluntary labor management committee or workforce transition committee comprised of representatives of the employer, affected workers, their representatives, and/or other community entities as necessary to assist in planning and overseeing event-specific strategy that supports the reemployment of affected workers (this work typically starts at the State-level but will involve close coordination with the local region. Whether the region steps in to lead or is more of a collaborator with the State depends on regional capacity, skill, and confidence level to manage),
- Appropriate labor representatives to consult and coordinate with when planning Rapid Response activities for impacted workers covered by a collective bargaining agreement,
- The need for peer-to-peer worker outreach to connect dislocated workers with services in conjunction with the labor management committee or its equivalent, and
- Those procedures are in place for the timely access and referral to WorkOne programs, services, and information offered by the WIOA (including Wagner-Peyser), UI, TAA, and other workforce development programs.

Our Market Insight data analytics can also be applied directly to Rapid Response by conducting radius searches of growing businesses in matching occupations. These leads then serve DWD and local areas as immediate connection points to reduce local dislocated impact. These connections could be in service of direct reemployment or alignment to upskilling affected talent in accessing quality jobs. These crucial connections serve our mission of coaching Hoosier businesses to produce their talent, rather than simply consume it. With an unemployment rate that many consider “full employment” we must look beyond churning, immediate jobs, and drive communities into long term talent growth strategies.

D. DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

In the case of a natural disaster, the State Rapid Response Unit will work closely with FEMA, the American Red Cross, the Business Services Unit, the local workforce development board, Designated Local Rapid Response Coordinator, and the Economic Development Board to provide services, recovery, and temporary relief by creating jobs through cleanup and restoration efforts. The Rapid Response and Business Services Units will assist in identifying business adversely affected and workers who lost their jobs as a result of the disaster. The Rapid Response and Business Services Unit will work with the local workforce development boards to access existing funding at the State and regional level, as well as determine the need for additional funding through a Disaster National Emergency Grant. The grant will be used to provide additional funding for cleanup and/or humanitarian efforts. DWD will provide technical assistance to the regions as needed and will assist in the efforts to provide the following information and services to the victims of the disaster: Disaster Unemployment Assistance UI claims filing, referrals to FEMA to file claims, and job matching and referrals to partner agencies.

E. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) AND ENSURES THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED.

(SECTION 134(A)(2)(A) AND TAA SECTION 221(A)(2)(A) .) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION AND HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICE TO WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE PETITION (TAA SEC. 221(A)(2)(A)).NOTE: UNTIL THE TAA PROGRAM IS REAUTHORIZED, THE REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSE AND APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A PETITION HAS BEEN FILED IS NOT APPLICABLE.

As of June 30, 2022, the TAA program entered into Sunset termination provision (TEGL 14-22). Under the phased termination of the TAA program, the State is only able to serve and conduct outreach to individuals who had a TAA certification occurring prior to the termination of the program. Under current operations, the State is conducting targeted outreach through individuals identified from a certified company worker list by providing a postcard, conducting phone calls and emails. Additionally, workers are invited to Open House events to engage with TAA and partner staff for services. TAA staff are attending Rapid Response events to engage with workers who may have TAA benefits from past layoffs, petitions are still able to be filed, however U.S. Department of Labor is unable to issue new TAA certifications under termination provisions.

If the TAA program is reauthorized by Congress, the State will resume normal operations as follows:

When a petition is filed that was not the result of a Rapid Response event, the TAA Unit of DWD notifies the region of the petition filing to initiate Rapid Response (RR) events, including initial fact finding and RR event scheduling. Once a certification is made, the TAA Unit disseminates a worker notification letter via mail notifying them of their eligibility for the TAA benefits and services, including case management, training, TRA, job search allowance, relocation allowance, and RTAA. The letter includes notification of deadlines for TRA income support.

Post- certification, in addition to the worker notification letter, Indiana TAA Unit issues Public Service Announcements, digital and/or print newspaper advertisements and extensive social media campaigns to target eligible workers within a certification group to engage them at a local WorkOne. Onsite orientations and in-person Rapid Response activities are offered in conjunction with TAA informational sessions while workers are still employed at a certified firm.

Workforce Development Boards are responsible for coordinating the Rapid Response services at the local level to ensure effective delivery of services. Each Workforce Development Board is responsible for the following:

- Designating a local Rapid Response Representative.
 - The representative may be a Workforce Development Board administrative staff or a local Rapid Response team member.

- The representative will coordinate with the Regional Managers of Business Service (RM) and Rapid Response Program Director.
- Representatives will be responsible for contacting the business and introducing Rapid Response services.
- Establishing and maintaining a Local Rapid Response team.
 - Members of the team may include: representatives from the Workforce Development Board, WorkOne staff, service providers, labor organizations and/or State Labor Council (when the workforce is union represented), community/technical colleges, and/or other stakeholders and interested parties.
- Arranging an initial on-site meeting with employers, employee representatives, and Trade Coordinators to assess layoff schedules, determine employer plans to assist the workers, and introduce appropriate onsite Rapid Response activities for the WARN and Trade Act.
- Informing and including TAA coordinators for all onsite meetings including orientations.
- Obtaining a layoff list of affected workers and their contact information when applicable.
- Ensuring all Local Non-WARN notices are entered into ICC and included in the monthly data reports.
- Providing planning assistance for dislocation events.
- Ensuring Rapid Response orientation materials include informational packets on all available services at local WorkOnes and other community resources.
- Providing information on career counseling and job search assistance, resume preparation and interviewing skills workshops, local labor market, education, and training opportunities (WIOA), health benefits (Cobra); and community resources.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) will continue to engage critical partners in the development and implementation of strategies, frameworks, and models for continued growth in work-based learning opportunities as a part of the State strategies. By partnering with workforce development and industry experts to mitigate challenges and to determine best practices, the State is able to generate employer support and engagement for broader participation statewide.

Indiana workforce regions have utilized work-based learning models for many years. On-the-job, incumbent worker, and customized trainings have been widely used and very effective tools in upskilling/re-skilling participants to meet the needs of employers and industry. Indiana's policies are developed to ensure that our providers continually evaluate and improve their work-based learning strategies. As we continue to expand the use of work-based learning, we encourage the local workforce development boards to monitor and review work-based learning programs through partnerships with training providers, employers, and other stakeholders to ensure programs continue to meet the needs of their communities.

Indiana is working to increase and improve the work-based learning models employed in the State. One specific model that the State is working on to enhance and increase is apprenticeships. Indiana has a high number of existing U.S. Department of Labor registered apprenticeships and, with our work going forward, we intend to increase the opportunities for companies to develop and implement registered apprenticeship and certified pre-apprenticeship trainings for existing and potential future employees. To that end, the Governor, via executive order, established the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA) at DWD to further support federal registered apprenticeships and to create a State work-based learning program model.

OWBLA has developed a scalable framework for State-level work-based learning programs, entitled *State Earn and Learn* (SEAL). The SEAL model strategically incorporates related instruction, on-the-job training, and rewards for skill gain, which all lead to an industry-recognized certification. SEALs develop a highly trained employee to fill the talent pipeline for Hoosier employers.

These models are scaled across the State through a well-coordinated process between local Workforce Development Boards and OWBLA regional directors. To ensure maximum outreach, participation, and the leverage of various funding, OWBLA recently entered into agreements with all twelve LWDBs for them to become Registered Intermediaries with U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). This partnership will allow for the expansion of registered apprenticeship, certified pre-apprenticeship, and SEALs. Additionally, this partnership creates a mechanism for more efficient allocation and usage of future U.S. DOL grant dollars as well as braiding opportunities with other available grant funds.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., outreach to sponsors and prospective sponsors, identifying potential participants and connecting them to apprenticeship opportunities).

Indiana continues the statewide expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs as comprehensive workforce solutions for business and industry in all economic sectors. Three key elements are helping with this: First, a single office within DWD has been developed to align the products, services, and functionality among four formerly separate DWD divisions to drive solution design and delivery in a more efficient and effective manner. The Office of Workforce Solutions and Engagement is comprised of Employer Engagement, Workforce Education and Training, the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship, and Serve Indiana. Second, all twelve local workforce development boards (LWDBs) are registered intermediaries, with many of them also working as sponsors. Finally, the Office of Work-Based Learning and

Apprenticeship (OWBLA) is developing several technical assistance tools, such as the Post-Secondary Model Program Guidance and the Indiana Apprenticeship Continuum, to aid in the alignment of State agencies and training providers.

The Office of Workforce Solutions and Engagement

The Office has played several roles in the State Plan over the years. However, this has happened as separate and distinct offices – Workforce Education and Training, Employer Engagement, and the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship which was originally stood up in 2018 to focus on growing work-based learning in Indiana. Since the first quarter of 2022, these offices, along with Serve Indiana (AmeriCorps), have been working as one unit to address both talent attraction and talent retention. This division proactively engages with the LWDBs and employers to identify employer needs and to provide an array of strategies and solutions to address today's needs and tomorrow's growth as well as overall culture and employee satisfaction. We have been able to identify opportunities for cross-functional work among the personnel of the four formerly separate offices as well as the potential for braiding different funding streams to help employers and individuals.

The office has a unique blend of subject matters experts with backgrounds in secondary education, post-secondary education and training, data analytics, business development, career exploration and coaching, and human capital. While truly listening to the customer, working in one office affords us the opportunity to capitalize on this expertise at a pace that aligns with business. At the center of the solution is work-based learning programs, built for both talent attraction and incumbent worker retention, with a focus on middle and high-level skilled occupations. Key to success is the assurance of quality, which comes from having a joint staff of industry and education experts as mentioned above, and a multi-step certification and approval process. And, contrary to misguided belief, these programs are not an alternative to a “traditional four-year degree.” These programs allow the individual and the company to grow by potentially including industry credentials, college credit, certificates, and college degrees.

While Indiana has come a long way in the past several years in the area of apprenticeship, not all states share in this success. Indiana boasts two successful, comprehensive work-based learning programs: Registered Apprenticeship (RAP) and certified *State Earn and Learn* (SEAL). Each program works well independently, but they also work very well together with SEALs fulfilling the role of Pre-Apprenticeship Programs when an articulation agreement is in place. We have seen significant growth in both programs and participants since OWBLA was stood up in June of 2018, with Indiana as one of the top states in the nation in number of apprentices per workforce capita. We expect to see continued growth, especially in non-traditional sectors, as the Office of Workforce Solutions and Engagement firmly believes that businesses should be talent producers and not just consumers.

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) as Registered Intermediaries / Sponsors

As of January 2020, all twelve LWDBs had become registered apprenticeship intermediaries, with each having entered into a sub-grantee relationship with DWD in order to develop and scale registered apprenticeship programs in each region across Indiana. The intermediaries are responsible for the outreach and collaboration efforts, RAP expansion, and the development of RAPs, SEALs, and Pre-RAPs. Some regions are now sponsors that also execute the registration and reporting to U.S. Department of Labor. Intermediaries report program and individual

participant data at the State level through the State's Indiana Career Connect (ICC) and Client Relationship Manager (CRM) systems. This structure supports State Plan goals to allow local areas to drive efforts to attract and retain apprentices for high-wage, high-demand jobs that meet the economic needs of the individual region.

Since 2018, DWD has received the SAE, ASE, SAE2020, ABA, and SAEF apprenticeship grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. Through the support of these grants, DWD has been able to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship in Indiana, the LWDBs, Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, various sector partnerships, and secondary and post-secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Adult Education programs. As of the 2022 program year, Indiana was reporting 17,185 apprentices in over nine hundred programs, with 58 new RAPs being approved during that period.[1] However, Indiana still lacks much needed diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. While we have made good progress with our grants, we believe that our LWDBs are in an excellent position to utilize State, WIOA, RAP, and regional resources to reach businesses, develop programs, braid funding, and identify potential talent pools from our target populations, to include:

- **Veterans:** Purdue University was one of the grantees that received grant dollars through the Presidential Executive Order Expanding Apprenticeships specifically targeting veterans.[2] We will look to create more partnerships between INVets and employers that provide registered apprenticeship opportunities. Connecting the skill sets that veterans have gained during their time of service to these opportunities will provide a benefit to both veterans living in Indiana and our employer community.
- **Women:** While we see good growth in healthcare apprenticeship, greater access to registered apprenticeships in the skilled trades can help women achieve economic security and fill predicted skills shortages in these sectors. From Pre-RAPs to RAPs, opportunities to earn and learn in these trades provide good careers with family-sustaining earnings and long-term employment. While RAPs in the trades offer good jobs with benefits, only a small portion of apprentices in the trades are women. Pre-Raps can provide women with the foundational skills, supports, networks, and knowledge needed for entering and succeeding in an apprenticeship. As our WorkOnes can help promote these opportunities to women, our business services need to simultaneously work with our businesses to make them inclusive and welcoming for women. As we promote non-traditional hiring practices through our business services representative, employers start to tap into this viable talent pipeline to fill jobs at various entry levels. Indiana can adapt resources and strategies the best practices identified by the National for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment.[3]
- **Formerly Incarcerated:** The occupations currently offered within the IDOC's Apprenticeship programs tend to be in industries where second chance employment is supported. Through both the Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry HIRE and WorkOnes, ex-offenders can be actively connected to these opportunities, if they align with their interests. Because they combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, a formerly incarcerated individual could learn academic and technical skills and earn a stable wage, with the option for regular pay increases during and after the program.
- **Historically Underrepresented Minorities:** Pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment programs can be especially valuable for people of color who have been historically

underrepresented in certain industries and apprenticeships. These programs can be paired with Adult Education to help workers acquire a basic level of academic- and industry-relevant skills. Effective Pre-RAPs expose workers to job sites and work environments, as well as provide income support for workers to address barriers to employment. Pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship programs also create formal access points to employers. RAPs or WIOA Adult and Dislocated programs can help with direct expenses, such as childcare and transportation.

- **Urban and Rural Populations:** RAPs and SEALS can provide consistent wages, debt-free education, and higher wages to urban and rural Hoosiers. Workers who complete an apprenticeship earn an average starting salary of \$50,000 and earn about \$300,000 more than comparable workers over their lifetimes. Employers also benefit from having the ability to build a pipeline of skilled workers.[4] Scaling access to State and federal apprenticeship programs will provide a way for urban students to earn postsecondary credentials and an income simultaneously. Pre- and/or youth-apprenticeship programs can aim to define clear career paths, help students (either in K-12 or adults) choose the best track for them, and prepare them to secure and succeed in full-time employment.
- **At-Risk Youth:** The use of pre-apprenticeship and bridge programs increases access and improves the odds of success for candidates who need job-readiness supports, such as at-risk youth. Pre-RAPs can introduce people to the workplace culture and expectations, developing employability skills as part of the education and training. Younger apprenticeship candidates may not be job-ready upon their graduation from high school, and they may not want to take the traditional four-year higher education route. Merging Pre-RAPs with the redesigned CTE programs of study could offer another option for high school students to earn a postsecondary credential and an income as they begin their career. Connecting Pre-RAPs to high school CTE courses while providing wraparound services such as career counseling and mentoring can help increase student success.[5]

Technical Assistance Tools and Program Alignment

The Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship is currently developing several technical assistance tools to aid in the alignment of State agencies, training providers, and program content. The main purpose of the **Post-Secondary Model Program Guidance** is to describe the most common career connected learning opportunities available to students. The guide provides common definitions for adult experiences and should help practitioners and employers better understand WBL. It provides standardized guidance for statewide programs as well as tips and resources for implementation.

While this guide includes many types of WBL, it focuses on comprehensive programs. These are training provider or employer-driven, “earn while you learn” programs that combine on-the-job training (OJT) with job-related instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of industry-recognized skills standards and certificates. Comprehensive programs are planned, structured learning experiences that combine classroom learning with paid work experience, and may be within the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. They include SEALS, Pre-RAPs, and RAPs.

The **Indiana Apprenticeship Continuum** is a technical tool that will house a series of templates to assist in building RAPs, Pre-RAPs, and certified SEALs. These templates will be used to enable intermediaries to build comprehensive WBL programs more easily through the use of already existing pathways aligned to U.S. DOL occupations, with options of adding customized training. Partnering with Ivy Tech Community College and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education will ensure alignment with CTE's Next Level Programs of Study and Ivy Tech's Certification Crosswalk, Certificates, Technical Certificates, and associate degrees.

This tool, once complete, will ensure alignment of post-secondary education programs to U.S. DOL occupational competencies and development of standardized articulation agreements and training plans for programs using training that can crosswalk or use dual credit or dual enrollment. Visually, it will show pathways with multiple entry points that eventually lead to post-apprenticeship degrees. Not only will State agencies and intermediaries make use of this continuum, but employers can use a version of it for both recruitment and retention purposes.

[1] U.S. Department of Labor, 2019. Overview of the Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies Grant Program and Project Summaries.

[2] The National Center for Women's Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment at Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) provides strategies and practical applications to increase the number of women entering and being retained in registered apprenticeship through our online resources, technical assistance, and training.

[3] U.S. Department of Labor. Registered Apprenticeship National Results Fiscal Year 2018.

[4] U.S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Toolkit.

[5] Jobs For the Future, 2019. Growing Equity and Diversity through Apprenticeship: Business Perspectives.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

An Eligible Training Provider is an entity that provides a program of training services and has been determined to be eligible to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-B funding for training services through an Individual Training Account. These providers and programs will be included on Indiana's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The provider must be open to the public and one of the following types of entities:

1. Institution of higher education that provides a program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential; or
2. Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs); or
3. Other public or private providers of training services, which may include:
 - a. Community-based organizations;

- b. Joint labor-management organizations; and
- c. Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA if such activities are provided in combination with training services described at §680.350 of the WIOA regulations.

Indiana's ETPL is administered through the INTraining website. It is important to note the distinction between the INTraining website and the ETPL. The INTraining website is the means by which training providers submit applications to have their programs listed for Hoosiers to view and access. Once the providers submit the required program information to be determined eligible to be placed on the INTraining website, a more thorough review will be completed by DWD staff to determine whether the program is also eligible to receive WIOA funding, and, therefore, be placed on the ETPL. The ETPL is a subset of INTraining and includes the selected INTraining providers and programs which have been determined eligible to receive WIOA funding.

The INTraining dashboard is viewable by the public and maintains multiple features which assist clients in finding the training program most suited to their needs. Jobseekers have the ability to refine their search by utilizing a number of filters, including the ability to sort by programs funded "in certain areas" or "statewide." They may view all training programs in a particular region or sort by county. They may view only training programs that are offered 'on-line' or sort by 'off-line' (in person). If a jobseeker is in pursuit of a particular type of credential, he or she may seek and sort the training options that specifically lead to an industry recognized certification, licensure, a certified pre-apprenticeship certification a registered apprenticeship certification, or an accredited post-secondary credential.

The procedures, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility are outlined in DWD Policy 2020-16, Change 1 and its companion guidance, DWD Technical Assistance 2020-17, Change 1 (the policy's TA guide), both of which can be found at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>. DWD's policy was released in June of 2021, shortly after the release of TEGL 8-19, Change 1. The companion TA guide serves as official State level guidance provided to complement DWD Policy 2020-16, Change 1, to provide robust procedural and process direction for training providers. In January 2023, DWD finalized improvements to DWD Policy 2020-16 to align with DOL-ETA recommendations that now include additional clarification on a provider's initial and ongoing eligibility requirements, explication on the unique approval process for Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) as WIOA Title I Eligible Training Providers (ETP), and to provide specific reasons for which DWD may terminate a training provider, provider location, or programs.

Below are key points from the policy and its companion TA guide:

Initial Application: The INTraining initial application process consists of two application types: Provider Location and Program.

Step One: Provider Location Application

Training providers must complete and submit a provider location application through the INTraining portal. A separate provider location application is required for each training location the entity wishes to seek approval.

The provider location application requires information about the provider and training location. Required information will include, but is not limited to:

1. Address for training location
2. Contact information for training location
3. Provider type
4. Accreditations and licenses, if applicable

Provider locations will be subject to clearance checks, which must be passed to receive approval. Pass/fail determination will be at the discretion of DWD. Clearance checks may include, but is not limited to:

1. Indiana Department of Revenue
2. Indiana Secretary of State
3. DWD Unemployment Insurance Tax
4. Office of the Indiana Attorney General E. Better Business Bureau

F. Any relevant accrediting bodies, which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Indiana Department of Health
2. Indiana State Board of Nursing
3. Office for Career and Technical Schools
4. Board for Proprietary Education
5. Indiana Professional Licensing Agency

Step Two: Program Application

Once the provider location application has been approved, the training provider must complete a program application for each training program it seeks to have included on the INTraining list.[1] Programs must be offered to the general public to be eligible for consideration. Required information will include, but is not limited to:

1. Description of the program of training services
2. Information concerning whether the training provider is in a partnership with a business for the program of training services
3. Program related costs
4. Information addressing the alignment of training with in-demand industry sectors and occupations
5. Confirmation of compliance with 29 CFR Part 38, "Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act" Final Rule (January 3, 2017)[2]

If the training provider fails to complete either the provider location or program application or fails to provide any information being requested by DWD within sixty (60) days of submitting the application or of being notified of the omitted information, the provider location and/or program applications will be denied.[3]

Upon satisfactory submission and approval of a provider and program application, the program will appear on the INTraining website. At this time, the system will automatically review the program specifics to determine whether the program is eligible to receive WIOA Title I funding and therefore be included on the ETPL.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC), in consultation with DWD, reserves the right to review and reestablish the initial and continued eligibility requirements on an annual basis. Initial and continued eligibility requirements can be found in DWD Policy 2020-16, Change 1. See https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/activepolicies/2020-16-PC1_INTraining_ETPL.pdf.

In-demand Metrics

When determining a program's eligibility to receive WIOA funding, DWD will consider the demand of the occupations the program trains towards. Indiana uses a scoring formula to rate occupations for both short-term and long-term outlooks to determine if the occupation is an in-demand occupation in a particular region. The formula considers the following characteristics: total job openings, growth openings, percentage change, real-time online job postings, labor market information, and wages. The final score results in a rating of one (1) through five (5) for each occupation, one (1) being least in-demand and five (5) being highly in-demand. The Indiana Career Ready INDemand website can be found at <https://indemandjobs.dwd.in.gov/>.

Programs can qualify to be funded regionally or statewide.

1. Lead to an in-demand occupation in the region and[4]
 - a. Occupations are based upon the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code to Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) crosswalk listed on the program application[5]
 - b. Identified occupations must meet the INDemand threshold—a 3 (or higher) flame ranking
 - c. INDemand data is updated annually on INTraining at the beginning of every program year (July 1st)[6]
2. Lead to a post-secondary credential
 - a. Industry Recognized Certification
 - b. Licensure
 - c. Apprenticeship
 - d. Accredited Post-Secondary Program of Study
 - i. Accredited short-term certificate (< Associate degree)
 - ii. Associate degree

- iii. Bachelor's degree
- iv. Master's degree
- v. Doctoral degree

In 2023, INTraining has included a fifth credential type, Pre-Apprenticeships, which are reviewed and certified by the Indiana Office of Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA). These credentials include industry-recognized certification training as well as allowing participants through a MOU with the employer to transition to a registered apprenticeship program upon completion.

The other requirement for initial and continued eligibility is **Performance Metrics**:

Performance Metrics

When determining a program's eligibility to receive WIOA funding, the State will consider the performance outcomes of the program. If a program does not have available data at the time of initial application, the program will receive a one-year data waiver. Programs can qualify to be regionally or statewide funded. Programs must meet the following minimum performance criteria:

1. Best of 2nd or 4th Quarter Completers Employment Rate greater than 30%; or
2. 50% or greater Credential Rate of all students served; or
3. Annual Total Completer's Median Earnings equal to or above \$10/hour.

If a program has been denied inclusion on the ETPL for failure to meet the required in-demand and/or performance criteria, the provider and program will remain on the INTraining list but will be removed from the ETPL. This renders them ineligible to receive WIOA funding and prompts the removal of the funding icon until both in-demand and performance criteria have been met.

Indiana has set performance criteria to denote those programs that meet exceptional performance metrics. Programs must meet the following criteria to receive this designation:

1. Best of 2nd or 4th quarter completers employment rate greater than 60%; and
2. Credential rate of all students served greater than 80%; and
3. Annual total completer's median earnings equal to or above \$15/hour.

As DWD's Education and Training department monitors the continued eligibility of ETPL programs of study based on current performance criteria, DWD will be recommending elevating minimum program performance benchmarks to remain listed as an eligible training provider.

Continued Eligibility Requirements for INTraining and the ETPL

In accordance with WIOA, DWD has set specific requirements a training provider must meet or complete to maintain their eligibility on either list. Continued eligibility consists of meeting and completing four requirements: in-demand metrics, performance metrics, annual review, and federal performance reporting.

To maintain ETPL eligibility, in-demand metrics, and performance metrics, as listed in the Initial Eligibility for the ETPL section, must continue to be met.

In January 2023, DWD updated ETPL Policy 2020-16, Change 1 to include language that addresses access to training throughout the State which is physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed or those with barriers to employment; reporting and accuracy of information on federal and State training programs, including performance and cost reports; and ensuring training program quality by requiring that programs lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. See https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/activepolicies/2020-16-PC1_INTraining_ETPL.pdf.

Annual Review

To maintain INTraining or ETPL inclusion, all training providers must complete an annual review of each provider location and program to ensure that the WIOA Title I-financially assisted program is conducted in a nondiscriminatory way according to WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38. The annual review due date is based upon the provider location or program application's initial approval date; therefore, training providers may have to complete an annual review multiple times if they have separate locations and/or programs that were approved at different times throughout the year.

An annual review includes the training provider reviewing and making any necessary updates on the provider location or program application. The training provider will receive a sixty (60) day notification prior to the annual review due date informing them of the deadline for submission of the review and any updates. Upon submission, the updated program information will be reviewed by DWD staff. If the training provider does not complete the annual review by its due date, the application will be placed into an "Information Requested" status. If the training provider fails to complete the annual review within sixty (60) days of the program being placed into "Information Requested" status, the program application will be denied. The training provider may immediately re-apply.[7]

Performance Reporting (federal reporting)

To maintain INTraining or ETPL inclusion, all training providers must complete the annual federal performance reporting. Under WIOA, each State is required to submit student-level data for all training programs to U.S. Department of Labor on an annual basis. Student-level data should be reported at the beginning and end of each cohort and must be reported by the July 31st deadline for that reporting period. The following requirements apply to federal performance reporting:

1. Student-level data **must** be reported before or during the open federal performance reporting time period of **July 1st through July 31st**.
2. Training providers are required to submit student-level data to DWD via the INTraining portal annually.
3. Student-level data must be reported under the program location in which the student was enrolled.
4. Training providers must report student-level data for every program location that was in "Staff Approved" status at any time during the reporting program year.

- a. **If the program did not serve any students, the training provider is still required to complete federal performance reporting.** The training provider will be able to indicate 'no students were served' during the reporting program year.
5. Student-level data must be submitted for all students, regardless of funding sources.
- a. First name
 - b. Last name
 - c. Full social security number (or last four digits of the SSN)
 - d. Address (only if full SSN is not available)
 - e. Date of Birth
 - f. Gender
 - g. Race
 - h. Course Start Date
 - i. Course End Date
 - j. Enrollment Status
 - k. Name of Assessment(s) (if applicable)
 - l. Assessment(s) Pass/Fail (if applicable)
 - m. Deceased
 - n. Incarcerated

Any program that does not successfully complete their reporting of appropriate program year student-level data by the July 31st deadline, will be placed into a “**Pending Data**” status and will not be fundable for a minimum of six (6) months. The training provider will still be obligated to submit student-level data during the six (6) month unfunded time frame. During and following the “Pending Data” status, the following rules apply:

1. **Training provider completes student-level data reporting during the pending data timeframe**—the program will move to “Suspended” status for the remainder of the six (6) month time period and will remain unfunded. At the end of the suspension, a funding determination will be made.[8]
2. **Training provider does not complete student-level data reporting during the pending data time frame**—the program will be terminated for two (2) years. Please note: A new duplicate program application will not be accepted during the termination period. If a duplicate program is submitted, the new program will be denied.[9]

The companion TA guide addresses the exception to eligibility requirements for Registered Apprenticeships:

Requirement and Eligibility Exceptions

Apprenticeships

U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) are automatically eligible to be included on the ETPL and are exempt from federal, State, and local ETP eligibility and federal performance reporting requirements. The RAP will automatically be included on the ETPL once the program sponsor opts in and has provided the following information to DWD:

1. Occupations included within the RAP
2. The name and address of the RAP sponsor
3. The name and address of the Related Technical Instruction (RTI) provider, and the location of instruction if different than the program sponsor's address
4. The method and length of instruction
5. The number of active apprentices

RAPs will remain on the ETPL until:

1. The RAP sponsor notifies DWD it no longer wants to be included on the list
2. The program becomes deregistered under the National Apprenticeship Act
3. The program is determined to have intentionally supplied inaccurate information
4. A determination is made that the RAP substantially violated any provision of Title I of WIOA or the WIOA regulations, including nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of 29 CFR part 38

The companion TA guide also addresses general responsibilities of the Training Providers and addresses new monitoring processes that have been put into place, both to support accuracy and maintain quality training programs:

Provider Responsibilities

In addition to meeting and maintaining eligibility requirements, training providers are obligated to adhere to the following responsibilities:

1. Ensure instructor credentials meet the minimum qualifications:
 - a. Possess a two-year degree from an institution recognized by the United States Department of Education or national accrediting body in the major area they are assigned to teach; or
 - b. Possess practical experience of not less than two years in the major area they are assigned to teach and professional licensure or industry-recognized certification in the field.
 - c. All faculty applications to teach in the school must be accompanied by transcripts, letters, and documents supporting the application.
 - d. These requirements do not supersede any requirements set by another oversight agency that may be more stringent than that of INTraining.

2. In addition, and separate to the INTraining portal record, training providers must maintain a paper or digital record of all eligible participants using the following guidelines:
 - a. Must contain copies of any documentation that pertains to the participant's eligibility, including all attendance records and any earned credential documentation.
 - b. Must be kept in a secured area with limited access, as these files contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
 - c. Must be kept for a minimum of 3 years.
 - d. For additional resources on ADA requirements, please refer to the following documents: ADA Compliance Standards, ADA checklists, WIOA Equal Opportunity Regulations, and WIOA Equal Opportunity Reference Guide.
3. Maintain at least one active email address that is regularly checked.
4. Respond within five business days to all communications from DWD including phone calls, emails, online surveys, or requests for other documentation to assist the Department with ongoing program quality assurance measures.

Monitoring

Monitoring activities will include application and portal review, site-visits, and review of student records. DWD reserves the right to visit any training provider at any time on-site and unscheduled or request provider kept participant records for the purpose of program monitoring. Monitoring activities may include, but are not limited to:

1. Site visits (scheduled or unscheduled)
2. Staff or student interviews (scheduled visits only)
3. Classroom observation
4. Review of full participant records
5. Review of resources, tools, and curriculum
6. Review of program cost[10]
7. Review of instructor credentials
8. Review of ADA compliance
9. Review of any requirements related to the INTraining and ETPL policy[11]
10. Financial records
11. Review of EO compliance

DWD reserves the right to place INTraining providers and/or ETPs or programs on an improvement plan or to remove such training providers or programs from INTraining or the ETPL. Reasons for placement on an improvement plan or removal from INTraining or the ETPL may include, but are not limited to:

1. Poor performance
2. Misuse of funding
3. Loss of ETPL fundable status
4. Falsification of documentation
5. Observations or findings from monitoring activities, etc.

Indiana's ETPL policy addresses termination of training programs, and the Technical Assistance provides more details regarding DWD determinations of 'denied' and 'terminated':

DWD Determinations

Conditions for Denial

DWD reserves the right to deny a training provider, provider location, or program from INTraining or ETPL. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to submit a completed application
2. Failure to submit requested information
3. Failure to complete annual review
4. Failure to meet in-demand metrics[12]
5. Failure to meet performance metrics
6. Failure to attain or retain required State licensure, certification, accreditation, or authorization to operate from the appropriate State oversight agency

If the training provider's location or program is denied and removed from the INTraining list for any of the above reasons, the training provider may re-apply once the issue has been resolved. If the training provider location is only denied from the ETPL for any of the above reasons, the provider or program application will automatically be re-evaluated as new information is received. A denial is not appealable.

If a training provider location or program is denied and removed from the ETPL while WIOA participants are enrolled and have already begun their training, the participants may complete the program unless the provider or program has lost State licensure, certification, accreditation, or authorization to operate from the appropriate State oversight agency. If the provider has lost its authority to operate, DWD will make every effort to find alternative, comparable training for the participant.

Conditions for Termination

DWD reserves the right to terminate a training provider, provider location, or program from INTraining or ETPL. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failing to complete student-level data reporting requirements
2. Intentionally supplying inaccurate information

3. Misrepresenting costs or services
4. Substantially violating WIOA statutes or regulations
5. Barred by the federal government from receiving federal funds

If the training provider location or program is terminated for any of these reasons, the provider must wait at least two (2) years before re-applying. The training provider is liable to repay all WIOA adult and dislocated worker training funds received during the period of non-compliance. A termination is appealable.[13]

The new policy and companion TA guide address a new and multi-tiered appeal process available to training providers who wish to challenge a termination:

Review of Termination

Training providers may request a review by DWD for any provider location or program that has been terminated. A training provider may request up to three reviews by DWD: administrative review, appeal of administrative decision, and objection to the Department Review Committee's decision.

Administrative Review

The request for an administrative review of termination from INTraining or the ETPL must be submitted electronically to INTraining@dwd.in.gov within ten business days of the date of notice of its termination. The request for review must include the following:

1. Name of training provider
2. Program location ID, if applicable
3. Justification for review
4. Any documentation to support the provider's justification

The DWD Associate Chief of Workforce Education and Training will select an Administrative Review Committee comprised of three DWD staff members who were not involved in the initial decision. This committee will conduct a review and send notice of its decision to the parties within thirty (30) business days of receiving the request for an administrative review.

Appeal of Administrative Review Decision

An appeal of the administrative review decision must be submitted electronically to INTraining@dwd.in.gov within fifteen business days of the date of the Notice of Administrative Review decision. The request for an appeal of the administrative decision must include the following:

1. Name of training provider
2. Program location ID, if applicable
3. Copy of Administrative Review Decision
4. Justification for appeal

5. Any documentation to support the appeal's justification

A Department Review Committee, designated by the DWD Commissioner, which has not been involved in the initial or the Administrative Review decision and is not Workforce Division team members, shall facilitate the appeal process. The Department Review Committee will schedule an administrative hearing not more than sixty business days after DWD receives the written request for appeal.[14] All appeal hearings will be held de novo, and the Workforce Education and Training Department will bear the burden of proof. Indiana Rules of Trial Procedure will govern the administrative proceedings. The Department Review Committee will issue a decision within ninety business days of the completion of the hearing.

Objection of the Department Review Committee's Decision

Not more than 15 days after the issuance of a written decision by the Department Review Committee, any party adversely affected by the order may file an objection to the decision in writing to the DWD Commissioner and request that the Commissioner review the decision. The party must identify the basis of the objection with reasonable particularity. No later than thirty after the objection is filed with the Commissioner, the Commissioner shall issue a final decision affirming, modifying, or dissolving the Department Review Committee's decision. The Commissioner may remand the matter, with or without instructions, to the Department Review Committee for further proceedings. The Commissioner is the ultimate authority (as defined by IC 4-21.5-1-15) for DWD.

A party may contest the decision of the ultimate authority by filing a petition for judicial review consistent with the requirements of I.C. 4-21.5- 5 et seq.

[1] A single program application may be associated with several provider (or training) locations. A new program application is needed for different program types or when commensurate programs have different details (i.e., course length, tuition, work experiences, etc.).

[2] 29 CFR 38

[3] For more information on denials, see Conditions of Denial section of policy docs. Initial ETPL Eligibility Under WIOA, DWD has set specific requirements a program must meet to be eligible to receive WIOA funding and be listed as an ETP. Initial eligibility consists of meeting two requirements: in-demand metrics and performance metrics.

[4] For information on an in-demand determination review request, please go to the Review of Regional Demand or Industry Recognized Certification section of DWD Technical Assistance 2020-17, Change 1.

[5] The CIP or SOC codes may be updated throughout the year as new codes are released by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

[6] The INDemand data will be updated each July utilizing April's bi-annual (every 2 years) report.

[7] For more information on denials, please go to Conditions of Denial section of DWD Technical Assistance 2020-17, Change 1

[8] For more information, please go to Initial and Continued Eligibility Requirements section of policy docs

[9] For denial terms, please go to Conditions for Denial section of policy docs.

[10] DWD reserves the right to request an itemized list of program costs outside of what is requested on the application. If the training provider submits a program cost increase, the training provider may be required to submit a justification.

[11] INTraining and Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Eligibility and Establishment Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I

[12] For information on a review request, please go to section Review of Regional Demand or Industry Recognized Certification.

[13] For more information on appeals, please go to section Review of Termination.

[14] Only appeal requests received by DWD within fifteen (15) business days of the date of notice of the Administrative Review Decision shall be scheduled for an administrative hearing. All other requests will be denied.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FOR THE ADULT PRIORITY OF SERVICE REQUIREMENT IN WIOA SECTION 134 (C)(3)(E) THAT REQUIRES AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF, WHEN USING WIOA ADULT PROGRAM FUNDS TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES, TO GIVE PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO RECIPIENTS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT (INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS).

DWD collaborated with U.S. Department of Labor to revise and publish updated Adult Priority of Service guidance in 2023. (See Policy 2019-04, Change 2 at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>). Additionally, local areas must have written policies that delineate how they will give priority of service and must adhere to these policies. DWD will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately and will provide technical assistance as needed. DWD is continuing to evaluate local level benchmarks and will review data and local policies to ensure priority is being carried out appropriately. Technical assistance will be provided as needed.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

In its 2023 Formula Allocation Memo, DWD reaffirmed that it allows local workforce development board (LWDBs) to transfer up to 100% of the Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations, provided local entities seek approval as noted in current WIOA allocation memo available at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>.

6. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S POLICY ON WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLMENT AND WHETHER AND HOW OFTEN THIS POLICY IS DISSEMINATED TO THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNERS. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.325, 20 CFR 618.824(A)(3)(I).

The State issued DWD Policy 2020-06, Change 1 in March 2022 to emphasize the requirement of co-enrollment of TAA individuals into WIOA Dislocated Worker as mandated by the Trade Act

sections above. The policy was distributed to local workforce development boards, posted on the DWD Policy website, and provided to the DWD Regional Support Managers for implementation by the local workforce development boards. Additionally, the TAA Unit provides a report of co-enrollment data specific to each region, quarterly.

7. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S FORMAL STRATEGY TO ENSURE THAT WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLED PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE NECESSARY FUNDED BENEFITS AND SERVICES. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.816(C)

Through the quarterly co-enrollment report issued by the TAA Unit, local workforce development boards are provided individual participant details of those TAA participants who are not co-enrolled into WIOA DW services. The TAA Unit schedules strategy meetings for any local area that is not meeting co-enrollment expectations upon issuance of each quarterly report. Additionally, the TAA Unit provides co-enrollment statistics to DWD Compliance team for implementation into WIOA monitoring.

8. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PROCESS FOR FAMILIARIZING ONE-STOP STAFF WITH THE TAA PROGRAM. 20 CFR 618.804(J), 20 CFR 618.305

The TAA program is administered by dedicated TAA staff in the local offices. The TAA Unit provides in-depth training to all new hires and annual refresher training provided to all other TAA case management staff. Additionally, the TAA Unit partners with Rapid Response to provide an annual roundtable to bring together Business Services teams regarding the coordination of TAA and Rapid Response activities. The TAA Unit offers additional TAA training to any local area non-TAA dedicated staff upon regional request.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA, States should describe their strategies that will support the implementation of youth activities under WIOA. State's must-

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA.¹¹ FURTHER, INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL AREAS IN DETERMINING WHETHER TO CONTRACT FOR SERVICES OR TO PROVIDE SOME OR ALL OF THE PROGRAM ELEMENTS DIRECTLY.

¹¹ Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and local workforce development boards (LWDBs) recognize and adhere to 20 CFR § 681.400 to allow grant recipients/fiscal agents the option to directly provide some, or all, of the required youth workforce investment activities. When not directly providing services, the LWDB will award grants or contracts on a competitive basis to providers of youth workforce activities, while taking into consideration the ability of providers to meet performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Youth program, as described in the WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii). The LWDB must also conduct oversight with respect to such providers.

The State-developed criteria for local boards to consider when procuring youth providers are the following:

- Ability to deliver services to the targeted population in accordance with locally established guidelines;
- Experience in working with youth in similar programs and activities;
- Past and current collaboration with other service providers;
- Past performance record, including both programmatic and fiscal integrity;
- Understanding of and commitment to meeting goals and objectives; and
- Demonstration of understanding of and commitment to continuous improvement methods.

As local boards make decisions about youth provider procurement and to award contracts and grants to providers, they must also:

- Identify youth service providers based on criteria established in the State Plan;
- Take into consideration the ability of the provider to meet performance accountability measures;
- Award such grants or contracts on a competitive basis and in accordance with the Procurement Stands found at Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR parts 200 and 2900; and
- If the service provider (entity) selected fulfills another role in the local area, the LWDB must comply with applicable conflict of interest, separation of duties, and firewalls requirements in relation to WIOA's single entity/multiple role parameters.

LWDBs must identify eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local workforce development area by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis, based on the recommendation of the youth standing committee, if the local board chooses to establish a standing youth committee under 20 CFR Section 681.100; if no such youth committee exists, the LWDB then must assign a committee that function. Where the LWDB elects to award contracts but determines there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, (such as a rural area), the LWDB may award grants or contracts on a sole source basis. The LWDB committee must take into consideration the ability of providers to meet performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Youth program.

Procurement of youth service providers must be in accordance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2900, in addition to applicable State and local procurement laws. Grantees and sub grantees must establish, maintain, and follow written procurement standards and procedures that are in compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

Currently, local areas are able to set their own parameters for procurement of youth services, thus not all areas describe or request specific performance plans related to primary performance indicators in their Request for Proposal. However, some local areas list metrics of

success to ensure providers meet or exceed goals, including pay for performance goals. Awards are then made to organizations possessing the demonstrated ability to perform.

- As determined by U.S. Department of Labor and DWD, performance goals include:
 - Placement in employment, education, or training;
 - Employment, education, or training retention;
 - Median earnings;
 - Credential rate;
 - Attainment of degree or certificate; or
 - Measurable skills gains
 - Valid satisfactory record of past performance in delivering the proposed or similar services, including demonstrated quality of services and successful outcome rates from past programs (including non-WIA/WIOA programming)
 - Ability to provide services that can lead to the achievement of competency standards for customers with identified barriers or deficiencies.

For youth service provision, performance analysis will continue to focus on performance of required WIOA youth service performance and performance as outlined in JAG services.

Youth service provision procurement will adhere to 20 CFR 681.400.

2. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN ACHIEVING EQUITABLE RESULTS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND IN-SCHOOL YOUTH. DESCRIBE PROMISING PRACTICES OR PARTNERSHIP MODELS THAT LOCAL AREAS ARE IMPLEMENTING AND THE STATE'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING AND SCALING THOSE MODELS WITHIN THE STATE FOR BOTH IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.

The purpose of WIOA youth services is to assist youth, (ages 14-21 if in-school youth; ages 16-24 if out-of-school youth), who face significant barriers to education and/or employment by providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and successfully transition to self-sufficient adulthood. This is accomplished by first assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs, and goals, creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant, and expanding the participant's connection to educational opportunities, the local economy, and community services. All youth metrics are linked together, there are no specific metrics for out-of-school youth. All the strategies below are designed to increase participation of and outcome achievement of Indiana's out-of-school youth population.

For out-of-school youth, WIOA services can be the primary connection point for these individuals with both the workforce development and social services systems. By leveraging WIOA Youth services for these Hoosiers, they can attain success in gaining access to occupational opportunities within the local economy.

In addition to broad state efforts, like the use of the Jobs for America's Graduates program as our statewide in-school program, DWD takes an approach emphasizing local partnerships built

around the 14 Youth Program Elements. Some in-school and out-of-school examples are described below.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies:

- Local programs may utilize their own strategies for individual tutoring or study skills training as appropriate and necessary. For example, Indiana's Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology operates the AskRose a homework help hotline for students statewide, a resource which is publicized and may be utilized by local areas
- Additionally, Indiana's Adult Education system serves as the catalyst for academic remediation services and or preparation for the high school equivalency test for most of Indiana's out-of-school youth population.

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services as appropriate:

- Additionally, as previously noted, all local areas partner with their adult education providers, operated by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development for dropout recovery/ high school equivalency classes for youth participants. In local areas where other adult education providers exist, such as Goodwill's Excel Center (a re-engagement center), youth are enrolled, as appropriate.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities:

- Indiana's local areas offer numerous work experiences (including summer employment, job shadowing, internships, and on-the-job training) at local employers for out-of-school youth. These work experiences range in length but are typically short-term and can last up to twelve weeks. Many work experiences include a "boot camp" or employability skills training prior to the start, as well as milestone trainings regarding the jobsite, industry, or individual's onsite performance. All work experiences include some form of academic and occupational education aligned with their placement and/or career pathway.
- As a promising practice, many local areas also provide training to employers and supervisors before and during the onsite work experience. Topics range from understanding youth culture, youth barriers, and activities designed to import strategies to make the experience successful for both parties.

4. Occupational skills training:

- Indiana offers multiple access points for out-of-school youth participants to seek occupational skills training that will result in an industry-recognized credential. These could include a specific training program selected by the youth based on their career interest and aptitude results and/or the State's sponsored short-term, in-demand industry training occupations accessed through Next Level Jobs and AE Integrated Education and Training (IET) program.
- Additionally, the State also includes apprenticeship programs, JobCorps, and YouthBuild in this program element

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities:

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, for youth who are enrolled in a postsecondary education opportunity (including those in credential programs) and may need a short-term work experience or employability skills training, such as those found in the Jobs for America's Graduates program models. This also includes local "boot-camp" programs offered prior to short-term work experience, on-the job training, internships, or Adult Education's IET
- The JAG program specifically identifies thirty-seven core employability skills to align with workforce preparation activities

6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors:

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through local partnerships with colleges and other leadership training programs or providers. Some such examples include the Boys and Girls Club, Junior Achievement, Shafer Leadership Academy, the Indiana National Guard, and more. One such LWDB has provided sub-contracts to the Boys and Girls Club and YMCA in their area to both fulfill this program element, but they are also service providers for other WIOA elements as well

7. Supportive Services:

Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, to assist OSY meet goals developed through the objective assessment, through the following examples of assistance:

- Clothing assistance (potentially used for interviews, work experience, job placement, etc.) which could be in the form of a gift card to purchase work appropriate clothing or through a local partnership with a community-based organization such as Dress for Success,
- Transportation assistance (potentially used to participate in work experience, interviews, education or job placement, etc.), which could be in the form of gift cards for gas or through a local partnership with a community-based ride- share/transportation provider,
- Child and dependent care assistance (WIOA sponsored providers should be connected to CCDF or On-My-Way, when feasible based on available community supports),
- Referrals to medical services such as individual and/or group mental health counseling, or drug/alcohol counseling services when needed; typically created at the local level,
- Assistance with training materials such as books and equipment, which could be in the form of direct support to a bookstore or community college bursars' office, and
- Incentives for completion of participant goals

8. Adult mentoring:

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through connections with partner organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Starfish Initiative, local postsecondary college and university students, or other organizations that specialize in mentoring teens and young adults. DWD works at a statewide level with the Indiana Youth Institute to connect LWDB's with high-quality mentor programs in their area; additional use of IYI's mentoring resources in the form of professional development and program creation are utilized when needed/available

9. Comprehensive guidance and counseling:

- Often, this program element is provided by the on-site youth case manager, especially for career and education counseling.
- However, if a youth, including an out-of-school youth, has a specific need for specialized counseling, local areas refer participants to drug and alcohol treatment facilities, mental health counselors and other organizations when appropriate.
- DWD works in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction's youth focused team to provide training and share resources when available/appropriate for the out-of-school youth population

10. Financial literacy education:

- Local areas have developed partnerships with individual financial institutions and local banks to provide financial literacy training to participants, including out-of-school youth. These include, but are not limited to, InvestEd, Regions Bank, Old National Bank, PNC Bank, and more.
- Local areas also utilize online curriculum and tools to provide digital financial literacy education; examples include materials through EverFi, Allison.com, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and FDIC Youth Guide to Financial Literacy

11. Entrepreneurial skills training:

- Local areas have established partnerships with their Small Business Administrations, Small Business Development Centers, State and local Chambers of Commerce, Ivy Tech's Cook Center for Entrepreneurship, and Junior Achievement as sources of curriculum, guest speakers, and mentors to youth participants, including out-of-school youth.
- Several local service providers have developed curriculum for this program element that focuses on the awareness and understanding of entrepreneurship and the steps to create a detailed business plan.
- For in-school youth, this program element is included in training and a competitive event for JAG students at the regional and State Career Development Conference, where students create a business plan and pitch deck

12. Services that provide labor market and employment information:

- Indiana operates a statewide career interest and work values website, Indiana Career Explorer, which provides all youth, including out-of-school youth, participants access to

labor market information related to career pathways and Indiana specific in-demand occupations that align with their interests.

- Local areas have the ability to provide additional information and resources for this program element as appropriate
13. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training:
- Local areas employ numerous tactics that are regionally specific. They include, but are not limited to, college fairs and visits, Financial Aid application nights, or college bridge programs.
 - Statewide partnerships with organizations such as the Commission for Higher Education and InvestEd help inform youth, their case managers, parents, and mentors understand and navigate the financial aid and State scholarship application processes (such as 21st Century Scholars and Frank O'Bannon Scholarship).
 - The Indianapolis-based YES (Youth Employability Skills) program is a statewide promising practice designed to recruit out-of-school youth through open hours at the Boys and Girls Club; youth are then matched with a REF (re-employment facilitator) to assess career interests, academic and employment goals, and then process through a mind-setting boot camp, with goals focused on student attainment of their high school equivalency diploma and/or entrance into training or employment
14. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation:
- Indiana requires follow-up services for all participants to occur at least once every 90 days after exit. In addition, Jobs for America's Graduates participants are contacted, at minimum once a month after exit, with student-specific goals to track the follow-up contact and services provided during the contact.
 - The types and duration of services provided may vary based on the needs of the individual, but may include leadership development and supportive services; regular contact with a youth's employer including assistance in addressing work-related problems; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career pathway development and further education or training; work-related peer support groups; adult mentoring; or services necessary to ensure success in post-secondary training.

The State's major partner for recruiting out-of-school youth and assisting them in achieving their goals is a partnership with Title II Adult Education programs. In the past two years, youth between the ages of 16-24 make up nearly 33% of the State's Adult Education enrollments, nearly all are drop-outs working on achieving their high school equivalency diploma. This partnership increases participation (enrollment and attendance) in both programs, as well as assisting in educating the out-of-school youth for preparation in career pathways and bridge short-term training programs with direct linkages to post-training employment.

At the State level, an ongoing partnership between Adult Education and youth department leadership has continued since 2014, where staff meet jointly on a bi-monthly basis or as needed, participate in monthly and annual training events, including the monthly Adult Education webinars, and annual Young Adult Services Summit, which provides professional

development opportunities for out-of-school youth case managers. Local WorkOne staff participate in Adult Education program participant onboarding or welcome meetings and vice versa to ensure all participants are aware of the array of services available to them in both programs. Adult Education partners serve on local standing youth committees and the statewide Youth Committee under the Governor's Workforce Cabinet.

In addition to partnership with Title II Adult Education programs, recruiting and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation has been a statewide focus since the implementation of WIOA. This partnership allows out-of-school youth with significant barriers to employment to access funding for both intensive and basic services to assist them in their pursuits. Joint statewide training, local staff meetings, and specific referral forms/personal hand-offs are just some of the strategies VR and the statewide WorkOne system have implemented to ensure out-of-school youth participant access to programming. VR partners serve on local youth standing committees and on the statewide Youth Committee under the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. VR is also a major partner in the provision of in-school youth services through a partnership with our JAG program and their Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS); school-based VR youth counselors refer students with IEP's and 504 Plans to JAG classes as available in their local schools; JAG Specialists then enroll them and provide JAG curriculum and services in alignment with the five (5) Pre-ETS required services.

Additional partnerships with the statewide community college system, foster care system and their service providers, Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Indiana Department of Child Services, Indiana Department of Education, and Indiana Department of Correction assist in helping local areas recruit potentially eligible out-of-school youth or provide them access to education or training funding and resources to assist them in completing goals related to education, training, and employment. State leadership serve on a variety of cross-agency committees and taskforces focused on bridging the gaps between agency programs designed to serve the State's most vulnerable youth populations, including youth in foster care, juvenile offenders, homeless youth, those with mental health issues, and/or economically disadvantaged.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR DELIVERING YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EFFECTIVE WAYS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS CAN MAKE AVAILABLE THE 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2); AND EXPLAIN HOW LOCAL AREAS CAN ENSURE WORK EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, IS PRIORITIZED AS A KEY ELEMENT WITHIN A BROADER CAREER PATHWAYS STRATEGY.

In 2015, Indiana issued an interim WIOA Youth Manual, which was subsequently finalized in 2016 and has been updated every year since implementation. The purpose of this manual is to provide consistent guidance, strategies, promising practices, and documents that can be used by local areas to implement WIOA youth services, both in- and out-of-school. The document includes many of the same strategies included in response to Question (c)(2) above, but also details the process staff should use to recruit, determine eligibility, conduct an objective assessment, and maintain case files for each youth enrollment. Additionally, the DWD has issued policy (DWD Policy 2017-03, Change 2, DWD Policy 2017-10, Change 1, and DWD Policy 2018-

01, Change 2 found at: <https://www.in.gov/dwd/compliance-policy/policy/active/>) surrounding requirements and effective practices for WIOA youth in the following areas:

- Eligibility Determinations, complete with definitions
- Work Experience program element, complete with definitions, guidance on fund expenditures and working with employer partners
- 14 Youth Program Elements, complete with definitions, requirements, and prohibitions; an updated version of this policy was issued in October 2021 to provide clarification on the provision of electronic devices as WIOA Youth Program supportive services and/or as an incentive.

The JAG National model, used as the primary vehicle to serve in-school youth, has multiple guidance and requirement handbooks which are guideposts for Indiana's implementation of this program, many of which were updated in 2021 in collaboration with JAG Indiana leadership serving on numerous workgroups to review and revise national standard operating procedures. All the above guidance and policy documents assist local areas to define and meet expectations of both youth constituents and requirements to ensure the effective implementation of the 14 program elements.

In addition to written guidance, DWD hosts multiple annual professional development events for both in- and out-of-school case managers and administrators to utilize current promising practices and introduce beneficial partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of the 14 program elements. DWD's youth team has a dedicated professional development staff member, providing ongoing training and technical assistance. JAG staff at the State and local levels also participate in numerous national conferences featuring the most current and promising practices in the areas of serving youth, especially those with barriers to education and employment success.

With respect to pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships, State, and local youth staff partner with DWD's Office of Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship to ensure program participants are aware of and have access to numerous work-based learning opportunities in this space, including certified pre-apprenticeship programs. These quality programs, created in direct partnership with local registered apprenticeship programs, offer both career exploration and direct entry opportunities into a strong career pathway.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

DWD Policy 2017-03, Change 2: Youth Eligibility states that "requires additional assistance to enter or complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment" for in- or out-of-school youth must be locally defined and does not include specific language for these definitions. WIOA allows States and/or local areas to define the requiring additional assistance

criterion that is part of the Out-of-School Youth and In-School Youth eligibility. It clarifies that if this criterion is not defined at the State level and a local area uses this criterion in their Out-of-School Youth or In-School Youth eligibility, the local area must define this criterion in their local plan. Additionally, DWD and GWC will be issuing Local Planning guidance, which will include assurance from each local area (either within Local Plans or local policy) that these criteria are addressed. Review of local plans and regular monitoring and oversight of policies and procedures will also support compliance with this element.

Some examples of local definitions are below:

Region 5 Examples:

- In-school Youth
 - A Youth living in a household where a parent is incarcerated, has a criminal record, or has no high school education; or
 - A Youth has experienced recent traumatic events, is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment, or suffers from serious emotional or medical problems; or
 - A Youth who is in a household where a parent or spouse has been terminated or laid off in the past 6 months; or
 - A Youth who has been referred to or treated by an agency for substance abuse/psychological problems; or
 - A Youth who is an expectant father; or
 - A Youth who has experienced the loss of a primary caregiver (parent or guardian) due to debilitating health issues, death, or military service; or
 - A Youth who lacks transportation to school or work and/or does not have access to technology; or
 - A Youth who is at risk of dropping out of high school due to failing a core subject/behind in credits/poor attendance/not passing proficiency exam or has had an out of school suspension or expulsion from school.
- Out-of-school Youth
 - A Youth who is unemployed and has been unable to obtain employment within the six weeks prior to program application; or is underemployed defined as part-time (less than 30 hours a week) and/or minimum wage; or
 - A Youth who has never worked or who has never held a full-time job (30+ hours a week) for more than 13 consecutive weeks; or
 - A Youth who has neither the work experience nor the credential required for an occupation in demand for which training is necessary and will be provided; or
 - A Youth who has dropped out of a post-secondary educational program during the last twelve calendar months prior to program application; or

- A Youth who has been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to program application; or
- A Youth living in a household where a parent is incarcerated, or has a criminal record or has no high school education; or
- A Youth has experienced recent traumatic events, is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment, or suffers from serious emotional or medical problems; or
- A Youth who is in a household where a parent or spouse has been terminated or laid off in the past 6 months; or
- A Youth who has been referred to or treated by an agency for substance abuse/psychological problems; or
- A Youth who is an expectant father; or
- A Youth who has experienced the loss of a primary caregiver (parent or guardian) due to debilitating health issues, death, or military service; or
- A Youth who lacks transportation to school or work and/or does not have access to technology.

Region 7 Examples:

- In-school and out-of-school Youth
 - Limited or no work experience;
 - One or more parents have been incarcerated in the last twelve months;
 - One or more parents dropped out of school;
 - Mother or father is not employed;
 - No one in the household is currently employed;
 - Lacks transportation to and from work or school; or
 - Lacks marketable skills that are in demand in the local labor market.

Region 8 Examples:

An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. Additional assistance is defined in Regional Policy 06-002 Eligibility as **one or more** of the following:

- Currently receives free lunch.
- Poor work history- having NOT worked full-time (32 hours per week or more) in unsubsidized employment for the same employer for 13 consecutive weeks in the past 12 calendar months. This information is collected on the enrollment application under the section "Limited Work History/Experience." This can be verified using the signed application along with a detailed case note.

- Unemployed or underemployed- the individual is not earning a self-sufficient wage (Earning \$18.00 per hour and working less than 35 hours per week or an equivalent income).
- Not receiving regular child support- the youth resides in a household where the non-custodial parent has not paid child support on a timely basis as established by the support order.

Region 9 Examples:

- In-school Youth
 - Has poor attendance patterns in an educational program during the last 12 calendar months; or
 - Has been expelled from school within the last 12 calendar months; or
 - Has been suspended from school at least within the last 12 calendar months; or
 - Has below average grades; or a GPA at or below 2.5; or
 - A member of a household with a parent/guardian that has a criminal record; or
 - Living in a household where a parent has no High School Diploma or its equivalent; or Has poor work history, to include no work history, or has been fired from a job in the last 6 calendar months.
- Out-of-school Youth
 - Has dropped out of a post-secondary educational program during the past 12 calendar months; or
 - Has poor work history, no work history, or has been fired from a job in the last 6 calendar months; or
 - A member of a household with a parent/guardian that has a criminal record; or
 - Living in a household where a parent has no High School Diploma or its equivalent; or
 - Has poor work history, no work history, or has been fired from a job in the last 6 calendar months.
 - Not receiving regular child support-youth resides in a household where the non-custodial parent has not paid child support on a timely basis as established by the support holder.

Region 11 Examples:

- A minor child currently residing in a household in which one or both legal parents are not currently residing. Documented by self-attestation.
- Any child who does not have at least one parent who holds a post-secondary degree. Documented by self-attestation.

- Any child who receives free or reduced lunches. Documented by letter from customer's school corporation.
- Any youth who has received or currently receives treatment for substance abuse, or currently resides in the household with a parent or legal guardian who has a documented history of substance abuse. Documented by verification from treatment/recovery program or police/court papers.
- Any child who lives or currently resides in a domestic violence household. Documented by certified counselor, social worker, school social worker or authorized employee of a domestic violence program or other reputable institution such as the customer's school or religious organization.
- Any child who has a parent who is considered an offender. Documented by probation, parole office, police records, or authorized employee of an offender recovery program.
- Any child currently participating in special education services or has participated in special education while in school. Documented by papers from school system, vocational rehabilitation, or authorized rehabilitation /educational agency.
- Any child receiving SNAP (Food Stamps) or TANF. Documented by Department of Family and Children.
- Child in the household of the custodial parent is not receiving regular child support. This information should be documented by court records, records, from the local prosecutor's office, records from FSSA (Family Social Services Administration) or a related entity.
- Youth involved with the juvenile justice system. This information should be documented with court records, statement from the probation officer, or documentation from another juvenile justice agency.
- Youth who declares a mental or physical disability. This information must be verified by school records, a physician's statement, a statement from a mental health provider or another qualified referring agency such as Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Youth who has aged out of foster care. This information must be verified by records from the Division of Child Services.
- Youth who do not have a driver's license, or does not access to a vehicle, or relies on public transportation, or no family support to provide transportation.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)
3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)
4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.
5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.
6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.
7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.
8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;
2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;
3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;
4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:
 - A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
 - B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
 - C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;

- D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
- E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.
- 5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND
- 6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:
 - A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
 - B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
 - C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
 - D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
 - E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.
- 7. THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE REGARDING THE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES OBSERVED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING WAIVER, IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.



STATE OF INDIANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State House, Second Floor
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

March 4, 2024

The Honorable Julie A. Su
Acting Secretary of Labor
United States Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Acting Secretary Su,

Indiana is building momentum and realizing success in advancing workforce development, much in part to the previously granted waiver requests from the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

I write today to respectfully ask that Indiana be granted continued authority to waive select requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) – specifically related to the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) membership and the Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds for Out-of-School Youth.

The requirements and corresponding previously granted waivers are as follows:

1. The WIOA requirement outlining the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) Membership at WIOA Sec. 101(b)(1) and (c) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 679.110(b)-(c).

Since 2018, ETA has granted approval for the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to serve as the State Workforce Development Board. This continued designation is critical, and even more so as Indiana embraces the major federal infrastructure projects and emerging industries that present an unprecedented opportunity to create additional good jobs and assist more Hoosiers that may face barriers to enter (or reenter) the workforce.

The unique structure of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet has been instrumental in convening a purposeful yet diverse group of leaders from workforce development, education and economic development with employers, postsecondary training institutions and local workforce boards – all working together on a cohesive strategy to tackle Indiana's workforce challenges.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet group takes a "cradle-to-career" approach to workforce development and is successfully:

- Aligning state, federal and local workforce and education programs, funds and emerging opportunities to better serve Hoosiers, reduce barriers and provide employment opportunities to those that have been traditionally excluded from the workforce;
- Achieving progress against the quantifiable goals set in 2022, as well as making strides in influencing legislative policy and programs; and
- Strengthening the relationship with, and performance of, the local workforce board system to ensure employers have access to a skilled and diverse workforce and Hoosiers have access to good jobs with sustainable wages without barriers.

Having the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, which has been designated with the leadership and authority to direct state agencies, serve as the State Workforce Development Board naturally makes workforce development one of Indiana's highest priorities.

The SWDB membership requirement would constrain Indiana's flexibility to continue aligning our State and federal workforce systems pursuant to the 2024-2027 Unified State WIOA Plan accompanying this waiver request. I kindly ask for continued support in utilizing the currently approved Cabinet structure promulgated under Senate Enrolled Act 50-2018, Indiana Code 4-3-27.

2. The WIOA requirement specifying that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on Out-of-School Youth under WIOA Section 129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410.

ETA previously determined that this requirement impeded the ability of Indiana to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. The previously granted waiver provided Indiana with the authority to lower the target rate for Governor's reserve and local Youth funds to 50 percent.

The WIOA Youth fund formula would impede the continued progress in effectuating the current state strategic plan and the plan modifications and updates accompanying this waiver request. I kindly ask for continued support in implementing our innovative state-focused approach in allocating youth funds with strategic intentionality.

The attached requests further outline the previously granted waiver authority described above. If you have questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Whitney Ertel, Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and a member of my staff, at wertel1@gov.in.gov. We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to a positive response.

Sincerely,



Eric J. Holcomb
Governor, State of Indiana

Cc: Brent Parton, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor

Julie Baker, Indiana Federal Project Officer,
U.S. Department of Labor

Whitney Ertel, Executive Director,
Governor's Workforce Cabinet & Office of Governor Eric J. Holcomb

GWC Waiver

1. Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan.

For PY 24-25, The State of Indiana is requesting a waiver from Section 101(b)(1) and (c) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 679.110(b)-(c), which requires how the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) is to be structured.

The State of Indiana requests that the waiver for the membership of the Indiana Governor's Workforce Cabinet (i.e., SWDB), be granted for a two-year period. This waiver will grant Indiana the flexibility to continue to the alignment of our State and Federal workforce systems. Since 2018, Indiana has been granted this waiver which has allowed the State to achieve greater connectivity among workforce partners, thus creating coordinated strategies among required WIOA partners and non-required partners.

The State of Indiana recognizes that the membership of the SWDB must meet the requirements of WIOA sec 101(b) and must represent diverse geographic areas of the State, however the structure of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet has positioned Indiana competitively to attract good jobs and serve as a workforce leader in the Midwest. It is through the current structure of the SWDB that Indiana was able to successfully be awarded the designation of a tech hub and hydrogen hub, in alignment with federal workforce investments relative to the CHIPS and Science Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and more. Members of the SWDB are strongly positioned to strategize, leverage resources, and deliver coordinated workforce solutions to Hoosier individuals and employers across the State. The 2024-2027 Unified State WIOA Plan includes goals and strategies that will make good on our promise to spearhead workforce investments and initiatives in the Midwest and nationally.

At the local level, this waiver for the Cabinet structure allows us to set a common vision, strategy, and implementation plan with local workforce development boards, empowering them to act upon these elements in their local workforce development area.

2. Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers.

There are no State or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

The Indiana General Assembly passed, and Governor Holcomb signed Senate Enrolled Act 50 in 2018, Indiana Code 4-3-27. The bill created the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to comply with the federal requirements for a SWDB under the Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA):

Sec. 4. (a) The cabinet shall serve as the state advisory body required under the following federal laws:

(1) The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 under 29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., including reauthorizations of WIOA.

(2) The Wagner-Peyser Act under 29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.

(3) The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act under 20 U.S.C. 9201 et seq.

(b) In addition, the cabinet may be designated to serve as the state advisory body required under any of the following federal laws upon approval of the particular state agency directed to administer the particular federal law:

(1) The National and Community Service Act of 1990 under 42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.

(2) Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act under 42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.

(3) The employment and training programs established under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 under 7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.

The membership of the GWC consists of 34 total members, of which 29 members have voting privileges. Members represent different geographic areas of the state, and include business and community leaders, K-12 and Career and Technical Education representatives, appointees from postsecondary institutions, Indiana lawmakers and experts from state agencies. This unique structure allows for a comprehensive view of workforce from early childhood, K-12, post-secondary, and adult education to the world of work.

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE CABINET MEMBER ROSTER & ROLES

1. A chairperson appointed by the Governor. *(Ryan Kitchell)*
2. The secretary of career connections and talent, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Vacant; this agency/role no longer exists.)*
3. The commissioner of the department of workforce development. *(Richard Paulk, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Workforce Development)*
4. The secretary of commerce or the secretary of commerce's designee, serving as a nonvoting member *(David Rosenburg, Secretary, Indiana Economic Development Corporation)*
5. The commissioner of the Indiana commission for higher education. *(Chris Lowery, Commissioner, Indiana Commission for Higher Education)*
6. The secretary of education *(Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education)*
7. The president of Ivy Tech Community College *(Dr. Sue Ellspermann, President, Ivy Tech Community College)*
8. The president of Vincennes University *(Dr. Chuck Johnson, President, Vincennes University)*
9. One (1) member representing a research university appointed by the governor *(Todd Richardson, Chief HR Officer and VP Human Resources, Indiana University)*
10. One (1) member representing a comprehensive university or an independent college, appointed by the governor. *(Rob Coons, President, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology)*
11. A member appointed by the governor who is an apprenticeship coordinator of a joint labor-management apprenticeship program approved by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Apprenticeship. *(Mark Kara, Assistant to the Coordinator for Local 150 Operating Engineers)*
12. A member representing high school career and technical education educators or directors appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education Districts. *(Dr. Steve Rogers, Director, Walker Career Center)*

13. Either:

- a. A member representing manufacturing appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Manufacturers Association; or *(Dan Peterson, Vice President of Industry and Government Affairs, Cook Group Incorporated)*
- b. An employee of the Indiana Manufacturers Association appointed by the governor

14. A member representing a minority business enterprise appointed by the governor. *(Amish Shah, CEO, Kem Krest)*

15. A member representing a women's business enterprise appointed by the governor. *(Jaqueline Barton, President and Founder, Specialized Staffing Solutions)*

16. A member representing a veteran owned business appointed by the governor. *(Tony Vespa, Founder, Vespa Group)*

17. A member representing the nonunion and construction trades appointed by the governor in consultation with the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., and the Indiana Builders Association. *(Steve Schreckengast, President and Co-Founder, Citation Homes, Inc.)*

18. Either:

- a. A business owner appointed by the governor in consultation with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. *(Micah Vincent, Chief Operating Officer of Heritage Growth, The Heritage Group)*
- b. An employee of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce appointed by the governor

19. A small business owner appointed by the governor in consultation with the National Federation of Independent Businesses. *(Loren King, President/CEO, Trinitas)*

20. A member of a community-based organization appointed by the governor. *(Fred Payne, President and CEO, United Way of Central Indiana)*

21. Three (3) at-large business owners appointed by the governor, one (1) of whom is a business owner who employs less than fifty (50) employees. One (1) member appointed under this subsection shall be from an organization representing technology.

- *(Rebecca Schroeder, President of Whiteshire Hamroc)*
- *(Megan Glover, CEO of 120WaterAudit)*
- *(Chris LaMothe, Ascendanci Ventures)*

22. A school principal, appointed by the governor *(Jody French, Principal, Perry Central Jr./Sr. High School)*

23. A school superintendent, appointed by the governor *(Paul Ketcham, Superintendent, Batesville Community School Corporation)*

24. The commissioner of the department of correction, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Christina Reagle, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Corrections)*

25. The secretary of family and social services, serving as a nonvoting member. *(Dr. Dan Rusyniak, Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration)*
26. A member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives who serves as a nonvoting member. *(Representative Bob Behning, House Education Chair)*
27. A member of the senate appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate who serves as a nonvoting member. *(Senator Jeff Raatz, Senate Education and Career Development Chair)*
28. Any additional members designated and appointed by the governor.
 - *(Joyce Irwin, President, Community Health Network Foundation)*
 - *(Becca McCuaig, Legal Counsel for Accelerate Indiana Municipalities, a statewide non-partisan advocacy organization for Indiana municipalities)*
 - *(Dave Shane, Lilly Endowment Inc. Board Member, former CEO of Lacy Diversified Industries)*
 - *(David Adams, Principal, Adams Advisors LLC)*
 - *(For Adult Education – Marilyn Pitzulo, Associate Chief of Workforce Strategy and Design – Indiana Department of Workforce Development)*
 - *(For Vocational Rehabilitation – Theresa Koleszar, Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration)*

3. Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted.

The goal of the waiver is to allow flexibility in the membership requirements of the SWDB under WIOA Sec. 101(b)(1) and (c). WIOA highlights the importance of states working to address the skills gap and align resources. The U.S. Department of Labor has specifically said reducing barriers to allow state innovation and efficiency is always important to the Department's mission of a skilled workforce. The size and membership requirements create barriers to that efficiency.

Under the Cabinet's current SWDB structure, membership includes lead state officials with responsibility for WIOA Title I and Wagner Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other core program partners, elected officials, and representatives from the state's economic development agency and institutions of higher education.

In addition, the SWDB membership also includes representatives from the K-12 education system, Indiana philanthropic organizations, minority businesses, industry associations, and more. A direct correlation can be made to how the SWDB is structured and comprised and Indiana's success in aligning state workforce systems to federal workforce initiatives and programs like the CHIPS and Science Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and more.

Should the waiver be granted, the SWDB will be able to expand upon recent designations, such as the Silicon Crossroads Microelectronics Commons Hub, Heartland BioWorks Tech Hub, and

the Midwest Hydrogen Hub, to ensure education, workforce, and economic development partners are aligned and equipped with the tools to successfully implement the envisioned outcomes of these programs.

4. Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

A. Supporting employer engagement

B. Connecting education and training strategies

C. Supporting work-based learning

D. Improving job and career results

E. Other guidance issued by the Department

The composition of the Cabinet provides an opportunity to hear from and provide solutions to employers in Indiana's key sectors. Regularly scheduled Cabinet meetings, which occur in-person across the State, provide the opportunity for local employers and elected officials to participate, in addition to sharing their workforce challenges, concerns, and ideas to members of the Cabinet. Unique representation of K-12 leaders from the State's public education system help align State workforce and education goals (e.g., graduation rates, increased work-based learning enrollment, postsecondary education and training, etc.) to current and future employer needs.

The composition of the Cabinet also provides stronger coordination for increased work-based learning opportunities. As detailed in this plan, the Indiana Legislature allocated funding to support students enrolled in work-based learning programs, including funds to overcome barriers to entry. Legislative action was a culmination of recommendations shaped by GWC board members, including industry, education, workforce, and philanthropic partners.

Future outcomes will continue to develop through implementation of the strategies outlined in the State Plan.

5. Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Individuals who will most benefit from this waiver include (1) Hoosier jobseekers who are sidelined from entering the workforce due to barriers (e.g., transportation, childcare, etc.), (2) employers seeking skilled talent for existing industries and employers seeking talent for emerging sectors (e.g., semiconductor manufacturing, electric vehicle battery manufacturing, biolife sciences, clean energy, etc.), and (3) WIOA targeted populations (e.g., individuals with disabilities, youth, veterans, military spouses, farmworkers, and Native Americans among others).

The GWC membership composition includes representatives that most directly serve these populations. By having their voice at the table, the Cabinet is able to identify and apply resources to support individuals-served, monitor success (or challenges) of state workforce strategies and adapt as necessary, and elevate best practices that can be scaled statewide to support state and federal workforce initiatives.

Additionally, local workforce development boards will continue to benefit from increased connectivity of State government (e.g., workforce development, education, economic development, Governor's Office, etc.).

6. Describes the processes used to:

A. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver

B. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver

C. Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request

D. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver

E. Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report

One of the functions of the Cabinet is to review, monitor, and recommend changes to the state's workforce system. As such, there will continually be an eye toward how Hoosiers are impacted by the policy decisions of the Cabinet and the programs implemented at both a State and local level. Outcomes that result from aligning these systems will be included in the State's annual WIOA report.

Public Comment. This waiver request was available for public comment concurrently with Indiana's Draft Unified State Plan prior to submission to USDOL/ETA for consideration. The waiver request was shared with several stakeholders, including each of Indiana's twelve local workforce development areas. The waiver request was highlighted on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and DWD websites. A copy of this waiver request is also maintained at DWD's central office for inspection upon request.

7. The most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

The Cabinet prides itself on the direct results and outcomes observed through the implementation of the existing waiver. Results and outcomes are produced in terms of workforce system improvements and achievements.

During the waiver modification review in 2022, quantifiable goals were established. (The following items will be updated with 2023 data during Q2-Q3 2024.)

1. Increase Indiana's educational attainment rate with a specific goal of having 60% of Hoosiers with a quality credential beyond high school by 2025. Consistent with its Perkins submission, Indiana will target an 8% increase in credential attainment over the waiver period.

Indiana set a goal to develop pathways towards higher education attainment rates post-high school for 60% of Hoosiers aged 25-64 by 2025. Since 2019, progress towards that goal has increased from 48.3% to 54%. Dating back to 2009, Indiana has increased by 21 percentage points.[1] The majority of the 2019-2021 increase is attributed to certificates and certifications—a 3.4% increase. In program year 2021, over 10,000 noncredit bearing and credit bearing credentials were awarded through the Workforce Ready Grant (WRG). In total, over 38,000 completions have been awarded since the programs' inception. In 2023, biennial funding for WRG was tripled to \$24 while funding for ETG was sustained, totaling a combined \$58M. In addition to short term credential attainment and targeted focus through the WRG, credential attainment within K-12, CTE and Postsecondary Education received administrative and legislative support to further develop K-12 graduation pathways, bolster adult education training, and incentivize post-secondary graduate in-state retention during the 2023 legislative session. Perkins credential attainment metrics remained flat with 20% of concentrators receiving a credential through career technical education.

2. Expand work-based learning opportunities for both youth and adult populations. Indiana will target a 6% increase in work-based learning participation over the waiver period.

During the waiver period, Indiana saw a decrease in the number of active apprenticeships, declining from 18,504 active apprenticeships at year end 2021 to 17,185 in 2022; however, new apprenticeships rose from 7,137 to 7,402 over the same period. Registered apprenticeship programs also declined from 1,173 to 900 and new program counts dropped from 66 to 58. Despite a slight year over year decrease, Indiana maintains the highest labor force to apprenticeship ratio nationally at .51%. Outside of federally recognized apprenticeships, Indiana saw increased participation in Perkins Work Based Learning Participation rising from 13% of concentrators in year ending 2021 to 18% of concentrators in year ending 2022. To improve K-12 employment and post-secondary pathway development, HEA 1002 established additional infrastructure to support work-based learning through Career Scholarship Accounts which will provide up to \$5,000 per student in allowable expense reimbursement to the employer to help remove student barriers for entering the workplace. In addition, HEA 1002 will increase connections to student to employer building career coaching intermediary capacity within high schools. The Employer Training Grant, an on-the-job training grant program which was distributed through regional workforce development boards, during PY21 and PY22 served nearly 900 employers with 5,700 individuals receiving on the job training support. Within Adult Education 5,000 individuals received assistance through the Workforce Education Initiative (WEI). WEI enrollment increased by 47% year over year.

3. Increase employer engagement with a focus on engagement with minority-, women- and veteran-owned businesses. Indiana will target a 10% increase in employer engagement over the waiver period.

From 2021 to 2022, Indiana increased employer engagement with a 9% increase in total businesses served. Over this timeframe, work-based learning assistance increased by 50%, engagement in strategic planning and economic development increased by 40%, and assistance to access untapped labor pools also increased by 40%. Women, minority, and veteran-owned business engagement increased by 6% in number of businesses served.

IN ADDITION TO QUANTIFIABLE GOALS:

In addition to the quantifiable metrics, the composition of the Cabinet has played a critical role in setting workforce strategy and direction for Indiana which is aligning with the ETA Vision 2030. In 2022, Cabinet members worked to set focus and develop solutions through a set of Recommendations that were developed for the Governor and members of the Indiana General Assembly, ahead of the 2023 legislative session. Some of the GWC Recommendations required policy and legislative action while other solutions could be realized through administrative changes and budget allocation. These Recommendations were solutions-focused, actionable and timely and most of all, realistic based on the input and experience from the variety of Cabinet members at the table – all with a vested interest as a contributing member of the Cabinet/SWDB. The Recommendations were well received, and now form the basis for Indiana’s 2024-2027 Unified State WIOA Plan. This framework, developed by Cabinet members, will also serve as the framework for the local workforce plans.

The three pillars with some examples are listed below. There is now even greater alignment with this structure and Indiana’s 2024-2027 Unified WIOA state plan submission, due in part to the contributions, experience, foresight and variety of Cabinet/SWDB members.

1. Helping Employers Find Skilled Workers

- Accelerate Digital Development in Indiana
- Develop a Career Navigation Network
- Prepare Workers with Digital Skills Training
- Incentivize College Graduation Rates for Key Degrees
- Bolster STEM Development via IU/Purdue Realignment
- Define Work-Based Learning and Build a Work-Based Learning Student-Employer Connector Model
- Scale Indiana’s Next Level Programs of Study

2. Removing Barriers for Workers

- Provide Monetary Support to Remove Student Barriers
- Expand Transportation Options for Working Youth

- Increase Access to Early Learning Services
- Increase Adult Education Funding and Launch
- Increase Employers Offering On-Site Education and Training
- Simplify and Automate the Expungement Process
- Auto-Enroll Financially Eligible Students in 21st Century Scholars
- Require High School Students to File the FAFSA
- Restore Frank O'Bannon Grant (state-level grant) Funding to Pre-Recession Levels

3. **Prepare Future Skilled Workers**

- Rethink High School by Increasing Diploma Flexibility
- Increase Access to Credentials of Value
- Incentivize Completion of Credentials of Value in High School
- Increase Access to High-Quality STEM Curriculum and Opportunities
- Strengthen the Educator Pipeline in STEM-Related Subjects
- Focus Early Childhood Education Programs on Educational Results
- Increase Kindergarten Readiness by Establishing a Dolly Parton Library of Indiana
- Ensure Students Can Read by the End of Third Grade
- Award "Second Year" of College to High School Dual Credit/Certificate Completers
- Ensure a Stackable Credential Attainment System

We will be revisiting our quantifiable metrics and adding additional tracking measures as we continue to more closely align Indiana's workforce and education efforts.

[1] <https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/#/progress/state/IN>

Youth Waiver

1. Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan.

For PY 24-25, The State of Indiana is requesting a waiver from Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410, which require not less than 75 percent of funds allotted to states under Section 127(b)(1)(c), reserved under Section 128(a), and available for statewide activities under subsection (b), and not less than 75 percent of funds available to local areas under subsection (c), shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for OSY.

Indiana is requesting an extension of the following waiver to this statutory and regulatory provision:

- A waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of funding on the OSY population. Indiana is requesting that this percentage be lowered to 50 percent.
- A waiver of the requirement that local funding meets the 75 percent minimum expenditure requirement. Indiana requests that this percentage be lowered to 50 percent to align with the statewide target (see 1 above).
- A waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of statewide activities funding on the OSY population. It is requested to reduce this percentage to 50 percent to allow flexibility of funding special projects that meet the vision and mission of the State.

Because JAG Indiana serves students with significant barriers to graduation, approval of this waiver will allow Indiana to continue to invest in at-risk youth before they drop out of high school. When entering the program, approximately 40% of JAG Indiana students have low academic performance or are basic skills deficient.

JAG Indiana serves more than 4,000 in-school youth who are at-risk for dropping out of high school in 125 school-based programs. JAG Indiana has proven outcomes with students graduating at a rate of over 95% for the Class of 2022, which remains higher than the average State graduation rate of 86.6% for all students and 83% of those who receive Free/Reduced price meals. JAG Indiana and WIOA performance goals are aligned to achieve positive outcomes with a focus on attainment of a credential and placement in higher education or training, employment, or military service.

School administrators and counselors refer students to the JAG Indiana programs because of the successful model and associated outcomes. This vulnerable population receives daily counseling and support by "Specialists" while delivering competency-based curriculum. Central to the JAG model is a focus on serving the most disadvantaged youth in communities most in need across Indiana. There is an inherent focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion in our programming both in JAG and WIOA youth services, as enrollments across in-school and out-of-school youth lean into minority populations across multiple intersectionality, including, but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, and disability status. Access to high quality programming, like JAG, for these students is of the utmost importance to their sense of belonging and identity which fuels their success in school, as showcased in overall programmatic outcomes shown below:

Programmatic Outcomes	2022	National Goal
Graduation Rate	95%	90%
Entered Employment	73%	60%
Full-time Employment	83%	60%
Full-time Positive Outcomes	83%	75%
Post-Secondary Outcomes	40%	35%

Specific goals of the PY24-25 waiver request are to increase flexibility of WIOA statewide activities and formula funding to support:

- The implementation of evidence-based programs and strategies;

- Progress toward closing the economic inequity gap;
- Placing more Hoosier youth on the path to high-wage skills; and
- Increase college readiness.

All four of the above strategies can be met by continuing to serve and/or increase the number of high school youth served through the JAG Indiana dropout prevention program. This allows us to be proactive about addressing the out-of-school youth problem, while simultaneously increasing the number of youth who enter the workforce and/or post- secondary education with the skills to succeed in either goal.

2. Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers.

Since the inception of WIOA, Indiana has requested and been approved for waivers from U.S. Department of Labor to support flexibility in serving in-school youth through the JAG program.

3. Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted.

As previously noted, Indiana's high school graduation rate has stagnated at less than 90% for years. While Indiana school counselors are over-burdened with increasing caseloads of students, averaging 532:1 (more than twice the recommended caseload), and growing administrative responsibilities, the State of Indiana is requesting increased flexibility of WIOA statewide activities funding to implement a statewide program focused on providing a comprehensive set of services designed to keep In-School Youth (ISY) attached to the education system to improve their rate of success in achieving educational and career goals. The DWD has identified the Jobs for America's Graduates program to be this solution in schools where it is most needed, given its previously described history of success and linkages to employers and community resources that will best benefit the students it serves.

Following the JAG National performance outcome requirements, DWD and the JAG Indiana program, pledge to strive to meet the following requirements:

JAG National Follow-up Goals	Multi-Year	Alternative Education
Graduation or HSE	90%	75%
Employment	60%	50%
FT Employment (30 hrs./week)	60%	50%
Total Full-Time Positive Outcomes (Employment, Education, Military)	75%	60%
Further Education Rate	35%	30%
Connectivity Rate	93%	93%

As previously shown, DWD has met or exceeded these metrics for over 7 years in a row, with one exception to the Further Education Rate for the Class of 2020, which aligned with national trends due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As evidenced by the chart below (showcasing PY22 data), Indiana's waiver has allowed the state to enroll larger populations of in-school youth, whose participation in dropout prevention programming has led to positive outcomes contributing to the overall strong WIOA youth performance metrics:

ISY	NUM	DEN	%
Q2ER	757	925	81.8%
Q4ER	711	826	86.1%
MED			\$4053.84
CRED	660	826	79.9%
MSG	1203	1437	83.7%

As compared to out-of-school metrics, which although demonstrating strong performance, programming for in-school youth clearly buoy Indiana's overall youth outcomes:

OSY	NUM	DEN	%
Q2ER	886	1115	79.5%
Q4ER	874	1074	81.4%
MED			\$5200.00
CRED	404	653	61.9%
MSG	620	1042	59.5%

Additionally, as noted in the numerator/denominator values, there are overall more out-of-school youth participants exiting to successful employment opportunities. PY23 data to-date shows Indiana is currently tracking to exceed prior year performance in median earnings and credential attainment, but are focused on overall WIOA youth negotiated rates as follows:

- Employment Q2: 78.4%
- Employment Q4: 78.6%
- Median Earnings: \$3341.00
- Credential Rate: 65%
- Measurable Skills Gain: 65%

4. Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

A. Supporting employer engagement

B. Connecting education and training strategies

C. Supporting work-based learning

D. Improving job and career results

E. Other guidance issued by the Department

This waiver request aligns with the above U.S. Department of Labor policy priorities in numerous ways as noted below:

- Use of the waiver and its focus on JAG in Indiana allows our strong network of over 500 unique employers to connect with in-school youth for employer tours, pathway planning, work experience and internships and myriad other ways that support a strong connection between employer and student;
- Existing strong partnerships with our statewide community college system through Ivy Tech Community College and other education and training partners will continue to grow with use of the approved waiver, encouraging more students to meet the State's goal of 60% attainment of high-quality credentials by 2030;
- Indiana's in-school youth programs focus on supporting work-based learning, skills development, and work readiness while promoting training strategies that lead to credential attainment and closing the skills gap with goals of over 75% credential attainment; and
- Connection between WIOA in-school youth programming and local high schools ensure students meet the rigorous demands of the Indiana Department of Education Graduation Pathways requirements focused on diploma attainment, demonstration of in-demand employability skills and post-secondary readiness.

5. Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Currently, JAG Indiana utilizes a limited amount of WIOA funds to operate its in-school model. With WIOA funds continuing to decline and if Indiana is limited to 25% of WIOA youth funding to serve only in-school youth, DWD would be forced to close over 25 JAG Indiana programs across the State, potentially removing nearly 1,000 students from the dropout prevention program and negatively impacting local communities statewide.

This waiver will ultimately impact Indiana's at-risk young adult population. WorkOne Centers (Indiana's term for American Job Center) and subcontracted service provider staff, workforce development partners, employers, parents, and school counselors will also benefit from the waiver.

Students enrolled in the JAG program face numerous barriers to success (average of 8 barriers/student). Below is snapshot of the ten (10) most common barriers among our at-risk population:

- Low academic performance (an average grade of C or GPA of 2.0 or below)
- A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials (10 or more absences)
- Low self-esteem

- Not connected to any extracurricular activities, community orgs, or teams/clubs
- Economically disadvantaged as defined by public assistance, TANF, or free lunch
- Has a fear of speaking in public, is shy, or would like to develop healthy social skills
- Needs transportation to and from work or school
- Lacks motivation or maturity to pursue education or career goals
- Having inadequate or no work experience
- Lacks marketable occupational skills that are in demand in the local labor market

6. Describes the processes used to:

A. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver

B. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver

C. Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request

D. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver

E. Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report

Monitoring Progress and collecting/reporting information. WIOA programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how local waivers are being utilized to ensure programmatic goals and outcomes are being met. The regional Youth Directors and State staff dedicated to the administration of the WIOA Youth program will continually examine the effectiveness of waivers throughout the PY, including monthly fiscal reviews and bi-annual desk reviews. This strategy ensures that the objectives described above, as well as those outlined in the existing State and local WIOA plans, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA, and federal and State regulations.

Since 2006, the State has utilized an electronic case management system for all federal and State eligibility-based workforce investment programs. This system, Indiana Career Connect, is configured to support the full integration of programs, eligibility determination, service recording and tracking, and performance tracking for WIOA, TAA, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Employment and Training Programs, and Reemployment Programs, as well as for local programs throughout the State, regardless of funding source. Indiana Career Connect has been designed to record service delivery information on every client service while providing transaction records necessary to document program performance. This crossmatch of data allows DWD and Workforce Development Boards to effectively determine such outcomes as credential attainment, employment status and participant earnings in a more rapid timeframe than other mechanisms. DWD will monitor the progress of the waiver implementation through analysis of local performance results as well as through ongoing oversight and exchanges with local area management and staff.

Local Boards and Public Comment. This waiver request was available for public comment concurrently with Indiana’s Draft Unified State Plan prior to submission to USDOL/ETA for consideration. The waiver request was shared with several stakeholders, including each of Indiana’s twelve local workforce development areas. The waiver request was highlighted on the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) and DWD websites. A copy of this waiver request is also maintained at DWD’s central office for inspection upon request.

7. The most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

Results and Outcomes data is woven throughout the information listed in Sections 1 – 6 of this waiver request.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program’s Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.9%	79.0	78.9%	79.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.5%	79.5	77.5%	79.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$7,030	\$7,700	\$7,030	\$7,700
Credential Attainment Rate	69.0%	72.8	69.0%	72.8

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Measurable Skill Gains	62.5%	66.2	62.5%	66.2
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

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The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each

of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	76.4	75.0%	76.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.6%	76.0	75.6%	76.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,219	\$8,219	\$8,219	\$8,219
Credential Attainment Rate	72.0%	73.6	72.0%	73.6
Measurable Skill Gains	62.5%	67.0	62.5%	67.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as

“baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.5%	80.0	78.5%	80.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	79.5%	82.1	79.5%	82.1
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3,391	\$4,300	\$3,391	\$4,300
Credential Attainment Rate	66.5%	68.0	66.5%	68.0
Measurable Skill Gains	66.5%	69.0	66.5%	69.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

NOTE: The contents of this section are based upon current practices and requirements found in 20 CFR 653.108 and 20 CFR 653.101 prior to issuance of the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Final Rule, which became effective January 23, 2024. DWD is currently evaluating the merit-staffing revisions for Employment Services staff and how it may impact Wagner-Peyser service delivery and will update this segment of the Plan as applicable.

Indiana's Wagner-Peyser program covers the full range of labor exchange activities in our WorkOne system. In the WorkOne centers (Indiana's term for American Job Centers), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development employs over 120 employees through Wagner-Peyser funding. These employees partner with the other staff who implement key components of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Their tasks include, but are not limited to, initial client evaluation and assessment, job search assistance, re-employment assistance through the RESEA program, employer recruitment and other employer services. Indiana's Wagner-Peyser State merit staff are closely tied to our employers across the State and provide a full range of services directly to our employers to assist them in filling their open positions.

In addition to staff, the Wagner-Peyser grant provides tools for State staff and their partners to manage the labor exchange services necessary to match an employer with a potential employee. Some of these tools include Indiana's labor exchange system called Indiana Career Connect. Assessment tools to help employees and employers evaluate the skills needed for critical positions such as Indiana Career Explorer (INCE), WorkKeys, and Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to name a few.

Indiana will also leverage the Skillful Governor's Coaching Corps to provide labor exchange services to constituents. This program is a partnership between Skillful and the State of Indiana. It is an 8-month program that gives career coaches the tools and training they need to better serve Hoosiers in our rapidly changing labor market. The participants represent a diverse mix of organizations: public workforce centers, adult educational institutions, K-12 schools, and non-profits from all 12 Indiana workforce regions. The work that this group completes serves as a foundation for professional development for school counselors and other school personnel to help provide career guidance and advisement to students and parents to help them make more informed decisions.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

DWD will provide training to all staff providing employment services by making use of various media to accommodate different learning styles. These will include, but not be limited to in-person training events, virtual events (webinars and other video recordings available online), self-paced instruction, procedure manuals, and best practices. DWD recently rolled out a new staff portal where all of these materials will be housed and accessible to all regional and DWD staff. Many training opportunities will also include step-by-step instruction guides with visual images incorporated into the guides. Additionally, with most of the training offerings being posted online, there is broader access for more partners within the One-Stop system. DWD will provide business systems and program training to include the case management and labor exchange system, the business engagement system, and assessment programs/tools for WorkOne constituents.

All DWD employees have been given LinkedIn Learning licenses and Wagner-Peyser staff are assigned job-related training modules to complete as part of their performance expectations and staff development.

DWD's Career Exploration and Coaching staff has created a multi-faceted program to support agency career coaches as well as those in other state organizations or who are part of our community partners. Staff created a website of coaching resources, tools, professional development, labor market information and supporting organizations that have been visited by viewers from every state in the union. The site is updated regularly and found at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/career-coaching>.

Through education reimbursement and tuition assistance programs, DWD reimburses employees who complete post-secondary education courses and degree programs. This improves their general education, knowledge, and skills, to perform their jobs more effectively and advance their careers.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

Local area case managers are required to review eligibility requirements and inform participants that they are required to report any changes to their employment status and/or eligibility for UI. The UI division has published a variety of resources on identifying eligibility issues. These resources are accessible to case managers and can be found here: DWD: Report Unemployment Fraud ([in.gov](https://www.in.gov))/.

DWD and UI are working collaboratively to evaluate current awareness levels and considering the development of additional tools to guide ES and WIOA staff on UI issue spotting and adjudication referrals. One consideration discussed for raising awareness is having a UI representative present at quarterly operations meetings with Wagner-Peyser and WIOA leaders to discuss topical issues within UI. As for training, we would like to have a standardized training that is updated on an annual or more frequent basis and is available virtually that provides an overview of the program and can be used to train new and/or existing staff. Additionally, all RESEA staff are already provided training annually on how to spot potential issues that would require adjudication through activities such as work search.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

Indiana implemented technology solutions to help UI claimants with all aspects of their claim. These solutions were implemented in every one-stop comprehensive office across the State. The State identified designated computer terminals and phone lines (called UI kiosks) in every comprehensive office specifically for UI customers. The phones connect directly with the UI customer service contact center for assistance with their claim.

One of the features of UI kiosks is a remote desktop software called Bomgar. This software gives the contact center staff the ability to take over the screen of a UI claimant so they can help walk the claimant through their claim. Any claimant that comes into a comprehensive office is directed to these computers and to the contact center for claim-related questions.

The State also assists clients through a marketed toll-free phone number which is available to the public. All partners have been informed of this hotline and are encouraged to refer clients for all UI related services. The Employment Services staff in the regions also provide over-the-shoulder help to UI claimants as they are navigating the claims filing system.

Two training sessions on UI procedures are provided by UI staff to all WorkOne staff that provides over-the-shoulder assistance to claimants to increase their knowledge to be better able to serve them.

DWD adopted the *ID.me* identity verification service in response to a large increase in UI claim fraud during the COVID pandemic. Smartphones were provided to a Wagner-Peyser funded staff person in each comprehensive WorkOne along with training for them and other staff on assisting customers with the *ID.me* process.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Indiana provides comprehensive statewide reemployment assistance that seeks to support all claimants in returning to work as quickly as possible in high-wage, high-demand jobs. Indiana operates two levels of federal RESEA programs: Initial and Subsequent RESEA to meet the needs of eligible claimants.

The program introduces unemployed Hoosiers to WorkOne services and training opportunities during a one-day orientation and 1:1 Initial Interview, and provides access to additional reemployment services, as appropriate. The program provides claimants the opportunity to learn about reemployment services and activities available through the WorkOne centers. Both Initial and Sub RESEA were designed to help UI claimants return to work sooner and enter a high-wage, high-demand career path; reduce weeks of unemployment; improve the solvency of the UI trust fund; and reduce fraudulent UI claims. Program participation is mandatory upon selection, unless the claimant qualifies for a Manual RES Waiver based on one of the following reasons: moved out of State, currently enrolled in State-approved training, returned to work date within 60 days of separation, or in good standing with a Union Hiring Hall.

The State of Indiana's reemployment strategy consists of the following: After UI claimants have received unemployment for four weeks, they are selected for Initial RESEA through WPRS

profiling. Claimants are sent a notification to their home address on record to participate. Claimants are scheduled through Indiana's case management system to participate in RESEA services through one of the WorkOne centers at week six of their claim. Selected participants are required to attend RESEA Initial Orientation and a 1:1 Initial Interview to learn of available WorkOne services and additional program requirements which include:

1. Claimants meet one-on-one with a RESEA Coach to receive current Labor Market Information (LMI),
2. Enrollment in Indiana's Labor Exchange System - Indiana Career Connect,
3. Creation of Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP),
4. Maintaining log of weekly work search activities, and
5. Referral to additional reemployment services.

Claimants are also required to attend follow-up meetings as scheduled to review progress and make necessary adjustments to the IRP until employment is obtained.

If claimants have not been successful in obtaining employment by week fifteen, they will again receive a mail notification and are required to participate in Subsequent (Sub) RESEA at approximately week seventeen. Sub includes a one-on-one meeting with WorkOne staff to reassess the claimant's work search efforts, review occupations based on transferrable skills, update resume, and reemployment plans to help the individual return to work prior to exhausting their UI benefits. Survival job search and the potential need for referral to partner supportive services are also reviewed.

During PY22, Indiana began a pilot to test the virtual RESEA option in two regions to allow RESEA claimants the option to select virtual RESEA participation and allow for more flexibility on how customers receive services. The virtual pilot is still underway, and we expect to make a decision based on the results of that pilot in PY24.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

Indiana's Wagner-Peyser and UI staff are connected within the same agency and partner together to support claimants throughout their engagement. Indiana has integrated systems that allow Wagner-Peyser registration to occur between UI and the State's Labor Exchange and Case Management System. Additionally, claimants have labor exchange access through both self-service and within any of the WorkOne.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

Indiana code IC 22-4-14-2 requires UI claimants to register with Indiana's Employment Service. Indiana has developed automated and manual registration processes for claimants to ensure service delivery is seamless and readily available.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

Wagner-Peyser and WorkOne RESEA staff facilitate the administration and initial review of the UI eligibility assessment/working test for claimants. Wagner-Peyser and WorkOne staff refer specific issue types to UI adjudication, when necessary, on those occasions when the automated UI issue system may not identify said issue.

WorkOne staff conduct one-on-one meetings with claimants to develop and update their IRP and provide reemployment services and referrals to training programs based on an individual's needs, interests and aspirations, and barriers to employment. WorkOne staff also encourage UI claimants prior to or during their RESEA program to engage in other workforce programs, as appropriate.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

WorkOne staff conduct one-on-one meetings with claimants to develop and update their IRP and provide reemployment services and referrals to training programs based on an individual's needs, interests and aspirations, and barriers to employment. WorkOne staff also engage UI claimants prior to or during their RESEA program to engage in other workforce programs, as appropriate.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

NOTE: The contents of this section are based upon current practices and requirements found in 20 CFR 653.108 and 20 CFR 653.101 prior to issuance of the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Final Rule, which became effective January 23, 2024. DWD is currently evaluating the merit-staffing revisions for Employment Services staff and how it may impact Migrant and Season Farmworkers (MSFW) service delivery and will update this segment of the Plan as applicable.

The assessment of need is geared towards the farmworker activities that the DWD outreach staff, program staff, and Employer Services staff have observed through past outreach efforts. The current primary connection with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and DWD is with respect to data. DWD staff utilize data provided by both the United States Department of Agriculture and ISDA to identify Indiana's primary crops and data for both State national rankings.

Historically, this has been the sole connection, since the ISDA and DWD have different focuses. The DWD focuses on MSFWs with respect to their housing, working conditions, rights, and access to job opportunities and employment services. ISDA mainly focuses on economic development opportunities, public affairs, soil conservation, Future Farmers of America (FFA), and Indiana grain and buyer's warehouse and licensing. DWD will begin exploring areas of overlap that can be leveraged for collaboration, such as outreach to farmers, corporations, and agriculture organization regarding both economic development opportunities for upskilling workers and ways to create awareness regarding MSFWs. ISDA's relationships with employers could help get outreach staff to MSFWs with more efficiency and ease. Additional strategies in which both agencies can leverage the activities of the other to further their goals will be examined during 2024 and 2025. Implementation of these strategies will begin in 2025.

The needs of these farmworkers and farmworker families range from employment, housing, and education-related to non-agricultural job training and education.

- **Employment:** During Indiana's peak season months, MSFWs are mainly hired through farm labor contractors or crew leaders, who recruit workers for the Agricultural Employer. During this strategic planning phase, the contractor is seeking talent with previous experience in the farm work industry, and usually hires the same workers season after season. The most demanding farm jobs in Indiana are still hand labor-intensive jobs to plant, weed, detassel, harvest, and sort the following crops: corn, tomatoes, melons, pumpkins, and apples. These crops are also the top five labor intensive crops in Indiana for the current program year. March/April to mid-November is considered peak season for Indiana. The farm work season relies heavily on a few factors: climate (either rainy conditions or droughts delay prepping the fields and planting) and shortage of workers which both affect the season. Indiana has been experiencing fewer migrant workers, especially workers from Texas, migrating to Indiana. Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that many older workers are retiring, the younger generations are seeking other employment opportunities.
- **Education:** MSFWs have multiple barriers to employment that can hinder their chances of advancing their education. For the most part, migrant farm work is a family affair and a way of life. Due to various migration paths throughout the year, migrant workers often do not receive sufficient education necessary to advance in the labor market. Most migrant workers lack education, have a language barrier, and rarely want to relocate to Indiana to work or pursue other opportunities.
- **Housing:** Many migrant workers depend on employer-provided housing, since they are unfamiliar with the area and need housing that is close in proximity to where the farm work is being performed. In Indiana, an ALC Permit is required if an agricultural employer is going to house 5 or more MSFWs in one location. Additional information and time are required to process and complete an Agricultural Labor Camp (ALC) Permit, which is done yearly. Pre-occupancy housing inspections are performed 45 days before the day of need or anticipated date of hire. The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) performs all pre-occupancy agricultural domestic housing inspections to include H-2A inspections as well. The ISDH also assists with initial permits or permit renewals. Housing for MSFWs is difficult to find for a short period of time. This leads to

renting non-traditional housing such as apartments, motels, trailer parks, and other means of public accommodations.

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

1. Identify the top five labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity.

The needs of farmworkers in Indiana have remained strong from year to year due to consistent crops, overall agricultural production, and planting and harvesting cycles. The top five labor intensive crops in Indiana are corn, tomatoes, melons, pumpkins, and apples.

The majority of the farm work activity in the State occurs in the northwest, central, and southern regions of the State with bursts of pockets near the following counties: Adams, Madison, Vigo, Sullivan, and Knox counties. Peak season in Indiana varies between March/April to mid-November.

2. Summarize the agricultural employers' needs in the State (i.e., are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce).

Growers are still expressing a shortage of U.S. Domestic workers and are moving towards hiring foreign workers. Last fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2022, to Sept. 30, 2023), the Indiana State Workforce Agency (SWA) processed 212 agricultural clearance orders. The total amount of H2A workers requested in Indiana for the year of 2023 is 5,138 H2A workers. DWD will increase collaboration and communication with the ISDA to extend its outreach efforts and impact for MSFWs.

3. Identify any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.

Even though agriculture in Indiana contributes an estimated \$35.1 billion to the economy, growers are still expressing a shortage of hiring local domestic workers and are moving towards hiring foreign workers. Last fiscal year (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30, 2023), the Indiana State Workforce Agency (SWA) processed 436 agricultural job orders. We have seen an increase in foreign workers in all types of agricultural commodities. Agricultural employers are hiring truck drivers, construction workers, agricultural equipment operators, and mechanics for agricultural work.

For the last couple of years, there have been warmer winters, wetter springs, and hotter summers. This may result in increasing weed, increasing pests and disease in Indiana's agricultural production. Some migrant workers could be hesitant to travel due to fear of facing another low production year.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWs IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

During Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023), the number of MSFWs that the State's outreach program was able to locate through outreach efforts was 1,408. The majority of these farmworkers contacts are migrant farmworkers. During peak planting and harvesting periods in the State, DWD, NFJP and other partner agencies report that the population is estimated at 12,000 workers. MSFWs in Indiana are predominantly from Mexico, with an increasing number of workers from Haiti and South Africa. MSFWs from Mexico and Haiti speak Spanish and Creole, and those from South Africa speak English.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Indiana's outreach strategies are designed to ensure that local offices outreach activities meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. The following sections outline DWD's strategies.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

Indiana has two full-time outreach specialists' positions. During peak season, the outreach specialist conducts joint outreach to significant large numbers of MSFWs with the following agencies: the U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division (WHD), Migrant Education Program, Indiana Legal Services, The National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP), and the Mexican Consulate. Additional partnerships and stakeholders are sought throughout the year to expand on the outreach plan for the upcoming season. The Migrant Education Program is under the umbrella of the Indiana Department of Education (DOE). This program provides education services to MSFWs during the peak season. DWD and DOE staff conduct joint outreach every year.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWs IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF

FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Recently, the State's outreach program has been working on a systematic approach for engaging MSFWs for services at our local WorkOnes. A weekly report from Indiana's labor exchange/case management system is completed in search of MSFWs who have completed a registration within the system. As part of our outreach efforts, staff communicate with potential MSFWs to determine if they fall into this category. They also inquire about the type of farm work being performed and update their employment history to reflect the seasonal farm work. During this communication, the outreach specialist provides an overview of the employment and training opportunities available at the nearest WorkOne and a brief overview of farmworker rights, along with awareness of the complaint system process.

The SWA provides opportunities for staff to participate in local events within the community of MSFW service and support agencies and groups. This allows our outreach staff to learn about new programs and services as well as leverage and build partnerships.

The SWA schedules a pre-season meeting (late February) and a post-season meeting (mid-November), which are led by the State Monitor Advocate (SMA). At these meetings the SMA will connect with all outreach staff as well as the twelve workforce regions to provide training on several topics, such as: identifying and determining MSFWs at the local WorkOnes, an overview/refresher of the complaint system, farm labor contractor registrations, terms, and conditions of employment for all agricultural job orders and raising awareness in the form of presentations from other MSFW agencies. These pre and post season meetings provide technical assistance to the outreach staff in building stronger connections and collaborations with the WorkOne Centers.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

The SWA has translated the UI Claimant Handbook and the Filling for Unemployment Insurance brochure into Spanish and Creole languages, increasing its access and use among Indiana's MSFW population. These resources provide MSFWs with a better understanding of the UI program and allow advocacy staff to articulate the UI process with this information. This will better prepare MSFWs in applying for UI.

Indiana designated UI computers in the one-stop comprehensive centers to help UI claimants with questions and/or issues about their claims. Staff direct claimants to use the computers, which connects them directly with a UI customer service representative at the call center. The UI call centers do have bi-lingual staff available for Spanish speakers. For languages besides Spanish, the call center uses the State's QPA vendor for interpretation services.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments Program (RESEA) worked with the SWA and SMA to identify MSFWs within the program. RESEA forms and documents are available in the Spanish and Creole language for MSFWs who are English Learners.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

State merit outreach staff have two mandatory annual trainings, human trafficking, and sexual harassment, followed by ongoing in-house professional development trainings throughout the year. All DWD employees have been given LinkedIn Learning licenses and Outreach staff are assigned job-related training modules during non-peak season to complete as part of their performance expectations and staff development. DWD also provides training to all ES staff by making use of various media to accommodate different learning styles. These include, but are not limited to, in-person training events, virtual events (webinars and other video recordings available online), self-paced instruction, procedure manuals, and best practices.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEE AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

The SWA Outreach Staff has a close working relationship with NFJP grantee staff, and other MSFW organizations, such as the Mexican Consulate, Migrant Education Program, Department of Wage and Hour, and Indiana Legal Services. The outreach program staff will continue to partner with NFJP grantee staff to identify MSFW needs. The SWA will continue to engage with other organizations for the purpose of identifying and assisting MSFWs through partnerships, such as those with food pantries and soup kitchens, to deliver goods and resources to migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the State of Indiana. Indiana Grown and Feeding Indiana's Hungry are new partner agencies that outreach staff have participated with.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

To ensure MSFWs have access to services at Indiana's WorkOnes, the SMA identifies areas for improvement in the delivery of services to MSFWs. The SMA meets with service providers at the local level to identify priority issues and to develop better processes to determine the appropriate technical assistance necessary. The SMA provides annual training at the IMFC (Indiana Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Coalition) meetings. The SMA provided a recorded webinar, which can be used for onboarding, a refresher course, and/or mandatory training. The training and other MSFW related items can be found on the WorkOne Portal for staff to access at any time.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

DWD meets with several MSFWs organizations and farmworker advocacy groups statewide to provide training on the complaint system. Each local area has unique Complaint System posters in each office that list the local area's specific complaint representatives contact information in

both English and Spanish. DWD ensures that farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups are made aware that the United States Department of Labor has launched <http://MigrantWorker.gov> (in English) and <http://TrabajadorMigrante.gov> (in Spanish). This ensures that migrant workers have access to information and resources to their rights on the job.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

DWD continues to provide agricultural employers assistance with their labor needs. When local domestic workers are not available, SWA provides technical assistance to growers to aid them in accessing the interstate Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS). We also intend on building a connection with the ISDA to help raise awareness among employers and agriculture organizations. Our local office staff continues to provide farm labor contractors assistance in preparing applications for certification within the U.S. Department of Labor. During 2023 and 2024, the SWA, along with the business service consultants, will engage in an ARS and Agricultural Employer Service training. The training will be provided to all twelve local workforce development areas. This training will consist of posting jobs on Indiana's labor exchange system, conducting local recruitment events or job fairs at the employment offices, and familiarizing staff with terms and conditions of employment.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

The SWA has three collaborative agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the following entities:

1. A monetary MOU with the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) for pre-occupancy farm worker housing inspections
2. NFJP Proteus Inc., as mandated by TEGL 8-17
3. Indiana Wage & Hour Division

DWD contracts the Indiana State Department of Health and its inspectors to conduct pre-occupancy farm worker housing inspections. This monetary MOU outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party regarding the housing inspections in the State of Indiana. The SWA will continue to partner with ISDH over the next two years and will renew the MOU on or before September 30, 2024.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) will continue to partner and collaborate with National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) as per TEGL 8-17, with the required non-monetary MOU between State Monitor Advocates and National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees. This non-monetary MOU establishes a pathway to ensure that MSFWs will have access to career

pathways, job training, and other supportive services offered between the two parties. This partnership will continue to work together within the next four years by conducting joint outreach to MSFWs, data collecting, attending meetings, SMA providing complaint system training and any other events deem necessary. The non-monetary MOU is valid between 2023 and June 30, 2025, with renewal options evaluated by June 30, 2024. Therefore, as the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) engages with other migrant and seasonal farmworker agencies, new partnerships are created along with new agreements.

DWD created a MOU between DWD & Wage and Hour Division (WHD). This Non-Monetary runs from October 2023 to September 2024 and allow joints for outreach to be conducted when appropriate and assists the SMA with information sharing in regard to Agriculture employers, exchanging investigative leads, complaints, and referrals of possible violations, to the extent allowable by law or policy.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107 & 108 (4), the State Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Such review indicates that the plan has been prepared properly, omitting none of the prescribed requirements, and properly describes the activities planned for providing services to both agricultural employers and migrant seasonal farmworkers.

WIOA Section 167 NFJP grantee, Indiana Farm Bureau, Purdue Agriculture Extension, Pathstone Corporation, Indiana Family & Social Services, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Indiana Department of Education, Community Development Institute Head Start, and

Indiana Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Coalition were solicited for information and suggestions in the formulation of this plan and/or provided the opportunity to comment.

On 02/02/2024, SMA emailed all members of the Indiana Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Coalition to include (NFJP) to advise them about the Indiana's Strategic Plan & AOP and encourage comment. Additionally, the Plan was posted for public comment on the GWC website and notice was sent out to a broad audience of the available public comment period. A public comment was received from one stakeholder entity, Proteus, and appropriate revisions were incorporated into the AOP. The committees met at the end of the public comment process to review the comments received and make any necessary updates to the Plan. The Plan was then submitted for final review and approval to the Governor's Workforce Cabinet before its submission. The SWA reviewed this comment and advised that we would review this strategy in PY24 and PY25 and identify if additional resources would be needed to conduct housing inspections for H2A workers.

The AOP will be uploaded to the MSFW DWD webpage by the Department's webmaster.

*Comments received from Proteus and corresponding DWD responses are below (page and section references based on draft Plan and may have changed):

- *COMMENT: I would like to see more mention about NFJP provider partnering with SWA, SMA and State Outreach Workers and our shared collaborations in conducting outreach, if possible.*
 - *RESPONSE: No change made to Plan; DWD will respond to Proteus.*
- *COMMENT: Page 51 Section 2.2 states, "Growers are still expressing a shortage of U.S. Domestic workers and are moving towards hiring foreign workers. Last fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2022, to Sept. 30, 2023), the Indiana State Workforce Agency (SWA) processed 212 agricultural clearance orders. DWD will increase collaboration and communication with the ISDA to extend its outreach efforts and impact for MSFWs." I would suggest that you include the total number of H2A Workers that worked in Indiana in 2023.*
 - *RESPONSE: Change made to Plan to add number of H2A Workers.*
- *COMMENT: Page 51 Section 2.3 States, "The agricultural economic factors are projected to be the same next year with effective net results. We have seen an increase in foreign workers in all types of agricultural commodities. Agricultural employers are hiring truck drivers, construction workers, agricultural equipment operators, and mechanics for agricultural work." I would suggest stating how many of each worker such as Equipment, drivers, etc.*
 - *RESPONSE: Change made to Plan to add numbers of workers.*
- *COMMENT: The Wage and Hour Division (WHD) is a federal agency in Indiana, not an Indiana state agency. It[s] full title is: U.S. Department of Labor – Wage & Hour Division. The way that it reads [is] looks like you are saying it is a state agency. You could denote that ILS and NFJP and the like are community partners, not state agencies, I think the rest is fine.*

- *RESPONSE: Change made to clarify US Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division.*

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

The provisions and proportionate services to MSFWs in Indiana have been steadily improving over the past 4 years, and in PY 18, the State achieved all of the five equity indicators, showing services provided to MSFWs and non-MSFWs. See the data chart below.

Program Year 2019 Equity Indicators	1-Referred to Jobs	2-Provided with a Service	3-Referred to Supportive Services	4-Provided with Career Guidance	5-Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity
MSFWs	65.2%	100%	0.0%	56.2%	8.7%	
NON- MSFWs	40.5%	100%	0.0%	48.5%	9.42%	
	1.6	1.0	0	1.15	.92	No
Program Year 2020 Equity Indicators	1-Referred to Jobs	2-Provided with a Service	3-Referred to Supportive Services	4-Provided with Career Guidance	5-Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity
MSFWs	20.4%	100%	4.08%	71.43%	4.08%	
NON- MSFWs	4.83%	100%	1.08%	60.70%	.83%	
	4.22	1.0	3.7	1.17	4.9	YES
Program Year 2021 Equity Indicators	1-Referred to Jobs	2-Provided with a Service	3-Referred to Supportive Services	4-Provided with Career Guidance	5-Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity
MSFWs	16.67%	100%	38.10%	54.76%	19.05%	
NON- MSFWs	21.55%	97.95%	8.85%	41.42%	10.21%	
	.77	1.02	4.3	1.3	1.8	NO
Program Year 2022 Equity Indicators	1-Referred to Jobs	2-Provided with a Service	3-Referred to Supportive Services	4-Provided with Career Guidance	5-Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity
MSFWs	38.2%	98.88%	28.09%	43.82%	19.10%	

Program Year 2019 Equity Indicators	1-Referred to Jobs	2-Provided with a Service	3-Referred to Supportive Services	4-Provided with Career Guidance	5-Job Development Contacts	Achieved Equity
NON- MSFWs	15.23%	97.53%	7.07%	36.97%	11.20%	
	2.5	1.01	3.97	1.18	1.7	YES

The following factors will address equity and ensure that MSFWs receive services on a basis which is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportional to services provided to non-MSFWs. MSFWs who go into a local one-stop center to obtain the full range of employment and training services, include an overview of the complaint system, will receive a full Wagner-Peyser application with referrals to employment opportunities and supportive services. MSFWs will additionally receive services at their local WorkOne with an emphasis on career guidance and job development contacts, if applicable.

MSFWs who are not being reached by the normal intake activities at the local WorkOne will meet with the State's outreach program specialist, who will explain to MSFWs in their own language the availability of referrals, services, and an overview of the complaint system, as well as a basic summary of farmworker rights. If an MSFW is not able to visit a local WorkOne, outreach staff will enroll MSFW in Wagner-Peyser services, provide appropriate referrals and services in the field, and will then advise the SWA and SMA of the MSFW jobseeker. The SWA will then communicate with the local WorkOne where the MSFW resides to connect and engage that individual with employment and training services at the AJC or other affiliate or access point sites.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Many achievements were made at the SWA level during PY22. In addition to the SMA and outreach staff, the SWA has added an additional outreach specialist position to support outreach efforts and also plans to hire this staff person in PY23.

The SWA developed policies and procedures that support MSFW services in the WorkOne centers, while providing technical guidance on how to increase service levels. The SWA has several technical assistance trainings scheduled for PY23 to include the MAS Refreshers and trainings, FLC Registrations, and ARS. It should be noted there are a few opportunities for improvement that have been identified such as placements and referrals to clearance orders, stronger local recruitment for Ag employer job orders. The SWA plans to review these opportunities throughout PY24 and PY25.

The SWA has developed a Self-Appraisal System to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance. Implementation will begin in PY24.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The Indiana State Monitor Advocate reviewed and approved the SWA's Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP).

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	
5. The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance (20 CFR 658.601).	Yes

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	74.0%	74.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.5%	72.0%	69.5%	72.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$7,612	\$8,000	\$7,612	\$8,000
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The College and Career Readiness Content Standards (CCR) form the instructional foundation of Adult Education program. The CCR standards are used to identify academic skills that students need to know and be able to do. A career-infused classroom integrates contextualized instruction aligned to the CCR Standards with career awareness, self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning.

In Indiana, Adult Education providers are expected to provide standards-based instruction using the College and Career Readiness Standards. The gap between the knowledge and skills of adult learners and the expectation of colleges, training programs, and employers drives the

movement to standards-based education. The standards were created as a manageable set of foundational knowledge indispensable for addressing this gap and preparing adult learners for college and careers. Additionally, the standards provide direction on where to focus instruction, a coherent framework for scaffolding student learning, and consistent expectations across the State.

In mathematics, for example, the standards reflect content typically taught in both beginning and more advanced algebra and geometry courses, as well as in data analysis and statistics classes. The ELA/literacy standards demand robust analytical and reasoning skills and strong oral and written communication skills. The integration of CCR standards into adult education programs is intended to provide all adult students with the opportunity to be prepared for postsecondary training without needing remediation. Integrating these standards into instructional delivery is essential to enabling adult learners to meet the real-world demands of postsecondary training and employment leading to high-demand careers in growth industries.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
 1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or

activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) solicits applications and proposals from entities eligible to receive WIOA Title II funds. Applicants can apply for funding in several areas that include adult education and literacy activities – WIOA Title II (per 29 USC §3272); adult high school credit program/competency-based high school diploma program/adult secondary credit (ASC); corrections education and education for institutionalized individuals; integrated education and training activities (IETs); workforce education initiative (WEI); and/or Indiana online only distance education.

An eligible individual is an individual who is 16 years of age or older; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

DWD competes funds in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 Subpart C.

To be awarded WIOA Title II funds in Indiana, applicant organizations must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA (per 29USC §3272). An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before the applicant can be considered an eligible applicant. Data which demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services include evidence of eligible individuals' academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, or English language acquisition), employment outcomes, family literacy, attainment of secondary credentials, transitions to postsecondary education, and workforce training.

Application materials include a separate data collection tool to ensure how past effectiveness is determined so that all eligible providers are treated fairly in grant competitions. Applicants that do not have performance data under WIOA section 116 may demonstrate previous effectiveness in servicing basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving the outcomes listed above. In the case of applicants applying as a consortium, each member of a consortium must provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness. Application materials clearly identify how many years of demonstrated effectiveness data an applicant must submit in the application.

Indiana conducts its review of applicant eligibility to determine if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness by utilizing a "yes" or "no" determination. The State screens each application to determine if it is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness and only applications that are determined to be from eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding. Similarly, all sub-recipient members must be determined to be an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the consortium application to be forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding.

Applicants that are determined to be ineligible for funding because they were not determined to be eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are notified.

In the State's multi-year adult education competitive grant application (request for application), all applicant organizations should complete all questions listed under each consideration (I-XIII, XIV) regardless of the type(s) of funding the applicant is seeking. All applicant organizations should address Consideration XIV [General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)]. Considerations I-XIII represent the thirteen statutory considerations DWD must consider when awarding WIOA Title II funds, while Consideration XIV, which is state-imposed, is used to meet the statutory GEPA plan required for all AEFLA funded sub-recipients. The State may also require additional State considerations to be completed. Failure to provide answers for the narrative portion of the application is grounds for non-consideration.

To fund eligible providers, a rubric is utilized to score the narrative section for the thirteen considerations. Review teams utilize a 0–5-point Likert Scale to score the quality of each response. Reviewers provide notes or commentary to justify the score, provide brief details of what the applicant omitted or missed, and brief descriptions of anything “positive” about the application.

5 – Excellent; Applicant's response clearly demonstrates an understanding of the question, the consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

4 – Good; Applicant's answer does a good job of generally providing support for its claims and demonstrates what would be expected out of a good adult education provider.

3 – Adequate; Applicant's response demonstrates some understanding, though this understanding may have to be inferred, of the question, consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

2 – Poor; Answer is not well supported and does not demonstrate what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

1 – Bad; Answer lacks any context or support, and in no way demonstrates what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

0 – Incomplete; Applicant made no attempt to answer the question.

DWD utilizes overall scores, quality of grant submissions, and responses to the thirteen considerations and any State considerations to fund eligible providers. Additionally, the State reviews funding requests and proposed service delivery areas to ensure that every county in the State is covered.

DWD awards multi-year adult education grants on a competitive basis, beginning with program year 2024 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025), and ending PY2029 (July 1, 2029, through June 30, 2030). After the initial year of this multi-year adult education grant award (PY2024), DWD requires sub-recipients apply for the renewal of funding through a non-competitive grant continuation for the following program years: PY2025; PY2026; PY2027; PY2028; PY2029.

Funding is allocated and distributed at the state level as prescribed by Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA):

1. Not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds are dedicated for awards under section 231 and to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other

Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 20 percent is available to carryout section 225;

2. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds are applied to carryout state leadership activities under section 223; and
3. Not more than five percent of the grant funds are set aside for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

In making initial award determinations during the first year of a multi-year grant, DWD will take into consideration each applicant's:

1. Accomplishments and progress toward goals;
2. Capacity and efficiency in service delivery;
3. Gaps and barriers that limit participation; and
4. Employment and labor market demands.

Based on state priorities, funding is prioritized and grants are awarded, in part, to:

1. Organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially participants who have low levels of literacy;
2. Organizations with services that are aligned with local workforce strategies, priorities, and partners; and
3. Organizations with services that are responsive to the needs of persons with barriers to employment.

Data is aggregated at the economic development regional level to determine the total amount of funds available for the region. Applicants apply for a region or a portion of the funds available in each region they intend to serve. To award funds, DWD considers the score and rank of proposals in a regional workforce area to allow for a diversity of programs geographically.

Total funding requested may vary depending upon program size, population (anticipated enrollment), demonstrated need, capacity, and number of subgrants within a service area. DWD distributes funding based on this review, attempting to fund as many applicants meeting minimum benchmarks in each area. State statute requires that at least 25 percent of the funding appropriated by the general assembly for adult education and literacy activities be used for workforce programming.

DWD reserves the right to award grant funds in amounts different from the applicant's initial budget request. Adjustments may be based on how the proposed budget and budget narrative covers program expenses and whether the requested amount is proportionate to the number of participants projected or previously served based on previous performance.

For DWD to maintain the federally required Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Indiana requires that WIOA-funded Adult Education providers contribute a local match.

In continuation years, the allocation of funds takes into account past performance as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Considerations include enrollment, measurable skills gains, high school equivalency attainment, and the number of industry-recognized credentials attained

by students. Providers that achieve all or a percentage of state-defined performance goals may also qualify for additional funding for outstanding performance during a program year.

DWD reserves the right, prior to the finalization of awards, to make adjustments that support fair and equitable access to services. Applicants may be provisionally awarded funds. Providers may also receive technical assistance and professional development to improve program performance and may be required to submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

Final budgets may be negotiated and all subgrants are contingent and may change based on federal and state appropriations.

Other Requirements: Increased collaboration between Indiana Adult Education grant recipients and the local workforce development boards (LWDBs) is encouraged. The grant requires that LWDBs have an opportunity to review all applications submitted to DWD that propose to offer services within the local workforce development area. In Indiana's RFA, entities must describe how the applicant plans to continually align its services with the workforce development regional plans (local plans) must also be included. The applicant organization's relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities where it is applying for funding and how the applicant organization intends to work with one-stop partners to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals must be addressed. This includes plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs.

Any recipient of funds awarded must provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals (both employees and students) with disabilities unless that accommodation would represent an undue burden in the exercising of the responsibilities of the sub-recipient to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Accepting an award is an acknowledgement that the grant recipient is following the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants are also required to acknowledge compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Indiana's process to award funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals is the same as (b) and is repeated here.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) solicits applications and proposals from entities eligible to receive WIOA Title II funds. Applicants can apply for funding in several areas that include adult education and literacy activities – WIOA Title II (per 29 USC §3272); adult high school credit program/competency-based high school diploma program/adult secondary credit (ASC); corrections education and education for institutionalized individuals; integrated education and training activities (IETs); workforce education initiative (WEI); and/or Indiana online only distance education.

An eligible individual is an individual who is 16 years of age or older; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

DWD competes funds in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 Subpart C.

To be awarded WIOA Title II funds in Indiana, applicant organizations must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA (per 29USC §3272). An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before the applicant can be considered an eligible applicant. Data which demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services include evidence of eligible individuals' academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, or English language acquisition), employment outcomes, family literacy, attainment of secondary credentials, transitions to postsecondary education, and workforce training.

Application materials include a separate data collection tool to ensure how past effectiveness is determined so that all eligible providers are treated fairly in grant competitions. Applicants that do not have performance data under WIOA section 116 may demonstrate previous effectiveness in servicing basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving the outcomes listed above. In the case of applicants applying as a consortium, each member of a consortium must provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness. Application materials clearly identify how many years of demonstrated effectiveness data an applicant must submit in the application.

Indiana conducts its review of applicant eligibility to determine if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness by utilizing a "yes" or "no" determination. The State screens each application to determine if it is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness and only applications that are determined to be from eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding. Similarly, all sub-recipient members must be determined to be an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the consortium application to be forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding.

Applicants that are determined to be ineligible for funding because they were not determined to be eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are notified.

In the State's multi-year adult education competitive grant application (request for application), all applicant organizations should complete all questions listed under each consideration (I-XIII, XIV) regardless of the type(s) of funding the applicant is seeking. All applicant organizations should address Consideration XIV [General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)]. Considerations I-XIII represent the thirteen statutory considerations DWD must consider when awarding WIOA Title II funds, while Consideration XIV, which is state-imposed, is used to meet the statutory GEPA plan required for all AEFLA funded sub-recipients. The State may also require additional State considerations to be completed. Failure to provide answers for the narrative portion of the application is grounds for non-consideration.

To fund eligible providers, a rubric is utilized to score the narrative section for the thirteen considerations. Review teams utilize a 0–5-point Likert Scale to score the quality of each response. Reviewers provide notes or commentary to justify the score, provide brief details of what the applicant omitted or missed, and brief descriptions of anything “positive” about the application.

5 – Excellent; Applicant's response clearly demonstrates an understanding of the question, the consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

4 – Good; Applicant's answer does a good job of generally providing support for its claims and demonstrates what would be expected out of a good adult education provider.

3 – Adequate; Applicant's response demonstrates some understanding, though this understanding may have to be inferred, of the question, consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

2 – Poor; Answer is not well supported and does not demonstrate what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

1 – Bad; Answer lacks any context or support, and in no way demonstrates what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

0 – Incomplete; Applicant made no attempt to answer the question.

DWD utilizes overall scores, quality of grant submissions, and responses to the thirteen considerations and any State considerations to fund eligible providers. Additionally, the State reviews funding requests and proposed service delivery areas to ensure that every county in the State is covered.

DWD awards multi-year adult education grants on a competitive basis, beginning with program year 2024 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025), and ending PY2029 (July 1, 2029, through June 30, 2030). After the initial year of this multi-year adult education grant award (PY2024), DWD requires sub-recipients apply for the renewal of funding through a non-competitive grant continuation for the following program years: PY2025; PY2026; PY2027; PY2028; PY2029.

Funding is allocated and distributed at the state level as prescribed by Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA):

1. Not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds are dedicated for awards under section 231 and to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 20 percent is available to carryout section 225;
2. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds are applied to carryout state leadership activities under section 223; and
3. Not more than five percent of the grant funds are set aside for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

In making initial award determinations during the first year of a multi-year grant, DWD will take into consideration each applicant's:

1. Accomplishments and progress toward goals;
2. Capacity and efficiency in service delivery;
3. Gaps and barriers that limit participation; and
4. Employment and labor market demands.

Based on state priorities, funding is prioritized and grants are awarded, in part, to:

1. Organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially participants who have low levels of literacy;
2. Organizations with services that are aligned with local workforce strategies, priorities, and partners; and
3. Organizations with services that are responsive to the needs of persons with barriers to employment.

Data is aggregated at the economic development regional level to determine the total amount of funds available for the region. Applicants apply for a region or a portion of the funds available in each region they intend to serve. To award funds, DWD considers the score and rank of proposals in a regional workforce area to allow for a diversity of programs geographically.

Total funding requested may vary depending upon program size, population (anticipated enrollment), demonstrated need, capacity, and number of subgrants within a service area. DWD distributes funding based on this review, attempting to fund as many applicants meeting minimum benchmarks in each area. State statute requires that at least 25 percent of the funding appropriated by the general assembly for adult education and literacy activities be used for workforce programming.

DWD reserves the right to award grant funds in amounts different from the applicant's initial budget request. Adjustments may be based on how the proposed budget and budget narrative covers program expenses and whether the requested amount is proportionate to the number of participants projected or previously served based on previous performance.

For DWD to maintain the federally required Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Indiana requires that WIOA-funded Adult Education providers contribute a local match.

In continuation years, the allocation of funds takes into account past performance as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Considerations include enrollment, measurable skills gains, high school equivalency attainment, and the number of industry-recognized credentials attained by students. Providers that achieve all or a percentage of state-defined performance goals may also qualify for additional funding for outstanding performance during a program year.

DWD reserves the right, prior to the finalization of awards, to make adjustments that support fair and equitable access to services. Applicants may be provisionally awarded funds. Providers may also receive technical assistance and professional development to improve program performance and may be required to submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

Final budgets may be negotiated and all subgrants are contingent and may change based on federal and state appropriations.

Further, DWD awards between 1% and twenty 20% percent of the total funds made available through an RFA to be used specifically to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals currently incarcerated in a State prison or correctional facility, a county jail, or are currently participating in Indiana's community corrections program. DWD requires all programs providing adult education and literacy activities to criminal offenders in State or county custody to give priority to individuals who are likely to leave State or county custody within 5 years of receiving adult education and literacy services.

In the RFA, eligible providers list the location(s) where adult education activities including adult education, literacy, secondary school credit, English language acquisition, workforce preparation and IET to eligible individuals who are currently inmates in State prisons, county jails, or are part of Indiana's community corrections programs are planned. A description of how the applicant plans to identify and provide services for eligible individuals with accommodated educational needs (disabilities and/or learning disabilities) in the corrections environment must be specified. Additionally, the applicant's capacity to deliver adult education and literacy activities must be addressed, as well as how the applicant plans to offer or partner with others to offer transitional services to eligible individuals exiting custody.

Other Requirements: Increased collaboration between Indiana Adult Education grant recipients and the local workforce development boards (LWDBs) is encouraged. The grant requires that LWDBs have an opportunity to review all applications submitted to DWD that propose to offer services within the local workforce development area. In Indiana's RFA, entities must describe how the applicant plans to continually align its services with the workforce development regional plans (local plans) must also be included. The applicant organization's relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities where it is applying for funding and how the applicant organization intends to work with one-stop partners to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals must be addressed. This includes plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs.

Any recipient of funds awarded must provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals (both employees and students) with disabilities unless that accommodation would represent an undue burden in the exercising of the responsibilities of the sub-recipient to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Accepting an award is an acknowledgement that the grant recipient is following the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants are also required to acknowledge compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Indiana's process to award funds provided under Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program is the same as (b) and (c) and is repeated here.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) solicits applications and proposals from entities eligible to receive WIOA Title II funds. Applicants can apply for funding in several areas that include adult education and literacy activities – WIOA Title II (per 29 USC §3272); adult high school credit program/competency-based high school diploma program/adult secondary credit (ASC); corrections education and education for institutionalized individuals; integrated education and training activities (IETs); workforce education initiative (WEI); and/or Indiana online only distance education.

An eligible individual is an individual who is 16 years of age or older; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

DWD competes funds in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 Subpart C.

To be awarded WIOA Title II funds in Indiana, applicant organizations must be an eligible provider as defined by WIOA (per 29USC §3272). An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities before the applicant can be considered an eligible applicant. Data which demonstrate the applicant's effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services include evidence of eligible individuals' academic gains (reading, writing, mathematics, or English language acquisition), employment

outcomes, family literacy, attainment of secondary credentials, transitions to postsecondary education, and workforce training.

Application materials include a separate data collection tool to ensure how past effectiveness is determined so that all eligible providers are treated fairly in grant competitions. Applicants that do not have performance data under WIOA section 116 may demonstrate previous effectiveness in servicing basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of success in achieving the outcomes listed above. In the case of applicants applying as a consortium, each member of a consortium must provide performance data to demonstrate effectiveness. Application materials clearly identify how many years of demonstrated effectiveness data an applicant must submit in the application.

Indiana conducts its review of applicant eligibility to determine if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness by utilizing a “yes” or “no” determination. The State screens each application to determine if it is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness and only applications that are determined to be from eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding. Similarly, all sub-recipient members must be determined to be an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the consortium application to be forwarded for review, scoring, and consideration for funding.

Applicants that are determined to be ineligible for funding because they were not determined to be eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness are notified.

In the State’s multi-year adult education competitive grant application (request for application), all applicant organizations should complete all questions listed under each consideration (I-XIII, XIV) regardless of the type(s) of funding the applicant is seeking. All applicant organizations should address Consideration XIV [General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)]. Considerations I-XIII represent the thirteen statutory considerations DWD must consider when awarding WIOA Title II funds, while Consideration XIV, which is state-imposed, is used to meet the statutory GEPA plan required for all AEFLA funded sub-recipients. The State may also require additional State considerations to be completed. Failure to provide answers for the narrative portion of the application is grounds for non-consideration.

To fund eligible providers, a rubric is utilized to score the narrative section for the thirteen considerations. Review teams utilize a 0–5-point Likert Scale to score the quality of each response. Reviewers provide notes or commentary to justify the score, provide brief details of what the applicant omitted or missed, and brief descriptions of anything “positive” about the application.

5 – Excellent; Applicant’s response clearly demonstrates an understanding of the question, the consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

4 – Good; Applicant’s answer does a good job of generally providing support for its claims and demonstrates what would be expected out of a good adult education provider.

3 – Adequate; Applicant’s response demonstrates some understanding, though this understanding may have to be inferred, of the question, consideration, and the challenges and expectations of an adult education provider.

2 – Poor; Answer is not well supported and does not demonstrate what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

1 – Bad; Answer lacks any context or support, and in no way demonstrates what would be expected out of an adult education provider.

0 – Incomplete; Applicant made no attempt to answer the question.

DWD utilizes overall scores, quality of grant submissions, and responses to the thirteen considerations and any State considerations to fund eligible providers. Additionally, the State reviews funding requests and proposed service delivery areas to ensure that every county in the State is covered.

DWD awards multi-year adult education grants on a competitive basis, beginning with program year 2024 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025), and ending PY2029 (July 1, 2029, through June 30, 2030). After the initial year of this multi-year adult education grant award (PY2024), DWD requires sub-recipients apply for the renewal of funding through a non-competitive grant continuation for the following program years: PY2025; PY2026; PY2027; PY2028; PY2029.

Funding is allocated and distributed at the state level as prescribed by Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA):

1. Not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds are dedicated for awards under section 231 and to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 20 percent is available to carryout section 225;
2. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds are applied to carryout state leadership activities under section 223; and
3. Not more than five percent of the grant funds are set aside for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

In making initial award determinations during the first year of a multi-year grant, DWD will take into consideration each applicant's:

1. Accomplishments and progress toward goals;
2. Capacity and efficiency in service delivery;
3. Gaps and barriers that limit participation; and
4. Employment and labor market demands.

Based on state priorities, funding is prioritized and grants are awarded, in part, to:

1. Organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially participants who have low levels of literacy;
2. Organizations with services that are aligned with local workforce strategies, priorities, and partners; and
3. Organizations with services that are responsive to the needs of persons with barriers to employment.

Data is aggregated at the economic development regional level to determine the total amount of funds available for the region. Applicants apply for a region or a portion of the funds available in each region they intend to serve. To award funds, DWD considers the score and rank of proposals in a regional workforce area to allow for a diversity of programs geographically.

Total funding requested may vary depending upon program size, population (anticipated enrollment), demonstrated need, capacity, and number of subgrants within a service area. DWD distributes funding based on this review, attempting to fund as many applicants meeting minimum benchmarks in each area. State statute requires that at least 25 percent of the funding appropriated by the general assembly for adult education and literacy activities be used for workforce programming.

DWD reserves the right to award grant funds in amounts different from the applicant's initial budget request. Adjustments may be based on how the proposed budget and budget narrative covers program expenses and whether the requested amount is proportionate to the number of participants projected or previously served based on previous performance.

For DWD to maintain the federally required Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Indiana requires that WIOA-funded Adult Education providers contribute a local match.

In continuation years, the allocation of funds takes into account past performance as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Considerations include enrollment, measurable skills gains, high school equivalency attainment, and the number of industry-recognized credentials attained by students. Providers that achieve all or a percentage of state-defined performance goals may also qualify for additional funding for outstanding performance during a program year.

DWD reserves the right, prior to the finalization of awards, to make adjustments that support fair and equitable access to services. Applicants may be provisionally awarded funds. Providers may also receive technical assistance and professional development to improve program performance and may be required to submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

Final budgets may be negotiated and all subgrants are contingent and may change based on federal and state appropriations.

In Indiana, WIOA Title II [§203(12)] authorizes the funding of programs providing adult education and literacy activities to English Learners (ELs), including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire both the basic and more advanced skills necessary to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens of the United States. These services include: 1) academic instruction in literacy and English language acquisition – reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending; 2) instruction on the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship and civic participation; and 3) workforce training.

To receive funding for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) under WIOA [§243] in Indiana, a program must: 1) prepare adults who are ELs for unsubsidized employment in high-demand occupations or career pathways, which lead to economic self-sufficiency; 2) assist ELs in achieving competency in English reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension; 3) lead to a secondary school diploma (high school diploma or HSD) or its equivalent (HSE or high school equivalency); 4) lead to ELs entering postsecondary education or training; and 5) offer adult education instruction in combination with IET.

IETs for IELCE students are intentionally short-term, a minimum of 40 hours, and a maximum of 14 weeks. The certification must be industry-recognized and high-demand occupations prior to approval. These basic requirements provide adults opportunities that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Immigrants often experience issues with verification of foreign credentials and licenses. IELCE activities may include foreign credential verification along with additional resources within a larger network.

The RFA requires potential providers to 1) explain how the applicant organization plans to provide contextualized instruction to eligible individuals; 2) how CCR standards will be used to enhance instruction and align with WIOA; 3) how career readiness and workforce skills will be taught to eligible individuals; 4) how the organization intends to offer contextualized instruction; and 5) how the organization will implement career awareness curriculum.

Applicants are required to address in the RFA 1) the specific occupation or occupational sector that the proposed IET will cover; 2) the funding that will be used for the training portion of the proposed integrated education and training; 3) the intensity and quality of the adult education and literacy activities component of the organization's proposed integrated education and training class(es); 3) the occupationally relevant materials that will be used; and 4) the specific workforce preparation activities that will be included in the proposed IET and how these activities will be provided.

Additionally, the RFA requires applicants to describe how the three required components of IETs will occur simultaneously with academic instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of US citizenship and civic participation.

How is Indiana including instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation into IELCE?

Indiana includes instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation through a variety of resources within IELCE programs.

Unlike national trends in adult education, the largest number of English language learners (ELL) in Indiana enrolled at literacy or pre-literacy levels. To gain more insight, DWD and local providers collaborated with a non-profit community organization, Immigrant Welcome Center of Indianapolis. A report entitled, Adult English Language Learner Pathway to Literacy Program, January to May 2023, and released by the Immigrant Welcome Center summarized that "organizations and educators have collaborated on curriculum development, assessment, classroom teaching, teacher support, and student referral systems to create a cohesive program aimed at getting adult ELL emergent readers to the starting line of the mainstream Level 1 Adult Basic Education English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes."

To measure skill gains, the Pathway to Literacy Program administered an alternative assessment piloted for the project that showed promising results. The Immigrant Welcome Center hosted study circles with ELL teachers and training included topics of phonological awareness, phonics, and vocabulary for learners with little or formal education in their native countries.

Teachers used a variety of resources and technology to provide instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation for the IELCE program. Because no one program or curriculum was recommended over another, teachers had flexibility to select resources that best met students' needs. Many providers with larger populations of non-native English speakers employed ELL professional development facilitators (PDF), lead teachers, to coordinate professional development at the local level. Because of low literacy levels, some providers offered IECLE as a bridge to better prepare students as they increased language skills.

An immigrant and refugee legal services map was created to help providers access assistance for students in cities across the state. An analysis was completed, and information presented on countries and languages spoken and the growing influx of Internationally Trained Professionals was highlighted. Local providers utilized vendors like BurlingtonEnglish that "blended curriculum to promote academic preparation, civics knowledge, career readiness, and technology integration at all levels and areas of instruction." Further, BurlingtonEnglish integrated "EL Civics content into the curriculum to help students improve language proficiency and gain important life skills," including U.S. citizenship, housing, and healthcare.

Meanwhile, DWD connected with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to provide information on additional grants that would prepare immigrants for naturalization and promote civic integration through increased knowledge of English, U.S. history, and civics. Educational products for adult educators were available on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' website for inclusion in class lessons. Providers used local resources, such as attorneys, to provide additional information to guide new immigrants through the process of applying for citizenship. IELCE activities included but was not limited to helping ELL students increase their economic well-being by offering numeracy and financial literacy skills required for online banking, bill paying, tax filing, and other activities required for civic and workforce participation.

How is Indiana designing IELCE to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency?

To meet workforce needs, Indiana designed IELCE programming to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and placement of adults in, unsubsidized employment for in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Workforce training was offered; however, any IELCE eligible individual could opt out of the training component of an IELCE program if he or she was not ready.

Required for students in ELL levels 3-6, Indiana Career Explorer was a tool to align interests and skills with high-demand career pathways by connecting individuals with resources and a plan how to get there. Indiana Career Explorer included identifying jobs that were expected to be in high demand, potentially leading to greater job prospects. Each potential job description provided insight into the profession including education, training, or certifications needed and where to go for that knowledge.

Meanwhile, individual classes and vendors like BurlingtonEnglish provided digital skills courses for success in today's workforce with contextualized language, communication, and employability skills needed to help ELL students attain, succeed in, or transition to a new career.

Beginning in PY 2024, all IELCE-funded providers will be required to employ at least one ELL career navigator within the program. ELL career navigators will play an important role in serving English learners and immigrants who benefit from additional aid navigating complex U.S. systems, particularly in the workforce.

Career navigators will identify ELL students who are actively looking for employment or additional training/education opportunities as they enroll in programs. They will serve as program liaison for Internationally Trained Professionals and be responsible for collecting previous work experience, certifications or education by sector, and career goals. Additionally, career navigators will develop a network of partner organizations that can refer students to adult education and extend services beyond.

Potential partners include refugee resettlement organizations; local faith-based and community organizations; post-secondary institutions; WorkOne and Title I & II offices; local schools with significant ELL populations; legal aid organizations; and employers that currently hire or are interested in hiring ELL. Moreover, they will identify program and individual barriers to ELL persistence and completion and collaborate with other adult education workforce personnel to develop and promote short-term career certifications aligned to student experience, interest, and community career opportunities.

Career navigators, as well as instructional staff, will provide guidance on unsubsidized employment for in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and include topics such as: getting and retaining a job; transferrable skills, certification, and licensing requirements; online application forms; job interviews and career fairs; workforce readiness and soft skills; onboarding, teamwork, conflict resolution, and problem-solving; and workplace safety skills.

Other Requirements: Increased collaboration between Indiana Adult Education grant recipients and the local workforce development boards (LWDBs) is encouraged. The grant requires that LWDBs have an opportunity to review all applications submitted to DWD that propose to offer services within the local workforce development area. In Indiana's RFA, entities must describe how the applicant plans to continually align its services with the workforce development regional plans (local plans) must also be included. The applicant organization's relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities where it is applying for funding and how the applicant organization intends to work with one-stop partners to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education and literacy services to eligible individuals must be addressed. This includes plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs.

Any recipient of funds awarded must provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals (both employees and students) with disabilities unless that accommodation would represent an undue burden in the exercising of the responsibilities of the sub-recipient to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Accepting an award is an acknowledgement that the grant recipient is following the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants are also required to acknowledge compliance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

Alignment

In Indiana, there is robust alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners. Through State and local collaborations between adult education, vocational rehabilitation, family and social services, workforce employment providers, and other partners, Hoosiers participate in a sequential series of services that result in a seamless transition to employment and/or enrollment in postsecondary education or training. While clients enter through multiple doors, the objective is the same – a seamless referral system. In addition to traditional classes within school facilities, classes for eligible adult participants take place at workforce offices, community centers, houses of worship, employers, and postsecondary institutions.

Referral procedures and data sharing are in place among cross agencies. Adult education providers have access to the newly developed Virtual Client Engagement (VCE) tool. This allows providers to make learner referrals to partner agencies as well as schedule and attend appointments virtually. Curricula are aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards to reflect the content most relevant to preparing adult students for success in colleges, technical training programs, work, and citizenship—in the areas of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Assessment and other professional development opportunities are shared between core partners. The workforce system provides assessment services and provides results to adult education partners and other agencies. Adult education staff convene regional consortia to discuss and share promising practices and barriers to participant success. In adult education, WIOA Regional Support Managers (RSM) enhance the strong alignment and coordination already in place with WIOA partners. Additionally, the new WIOA Partner Cross Training between WIOA 1, 2, 3, & 4 is a way to encourage and foster alignment.

Indiana Career Explorer is provided across systems to assist participants with the exploration of career possibilities, to help them make decisions about their future, and prepare for the next step in their education and career planning journey. Indiana Career Explorer is a comprehensive starting point for determining career interests and abilities and is a required part of orientation for all adult education participants. Meanwhile, Indiana Career Connect (ICC) and the Hoosier Talent Network are available to connect employers with job ready talent.

High Quality Professional Development

Indiana Adult Education has established a solid foundation for the delivery and operation of a high-quality professional development program to facilitate and improve instruction.

Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs) are an anchor for State leadership activities. They are a network of lead adult education instructors who are trained to model and deliver the highest quality professional development both locally and regionally. Professional development delivered by PDFs are tied directly to State and federal adult education performance measures. PDFs develop local and regional professional development plans and share their knowledge and expertise to assist adult education programs and DWD with continuous adult education program improvement.

In addition to modeling effective teaching strategies, PDF responsibilities include development of local professional development plans in conjunction with program directors and DWD representatives; creation of new teacher trainings and orientations; delivery of assessment and accommodations trainings; and one-on-one assistance to instructors as required by DWD or requested by local program directors.

Supplemental professional development is offered based on a needs assessment. Sessions are reviewed by participants and evaluated by the professional development team. Local providers must incorporate lessons learned into local programming, performance targets, and provide feedback through written reports. Past examples included face-to-face trainings and virtual offerings on topics such as Addressing Racism in the Classroom; Evidence-Based Reading; Integrated Education and Training | Workforce Education Initiative Training; New Teacher Training; and Promising Strategies for the Implementation of Distance Education and Remote Instruction.

The Indiana Mentoring Project, in collaboration with DWD and the State adult education professional association, provides opportunities for administrators of adult education, especially new or nearly new, to connect with a retired director of adult education. The project offers technical assistance, professional development, promising practices, and on-demand, individualized coaching to cultivate and support new leaders for continued success.

The State adult education office typically sponsors conferences in partnership with its professional organization. The event is a shared educational/professional development opportunity for adult educators, directors, administration, and support staff, WorkOne staff, career and transition counselors, and other adult education stakeholders. The conference allows sharing of promising practices and presents opportunities to model effective strategies, including technology and resources, for adult educators.

Sessions are aligned with other one-stop partners to ensure that coordination occurs at all levels of engagement. Sessions are evaluated by participants and results are shared with DWD's professional development team as a guide in planning additional opportunities and technical assistance throughout the program year. DWD's professional development team reviews the conference's agenda and solicits session presenters based on this coordinated effort.

Topics are chosen, in part, based on the State's professional development initiatives and how Indiana can strengthen and build upon its adult education delivery system based on negotiated performance targets.

Disseminates Promising Practices

DWD's adult education professional development initiative provides technical assistance; develops and disseminates instructional and programmatic practices based on scientifically valid research; promotes access to employment, education, and training services; and offers assistance in the use of technology. Teachers and instructional aides working nine (9) or more hours per week in adult education are required to complete a minimum of one (1) DWD adult education sponsored professional development initiative annually. Each DWD professional development initiative must be a minimum of 10 hours in length, will be extended over time, and will be either job embedded or require participation in a community of practice. In partnership with the State's professional organization, many COABE and LINC's trainings are made available to meet this requirement.

Each local professional development plan is approved individually by the professional development team and encompasses goals based on scientifically valid research that will contribute to meeting specific performance metrics. DWD's Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) pairs adult education, the workforce system, and businesses with employees who require basic skills upgrading to be successful on the job. An adult education coordinator serves as a workforce resource. Meanwhile, Integrated Education Training (IET) programs are approved individually at the State level, must be 40 hours in length and no more than 14 weeks in length, and lead to an industry-recognized credential. Curricula are evaluated and technical assistance is provided when required by the State adult education office.

Monitoring Quality and Improvement

The State adult education team continually monitors and evaluates adult education programming throughout the State. Monthly reports are sent to programs outlining performance compared to the same time a year ago and to State averages. Performance metrics are shared and evaluated with PDFs to implement strategies to improve the delivery of instruction and services to participants and core partners. Monthly statewide webinars take place and include performance goals, and initiatives to meet benchmarks. Three State adult education team members serve as the State's monitoring team. Risk assessments are conducted, and programs are chosen for yearly monitoring visits. Reports are written and distributed, and technical assistance, including individualized professional development, is provided to correct deficiencies.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

In addition to regional support managers and State staff who provide technical assistance, Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs) provide "boots on the ground" to monitor and evaluate State and local initiatives that will foster improvement in teaching and learning. State goals are outlined each year and local professional development plans are created based on State initiatives and local goals. PDFs determine where needs exist and develop yearly plans to advance services, build communities of practice, monitor, and evaluate performance targets, and institute promising practices based on sound research.

The Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) brings adult education, businesses, and employees together to skill up workers who lack basic skills and require additional training for improved performance on the job and career advancement. The State adult education office provides a dedicated position to provide this linkage. Each workforce project submitted must be approved by the State coordinator, who provides technical assistance, promotes promising practices, and monitors and evaluates performance.

Additionally, Indiana Adult Education requires that each funded provider employ an academic and career counselor. This position is a bridge between students, program staff, employers, workforce, higher education, and other core partners to lessen barriers to participation. The State adult education office provides a dedicated position to provide this coordination.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II. Describe how the eligible agency will take actions to improve

such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA. Describe how the eligible agency will use evaluations, data analysis, program monitoring, or other methods to improve the quality of adult education activities in the State.

The State office employs regional support managers to provide technical assistance and State adult education staff provide targeted professional development in assigned regions. In addition to visiting classes, the team reviews goals, conducts monthly desk audits, and provides analysis and interpretation of performance data. Each program provides comparisons to how the provider is performing regionally and to State averages. Every program employs or has access to a Professional Development Facilitator (PDF), a lead teacher who works with instructional staff and leadership on program improvement and student success.

PDFs work together with the State's professional development team to set goals, identify and target areas of program improvement, and facilitate professional development trainings and activities that promote student achievement. Each PDF is responsible for the development of a local professional development plan, which must be approved by the State adult education team. Additionally, PDFs monitor and evaluate progress according to State benchmarks.

The Indiana Mentoring Project, in collaboration with DWD and the State adult education professional association, provides opportunities for administrators of adult education, especially new or nearly new, to connect with a retired director of adult education. New administrators are usually more open to asking questions with a mentor as they evaluate problems, consider solutions, and utilize data for continuous improvement. A mentor can individually address specific issues and provide guidance, encouragement, and support.

Three adult education staff serve as part of the State's monitoring team. The data team alerts State staff when questions arise or if there are irregularities in data submissions. The monitoring team utilizes a formal monitoring instrument to review and evaluate providers. Programs are chosen for monitoring based on risk assessment. An exit interview is conducted at the conclusion of the visit with leadership and a formal report is written and submitted to the provider. A corrective action plan may be necessary and is coordinated through the regional adult education coordinator. Additional technical assistance and localized professional development are often required to correct deficiencies.

The State office employs a workforce coordinator and an academic and career coach liaison. The Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) targets employers with workers who possess basic skill deficiencies and desire to maintain their jobs or improve performance. Additionally, this project supports employers in hiring and retaining workers who will be able to meet demands for productivity, safety, and advancement. The State coordinator reviews and assesses the quality of each workforce application and proposal and provides recommendations for improvement before the State approves the project. Meanwhile, the academic and career coach liaison oversees, monitors, and evaluates the State project; each program is required to employ an individual in a similar position at the local level. The intent of this position is to reduce or eliminate barriers to student participation and build a foundation to increase academic and career success for students.

Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs) are lead teachers in local programs who conduct needs assessments and gauge the quality of the professional development provided. In Indiana, professional development is based largely on local needs and State initiatives. A local program

receives a stipend for its PDF and dollars are specifically provided for the PDF's own professional development. As a result, PDFs are required to submit local professional development plans that are monitored closely by the State team. In quarterly reports, PDFs assess the quality of professional development locally and provide successes and challenges. The professional development team brings PDFs to statewide meetings twice a year along with directors of adult education to solicit recommendations and feedback. Any professional development offered must be applied and implemented in the classroom and results shared. A guiding question is, "Did the professional development impact instruction, learning, and student success?"

Targeted professional development trainings, including the joint annual conference developed by the professional development team and the professional organization, are evaluated individually by participants. Results are shared and analyzed to improve and build on future events and activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any

Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant's Organization	Indiana Department of Workforce Development

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Richard
Last Name	Paulk
Title	Commissioner
Email	rpaulk@dwd.in.gov

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their

applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

GEPA Section 427 Instructions to State Applicants for their Subrecipient Applicants

The State grantee provides a subrecipient applicant seeking Federal assistance instructions and guidance for how it must comply with the GEPA Section 427 requirement. The State grantee determines the form and content of the information a subrecipient applicant must include in its application regarding the steps it proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, its local-level project or activity. For example:

- The State grantee may require its subrecipient applicant to use and submit the GEPA Section 427 form that it is required to submit to the Department; or
- The State grantee may use a State-developed form that is sufficient to meet the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- The State grantee maintains the subrecipient applicants' responses in the State office.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

All applicants and grantees are required to attach a description of the steps the organization proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted program. Failure to address the GEPA consideration results in the non-consideration of the submitted application.

Programs address the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to programming and participation, including those based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age. Through monitoring, the State office ensures that local providers give equal access to, and equitable participation in, all such projects.

Additionally, all WIOA Section 223 State Leaderships funds utilized for professional development will include steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, the federal grant program by local adult education personnel, including administrators, teachers, aides, academic and career coaches, and other staff who participate.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

The State adult education office identifies improvement strategies and the need for targeted professional development offerings among instructional staff at the local level. Indiana utilizes State Leadership funds to formulate a local network of teachers to determine effective strategies for engaging them in improvement efforts. This activity continues to address barriers to equitable participation for students based on academic achievement to satisfy the GEPA requirement.

As a State office, the goal in Indiana is to prevent the elimination or underutilization in the workforce of members of any group on the basis of race or color, religion, nationality, age, gender, or disability. Each State employee has the right to work in a professional atmosphere

which promotes equal opportunities regardless of race, sex, religion, age, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. The State does not tolerate, condone, or allow any harassment or discrimination whether verbal, physical or environmental.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

The State engages in an interactive process to identify reasonable accommodations wherever necessary for all employees or applicants with a known disability. Reasonable accommodations include, but is not limited to:

- Making existing facilities readily accessible and usable;
- Restructuring of a job or service, or of the way in which aid, benefits, services, or training is/are provided;
- Modified work schedules or training schedules;
- Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices;
- Appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials, or policies; and
- Provision for readers or interpreters.

The State adult education office also ensures equitable access to, and participation in, all staff projects and activities conducted with federal and State adult education funds.

The State office previously identified a need for cultural competency specifically in regard to the social, emotional, and academic success of employees and students. Recently, the State also identified a greater percentage of English language learners who entered at the lowest educational functioning levels.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Based on these needs, Indiana will continually utilize State Leadership funds to identify and provide a myriad of professional development opportunities, in part, for teachers and program staff to address culturally responsive practices and to provide additional opportunities to assist learners with multiple barriers to satisfy the GEPA requirement.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available

to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers

indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	54.5%	51.0%	55.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0%	73.0%	73.0%	73.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,000	\$6,750	\$5,250	\$6,800
Credential Attainment Rate	68.0%	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%	69.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

A. STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL.

1. ALL VR AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSION, MUST HAVE A STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (COUNCIL OR SRC) THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA IN SECTION 105 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPLICABLE, HAS:

Select A or B:

(A) is an independent State commission

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSURANCE (A)(1)(B), IF SELECTED, PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVE TYPE, INCLUDING THE TERM NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE, AS APPLICABLE, AND ANY VACANCIES, AS WELL AS THE BEGINNING DATES OF EACH REPRESENTATIVE'S TERM.

Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	1	01/2023
Parent Training and Information Center	1	01/2024
Client Assistance Program	1	01/2024
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	2	01/2023
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	1	01/2022
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	01/2022
Business, Industry, and Labor	2	01/2024
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	01/2022
Business, Industry, and Labor	vacant	N/A

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Disability Advocacy Groups (2 representatives)	1	01/2024
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services (4 representatives)	1	01/2024
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	N/A	N/A
State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	2	01/2022
State Workforce Development Board	1	01/2024
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	N/A	07/2016
Disability Advocacy Group (third representative)	2	01/2022
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services (fifth representative)	2	01/2023

3. IF THE SRC IS NOT MEETING THE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 105(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND/OR IS NOT MEETING QUARTERLY AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 105(F) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, PROVIDE THE STEPS THAT THE VR AGENCY IS TAKING TO ENSURE IT MEETS THOSE REQUIREMENTS.

All seats are currently filled with Governor appointed members, with the exception of one business representative which has been vacant since July 2023. BRS and the VR Council membership committee are actively seeking qualified individuals to fill this seat and will be making a recommendation to the Governor's office for appointment by July 2024. A potential member was identified in the fall of 2023, however that individual was not ultimately moved forward to appointment as we are seeking a business representative who is also a member of the disability community. BRS is in compliance with all composition requirements, with the exception of this one vacant seat. We do not anticipate any significant barriers to filling this seat. As soon as a candidate is identified, completed paperwork will be submitted to the governor's office for appointment consideration.

In addition to the federally required members listed in the table above, Indiana's Employment First Act expands VR Council membership to include the following additional representatives:

Trade Association of I/DD Service Providers (state requirement)	1	January, 2022
State Division of Mental Health and Addiction (Ex Officio- state requirement)	2	January, 2023
State Developmental Disability Services (Ex Officio- state requirement)	1	January, 2024

4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 101(A)(21)(A)(II)(III) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, INCLUDE A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT (INCLUDING HOW IT WAS OBTAINED) INTO THE STATE PLAN AND ANY STATE PLAN REVISIONS, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORTS, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS.

OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS.

The VR Council meets six times each year, with meetings occurring every other month, regularly receiving updates from BRS leadership and providing feedback on many VR program initiatives and policies. The VR Council reviewed and discussed the draft state plan on September 8th, 2023 during a council meeting. Commission members were supportive of the goals and strategies outlined for the Performance Year (PY) 24-25 VR section of the State Plan. The Council stated that the goals and strategies seemed very comprehensive and aligned with current initiatives as well as identified areas of improvement. The VR Council made some recommendations for further enhancement of the goals. Recommendations are included in the next section.

The Council also reviewed highlights of performance on prior year state plan goals, order of selection data including a need to continue the order selection partway through PY24, annual estimates, and federal performance indicators including actual performance from PY20-23 as well as estimated performance targets for PY24 and PY25. The Council revisited section A during a public council meeting on March 14, 2025. BRS remained under an order of selection at the time the state plan was submitted in Spring, 2024, however all waitlists were opened in October of 2024. The Council voiced positive support to the reopening of all waiting lists and the end to the order of selection during several meetings, including the March 14, 2025 meeting where they acknowledged the administrative updates to the state plan to reflect the end to OOS.

Customer satisfaction survey results are presented to the VR Council at least twice per year, and council members have opportunity to ask questions and share feedback or suggestions. In July 2023, BRS proposed a modification to the survey process to shift to electronic survey collection and the commission was in support of this, along with the continued availability of alternative options for customers to complete the survey such as working individually with a BRS central office team member to complete the survey verbally or completing a paper survey with a self-addressed stamped return envelope.

5. PROVIDE THE VR AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION FOR THE REJECTION OF ANY INPUT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS.

List each recommendation/input followed by the VR agency response

Input: The VR Council acknowledged that goals, priorities and strategies were aligned with topics and areas of growth discussed during commission meetings and from review of VR performance data. No missing areas of focus were identified, however there were a few recommendations as outlined below. The VR Council acknowledged the positive trend in performance on federal performance indicators and agreed that areas of continued growth include continued increase in median wages and in the number of individuals enrolled in programs that result in post-secondary credentials. The council noted that these two areas are interrelated. The VR Council complimented VR in particular on the postsecondary credential attainment rate achieved for PY22, which is above the average in Indiana for all populations enrolled in training at postsecondary institutions. The VR Council remains supportive of progress toward ending the order of selection and reviewed the timeline around this during several meetings in calendar year 2023, including during the September 8, 2023 meeting as part of the review of the draft state plan. As mentioned in section A.4., the Council revisited section A during a public council meeting on March 14, 2025. BRS remained under an order of selection at the time the state plan was submitted in Spring, 2024, however all waitlists were opened in October of 2024. The Council voiced positive support to the reopening of all waiting lists and the end to the order of selection during several meetings, including the March 14, 2025 meeting where they acknowledged the administrative updates to the state plan to reflect the end to OOS.

Recommendation: During discussion on the priorities and strategies pertaining to an increased focus on work-based learning, including on-the-job training (OJT), a recommendation was made for BRS to consider reviewing programs offered across other organizations that are similar to OJT, to explore how other organizations message those services to businesses. The Employment Aid Readiness Network (EARN) was one example suggested.

BRS Response: BRS will review programs such as EARN, Indiana's work study program, to learn how those programs are messaged to businesses. One area of particular interest is messaging these services in a way that does not reduce the employers' perception of the value that participants bring to the place of employment. Applicable information learned will be incorporated into the VR OJT service and communication about the service. This feedback will be incorporated into the process for service delivery on OJT, however does not result in any changes to the state plan.

Recommendation: Consider expanding the measurement around increasing applicants to VR who are students, by establishing a goal for the percentage of students with disabilities in secondary education (students receiving special education services through an Individualized Education Plan or served through a 504 plan) who apply for VR or pre-employment transition services (pre-ets).

BRS Response: Based on this recommendation, BRS reviewed data shared by the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) to determine a baseline for percentage of students with disabilities who enter VR or pre-ets, and established a goal that supports the increase of

students entering into services. A measurement has been added to the goals section of the state plan.

Recommendation: Consider collaborating with other organizations, such as the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, in hosting educational events during Disability Employment Awareness Month.

BRS Response: BRS would be happy to collaborate with the GCPD or other organizations to identify opportunities to partner on initiatives, including during Disability Employment Awareness month. Section L8 of the VR portion of the state plan was amended to include specific reference to partnership with the GCPD.

B. COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CSNA).

Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

1. THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, INCLUDING:

A. INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT;

The information presented in this section is based on the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment completed in 2022, with relevant updates. The next CSNA has begun and will be completed by early 2025 and incorporated in the next state plan amendment.

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires Vocational Rehabilitation state agencies to conduct a comprehensive statewide needs assessment every three years. The needs assessment included review of data on the general population in Indiana as well as data on individuals being served in the Indiana VR program. A survey was also conducted to gather input from individuals with disabilities and their families, stakeholders, employers, VR staff and others regarding the needs of individuals with disabilities in Indiana, particularly as they pertain to employment and transition services. Feedback was also obtained on an ongoing basis through the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, regular VR staff meetings, the VR Employment Advisory Group, The Transition Advisory Group, The Mental Health and Employment Taskforce, and a variety of workgroups with stakeholders. The comprehensive statewide needs assessment established VR program priorities for the next three years, fiscal year 2022-2024.

Indiana's 2022 comprehensive statewide needs assessment reflects a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data addressing the state's overall vocational rehabilitation needs.

Data highlights from the full CSNA include a breakdown of individuals served in VR by disability service priority category.

Eligible VR Individuals Served by Disability Priority Category:

Service Priority Category	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021
Priority Category 1: Most Significant Disability	8,889 (81.9%)	8,636 (87.7%)	8,448 (90.6%)
Priority Category 2: Significant Disability	1,798 (16.6%)	1,120 (11.4%)	792 (8.5%)
Priority Category 3: All Other VR Eligible Individuals	163 (1.5%)	88 (0.9%)	83 (0.9%)

The percentage of individuals (most significant disability) served in priority category one has increased significantly, representing over 90% of total individuals served in FFY2021 compared to 42.6% in FFY2016.

The CSNA survey instrument presented questions about the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities and who might need supported employment to keep a job. Relevant survey questions and responses are outlined below:

Do you know that VR can provide supported employment services for up to 24 months?

59.45% of combined respondents indicated 'yes' with 40.55% answering 'no.' 52.86% of individuals with disabilities indicated 'yes' with 47.14% answering 'no.' This indicates that over half of the respondents were aware that VR can provide supported employment services for up to 24 months.

What employment barriers exist for individuals with the most significant disabilities?

Highest reported barriers by combined respondents:

1. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support 22.09%
2. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable) 15.23%
3. Expectations of employers about individuals with disabilities working 13.81%
4. Not enough employment specialists or job coaches 10.73%
5. Expectations of professionals about individuals with disabilities working 9.10%

Highest reported barriers by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support 22.95%
2. Expectations of employers about individuals with disabilities working 16.17%
3. Expectations of professionals about individuals with disabilities working 13.57%
4. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable) 11.73%
5. Not enough employment specialists or job coaches 7.99%

A notable difference between the two groups is that individuals with disabilities ranked expectations of both employers and professionals as higher barriers compared to combined

respondents. respondents. Combined respondents ranked transportation and not enough employment specialists as higher barriers compared to respondents with disabilities.

What would improve employment services and outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities?

Highest reported needed improvements by combined respondents:

1. Education to employers about the value of hiring individuals with disabilities 20.72%
2. Additional opportunities for work experience 19.76%
3. Targeted efforts to transition individuals out of subminimum wage employment

(sheltered workshops) and into competitive, integrated employment 13.32%

4. Additional training to employment specialists and job coaches 11.60%
5. Additional opportunities for career exploration 10.04%

Highest reported needed improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability

1. Education to employers about the value of hiring individuals with disabilities 21.68%
2. Additional opportunities for work experience 18.95%
3. Targeted efforts to transition individuals out of subminimum wage employment

(sheltered workshops) and into competitive, integrated employment 12.96%

4. Additional training to employment specialists and job coaches 12.70%
5. Additional opportunities for career exploration 10.03%

Responses were very similar across both groups.

BRS also continued to support Establishment projects for several VR employment services providers through March 2021. The purpose of these projects was to increase provider capacity and training to serve VR participants, particularly those with the most significant disabilities. The CSNA includes outcomes from these projects including outcomes pertaining to the provision of supported employment services. Some *highlights are as follows:

Number of Individuals in Supported Employment

PY16	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20
774	2028	2698	2365	2398

The establishment project data does not represent all VR participants or all VR providers. This data represents supported employment data for participants served by a subset of VR providers.

In PY16, the reported baseline number of individuals in supported employment was 774, a statewide average of 19 per contracted establishment provider. This number significantly increased to 2,028 in PY17, resulting in a statewide average of 51, with a 162% increase. In PY18, the number of individuals in supported employment again increased to 2,698, resulting in a statewide average of 67, with a 33% increase. When comparing activity for the first two years of the Establishment projects, PY16 to PY18 resulted in a 249% increase in the number of individuals in supported employment.

The overall metric for this performance measure was a 30% increase in the number of individuals receiving VR-funded supported employment or on-the-job supports short-term by end of year 2 (PY18), and therefore, the statewide sum in both program years by far surpassed the required end of year 2 metric. The results of both program years were a significant accomplishment as supported employment services were underutilized in prior years. As a result of the Establishment projects, community rehabilitation programs devoted more time in the provision of supported employment services to assist VR participants in achieving stabilization and successful job retention.

In PY19, the reported number of individuals in supported employment was 2,365, a statewide average of 74, with a 27% increase. In PY20, this number slightly increased to 2,398, a statewide average of 75, with a 1% increase from PY19. When comparing activity for the remaining two years of the Establishment projects, increased supported employment utilization from PY18 to PY20 was a 29% increase in the number of individuals in supported employment.

The overall metric for the two final years was at least a 10% increase in the number of individuals receiving VR-funded supported employment or on-the-job supports short-term by end of year 3 (PY19) and an additional 10% increase by end of year 4 (PY20). PY19 met the overall metric for this performance measure; however, PY20 did not meet the additional 10% metric increase, largely contributed to COVID-19.

Again, even though the results differ from the first two years of the Establishment projects, and the overall metric wasn't met in year 4, the results still indicate that community rehabilitation programs are focused on utilizing supported employment, with more than a 200% increase in the number of individuals receiving supported employment services from baseline to end of the project period. As a result of the Establishment projects, community rehabilitation programs devoted more time providing supported employment services to assist VR participants in achieving stabilization and successful job retention.

Average Number of Hours for the Amount or Duration of Supported Employment or On-The-Job Supports Short Term, Per Person

PY16	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20
16	18	23	19	16

As indicated above, the data does not represent all VR participants or all VR providers. This data represents supported employment data for participants served by a subset of VR providers.

In PY16, the baseline reported number of average hours spent on supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term, per person, was 658, resulting in a statewide average of 16 hours. In PY17, the sum increased to 710, a statewide average of 18 hours, with an 8% increase. In PY18, the sum increased to 922, a statewide average of 23, with a 30% increase. When comparing activity for the first two years of the Establishment projects, PY16 to PY18 resulted in a 40% increase in the number of average hours spent on supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term provided, per person.

The project metric was met, as the goal was a 30% increase in the amount or duration of supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term that participants received by end of year 2. Through the Establishment project, it is clear that community rehabilitation programs devoted more time providing supported employment services to assist VR participants with achieving stabilization and successful job retention.

In PY19, the reported number of average hours spent on supported employment services or on-the-job supports short-term, per person, was 603, resulting in a statewide average of 19 hours, with an 8% decrease from the baseline. In PY20, the sum slightly decreased to 522, a statewide average of 16 hours, with a 13% decrease from PY19.

The overall metric for year 3 (PY19) was a 10% increase in the amount or duration of supported employment or on-the-job supports short-term, per person, and an additional 10% increase by end of year 4 (PY20). Neither of the goals were met in PY19 or PY20, which is likely largely contributed to COVID-19. Not only was participants' employment impacted by the pandemic as shared previously, but providers also reported increased difficulty with staff retention and recruitment during this time. Some VR participants also asked to pause services for a period of time due to the pandemic.

B. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Data highlights from the full CSNA include a breakdown of individuals served in VR by race/ethnicity.

***Total Individuals Served: Race/Ethnicity**

	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021
American Indian or Alaska Native	139 (1.4%)	142 (1.4%)	123 (1.2%)
Asian	113 (1.2%)	131 (1.3%)	125 (1.2%)
Black or African American	1,406 (14.4%)	1,493 (14.7%)	1,468 (14.6%)
Does Not Wish to Identify	4 (.0%)	19 (0.2%)	39 (0.4%)

	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021
Hispanic or Latino	341 (3.5%)	349 (3.4%)	361 (3.6%)
Middle Eastern	31 (0.3%)	39 (0.4%)	42 (0.4%)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	27 (0.3%)	35 (0.3%)	33 (0.3%)
White	7,711 (79.1%)	7,969 (78.3%)	7,870 (78.2%)

**Numbers are duplicated as individuals may be counted in more than one category, therefore the total for all percentages may equal more than 100%.*

In FFY21, the majority of individuals served in VR (78.2%) were white, with the second largest population at 14.6% who were individuals who are black or African American. The percent of individuals who are white has decreased slightly over the last few years (79.8% in FFY18), while the percent of individuals who are Black or African American has increased slightly (14.1% in FFY18). For comparison, the below data compares total individuals served by race/ethnicity in VR compared to the Indiana population of individuals with disabilities by race/ethnicity.

Indiana disability population by race and VR participants served by race

Indiana	Number of people with a disability(all ages)	*Percentage of disability population by race/ethnicity	Served by VRPY 2020(ages over 14)	Percentage of VR participants served by race
Total for Indiana	894,735 (13.5% of the total population)	-	12,284	-
Race	-	-	-	-
White	764,451	85.4%	10,323	84.0%
African American	84,964	9.5%	1,946	15.8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	N	N	168	1.4%
Asian	8,576	<1%	154	1.3%
Other race(s)	31,203	3.5%	351	2.9%
Ethnicity	-	-	-	-
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	34,758	3.9%	463	3.8%

**Calculated by dividing number of people in each race/ethnicity category by total count of people with a disability in Indiana.*

Census - Table Results and ETA-9169 PY 2020 (Indiana Rehabilitation Federal Report)

Proportionally, VR serves a higher percentage of individuals who are African American and individuals who are Asian compared to the total Indiana disability population; conversely, a slightly lower percentage of individuals who are white, and individuals of other races.

The following is a summary of survey questions and responses in regard to services for minorities:

What racial/ethnic groups are unserved or underserved?

Highest reported unserved/underserved racial/ethnic groups by combined respondents:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 1. African American or Black | 24.14% |
| 2. Hispanic or Latino | 21.10% |
| 3. Multi-racial | 10.29% |

Highest reported unserved/underserved racial/ethnic groups by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 1. African American or Black | 23.27% |
| 2. Hispanic or Latino | 18.81% |
| 3. Caucasian | 10.23% |

Both groups ranked African American or Black and Hispanic or Latino as the two most unserved or unserved racial or ethnic groups, however combined respondents ranked multi-racial as the third most underserved or underserved racial or ethnic group, while respondents with disabilities ranked Caucasian as their third underserved or unserved racial or ethnic group.

What would improve services for racial/ethnic minority groups?

Highest reported needed improvements by combined respondents:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Increased outreach about available programs and services | 20.31% |
| 2. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff | 16.47% |
| 3. Ways to address language barriers | 16.47% |
| 4. Improved transportation options | 15.08% |
| 5. Access to peer mentors | 11.95% |

Highest reported needed improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Increased outreach about available programs and services | 19.74% |
| 2. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff | 17.29% |
| 3. Ways to address language barriers | 15.07% |
| 4. Improved transportation options | 13.79% |

5. Access to peer mentors	12.03%
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Responses were very similar across both groups.

The following is a summary of survey questions and responses in regard to unserved or underserved populations:

Who is not being served well enough?

Highest reported responses by combined respondents:

1. Individuals with mental health conditions	13.40%
2. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (need more support to get and keep a job)	13.09%
3. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities	7.95%
4. Individuals with autism	7.75%
5. Individuals residing in rural areas	7.40%

Highest reported responses by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Individuals with mental health conditions	13.18%
2. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (need more support to get and keep a job)	12.27%
3. Individuals with disabilities pursuing career paths and advanced degrees	7.58%
4. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities	5.78%
5. Individuals with traumatic brain injuries	5.60%
6. Individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing	5.60%

While both groups reported individuals with mental health diagnosis and individuals with the most significant disabilities as the top two populations not being well enough, respondents with disabilities included individuals pursuing career paths and advanced degrees, individuals with traumatic brain injury, and individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing as top populations not being served well enough. Combined respondents included individuals with autism and individuals residing in rural areas as top populations not being served well enough.

What would improve services for the underserved populations you selected in the previous question?

Highest reported improvements by combined respondents:

1. Increased outreach about available programs and services	21.60%
---	--------

2. Improved transportation options	20.46%
3. Increased training for employment specialists or job coaches	14.38%
4. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff	13.06%
5. Ways to address language barriers	9.27%

Highest reposted improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

1. Increased outreach about available programs and services	20.21%
2. Improved transportation options	17.75%
3. Diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff	15.54%
4. Increased training for employment specialists or job coaches	11.40%
5. Review of policies and practices to ensure equitable access to services	11.14%

Respondents with disabilities ranked diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff above increased training for employment specialists or job coaches, in contrast to combined respondents. Respondents with disabilities included review of policies and practices to ensure equitable access in their top 5, while combined respondents did not. Combined respondents included ways to address language barriers in their top 5, while respondents with disabilities did not.

C. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The Department of Labor (DOL) December 2021 disability employment statistics reports the following for individuals ages 16 and over:

Labor Force Participation

- People with disabilities: 22.3% (increase from 20.5% in 2020)
- People without disabilities: 67.2% (increase from 67.1% in 2020)

Unemployment Rate

- People with disabilities: 7.9% (decrease from 12.6% in 2020)
- People without disabilities: 3.5% (decrease from 7.9% in 2020)

Note: Labor Force participation refers to the percentage of the population who are working or looking for work while Unemployment Rate is the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the labor force.

The Wagner-Peyser National Quarterly report for 2020 (DOL, March 2021) showed that 192,419 individuals with disabilities received services from Wagner-Peyser. Services to individuals with disabilities is 5.3% of the total served.

The survey addressed a few questions about partnerships with the statewide workforce development system (i.e., Work One Centers).

How can VR and other Indiana workforce programs (example: Work One, Adult Education) support increased access to workforce services for people with disabilities?

Highest reported responses by combined respondents:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Increase communication about available programs and services | 22.17% |
| 2. Coordinating services among multiple partners | 17.50% |
| 3. Disability awareness training | 14.87% |
| 4. Making the referral process between workforce programs easier | 13.50% |
| 5. Increased VR presence in Work One Centers | 11.05% |

Highest reported responses by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Increase communication about available programs and services | 20.95% |
| 2. Disability awareness training | 16.53% |
| 3. Coordinating services among multiple partners | 15.68% |
| 4. Making the referral process between workforce programs easier | 12.00% |
| 5. Cross-training of staff | 11.37% |

Respondents with disabilities ranked a need for disability awareness training higher than combined respondents. One other difference between the two groups is that combined respondents ranked increased VR presence in Work One Centers in their top 5 responses, while individuals did not. Additionally, respondents with disabilities ranked cross-training of staff in their top 5 responses, while combined respondents did not.

What are positive things that are happening between Work One and VR?

This was an open-ended survey question. Respondent comments varied widely across the state. Noted positives include increased communication between Work One and VR staff, increased availability of a variety of training programs at the Work One Centers, availability of VR staff in the Work One Centers, and VR presence on Workforce Development Boards, coalitions, etc. In many areas the cross-training of staff in both agencies on programs and services were noted positives along with the cross-referral process resulting in improved communication and collaboration.

What opportunities do you see for increased collaboration among workforce programs to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities?

This was an open-ended survey question. Common feedback regarding improving employment outcomes were comments pertaining employer buy-in to disability hiring. Expansion of services such as work experience, job shadowing, externship, mentoring, job fair participation, networking with HR representatives, and the development of secondary school education to work programs were identified. Employers indicated a continuing need for resources and guidance in job site accommodations, disability awareness, building basic employment skills to include independent living, and the availability of post-hire support services.

Additional areas identified by respondents included continuing efforts to improve communication, cross-training of VR and Work One Center staff, VR staff embedded in Work One Centers, and transportation barriers statewide.

D. YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER IDEA.

2021 data from the U.S. Department of Labor shows the following labor force participation and unemployment rate for youth:

Labor Force Participation for Youth:

- Age 16-19 with Disability: 24.3%
- Age 16-19 with No Disability: 36.8%
- Age 20-24 with Disability: 46.7%
- Age 20-24 with No Disability: 72%

Unemployment Rate for Youth:

- Age 16-19 with Disability: 21.1%
- Age 16-19 with No Disability: 11.4%
- Age 20-24 with Disability: 16.5%
- Age 20-24 with No Disability: 8.7%

Data highlights from the CSNA pertaining to services to youth and students are provided below:

Total Individuals Served: Age

FFY2019	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021
14-20 years	5.5%	2.3%	7.0%
20-30 years	43.5%	44.5%	42.9%
30-40 years	16.6%	16.6%	16.4%
40-50 years	13.2%	13.2%	12.6%

FFY2019	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021
50-60 years	15.6%	14.2%	13.5%
60-70 years	8.8%	7.6%	6.4%
70+ years	.11%	1.54%	1.13%

Nearly half of all individuals served were 30 years of age or younger with a continued drop in individuals age 40-70 served. The increased focus on serving students through Pre-ETS could be contributing to the increase in this younger population served in VR.

VR Eligible and Potentially Eligible Students Served Through Pre-ETS

	VR eligible and received Pre-ETS	Potentially eligible Pre-ETS only (no VR IPE)	Total students received Pre-ETS
PY2019	244	4,184	4,428
PY2020	546	3,871	4,417
PY2021	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available

Over 4,000 students with disabilities received services during PY19 and PY20. The majority of students who received Pre-ETS in both years were those potentially eligible students who were not yet receiving VR services under an IPE.

The following is a summary of survey questions and responses in regard to youth and students with disabilities:

What are the biggest barriers students with disabilities have when making the transition from school to work?

Highest reported barriers by combined respondents:

1. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable) 12.50%
2. Gap in services from school to work (student leaves school without connections

to
services)
%

11.35

3. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support 10.86%
4. Concerns of individual or family about loss of benefits (examples: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, housing assistance) 9.90%
5. Lack of information or confusion about available services 9.51%

Highest reported barriers by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:12,

1. Employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support 12.51%
2. Expectations from professionals about individuals with disabilities working 11.97%
3. Transportation (example: can't drive, bus not reliable) 10.50%
4. Concerns of individual or family about loss of benefits (examples: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, housing assistance) 9.88%
5. Gap in services from school to work (student leaves school without connections to services) 9.65%

While reported barriers were similar across both groups overall, of note is that respondents with disabilities reported expectations from professionals about individuals with disabilities working as the 2nd highest barrier, and this was not included in the top five barriers for combined respondents. Also of note is that while transportation was ranked as the top barrier by combined respondents, both employers' willingness to hire individuals needing significant support and expectations from professionals ranked as higher barriers than transportation by respondents with disabilities.

What are the needs of students with disabilities as they transition to employment and/or post-secondary education?

Highest reported needs by combined respondents:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Skills to get ready for work and independent living | 26.89% |
| 2. Work experience, internships | 23.85% |
| 3. Self-advocacy and self-determination skills | 19.22% |
| 4. Job exploration counseling | 17.73% |
| 5. Counseling on post-secondary education programs | 10.01% |

Highest reported needs by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Skills to get ready for work and independent living | 24.95% |
| 2. Work experience, internships | 23.82% |
| 3. Self-advocacy and self-determination skills | 21.00% |
| 4. Job exploration counseling | 16.57% |
| 5. Counseling on post-secondary education programs | 10.55% |

Responses were very similar across both groups.

What would improve VR services for students and youth with disabilities?

Highest reported needed improvements by combined respondents:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Additional opportunities for work experience | 17.17% |
| 2. Increased knowledge of resources and opportunities that support employment | 15.39% |
| 3. Better coordination between VR and schools | 15.15% |
| 4. Earlier access to VR services | 12.23% |

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 5. Additional opportunities for career exploration | 10.64% |
|--|--------|

Highest reported needed improvements by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Additional opportunities for work experience | 18.43% |
| 2. Increased knowledge of resources and opportunities that support employment | 15.93% |
| 3. Better coordination between VR and schools | 14.30% |
| 4. Additional opportunities for career exploration | 12.58% |
| 5. Earlier access to VR services | 11.89% |

Responses by both groups were similar, except respondents with disabilities ranked additional opportunities for career exploration as a higher area of improvement v. earlier access to VR, in contracts to combined respondents.

How can employers be more involved with helping students and youth with disabilities transition to work and/or post-secondary education?

Highest reported responses by combined respondents:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Provide more work experiences/internships | 24.72% |
| 2. Increase their awareness of employment resources and supports (example: Vocational Rehabilitation, job coaching, accommodations) | 24.08% |
| 3. Mentor students and youth | 16.95% |
| 4. Provide job fairs at schools (mock interviews/application practice) | 15.04% |
| 5. Offer tours at business sites | 9.28% |

Highest reported responses by respondents reporting as a person with a disability:

- | |
|--|
| 1. Increase their awareness of employment resources and supports (example: |
|--|

Vocational Rehabilitation, job coaching, accommodations)	24.49%
2. Provide more work experiences/internships	21.73%
3. Mentor students and youth	17.81%
4. Provide job fairs at schools (mock interviews/application practice)	13.71%
5. Offer tours at business sites	10.06%

Responses by both groups were similar, except combined respondents ranked increased work experience/internships as a higher need v. increased awareness of employment resources and support, in contracts to respondents with disabilities.

According to the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) "Memorandum to State Board of Education Regarding Child Counts" for December 1, 2020, there was a non-duplicated child count of 169,169 students in special education. This is down from the year before by 22 students (-.013%). The breakdown according to disability is shown in the chart below.

Child Count Comparisons (December 2, 2019, and December 1, 2020)

Ages: 5B (kindergarten eligible)-22- Unduplicated State Totals by Disability

Primary Exceptionality Category	December 2019 Count	December 2020 Count	Increase/Decrease
Multiple Disability	1,961	1,862	-99
Orthopedic Impairment	1,378	1,301	-77
Blind or Low Vision	924	914	-10
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	2,293	2,303	10
Emotional Disability- Full Time	6,766	6,422	-344
Emotional Disability - All Other	6,019	5,857	-162
Specific Learning Disability	54,379	53,106	-1,273
Developmental Delay (Ages 5B-8)	5,187	7,807	2,620

Primary Exceptionality Category	December 2019 Count	December 2020 Count	Increase/Decrease
Language/Speech Impairment	33,170	32,895	-275
Mild Cognitive Disability	9,417	8,979	-438
Moderate Cognitive Disability	3,336	3,202	-134
Severe Cognitive Disability	308	270	-38
Deaf Blind	28	26	-2
Autism Spectrum Disorder	16,413	16,281	-132
Traumatic Brain Injury	429	403	-26
Other Health Impairment	27,183	27,541	358
Total Unduplicated Count	169,191	169,169	-22 (-.013%)

Source: DOE-Special Education and DOE-Special Education for Voucher Students

The following is information as to Indiana's progress in meeting the Federal Indicators for IDEA in 2019, (LEAD, n.d.):

- 24.17% of youth no longer in secondary school had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school (Indicator 14a).
- 64.33% of youth who are no longer in secondary school had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (Indicator 14b).
- 75.83% of youth who are no longer in secondary school had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or they were competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (Indicator 14c). (M. Oja personal communication, December 18, 2021).

With the advent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), VR agencies must earmark 15% of federal VR funds for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities is defined as students in secondary or postsecondary school between the ages of 14 through the school year in which the student

becomes 22, who are eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or is an individual with a disability for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students may be eligible for and receiving VR services, or they may be “potentially eligible.” VR considers a potentially eligible student to be a student with a disability as defined above who is not currently receiving VR services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Indiana provides Pre-ETS to students with disabilities in all 92 counties through both contracted community rehabilitation programs and internal VR staff. Both students who are eligible for VR services as well as those potentially eligible for VR services receive Pre-ETS. Over 7,000 students, served by 12 contracted providers, received pre-ETS through the program year ending June 2021.

Additionally, Pre-ETS contracts were amended in the fall of 2021 to align contractors’ updated budget estimates with actual contract budgets to assist VR in reaching their 15% pre-ETS required spend. Additionally, stipends for students participating in certain work-based learning activities were added to contracts to encourage more student involvement in work-based learning, which is a clear predictor of post high school success.

The number of students served through Pre-ETS and type of Pre-ETS activities received is outlined in the Tables below.

VR Eligible and Potentially Eligible Students Served Through Pre-ETS

	VR eligible and received Pre-ETS	Potentially eligible Pre-ETS only (no VR IPE)	Total students received Pre-ETS
PY2019	244	4,184	4,428
PY2020	546	3,871	4,417
PY2021	632	7,585	8,217

Over 4,000 students with disabilities received services during PY19 and PY20, with a significant increase to over 8,000 students in PY21. The majority of students who received Pre-ETS in both years were those potentially eligible students who were not yet receiving VR services under an IPE. There may be a need to implement strategies to increase the number of students receiving pre-ets who apply for VR services.

In 2019, Indiana created eight VR Youth Counselor positions to assist with pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS) and general transition outreach to students, families, schools, and providers. They completed local area needs assessments to better understand availability of and

access to pre-ETS, develop methods of expanding pre-ETS, improve relationships among VR, schools and providers, and determine the technical assistance and training needs of schools, providers, and VR staff. These assessments led to our youth counselors bringing pre-ETS to more school systems throughout the state, assisting with training of pre-ETS career coaches, and providing community and business outreach to increase work-based learning activities and strengthen overall programming for students with disabilities. Additionally, youth counselors act as liaisons between local education agencies and Vocational Rehabilitation, working on improving referrals processes, attending case conferences, and assisting schools and VR with understanding each other's systems to improve outcomes for transition aged youth.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

BRS plans to enter into a contract with an entity to provide training and technical assistance to VR employment service providers for the improvement and expansion of CRPs. This will include opportunities for one-on-one provider training and technical assistance, tailored to specific areas of improvement, such as purposeful discovery activities, career pathways, and supported employment services. BRS is evaluating specific needs of CRPs and identifying strategies that can be carried out through establishment projects to ensure CRPs have access to essential training, including employment specialist training that is ACRE certified. BRS is also identifying strategies for utilization of establishment projects to support CRP expansion, including opportunities for some CRPs to grow their employment programs in order to serve more VR participants. BRS has initiated communication with RSA on a concept for Establishment projects and will remain in contact as a scope of work is developed.

The complete CSNA can be viewed at Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, January 2022

C. GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND STRATEGIES

Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of Section 116 of WIOA; and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE SRC AND THE VR AGENCY JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES AND ANY REVISIONS; AND

Goals, outcomes, and priorities were reviewed and discussed with the State Rehabilitation Council during a September 8, 2023 council meeting, providing an opportunity for input and recommendations. Information was provided to the VR Council for review in advance of the meeting. The council was in agreement with the goals and priorities outlined in 2D and commented that they were very comprehensive and aligned with initiatives and identified areas of improvement. The VR Council did not identify any goals and priorities that were missing.

There was a recommendation to expand up on the measurement for the percentage of students with disabilities entering into VR, including the use of DOE data to set a goal for the percentage of students with disabilities who enter VR or pre-ets. An additional measure was added to include this recommendation.

2. IDENTIFY MEASURABLE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND THE BASIS FOR SELECTING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES (E.G., CSNA, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, SRC RECOMMENDATIONS, MONITORING, OTHER INFORMATION). AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 101(A)(15)(D), (18), AND (23), DESCRIBE UNDER EACH GOAL OR PRIORITY, THE STRATEGIES OR METHODS USED TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OR PRIORITY, INCLUDING AS APPLICABLE, DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIES OR METHODS THAT—

A. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES;

B. OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ACCESSING VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

C. IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES); AND

D. IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority

A. Support innovation and expansion activities

The Innovation and Expansion authority is utilized to support the Indiana State Independent Living Council (INSILC), as well as new and innovative initiatives that open the door for new employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and/or increase opportunities for those with the most significant disabilities. This includes continued investment in VR's Business and Community Engagement Team to lead business outreach efforts for the VR program and serve as an initial point of contact for businesses, facilitating necessary connections with resources and partners. The team also provides technical assistance to local VR field offices on effectively working with businesses, including supporting enhanced opportunities for on-the-job training or other work-based learning for VR participants. Partnership and strong collaboration with community stakeholders and employers continues to result in networking events that facilitate the connection of employers directly to VR participants who are seeking employment.

B. Overcome barriers to accessing VR and supported employment services

BRS continues to partner with the Arc of Indiana and Self-Advocates of Indiana to provide career counseling and information and referral services (CCIR) to individuals employed at subminimum wage. CCIR services were originally provided largely in a group setting format, however as of July 2023, CCIR services have shifted to a one-to-one approach. Individual CCIR

provides opportunity to tailor services to individuals. Attendees receive information about local resources regarding employment services and other-related information; discuss potential competitive, integrated employment opportunities and ways to learn more about a new career field (i.e., informational interviewing or job-shadowing); and discuss the importance of seeking assistance and guidance from a support network, such as family members or friends. Attendees receive a certificate of participation documenting completion of the CCIR activities.

VR recognized individuals with mental health disabilities as an underserved population as outlined in both the 2019 and 2022 CSNAs in terms of the effectiveness of services and achievement of employment outcomes. A dedicated workgroup was established in 2019 comprised of representatives from VR, DMHA, CMHCs, NAMI, Key Consumer Organization, the Indiana Mental Health Council, and individuals with lived experience. DMHA and VR collectively sought and received an opportunity for training and technical assistance through ODEP, securing two rounds of training and TA. The project is focused on capacity building to improve competitive, integrated employment outcomes for individuals with mental health disabilities, including supporting two early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) sites since late 2021 with plans for expansion in early 2024.

The reduced capacity of VR employment service providers has led to new challenges with access to employment services, including supported employment services. Many providers have implemented wait lists for services which has delayed service provision and may have impacted customer engagement. BRS has implemented several strategies to mitigate this challenge, including a rate increase in April 2022 and implementation of performance incentive payments in July 2023. VR has also initiated a virtual job club, led by VR staff, to better engage participants and provide options for guided, self-directed career exploration. VR also contracted with nine Navigators to support VR participants in accessing services from other workforce programs, as services through local Work One offices have historically been underutilized by VR participants but may offer great value, particularly in light of provider capacity challenges.

C. Improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, post-secondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services)

Youth VR Counselors have developed relationships with businesses at their local level to improve services for transition aged youth by increasing the number of work-based learning experiences available to pre-ETS students and other youth. BRS has a dedicated youth services director, a youth services associate director, and 10 youth counselors located throughout the state, who have worked to expand and improve relationships with key transition stakeholders. The director facilitates the VR Transition Advisory Council, engaging in one-on-one conversations, and presenting and educating various stakeholder groups about VR and pre-employment transition services, including having youth counselors present at each advisory council meeting on pre-ETS and other transition related initiatives in their regions. The Transition Advisory Council has been instrumental in increasing outreach and education related to transition aged youth. Specifically, collaboration with representatives from PCG, DOE, and DWD on the council has aided in outreach to school systems, training of educators on transition, VR, and Pre-ETS, and services available to transition-aged youth through DWD and other sources.

Furthermore, the 10 VR youth counselors have completed and continue to update maintenance and expansion plans with local schools, providers, and VR offices to identify best practices and gaps in services, have helped to facilitate improved relationships at the local level between VR and schools, and have worked with VR's Director of Youth Services to outline recommended best practices and improved strategies for VR transition efforts. These staff are discussed in greater detail throughout the VR section of the state plan.

D. Improve the performance of the VR and Supported Employment programs in assisting individuals with disabilities to achieve quality employment outcomes. List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list, and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority.

Goal 1: Improve VR participant engagement and participation

Priority 1.1: Rapid and quality engagement of individuals

Basis: Data from the VR-Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management, funded by RSA, indicates that a shorter turnaround time from application to eligibility and IPE, leads to a higher rate of rehabilitation. Additionally, there has been little improvement in reducing the percent of eligible individuals exiting the VR program prior to IPE or after IPE without employment. In PY22 quarter 4, of all exits from VR, 17% exited after eligible and before IPE, and 43.6% exited after IPE but prior to obtaining an employment outcome (data source: RSA dashboard reports). This attrition rate negatively impacts the overall employment outcomes for the VR program. Furthermore, while many positive comments are received through customer satisfaction surveys, one concerning theme has been dissatisfaction with the length of time it takes to receive services for some individuals.

- Strategy 1.1a: Decrease time from application to eligibility. Average days from application to eligibility will average 30 days or less by the end of the state plan period. (PY22 baseline: 36.02; data source: Aware and Tableau dashboards).
- Strategy 1.1b: Review processes to identify opportunities to streamline or modernize, such as provision of specific services including hearing aid devices, and opportunities for increased efficiency with information technology systems. Implement at least 2 strategies each year during state plan period.
- Strategy 1.1c: Explore opportunities for streamlining application or eligibility determination processes with other agencies, including Bureau of Disability Services (BDS) and Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA). Identify and implement at least two strategies during the state plan period.
- Strategy 1.1d: Continue to focus training efforts to VR Counselors on the importance of quality interactions with participants. Training or technical assistance related to this topic area will be provided at least twice per year during the state plan project period, such as technical assistance provided in regional staff meetings, Friday field chats, or statewide training opportunities.

Priority 1.2: Serve all eligible individuals

Basis: BRS has been operating under an order of selection since August 2017 and has retained a goal of opening all service categories and ending the order of selection. This goal remains a

priority so that all eligible individuals can receive services. This will not only benefit eligible individuals in need of VR services, but may also contribute to improved trends in the number of individuals receiving services and exiting with employment.

- Strategy 1.2a: Continue quarterly order of selection waitlist releases until all eligible individuals on the wait list are offered services. All service priority categories will be open by December 2024.

Priority 1.3: Increase participation of students and youth in the VR program

Basis: There has been a decline in the percent of VR participants served who are students and youth (age 24 and younger) with disabilities from 48% in the fourth quarter of PY20 to 39% in the fourth quarter of PY22 (data source: RSA dashboard report). This could have been impacted by the growth in the number of students served in pre-ets from PY 20 to PY22, but remains an area of needed improvement. Additionally, only 9% of students receiving pre-ets are applying for VR services as of the end of PY22 (data source: RSA dashboard report). RSA has indicated that this is below average compared to other state VR agencies.

- Strategy 1.3a: Provide training to pre-ets providers on the VR referral process and the role they can play in facilitating referrals of students with disabilities. Training will be conducted annually, resulting in a 10% increase in the portion of pre-ets students who apply for VR services each year (PY22 baseline: 9%; data source: RSA dashboard report).
- Strategy 1.3b: Review referral practices with schools and local VR offices and address areas of improvement as needed to support an increase of student applications to VR. The number of students entering VR or pre-ets will represent at least 30% of students age 14-22 receiving services through an IEP or 504 plan reported by DOE annually (current performance for PY22: 16,545 or 26% of students reported on RSA PY22 dashboard report, of 15,100 students age 14-22 with 504 plan and 38,169 students 14-24 on IEP as reported by DOE December 2022).
- Strategy 1.3c: Youth VR counselors will support efforts to increase the number of potentially eligible pre-ETS students who apply to VR, through a comprehensive review of pre-ets cases annually. Youth VRCs will identify students who need referral to VR, including those nearing exit from school and will facilitate the referral process as needed. This review will be conducted by December of each academic year.
- Strategy 1.3d: Identify promising practices in the delivery of required Pre-ETS and transition activities, such as Seamless Transition projects in partnership with BDS, the use of peer mentors for students with disabilities, increased student involvement in the development of Pre-ETS curricula at the local level, and coordination with Indiana Career Explorer on transition related initiatives. At least one promising practice will be implemented annually during this state plan period.

Overall measure: VR participant attrition will decrease by at least 10% during the state plan period (PY22 Q4 RSA Dashboard baseline: Of all exits for that quarter, 60.7% exited VR services after eligibility and prior to signed IPE or after IPE without an employment outcome).

Goal 2: Improve quality and quantity of outcomes

Priority 2.1: Build VR service delivery capacity, including increased capacity of vendors to provide timely and quality services

Basis: Many VR employment service providers have implemented wait lists or waiting periods for new referrals from VR. For example, in the Indianapolis area, the largest metropolitan region in the state, VR field managers have reported that all providers serving the area except for two, have had a wait list over the last year. This accounts for at least 90% of providers serving the Indianapolis and surrounding area. Providers report experiencing significant turnover of staff and this was validated through a quarterly provider capacity survey VR conducted during 2022. 76.7% of respondents indicated they experienced 1-2 vacancies each quarter during 2022. This is significant when considering that most providers, well over two-thirds, have 7 or less staff with half of those employing 3 or less staff. The survey results indicate that the vacancy rate accounts for 50-100% turnover for teams of 4 or less, and 14-40% turnover for teams of 5-7.

- Strategy 2.1a: Evaluate the impact of Employment Service Provider performance outcome payments implemented in July 2023. Evaluation will be completed before the end of the state plan period, including identification of applicable revisions.
- Strategy 2.1b: Pursue opportunities for enhanced training and technical assistance to VR Employment Service providers with the goal of improving provider performance and outcomes, such as through the Establishment authority, disability innovation funds, or other allowable sources of funds. Training and technical assistance will begin during the state plan period. The most recent CSNA (Section B) has been updated to reflect specific strategies for improvement and expansion of CRPs through Establishment projects, including access to employment specialist training that meets ACRE competencies, targeted technical assistance for the improvement of the CRP, and supports for potential growth or expansion in order to increase capacity to serve more VR participants and improve the timeliness and quality of services.

Priority 2.2: Increase VR participant access to multiple pathways to employment

Basis: Given the service provider capacity challenges described above, as well as the need to support a more diverse population as BRS prepares to open all service priority categories, additional paths to employment will be necessary to more adequately meet the needs of VR participants.

- Strategy 2.2a: Enhance existing or develop new pathways for service delivery so that VR participants have access to a variety of pathways to pursue employment services. This may include enhancement of VR led virtual job clubs, expansion of the vendor recruiter role, expanding employment services in CMHCs in partnership with DMHA including expansion of Individual Placement and Support, enhancing the role of the WIOA Navigators, and exploring provider requirements to identify opportunities to expand the network of service providers. At least three pathways will be enhanced for greater access, or a new pathway developed, during the state plan period.

Priority 2.3: Increase participation in work-based learning opportunities and attainment of measurable skills gains or credentials

Basis: While BRS exceeded the negotiated measures for measurable skill gains and credential attainment rate for PY22, only 13% of VR participants were enrolled in a training program or

activity that leads to a measurable skill gain or credential (data source: RSA dashboard report PY22 Q4). Additionally, individuals who participate in work-based learning are more likely to achieve employment, and therefore increasing these opportunities is an important strategy in improving employment outcomes.

- Strategy 2.3a: Increase work-based learning opportunities for VR participants, which may include opportunities for increasing On-the-job training (OJT) services, increased partnerships with businesses to host participants, creating internship or apprenticeship opportunities with VR partners, or other work-based learning activities such as through pre-employment transition services or the supported employment plus (SE+) project. At least three new work-based learning strategies will be implemented during the state plan project period.
- Strategy 2.3b: Increase enrollment of VR participants in postsecondary training. Identify and implement strategies to increase enrollment such as continued targeted training to VR postsecondary Counselors, revisiting postsecondary education funding determination procedures, increasing outreach to students, and increasing provision of counseling on postsecondary opportunities through pre-ets. The number of VR participants enrolled in postsecondary education will increase by 10% each year during the state plan period (PY22 baseline: 671 participants with a postsecondary education goal; Data source: Aware and Tableau).

Overall measure: Total number of participants exiting with employment will increase by at least 25% by the end of the state plan period (PY22 baseline: 1,454; data source: RSA Dashboard report), with average hourly wages increasing by at least 15% by end of the state plan period (PY22 baseline: \$15.10; data source: RSA Dashboard report).

Supported Employment Goal

Priority 2.4: Increase the quality of outcomes for individuals receiving supported employment services.

Basis: The average wages for those who received supported employment services and exited VR with an employment outcome are significantly lower than overall average wages for all employment outcomes. (\$11.71 compared to \$15.10; data source: Aware and Tableau dashboard). Additionally, the average weekly work hours for those receiving supported employment services has remained steady at approximately 20 hours per week, (date source: Aware and Tableau dashboard) with limited or no growth from year to year.

- Strategy 2.4a: BRS will identify and implement strategies to improve the quality of employment outcomes for individuals receiving supported employment services, such as identifying opportunities for enhanced counseling on benefits and work incentives, continued collaboration with the Bureau of Disabilities services to promote competitive integrated employment for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, expansion of Individual Placement and Support in collaboration with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction, and evaluating the Supported Employment plus (SE+) Disability Innovation Fund project to identify emerging best practices. At least three strategies will be implemented during the state plan project period.

- Strategy 2.4b. Priorities and strategies 2.1-2.3 under goal 2 outlined above, are applicable to supported employment services. BRS is targeting a 15% increase in average wages for individuals exiting VR after receiving supported employment services by the end of the state plan period. (PY22 baseline average wages for individuals receiving supported employment services: \$11.71; data source: Aware and Tableau dashboard.)

D. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

For the most recently completed program year, provide an evaluation and report of progress for the goals or priorities, including progress on the strategies under each goal or priority, applicable to that program year. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe—

1. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED FOR THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS;

List the goals/priorities and discuss the progress or completion of each goal/priority and related strategies

Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR

Goal 1: Improve the quality of services and outcomes

Priority 1.1: Implement new innovative training strategies for VR Counselors and other VR staff, such as increased use of itinerant (working lead) VR Counselors as regional trainers, enhancements to web-based modules including development of content for VR Case Coordinators, or other strategies. Provide training to staff on post-secondary services, transition responsibilities, extended services to youth with a most significant disability, and training on strengths-based service provision to specific populations such as individuals with mental health conditions and individuals transitioning from subminimum wage employment to competitive, integrated employment. At least two new training focus areas will be identified annually with training provided to applicable staff during PY20-PY21. This goal is extended into PY22-PY23.

Outcome 1.1: Achieved. All training goals outlined above were achieved, along with provision of additional training including inclusive service delivery, cultural competencies, and training on serving individuals with substance use disorder. Significant training priorities during PY20-21 included serving individuals with mental health conditions and diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility. An additional focus during PY22-23 was training around career pathways and postsecondary services. VR shifted approximately 20 current VR Counselor positions to focus on postsecondary services, and then subsequently created a postsecondary VR Counselor lead in each of the five VR regions. Intensive training was provided to these staff to improve consistency in the delivery of postsecondary training services and funding determinations. Postsecondary Counselor leads also perform quality assurance review of postsecondary Counselors in their regions and provide technical assistance. During the state plan period, VR also provided additional training to support individuals in the transition from subminimum wage to competitive integrated employment. VR has been in the planning year for the Disability Innovation Fund (DIF), Subminimum Wage to Competitive, Integrated Employment (SWTCIE) grant and has begun to roll out training in preparation for implementation of a model

demonstration project in October 2023. New VR Counselors have been hired and have received initial training.

Priority 1.2: Identify and implement at least two new strategies during PY22-PY23 for effective training to VR employment service providers, including opportunities for hands-on training to build skills, training focused on strengths-based service provision to individuals with high support needs, opportunities for joint training with VR staff, and other needed topics. Identify additional strategies to build capacity within providers to serve VR participants, such as facilitating supervisor circles and obtaining recommendations from the Discovery cohort on needed revisions to Discovery service practices.

Outcome 1.2: Achieved. Supervisor circles have been well attended by management staff from providers across the state, to share best practices and learn about effective strategies and helpful resources. As part of the SWTCIE grant, 4 pilot provider organizations have received training to support improvement in the delivery of supported employment services. These pilot organizations also completed a baseline fidelity review to evaluate their level of fidelity and identify specific training needs to support areas of improvement in an effort to work toward high fidelity. The SWTCIE grant will support additional training, along with technical assistance, to help support those areas of improvement. The Discovery cohort presented written recommendations for the improvement of Discovery services, and some recommendations have begun to be implemented including issuing several helpful guidance documents to share best practices and provide helpful tools to VR and provider staff. Joint training was provided to VR and providers to share updates to benefits/work incentives counseling.

Priority 1.3: Continue to engage appropriate stakeholders, including VR, Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), Community Mental Health Centers, NAMI, Key Consumer Organization, individuals with lived experience, and others through a statewide taskforce during PY22-PY23. The taskforce will continue its efforts to improve services and outcomes for VR participants with mental health conditions as well as serve as the advisory board for the early adopter IPS sites. In collaboration with DMHA, VR will evaluate outcomes of early adopter IPS sites such as employment rate, average wages and hours worked, length of time to placement, and other relevant data elements. Project evaluation will be conducted during the PY22-23 state plan period.

Outcome 1.3: Achieved. The taskforce has continued to meet quarterly. VR and DMHA meet biweekly to jointly support IPS implementation. A funding guidance document was jointly developed, which outlines approaches for braiding and sequencing VR and Medicaid dollars to support individuals receiving IPS and pursuing employment. The two early adopter IPS sites have been in place for two years. Data from year one was reviewed and compiled as of the submission of this state plan, reflecting a total of 89 participants served in year one. At the end of year one, 22 participants achieved employment, with the remaining either still pursuing employment or having exited the program. Additionally, VR and DMHA entered into an interagency written agreement in PY22 to formalize collaboration and facilitate information sharing.

Priority 1.4: Identify and implement strategies to improve employment outcomes, such as exploration of the need for Establishment projects to further improve service provision by community rehabilitation programs, analysis of the impact of discovery activities on employment outcomes, increased utilization of supported employment services, sharing

emerging best practices, or other strategies. The number of VR participants achieving employment will increase by 10% (pre-pandemic baseline 2160) and average hourly wages will increase by at least 5% (PY20 baseline \$12.31).

Outcome 1.4: Partially Achieved. These targets were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, however VR has continued to implement strategies to improve outcomes post-pandemic, including increasing the number of individuals released from the order of selection wait list; implementing online job clubs hosted by VR staff to help with participant engagement; implementing provider performance incentive payments to incentivize outcomes achieving living wages, full-time status, and employer offered health benefits; and training staff on strategies to support rapid eligibility determination.

Notable progress has been made in reducing the time between application and eligibility, and between eligibility and development of the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Since program year 2020 the average number of days between applicant and eligibility has decreased by seven days. Since program year 2020, the average number of days between eligibility and IPE has decreased by six days.

While average wages have increased by 22% between PY20 and PY22, the total number of participants exiting with employment has decreased. The table below outlines the average weekly work hours, average hourly wage, and total employment exits. Employment exits increased from PY20 to PY21 by 31% but then decreased between PY21 and PY22 by 7%. Weekly work hours remained largely stable, while average wages increased from \$12.31 in PY20 to \$15.10 in PY22.

Program Year	2020	2021	2022
Average Weekly Work Hours	25.2	25.1	24.9
Average Hourly Wage	\$12.31	\$12.85	\$15.10
Total Employment Exits	1,200	1,570	1,454

GOAL 2: Improve capacity to serve VR eligible individuals

Priority 2.1: Identify and implement strategies to improve staff capacity to serve eligible individuals, including improved recruitment through use of interns in VR field offices, outreach to colleges and universities, or other strategies; and improved retention through implementation of strategies to improve VR staff job satisfaction such as improved communication and training to staff, and increased opportunities for staff to participate in special projects and workgroups in areas that match their interests. At least one recruitment and retention strategy will be implemented annually during PY20-23.

Outcome 2.1: Achieved. Staff retention has increased substantially over the last few years, with only 4.5% of VR Counselor positions vacant as of July 2023 (2.5% vacant as of November 2023). During the first two years of the state plan period, VR initiated the Discovery Cohort, a project involving numerous VR staff who are evaluating the current discovery services and expectations, identifying best practices as well as areas of improvement, and conducting small pilots in their local areas. Additionally, VR created a new VR Counselor specialty position with a focus on serving VR participants in postsecondary training. Indiana VR was selected to present

at a national conference to share staff recruitment/retention and satisfaction strategies due to the significant strides accomplished with Indiana VR staffing. In PY22, VR staff compensation increases were implemented, reflecting approximately a 38% increase in starting salary for a VR Counselor position.

Priority 2.2: Spending patterns have changed during the pandemic due to reduced applicants and vendors pausing services, resulting in increased carryover funding. VR will strategically invest increased carryover to fill service gaps and expand services to more eligible individuals. VR aims to release at least 1,000 individuals from the order of selection waiting list annually during PY22-23, while sustaining our improved staff capacity, and implement at least two innovative strategies to address service gaps such as enhanced benefits and work incentives counseling.

Outcome 2.2: Achieved. VR has released over 3000 individuals from the order of selection waitlist since January 2021, and opened priority category 2 in July 2023 after reducing the waitlist for that priority category to zero. Enhancements to benefits counseling services were implemented in PY21, which included implementation of supplemental benefits and work incentives counseling services to enhance the current benefits information network. Employment service provide rate increases were also implemented in PY21. Additionally, VR has added 13 new VR Counselor positions to support sustained VR staffing capacity.

Priority 2.3: Continue streamlining efforts such as ongoing system modernization including enhancements to the VR Claims Payment System, exploration of a streamlined referral process with core WIOA programs, and review of VR rules and processes to identify opportunities for reduced administrative burden. At least one streamlining effort will be implemented annually during PY20-PY23.

Outcome 2.3: Achieved. VR implemented additional improvements to both the VR case management system (Aware) and the VR Claims Payment System (CPS), streamlining administrative processes for both VR staff and vendors. One example is the implementation of DocuSign to allow for better ease of capturing signatures from participants. The process for conducting quarterly follow up activities was also significantly streamlined through full implementation of the SWIS agreement with DWD, enabling VR to meet federal requirements with reduced burden on field staff. Enhancements to the Pre-ETS portal were also implemented to improve program monitoring and internal controls. VR also implemented an online application and is targeting its outreach on this mode of application to transition aged youth and stakeholders. Since the release of the online application VR receives on average 50 applications a month. A new Learning Management System was implemented which improved access to web-based learning modules for staff who use screen readers or other assistive technology. VR modernized the provider directory by using Salesforce. Participants can access the provider directory to assist in informed choice in selecting an employment service provider. Additional BRS programs, including Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services and the Business Enterprise Program, also achieved modernization in information technology, including an online interpreter scheduling platform for DHHS and a new BEP licensed manger portal for the BEP program.

GOAL 3: Enhance collaboration with a variety of partners to ensure that job seekers with disabilities have access to a variety of pathways to employment

Priority 3.1: Continue collaboration with core WIOA partners through strategies such as implementation of a combined state plan, maintaining and enhancing written partnership agreements, implementing Indiana's SWIS agreement, joint participation in special projects such as Department of Labor training and technical assistance projects to promote increase employment for individuals with mental health conditions, and other efforts. At least one new or enhanced collaboration effort will be achieved annually in PY20-PY23.

Outcome 3.1: Achieved. In addition to collaboration on development of the combined state plan, VR partnered at the local level with several workforce regions to implement a shared scheduling software to streamline the referral process across VR and other workforce programs. Annual agreements for infrastructure funding also continued and the JAG agreement was significantly enhanced to target services to a larger population of students with disabilities. The percent of students served through JAG who have a disability has increased from 5% to 20%. VR has continued to partner with DMHA as mentioned above on an IPS early adopter project, and has developed an interagency agreement.

Priority 3.2: Continue to build capacity for business engagement through implementation of new and innovative strategies and partnerships. Strategies may include distribution of a toolkit for businesses with helpful resources for hiring job seekers with disabilities, ongoing and continued education to workforce development boards on improving opportunities for employment for individuals with disabilities, enhancing resources such as a dedicated VR webpage for businesses, providing training to stakeholders including employment service providers, coordinating with the Governor's Council for Persons with Disabilities to amplify their awareness campaigns and education events during National Disability Awareness Month and National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), and increasing partnerships at the local, state, and national level. At least one new or enhanced strategy will be implemented annually PY20-PY23.

Outcome 3.2: Achieved. The Business & Community Engagement team supports employers by providing resources around the employment of persons with disabilities and creating an inclusive workplace. This is accomplished through the provision of resources and information via a dedicated webpage (FSSA: DDRS: Business and Community Engagement), on social media (Twitter and Facebook), and in person. The team attends networking events and resource fairs around the state; shares information with internal staff about employer partners and employment/work experience/internship opportunities and provides training as requested. Opportunities to present to large groups of employers via sponsored events by local human resources professional groups like SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) and local business networking groups like area chambers of commerce have proven to be quality outreach activities that can lead to long-term employer connections. The engagement team also participates in monthly coalition meetings in communities around the state that bring employers and jobseekers together to facilitate connections between those employers and job seekers. Connecting with and engaging employers who are actively seeking to hire individuals with disabilities is a key priority of these coalitions and it has proven to be successful.

Priority 3.3: Identify best practices in the delivery of required Pre-ETS activities such as incorporation of the LifeCourse Framework, and identify areas of growth such as increased focus on career and technical education for students with disabilities and collaboration with Department of Education on a new student portfolio and graduation pathway requirements, and

increased access to paid work experiences. Enhance Pre-ETS coordinating activities through increased transition efforts of VR staff including dedicated VR Youth Counselors. Enhance the Memorandum of Understanding with DWD to increase participation of students with disabilities in the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program. Ensure that 15% of VR federal funds are earmarked for Pre-ETS each federal fiscal year and increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS annually. Increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS who apply for VR services in PY22-23.

Outcome 3.3: Achieved. VR met the 15% reserve requirement for both FFY 2021 and 2022. This was due to a number of strategies including increased availability of stipends to support paid work experiences for students with disabilities, our continued JAG partnership, increased summer programming for students, and an authorized activity contract that supports FEAT (Family Employment Awareness Training) among other items. JAG continues to successfully serve students with disabilities through pre-ETS funding. Prior to access to Pre-ETS funding, 4% of students participating in JAG had an IEP or 504 plan. As of this writing, 20% of JAG Indiana students have an IEP or 504. Additionally, the overall 2022 graduation rate for students with disabilities was 76.41%, while those students with disabilities enrolled in JAG had a graduation rate of 93%. A series of training modules has been developed and are now available to Pre-ETS career coaches that cover topics such as effective community-based instruction, effective partnerships with schools, improving access to underserved populations and other topics. In addition, VR partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG), in creating a Pre-ETS toolkit to assist career coaches in accessing resources and developing quality activities including improving collaboration with schools, lesson plans and skill-building exercises and other online resources. The percent of students receiving Pre-ETS who apply for VR services was 9% as of the end of PY22, compared to 5% at the beginning of PY21, which represents some growth but continued growth is needed in this area.

Priority 3.4: Continue collaboration with other state agencies, such as participation in key advisory groups for BDS especially as it pertains to competitive integrated employment, co-leading the IPS early adopter project with DMHA, and collaboration with other state agencies in the implementation of Employment First philosophy in Indiana in alignment with the Employment First Act. Increase opportunities for targeted local partnership such as enhanced collaboration with 14c facilities, local workforce programs, community mental health centers, local schools, and others. Increased collaboration may improve education and awareness across organizations, create opportunities for shared participants or shared service costs, and increase referrals to VR. At least one new collaborative partnership will be achieved annually in PY20-PY23.

Outcome 3.4: Achieved. VR further enhanced collaboration with DMHA throughout the state plan period, culminating in implementation of IPS early adopter sites. This collaboration has been expanded to include representation from the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning, which has been crucial in developing guidance on braided and sequenced funding to fiscally support IPS services. BRS Leadership participation in a Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN) assessment with the Division of Disability and Rehabilitation Services and Bureau of Disabilities services, to identify areas of strength and areas of improvement. BRS and BDS are also working on strategies for streamlined application and eligibility processes across both programs to better serve mutual participants. VR and the state's Adult Education program

provided cross-training to staff, revealing opportunities to braid services to better support participants across both programs.

Evaluation and Reports of Progress: Supported Employment

Goal 1: VR Supported Employment providers will increase knowledge and skills on the provision of supported employment services, including greater understanding and focus on development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, customized employment, and strategies for achieving stabilization on the job. BRS will invest in training for supported employment providers including classroom-based, web-based, and hands-on workshops that focus on job coaching and job readiness training techniques. BRS will examine strategies for improvement of community rehabilitation providers to ensure capacity to carry out increased expectations under the new model, such as provision of funding for Establishment projects. At least one new training strategy will be implemented annually, such as micro-training or innovative hands-on training opportunities.

Outcome: Achieved. Provider training was enhanced with the addition of mentoring/coaching to supplement classroom-based training. Additionally, BRS continued to support establishment projects through the end of the 4-year project period. During the final year of the establishment project period, 2398 individuals received supported employment services, compared to a baseline 774 individuals receiving supported employment prior to project start. Lunch and learns have been provided throughout the last two years to provide short, but impactful training on a variety of topics including serving individuals with multiple disabilities.

Goal 2: BRS will implement strategies to increase the quality of outcomes for individuals receiving supported employment services. There will be a 10% increase in average wages for individuals exiting VR after receiving supported employment services by the end of the state plan period. Baseline PY20 average wages for individuals receiving supported employment services was \$10.10.

Outcome: Achieved. Average wages for individuals receiving supported employment services increased by 16% from PY20 to PY22. The table below outlines average weekly work hours and average wages for VR participants who received supported employment services, as well as total number and percent of employment outcomes that were participants who received supported employment services. Average weekly work hours have remained relatively stable, while average hourly wages have increased each year. The percentage of individuals exiting VR with employment who received employment services was 40% in PY20 and 41% in PY21 and PY22.

Program Year	2020	2021	2022
Average Weekly Work Hours	20.3	21.3	20.4
Average Hourly Wages	\$10.10	\$10.58	\$11.71
Employment Outcomes who received Supported Employment	476 / 40%	644 / 41%	597 / 41%

2. PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR, REFLECTING ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE. EXPLAIN ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS; AND

VR made necessary modifications to the data collection system to ensure new required data elements are tracked and collected, including post-exit data, and all data is included in the submission of quarterly RSA-911 reports. The goals outlined above helped to drive performance regarding median wages and employment rates, as well as measurable skill gains and credential attainment. In 2020, VR improved collection of data related to measurable skill gains and postsecondary credential attainment, with technical assistance from WINTAC. A webinar was held with statewide VR management staff to improve training and guidance to field staff on data collection needs related to core performance measures. VR is tracking employer engagement data in DWD's INGage system, a joint effort with DWD. Tracking data for employer engagement in a single system across WIOA core programs allows for efficient and robust reporting of outcomes for this core performance indicator.

Outcome: BRS exceeded negotiated levels of performance for employment rate second quarter after exit, and employment rate fourth quarter after exit, at 60.4% (negotiated 51.3%) and 57.9% (negotiated 48.3%) respectively. BRS' actual median earnings level exceeded the negotiated rate at \$3,561.54 (negotiated \$3,431). Additionally, BRS exceeded the negotiated performance level for credential rate with actual performance of 47.7% compared to the negotiated level of 20%. Finally, measurable skill gains exceeded negotiated level of performance at 65.2% (negotiated 63.8%). In summary, BRS exceeded all performance accountability indicators negotiated levels for PY22.

Program year 22	Negotiated	Actual	Result
Employment Rate Q2	51.3%	60.4%	exceeded
Employment Rate Q4	48.3%	57.9%	exceeded
Median Earnings	\$3,431	\$3,561.54	exceeded
Credential Rate	20%	47.7%	exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	63.8%	65.2%	exceeded

BRS has made notable improvement in performance in common performance measures as presented in the table below, which outlines performance from PY20 through PY22:

Program year	2020	2021	2022
Employment Rate Q2	47.9%	56.0%	60.4%
Employment Rate Q4	45.0%	51.4%	57.9%
Median Earnings	\$3,082	\$3,448	\$3,561.54
Credential Rate	13.5%	34.5%	47.7%
Measurable Skill Gains	63.7%	63.5%	65.2%

3. THE USE OF FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES (SECTIONS 101(A)(18) AND 101(A)(23) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT) (E.G., SRC, SILC).

VR continued to support the Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council (INSILC) with I&E funds. These funds support the council in carrying out their core functions and meet goals outlined in the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The State Rehabilitation Counselor is also supported by BRS, including through the provision of communication accommodations, e.g., CART for public meetings and BRS personnel time for the coordination of council materials including meeting materials and the Annual Report. VR has also maintained a business and community engagement Director who has a presence across Indiana to share resources and educate businesses about opportunities to employ individuals with disabilities. She also provides technical assistance to VR staff to support local business engagement efforts.

E. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS, AND ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF TITLE VI FUNDS:

(A) VR agency requests to receive title VI funds.

2. IF THE VR AGENCY HAS ELECTED TO RECEIVE TITLE VI FUNDS, SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRES VR AGENCIES TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. DESCRIBE THE USE OF TITLE VI FUNDS AND HOW THEY WILL BE USED IN MEETING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

Please see section C. Goals, Priorities, and Strategies, item 2D for Supported Employment goals.

Indiana receives approximately \$350,000/year of Title VI B funds to provide supported employment (SE) services. VR has made a commitment to serve people with the most significant disabilities and also utilizes Title I dollars to serve this population. VR spent more than \$3M million on hourly SE services and \$4.7M on '4-week support' and 'retention' milestone payments for individuals with a most significant disability in PY22, for a total of \$7.7M on supported employment services in PY22. 2,396 participants received supported employment services in PY22. The table below outlines SE expenditures and participants served for the last three completed performance years. Total SE expenses have increased from just under \$6M in PY20 to \$7.7M in PY22, with total served ranging from 2,168 to 2,508 during the last three performance years. It should be noted that SE spend occurs only after an individual is placed, so all expenditures and participants served represent individuals who were employed.

Program year	2020	2021	2022
Supported Employment	\$2,293,358	\$2,586,744	\$3,006,612
4-week support	\$2,710,00	\$3,088,000	\$2,874,000

Program year	2020	2021	2022
Retention milestone	\$971,000	\$1,572,500	\$1,825,350
Grand Total	\$5,974,458	\$7,247,244	\$7,705,962
Participant Count	2,168	2,508	2,396

Supported employment services are carried out by accredited employment service providers and follow requirements outlined in the VR employment services manual.

For participants with intellectual/developmental disabilities eligible for services under the Bureau of Disabilities Services (BDS), VR works collaboratively with BDS to provide SE services and seamless transition to extended services. The initial job placement, training and supports needed for stabilization are typically provided through VR. Extended Services through BDS, natural supports or Medicaid Rehabilitation Option funding, provide additional work-related supports needed by the individual to continue to be as independent as possible in competitive, integrated employment. For BDS participants, ongoing employment support services are identified in the participants' Individualized Support Plan and must be related to the participants' limitations in functional areas (i.e., self-care, understanding and use of language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency), as are necessary to maintain employment. As an individual reaches stabilization on the job, VR initiates documentation to BDS to facilitate transfer to extended services, ensuring this documentation is provided at least 60 days prior to expected transition to extended services, helping prevent any gap in receipt of needed supports as an individual transitions to VR exit. Extended Services are provided in competitive, integrated settings where persons without disabilities are also employed. Extended Services do not include sheltered work or other similar types of vocational services furnished in specialized facilities or volunteer endeavors.

BRS also worked in collaboration with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction and Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning to develop written guidance on the utilization of Medicaid Rehabilitation Option (MRO) to support individuals in extended services. The braiding of VR and MRO funding has been critical in the implementation of early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) sites.

VR provides funding for extended services for youth with a most significant disability, for up to 4 years, for individuals who are not BDS eligible or do not have another means of obtaining necessary extended services. Joint training was provided in early 2019 to both VR and employment service provider staff on VR-funded extended services, including the process for requesting services, documentation requirements, and criteria for receipt of services.

3. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MAY BE PROVIDED WITH TITLE 1 OR TITLE VI FUNDS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(22) AND SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, DESCRIBE THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES; AND THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

Indiana's Supported Employment (SE) services are highly individualized and involve ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with the most significant disability (MSD), including youth with the most significant disabilities, in SE for a period of time that generally does not exceed 24 months. Such services, such as job coaching, are for individuals who have SE and long-term supports identified on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Often, because of the nature and severity of the individuals' disability, there is a need for extended services that are provided by a State agency, private nonprofit organization, natural supports, or any other appropriate resources that are funded outside of VR. VR funding is available for the provision of extended services to Youth with a MSD, for a period not to exceed four years (unless a longer period is established in the IPE). Extended services would typically begin once the youth has exhausted 24 months of SE services and is not eligible for extended services through other sources.

Eligible VR participants with a MSD obtain SE services through accredited Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) across the state. SE services are provided from the time of job placement through achievement of stabilization and retention (90 days after stabilization). The expected outcome of SE services is to ensure that stabilization on the job has appropriately occurred after a period of gradually decreasing needed supports and a correlated demonstration of increased independence. The intensive level of support needs should be well-documented by the CRPs in the Employment Support and Retention Plan, and the expectation of fading (i.e., decreasing the amount of support as a consumer becomes more proficient in completing job duties) is important to reach optimal independence. VR acknowledges that fading of supports may not always occur in a completely linear process, and levels of SE support may ebb and flow depending on the needs of the individual. However, a pattern of increased independence and reduced need for support (fading) should be evident prior to the identification that stabilization has occurred for an individual needing SE services. More specifics regarding Supported Employment may be found in the Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Manual of Employment Services at www.vrs.in.gov.

BRS administers two Title VI grants: Supported Employment which is 100% federal and is used for the provision of supported employment services for eligible individuals of any age; and Supported Employment for Youth which requires a 10% non-federal match provided by BRS, and supports the provision of supported employment services specifically for eligible youth, including extended services for youth. BRS adheres to limits on the use of SE grant funds for administrative costs, typically using 100% of SE grant funds for direct service provision.

4. SECTIONS 101(A)(22) AND 606(B)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRE THE VR AGENCY TO DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND ARRANGE, INCLUDING ENTERING INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. THE DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE EXTENDED SERVICES, AS APPLICABLE, TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 363.4(A) AND 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(C)(19)(V).

It is critical that early conversations take place regarding the anticipated need for extended services between VR, the participant and the CRP to begin planning for the transition to extended services, including the possibility of VR funding youth extended services if no other

(or inadequate) funding sources are available. It is important to recognize the impact that a good job match with appropriate and intensive ongoing supports may have on the amount and type of extended services an individual may need long term in order to maintain his/her job. It is also valuable to begin identifying and exploring natural supports an individual may have available to him/her early in the process. When it has been determined that a participant is approaching stabilization on the job, the process to transition to extended services begins, and this process must identify the participant's ongoing specific need(s), types of supports and services, the sources of extended services, and the projected number of hours of support needed. VR Counselors are required to assist in facilitating the seamless transition to extended services funded by other entities, prior to VR case closure. The Stabilization Notification form is completed for VR participants who require extended services. VR and CRP personnel work jointly to complete this document, which is subsequently provided to entities providing extended services, e.g., Bureau of Development Disability Services, at least 60 days prior to the anticipated transition date to extended services.

VR administration continues to focus on the need to ensure quality SE service; as such services are essential in securing quality employment outcomes for those participants with MSD. VR will continue to work closely with the Bureau of Disabilities Services, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction, and CRPs to identify areas of concern, implement needed changes in practices, and provide training and/or technical assistance.

CRPs who meet accreditation requirements as outlined in Indiana code, may register as VR employment service vendors. During this registration process, accreditation requirements are verified and the specific services the vendor will provide are identified. Vendors may request registration for the provision of Supported Employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities and extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities. Once approved by BRS as meeting all criteria to be a registered vendor for these services, a vendor agreement is generated which outlines vendor requirements and responsibilities. Upon client informed choice of vendor selection and inclusion of SE and/or extended services on the IPE, the VR case management system will allow authorizations for SE and extended services to be issued only to vendors who are approved to provide these services through the vendor registration process.

BRS has also developed a written agreement with the In Bureau of Disabilities Services, the state entity that manages several home and community based waivers, including for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The agreement outlines responsibilities for each program and areas of collaboration, including sustaining a process for the transition of individuals to BDS funded long term supports, as well as collaboration in the provision of training to BRS and BDS staff, providers and case managers on the transition process.

F. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

1. ESTIMATES FOR NEXT FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR—

A. VR PROGRAM; AND

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
Category 1 MSD	10,139	10,139	\$27,466,355	0
Category 2 SD	1,599	1,599	\$4,331,598	0
Category 3 all other eligible	1,582	1,582	\$4,285,348	0
Total	13,320	13,320	\$36,083,301	0

B. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
Category 1 MSD	2,396	2,396	\$7,705,962	0

G. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. PURSUANT TO SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, THIS DESCRIPTION MUST BE AMENDED WHEN THE VR AGENCY DETERMINES, BASED ON THE ANNUAL ESTIMATES DESCRIBED IN DESCRIPTION (F), THAT VR SERVICES CANNOT BE PROVIDED TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR AND ARE DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

The VR agency is not implementing an order of selection and all eligible individuals will be served.

2. FOR VR AGENCIES THAT HAVE DEFINED PRIORITY CATEGORIES DESCRIBE—

A. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

Indiana began operating under an order of selection August 1, 2017 due to a deficit of staffing and fiscal resources, as approved by RSA through a State Plan amendment. Priority category 1 remained open, while priority categories 2 and 3 were closed from August 2017 through early July 2023. Priority category 2 opened July 5, 2023, and priority category 3 opened October 7, 2024. IN VR is no longer operating under an order of selection as of October 2024.

B. THE ORDER (PRIORITY CATEGORIES) TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

BRS continues to assess level of severity for eligible individuals to determine assigned priority category. Priority categories are as follows:

- Priority Category 1: Individuals determined to have a most significant disability (MSD);
- Priority Category 2: Individuals determined to have a significant disability (SD); and,
- Priority Category 3: All other eligible individuals (Individuals determined to have a non-significant disability (NSD)).

MSD: An individual who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits three or more functional capacities (communication, interpersonal skills, mobility, self-care, self-direction, work skills, or work tolerance) in terms of an employment outcome, requires multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time, and has one or more physical or mental disabilities determined to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

SD: An individual who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (communication, interpersonal skills, mobility, self-care, self-direction, work skills, or work tolerance) in terms of an employment outcome and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

NSD: All other VR eligible individuals.

C. THE VR AGENCY'S GOALS FOR SERVING INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, INCLUDING HOW THE AGENCY WILL ASSIST ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED TO CLOSED PRIORITY CATEGORIES WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRAL, THE METHOD IN WHICH THE VR AGENCY WILL MANAGE WAITING LISTS, AND THE PROJECTED TIMELINES FOR OPENING PRIORITY CATEGORIES. NOTE: PRIORITY CATEGORIES ARE CONSIDERED OPEN WHEN ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE PRIORITY CATEGORY MAY BE SERVED.

All priority categories were open as of October 2024. There are no closed categories and no individuals on waiting lists as of that date.

3. HAS THE VR AGENCY ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE OF THE ORDER OF SELECTION WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT?

Not at this time. VR is in process of promulgating new rules which will provide authority for BRS to serve eligible individuals outside of the order of selection (when an OOS is in place) who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

H. WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS.

The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive compliance with this requirement in accordance with Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of statewideness or has a previously approved waiver of statewideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of statewideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of statewideness, please indicate “not applicable.”

Not applicable. Project Search is a model that was adopted by BRS many years ago, and is described elsewhere in the State Plan. VR supports this model solely through provision of fee-for-services to support participants. In other words, VR provides funding for clients to participate. While most project search sites do not typically offer wages or stipends to participants (usually students) for completion of work experience opportunities as part of project search, Indiana has one site that targets young adults and the host business partners do offer wages to participants. While Project Search is not available statewide, access to VR funded work experiences and internships (paid or unpaid) is available statewide to VR participants.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency’s comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the State VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

1. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PERSONNEL AND PROJECTED PERSONNEL NEEDS INCLUDING—

A. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

B. THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF PERSONNEL THAT ARE EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING RATIOS OF QUALIFIED VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS;

C. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS

BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

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A. The number and type of personnel that are employed by the VR agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, including ratios of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors to clients

There are currently 346 positions in BRS, further detailed in the table under 1C below. As of July 2023, the average Caseload Counselor to participant ratio is approximately 1:75, however in some areas of the state, caseloads are as high as 100 or more, and most office Supervisors are also carrying caseloads at this time. Additionally, the large majority of these cases are individuals with most significant disabilities given that two of three priority categories were closed between August 1, 2017 and July 5, 2023. Average caseload sizes are anticipated to increase over the next one to two years due to opening a second priority category in July 2023 and targeting the opening of the third priority category by end of calendar year 2024, as well as an increasing trend in applications.

B. The number of personnel currently needed by the VR agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category

See table under item C below

C. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the VR agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	179	183	200
Working Lead VR Counselors	8	8	9
VR Youth Counselors	10	10	10
VR Area Supervisors	25	25	26
VR Region Managers	5	5	5
BRS Leadership/Admin	8	8	9
VR Case Coordinators	64	66	70

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
VR Area Secretaries	17	19	19
Blind/Deaf programs	4	5	5
Other Central Office	14	16	17
Business Engagement Staff	1	1	6
Total	335	346	376

D. RATIO OF QUALIFIED VR COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS:

As of July 2023, the average Caseload Counselor to participant ratio is approximately 1:75. That caseload ratio does not support sustained growth in the number of VR participants. Therefore, increased staffing is anticipated to be necessary over the next two years, including new VR Counselors. Some of those positions are needed more quickly to address current areas of high volume.

E. PROJECTED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED IN 5 YEARS:

VR projects an increase in the number of individuals served over the next five years due to several factors, including a planned end to the order of selection in CY24, an increasing trend in the number of VR applicants (10% increase from PY21 to PY22), targeted outreach efforts to transition aged youth, and special projects such as BRS' Disability Innovation Fund SE+ grant. BRS projects serving at least 16,000 individuals in PY28.

2. DATA AND INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

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Indiana does not have any CACREP Accredited Rehabilitation master's programs in the state, and therefore there are 0 graduates to report. VR staff are encouraged to pursue online rehabilitation counselor preparation programs through out-of-state institutions which are CACREP-approved.

VR encourages students studying in related fields to participate in internships with the VR agency and believes this to be a valuable recruiting practice. VR will continue to work with local universities to increase the number of interns with hopes of increasing the recruitment pool for vacant VR Counselor positions.

Due to the lack of accredited rehabilitation graduate programs in Indiana and historic challenges in recruiting qualified candidates for VR Counselor positions, BRS modified its minimum educational requirements for VR Counselor positions after WIOA was passed. Current minimum qualifications include a bachelor's degree in rehabilitation or a related area along with at least one year of related experience. Prior to this significant change, the minimum requirement was a master's degree in Rehabilitation or related area.

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

B. THE VR AGENCY'S PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, WHICH ADDRESSES THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL; AND THE COORDINATION AND FACILITATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO RECRUIT, PREPARE, AND RETAIN PERSONNEL WHO ARE QUALIFIED, INCLUDING PERSONNEL FROM MINORITY BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONNEL WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Over the last 10 years, BRS has implemented several recruitment, training and retention strategies, with great success as staffing retention has reduced significantly. Only 2.5% of VR Counselors positions are vacant as of November 2023 (4 positions). These strategies included a comprehensive restructuring of the field services staffing model, including the addition of the VR Case Coordinator role to ensure that the VR Counselor role is focused primarily on rehabilitation counseling and guidance. Further restructuring included the addition of 7 working lead VR Counselors to help cover caseloads tied to vacant positions and mentor newly hired VR Counselors, which has recently been increased to 8 working leads. VR further adjusted its staffing model by shifting VR Counselors to either a designated role of performing intakes/application and eligibility/disability priority determination, or a designated role of IPE development and service planning/implementation and placement. All new VR staff complete training to understand the full spectrum of VR services, from referral to closure, however Intake and Eligibility VR Counselors receive additional training around eligibility determination and disability priority category assignments. Likewise, Caseload Counselors receive additional training on development of quality IPEs, as well as more in-depth training on VR services, such as postsecondary service provision. This ensures that all VR Counselors have a core set of knowledge and skills to perform their role as a qualified VR Counselor, with further depth of knowledge in their area of specialization, e.g., eligibility.

All of these changes increased job satisfaction and created advancement opportunities, and the designation of Intake/Eligibility v. Caseload VR Counselor role also improved efficiency and timeliness of eligibility determination and IPE development, and created a higher level of specialization of Counselors within each role. An initial wage increase was implemented in 2019 for VR staff, with a second compensation adjustment in 2022. With these changes, staff retention improved substantially, from over 50% turnover of VR Counselors in 2016 down to about 13.5% at the end of 2023.

VR also expanded training and professional development for VR staff, expanding from 1 training position to a 3-member training team. The team has improved and restructured training for new and seasoned VR staff, incorporating more engaging training strategies such as use of short videos and interactive activities. VR Counselor working leads and VR Area Supervisors are also important players in the training of new staff from a 'boots on the ground' level. Seasoned Counselors also provide training as a peer, such as providing opportunities for job shadowing.

VR has a long-standing history of hiring qualified candidates from minority backgrounds as well as individuals with disabilities for all BRS positions, including VR Counselors, support staff, and management roles. The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the DDRS/BRS umbrella agency, has updated the agency Affirmative Action plan. Additionally, VR is participating in FSSA Equity initiatives which are designed to promote diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility efforts, including hiring a more diverse workforce. VR Counselors also share openings as appropriate with VR participants and VR has hired several former participants into VR positions, including VR Counselor positions.

BRS has a long history of hiring VR staff with disabilities. A survey conducted by State Personnel in 2022 reflected that approximately 40% of BRS staff consider themselves to be an individual with a disability.

C. DESCRIPTION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY RECEIVE APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS:

I. PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

II. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO VR AGENCY PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS AND FOR PROVIDING TRAINING REGARDING THE AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT MADE BY THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

i. Particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998

VR continues to assess training methods and curriculum in order to make necessary improvements to the development and delivery of training for staff, specifically new VR

Counselors. Counselor training needs are assessed through survey, dialogue, supervisor recommendations, staff feedback, and agency directives. VR has a dedicated statewide training director to oversee all training initiatives, obtaining ongoing feedback from a variety of staff to work toward continuous improvement in the development and delivery of training. In early 2022, the VR training team was expanded to also include a VR Training Assistant Director as well as a Training Coordinator, taking the team from 1 to 3 staff.

Training is provided through a variety of modalities, including regional trainings, webinars, and in-person workshops. VR is utilizing the YesLMS learning management system for web-based modules for new and seasoned VR staff. The training team has developed a series of new customized training courses for new and more seasoned Counselors and has utilized existing courses in the YesLMS training library to augment the customized training developed. For new Counselors, a training plan has been developed to include 8 weeks of training activities in addition to the YesLMS courses, including video tutorials on the case management system and other relevant topics.

In addition to formal classroom style or web-based training, a great deal of mentoring and coaching occurs at the local level, especially for new staff. Supervisors and Itinerant (working lead) VR Counselors play a large role in coaching new staff and will continue to be a key part of new staff training. BRS established VR Counseling and Guidance Cohorts to focus on the essentials of counseling and guidance throughout the VR process. These are small groups of 5-10 newer VR staff who work with a skilled facilitator and other trainees through a series of sessions, under the supervision of a senior or management-level staff member who has a graduate degree in Rehabilitation or other counseling area, or is certified or licensed as a counselor.

ii. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to VR agency professionals and paraprofessionals and for providing training regarding the amendments to the Rehabilitation Act made by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

VR also accesses training and resources offered by partners, including the statewide Assistive Technology IN-DATA program which offers 'first Friday' AT webinars specifically for VR staff as well as trainings from the VRTAC-QE, VRTAC-QM, and the Center for Innovative Training in VR (CIT-VR). State and national subject matter experts are frequently invited to present to VR staff through Friday field chats, webinars, and other training modes. Example topic areas have included Adult Education, labor market information, postsecondary services, disability specific content, cultural diversity, and more. Many VR staff are also supported in attending state and national conferences and trainings to obtain relevant content, such as vehicle modifications, traumatic brain injury, program evaluation, transition services, and related. A weekly communications 'Blast' is also distributed to all staff to provide timely information and helpful resources. Furthermore, VR meets regularly with staff through weekly leadership team meetings which include VR region managers and the training team, quarterly supervisor meetings, and quarterly regional meetings with all VR field staff. These meetings have proven to be a great method of information sharing, opportunities to solicit feedback, clarification of procedures and practices, and insight into areas of concern.

The VR training team worked directly with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) in developing training material using the YesLMS platform to educate VR and DWD field

on WIOA program involvement. This included development of three courses to be completed by both VR and DWD staff on collaboration and coordination between workforce programs, VR, and Adult Education. Additionally, VR is contracting with ten WIOA Partner Navigators to help VR participants navigate programs available through regional Work One or American Job Centers, while also assisting Work One participants in accessing the VR program.

3. DESCRIPTION OF VR AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B) TO ENSURE THAT VR AGENCY PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND PREPARED, INCLUDING—

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

A. Standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services

While Indiana BRS does not require any specific certification, licensing, or registration, BRS has several staff who are Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC). There are currently 17 VR staff who hold a CRC, with 4 additional staff enrolled in master's in rehabilitation counseling programs who plan pursue the CRC credential. Of the 200 current VR counselor positions, 5 have their CRC. VR also has 2 certified region managers, 5 certified area supervisors, and 5 individuals on the Central Office team who are CRC's. As there are no CACREP accredited rehabilitation programs in Indiana, BRS modified the minimum VR Counselor qualifications to ensure a sufficient talent pipeline to fill VR Counselor positions. Those minimum qualifications are detailed below under item B of this section of the state plan. As many VR Counselors do not come to BRS with a Rehabilitation degree, BRS has built a robust training process to ensure that new VR Counselor training fills any education gaps. Those training requirements are outlined throughout this section of the state plan.

B. The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Current VR Counselor qualifications are as follows:

Master's degree from an accredited university in rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation administration, counseling and guidance, social work, special education, sociology, audiology, education, speech pathology, or a closely related human service area or certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) is preferred;

OR

In lieu of a master's degree, a bachelor's degree from an accredited university in rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation administration, counseling and guidance, social work, special education, sociology, psychology, audiology, education, speech pathology, or a closely related human service area or certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC); AND

Demonstrated paid or unpaid experience, for not less than (1) one year, consisting of:

- Direct work with individuals with disabilities in a setting such as an independent living center;
- Direct service or advocacy activities that provide such individual with experience and skills in working with individuals with disabilities; or
- Direct experience as an employer, as a small business owner or operator, or in self-employment, or other experience in human resources, recruitment, or experience in supervising employees, training, or other activities that provide experience in competitive integrated employment environments.

Other preferred experience includes:

- Vocational counseling skills, motivational interviewing skills, or related counseling skills
- Awareness of cultural diversity, medical and psychological aspects of disability, counseling theories, assessment tools, job development and placement, Rehabilitation Act, ADA, IDEA, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, other state/federal programs, DWD programs, rehabilitation technology, economic and labor market trends, community organizations, and financial aid.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, creativity, problem-solving, evaluation of services, and time management skills.
- Ability to communicate with diverse populations, flexibility, handling multiple tasks, maintaining professional demeanor, and ability to empathize.
- Ability to interpret psychological/medical evaluation reports and medical terminology.
- Familiarity with Assistive Technology and how to access AT services.
- Knowledge of local community and statewide resources preferred.
- Knowledge of local and statewide job market preferred.
- Willingness to obtain necessary continuing training/education for CRC maintenance, or if not a CRC willingness to work toward becoming eligible to sit for CRC examination.

Since there are no accredited rehabilitation education programs in the state, BRS identified a need to modify VR Counselor minimum qualifications as outlined above to ensure a sufficient pipeline of qualified applicants. To sustain a high-quality VR Counselor workforce, the training process for new Counselors has also been enhanced, along with continuing education requirements for all VR Counselors, to ensure staff stay up-to-date on the evolving needs of individuals with disabilities. Individuals hired as VR Counselors that do not have a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or CRC must complete a robust training process, with oversight by the VR Training Team and the local Supervisor. These staff enter as VR Counselor

Trainees and perform their work under the supervision of the VR area supervisor or VR working lead Counselor until they have completed initial training and demonstrated the necessary progression in performance of VR Counselor responsibilities to promote to a VR Counselor. They are required to complete 70 clock hours of asynchronous online courses to include, but not limited to, medical and psychological aspects of disability; rehabilitation counseling theory, strategies and techniques; benefits counseling; and assistive technology. Trainees must demonstrate satisfactory completion of these training requirements and satisfactory performance prior to transitioning out of the VRC Trainee role and into the VR Counselor role. This is assessed by the Supervisor and reviewed with the Region Manager at around 8 months from the VR Counselor Trainees start date. The review can be extended for another 3-6 months if training requirements have not been met or satisfactory competency in performing their responsibilities has not been demonstrated.

In addition, VR Counselor Trainees must demonstrate satisfactory counseling and guidance skills through participation in a Counseling and Guidance Cohort, a small group in which Trainees put their newly acquired skills into practice using scenarios and role play exercises, during their first year of employment. The Counseling and Guidance Cohorts are conducted under the supervision of individuals who hold a graduate degree in Rehabilitation or other counseling area, or is certified or licensed as a counselor.

Additionally, all VR Counselors including seasoned staff, are required to complete a minimum of 12 clock hours annually for professional development activities as appropriate and approved by their supervisor.

Through the VR staffing structure outlined in this section including the designation of VR Counselor Trainee from VR Counselor and the designated VR Counselor Specialty roles, e.g., Intake/Eligibility Counselor v. Caseload Counselor; the robust initial training for Trainees; Counseling and Guidance Cohorts; and ongoing professional development for all VR Counselors and Supervisors, VR Counselors are qualified to perform their responsibilities, including non-delegable functions and the authorization and delivery of high quality vocational rehabilitation services. BRS VR Counselors are qualified personnel for purposes of the determinations that must be made in accordance with 34 CFR 361.42(a)(1)(i) and (ii), i.e., that the applicant has a physical or mental impairment, and that the physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment. VR Counselor Trainees, who are not yet considered to meet the standards as qualified personnel, work under the direct supervision of qualified personnel who will review and approve all of their eligibility determinations.

The current hiring qualifications were put into place shortly following the passing of WIOA legislation. VR initially experienced an increased number of qualified applicants for VR Counselor vacancies as well as improved retention. However, with the continuous drop in the unemployment rate and increasingly competitive job market, recruitment challenges continued for several years following WIOA implementation. Over the last year, BRS has experienced much greater success in recruiting qualified applicants, likely attributed to salary increases and other initiatives as described above.

4. METHOD(S) THE VR AGENCY USES TO ENSURE THAT PERSONNEL ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE IN APPROPRIATE MODES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OR IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS OR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY.

VR maintains the ability to communicate with VR participants in their preferred mode of communication in a variety of ways. VR staff access and coordinate foreign language translation, ASL communication, Communication Access Real Time (CART), etc. whenever needed. To ensure communication services are available despite a shortage of some providers (i.e., ASL interpreters, CART providers), VR has increased utilization of remote interpreting services.

VR has VR Counselor Specialists to provide expertise and support for specific populations, including individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, individuals with low vision, and individuals with a traumatic brain injury. VR seeks candidates with some fluency in ASL for Counselor positions supporting participants with hearing loss. The BRS Aware (VR case management system) team has also expanded their understanding of the use of screen readers with JAWS and have provided additional training to VR staff who use screen readers. Accessibility was also a key consideration in identifying a learning management system to improve delivery of web-based training, and as mentioned, BRS began using YESLMS to allow us to further improve accessibility for staff.

VR also accesses language translation services whenever needed for communication with participants who are non-English speaking. Publications and brochures are available in large print and Spanish versions.

5. AS APPROPRIATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

VR has a Director of Youth Services on staff to train and notify VR field staff of best practices, changes and initiatives related to working with transition-aged youth. The Director of Youth Services also collaborates with other agencies, such as Department of Education (DOE) and DWD, to conduct joint training and develop/distribute training materials and other resources. Partners such as the Indiana University Institute on Disability and Community, and Public Consulting Group (PCG) serve as a transition resource to VR and/or DOE and develop and maintain a variety of resources in this area. The Transition Advisory Council serves as an advisory group pertaining to statewide VR transition initiatives, including Pre-ETS and is expanding its scope to serve as the Employment for Youth Advisory Committee to facilitate education and resource sharing based on a needs assessment conducted by BRS and a pre-ets authorized activities contractor. In addition to VR, partners who sit on this group include parent advocates, youth with disabilities, DOE, DWD, local schools, IIDC, VR providers including Pre-ETS providers, Department of Corrections, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), and others.

VR Youth Counselors continue to update their maintenance and expansion plans to identify service and training needs for area VR offices, school staff and providers. In 2023, training was provided to VR staff on improving collaboration with partners around transition, including expectations around the referral process and VR presence in schools through annual meetings, case conferences and transition fairs. This training was designed to increase the number of students applying for VR services, including students receiving Pre-ETS. Material was developed and distributed to all Indiana high schools that describes Pre-ETS activities, how to refer a student to VR and how to reach VR to request attendance by VR at a case conference, transition fair or other meetings or events. This is an area of growth for BRS and data trends on student

applications to VR will be monitored throughout this new state plan period to evaluate the success of the updated referral process and expectations.

J. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act—

1. DESCRIBE PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATION OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THAT ARE DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM THE RECEIPT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES.

Student with a disability definition: includes students in secondary school between the ages of 14 through the school year in which the student becomes 22, who is eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, is an individual with a disability for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or is otherwise a student with a documented disability. Pre-employment transition services may be provided to students who are applicants of or eligible for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program (participants) and students with disabilities who may be potentially eligible for the VR program.

A student aged 14 to 22 years old in the following categories is considered “potentially eligible” for the provision of VR Services, regardless of whether the student has applied for or has been determined eligible for VR services if the student:

- 1. Receives special education services pursuant to 511 IAC 7;*
- 2. Receives accommodations pursuant to a Section 504 plan;*
- 3. Is a student who is an individual with a disability, for purposes of Section 504; or*
- 4. Is a student with a documented disability.*

Indiana VR and key partners continue to collaborate for the purpose of streamlined transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). Ongoing Indiana initiatives and WIOA requirements are aligned for VR to coordinate with Education officials and other key partners (e.g., Department of Workforce Development) to identify the best methods for providing successful transition services to students.

Serving transition-aged students continues to be a priority for VR, even more so with the advent of WIOA and Pre-ETS. Through the efforts of VR’s dedicated transition staff, the Director of Youth Services, the Associate Director of Youth Services, and 10 youth counselors located throughout the state, VR has maintained Pre-ETS in all 92 Indiana counties and is active in approximately 400 schools statewide, serving approximately 8,000 students annually. Education to key stakeholders is a major part of maintaining these Pre-ETS programs. This includes VR staff and contractors providing Pre-ETS across the state, as well as outreach and education to students, parents, educators, and others. This training has included face-to-face meetings with Pre-ETS contractors for the purpose of sharing resources, expectations, and accomplishments, including updated referral information which youth counselors trained

career coaches on and shared with school staff. Training with Pre-ETS contractors has also included webinars to VR staff, parents, and educators, presentations to local school systems, and providing ongoing updates to the statewide VR Transition Advisory Council. The focus of much of this outreach has been to aid in understanding of the importance of and how to access Pre-ETS for students with disabilities across the state. Outreach has also included training to the Department of Child Services on Pre-ETS, traditional VR services and the process for referrals to both. Updated training on Pre-ETS was conducted for JAG instructors throughout the state at their annual JAG training conference. VR continues to work with DOE on improvements to the updated Indiana Career Explorer (INCE) site which will allow Pre-ETS career coaches and VR Counselors to assist students and VR participants in working on job exploration and goal setting.

VR'S 10 youth counselors work in their respective regions throughout the state assisting with transition and Pre-ETS activities. They update maintenance and expansion plans on a quarterly basis focusing on VR area offices, school systems and Pre-ETS contractors and have introduced many positive changes. They have helped to strengthen the referral process and communication in general with VR and many school systems, assisted providers in accessing schools where Pre-ETS was not widely available, and provided numerous trainings and technical assistance to Pre-ETS and transition stakeholders. Updating the maintenance and expansion plan allows the youth counselors to keep current on student enrollment, referrals to VR, and strengths and concerns with transition and Pre-ETS processes. They work closely with all stakeholders to address concerns, highlight strengths, and continually improve processes, procedures and outreach to students and youth with disabilities.

VR, in collaboration with DOE, established a Statewide Transition Advisory Council to identify and address the barriers that continue to impact students with disabilities, and develop and implement strategies and services to make the transition successful for students and youth with disabilities. The VR/DOE MOU was revised in March, 2022 and the Transition Advisory Council continues to serve as the VR/DOE MOU Oversight group and provide input and recommendations into the 5 key oversight areas. These 5 areas are:

1. Reviewing, addressing and facilitating resolution of concerns relating to transition and Pre-ETS for students with disabilities.
2. Supporting joint training for Partner Agency staff to promote mutual understanding of each Partner Agency's systems.
3. Providing professional development and technical assistance to LEAs and VR Area Offices that enhance collaboration and involvement with community-based organizations, employers, employer groups, and other agencies.
4. Developing and implementing processes for sharing appropriate individual or aggregate data and information regarding students with disabilities, who are being served or may potentially be served by a Partner Agency.
5. Identifying ways to provide timely information to students with disabilities and their families regarding specific work incentives and the positive impact of work on government benefits.

The Statewide Transition Advisory Council includes representation from a wide range of key partners and stakeholders, including the following: VR, DOE, local educational agencies' school personnel and administrators, the Bureau of Disabilities Services (BDS), the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Corrections, Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Education (CDHHE), Community Mental Health Centers, Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (INAPSE), Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF), Indiana Institute of Disability and Community – Center on Community Living and Careers (IIDC - CCLC), parent representation, the Arc of Indiana, INSOURCE, and other family advocacy groups. BRS has requested appointments from the Governor's office for 2 student representatives on the VR Council.

IIDC-CCLC, along with partners from the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and Office of Career and Technical Education, DOE, and IN*Source created the Career and Technical Education (CTE) workgroup with the goal of increasing enrollment of and positive outcomes for students with disabilities in CTE. The workgroup completed interviews with school counselors at select CTE sites to determine their protocol for student selection, resources for assisting students with disabilities, and overall success rate. This information has been used to identify pilot sites throughout the state with the goal of providing training, technical assistance and other support to increase the number of students with disabilities enrolled and successfully completing CTE courses. The CTE workgroup has updated their plan and is working on developing modified pathways that students can pursue that will allow them to attain micro-credentials in areas of employer demand.

VR has counselors assigned to each school for outreach and education to teachers, students, and parents. These VR counselors collaborate with school staff to enable a seamless transition to life after high school. The goal for each student is for a VR application to be completed, and, for eligible participants who are being served, to have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place, before exiting high school. While this process works well in many cases, as mentioned above, VR Youth Counselors continue to identify any areas of need in order to increase communication, improve the referral process and ensure students with disabilities are identified and connected to VR, as appropriate, in a timely manner.

Identified best practices include: youth counselors identifying Pre-ETS students close to graduation and assisting with their VR referrals as appropriate, LEA's and VR conferring at least one time per year to identify other students who may require VR services, those requiring a VR counselor to attend their case conference, providing "VR 101" refreshers to school personnel, and a follow-up process for VR referrals.

Training for VR staff is planned for the coming year on improvements to the referral process from Pre-ETS to VR, and transition and Pre-ETS basics to new counselors. VR counselors and/or area supervisors are also involved in local transition councils if they exist in the community. Councils are made up of local stakeholders who are involved in the transition from school to work and adult life. Councils could include, but are not limited to, students/family, school personnel, and service providers. VR has contracted with PCG on the development of training and technical assistance for pre-ETS providers and VR staff. This will include modules and other training on pre-ETS curricula, including working with high support needs students, Level Up Your Leadership training, and foundational training for pre-ETS career coaches, among many other initiatives. Additionally, DOE provided training to the Transition Advisory Council on the

new alternate diploma for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities as well as the use of supported decision making as an alternative to guardianship.

2. DESCRIBE THE CURRENT STATUS AND SCOPE OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO 34 C.F.R. § 361.22(B), PROVIDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGREEMENT:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH MAY BE PROVIDED USING ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR MEETING PARTICIPATION (SUCH AS VIDEO CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE CALLS), TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES AND OTHER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES;

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PERSONNEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) UNDER SECTION 614(D) OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT;

C. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES;

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. OUTREACH TO THESE STUDENTS SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE DURING THE TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS AND MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, A DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION PROCEDURES, AND SCOPE OF SERVICES THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS;

E. COORDINATION NECESSARY TO SATISFY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN 34 C.F.R. PART 397 REGARDING STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE SEEKING SUBMINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT; AND

F. ASSURANCE THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 397.31, NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WILL ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENT WITH AN ENTITY, AS DEFINED IN 34 C.F.R. § 397.5(D), FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING A PROGRAM UNDER WHICH YOUTH WITH A DISABILITY IS ENGAGED IN WORK COMPENSATED AT A SUBMINIMUM WAGE.

A. Consultation and technical assistance, which may be provided using alternative means for meeting participation (such as video conferences and conference calls), to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including pre-employment transition services and other vocational rehabilitation services

BRS and DOE have a fully executed MOU that includes the following information:

1. DDRS will provide consultation and technical assistance to the IDOE staff in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post -school activities, including pre-employment transition services.
2. Consultation and technical assistance will be provided by the administrative, supervisory, and direct service delivery levels of DDRS and will occur formally and informally throughout the school year.
3. DDRS staff will be responsible for providing consultation and technical assistance to IDOE special education and transition personnel at the district and school levels, to assist IDOE transition teachers and staff in planning for transition activities. Areas of consultation and technical assistance may include information related to:
 - a. DDRS service description including pre-employment transition services
 - b. DDRS eligibility criteria
 - c. Assistive technology needs and assessments
 - d. Social Security benefits planning
 - e. DDRS referral procedures
 - f. Career exploration
 - g. Local resources for transition in addition to DDRS
 - h. Federal financial aid available for post-secondary education
4. DDRS is available to provide consultation and technical assistance to IDOE as needed throughout the year. IDOE may request consultation and technical assistance by phone, video conferencing, e-mail, mail, or on a peer-to-peer basis. DDRS and IDOE agree to provide cross-training as needed.

B. Transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency personnel for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs (IEPs) under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

1. DDRS will attend meetings to facilitate transition planning, such as meetings for the development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) when invited and with sufficient notice, with appropriate consent, and as resources allow.
2. DDRS will make available to IDOE and LEA's, informational resources, such as the "Moving On...Life After High School" VR transition planning booklet, that LEA's are encouraged to distribute) to family members, and or guardians and their representatives at all IEP meetings as part of the routine information shared.
3. DDRS, in collaboration with LEAs and local providers, will provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities identified as requiring these services.

4. DDRS shall determine the eligibility of all students with disabilities who have applied for VR services within 60 days from the date of application pursuant to section 102(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 34 CFR 361.41(b)(1) of its implementing regulations.
5. DDRS will develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), which is consistent with, and which takes into consideration the student-participant's IEP, within 90 days of VR eligibility, unless an extension is approved.

C. The roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services and pre-employment transition services

The responsibilities of DDRS are to serve as the lead agency in Indiana for carrying out Federal and State policies relating to the program under the Rehabilitation Act, including the following:

1. Accept referral of students with disabilities during the transition planning process for the provision of pre-employment transition services.
2. Provide consultation with school district staff on transition planning to prepare a student to move from school to work or post-secondary education in accordance with the student's unique needs as determined through the IEP process and provision of pre-employment transition services.
3. Assess, plan, develop and provide VR services for eligible individuals with disabilities who have been referred for VR services, consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice, so that such individuals may prepare for and engage in competitive, integrated employment.
4. Develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), which is consistent with and which takes into consideration the student-participant's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), within 90 days of DDRS eligibility determination, unless an extension is approved.
5. Provide consultation to assist in the identification of eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities and assessment of their individual needs for pre-employment transition services.
6. Provide or arrange for the provision of services required by the IPE goal, when the student has been determined eligible for VR and the services are specific to his/her employment outcome and are not services customarily provided to the student by the LEA under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
7. Provide information to parents and/or guardian(s), student-participants regarding VR eligibility, vocational assessment for employment and post-secondary planning and the Client Assistance Program (CAP).
8. Obtain written consent for the release of confidential information, pursuant to DDRS policy and procedures, federal and state laws and regulations regarding confidentiality.
9. Provide contact information for DDRS counselors, and information related to the VR process for coordination of transition activities within each school district.

10. Share information regarding policies, procedures, guidelines, programs and services for the purpose of improving access to, and availability of, transition services.
11. Provide informational materials about the VR process and services to the school districts for distribution to the students, parents, legal guardians, teachers and others.
12. Promote employer participation in providing opportunities for work-based learning for students with disabilities.
13. As new federal or state requirements or initiatives are identified, DDRS will participate with DOE on joint training of school district and VR staff whenever possible and as applicable.
14. Inform teachers, DOE, students, legal guardians and parents of the mandates found in the Rehabilitation Act and its implementing regulations, which require the student with a disability exiting school to be referred to DDRS prior to entering subminimum wage work with a 14c certificate holder.

The responsibilities of DOE are as follows:

1. To provide technical assistance, training and reference materials regarding WIOA to school districts and other stakeholders identified by DOE, including parents, families, guardians and students relating to the provision of pre-employment transition services and other transition services. Additionally, DOE will disseminate this information to all appropriate DOE staff who work with or make decisions about Special Education Services and ensure knowledge of joint responsibilities.
2. To facilitate and coordinate the smooth transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school employment-related activities, including the receipt of appropriate pre-employment transition services, transition services, technical education and competitive, integrated employment.
3. To encourage school district and DDRS collaboration and coordination for the purpose of providing more opportunities and resources to move students from school to work (e.g., participation on local multi-agency teams, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and other opportunities for collaboration for improved pre-employment transition outcomes).
4. To encourage liaisons between the school districts or individual schools and local DDRS offices, to ensure the provision of relevant disability documentation, and/or copy of the IEP/504 for students referred with documented consent, as applicable.
5. To develop active communication and outreach efforts to make parents and students aware of coordinated transition services and opportunities. Examples are participation in the annual transition conference, career fairs, summer camps, and other vocational/educational opportunities.
6. To facilitate joint training between DDRS and appropriate school district personnel on new State or Federal requirements or initiatives that impact the provision of services by both entities, as applicable.

7. See section V, Coordination of Effort, for specifics on subminimum wage work environments and documentation requirements.

The student's Transition IEP will define the services and responsible payer for each of the services in accordance with 34 CFR 300.320(b). If DDRS/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)/Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services is responsible for payment of a service, this responsibility will be described in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45.

1. Each Partner Agency will maximize coordination in the use of federal funds.
2. Decisions related to which entity will be financially responsible for providing transition or pre-employment transition services that can be considered both a special education and a VR service must be made at the local level as part of the collaboration between the VR agency, state educational agency, and the local educational agency. When considering and assigning the financial responsibility of each agency for the provision of transition and pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, the Partner Agencies decision will be based, at least in part, on the following criteria:
 - a. Is the purpose of the service related to an employment outcome or education?
 - b. Is the service one that the school customarily provides under IDEA, part B?
 - c. Is the student receiving special education services 14 years or older or has entered grade 9?

D. Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services and pre-employment transition services. Outreach to these students should occur as early as possible during the transition planning process and must include, at a minimum, a description of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals

1. Annually, DDRS, or qualified vendors, will work with LEAs so they may identify students with disabilities and potentially eligible students who need pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS).
2. The LEA's will work to increase identification of students with disabilities, such as through conducting career fairs or planning meetings and inviting DDRS to parents' nights. Schools will refer students with disabilities for purposes of 504 or at the time the individual begins IDEA services.
3. Anyone (an LEA, nurse, parent or student self-referral) can refer students for Pre-ETS and DDRS will work with the LEA to ensure seamless collaboration between transition services provided under IDEA and the Pre-ETS activities.
4. Annually, DDRS will provide written information regarding the availability of Pre-ETS for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities and the process for accessing these services.

5. Not all eligible or potentially eligible students with disabilities will require all five required Pre-ETS activities, however, all required Pre-ETS activities will be available statewide and delivered based on individual student need.

E. Coordination necessary to satisfy documentation requirements set forth in 34 CFR part 397 regarding students and youth with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment

As identified in 34 CFR Part 397.30, IDOE shall ensure LEAs document completion or refusal of transition services and provide the documentation to DDRS by the prescribed intervals. Upon transmittal of the final documentation, IDOE shall provide a “cover sheet” to DDRS itemizing the documentation that has been provided to DDRS regarding the youth. IDOE must retain copies of the documentation in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.333.

F. Assurance that, in accordance with 34 CFR 397.31, neither the SEA nor the local educational agency will enter into a contract or other arrangement with an entity, as defined in 34 CFR 397.5(d), for the purpose of operating a program under which youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.

Neither IDOE nor the LEA will enter into an arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work at a subminimum wage.

K. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe how the VR agency will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services; and transition services for youth and students with disabilities, including pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

The VR Business and Community Engagement (BC&E) team builds relationships with employers for the purpose of sharing information and resources that will increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. The team continues to explore strategies to expand its capacity for business engagement to increase diversity hiring opportunities for job seekers with disabilities and meet the needs employers in their hiring efforts. Employers often seek resources around disability hiring in the form of informative and educational presentations to executive management, supervisors, and HR teams. Resources requested include information on recruiting, hiring, and retaining individuals with disabilities; creating an inclusive organization and how to ensure that all aspects of the workplace are accessible. Informational panel presentations during March Disability Awareness month and October’s Disability Employment Awareness Month, sponsored by business networking organizations like SHRM and Chambers of Commerce, are very often the first point of contact in reaching employers and have resulted in requests for more information from those employers. Employers have requested specific presentations and trainings on various topics for their management and employees. Disability etiquette & awareness training for hiring managers, information on tax credits, accommodations and opportunities to network directly with jobseekers are the majority of what the employers request. In the past two years, the Indianapolis Area Work to Include coalition launched a monthly Employer Showcase that brings employers, job seekers with disabilities and employment service providers together to network and share

information. There are similar coalitions around the state doing these types of activities that result in long-term connections for job seekers with disabilities.

As part of employer engagement, sharing information on how employers can engage youth is very popular because of the potential pipeline of talent they can build. Employers are very receptive at providing opportunities to transition age youth like employer tours, informational interviews and interview preparation. Some employers have even started to provide video tours and live virtual tours and an option to increase their outreach activities for youth and the general population.

Additionally, VR youth counselors engage with employers at the local level for the provision of work-based learning activities, including work site tours, job shadowing and work experiences. Over the last two years, a portion of pre-ETS funding is used to provide stipends for students participating in work experiences. The availability of stipends combined with increased pre-ETS summer programming has greatly increased VR's coordination with employers at the local as well as statewide level.

L. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(C) and (K), describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system to develop opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings, to the greatest extent practicable for the following:

1. STATE PROGRAMS (DESIGNATE LEAD AGENCY(IES) AND IMPLEMENTING ENTITY(IES)) CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

BRS is the grantee for the AT state grant. VR has a long-standing association with Easter Seals Crossroads Assistive Technology Center INDATA Project. The INDATA Project is federally funded through the Assistive Technology Grant and is designed to increase access to and awareness of assistive technology. INDATA's core services include: information and referral, funding assistance, public awareness and education, device demonstration, device loan, reutilized computers, and equipment reutilization. The INDATA Project is an international benchmark of success. The INDATA Project helped transform the Easter Seals Crossroads AT Center into more than just what the federal act requires. Now the AT Center has its own recording studio and broadcasts 24/7 podcasts around the world. They are known for their expertise and ability to train their staff in order to prepare each member for their national RESNA certification as an AT Provider. In addition, the INDATA Project staff provides VR Counselors ongoing assistive technology training and monthly webinars that are live streamed to VR staff. Furthermore, participants and VR staff can access the equipment loan library to test various types of equipment or borrow equipment to be used when repairs are necessary to previously purchased items. INDATA Project also partners with Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) ensuring broad networking reach for persons with disabilities to understand what services are available and how they can best be utilized to assist with employment and independent living.

2. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

VR participants utilize the Indiana AgrAbility/Breaking New Ground Outreach Program located at Purdue University. This program assists farmers with disabilities to assess barriers and the need for accommodations and identify possible resources. Breaking New Ground provides outreach to rural communities across a spectrum of disabilities including spinal injuries, amputations, arthritis, back impairments and behavioral health; making referrals to Indiana VR as appropriate. AgrAbility serves as a VR vendor to support farm modifications for VR participants.

3. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH;

BRS continues to be a collaborative partner with DWD for services to all individuals with disabilities, including out-of-school youth. VR also continues to partner with the Arc of Indiana and Self-Advocates of Indiana to provide Career Counseling and Information and Referral (CCIR) services to individuals employed at subminimum wage, including youth. Additionally, VR continues to support a young adult Project Search site with Cook Medical and Ivy Tech as host businesses. This site is unique in that it provides paid internship opportunities for participants.

4. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS;

BRS has assigned a designee to represent DDRS/VR on the Indiana State Use Committee, also known as the Ability Indiana Committee. The Committee continues to meet quarterly to review services, products, and employment data while monitoring new initiatives by providers. The Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF) manages the program and acts in a liaison capacity to facilitate contracts with Certified Ability Indiana Organizations and the Indiana Department of Administration. VR evaluates employment outcomes for VR participants engaged in Ability Indiana to assess whether they meet requirements for competitive, integrated employment. This is done on an individualized basis.

5. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT (42 U.S.C. 1396 ET SEQ.);

VR has provided education and outreach regarding Indiana's Medicaid buy-in program (called M.E.D. Works) to support increased access to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities receiving Medicaid. Through the VR-funded Benefits Information Network (BIN), VR participants also receive information about M.E.D. Works and how this program can enable them to both work and maintain their needed Medicaid benefits. The BIN process also educates VR participants to make overall informed choices about working, providing education not only about the impact on Medicaid, but also the impact on other federal and state benefits, and the use of federal and state work incentives to assist in maximizing their employment opportunities. In 2021, VR, OMPP and Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) jointly conducted a funding gap analysis related to the delivery of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and provided guidance to CMHC IPS early adopters on billable activities across the VR and Medicaid funding streams.

6. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES;

BRS and the Bureau of Disabilities Services (BDS) are housed in the same division, the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS). Additionally, VR and BDS field offices are co-located, allowing for increased collaboration in serving mutual participants, educating referrals about each program's services and ensuring a smooth transition to extended services prior to exit from VR.

Many BDS and BRS current projects and initiatives are well aligned, including progress toward transitioning individuals from subminimum wage to competitive integrated employment, such as through BRS' Disability Innovation Fund project and BDS Waiver Redesign and System Transformation efforts. BDS has established a goal of a 15% increase in CIE outcomes for BDS participants by 2027. BRS and BDS collaboration is also threaded throughout the VR goals and priorities section, including exploration of opportunities for streamlined processes for serving mutual participants. Additional information about VR and BDS collaboration is detailed throughout the VR section of this state plan.

A representative from BDS has served on the VR Council since FFY18. BRS Leadership also presents quarterly to the DDRS Advisory Council.

7. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND

VR enhanced its partnership with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) in 2019 through co-leading a workgroup aimed at improving employment services and outcomes to individuals with mental health disabilities. DMHA and VR also jointly submitted and were subsequently awarded several rounds of training and technical assistance through Department of Labor initiatives, including the Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE), and Advancing State Policy Integration for Recovery and Employment (ASPIRE) projects.

In partnership with DMHA, BRS is supporting two early adopter Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) sites in late 2021. DMHA Has issued a request for funding to identify up to two additional IPS early adopter sites, to begin in January 2024. As mentioned previously, BRS, DMHA and OMPP jointly developed a funding guidance document to outline allowable braiding and sequencing of VR and MRO funds for IPS sites. Early adopter sites report that the IPS program is financially solvent due to the ability to braid and sequence these different funding sources.

Ten of the 24 community mental health centers across the state are registered employment service providers with VR for the provision of employment services including supported employment. VR Leadership has frequently been invited to present to CMHCs around the state to provide updates on VR initiatives and address questions and concerns.

8. OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) is the designated state entity for the Independent Living Program. BRS maintains a dedicated staff member as liaison to CILs and providers of services for independent living for older individuals who are blind (OIB program). BRS leadership and CIL Directors began quarterly meetings in 2019 to improve collaboration. This included increasing BRS knowledge of the local efforts of CILs and increasing awareness of CILs of BRS initiatives. These regular meetings have resulted in updates to contract metrics for CILs

to address concerns expressed by CILs, and introduction of CILS to the LifeCourse Framework. VR makes it a priority to support the network of CILs in Indiana by providing additional funding with the use of SSA program income to support center operations in the provision of services to assist individuals with disabilities with increased independence and improved access to their communities. BRS leadership also meets regularly with Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council (INSILC) officers and attends public meetings. This increased collaboration has resulted in contract changes and improved communication.

BRS will continue to identify collaboration opportunities with the Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities (GCPD), including partnering on activities during Disability Employment Awareness month, and GCPD representation on the VR Council. The GCPD executive director has also provided feedback on specific VR initiatives, such as the SE+ Disability Innovation Fund project, particularly pertaining to peer support services. GPCD has indicated the potential opportunity to support training costs for individuals who enroll in peer support specialist training.

9. OTHER PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

VR purchases an array of services from a variety of vendors who complete the vendor registration process and meet criteria to provide services. VR maintains agreements in the registration system with each vendor. There are approximately 80 employment service providers, including Rehabilitation services facilities and Community Mental Health Centers who are registered vendors with BRS, and hundreds of other vendors such as medical providers, training institutions, evaluators, rehabilitation technology providers, independent contractors, and a variety of other organizations. VR promotes participant informed choice in the selection of services and service providers. BRS modernized it’s provider directory to an online format to enhance the process for VR participants in making an informed choice in the selection of an employment service provider, while easing administration around timely updates to the directory. VR is also contracting with a vendor recruiter to help identify and onboard new vendors to fill service gaps across the state.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner, that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The VR agency must select the “Edit” button to review and agree to the VR State plan Assurances.

The State Plan must include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR

The State Plan must include
Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a Unified State plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:
3.a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.b. either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
3.e. as applicable, the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.f. as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.g. statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.h. the requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The State Plan must include
3.l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities as set forth in section 101(a)(18)(A).
3.m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:
4.a. comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.b. impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.c. provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services or, if implementing an order of selection, in accordance with criteria established by the State for the order of selection as set out in section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.d. determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.e. comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
4.g. provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.h. comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by sections 101(a)(14) and 511 of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.i. meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs.
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
4.j.i. has developed and will implement,
4.j.i.A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and

The State Plan must include
4.j.i.B. strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and
4.j.ii. has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25) and 113).
4.j.iii. shall reserve not less than 15 percent of the allocated funds for the provision of pre-employment transition services; such funds shall not be used to pay for the administrative costs of providing pre-employment transition services.
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(H) and (I) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:
7.a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.
7.b. The designated State agency assures that the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and

The State Plan must include

funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(7)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Do you attest that these assurances will be met?

Yes

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY TITLE IV OF WIOA[1], AND ITS STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT;

[1] Public Law 113-128.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

2. IN THE EVENT THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY IS NOT PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH VOCATIONAL AND OTHER REHABILITATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT FOR THE VR PROGRAM (SECTION 101(A)(2)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT). AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT)[2] AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[3], THE REHABILITATION ACT, 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C), AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[4], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO STATES UNDER SECTION 111(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

^[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY, OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN^[5], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS^[6], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

^[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

^[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT OR, IF NOT APPLICABLE, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C);

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Theresa Koleszar, MS, CRC

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Public Law 113-128.

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

To review and complete the Certification section of the VR portion of the State plan, please select the "Edit" button.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Theresa Koleszar MS, CRC
Title of Signatory	Director, BRS
Date Signed	3/28/2025

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must

be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	60.4%	60.7%	61.0%	61.2%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	57.9%	58.4%	58.5%	58.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3739	\$3739	\$3926	\$3926
Credential Attainment Rate	47.7%	48.2%	50.0%	50.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.2%	65.7%	66.0%	66.2%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Vocational Rehabilitation, a statewide program under the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, helps individuals with disabilities achieve employment. Vocational Rehabilitation services are offered locally in 25 Area Offices throughout Indiana and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide services in all 92 Indiana counties. Eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation is not based on income or financial resources.

FSSA Vision

All Hoosiers live in fully engaged communities and reach their greatest emotional, mental and physical well-being

FSSA Mission

To compassionately serve our diverse community of Hoosiers by dismantling long-standing, persistent inequity through deliberate human services system improvement

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable civil rights laws, FSSA does not discriminate against a qualified individual based on race, disability, religion, sex, or national origin in the receipt of or participation in services, programs, or other activities made available to other similarly qualified individuals.

Upon request, FSSA will provide appropriate aids, services or other reasonable

accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability to the best of our ability. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service to equally participate in any FSSA program, service, or activity may contact the ADA Coordinator with the Office of Healthy Opportunities.

FSSA also strives to maintain a website that is compliant with all digital guidelines and is open to feedback. To provide feedback, file a complaint, or request assistance individuals can contact the ADA Coordinator at ada@fssa.in.gov. FSSA also maintains a Accessibility Barrier Removal Policy and Service Animal Notice.

**2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE
EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER
BENEFICIARIES?**

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Known barriers to participation in state programs and services include transportation barriers, a shortage of American Sign Language Interpreters, and stigma associated with disability.

**3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH
BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR
ACTIVITY?**

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

To address transportation barriers, the Vocational Rehabilitation program provides services in all 92 counties and can carry out services in person or offer virtual options. VR partners with hundreds of service providers throughout the state to increase participant access to services in

their local communities. VR can also provide assistance with training on the use of public transportation, mileage reimbursement, and vehicle modification services.

To decrease communication access barriers, VR has increased the number of sign language interpreters who are registered with VR to provide services, and continues to offer options for remote interpreting. VR staff who serve Deaf participants are provided with ipads to ensure they have the necessary equipment to support remote interpreting. VR also uses captions for virtual meetings. Materials are available in braille and additional languages, such as Spanish and can be translated into a wide range of other languages. VR also has access to translators to ensure communication access to individuals who are non-English speaking.

To reduce stigma around disability, VR continues with business engagement efforts, promotes work based learning for participants with disabilities as a way to initiate an employer partnership, shares stories of success, and provides training to VR staff aimed at reducing bias, including DEI&A training.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

VR will increase business engagement efforts through the provision of technical assistance to businesses with the goal of engaging 60 business partners by June 2026. Training to staff and stakeholders to reduce bias and stigma is ongoing. If additional need is identified, VR will recruit additional interpreters and translators within 90 days of identifying the need. VR will continue to provide transportation supports to participants, including mileage reimbursement, vehicle modification services, and public transportation assistance. Transportation assistance, when needed, will be included on participant service plans within 90 days of program eligibility.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program

beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.
- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that

provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Vocational Rehabilitation, a statewide program under the Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, administers Title VI Supported Employment grants to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with MSD, to achieve competitive, integrated employment. Supported employment services are offered locally in 25 Area Offices throughout Indiana and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide services in each county. Eligibility for SE is not based on income or financial resources. SE services include job coaching after placement to support eligible individuals in becoming more independent in the performance of their job tasks and to support employment retention. SE Title VI funds also support the delivery of extended services to youth with a most significant disability.

FSSA Vision

All Hoosiers live in fully engaged communities and reach their greatest emotional, mental and physical well-being.

BRS promotes the philosophy that all Hoosiers includes those with the most significant disabilities.

FSSA Mission

To compassionately serve our diverse community of Hoosiers by dismantling long-standing, persistent inequity through deliberate human services system improvement

BRS believes that SE services directly support the agency mission to remove barriers and inequity that individuals with the most significant disabilities may experience when accessing employment. SE supports barrier removal through individualized services designed to support individuals with MSD in achieving sustained competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable civil rights laws, FSSA does not discriminate against a qualified individual based on race, disability, religion, sex, or national origin in the receipt of or participation in services, programs, or other activities made available to other similarly qualified individuals.

Upon request, FSSA will provide appropriate aids, services or other reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability to the best of our ability. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service to equally participate in any FSSA program, service, or activity may contact the ADA Coordinator with the Office of Healthy Opportunities.

FSSA also strives to maintain a website that is compliant with all digital guidelines and is open to feedback. To provide feedback, file a complaint, or request assistance individuals can contact the ADA Coordinator at ada@fssa.in.gov. FSSA also maintains an Accessibility Barrier Removal Policy and Service Animal Notice.

**2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE
EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER
BENEFICIARIES?**

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Known barriers to participation in state programs and services include transportation barriers, a shortage of American Sign Language Interpreters, and stigma associated with disability.

**3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH
BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR
ACTIVITY?**

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

To address transportation barriers, the Vocational Rehabilitation program provides services in all 92 counties and can carry out services in person or offer virtual options. VR partners with hundreds of service providers throughout the state to increase participant access to services in their local communities. VR can also provide assistance with training on the use of public transportation, mileage reimbursement, and vehicle modification services.

To decrease communication access barriers, VR has increased the number of sign language interpreters who are registered with VR to provide services, and continues to offer options for remote interpreting. VR staff who serve Deaf participants are provided with ipads to ensure they have the necessary equipment to support remote interpreting. VR also uses captions for virtual meetings. Materials are available in braille and additional languages, such as Spanish and can be translated into a wide range of other languages. VR also has access to translators to ensure communication access to individuals who are non-English speaking.

To reduce stigma around disability, VR continues with business engagement efforts, promotes work based learning for participants with disabilities as a way to initiate an employer partnership, shares stories of success, and provides training to VR staff aimed at reducing bias, including DEI&A training.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

VR will increase business engagement efforts through the provision of technical assistance to businesses with the goal of engaging 60 business partners by June 2026. Training to staff and stakeholders to reduce bias and stigma is ongoing. If additional need is identified, VR will recruit additional interpreters and translators within 90 days of identifying the need. VR will continue to provide transportation supports to participants, including mileage reimbursement, vehicle modification services, and public transportation assistance. Transportation assistance, when needed, will be included on participant service plans within 90 days of program eligibility.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR

program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.9%	79.0	78.9%	79.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.5%	79.5	77.5%	79.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$7,030	\$7,700	\$7,030	\$7,700
Credential Attainment Rate	69.0%	72.8	69.0%	72.8
Measurable Skill Gains	62.5%	66.2	62.5%	66.2
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and

- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	76.4	75.0%	76.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.6%	76.0	75.6%	76.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,219	\$8,219	\$8,219	\$8,219
Credential Attainment Rate	72.0%	73.6	72.0%	73.6
Measurable Skill Gains	62.5%	67.0	62.5%	67.0

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a

reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.5%	80.0	78.5%	80.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	79.5%	82.1	79.5%	82.1
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3,391	\$4,300	\$3,391	\$4,300
Credential Attainment Rate	66.5%	68.0	66.5%	68.0
Measurable Skill Gains	66.5%	69.0	66.5%	69.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT - WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not

required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	74.0%	74.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.5%	72.0%	69.5%	72.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$7,612	\$8,000	\$7,612	\$8,000
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM - ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the

Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	54.5%	51.0%	55.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0%	73.0%	73.0%	73.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,000	\$6,750	\$5,250	\$6,800

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Credential Attainment Rate	68.0%	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%	69.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (COMBINED OR GENERAL) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to

report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	60.4%	60.7%	61.0%	61.2%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	57.9%	58.4%	58.5%	58.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3739	\$3739	\$3926	\$3926
Credential Attainment Rate	47.7%	48.2%	50.0%	50.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.2%	65.7%	66.0%	66.2%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (BLIND) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Additional Indicators of Performance
N/A

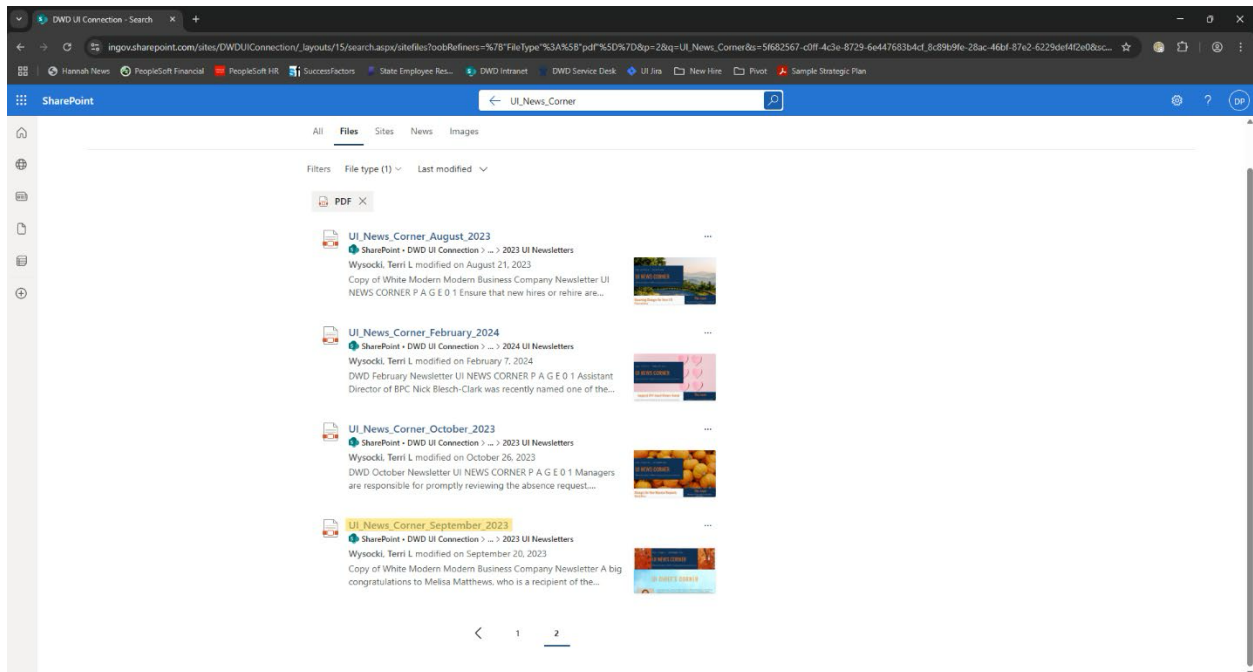
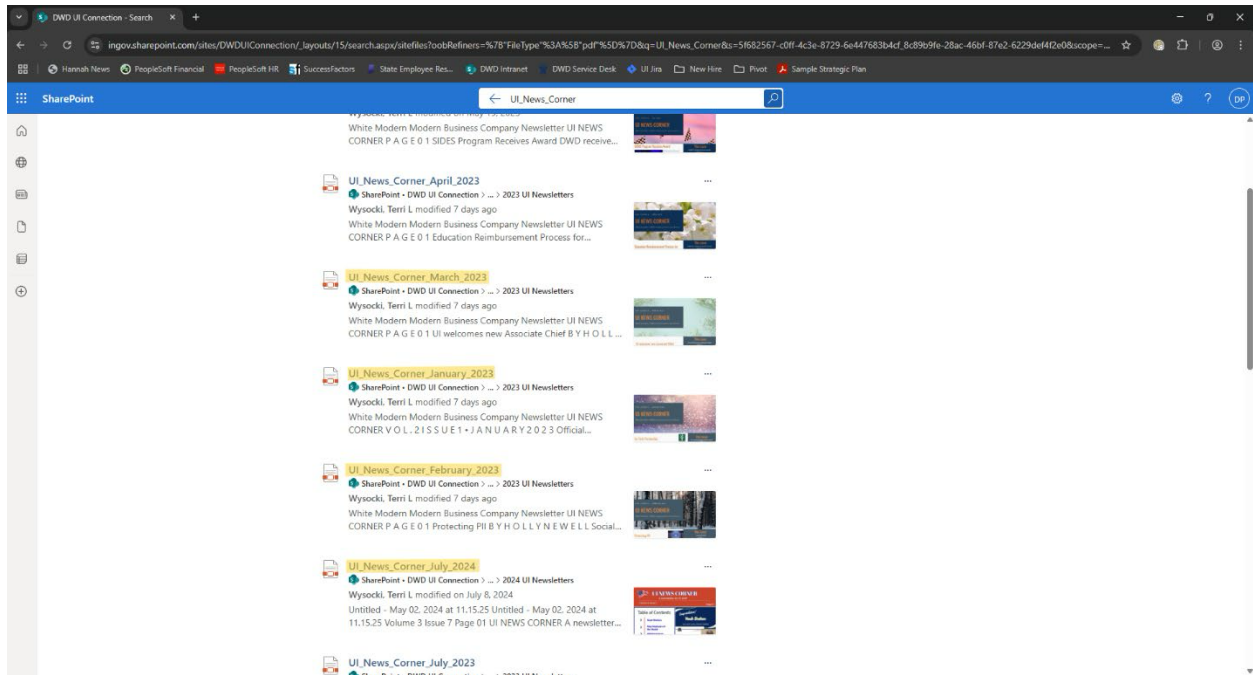
OTHER APPENDICES

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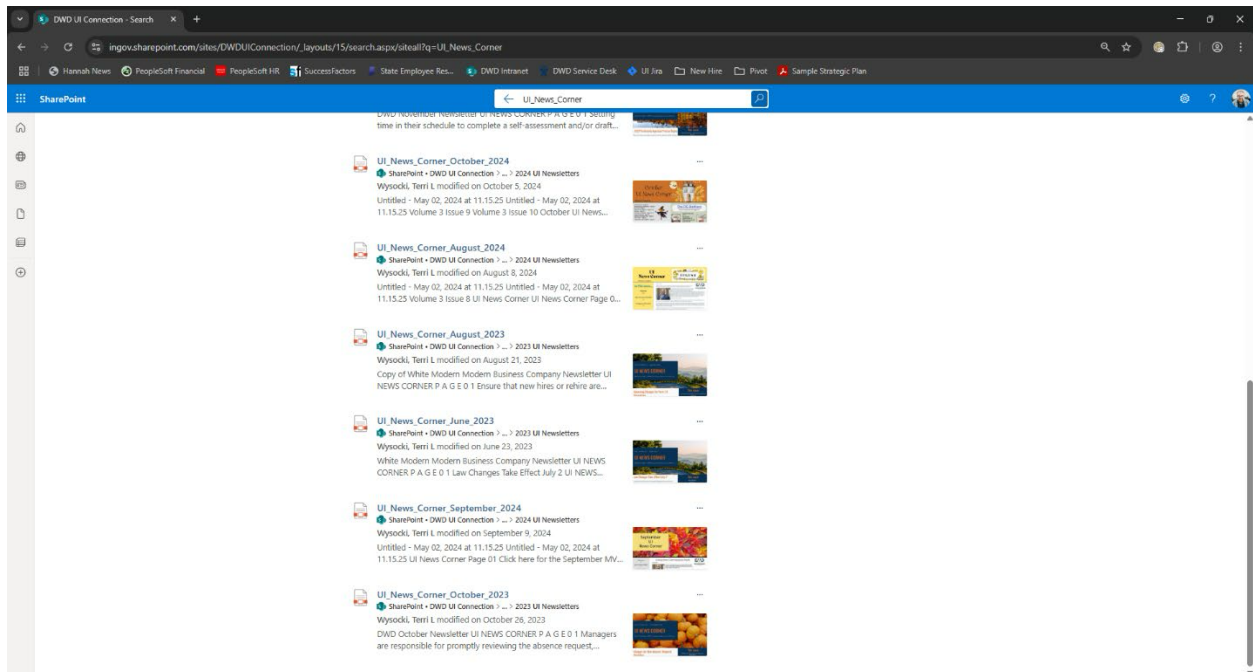
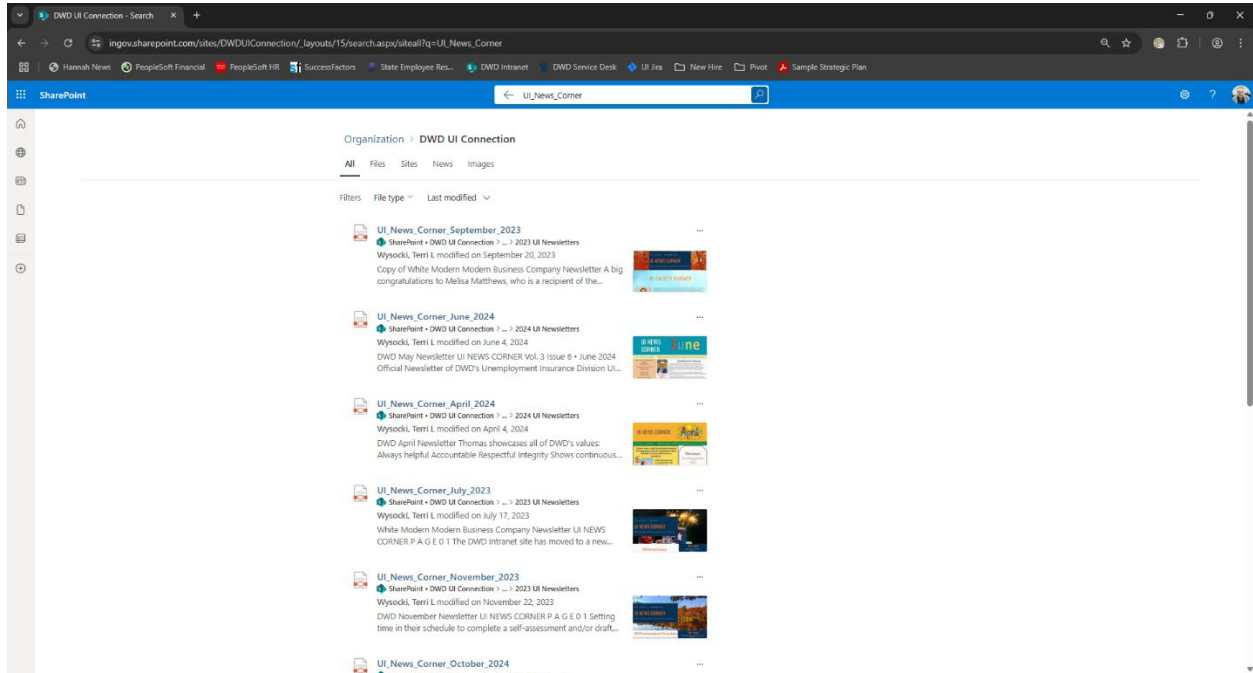
Item 3

DWD Intranet

Before Removal:



After Removal:





Limited English Proficiency Communication Tool

BY JANET GARCIA-HOBBS

The UI Equity Access & Outreach team would like to share a "One Moment Please" tool to assist UI staff when interacting with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals. The tool provides instructions on how to say, "One Moment Please," in eighteen (18) common languages. This tool should complement the transition when requesting an interpreter to connect and engage with claimants on the line. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Director of UI Equity Access and Outreach, Janet Garcia-Hobbs at Jgarciahobbs@dwd.in.gov

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Invite

BY BROOKE MULLEN

UI is committed to DWD's theme of "...celebrating, valuing, and prioritizing equity, inclusion, and diversity" and believes that every employee has a unique experience to contribute.

UI's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee is seeking new members! The Committee consists of volunteer members who serve on rotating terms. The maximum time commitment is 5 hours per month. We assist UI divisions and leadership in the development of ideas for strategies and best practices with regard to diversity and inclusion within UI.



What to know:

- Applications will be accepted through 02/02/2023. Please email Janet Garcia-Hobbs at JGarciaHobbs@dwd.IN.gov if you are interested.
- Interested individuals will be asked to complete a brief application to provide additional information regarding their interest in the Committee.
- Committee members should expect to spend between 1.5 hours and 5 hours per month on activities.
- Committee members will be representing their own views. However, members can also act as a point of contact for their co-workers and team by bringing additional points of views to scheduled meetings.

What to expect:

- The Committee will discuss a variety of topics focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workplace community.
- The Committee may choose to discuss sensitive materials, topics, or terms that are not normally discussed in the workplace.
- Committee discussion rules and procedures are in place and adherence is expected from each member.
- Members who do not demonstrate or apply these rules and procedures may be asked to leave the Committee.
- Committee members are expected to be respectful and considerate in all discussions, while maintaining discretion.



Limited English Proficiency Top Languages

Spanish, Burmese, and Arabic, are the top three languages spoken by the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) claimants our agency serves.

Spanish

Burmese

Arabic

Babel notices, notifying a claimant of the availability of language services, have been added to the Claimant Handbook, monetary determination document, Determination of Eligibility (DOE) documents, Appeals and Review Board notices, and Appeals and Review Board decisions.

We are working to provide other important documents, such as Overpayment Waiver Determinations and Work Search Logs, in the preferred language as requested.

Other available languages include Chinese, French, German, Italian, Korean, Polish, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Diversity, **EQUITY**, and Inclusion Committee Thank You!

BY JANET GARCIA-HOBBS

We never cease to be impressed by our DEI Committee members. Success is no accident! We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to the following individuals who will be ending their service to the DEI Committee. Thank you for your work and commitment to the team. Your efforts did not go unnoticed, and we thank you for your support. We look forward to working with you in the future.

- Elizabeth Colman – Appeals
- Stephanie Banks – Contact Center
- Joan Sporny – Compliance
- Katherine Nickels – Benefits

"Strength lies in differences, not in similarities." Stephen Covey



DEI Terms to Know

Intersectionality is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, while she was working on a paper to help explain the oppression of African American women. Intersectionality, simply put, is the overlapping of social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination.

For example, if an older African American woman with a culturally unique name applies for a job, she may face discrimination from her name being different, her race, and age. Understanding the concept of intersectionality is important because anyone could suffer discrimination based on more than one factor. In the example above, the person faced discrimination based on three factors.

Retrieved from:

<https://researchguides.library.syr.edu/fys101/intersectionality>

Spring Pulse Survey

BY RICHARD PAULK

Haven't taken the Spring Pulse Survey yet? What are you waiting for? Your responses directly impact workforce decisions internally at DWD and statewide for all State of Indiana employees. Take the Pulse today:

<http://on.in.gov/SpringPulseSurvey2023>

By taking the survey, you are helping us measure progress and ensuring that leadership continues to prioritize the employee experience.

The Spring Pulse Survey will be open until March 17.

Please complete the survey and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Our goal is to hear from at least 60% of employees at our agency. So far, more than 350 team members have completed the survey, which is a little more than 32% of our staff.

As always, the Pulse Survey is confidential, and no identifiable information will be shared with the agency or your manager.

Thank you for your dedication to public service and your hard work.



Indiana Commission of Hispanic/Latino Affairs

Kyle Lively, Christine Myles and Rochelle Pritchard worked the DWD booth at the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs on Friday, 9/1/23. They did a great job explaining what DWD can do for the community.



Hispanic Heritage Month

DWD's Equity Access and Outreach Director, Janet Garcia-Hobbs kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month by attending the Fiesta Indianapolis, on Saturday, September 16, 2023. UI supported this event by having an informational outreach booth with Spanish resources, and a bilingual staff member to engage with the diverse community.

Every year, Indiana celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15. During this month, individuals celebrate the many contributions that Latinx communities offer to Indiana and its anniversaries of Independence for Latin American countries.



UI Happenings



Employee Engagement Committee & Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Thank you to everyone who donated and volunteered their time to help prepare and deliver the items to Coburn Place. Together we were able to raise over 1,000 laundry pods, 800 quart storage bags, 160 dryer sheets, and even managed to raise \$20.00. All donations helped 100+ survivors of domestic violence and their children. We look forward to continuing this project again next year, Spring 2025.

- Janet Garcia-Hobbs



Pictured clockwise: Niesha Ward, Monet Owens, Greg Seiter and Jenna Machunas from HR.

Item 4

UI Mentoring Presentation

Before Removal:

Advantages of a Mentoring Program

- Enhance Leadership skills
- Increased Engagement
- Focused Goals
- Communication
- Employee Retention
- Employee Satisfaction
- Increased Motivation
- Networking
- Career Development
- Builds Confidence
- Knowledge Sharing
- Professional Development
- Skill Development
- Diversity and Inclusion



After Removal:

Advantages of a Mentoring Program

- Enhance Leadership skills
- Increased Engagement
- Focused Goals
- Communication
- Employee Retention
- Employee Satisfaction
- Increased Motivation
- Networking
- Career Development
- Builds Confidence
- Knowledge Sharing
- Professional Development
- Skill Development



Indiana Economic Development Corporation

This section outlines the Indiana Economic Development Corporation's (IEDC) internal review of DEI position, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

IEDC did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

IEDC did not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

- IEDC does not have a mission or value statement including DEI.

Programs Administered to the Public

- The IEDC webpage has an article on their webpage from 2023. This covers how IEDC 'will continue to recognize black entrepreneurs beyond black history month.' The article also talks about the Diversity and Career Center at Ivy Tech.ⁱ
- IEDC's webpage includes an article from 2024 that discusses Indiana's LEVEE district. Near the end, it mentions ensuring enhanced quality of life of downtown Indianapolis based on two pillars of equity and inclusion.ⁱⁱ
- On IEDC's READI webpage, they have a list of READI review committee members. Kelli Jones has in her description that her enterprise works to advance diversity initiatives and create fully inclusive tech ecosystems.ⁱⁱⁱ
- There is a Salesforce feature on IEDC's webpage. The feature includes that the power of Salesforce to drive community service, sustainability, and social justice initiatives.^{iv}
- IEDC's webpage has a section to describe social disadvantaged individuals and businesses, and they are said to be subjected to racial or ethnic prejudices.^v
- IEDC's webpage has an article from 2023 that discusses 3 cities launching bold visions and strategic plans. The article further discusses the cities have plans to bridge systemic gaps in health, wealth, and opportunity and ensuring employment diversity.^{vi}

- IEDC's webpage has an article from 2023 on Minority Business Skills Enhancement program in NW Indiana. The article includes reference issues surrounding ethnic diversity and inclusion.^{vii}

Grant Conditions

- IEDC has not used DEI in its grant conditions.

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

- The IEDC has a Professional Development Training and Tuition Reimbursement policy that provides staff flexible work schedules and tuition reimbursement in order to pursue professional development and educational opportunities. While not specifically intended to allow staff to pursue opportunities that showed preference to individuals based on race, color, ethnicity, or national origin, a review found that some programs staff requested to participate in did. In response to EO 25-14, the IEDC revoked approval or did not approve three (3) employee professional development opportunities. The IEDC has updated the Professional Development Training and Tuition Reimbursement policy to clearly state that DEI related opportunities will not be considered and is in the process of rolling out the new policy to all staff.^{viii}
- Community Collaboration Fund (CCF)
For the 2024 CCF awards, the IEDC team reviewed all 32 awards for compliance with EO 25-14 upon release and identified that only one project was not in alignment - Igniting Growth for Cleaning Service Businesses with Business Ownership Initiative of Indiana. This program was designed to serve Hispanic women. During a call with the awardee, the EO was shared along with guidance for compliance. The final cohort of the program was opened to all SEDI entrepreneurs in compliance with the EO. Projects chosen for inclusion for the 2025 program will strictly comply with EO 25-14.^{ix}
- Indiana Minority Business Initiative. Re-branded 3/2025 as INpact Initiative. The MBDA Business Center is funded by the U.S. Minority Business Development Agency, a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce. In a March 2024 decision, Nuziard et al. v. Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) et al., the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas found the MBDA's presumption of social disadvantage for certain program applicants to be unconstitutional and ordered the agency to discontinue using race or ethnicity as criteria for receiving MBDA Business Center services nationwide. The Indiana MBDA Business Center is in full compliance.^x
- The IEDC Employee Handbook contained a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging policy statement. This statement was amended to remove DEI related language. A

revised and original copy of the statement is contained in the Appendix. Further, a statement was added to the employee handbook that provides the IEDC does not utilize state funds, property or resources to support diversity, equity, and inclusion positions, departments, activities, procedures or programs if they grant preferential treatment based upon a person's particular race, color, ethnicity, or national origin.^{xi}

- The State and IEDC entered into an MOU with Lombardy. Article 3, Section F of the non-binding MOU, signed by Governor Holcomb on November 25, 2024, provides that the area of cooperation works to include people of disabilities and other minority groups, including migrants and ethnic/racial minorities.^{xii}
- Elevate Ventures – ElevateME. “Serving as an entry point for Black, Brown, and women founders, this program connects minority-owned and operated startups to Elevate Ventures through a dedicated representative who understands their journey and provides pathways to valuable resources.” Programming may be in violation of Indiana EO 25-14 and U.S. Executive Order 14151 as Elevate Ventures receives both State and Federal funds (SSBCI) to support this programming. The IEDC has communicated with Elevate regarding the use of state funds in conformance with EO 25-14 and a copy of the correspondence can be found in the Appendix.^{xiii}
- Indiana Next Level Fund. One of the underlying funds which 50South has invested in twice is Sixty8 Capital, a seed-stage fund for “black, brown, women, and LGBTQ+ led startups. Messaging to 50South regarding compliance with EO 25-14 will be provided.
- In an article found on IEDC's webpage about the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's economic impact, it mentioned a certification from a nonprofit that reflects achievements in 5 categories, including access and equity.^{xiv}
- Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative (READI) Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative (READI) (IC 5-28-41) and READI 2.0 (IC 5-28-43) There are no statutory or programmatic requirements that direct funding to support diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Additionally, IEDC KPIs for READI do not explicitly target, or encourage DEI specific investments; however, the IEDC has established KPIs that could indirectly implicate these programs. These include increasing the state per capita income and targeting disadvantaged communities (as

defined by HUD) for certain levels of investment. Twelve projects were identified during the IEDC's review for alteration following the issuance of EO 25-14. The spreadsheet attached in the appendix provides a detailed description of each READI program identified as conflicting with EO 25-14 and what changes have been made or are planned to be made. Note, project descriptions contained in the spreadsheet directly correspond to those found on the READI webpage and elsewhere. ^{xv}

Job Applicant Requirements

- IEDC does not have DEI job applicant requirements.

ⁱ See Page 2 of Appendix

ⁱⁱ See Page 4 of Appendix

ⁱⁱⁱ See Page 6 of Appendix

^{iv} See Page 8 of Appendix

^v See Page 10 of Appendix

^{vi} See Page 12 of Appendix

^{vii} See Page 14 of Appendix

^{viii} See Page 16 of Appendix

^{ix} See Page 20 of Appendix

^x See Page 30 of Appendix

^{xi} See Page 48 of Appendix

^{xii} See Page 52 of Appendix

^{xiii} See Page 59 of Appendix

^{xiv} See Page 61 of Appendix

^{xv} See Page 63 of Appendix

APPENDIX

DEI POLICY REVIEW

June 30, 2025

IEDC Will Continue to Recognize Black Entrepreneurs beyond Black History Month

FEB 28, 2023

As February comes to a close, we want to continue to celebrate Black History Month and recognize the many contributions of African Americans to our state, our nation and the world. Black History Month also provides an opportunity to reflect on the struggles for basic civil rights that African Americans still endure today, and to learn more about how we can drive social change in our communities.

As a nation we represent the greatest diversity of any country in the world, and that has challenged us as wave after wave of immigrants have looked to America as a place with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. From veterans to presidents, we honor people for many reasons in this country with special times of remembrance. These annual events by themselves do not begin to tell the stories of our history and the people who helped write them.

Black History Month serves as such a marker. That's why we want to take the time to honor the stories of African Americans and events that shaped who we are as a culture.

To shine a light on Black History and celebrate the stories of African Americans in Indianapolis, visit <https://www.visitindy.com/travel-tools/black-culture-indy-guide/black-history-in-indy/>.

HOW IS THE IEDC DRIVING CHANGE?

Our team at the IEDC is leaning in to support historically underserved populations. This includes investments in Black and minority businesses, programs and disinvested communities. There is much more to do, but a few key initiatives are highlighted below:

Inclusive Learning Lab (Seymour, Michigan City and Warsaw)

Aimed at closing geographic and racial gaps in economic opportunity, the Brookings Institution's Bass Center for Transformative Placemaking and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) will, together, work with three Indiana towns — Michigan City, Seymour and Warsaw — over the next year to co-create "community-centered economic inclusion" (CCEI) agendas. The effort is supported by the IEDC and focused on small cities located in the state of Indiana's READI program regions. This 12-month Learning Lab, Brookings and LISC will offer research, technical assistance, and structured opportunities for the three local teams ("the cohort") to come together to discuss specific challenges and best practice strategies for advancing community-centered economic inclusion. The individual CCEI agendas created through the Lab will position each Indiana town to effectively engage in the growing sectors of their regional economy to expand local economic opportunity. Importantly, the agendas will also outline strategies to address persistent economic stagnation and inequity by coordinating and concentrating workforce, small business, real estate development, and placemaking efforts.

PROGRAMS & INVESTMENTS

Ivy Tech Diversity and Career Center (READI Wabash River Region)

The Career and Employer Connection Center will house the new Career Coaching and Employer Connections team. The Terre Haute campus launched this initiative in July of 2021 as part of the statewide rollout. The READI funds will allow an increased emphasis on the necessity for this portion of workforce development by creating a space integrated into a new welcoming space for students. The \$970,000 allotted to the **Diversity and Career Center** will go towards the Healthcare workforce pipeline and the **Diversity, Equity and Belonging Center**. To aid in Healthcare Workforce Development, Ivy Tech will use funding for the renovation of the School of Health Sciences and the expansion of the School of Nursing. The remaining funding will be used to renovate the current student admission and enrollment area to create the **Diversity, Equity and Belonging Center (DEB)** along with the hiring/salary of the DEB Director, community outreach, on-campus programing, DEB focused marketing and center refurbishments. The project launched in January 2023, with a completion date of December 2026.

The ONE Fund (READI One Southern Indiana Region)

One Southern Indiana is collaborating with the Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC), Caesars Foundation of



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Indiana's LEVEE District Poised to Advance Robust Life Sciences Ecosystem, Innovation

OCT 24, 2024

Former GM Stamping Plant site gets rebrand, updated master plan to accelerate live, work, play development in the heart of downtown Indianapolis

INDIANAPOLIS (Oct. 24, 2024) – The Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) is moving forward with redevelopment at LEVEE, a premier 91-acre hub at the former General Motors (GM) Stamping Plant site on the western edge of downtown Indianapolis. A zoning modification set to be submitted outlines an updated master plan to reflect the growing vision for the site as a collaborative live, work and play hub designed to drive health care and life sciences innovation and talent.

"Indiana's LEVEE district embodies our strategic focus – to build industries of the future and vibrant communities that enable all Hoosiers to prosper," said Indiana Secretary of Commerce David Rosenberg. "This site represents a unique opportunity to transform the state's capital city, expand downtown Indianapolis and cultivate a new, innovative and bustling ecosystem. We can't wait to partner with like-minded, forward-thinking businesses and developers to bring this vision to life and impact the city's landscape for generations to come."

The IEDC, which purchased the site in 2020, has made significant strides in priming LEVEE for development, undertaking critical infrastructure such as new roads and sidewalks – a first step in transforming the blighted industrial site into a transformative, mixed-use urban renewal project that will bring new life and vibrancy to the west side of the White River. Now, 30 acres of land at LEVEE is ripe for development, and the IEDC is marketing the site to potential buyers, partners and end users to attract industry, innovation and talent.

LEVEE gets its name from the Latin word "levare," meaning "to lift up" and plays tribute to the site's history, honoring the levee along the White River that long protected the GM Stamping Plant and has paved the way for reuse. The updated development plan focuses on fostering Indiana's robust life sciences ecosystem – an ideal complement to [the site's first tenant, Elanco Animal Health](#), and its [planned One Health Innovation partnership with Purdue University](#) – and features strategic urban design emphasizing greenspace and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure to support commercialization and high-density residential living.

The concept, which is available online at iedc.in.gov/levee, outlines diverse opportunities for development within the remaining 30 acres, including the potential to house up to 550,000 square feet of research and development hub space, 1.6 million square feet of planned housing space, 1.2 million square feet of planned office space and 290,000 square feet of planned retail space. This vision for LEVEE, which was developed in close collaboration with its residential neighbors, will create a new, interconnected destination for research, development and commercialization, accelerating economic and community growth on the west side of the state's capital city.

"The Valley Neighborhood has long understood, given its location and geography, the importance and significance of development in that historic part of our neighborhood now commonly referred to as the former GM Stamping Plant," said Jay Napoleon, resident and president of the Valley Neighborhood Association. "With that knowledge we appreciate the concept of 'Levee,' which sets the stage for a true expansion and understanding of what it means to live, play and work in downtown Indianapolis. Levee, with its emphasis on 'green space and pedestrian friendly infrastructure,' helps make real the Valley Neighborhood's long held commitment to assure our residents an enhanced quality of life in downtown Indianapolis based on **twin pillars of equity and inclusion.**"



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About Indiana READI

Indiana is committed to investing in the growth and prosperity of the individuals and families that call the Hoosier state home. READI builds on the framework and successes of the Indiana Regional Cities Initiative and the 21st Century Talent Initiative, encouraging neighboring communities across the state to work collaboratively to develop a bold vision for their future that, when implemented, will attract, develop and retain talent in Indiana.

To achieve this vision, regions will develop data-driven, actionable and sustainable development plans that outline strategies focused on improving the quality of place, quality of life and quality of opportunity within their communities. To help regions achieve their goals, the IEDC will award up to \$50 million per region to accelerate the implementation of regional development plans and the programs and projects identified that will catalyze economic and population growth.

The READI Review Committee will hold several meetings over the coming months to evaluate regional development plans before making formal recommendations for funding to the IEDC board of directors in December. Once approved, the IEDC will award READI funding to selected regions to advance implementation of the projects and programs designed to catalyze economic growth and talent development in Indiana.

READI Review Committee Members:

Bill Hanna, Executive Director, Dean and Barbra White Family Foundation

Hanna previously served the president and chief executive officer of the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority for 10 years before joining the foundation.

Isaac Bamgbose, President and CEO of New City Development

Bamgbose leads the organization, which currently has over \$150 million of planned development throughout central Indiana. Previously, he served as the vice president of development for Hendricks Commercial Properties where he led the Bottleworks District and Ironworks Campus projects.

Jason Dudich, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Treasurer, University of Indianapolis

Dudich, who previously served as the budget director for the state of Indiana for more than two years, joined the University in 2019.

Jason Blume, Executive Director, Innovation One

Blume has led Innovation One for more than seven years, working to connect business, industry and the community with the students, expertise and resources of Trine University.

Kelli Jones, Co-Founder and General Partner, Sixty8 Capital

Sixty8 Capital is the first Indiana-based venture capital firm dedicated to investing in black, brown, women, LGBTQ+ and disabled founders. Jones also serves as the founder and CEO of the Be Nimble Foundation, a social enterprise **working to advance diversity initiatives to create fully inclusive tech ecosystems.**

Leah Curry, President, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Indiana

Curry is responsible for all production and administrative functions at the Princeton manufacturing facility. Previously, Curry served as president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Mississippi.

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Millions of underserved people worldwide have found greater opportunities by embracing technology and adopting new skills. Kai is passionate about helping them get there. In partnership with nonprofit organizations in the Indianapolis area, she and her team have helped countless members of underrepresented communities learn technological skills and discover the Salesforce ecosystem — paving the way toward careers in Salesforce administration and development.



Innovation is a core value at Salesforce, and Kai is excited to be at the forefront of the company's innovative efforts in community impact and improvement. When she thinks about the future, she feels Indianapolis is truly the place where she has the greatest opportunity to leverage the power of Salesforce to drive community service, **sustainability, and social justice initiatives.**

"At Salesforce, we use business as a platform for change. We give 1% of our equity, 1% of our time, and 1% of our product back to the community," said Kai. "We want to create a better planet and a better world for all, and I'm grateful for the chance to do that with underserved communities here in Indianapolis."

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PRIOR

Indiana's SSBCI funding will attract additional investment alongside its early-round seed funding, which requires a minimum 1:1 co-investment, and its loan participation program, which will purchase a percentage of loans already made to Indiana entrepreneurs and small businesses. Indiana's SSBCI funding is expected to leverage \$10 in follow-on investment for each \$1 of SSBCI funding, resulting in at least \$990 million invested in Indiana's innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem by the end of the SSBCI program.

What is a SEDI-owned business? What is a Very Small Business?

The SSBCI program defines SEDI-owned businesses as business enterprises owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI). **Socially disadvantaged individuals** are those who have been **subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias because of their identity as a member** of a group without regard to their individual qualities; economically disadvantaged individuals are those **socially disadvantaged individuals** whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same business area who are not socially disadvantaged.

To be considered a SEDI-owned, business enterprises must certify that they:

- Are owned and controlled by individuals who have had their access to credit on reasonable terms diminished as compared to others in comparable economic circumstances, due to their (1) membership of a group that has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias within American society; (2) gender; (3) veteran status; (4) limited English proficiency; (5) physical handicap; (6) long-term residence in an environment isolated from the mainstream of American society; (7) membership of a federally or state-recognized Indian Tribe; (8) long-term residence in a rural community; (9) residence in a U.S. territory; (10) residence in a community undergoing economic transitions (including communities impacted by the shift towards a net-zero economy or deindustrialization); or (11) membership of another "underserved community" as defined in Executive Order 13985.
- Are owned and controlled by individuals whose residences are in CDFI Investment Areas, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii);
- Will operate a location in a CDFI Investment Area, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii); or
- Are located in CDFI Investment Areas, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii).

Very Small Business is defined as a business with fewer than 10 employees and may include independent contractors and sole proprietors.

Has Indiana received SSBCI funding previously, and, if so, how was it utilized?

This is the second SSBCI award Indiana has received, following an initial allocation at the program's inception in 2010. Then, the state received \$30 million, which has supported Indiana startups and small businesses through Elevate Ventures' pre-seed and seed investments.

Since its inception, Elevate Ventures has invested \$136 million in Hoosier businesses, attracting \$1.9 billion in private co-investment (13-to-1 investment leverage ratio).

Indiana-based companies that have grown thanks, in part, to SSBCI funding through Elevate Ventures include:

- Greenlight Guru – This Indianapolis-based tech company, which was founded in 2013, offers quality management software for the medical device industry, helping bring higher quality, life-changing products to market faster. By 2021, Greenlight Guru secured a \$120 million private investment and, in 2022, acquired three companies. Today, the company serves more than 800 leading MedTech companies around the world and has been recognized by Forbes as one of the Midwest's best enterprise software companies.

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Three Indiana Cities Launch Bold Visions, Strategic Plans to Fuel Growth

SEP 19, 2023

PRIOR

Local leaders from Michigan City, Seymour and Warsaw outline economic, community development plans to support current and future residents, prepare for state investment opportunities

INDIANAPOLIS (Sept. 19, 2023) – Three Indiana cities today unveiled ambitious economic development plans, outlining long-term strategies to better fuel economic growth, innovation and quality of life for current and future residents. These new growth agendas for Michigan City, Seymour and Warsaw were developed in partnership with local residents and funded by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) in an effort to increase economic mobility and opportunity statewide, enabling these smaller communities to be better equipped to access new funding from the recently expanded Indiana Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI).

"As we think about increasing the vibrancy of our regions and advancing quality of life and quality of place across Indiana, we want to ensure that all communities – regardless of size or resources – have the opportunity to grow and better position themselves for long-term success," said Indiana Secretary of Commerce David Rosenberg. "These three plans directly address the challenges small cities face when working to build economic opportunity. The visions and strategies now in place in Michigan City, Seymour and Warsaw will enable these communities to better attract capital and fuel development and revitalization, positively impacting their residents and creating more opportunities for families for years to come."

These three plans were developed during year-long 'learning labs' that enabled local teams, including government, industry and nonprofit officials as well as current residents, to work together with national community development officials from the Brookings Institution and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to develop place-based strategies that **bridge systemic gaps in health, wealth and opportunity.** The bold, long-term plans will equip each community with the tools needed to better compete for community and economic investment, particularly through the state's nationally recognized READI program, which received another \$500 million allocation from state leadership this spring.

"It is clear from both data and experience that equity-focused community investment plans can produce sustainable gains that have a positive ripple effect beyond any one project or neighborhood," said William Taft, senior vice president of economic development with LISC. "For these three cities, these goals are achievable. They have committed local champions behind them, and they offer great opportunities for investors to empower real community-driven transformation."

Michigan City, Seymour and Warsaw each tailored its strategy to its local assets, needs and opportunities. Their plans, which are highlighted below, share many common goals, such as expanding career pathways to high-quality jobs, building and preserving affordable housing, and transforming distressed or underutilized land into vibrant commercial facilities and public space for arts and recreation. The plans are based on the principles of community-centered economic inclusion (CCEI), which builds community wealth within underinvested places by directly engaging with residents; breaking down barriers related to race, income and geography; and connecting to broader economic growth in the region.

Michigan City | [Vibrant Michigan City: Economic Prosperity for All](#)

The Vibrant Michigan City playbook serves as a dynamic roadmap for progress, presenting a variety of projects, policies and programs to foster a vibrant and thriving community. The community's strategies aim to leverage the unique opportunities and tackle the unique challenges of each of its three main areas – west side, east side and mid-town – such as increasing quality of life assets, such as banking, grocery stores and public parks, to improve livability; advancing revitalization to retain talent; and **ensuring employment diversity to** ensure opportunities for residents.

"By working through this process as a community, we have sparked a sense of collaboration that is vital to putting the Vibrant Michigan City agenda items into action," said Clarence L. Hulse, executive director of the Economic Development Corporation Michigan City. "Our community is so appreciative of the opportunity to work with the initiative's partners to create a more economic inclusive environment not only here in Michigan City, but also in cities and towns across the country that can mirror our playbook as a guide."



iedc.in.gov/events/news/details/2023/09/19/three-indiana-cities-launch-bold-visions-strategic-plans-to-fuel-growth



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Minority Business Skills Enhancement Program Gives Underserved Groups a Hand Up in Northwest Indiana

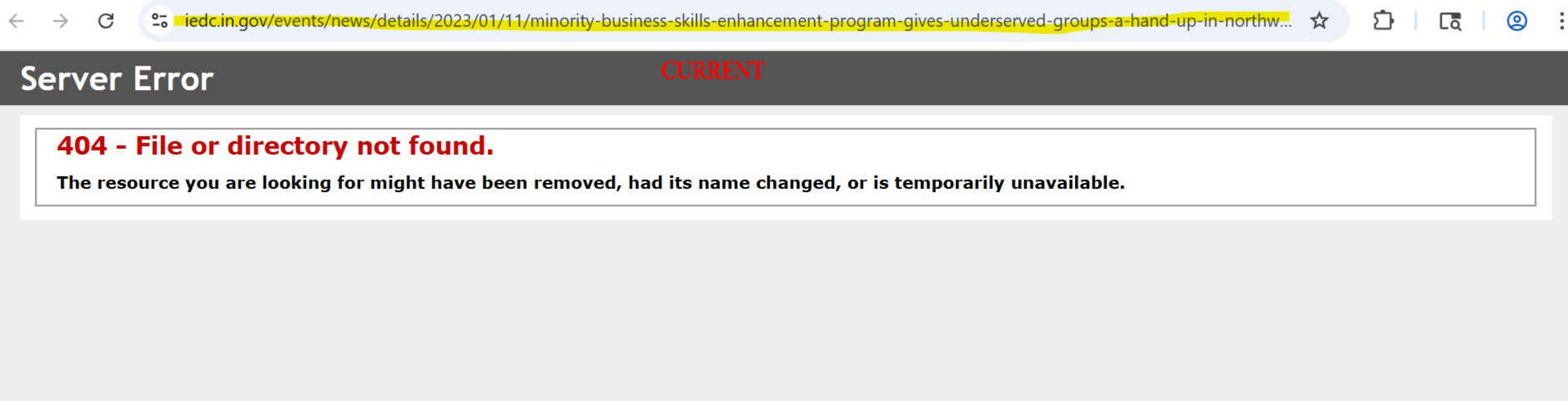
JAN 11, 2023

Small businesses are the economic engines of local communities and the national economy, though they aren't always on an equal playing field with their larger counterparts. **Yet more disparities exist with issues surrounding ethnic diversity and inclusion.** A solution-oriented program made possible by READI funding will address those challenges head-on.

The Minority Business Skills Enhancement Program, managed by the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center (Northwest Indiana SBDC), is a resource for both existing businesses and entrepreneurs looking to launch a new venture. The center will offer its business expertise to help minority-owned businesses grow, and to help start-ups succeed from the beginning. Hosted by Purdue University Northwest, the Northwest Indiana SBDC works to strengthen the region's small businesses through workshops, one-on-one consulting and special events.

The program is specifically designed with a more niche focus in terms of impact. Lorri Feldt, regional director of the Northwest Indiana SBDC, said zeroing in on this target market is strategic and intentional.

"During the pandemic, we were hearing for the first time from business owners under a great deal of stress and dealing with a lot of new challenges," she said. "We were hearing things like, 'I can't apply for disaster funds because I don't have my documents. Or, 'how do I make a profit and loss statement in order to get an SBA disaster loan?'"



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PRIOR

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING & TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

The IEDC invests in employees by providing professional development training and educational opportunities to enhance individual growth through flexible work schedules and a tuition reimbursement program.

A. Eligibility

Professional development training and tuition reimbursement is available to full-time employees who meet the following criteria:

- Must have been employed full time continuously with the state for at least 12 months prior to their submission of a Tuition Reimbursement or the [State of Indiana Tuition Assistance](#) application. Professional Development requests initiated and approved by a manager prior to an employee's completion of 12 months of employment and specifically related to the employee's role will be considered for approval.
- Must receive an overall rating of at least "Meets Target Performance" on their most recent performance evaluation of Individual Objectives
- Not subject to a Work Improvement Plan
- Total spend for professional development training and tuition reimbursement has not exceeded \$5,250 in the calendar year
- Must be an active employee at the time reimbursement is requested in order to be eligible to receive payment

B. Professional Development Training

The IEDC will pay for or reimburse the costs associated with professional development related to an employee's role. This training needs to be pre-approved by the employee's manager and Human Resources.

Requests by lawyers for the IEDC to pay or reimburse the costs associated with continuing legal education should be submitted to the General Counsel, who may approve such costs without the review of Human Resources.

When participating in professional development during normal business hours, employees should record the time as Regular Time, as that term is defined by the Work Schedule & Timekeeping Policy.

C. Tuition Reimbursement

Tuition reimbursement applies to all core and elective courses required for completion of a certificate, state licensure, General Education Development (GED), High School Equivalency (HSE), associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree program offered through, in, or associated with an accredited training or educational institution, school, or professional organization.

Tuition reimbursement may include registration fees, technology fees, rental fees, lab fees and more. It does not include courses taken more than once, materials required by class, activity fees, parking fees, equipment or if the participant receives a Grade C or lower.

Employees are encouraged to use the Alternative Work Schedule Policy or to utilize accrued Personal, Vacation, and Compensatory Time to attend class. Employees may not record the time as Regular Time.

D. Application & Procedure

1. Employees must complete the appropriate application ([Professional Development](#), [Tuition Reimbursement](#), [State of Indiana Tuition Assistance](#))
2. Employees are to obtain their manager's approval and return the form and a course description from the learning institution to Human Resources a minimum of 14 days prior to the date course(s)/training begin
3. Human Resources will review the request, obtain all additional approvals and inform the employee of their application status
4. Upon final approval, sign the Tuition Reimbursement acceptance form

Reimbursement calculation will be based upon the amount of tuition not covered by other sources of financial assistance, such as Pell Grants or other programs intended to support the employee's educational effort, but not including student loans.

Reimbursement Procedures

In order to receive reimbursement an employee must:

1. Remain employed with IEDC through completion of the approved course or program
2. Submit paid receipts for all eligible fees to Human Resources
3. Maintain at least a grade point of 2.7 (B-) on a 4-point scale or its equivalent
4. Submit a copy of the official grade report to Human Resources

E. Availability of Funds & Total Per-Employee Annual Cap

Payment for Professional Development Training and Tuition Reimbursement is contingent upon the continued availability of funds. Tuition Reimbursement is not a fringe benefit or a guaranteed entitlement or condition of employment.

In accordance with IRS requirements, the total costs associated with Professional Development Training and Tuition Reimbursement shall not exceed \$5,250 per calendar year per employee. Total calculations are determined based on the distribution date.

CURRENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING & TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

The IEDC invests in employees by providing professional development training and educational opportunities to enhance individual growth through flexible work schedules and a tuition reimbursement program. The IEDC will not approve participation in any program or activity that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion if they grant preferential treatment based upon one person's particular race, color, ethnicity, or national origin, over that of another person.

A. Eligibility

Professional development training and tuition reimbursement is available to full-time employees who meet the following criteria:

- Must have been employed full time continuously with the state for at least 12 months prior to their submission of a Tuition Reimbursement or the [State of Indiana Tuition Assistance](#) application. Professional Development requests initiated and approved by a manager prior to an employee's completion of 12 months of employment and specifically related to the employee's role will be considered for approval.
- Must receive an overall rating of at least "Meets Target Performance" on their most recent performance evaluation of Individual Objectives
- Not subject to a Work Improvement Plan
- Total spend for professional development training and tuition reimbursement has not exceeded \$5,250 in the calendar year
- Must be an active employee at the time reimbursement is requested in order to be eligible to receive payment

B. Professional Development Training

The IEDC will pay for or reimburse the costs associated with professional development related to an employee's role. This training needs to be pre-approved by the employee's manager and Human Resources.

Requests by lawyers for the IEDC to pay or reimburse the costs associated with continuing legal education should be submitted to the General Counsel, who may approve such costs without the review of Human Resources.

When participating in professional development during normal business hours, employees should record the time as Regular Time, as that term is defined by the Work Schedule & Timekeeping Policy.

C. Tuition Reimbursement

Tuition reimbursement applies to all core and elective courses required for completion of a certificate, state licensure, General Education Development (GED), High School Equivalency (HSE), associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree program

offered through, in, or associated with an accredited training or educational institution, school, or professional organization.

Tuition reimbursement may include registration fees, technology fees, rental fees, lab fees and more. It does not include courses taken more than once, materials required by class, activity fees, parking fees, equipment or if the participant receives a Grade C or lower.

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AS REVISED FOR 2025

TEMPLATE GRANT AGREEMENT

This Grant Agreement (this “Grant Agreement”), entered into by and between **INDIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION** (the “IEDC”) and **LEGAL NAME OF GRANTEE** (the “Grantee”), is executed pursuant to the terms and conditions set forth herein. In consideration of those mutual undertakings and covenants, the parties agree as follows:

1. Purpose of this Grant Agreement; Funding Source. The purpose of this Grant Agreement is to enable the IEDC to award a Grant of \$**GRANT AMOUNT** (the “Grant”) to the Grantee for eligible costs of the services or project (the “Project”) described in **Exhibits A and B** of this Grant Agreement, which are incorporated fully herein. The funds shall be used exclusively in accordance with the provisions contained in this Grant Agreement. The funds received by the Grantee pursuant to this Grant Agreement shall be used only to implement the Project or provide the services in conformance with this Grant Agreement and for no other purpose.

2. Representations and Warranties of the Grantee.

A. The Grantee expressly represents and warrants to the IEDC that it is statutorily eligible to receive these Grant funds. The Grantee expressly agrees to promptly repay all funds paid to it under this Grant Agreement should it be determined that it was ineligible to receive the funds.

B. The Grantee certifies by entering into this Grant Agreement that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from entering into this Grant Agreement by any federal or state department or agency. The term “principal” for purposes of this Grant Agreement is defined as an officer, director, owner, partner, key employee or other person with primary management or supervisory responsibilities, or a person who has a critical influence on or substantive control over the operations of the Grantee.

C. Grantee acknowledges Grant funds shall not be used to fund Projects, positions, activities, procedures or programs that show preference based on an individuals’ race, color, ethnicity, or national origin in conformance with Executive Order 25-14.

Commented [AL1]: Language added in response to EO 25-14

3. Implementation of and Reporting on the Project.

A. The Grantee shall implement and complete the Project in accordance with **Exhibits A & B**. Modification of the Project shall require prior written approval of the State.

B. The Grantee shall submit to the IEDC written progress reports until the completion of the Project. These reports shall be submitted on a quarterly basis and shall be submitted using the template provided in **Exhibit C**, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein.

4. Term. This Grant Agreement commences on July 1, 2024 and shall remain in effect through June 30, 2025. Unless otherwise provided herein, it may be extended upon the written agreement of the parties and as permitted by state or federal laws governing this Grant.

5. Grant Funding.

A. The IEDC shall fund this Grant in the amount of \$**GRANT AMOUNT**. The approved Project Budget is set forth as **Exhibit B** of this Grant Agreement, attached hereto and incorporated herein. The Grantee shall not spend more than the amount for each line item in the Project Budget without the prior written consent of the State, nor shall the Project costs funded by this Grant Agreement and those funded by any local and/or private share be changed or modified without the prior written consent of the State.

B. The disbursement of Grant funds to the Grantee shall not be made until all documentary materials required by this Grant Agreement have been received and approved by the IEDC and this Grant Agreement has been fully approved by the State.

6. Payment of Claims.

A. If advance payment of all or a portion of the Grant funds is permitted by statute or regulation, and the IEDC agrees to provide such advance payment, advance payment shall be made only upon submission of a proper claim setting out the intended purposes of those funds. After such funds have been expended, Grantee shall provide State with a reconciliation of those expenditures. Otherwise, all payments shall be made thirty five (35) days in arrears in conformance with State fiscal policies and procedures. As required by IC § 4-13-2-14.8, all payments will be by the direct deposit by electronic funds transfer to the financial institution designated by the Grantee in writing unless a specific waiver has been obtained from the Indiana Auditor of State.

B. Requests for payment will be processed only upon presentation of a Claim Voucher in the form designated by the State. Such Claim Vouchers must be submitted with the budget expenditure report detailing disbursements of state, local and/or private funds by project budget line items to ccf@iedc.in.gov.

C. The IEDC may require evidence furnished by the Grantee that substantial progress has been made toward completion of the Project prior to making the first payment under this Grant. All payments are subject to the State's determination that the Grantee's performance to date conforms with the Project as approved, notwithstanding any other provision of this Grant Agreement.

D. Claims shall be submitted to the IEDC within 60 calendar days following the end of the month in which work on or for the Project was performed. The IEDC has the discretion, and reserves the right, to NOT pay any claims submitted later than 60 calendar days following the end of the month in which the services were provided. All final claims and reports must be submitted to the IEDC within 60 calendar days after the expiration or termination of this agreement. Payment for claims submitted after that time may, at the discretion of the State, be denied. Claims may be submitted on a quarterly basis only. If Grant funds have been advanced and are unexpended at the time that the final claim is submitted, all such unexpended Grant funds must be returned to the State.

E. Claims must be submitted with accompanying supportive documentation as designated by the State. Claims submitted without supportive documentation will be returned to the Grantee and not processed for payment. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Grant Agreement may result in the denial of a claim for payment.

7. Project Monitoring by the State. The IEDC may conduct on-site or off-site monitoring reviews of the Project during the term of this Grant Agreement and for up to ninety (90) days after it expires or is otherwise terminated. The Grantee shall extend its full cooperation and give full access to the Project site and to relevant documentation to the IEDC or its authorized designees for the purpose of determining, among other things:

- A. whether Project activities are consistent with those set forth in **Exhibits A & B** and the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement;
- B. the actual expenditure of state, local and/or private funds expended to date on the Project is in conformity with the amounts for each Budget line item as set forth in **Exhibit B** and that unpaid costs have been properly accrued;
- C. that Grantee is making timely progress with the Project, and that its project management, financial management and control systems, procurement systems and methods, and overall performance are in conformance with the requirements set forth in this Grant Agreement and are fully and accurately reflected in Project reports submitted to the State.

8. Compliance with Audit and Reporting Requirements; Maintenance of Records.

A. The Grantee shall submit to an audit of funds paid through this Grant Agreement and shall make all books, accounting records and other documents available at all reasonable times during the term of this Grant Agreement and for a period of three (3) years after final payment for inspection by the IEDC or its authorized designee. Copies shall be furnished to the IEDC at no cost

B. If the Grantee is a “subrecipient” of federal grant funds under 2 C.F.R. 200.330, Grantee shall arrange for a financial and compliance audit that complies with 2 C.F.R. 200.500 *et seq.* if required by applicable provisions of 2 C.F.R. 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements).

C. If the Grantee is a non-governmental unit, the Grantee shall file the Form E-1 annual financial report required by IC § 5-11-1-4. The E-1 entity annual financial report will be used to determine audit requirements applicable to non-governmental units under IC § 5-11-1-9. Audits required under this section must comply with the State Board of Accounts *Uniform Compliance Guidelines for Examination of Entities Receiving Financial Assistance from Governmental Sources*, <https://www.in.gov/sboa/files/guidelines-examination-entities-receiving-financial-assistance-government-sources.pdf>.

9. Compliance with Laws.

A. The Grantee shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances, and all provisions required thereby to be included herein are hereby incorporated by reference. The enactment or modification of any applicable state or federal statute or the promulgation of rules or regulations thereunder after execution of this Grant Agreement shall be reviewed by the IEDC and the Grantee to determine whether the provisions of this Grant Agreement require formal modification.

B. The Grantee and its agents shall abide by all ethical requirements that apply to persons who have a business relationship with the IEDC as set forth in IC § 4-2-6, *et seq.*, IC § 4-2-7, *et seq.* and the regulations promulgated thereunder. **If the Grantee has knowledge, or would have acquired knowledge with reasonable inquiry, that a state officer, employee, or special state appointee, as those terms are defined in IC 4-2-6-1, has a financial interest in the Grant, the Grantee shall ensure compliance with the disclosure requirements in IC § 4-2-6-10.5 prior to the execution of this Grant Agreement.** If the Grantee is not familiar with these ethical requirements, the Grantee should refer any questions to the Indiana State Ethics Commission, or visit the Inspector General's website at <http://www.in.gov/ig/>. If the Grantee or its agents violate any applicable ethical standards, the IEDC may, in its sole discretion, terminate this Grant immediately upon notice to the Grantee. In addition, the Grantee may be subject to penalties under IC §§ 4-2-6, 4-2-7, 35-44.1-1-4, and under any other applicable laws.

C. The Grantee certifies by entering into this Grant Agreement that neither it nor its principal(s) is presently in arrears in payment of taxes, permit fees or other statutory, regulatory or judicially required payments to the State. The Grantee agrees that any payments currently due to the IEDC may be withheld from payments due to the Grantee. Additionally, payments may be withheld, delayed, or denied and/or this Grant suspended until the Grantee is current in its payments and has submitted proof of such payment to the State.

D. The Grantee warrants that it has no current, pending or outstanding criminal, civil, or enforcement actions initiated by the State, and agrees that it will immediately notify the IEDC of any such actions. During the term of such actions, the Grantee agrees that the IEDC may suspend funding for the Project. If a valid dispute exists as to the Grantee's liability or guilt in any action initiated by the IEDC or its agencies, and the IEDC decides to suspend funding to the Grantee, the Grantee may submit, in writing, a request for review to the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA). A determination by IDOA shall be binding on the parties. Any disbursements that the IEDC may delay, withhold, deny, or apply under this section shall not be subject to penalty or interest.

E. The Grantee warrants that the Grantee and any contractors performing work in connection with the Project shall obtain and maintain all required permits, licenses, registrations, and approvals, and shall comply with all health, safety, and environmental statutes, rules, or regulations in the performance of work activities for the State. Failure to do so may be deemed a material breach of this Grant Agreement and grounds for immediate termination and denial of grant opportunities with the State.

F. The Grantee affirms that, if it is an entity described in IC Title 23, it is properly registered and owes no outstanding reports to the Indiana Secretary of State.

G. As required by IC § 5-22-3-7:

(1) The Grantee and any principals of the Grantee certify that:

(A) the Grantee, except for de minimis and nonsystematic violations, has not violated the terms of:

(i) IC § 24-4.7 [Telephone Solicitation Of Consumers];

(ii) IC § 24-5-12 [Telephone Solicitations]; or

(iii) IC § 24-5-14 [Regulation of Automatic Dialing Machines];

in the previous three hundred sixty-five (365) days, even if IC 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law; and

(B) the Grantee will not violate the terms of IC § 24-4.7 for the duration of this Grant Agreement, even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law.

(2) The Grantee and any principals of the Grantee certify that an affiliate or principal of the Grantee and any agent acting on behalf of the Grantee or on behalf of an affiliate or principal of the Grantee, except for de minimis and nonsystematic violations,

(A) has not violated the terms of IC § 24-4.7 in the previous three hundred sixty-five (365) days, even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law; and

(B) will not violate the terms of IC § 24-4.7 for the duration of this Grant Agreement even if IC § 24-4.7 is preempted by federal law.

10. Debarment and Suspension.

A. The Grantee certifies by entering into this Grant Agreement that it is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from entering into this Grant by any federal agency or by any department, agency or political subdivision of the State. The term "principal" for purposes of this Grant Agreement means an officer, director, owner, partner, key employee or other person with primary management or supervisory responsibilities, or a person who has a critical influence on or substantive control over the operations of the Grantee.

B. The Grantee certifies that it has verified the suspension and debarment status for all subcontractors receiving funds under this Grant Agreement and shall be solely responsible for any recoupments or penalties that might arise from non-compliance. The Grantee shall immediately notify the IEDC if any subcontractor becomes debarred or suspended, and shall, at the State's request, take all steps required by the IEDC to terminate its contractual relationship with the subcontractor for work to be performed under this Grant Agreement.

11. Drug-Free Workplace Certification. As required by Executive Order No. 90-5, April 12, 1990, issued by the Governor of Indiana, the Grantee hereby covenants and agrees to make a good faith effort to provide and maintain a drug-free workplace. Grantee will give written notice to the IEDC within ten (10) days after receiving actual notice that the Grantee, or an employee of the Grantee in the State of Indiana, has been convicted of a criminal drug violation occurring in the workplace. False certification or violation of the certification may result in sanctions

including, but not limited to, suspension of grant payments, termination of the Grant and/or debarment of grant opportunities with the IEDC of Indiana for up to three (3) years.

In addition to the provisions of the above paragraphs, if the total amount set forth in this Grant Agreement is in excess of \$25,000.00, the Grantee certifies and agrees that it will provide a drug-free workplace by:

- A. Publishing and providing to all of its employees a statement notifying them that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the Grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; and
- B. Establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform its employees of: (1) the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; (2) the Grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace; (3) any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and (4) the penalties that may be imposed upon an employee for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace; and
- C. Notifying all employees in the statement required by subparagraph (A) above that as a condition of continued employment the employee will: (1) abide by the terms of the statement; and (2) notify the Grantee of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction; and
- D. Notifying in writing the IEDC within ten (10) days after receiving notice from an employee under subdivision (C)(2) above, or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction; and
- E. Within thirty (30) days after receiving notice under subdivision (C)(2) above of a conviction, imposing the following sanctions or remedial measures on any employee who is convicted of drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace: (1) take appropriate personnel action against the employee, up to and including termination; or (2) require such employee to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency; and
- F. Making a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace through the implementation of subparagraphs (A) through (E) above.

12. Employment Eligibility Verification. As required by IC § 22-5-1.7, the Grantee hereby swears or affirms under the penalties of perjury that:

- A. The Grantee has enrolled and is participating in the E-Verify program;
- B. The Grantee has provided documentation to the IEDC that it has enrolled and is participating in the E-Verify program;

- C. The Grantee does not knowingly employ an unauthorized alien.
- D. The Grantee shall require its contractors who perform work under this Grant Agreement to certify to Grantee that the contractor does not knowingly employ or contract with an unauthorized alien and that the contractor has enrolled and is participating in the E-Verify program. The Grantee shall maintain this certification throughout the duration of the term of a contract with a contractor.

The IEDC may terminate for default if the Grantee fails to cure a breach of this provision no later than thirty (30) days after being notified by the State.

13. Funding Cancellation. As required by Financial Management Circular 2007-1 and IC § 5-22-17-5, when the Director of the Budget Agency makes a written determination that funds are not appropriated or otherwise available to support continuation of performance of this Grant Agreement, it shall be canceled. A determination by the Director of the Budget Agency that funds are not appropriated or otherwise available to support continuation of performance shall be final and conclusive.

14. Governing Law. This Grant Agreement shall be governed, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana, without regard to its conflict of laws rules. Suit, if any, must be brought in the State of Indiana.

15. Information Technology Accessibility Standards. Any information technology related products or services purchased, used or maintained through this Grant must be compatible with the principles and goals contained in the Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards adopted by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board under Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. §794d), as amended. The federal Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards can be found at: <http://www.access-board.gov/508.htm>.

16. Insurance. The Grantee shall maintain insurance with coverages and in such amount as may be required by the IEDC.

17. Nondiscrimination. Pursuant to the Indiana Civil Rights Law, specifically IC § 22-9-1-10, and in keeping with the purposes of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Grantee covenants that it shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment relating to this Grant with respect to the hire, tenure, terms, conditions or privileges of employment or any matter directly or indirectly related to employment, because of the employee or applicant's: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, ancestry, status as a veteran, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law ("Protected Characteristics"). Furthermore, Grantee certifies compliance with applicable federal laws, regulations, and executive orders prohibiting discrimination based on the Protected Characteristics in the provision of services.

The Grantee understands that the IEDC is a recipient of federal funds, and therefore, where applicable, Grantee and any subcontractors shall comply with requisite affirmative action requirements, including reporting, pursuant to 41 CFR Chapter 60, as amended, and Section 202 of Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 13672.

18. Notice to Parties. Whenever any notice, statement or other communication is required under this Grant, it will be sent by E-mail or first class U.S. mail service to the following addresses, unless otherwise specifically advised.

A. INDIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Attn: General Counsel
One North Capitol Avenue, Suite 700
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2288
CCF@IEDC.in.gov

B. Notices to the Grantee shall be sent to:

E-mail: _____

As required by IC § 4-13-2-14.8, payments to the Grantee shall be made via electronic funds transfer in accordance with instructions filed by the Grantee with the Indiana Auditor of State.

19. Order of Precedence; Incorporation by Reference. Any inconsistency or ambiguity in this Grant Agreement shall be resolved by giving precedence in the following order: (1) requirements imposed by applicable federal or state law, including those identified in paragraph 24, below, (2) this Grant Agreement, (3) Exhibits prepared by the IEDC, (4) Invitation to Apply for Grant; and (5) Exhibits prepared by Grantee. All of the foregoing are incorporated fully herein by reference.

20. Public Record. The Grantee acknowledges that the IEDC will not treat this Grant as containing confidential information, and will post this Grant on the transparency portal as required by Executive Order 05-07 and IC § 5-14-3.5-2. Use by the public of the information contained in this Grant shall not be considered an act of the State.

21. Termination for Breach.

A. Failure to complete the Project and expend State, local and/or private funds in accordance with this Grant Agreement may be considered a material breach, and shall entitle the IEDC to suspend grant payments, and to suspend the Grantee's participation in State grant programs until such time as all material breaches are cured to the State's satisfaction.

B. The expenditure of State or federal funds other than in conformance with the Project or the Budget may be deemed a breach. The Grantee explicitly covenants that it shall promptly repay to the IEDC all funds not spent in conformance with this Grant Agreement.

22. Termination for Convenience. Unless prohibited by a statute or regulation relating to the award of the Grant, this Grant Agreement may be terminated, in whole or in part, by the IEDC whenever, for any reason, the IEDC determines that such termination is in the best interest of the State. Termination shall be effected by delivery to the Grantee of a Termination Notice, specifying the extent to which such termination becomes effective. The Grantee shall be compensated for completion of the Project properly done prior to the effective date of termination. The IEDC will not be liable for work on the Project performed after the effective date of termination. In no case shall total payment made to the Grantee exceed the original grant.

23. Travel. No expenses for travel will be reimbursed unless specifically authorized by this Grant.

24. Provision Applicable to Grants with tax-funded State Educational Institutions:

“Separateness” of the Parties. The IEDC acknowledges and agrees that because of the unique nature of State Educational Institutions, the duties and responsibilities of the State Educational Institution in these Standard Conditions for Grants are specific to the department or unit of the State Educational Institution. The existence or status of any one contract or grant between the IEDC and the State Educational Institution shall have no impact on the execution or performance of any other contract or grant and shall not form the basis for termination of any other contract or grant by either party.

25. Use of the IEDC Name; Public Relations & Marketing. The IEDC has not granted any rights to use its name, trademark, intellectual property, or logos. The Grantee agrees that it will not use the name or intellectual property, including, but not limited to, IEDC trademarks or logos, in any manner, including commercial advertising or as a business reference without the prior written consent of the IEDC. In all cases in which the IEDC’s participation will be referenced, the IEDC shall have the right of review and approval of the use, disclosure, and the finished product prior to its publication. All such requests shall be made in writing and delivered to the IEDC for approval at its sole discretion.

All external facing communications related to this Agreement, including but not limited to marketing, public relations and social media materials and content, shall be developed in consultation with the IEDC and receive IEDC written approval prior to publication. Communications should include appropriate reference to the IEDC as an investor, partner and/or sponsor of the program or initiative that is the subject of this Grant, including the use of the IEDC logo and IEDC social media tags and reference to IEDC social media accounts. All communications required under this paragraph shall be sent to the IEDC Vice President of Marketing.

Non-Collusion, Acceptance

The undersigned attests, subject to the penalties for perjury, that the undersigned is the Grantee, or that the undersigned is the properly authorized representative, agent, member or officer of the Grantee. Further, to the undersigned’s knowledge, neither the undersigned nor any other member, employee, representative, agent or officer of the Grantee, directly or indirectly, has entered into or been offered any sum of money or other consideration for the execution of this

Grant Agreement other than that which appears upon the face hereof. **Furthermore, if the undersigned has knowledge that a state officer, employee, or special state appointee, as those terms are defined in IC § 4-2-6-1, has a financial interest in the Grant, the Grantee attests to compliance with the disclosure requirements in IC § 4-2-6-10.5.**

In Witness Whereof, the Grantee and the IEDC have, through duly authorized representatives, entered into this Agreement. The parties, having read and understand the foregoing terms of this Agreement, do by their respective signatures dated below hereby agree to the terms thereof.

LEGAL NAME OF GRANTEE

Signature

Printed Name and Position/Title

Date: _____

INDIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Jeff Blade, Executive Director

(Digital Signature Stamp Below)

STATE BUDGET AGENCY

Chad Ranney, Budget Director

Date: _____

Meet the Team

PRIOR



Natasha Jensen-Matta

VP, Entrepreneurship and
Innovation



Ryan Locke

VP, Venture Finance



Aaryn Eady

Director, Minority Business
Initiative

Meet the Team

CURRENT



Natasha Jensen-Matta

VP, Entrepreneurship and
Innovation



Ryan Locke

VP, Venture Finance



Aaryn Eady

Director, INPACT Initiative

Get Certified Pilot Program (GCP)

Business Certification Accelerator for minority, woman, and veteran owned business

[Start Your Application](#)

What is the Get Certified Pilot Program (GCP)?

The GCP is a no-cost two-week, accelerator-style course designed to equip minority business enterprises owned or operated by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) with the skills to apply for business certification as a minority, woman, or veteran business enterprise. This program is a partnership between the Indiana Economic Development Corporation's Minority Business Initiative (MBI) and Ivy Tech Community College, Lake County and Allen County campuses. Participants in the GCP will not only get hands-on technical assistance and support for their certification application, but also receive valuable insight on upcoming opportunities for diverse suppliers across Ivy Tech's network of campuses.

Who should apply to this program?

Businesses applying to the GCP are required to complete the no-cost pre-course webinar and identify themselves as good fits for business certification. Businesses applying to the GCP should meet the following requirements for business certification with the Indiana Department of Administration (or other certifying agencies if interested.)

- At least 51% of the business is owned or controlled by a qualified minority, woman, or veteran
- The individual that will be applying for business certification is a United States citizen
- The business filed tax returns for the 2023 year
- The business is for-profit and currently generating revenue.
- The business is organized or incorporated in the state of Indiana

How will my business get certified through this program?

The GCP is purposed to give you the technical knowledge to start, complete, and receive approval for certification with the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA.) While IDOA certification will be the focus of the program, other certifying agencies and their certifications will be covered for interested businesses. The program WILL NOT complete any certification application on behalf of the business, NOR guarantee approval of any certification application, NOR guarantee contracts for any business. Rather, this program is intended to provide hands-on assistance for SEDI-owned or -operated businesses to navigate the certification application process easier and faster. Just think, the faster you complete your certification application and get approved, the faster you can enter the market of buyers looking to purchase products and services with diverse supplier businesses like yours!

How do I apply?

Start by watching the no-cost, pre-course webinar! This webinar will provide you with foundational knowledge about business certification, and help you determine if your business is a good fit for the GCP and business certification with the IDOA. Upon completion of the webinar, you will gain access to the online application through a QR code, which can be completed on a smart phone or desktop device. The application closes on Monday, August 19 at 11:59pm, no late applications will be accepted.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

What if I have questions?

Feel free to email info@mbi.iedc.in.gov for questions on the program or the application process.

Get Certified Pilot Program (GCP)

Business Certification Accelerator for underserved businesses

Stay In Touch with GCP

Watch the Webinar

What is the Get Certified Pilot Program (GCP)?

The GCP is a no-cost, multi-week accelerator course designed to equip minority business enterprises owned or operated by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) with the skills to apply for business certification with the State of Indiana. Participants in the GCP will not only get hands-on technical assistance and support for their certification application, but also receive valuable insight on how to market their certification and compete for state government contracts as a diverse supplier.

How is the Program Structured?

Applicants accepted into the GCP will be required to attend a mandatory virtual orientation session on Tuesday, September 10 from 6:00pm to 7:00pm CT, 7:00pm to 8:00pm ET. Accepted participants will then have two mandatory in-person sessions – Thursday, September 12 and Thursday, September 19. Between each class session, participants can participate in optional office hours for individualized support and specific questions. Office hours will be hosted virtually on Tuesday, September 17; Tuesday, September 24; and Thursday, September 26. Office hours are held from 6:00pm to 7:00pm CT, 7:00pm to 8:00pm ET.

Who should apply to this program?

Businesses applying to the GCP are required to complete the no-cost pre-course webinar and identify themselves as good fits for business certification. Businesses applying to the GCP should meet the following requirements for business certification with the Indiana Department of Administration (or other certifying agencies if interested.)

- At least 51% of the business is owned or controlled by a qualified individual
- The individual that will be applying for business certification is a United States citizen
- The business filed tax returns for the 2023 year
- The business is for-profit and currently generating revenue.
- The business is organized or incorporated in the state of Indiana

How will my business get certified through this program?

The GCP is purposed to give you the technical knowledge to start, complete, and receive approval for certification with the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA.) While IDOA certification will be the focus of the program, other certifying agencies and their certifications will be covered for interested businesses. The program WILL NOT complete any certification application on behalf of the business, NOR guarantee approval of any certification application, NOR guarantee contracts for any business. Rather, this program is intended to provide hands-on assistance for SEDI-owned or -operated businesses to navigate the certification application process easier and faster. Just think, the faster you complete your certification application and get approved, the faster you can enter the market of buyers looking to purchase products and services with diverse supplier businesses like yours!

Who is instructing this class?

The course will be instructed by Joanne Tica, certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) by the state of Indiana as well as a Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB) by the SBA. Joanne is a Certification Specialty Advisor for the INPACT Initiative and has dedicated hundreds of hours in 1:1 and group advising to MBEs, helping them understand their unique pathway to certification and successful contracting as a business.

Can I apply to this program at a later date?

The INPACT Initiative is excited to host our pilot cycle of the Get Certified Program in September 2024. We are looking to launch additional cycles at the beginning of 2025. Be sure to click the link [here](#) to stay in the loop about upcoming cycles of the Get Certified Program in various regions across the state. In the meantime, you're invited to watch our no-cost, 30-minute webinar, which will provide you with foundational knowledge about business certification and government contracting, and help you determine if your business is a good fit for business certification with the IDOA.

Watch the Webinar

What if I have questions?

Feel free to email info@inpact.iedc.in.gov for questions on the program or the application process.

Minority Business Initiative (MBI)

Supporting Hoosier MBEs and SEDI-owned Businesses

Get Connected

Our Mission

The Indiana Minority Business Initiative's (MBI) mission is to support Hoosier minority business enterprises – that are owned or operated by socially & economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) – by helping them navigate entrepreneur resources, services, and networks, increase their business competitiveness through certifications and contract support, and develop their businesses through capacity-building technical assistance initiatives. The MBI aims to provide direct assistance and referrals to minority business enterprises as they start, grow, and sustain in Indiana – all while contributing collaboratively and meaningfully to the statewide entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The MBI does not aim to duplicate the efforts of existing resource providers within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Instead, the initiative will provide targeted assistance for historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs and business owners and create an on-ramp to the ecosystem of business resources and opportunities in Indiana.



MBI Services

Ecosystem Navigation

Helping minority business owners better navigate the growing ecosystem of entrepreneurial resources, services, and networks.

Business Development

Helping minority businesses build their capacity and competitiveness for certification and contract capital.

Capacity Building

Helping minority businesses grow, expand, and retain their businesses and jobs through advising and technical assistance initiatives.

MBI Programs

Get Certified Program

Business certification accelerator for minority, woman, and veteran owned business

Certification Readiness 1:1 Technical Advising

Helping minority business enterprises understand their unique pathway to certification and successful contracting

Certification Readiness Lunch and Learns

Monthly virtual presentations featuring SMEs and key topics on certification

Get Connected with MBI

Whether you've just put your business idea on paper for the first time, or you're looking for investment opportunities for the latest tech innovation, the MBI is here to serve you.

Complete the online intake form to get started on your journey with MBI today.

Get Connected

Other Resources

[SSBCI](#)

The SSBCI supports underserved entrepreneurs and small businesses with loans for operating capital

[ElevateME](#)

Venture capital for minority and women founders and innovators

[Entrepreneurship @ The IEDC](#)

Additional resources your small business needs for success



More Information

The Indiana Minority Business Initiative Center is operated by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and is funded, in part, by the U.S. Department of Commerce through the Minority Business Development Agency. The Indiana Minority Business Initiative Center proudly serves all minority business enterprises owned or operated by socially & economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI.)

Still have questions?

Please reach out to our team at info@mbi.iedc.in.gov.

Indiana Procurement Assistance & Certification Training (INPACT) Initiative

Supporting Hoosier MBEs and SEDI-owned Businesses

Get Connected

Our Mission

The Indiana Procurement Assistance & Certification Training (INPACT) Initiative's mission is to support Hoosier minority business enterprises – that are owned or operated by socially & economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) – by helping them navigate entrepreneur resources, services, and networks, increase their business competitiveness through certifications and contract support, and develop their businesses through capacity-building technical assistance initiatives. The INPACT Initiative aims to provide direct assistance and referrals to minority business enterprises as they start and grow in Indiana – all while contributing collaboratively and meaningfully to the statewide entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The INPACT Initiative does not aim to duplicate the efforts of existing resource providers within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Instead, the initiative will provide targeted assistance for historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs and business owners and create an on-ramp to the ecosystem of business resources and opportunities in Indiana.



INPACT Services

Ecosystem Navigation

Helping MBE owners better navigate the growing ecosystem of entrepreneurial resources, services, and networks.

Business Development

Helping minority business enterprises build their capacity and competitiveness for certification and contract capital.

Capacity Building

Helping MBEs grow, expand, and retain their businesses and jobs through advising and technical assistance initiatives.

For Small Businesses →

INPACT Programs

[Get Certified Program– applications currently closed](#)

Business certification accelerator for minority, woman, and veteran owned businesses

Certification Readiness 1:1 Technical Advising

Helping minority business enterprises understand their unique pathway to certification and successful contracting

Certification Readiness Lunch and Learns

Monthly virtual presentations featuring SMEs and key topics on certification

Get Connected with the INPACT Initiative

Whether you've just put your business idea on paper for the first time, or you're looking for investment opportunities for the latest tech innovation, the INPACT Initiative is here to serve you.

Complete the online intake form to get started on your journey with INPACT today.

Get Connected

Other Resources

[SSBCI](#)

The SSBCI supports underserved entrepreneurs and small businesses with loans for operating capital

[ElevateME](#)

Venture capital for minority and women founders and innovators

[Entrepreneurship @ The IEDC](#)

Additional resources your small business needs for success



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The Indiana MBDA Business Center (INPACT Initiative) is operated by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and is funded, in part, by the U.S. Department of Commerce through the Minority Business Development Agency. The INPACT Initiative proudly serves all minority business enterprises owned or operated by socially & economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI.)

Still have questions?

Please reach out to our team at info@inpact.iedc.in.gov.

INDIANA
FOR THE BOLD
Economic Development Corp.



ENTREPRENEUR SUPPORT

CAPITAL

INCENTIVES

INNOVATIVE INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Small business grant for export-related activities



Grant to assist manufacturers investing in smart technology



businesses for intensifying cybersecurity threats



Minority Business Initiative (MBI)

PRIOR

Targeted assistance for historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs and business owners



Ecosystem Navigator

The experts behind the portal that helps connect Indiana founds with the right resources at the right time



Capital Access Program (CAP)



Annual high school pitch
competition



mentors, investors and other
valuable resources



insights and a foundation for
smart manufacturing



CURRENT

Cybersecurity

Preparing Indiana's small
businesses for intensifying
cybersecurity threats



Indiana Procurement Assistance & Certification Training (INPACT) Initiative

Targeted assistance for
historically disadvantaged
entrepreneurs and business
owners



Ecosystem Navigator

The experts behind the portal
that help connect Indiana
founders with the right
resources at the right time



PRIOR

Indiana Procurement Assistance & Certification Training (INPACT) Initiative Client Registration Form

By completing the below form, you ("client") acknowledge engagement with the Indiana MBDA Business Center (INPACT Initiative) for business consulting or other services. The services provided by the Business Center to the client are subsidized through federal appropriations. The MBDA-funded Business Center agrees to provide one or more of the following services to the client:

- business consulting
- business match-making
- contract opportunity
- sourcing capital sourcing
- other services

Business Representative First Name *

Business Representative Last Name *

Business Name *

Is your business address a commercial address or residential address? Addresses of residence-based businesses will be kept confidential and can only be accessed by approved INPACT staff. *

- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Residential

Business Address Line 1 *

Business Address Line 2

City *

State *

Zip *

Best Contact Phone *

Best Contact Email *

Please select how your business identifies as SEDI according to the definitions below. *

(1) Self-certified the business is owned and controlled by individuals who have had their access to credit on reasonable terms diminished as compared to others in comparable economic circumstances, due to their:

- a. membership of a group that has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias within American society
- b. gender
- c. veteran status
- d. limited English proficiency
- e. disability
- f. long-term residence in an environment isolated from the mainstream of American society
- g. membership of a Federally or state-recognized Indian Tribe -long-term residence in a rural community
- h. residence in a U.S. territory -residence in a community undergoing economic transitions (including communities impacted by the shift towards a netzero economy or deindustrialization)
- i. membership of an "underserved community" as defined in Executive Order 13985
 - i. individuals who belong to communities of color, such as Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, Native American, Alaska Native and Indigenous, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and North African persons
 - ii. individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity (including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, gender non-conforming, and non-binary (LGBTQ+) persons)
 - iii. persons who face discrimination based on pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions
 - iv. Parents
 - v. Caregivers
 - vi. individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on their religion or disability
 - vii. first-generation professionals or first-generation college students
 - viii. individuals with limited English proficiency
 - ix. Immigrants
 - x. individuals who belong to communities that may face employment barriers based on older age or former incarceration
 - xi. individuals who belong to communities that may face employment barriers based on older age or former incarceration
 - xii. persons who live in rural areas
 - xiii. veterans and military spouses
 - xiv. persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty, discrimination, or inequality.

(2) Self-certified the business is owned and controlled by individuals whose residences are in CDFI Investment Areas, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii). Visit <https://www.cdfifund.gov/cims> to quickly determine if your residence is in a CDFI Investment

Area.

(3) Self-certified the business will build, open, or operate a location in a CDFI Investment Area, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii)

(4) Self-certified the business is located in a CDFI Investment Area, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii)

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

Acknowledgement of Client Relationship

MBDA does not guarantee any particular outcome or business result on behalf of the client or associated third parties and is not liable for any outcomes or business decisions made by the client or associated third parties.

Acceptance of Client Relationship

The client agrees to: (a) acknowledge the relationship with Business Center (as demonstrated in this agreement); (b) provide firm contact and profile information; (c) disclose to MBDA and/or Business Center outcome(s) based on the services provided to the client by Business Center to MBDA; and (d) provide documentary verification to MBDA and/or Business Center for transactions resulting from services provided pursuant to this engagement.

Certification

Under this agreement, the client certifies under penalty of perjury that it is a minority business enterprise (MBE), as defined by the MBDA Act. 15 U.S.C. §§ 9501(9), (15). A **minority business enterprise (MBE)** under the MBDA Act is a business enterprise owned and controlled by at least one **socially or economically disadvantaged individual**. 15 U.S.C. § 9501(9). A **socially disadvantaged individual** is an individual who has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias because of the identity of the individual as a member of a group, without regard to any individual quality of the individual that is unrelated to that identity. 15 U.S.C. § 9501(15). An **economically disadvantaged individual** is an individual whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities, as compared to others in the same line of business and competitive market areas, because of the identity of the individual as a member of a group, without regard to any individual quality of the individual that is unrelated to that identity. 15 U.S.C. § 9501(15). An individual that identifies as a member of one or more of the following groups is **presumed to be** socially or economically disadvantaged: Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian (including South Asian); Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; and Hasidic Jews. 15 U.S.C. § 9501(15). An individual does not need to identify as a member of one of these groups to be a socially or economically disadvantaged individual eligible to receive Business Center services under the MBDA Act.

Privacy Disclosure and Information Use

By submitting this form, your company agrees to allow the Business Center and/or MBDA to share this document, information contained therein, and any supplementary material provided by your company (collectively "Client Engagement Form") on an as needed

basis, with United States Government agencies to carry out appropriate due diligence and more effectively advocate for your interests. The Client Engagement Form also may be used by MBDA and Business Centers for the purposes of conducting research, studies, and analysis consistent with the MBDA mission as stated in the MBDA Act. The Client Engagement Form is considered business confidential and will not be shared with any other person or organization outside the U.S. Government unless MBDA is given permission to do so by your company. All business confidential information will be protected from disclosure to the extent permitted by law.

By my typed signature below, I intend and agree to be legally bound by this agreement.* *

Submit



Indiana Procurement Assistance & Certification Training

Whether you've just put your business idea on paper for the first time, or you're looking for investment opportunities for the latest tech innovation, the INPACT Initiative is here to serve you. Complete our intake form to get started on your journey with the INPACT Initiative today.

This form will take 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Contact Information for Program Purposes

Full Business Name (include dba if applicable) *

Business Primary Contact First Name *

Business Primary Contact Last Name *

Preferred Name *

Contact Job Title *

Best Phone Number w/ Extension *

Best Email Address *

Business Physical Address Line 1 (for home-based businesses, you can omit Lines 1 and 2 if you prefer)

Business Physical Address Line 2

Business Physical Address City *

Business Physical Address State *

Business Physical Address Zip *

Is your business physical address and mailing address the same? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Business Website

Active Social Media

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ LinkedIn

☐ X (Twitter)

☐ TikTok

☐ Other

Please add up to TWO social media platforms with the highest engagement/ activity currently.

Please provide a brief description of your business products or services. *

Demographic Information

Business Ownership - Ethnicity

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other

Please indicate any active certifications that the business has, including the type and certifying agency.

Business Information

Date Company Founded

MM / DD / YYYY

☐ Is your business registered with System Award Management ([SAM.gov](https://sam.gov))?

Entrepreneurship Business Stage *

- ☐ Ideation (thinking of a new business idea)
- ☐ Planning (developing business functions and strategies)
- ☐ Execution (operating the business, with or without profit)
- ☐ Scaling (growing business operations and profits)

Please check all that apply to the business. *

- ☐ My business has not been legally registered with the Indiana Secretary of State.
- ☐ C- Corporation
- ☐ Family-Owned
- ☐ Limited Liability Company (LLC)
- ☐ Partnership
- ☐ Privately-Held
- ☐ Publicly-Held
- ☐ Sole Proprietorship
- ☐ Sub S Corporation
- ☐ Other

☐ The business is organized or incorporated in the state of Indiana.

Which industry best describes your business? *

- ☐ Agriculture
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Financial and Professional Services
- ☐ Food and Beverage
- ☐ Health, Human, and Family Services
- ☐ Hotels and Tourism
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Mechanical and Electrical Engineering
- ☐ Media, Arts, and Culture
- ☐ Nonprofit or Charitable Mission
- ☐ Personal Care Services and Beauty
- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Shipping, Transportation, and Logistics
- ☐ Textiles and Clothing
- ☐ Other

How many full-time employees does your business have? *

How many part-time employees does your business have? *

What is your current annual business revenue? *

Please select how your business identifies as SEDI-owned according to the definition below. *

(1) Self-certified the business is owned and controlled by individuals who have had their access to credit on reasonable terms diminished as compared to others in comparable economic circumstances, due to their:

- a. membership of a group that has been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias within American society
- b. gender
- c. veteran status
- d. limited English proficiency
- e. disability
- f. long-term residence in an environment isolated from the mainstream of American society
- g. membership of a Federally or state-recognized Indian Tribe -long-term residence in a rural community

h. residence in a U.S. territory -residence in a community undergoing economic transitions (including communities impacted by the shift towards a netzero economy or deindustrialization)

i. membership of an “underserved community” as defined in Executive Order 13985

ii. individuals who belong to communities of color, such as Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, Native American, Alaska Native and Indigenous, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and North African persons

iii. individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity (including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, gender non-conforming, and non-binary (LGBTQ+) persons)

iv. persons who face discrimination based on pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions

v. Parents

vi. Caregivers

vii. individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on their religion or disability

viii. first-generation professionals or first-generation college students

ix. individuals with limited English proficiency

x. Immigrants

xi. individuals who belong to communities that may face employment barriers based on older age or former incarceration

xii. individuals who belong to communities that may face employment barriers based on older age or former incarceration

xiii. persons who live in rural areas

xiv. veterans and military spouses

xv. persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty, discrimination, or inequality.

(2) Self-certified the business is owned and controlled by individuals whose residences are in CDFI Investment Areas, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii). Visit <https://www.cdfifund.gov/cims> to quickly determine if your residence is in a CDFI Investment Area.

(3) Self-certified the business will build, open, or operate a location in a CDFI Investment Area, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii)

(4) Self-certified the business is located in a CDFI Investment Area, as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 1805.201(b)(3)(ii)

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

Business Services Inquiry

Would you like to be added to the INPACT Initiative e-newsletter list to stay informed of the latest business resources, programs, and events for minority business enterprises?

☐ Yes, please add me to the list

Are you interested in receiving information about getting your business certified? (MBE, DBE, VOSB, etc.) *

☐ Yes

☐ No

The INPACT Initiative hosts monthly virtual presentations covering the topics that are most valuable to your business' growth and success. Would you like to receive personal invitations to these virtual sessions? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

The INPACT Initiative offers 1:1 specialty advising on topics of (1) certification and contracting and (2) business operations and supplier readiness. To ensure these advising sessions are the right fit for your current stage of business, we recommend starting with a general advising session through our Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC) network first. This helps us tailor support and connect you with the most effective resources. Have you completed a general advising session through the ISBDC in the last 6 months? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No, but I'd like to be referred
☐ No, and I'm not interested at this time

Please select all of the topics that you would like to see INPACT Initiative create programs/resources around that would MOST help your business in its CURRENT stage. *

- ☐ Registration (LLC, S-Corp, etc.)
☐ Business Plan Writing
☐ Business Model Development & Market Research
☐ Marketing & Communications (branding, website, etc.)
☐ Financing (grants, debt capital, etc.)
☐ Financial Management (taxes, accounting, profit and loss statements, projections, etc.)
☐ Talent and Workforce Development
☐ Legal and Human Resources
☐ Technology and Security
☐ Business Certification
☐ Business Procurement Readiness and Contracting
☐ Government Contracting
☐ Trades and Exporting
☐ Pitching (investors, buyers)
☐ Venture Investment and Capital
☐ Business Transition (acquisition, succession, sale, etc.)
☐ Other

Submit

PRIOR

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING

The IEDC recognizes that our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The sum of individual differences is what makes the IEDC unique and successful, and we are committed to fostering a professional community that supports diversity of voice, lifelong learning, opportunities and equity for inclusion, and a sense of belonging for team members.

We embrace all IEDC team member's differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status and other characteristics that make our team unique. We know the IEDC is stronger, more credible and effective with a workforce made up of qualified individuals whose backgrounds reflect our state's rich diversity.

Our diverse and inclusive environment ensures an equitable and accessible workplace where all are valued on a level playing field. This environment deepens our relationships, expands creativity, increases our adaptability, accessibility and accountability. In addition, it contributes to the retention and productivity of our talented team.

The IEDC's diversity initiatives are applicable to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection, compensation and benefits, professional development and training, promotions, transfers, social and recreational programs and terminations.

Our work environment, built on the premise of equity, diversity, and inclusion that results in a sense of belonging, encourages and enforces:

- Respectful communication and cooperation among all
- Teamwork and individual participation, permitting the representation of all groups and perspectives
- Work and life balance through appropriately flexible work schedules
- Employer and team member contributions to the communities we serve

All IEDC team members are responsible for treating others with dignity and respect while exhibiting conduct that reflects inclusion and a sense of belonging at all times. Any inappropriate conduct or behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.

Accommodation for Religious Beliefs or Restrictions

The IEDC will provide reasonable accommodation upon request for those whose religious beliefs or restrictions create a conflict with the IEDC policies, practices or procedures, so long as doing so does not cause an undue hardship.

Employees who believe they were subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with this policy should seek assistance from any of the following persons or agencies:

- Vice President of Human Resources

- Senior Vice President and General Counsel
- Any member of the Executive Team
- Indiana State Personnel Department/Employee Relations Specialists within the Employee Relations Division
 - (855) 773-4647 - choose employee relations option
- Indiana Civil Rights Commission (ICRC)
 - (317) 232-2600
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
 - (317) 226-7212 or (800) 669-4000

CURRENT

~~DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING~~

The IEDC recognizes that our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. ~~The sum of individual differences is what makes the IEDC unique and successful, and~~ We are committed to fostering a professional community that supports ~~diversity of voice,~~ lifelong learning, opportunities ~~and equity for inclusion,~~ and a sense of belonging for team members.

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- Work and life balance ~~through appropriately flexible work schedules~~
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- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
 - (317) 226-7212 or (800) 669-4000

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ECONOMIC, ACADEMIC,
AND CULTURAL COOPERATION**

BETWEEN

THE LOMBARDY REGION

AND THE

STATE OF INDIANA

THE LOMBARDY REGION of the Italian Republic

AND

THE STATE OF INDIANA

each a “Party” and together the “Parties”;

RECOGNIZES the importance that the Parties attribute to the promotion of dialogue and collaboration as tools for growth and competitiveness;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the common interest of the Parties in strengthening institutional relations functional to the development of mutually beneficial partnerships;

IN LIGHT of the relations already established between the Parties, with particular reference to the institutional mission of the delegation led by the President of the Lombardy Region to the United States and in particular to the Indianapolis stop in May 2024;

ON THE BASIS of the outcomes of the meetings held during the mission, with particular reference to the bilateral conversation between the President and the Governor of the State of Indiana, in the presence of the Secretary of Commerce, who renewed the sense of friendship between the Parties;

EXAMINED during the interview the prospects for economic exchange;

VERIFIED the shared strengths and points of contact, such as automotive, innovation, research, advanced manufacturing, high tech, biomed, aerospace, and the interest in collaborations, in the sectors of emerging technologies, including semiconductors and artificial intelligence, aerospace, academic and workforce development, related cultural exchanges, partnerships between research hospitals, and agri-food;

FOUND a specific interest in the automotive sector, which unites Lombardy to Indiana through circuits and supply chains, and examined in depth the possible ongoing collaborations at university level on autonomous and remote driving projects, as well as further possible exchanges between the respective circuits and motor racing competitions;

Also **TAKING INTO ACCOUNT** the important academic meetings held by the Universities following the President, in parallel to the institutional program, with counterpart Indiana institutions, laying the foundations for collaboration and exchange.

Within the scope of their competences, have reached this Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as "MOU"):

ARTICLE 1

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

In line with the principle of mutual benefit, the Parties share the intent to cooperate with respect to the areas below. These areas of cooperation may feature more specifically in the sectoral areas of cooperation outlined in Section 3 below.

A. Innovation, Research, and Development

This area of cooperation supports and enables innovation by sharing expertise and best practices to promote experimentation and adoption of innovative and disruptive technologies (e.g. autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence, and high technology), whilst being mindful of any consumer protection, confidentiality, safety and privacy concerns that may arise.

B. Academic Collaboration

This area of cooperation focuses on facilitating the creation of new exchange programs or the enhancement of existing programs to support and encourage appropriate institutional collaboration between colleges and universities, as well as research institutions in Indiana and the Lombardy Region.

C. Workforce Development & Inclusion

This area of cooperation supports the sharing of best practices to meet the challenges of creating and training a workforce to meet high-demand, high-wage job growth created by innovation across all sectors. The Parties will work together to identify opportunities for strategic partnerships and alliances between the public and private sectors, and academic institutions, which will strengthen their capabilities to compete in international markets with a trained and ready workforce. Both Parties will also establish opportunities that promote solidarity, relationship-building and information sharing across disability and technology communities.

This MOU will aim to promote greater economic relations and strengthen relations between the Parties.

ARTICLE 2

REGULATORY INVARIANCE CLAUSE

This MOU does not constitute a legally binding agreement and in no way creates any legal, equitable, or financial rights, obligations, or liabilities for either Party. This MOU shall be implemented in accordance with the laws governing each Party, as well as with the applicable international law and for the Italian Party of the obligations arising from Italy's membership to the European Union.

ARTICLE 3

AREAS OF COLLABORATION

The Parties intend to collaborate in the following areas:

A. Automotive, including Electric, Connected and Autonomous Transportation

This area of cooperation fosters information sharing in the development and support of the automotive industry, including automotive innovation, engineering and manufacturing, and battery research and workforce development. and motorsports, including but not limited to mobility and high-performance automation of vehicles, car competitions and enhancement of the respective circuits; training for *motor sport*.

B. Aerospace & Aviation

This area of cooperation targets the development, operation and manufacturing of aircraft between the aerospace industries of the Parties, with the aim of enhancing aerospace manufacturing attractiveness, workforce development, foreign direct investment and market access.

C. Life Sciences

This area of cooperation works to advance company partnerships, opportunities, economic development missions, symposia, workshops, and other relevant cooperative events; market access, early-stage company investment, finance, and support; clinical research/regulatory affairs; and research partnerships.

D. Microelectronics and Semiconductors

This sector of cooperation works to strengthen the semiconductor industry; bolster collaboration and identify potential opportunities between the

Parties in the semiconductor and microelectronics sectors and promoting research-academia relations.

E. Technology & Innovation, including Artificial Intelligence, data centers.

This sector of cooperation promotes collaborative projects, research, and information exchange regarding innovation in artificial intelligence, data capacity, specifically 5G.

F. Labour inclusion, disabilities and minorities.

This area of cooperation works to identify and exchange good practice, primarily, on the labour inclusion of people with disabilities, as well as other minority groups, including migrants and ethnic/racial minorities.

ARTICLE 4 IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve the aforementioned collaboration, the Parties will promote initiatives in the areas of mutual interest referred to in Articles 1 and 3 in order to:

- Promote institutional and project connections;
- Encourage knowledge, best practices and information exchanges in areas of mutual interest;
- Involve and support the presentation of investment opportunities;
- Promote mutual participation in industrial and commercial events;
- Promote contact and collaboration between small and medium-sized enterprises, support from supply chains and trade associations, in close collaboration with regional business federations;
- Connect institutions, sector training bodies, automotive companies to share skills and experiences in the main events for the enhancement of circuits and infrastructures;
- Support possible collaborations at university level on autonomous and remote driving projects;
- Support collaborative activities in the area of microelectronics and semiconductors;
- Promote joint participation in knowledge sharing platforms and working communities that support innovation in the interaction between industry and academia;
- Accelerate the exploration of new use cases for 5G technology, promoting structural relationships between projects and research structures, to develop good practices, harmonize standards and protocols and promote the interoperability of 5G networks, with the support of the respective academic partners: sharing of resources, skills and knowledge, including

- stays of doctoral students and young researchers, with the aim of creating a federated test bed for 5G technologies;
- Activate collaboration methods for the development of sensors on space platforms at the level of university research and industrial development;
 - Develop research and projects between universities for the protection of the rights of people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups and their inclusion and participation in public life, especially in the workplace; and
 - Share best practices and support the mobility of students and teachers within academia.

ARTICLE 5

FINANCIAL NEUTRALITY CLAUSE

The implementation of this MOU does not generate financial burdens for the Parties or for the ordinary budget of the Italian Republic.

ARTICLE 6

DISCLOSURE

The Italian Party will inform its diplomatic representation competent for the territory on the progress of the initiatives planned to implement this MOU.

ARTICLE 7

CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

Any modifications or additions to this MOU may be defined in writing with the prior consent of the Parties and, for the Italian Party, in compliance with procedures similar to those envisaged for the authorization of this MOU.

ARTICLE 8

DIFFERENCES IN INTERPRETATION

Any divergence in the interpretation or implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding will be resolved amicably, through direct consultations between the Parties.

ARTICLE 9
PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

The implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding and the activities envisaged by it are carried out in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable in the territory of each Party. Pursuant to this Understanding, neither Party may use information received from the other Party without prior written consent, for purposes other than those directly related to the implementation of this Understanding.

ARTICLE 10
FINAL PROVISIONS

This MOU becomes effective from the date of signature by both Parties and will have a duration of five (5) years.

It may be expressly renewed between the Parties through written communication and in compliance with the procedures established by the respective national laws.

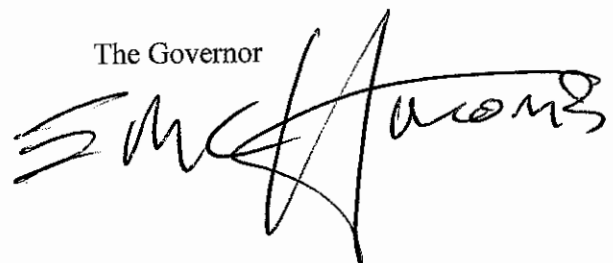
Each Party may terminate the effectiveness of this MOU by written communication to the other Party, with a notice of 45 days from the date of notification to the other Party.

Signed in two originals, each in the Italian and English languages, all texts being equally authentic.

FOR THE LOMBARDY REGION


The President

FOR THE STATE OF INDIANA

The Governor


ELEVATE NOTIFICATION

From: [Phil Lodato](#)
To: [Watkins, David](#)
Cc: [Christopher Day](#); [Lang, Andrew \(IEDC\)](#)
Subject: Re: State of Indiana Executive Order Compliance
Date: Monday, April 28, 2025 4:21:42 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email was sent from outside your organization. Exercise caution when clicking links, opening attachments or taking further action, before validating its authenticity.

David, confirming that we will comply with EO 25-14. Beyond this confirmation, if there is any specific action you would request that we take to demonstrate compliance, please advise. Thank you.



On Mon, Apr 28, 2025 at 4:03 PM Watkins, David <DWatkins@iedc.in.gov> wrote:

Toph & Phil,

Pursuant to EO 25-14, state funds shall not be used to fund projects, positions, activities, procedures or programs that show preference based on an individuals' race, color, ethnicity, or national origin in conformance with Executive Order 25-14.

The attached amended PSA from last year includes language referencing "ElevateME", which according to your website, dedicates resources for minority-owned and operated startups. Please confirm in an email response that you will

comply with EO 25-14.

Thanks,
David



David Watkins

Senior Vice President, Entrepreneurship &
Small Business

m 317.607.9176 | forthebold.com



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More than a Race: How the IMS Elevates the Hoosier State

MAY 11, 2023

In the heart of the Midwest lies the home of world-renowned, incredible racing events. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway hosts many Hoosier traditions, spanning generations of race fans. IMS is an integral part of Indiana's culture, bringing in visitors from around the world to positively impact the state's economy.

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway is significant in both its physical footprint and its contributions to the economic development landscape. The racetrack is the largest sports venue in the world, hosting up to 400,000 fans. The Speedway also hosts the NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR Xfinity Series annually. In a typical year, its events generate more than \$510 million annually for the Indiana economy.

For the sake of comparison, a study commissioned in 2000 by IMS showed the Indy 500 brings about twice as much revenue into the local economy as a Super Bowl. The increased tourism activity means that event goers need places to eat, sleep and they might buy some merch. That's how the Indianapolis Business Journal estimated the race has an economic impact of more than \$200 million on the region.

However, the Indy 500 isn't the only event that puts the IMS on the map.

"From an economic impact standpoint, having the Indianapolis 500, the Brickyard 400 and the Formula One races are like having multiple Super Bowls every year, an impact larger than any city in the United States enjoys from a sports venue by far," Indiana University Professor Mark Rosentraub told Autoweek.com.

You can't overestimate the influence this event has on the world stage. According to Fox59, the race witnessed a strong 10 percent increase in the number of international visitors at the 100th Indy 500 in 2016. It's estimated that 300 million viewers spread across more than 200 countries tuned in to the May tradition. A record-setting number of international media also attended in person. Reporters from Italy, Japan, Spain, Mexico and China produced stories about the race, its drivers and also the host city.

The venue isn't just good for the economy; it's also an example of how the private sector can further the common good. In February 2023, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway announced it received one of the sports world's most prestigious sustainability awards, becoming the first venue in the world to do so.

In 2021, the Indianapolis 500 was certified a responsible event by the Council for Responsible Sport. This is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with a vision of a world where responsibly produced sports events are the norm. This was the first organizational certification awarded by the council, which reflects achievements in five categories: planning and communications, procurement, resource management, **access and equity and community legacy**.

Credit toward the silver certification was achieved in all five categories and was guided by a social and environmental



Server Error

CURRENT

404 - File or directory not found.

The resource you are looking for might have been removed, had its name changed, or is temporarily unavailable.

READI DEI REVIEW

Project ID/Number	Project Name	DEI Region	EOC Contact	Original Project Description	Updated Project Description	\$	READI Project Amount	\$	READI Amount Disbursed	\$	READI Amount Pending Disbursement	DEI Description	EOC Comments	Change Made in 4/24/23	
00023	The ONE Fund	Our Southern Indiana	Heidi Young	One Southern Indiana (OSI) is collaborating with the Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC), Center Foundation of Floyd County, Washington County Economic Growth Partnership, and several other community partners, to establish a Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (The ONE Fund), which will provide small business education, business programming and lending with a sustained focus on minority and rural communities. The ONE Fund will provide small business loans as an all-inclusive resource where they can receive education, counseling, mentoring, match-making, financial literacy programs and lending to individuals and business owners. Funding received from the READI initiative will be utilized specifically to fund the daily administration and management costs of the program. READI funds will be utilized for 3 years (2022 – 2024). 14 staff members that will perform administrative functions for The ONE Fund include: Controller, Chief Revenue Director, Small Business Manager and Accounting Assistant. The ONE Fund will allow start-ups and existing on-bankable businesses to get lending. The program expects to do average loans of \$15,000 per loan and manage a portfolio of 16 – 20 small business loans once the program launch off.	The project objective is to provide greater and more effective outreach and resources to minority and rural business owners and individuals starting businesses. The NW SBDC provides extensive no-charge resources and assists many urban and rural clients currently, but observed during the pandemic that other than those populations were less likely to be aware of, seek and receive assistance and resources available. Using the federal CARES Act funds in 2020 – 2022, the team piloted different methods of outreach including having business advisors who lived in or near urban areas and also needed that owned a business, utilizing business centers from within the communities as business advisors has shown to be an effective tool that helped to attract and serve the needs of other business owners. The intent of this project is to provide additional part-time advisors from within the targeted communities to conduct outreach and provide resources. These advisors would be in addition to the service provided by In-person advisors at resources in the communities. The focus of the project is on small business owners and start-ups in more economically disadvantaged parts of our large urban centers, as well as those in rural communities where there are limited business/entrepreneur support resources. Initially the project begins with North Lake county (more income urban areas). We will expand the audience offered to rural areas.	\$	125,000.00	\$	125,000.00	\$	125,000.00	Yes - Resolved - Description fills	READI funds will be used to administer the ONE Fund which will provide small business education, business programming and lending with a sustained focus on minority and rural communities. Project edit discussions are underway to change description.	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	Funds were disbursed after 1/24/23 related to small business advisor (not DEI - 64-548-93)
00012	Small Business Outreach and Skills Enhancement	Northwest	Naseef Kouton	The project objective is to provide greater and more effective outreach and resources to minority and rural business owners and individuals starting businesses. Main services will provide business assistance, direct financing, training on bookkeeping, assisting with digital marketing, and with MSB/WBE and other certifications. We will display individuals from the underserved communities who have owned or own a small business as business advisors providing counseling and resources. The main communities we will focus on are Black, Hispanic, and rural small business owners and those starting businesses. The project is estimated to start in August 2022 with a duration through December 2023. READI funds will be used to pay for consulting services and training materials. Primarily by the Northwest Indiana SBDC calling two contact Business Advisors. Training provided by Accounting Skills Single as well as a WFO digital marketing agency to be determined. We will also partner with stakeholders in underserved communities to have space to meet business owners in person. An estimated 200 business owners and start-ups enrolled annually. We anticipate being able to show quantitative successes that will help us persuade funding to be provided from economic development organizations, cities, or other entities. We will also look for appropriate grant applications as sources of funds to sustain these efforts.	The project objective is to provide greater and more effective outreach and resources to urban and rural small business owners and individuals starting businesses. The NW SBDC provides extensive no-charge resources and assists many urban and rural clients currently, but observed during the pandemic that other than those populations were less likely to be aware of, seek and receive assistance and resources available. Using the federal CARES Act funds in 2020 – 2022, the team piloted different methods of outreach including having business advisors who lived in or near urban areas and also needed that owned a business, utilizing business centers from within the communities as business advisors has shown to be an effective tool that helped to attract and serve the needs of other business owners. The intent of this project is to provide additional part-time advisors from within the targeted communities to conduct outreach and provide resources. These advisors would be in addition to the service provided by In-person advisors at resources in the communities. The focus of the project is on small business owners and start-ups in more economically disadvantaged parts of our large urban centers, as well as those in rural communities where there are limited business/entrepreneur support resources. Initially the project begins with North Lake county (more income urban areas). We will expand the audience offered to rural areas.	\$	141,000.00	\$	55,763.06	\$	29,011.90	Yes - Resolved - Description fills	For the project description, "The project objective is to provide greater and more effective outreach and resources to minority and rural business owners and individuals starting businesses. The main communities we will focus on are Black, Hispanic, and rural small business owners and those starting businesses."	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	\$14,136.88 disbursed after 1/4/23 full eligible - related to marketing and salary of DEI Director)
00040	Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Business Training Program	Northwest	Naseef Kouton	The Urban League of Northwest Indiana, Inc. (UNWNI) works to promote, encourage, and enhance services to improve the social, educational, and economic conditions of African-Americans and other minority groups in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties. The UNWNI, in partnership with Center of Workforce Innovations, seeks to implement a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI&I) training program. The UNWNI DEI&I Project will provide awareness and skills training in the areas of implicit bias, stereotyping, cultural competence and leadership. The focus is to help individuals and organizations use the word. Through the eyes of someone of a different age, race, sexual orientation, or gender. The DEI&I framework provides employees with tools that identify and address systemic barriers to build a diverse and inclusive workforce broadly representative of the citizens and communities we live and serve. A local organization will provide funding for equipment and facility management costs. READI funding will be used toward training staff and purchase of additional equipment. Training is expected to begin in Winter 2022 and continue until December 2023. Each year four organizations will be selected to receive the DEI&I awareness training. Facilities will conduct two training sessions for each organization selected. Over the course of four years, DEI&I training will be provided to a total of sixteen organizations.	The project objective is to provide greater and more effective outreach and resources to urban and rural small business owners and individuals starting businesses. The NW SBDC provides extensive no-charge resources and assists many urban and rural clients currently, but observed during the pandemic that other than those populations were less likely to be aware of, seek and receive assistance and resources available. Using the federal CARES Act funds in 2020 – 2022, the team piloted different methods of outreach including having business advisors who lived in or near urban areas and also needed that owned a business, utilizing business centers from within the communities as business advisors has shown to be an effective tool that helped to attract and serve the needs of other business owners. The intent of this project is to provide additional part-time advisors from within the targeted communities to conduct outreach and provide resources. These advisors would be in addition to the service provided by In-person advisors at resources in the communities. The focus of the project is on small business owners and start-ups in more economically disadvantaged parts of our large urban centers, as well as those in rural communities where there are limited business/entrepreneur support resources. Initially the project begins with North Lake county (more income urban areas). We will expand the audience offered to rural areas.	\$	281,000.00	\$	182,607.06	\$	9,000.00	Yes	Works to promote, encourage, and enhance services to improve the social, educational, and economic conditions of African-Americans and other minority groups in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties.	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	\$9,000 was paid after the executive order on 6/10/22 related project that was approved and completed prior to the issuance of the EO. The funds were used for salaries, DEI related presentations, DEI awareness training, etc.)
00016	Arise Cyclesworks (Prouse)	South Bend Elkhart	Naseef Kouton	The project will build 135 workforce housing apartments on an abandoned 4 acre brownfield site in the heart of Goshen. The City has no capacity in its CSD system to absorb stormwater runoff from this site. As a result, all stormwater must be absorbed on site through multiple types of stormwater management systems, including green infrastructure, underground storage facilities and permeable hardscape. Road funds will be spent on site infrastructure including engineering design, lot development, water service, sanitary sewer, storm water sewer, lot paving, concrete (curbs, sidewalks, etc.), landscaping and other amenities. 2) Construction will start 12/1/2023 and be complete by 9/30/2024. 3) The City has also committed to the approximate amount of \$4.5 million (2008 pledge of 10¢ per sq. ft. for 25 years). The City has also committed to investing approximately \$1 million in site improvements, including a public parking lot adjacent to the north of the project and the completed rebuild of East Douglas Street on the west side of the project. 4) Success will be measured by the number of workforce housing apartments built = 135. New residents estimated at full lease-up at 204 residents of which 73 (66%) may be minority. Essential Workers housing goal of 50% of the units would provide 27 units for essential worker households.	The project will build 135 workforce housing apartments on an abandoned 4 acre brownfield site in the heart of Goshen. The City has no capacity in its CSD system to absorb stormwater runoff from this site. As a result, all stormwater must be absorbed on site through multiple types of stormwater management systems, including green infrastructure, underground storage facilities and permeable hardscape. Road funds will be spent on site infrastructure including engineering design, lot development, water service, sanitary sewer, storm water sewer, lot paving, concrete (curbs, sidewalks, etc.), landscaping and other amenities. 2) Construction will start 12/1/2023 and be complete by 9/30/2024. 3) The City has also committed to the approximate amount of \$4.5 million (2008 pledge of 10¢ per sq. ft. for 25 years). The City has also committed to investing approximately \$1 million in site improvements, including a public parking lot adjacent to the north of the project and the completed rebuild of East Douglas Street on the west side of the project. 4) Success will be measured by the number of workforce housing apartments built = 135. New residents estimated at full lease-up at 204 residents of which 73 (66%) may be minority. Essential Workers housing goal of 50% of the units would provide 27 units for essential worker households.	\$	4,200,000.00	\$	27,632.45	\$	-	Maybe - Resolved - Description fills	Project 60% include 5¢ of minority apartment tenants.	Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 4/22/23. Finalized in GMT on 4/23/23.	
00018	Worldwide Botanic Garden Visitor Center	South Bend Elkhart	Naseef Kouton	The Project consists of: 1) building a new Visitors Center, 2) building an Open Air Pavilion, 3) expanding parking and associated infrastructure, 4) relocating and repurposing the existing Visitors Center, and 5) acquiring adjacent property for future parking. READI funds will be directed to reimbursement costs of expanding the parking lot and relocation of the existing Visitors Center. READI funds support increased quality of place and economic development, and encourage diversity, equity and inclusion while providing financial sustainability, increasing mission-effectiveness and enabling increased collaboration. The Project is anticipated to begin in April 2023 and be completed by June 2024. The Project is being designed and managed by Arise Design of Milwaukee. A construction manager is providing construction consultation, serves as construction manager/contractor and will obtain all necessary building permits to complete the parking expansion and Visitors Center relocation portions of the project. The Community Foundation of Elkhart County provided some matching funding as indicated in the fundraising budget. The Project will enhance good experience through improved access and amenities while creating greater numbers of jobs including students and four buses. The Project increases volunteer service opportunities, partnerships with local schools, community service/mentorship opportunities, and increased volunteer opportunities.	The Project consists of: 1) building a new Visitors Center, 2) building an Open Air Pavilion, 3) expanding parking and associated infrastructure, 4) relocating and repurposing the existing Visitors Center, and 5) acquiring adjacent property for future parking. READI funds will be directed to reimbursement costs of expanding the parking lot and relocation of the existing Visitors Center. READI funds support increased quality of place and economic development, and encourage diversity, equity and inclusion while providing financial sustainability, increasing mission-effectiveness and enabling increased collaboration. The Project is anticipated to begin in April 2023 and be completed by June 2024. The Project is being designed and managed by Arise Design of Milwaukee. A construction manager is providing construction consultation, serves as construction manager/contractor and will obtain all necessary building permits to complete the parking expansion and Visitors Center relocation portions of the project. The Community Foundation of Elkhart County provided some matching funding as indicated in the fundraising budget. The Project will enhance good experience through improved access and amenities while creating greater numbers of jobs including students and four buses. The Project increases volunteer service opportunities, partnerships with local schools for community service/mentorship opportunities, and increased volunteer opportunities.	\$	1,300,000.00	\$	1,300,000.00	\$	-	Maybe - Pending - Description fills	For project description, READI funds will help to encourage diversity, equity and inclusion through other goals including quality of place and economic development. We listed first.	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 4/21. Not yet in GMT.
00020	Regional Cultural Center	North Central	Naseef Kouton	Embracing Hope of Howard County seeks to renovate and reuse a former school building into a Regional Cultural Center in the City of Baltimore. The Cultural Center will create a vibrant, regional resource that inspires and unites all generations while celebrating the contributions and successes of minority populations within the region. Initial programming will include education, mentoring, art/culture, and youth development activities. The Center will partner with the region's 6-12 schools, Ivy Tech Baltimore, Indiana University, Greater Indiana Convention and Visitors Bureau, Indiana Black Expo, NAACP, and other local non-profit organizations. The total project includes the structural and mechanical improvements to the 1970 structure. The \$100,000 READI scope of work will address the plaster restoration for 2 classrooms, entryway, hallway, stairwell, gymnasium and office space. The READI project was publicly procured 4th quarter of 2024 and completed by 2nd quarter 2025. The public match is from the City's property donation and private match from multiple philanthropic organizations. All matching dollars are secured, committed and available for the project. The estimated annual attendance is 3,500. The Cultural Center will support diversity throughout the region.	Embracing Hope of Howard County seeks to renovate and reuse the former Douglas School building into a Regional Cultural Center located in the City of Baltimore. The Cultural Center will create a vibrant, regional resource that inspires and unites all generations. The Center's mission is to present, preserve and promote community history and the building's history as a school, employment center and nursing school. Embracing Hope has partnered with the City of Baltimore and several private organizations to secure \$166,000 to repair this site and begin the renovations. The READI project includes the structural repair of the 1980 year old building and the READI project will be publicly procured 4th quarter of 2024 and completed by the end of the 2nd quarter 2025. All matching dollars are secured, committed and available for the project. The estimated annual attendance is 3,500. The Cultural Center will serve as a museum and community center providing community members access to resources for pandemic recovery initiatives.	\$	100,000.00	\$	100,000.00	\$	-	Maybe - Resolved - Description fills	This project aims to build a cultural center that will "create a vibrant, regional resource that inspires and unites all generations while celebrating the contributions and successes of minority populations within the region."	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 4/22/23. Finalized in GMT on 4/24/23.
00040	Ivy Tech Diversity and Career Center	Wabash Elmer	Heidi Young	The Career and Employer Connection Center will house the new Career Coaching and Employer Connections team. The Career Coach campus launched this initiative in July of 2021 as part of the statewide rollout. The READI funds would allow an increased emphasis on the necessary for this portion of workforce development by creating a space integrated into a new welcoming space for students. The \$970,000 allotted to the Diversity and Career Center will go towards the Healthcare workforce training and the Diversity, Equity and Belonging Center. To aid in Healthcare Workforce Development, Ivy Tech will use funding for the renovation of the School of Health Sciences and the expansion of the School of Nursing. The remaining funding will be used to renovate the current student admission and enrollment area to create the Diversity, Equity and Belonging Center (DEB) along with the reimagining of the DEB Director, community outreach, on-campus programming, DEB focused marketing, and career re-evaluation. The project will begin January 2021, with a completion date of December 2026.	The Career and Employer Connection Center will house the new Career Coaching and Employer Connections team. The Career Coach campus launched this initiative in July of 2021 as part of the statewide rollout. The READI funds would allow an increased emphasis on the necessary for this portion of workforce development by creating a space integrated into a new welcoming space for students. The \$970,000 allotted to the Diversity and Career Center will go towards the Healthcare workforce training and the Diversity, Equity and Belonging Center. To aid in Healthcare Workforce Development, Ivy Tech will use funding for the renovation of the School of Health Sciences and the expansion of the School of Nursing. The remaining funding will be used to renovate the current student admission and enrollment area to create the Diversity, Equity and Belonging Center (DEB) along with the reimagining of the DEB Director, community outreach, on-campus programming, DEB focused marketing, and career re-evaluation. The project will begin January 2021, with a completion date of December 2026.	\$	970,000.00	\$	92,173.72	\$	-	Yes	READI funding will be used to renovate the current student admission and enrollment area to create the Diversity, Equity, and Belonging Center (DEB) along with the reimagining of the DEB Director, community outreach, on-campus programming, DEB focused marketing, and career re-evaluation. The project will begin January 2021, with a completion date of December 2026.	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	\$50,357.48 disbursed after 1/4/23 full eligible - related to marketing and salary of DEI Director)
00029	Talent Risk (InnovPower)	TS-40 Mt Carmel Corridor	Naseef Kouton	Early disparities in achievement place students on a track that lacks college and career readiness. Minority students and diverse at-risk students are at higher risk of dropping out of high school and entering a prison/correctional or a technical career area significantly less income and are less likely to move to a more affluent community. This project will help low-income students access more significant educational opportunities. InnovPower and Ivy Tech Community College are focused on engaging, educating, and inspiring Black students to take and complete Dual Credit courses. READI funding will be used to train and pay a stipend to two teachers at Warren Central, Lawrence Central, and Lawrence North High Schools who will teach and serve as entrepreneur champions in the Dual Credit courses. The initiative is expected to serve 30 students per year for four years, or 120 students. This project will be completed in coordination with Ivy Tech Community College, Wabash Career Center, and the Sagamore Institute. Dual Credit Courses are now being funded in 120 students per year. Student costs and provide access to educational opportunities. The project will begin in January 2023 and is expected to be completed in December 2026. As a result of participating in the Talent Risk program, students will be contributors to the pool of Black business leaders to start a business, challenged to take risks, and connected to local business leaders for mentorship, support, and networking.	Early disparities in achievement place students on a track that lacks college and career readiness. Students who are diverse at-risk students are at higher risk of dropping out of high school and entering a prison/correctional or a technical career area significantly less income and are less likely to move to a more affluent community. This project will help low-income students access more significant educational opportunities. InnovPower and Ivy Tech Community College are focused on engaging, educating, and inspiring Black students to take and complete Dual Credit courses. READI funding will be used to train and pay a stipend to two teachers at Warren Central, Lawrence Central, and Lawrence North High Schools who will teach and serve as entrepreneur champions in the Dual Credit courses. The initiative is expected to serve 30 students per year for four years, or 120 students. This project will be completed in coordination with Ivy Tech Community College, Wabash Career Center, and the Sagamore Institute. Dual Credit Courses are now being funded in 120 students per year. Student costs and provide access to educational opportunities. The project will begin in January 2023 and is expected to be completed in December 2026. As a result of participating in the Talent Risk program, students will be contributors to the pool of business leaders to start a business, challenged to take risks, and connected to local business leaders for mentorship, support, and networking.	\$	200,000.00	\$	96,370.13	\$	-	Maybe - Resolved - Description fills	This project will help low-income students access more significant educational opportunities. InnovPower and Ivy Tech Community College are focused on engaging, educating, and inspiring Black students to take and complete Dual Credit courses. READI funding will be used to train and pay a stipend to two teachers at Warren Central, Lawrence Central, and Lawrence North High Schools who will teach and serve as entrepreneur champions in the Dual Credit courses. READI funding will be used to train and pay a stipend to two teachers at Warren Central, Lawrence Central, and Lawrence North High Schools who will teach and serve as entrepreneur champions in the Dual Credit courses.	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 4/27/23. Finalized in GMT on 4/28/23.
00049	Digital Storefront Program (SBE Caterworks)	South Bend Elkhart	Naseef Kouton	Under the Entrepreneurship Pillar, South Bend Code Works (SBCW) and Human Delta, Inc. (HDI) propose a 3-year program (beginning in January 2023 and ending in December 2025) to deliver technology assistance grants to small businesses in the South Bend / Elkhart Region. The Digital Storefront Program will assist 20 small businesses, at least 75% of which will be female or minority-owned. READI funds will reimburse the expense of full-time employees, who are critical to the management and execution of the Digital Storefront Program. SBCW will deliver the Digital Storefront Program, which will help regional businesses that lack the resources and/or knowledge to actualize their potential for growth through digital means. Whether a business lacks an online presence, is at the early stages of experimenting with digital capabilities, or is seeking more advanced support, the Digital Storefront Program will accelerate its journey. HDI will support the program by performing all grant management activities. SBCW and HDI bring \$600,000 in matching public funds from regional economic development groups and \$640,000 in matching private funds for this project.	Under the Entrepreneurship Pillar, South Bend Code Works (SBCW) and Human Delta, Inc. (HDI) propose a 3-year program (beginning in January 2023 and ending in December 2025) to deliver technology assistance grants to small businesses in the South Bend / Elkhart Region. The Digital Storefront Program will assist 20 small businesses, at least 75% of which will be female or minority-owned. READI funds will reimburse the expense of full-time employees, who are critical to the management and execution of the Digital Storefront Program. SBCW will deliver the Digital Storefront Program, which will help regional businesses that lack the resources and/or knowledge to actualize their potential for growth through digital means. Whether a business lacks an online presence, is at the early stages of experimenting with digital capabilities, or is seeking more advanced support, the Digital Storefront Program will accelerate its journey. HDI will support the program by performing all grant management activities. SBCW and HDI bring \$600,000 in matching public funds from regional economic development groups and \$640,000 in matching private funds for this project.	\$	300,000.00	\$	209,747.07	\$	-	Maybe - Resolved - Description fills	The project delivers technology assistance grants to small businesses to help regional businesses that lack the resources and/or knowledge to actualize their potential for growth through digital means. Whether a business lacks an online presence, is at the early stages of experimenting with digital capabilities, or is seeking more advanced support, the Digital Storefront Program will accelerate its journey. HDI will support the program by performing all grant management activities. SBCW and HDI bring \$600,000 in matching public funds from regional economic development groups and \$640,000 in matching private funds for this project.	Project Tagged by Andrew (Igali)	Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 3/23/23. Finalized in GMT on 3/23/23.

03051	enfocus Fellowship Expansion	South Bend Elkhart	Naseef Kouton	<p>The READI grant will expand the enfocus Fellowships and internships program. Today, enfocus hires 30 Fellows and 30 interns per year in support of 70 projects with public, private and nonprofi organizations across the region. The READI grant will add catalytic funding to hire more Fellows and interns by at least 40% across the current enfocus civic, industry and new project focus areas including sustainability and entrepreneurship from the period of January 2023 and December 2026.</p> <p>READI support will leverage multi-year commitments from local granting organizations and grow highly demanded Fellow projects that are receiving more than \$2.5M annual in project fee income annually across St. Joseph, Elkhart and Marshall Counties. We expect that projects will continue to grow and the READI award will enable enfocus to hire more Fellows and target key sectors of the economy for talent attraction, development and retention.</p> <p>The award will ensure the hiring of 235 total Fellows and interns by 2026, including 60% STEM and Master's level graduates, 50% women, and 20% minority and international students. We expect greater than 50% of Fellows and interns to be retained into high wage positions across the region. The award will bolster \$16M in direct matching contributions and will generate an estimated \$50 million in economic impact over the grant period. As a result, the enfocus READI award aligns strongly with the region's 2030 goals for economic growth and development.</p>	<p>The READI grant will expand the enfocus Fellowships and internships program. Today, enfocus hires 30 Fellows and 30 interns per year in support of 70 projects with public, private and nonprofi organizations across the region. The READI grant will add catalytic funding to hire more Fellows and interns by at least 40% across the current enfocus civic, industry and new project focus areas including sustainability and entrepreneurship from the period of January 2023 and December 2026. READI support will leverage multi-year commitments from local granting organizations and grow highly demanded Fellow projects that are receiving more than \$2.5M annual in project fee income annually across St. Joseph, Elkhart and Marshall Counties. We expect that projects will continue to grow and the READI award will enable enfocus to hire more Fellows and target key sectors of the economy for talent attraction, development and retention. The award will ensure the hiring of 325 total Fellows and interns by 2026, including 60% STEM and Master's level graduates. We expect greater than 50% of Fellows and interns to be retained into high wage positions across the region. The award will bolster \$16M in direct matching contributions and will generate an estimated \$50 million in economic impact over the grant period. As a result, the enfocus READI award aligns strongly with the region's 2030 goals for economic growth and development.</p>	\$	800,000.00	\$	437,095.65	\$	-	Maybe - Resolved - Description Edits	The project provides a fellowship program consisting of a percentage of women, minority and international students.	Project flagged by Andrew Jagals Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 3/29/25. Finalized in GMT on 4/2/25.
03052	Engineering Your Future (CYF)	South Bend Elkhart	Naseef Kouton	<p>Engineering Your Future is an initiative to increase participation in Career and Technical Education (CTE) in the Advanced Manufacturing programs delivered at the Elkhart Area Career Center and regional high schools. Focused on middle school-aged students, this combined awareness campaign and summer programming effort will increase students' access to meaningful career exploration support. During the summer between eighth and ninth grades, students will participate in hands-on project-based learning activities and guided career exploration with community business partners in the area of advanced manufacturing. The program will allow students from underrepresented populations an opportunity to learn and develop employability skills and explore various careers. Additionally, our community will understand the relationship between advanced manufacturing and engineering and view this field as a career pathway that anyone with an interest can access.</p> <p>Student programming is set to start summer 2024 and continue until December 31, 2026. Campaign activities will commence summer 2023.</p> <p>The CACC will use its operating budget to fund part of the personnel and equipment costs. READI will be used to purchase programming supplies and equipment as well as compensation costs for teachers involved with summer programming activities.</p>	<p>Engineering Your Future is an initiative to increase participation in Career and Technical Education (CTE) in the Advanced Manufacturing programs delivered at the Elkhart Area Career Center and regional high schools. Focused on middle school-aged students, this combined awareness campaign and summer programming effort will increase students' access to meaningful career exploration support. During the summer between eighth and ninth grades, students will participate in hands-on project-based learning activities and guided career exploration with community business partners in the area of advanced manufacturing. The program will allow students an opportunity to learn and develop employability skills and explore various careers. Additionally, our community will understand the relationship between advanced manufacturing and engineering and view this field as a career pathway that anyone with an interest can access. Student programming is set to start summer 2024 and continue until December 31, 2026. Campaign activities will commence summer 2023. The CACC will use its operating budget to fund part of the personnel and equipment costs. READI will be used to purchase programming supplies and equipment as well as compensation costs for teachers involved with summer programming activities.</p>	\$	75,000.00	\$	5,929.84	\$	-	Yes - Resolved - Description Edits		Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 4/24/25. Finalized in GMT on 4/28/25.
03056	Experiential Learning Coordinator, Saint Joseph - District 7 Career Hub (CYF)	South Bend Elkhart	Naseef Kouton	<p>This program will expand work-based learning (WBL) opportunities (hands-on work experience, on-site at a business) for all area high school students, building supply before the St. Joseph Career Hub opens its doors in August 2025. This program will increase K-12 experiential learning opportunities, with the long-term goal to support talent development including increasing the % of graduation rates, student retention in pathways, and students connected with 21st century careers in our region.</p> <p>To implement this program, the South Bend Regional Chamber will hire an Experiential Learning Coordinator (ELC) in 2023. Key performance indicators: by the end of 2026, to increase WBL placements by 110 (100% increase). The ELC will 1) build industry partnerships to scale up WBL and 2) foster collaboration between and with area school leaders, guidance counselors and instructors, community partners, and the Career Hub planning team to ensure WBL is prioritized.</p> <p>READI funds will be used to launch the position in 2023-2024, with additional investment from SBR Chamber and South Bend Community School Corporation. Through a capital campaign for the Career Hub, industry leaders will contribute funds to sustain the position's transition to the Hub in 2025. By 2026, the position will be funded fully and sustainably by tuition paid by schools sending students to the Hub.</p>	<p>This program will expand work-based learning (WBL) opportunities (hands-on work experience, on-site at a business) for all area high school students, building supply before the St. Joseph Career Hub opens its doors in August 2025. This program will increase K-12 experiential learning opportunities, with the long-term goal to support talent development including increasing the % of graduation rates, student retention in pathways, and students connected with 21st century careers in our region. To implement this program, the South Bend Regional Chamber will hire an Experiential Learning Coordinator (ELC) in 2023. Key performance indicators: by the end of 2026, to increase WBL placements by 110 (100% increase). The ELC will 1) build industry partnerships to scale up WBL and 2) foster collaboration between and with area school leaders, guidance counselors and instructors, community partners, and the Career Hub planning team to ensure WBL is prioritized. READI funds will be used to launch the position in 2023-2024, with additional investment from SBR Chamber and South Bend Community School Corporation. Through a capital campaign for the Career Hub, industry leaders will contribute funds to sustain the position's transition to the Hub in 2025. By 2026, the position will be funded fully and sustainably by tuition paid by schools sending students to the Hub.</p>	\$	60,000.00	\$	31,077.06	\$	3,812.11	Maybe - Resolved - Description Edits	READI funds are being used to fund a coordinator role responsible for placing more minority students in WBL opportunities.	Project flagged by Andrew Jagals Project description is being edited - approved by EDC on 3/7/25. Finalized in GMT on 4/7/25.

Governor's Workforce Cabinet

This section outlines the Indiana Governor's Workforce Cabinet's internal review of DEI positions, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

The GWC did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

The GWC does not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

The GWC does not have a DEI mission or value statement.

Programs Administered to the Public

The GWC did not administer any DEI programs to the public.

Grant Conditions

The GWC does not require any DEI grant conditions

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

The GWC did not participate in any DEI trainings for employees

Job Applicant Requirements

The GWC did not maintain any DEI job applicant requirements.

Indiana Destination Development Corporation

This section outlines the Indiana Destination Development Corporation's internal review of DEI positions, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

The Corporation did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

The Corporation does not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

The Corporation does not have a DEI mission or value statement.

Programs Administered to the Public

The Corporation did not administer any DEI programs to the public.

Grant Conditions

The Corporation does not require any DEI grant conditions

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

The Corporation did not participate in any DEI trainings for employees

Job Applicant Requirements

The Corporation did not maintain any DEI job applicant requirements.

Indiana State Fair Commission

This section outlines the Indiana State Fair Commission's internal review of DEI positions, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

The ISFC did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

The ISFC does not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

The ISFC does not have a DEI mission or value statement.

Programs Administered to the Public

The ISFC did not administer any DEI programs to the public.

Grant Conditions

The ISFC does not require any DEI grant conditions

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

The ISFC did not participate in any DEI trainings for employees

Job Applicant Requirements

The ISFC did not maintain any DEI job applicant requirements.

Ports of Indiana

This section outlines the Ports of Indiana's internal review of DEI positions, departments, activities, procedures, and programs as required by Executive Order 25-14.

DEI Department

POI did not have a department dedicated to DEI initiatives.

DEI Staff Positions

POI does not employ any staff dedicated to DEI initiatives.

Mission Statement or Value Statement

POI does not have a DEI mission or value statement.

Programs Administered to the Public

POI did not administer any DEI programs to the public.

Grant Conditions

POI does not require any DEI grant conditions

Training/Instruction Administered to the Employees

POI did not participate in any DEI trainings for employees

Job Applicant Requirements

POI did not maintain any DEI job applicant requirements.