

***THE NORTHERN PANHANDLE  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.  
(NPWDB, INC.- REGION 5)  
LOCAL PLAN***

***JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2028***



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## **SECTION 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING**

### ***A) An Analysis of the Regional Economic Conditions including Existing and Emerging High Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations; and the Employment Needs of Business in those Industry Sectors and Occupations. The Analysis should identify local Priority Industries based on Employer and (Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Partner Input;***

The Weirton area (Hancock and Brooke Counties in West Virginia and Jefferson County in Ohio) suffered a sharp drop in employment during the COVID-19 recession, but the region experienced a relatively milder bout of job losses during the early phases of the pandemic compared to many areas. Overall, local employers cut just over 11% of payrolls (4,300) in early-2020 versus a 14% drop in jobs at the state and national levels. The region's recovery has slightly outpaced that of West Virginia and remained on par with the nation, with employment in the Weirton Area increasing by roughly 4,000 over the past 6 quarters, which puts total payrolls at roughly 98% of the pre-pandemic level. With that said, the local economy does face many of the same supply chain encumbrances and labor market constraints that have occurred nationally, as businesses have faced staffing issues, production delays and other problems due to the global scale of the pandemic's impact. The region's economy stabilized in 2018 and 2019 and even experienced solid growth among certain sectors that had endured sustained economic declines.

The Pittsburgh, PA Area provided a boost to the Weirton Area's economy even prior to the pandemic, as an increasingly larger share of the region's workforce commutes to Pittsburgh or one of its outlying counties for work. Brooke County, which accounts for the smallest share of population in the Weirton area, was not experiencing rapid growth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic's onset in March 2020. Brooke County has experienced a more modest rebound in overall job growth during the recovery phase compared to the rest of the region. While some segments of the county's manufacturing sector continue to struggle (ie: the recent closing of Mountain State Carbon which resulted in the loss of 300 jobs), Brooke County has enjoyed growth in manufacturing activity. Pietro Fiorentini opened a plant in 2019 to produce pressure valves and other parts to support shale gas production in the tri-state area, while another Italian manufacturing firm, Fanti, recently opened a new metal packaging plant. The development of the Port of West Virginia in Follansbee, which is a joint operation between the Port of West Virginia and Empire Diversified Energy, has created opportunity as well through major investments that could help the area make inroads into becoming a secondary gateway into midwestern markets. The natural gas industry has become an increasingly larger player in the area's energy production capabilities. Despite its small geographic footprint, Brooke County ranks among West Virginia's highest-producing counties for oil and NGLs (Natural Gas Liquids). Still, the Weirton area's local economy is driven in large part by Hancock County, which is anchored by most of Weirton and New Cumberland and Jefferson County, Ohio. A large share of the region's overall job losses since 2010 have originated from these counties, due in large part to multiple large layoff events in manufacturing. Many regions in West Virginia have a deep historical connection to energy production, whether it's coal or natural gas. Coal production in the Weirton Area has declined significantly over the past couple of decades, but the area has continued to maintain a link to the coal industry through industrial coke production and electricity generation at several local coal-fired power plants. However, these connections have eroded over time as well due to the secular decline in area steel manufacturing activity and the ongoing shift away from steam coal to natural gas or renewables to

generate electricity. The Weirton Area, which once thrived as one of the nation's major steel-producing centers, has experienced notable instability in the manufacturing sector over the last 30-years (*In February, 2024, Cleveland Cliffs announced they would be idling their Weirton tin plant effective April 15, 2024. This will result in the loss of approximately 900 jobs in the Weirton area.*)

Due to public policy changes, shifts in global trade flows and other factors, steel production has become an increasingly smaller player in local manufacturing activity. Despite the shrinking footprint of steel as one of the area's primary industries, manufacturing still accounts for a large portion of employment and output in the area, with roughly 15% of jobs and 25% of total output linked to goods production. The plastics, food processing, and a few miscellaneous manufacturing subsectors have managed to add a moderate number of jobs over the past 2-years. The shale gas boom throughout the region has generated some measurable benefits for the Weirton area's manufacturing base, most notably chemicals and plastics producers, which rely heavily on natural gas and byproducts from shale deposits as feedstock for their production processes. While the Weirton Area's economy remains highly reliant upon manufacturing and broader energy production (power plants and rising gas output), service-providing sectors play a critical and growing role in the region's economic fortunes. Education and health services contains more than one-in-five of the region's jobs. Although some of this total accounts for a couple of small private higher education institutions, most of the sector is associated with healthcare providers, which have generally been a source of stability and some growth over the past decade or so in line with broader national trends. Weirton Medical Center's recent partnership announcement with WVU Medicine for certain specialization options is expected to improve local access for the region's residents and prevent them from traveling to other major healthcare centers for preventive care and treatment. The area's consumer-based service sectors endured significant declines during the pandemic. Consumer spending during this time shifted more toward goods rather than dining and other services as concerns over the virus and various public health measures limited the ability of consumers to spend on service activities such as gaming (at Mountaineer Casino, Racetrack and Resort, New Cumberland), in-person dining or movies.

Most of these venues have experienced some level of recovery, but just as nationally, most companies operating within the leisure and hospitality sectors and other similar consumer-contact driven activity remain between 5 to 10% below pre-pandemic levels in terms of employment. After recording a smaller loss in economic activity during the pandemic and a solid rebound since lockdown conditions ended, the Weirton area is expected to see a more moderate pace of recovery during the outlook period when compared to both state and national averages. Ongoing structural changes in the nation's energy industries will continue to shape the Weirton Area's economy, even though the sector accounts for a relatively small share of direct employment. Education and health services is expected to add jobs at a 0.8 % average annual rate through 2026. Initial gains for the sector will be driven by the expected waning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which should allow healthcare facilities to return to more normal staffing needs and scheduled care provision. Longer term, demographic factors suggest healthcare demand will likely increase going forward as the area's population ages further, but decades of declining population suggest limited upside for significant additions to hospital capacity—particularly given the recent closures (or sale) of hospitals in areas like the Weirton Area. Leisure and hospitality will be among the region's leading sources of job growth during the outlook period, but most of these gains can be attributed to normalization of activity as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is only expected to wane further in the coming quarters. Over the latter half of the forecast horizon, the sector will be weighed down by expectations of additional

population declines and continued difficulty for the area's gaming industry to compete with other venues in the Mid-Atlantic region. Construction payrolls in the Weirton area are expected to remain flat overall for the forecast horizon, but the region should enjoy healthy growth in state- and federally funded construction activity during the next couple of years. Other portions of the construction sector are expected to see a solid performance over the next 5-years. Public infrastructure investment is expected to be at a relatively high level as the region has projects ongoing under the Roads to Prosperity and the state's recent announcement to spend one billion on broadband development bodes well for high-skill construction activity. Further development of the tri-state Area's (West Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania) natural gas industry should benefit the region, as companies set up their offices in the area, along with legal, accounting, engineering, and other business services firms. This should also help with revitalization efforts in older cities such as Weirton, where work is needed to remove some deteriorating and abandoned commercial and industrial properties.

Public sector payrolls in the Weirton Area are expected to remain stable during the outlook period. State and local government payrolls will see some modest growth over the next couple of years as state, county and city agencies return to more normal staffing levels after the pandemic prompted a spike in early retirements and job. The forecast calls for manufacturing payrolls to decline slightly during the outlook period. The region's chemicals and steel industries have endured decades-long secular declines in production and employment. It is anticipated that some of these same issues will remain in place, resulting in additional job losses during the outlook period. Some segments of local manufacturing activity should see some positive spillover effect from an abundant supply of low-cost feedstock in the Marcellus and Utica Shale play as well as the possibility of Shell's ethane cracker attracting new plastics and manufacturers into the tri-state area. In addition, continued development of upstream gas and gas liquid resources could encourage other industry suppliers (like Pietro Fiorentini) to expand locally.

Per capita personal income for the Weirton Area is estimated at just over \$47,000 during calendar year 2020, equaling an 8.5 % increase over 2019. Federal pandemic relief, in the form of expanded unemployment insurance and direct payments to households, provided a large boost to the transfer payments component of personal income, more than offsetting the transitory loss of wage income observed within the region that occurred due to shelter-in-place orders and subsequent restrictions on close-contact consumer service sectors. Overall per capita income for the region has surged 34.7 % since 2012 (not adjusting for inflation), surpassing income growth at both the state and national levels. Even after adjusting for inflation, residents in the Weirton Area have enjoyed healthy gains in real purchasing power over the last 8-years. Rapid increases in the overall price level in the past year or so and a significant drop-off in federal pandemic relief after the first quarter of 2021 suggest real personal income likely declined at an appreciable rate during 2021 and continued during early-2022. Per capita incomes in the region is boosted to some extent by high wages paid by the manufacturing sector as well as the earnings of highly paid workers who commute into the Pittsburgh metro area for work daily. Moreover, growth in the gas industry has boosted local incomes as residents in the area that hold mineral rights have seen their incomes boosted by rising natural gas, oil and NGL production. Transfer payments account for an above-average share of personal income in the Weirton Area, though this is attributable to the region's high share of elderly residents. Brooke County residents received income levels of nearly \$50,000 per person during 2020, putting it at \$10,000 less than the national average. Hancock County has the region's second-highest level of income and is roughly \$3,000 more than the West Virginia average. Inflation-adjusted per capita

income in the Weirton Area is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.2 % between 2022 and 2026, falling slightly below the statewide average. Job growth in the region's high-wage sectors will provide a significant boost, as should royalty payments that can be attributed to rising shale gas and NGL production in the region. The area's high share of residents at or above the age of 65 will cause government transfer payments (i.e., Social Security and Medicare) to account for a growing share of incomes going forward. In addition, the three-county area, particularly Brooke and Hancock counties, will see a rising share of income imported by commuters working in areas in and around growing employment centers such as Pittsburgh and its suburbs. Per capita personal income for the Weirton Area is estimated at just over \$47,000 during calendar year 2020, equaling an 8.5 % increase over 2019. Federal pandemic relief, in the form of expanded unemployment insurance and direct payments to households, provided a large boost to the transfer payments component of personal income, more than offsetting the transitory loss of wage income observed within the region that occurred due to shelter-in-place orders and subsequent restrictions on close-contact consumer service sectors. Overall per capita income for the region has surged 34.7 % since 2012 (not adjusting for inflation), surpassing income growth at both the state and national levels. Even after adjusting for inflation, residents in the Weirton Area have enjoyed healthy gains in real purchasing power over the last 8-years. Rapid increases in the overall price level in the past year or so and a significant drop-off in federal pandemic relief after the first quarter of 2021 suggest real personal income likely declined at an appreciable rate during 2021 and continued during early-2022. Per capita incomes in the region are boosted to some extent by high wages paid by the manufacturing sector as well as the earnings of highly paid workers who commute into the Pittsburgh metro area for work daily. Moreover, growth in the gas industry has boosted local incomes as residents in the area that hold mineral rights have seen their incomes boosted by rising natural gas, oil and NGL production. Transfer payments account for an above-average share of personal income in the Weirton Area, though this is attributable to the region's high share of elderly residents. Brooke County residents received income levels of nearly \$50,000 per person during 2020, putting it at \$10,000 less than the national average. Hancock County has the region's second-highest level of income and is roughly \$3,000 more than the West Virginia average. Inflation-adjusted per capita income in the Weirton Area is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.2 % between 2022 and 2026, falling slightly below the statewide average. Job growth in the region's high-wage sectors will provide a significant boost, as should royalty payments that can be attributed to rising shale gas and NGL production in the region. The area's high share of residents at or above the age of 65 will cause government transfer payments (i.e., Social Security and Medicare) to account for a growing share of incomes going forward. In addition, the 3-county area, particularly Brooke and Hancock counties, will see a rising share of income imported by commuters working in areas in and around growing employment centers such as Pittsburgh and its suburbs.

The Wheeling area (Ohio, Marshall and Wetzel Counties in West Virginia and Belmont County in Ohio) has experienced major episodes of economic volatility in recent years. Natural gas pipeline construction activity added thousands of jobs locally, only to be followed by unprecedented job losses in just 2 months due to the COVID-19 recession. below are several key facts behind the Wheeling area's recent economic performance:

- The Wheeling Area suffered above-average rates of job losses during the COVID-19 recession, as regional employment fell by more than 16 % between mid-February and mid-April 2020;

- Payrolls have increased at a strong pace over the past year, but only 60% of jobs lost during the initial phase of the pandemic have been recovered;
- Ohio County experienced the largest losses of any county in the region while Wetzel County is the lone county to see payrolls return to pre-pandemic levels;
- Coal production in the region plunged to its lowest levels in a decade during the pandemic, but productive operations and rebounding demand have allowed output to return close to pre-pandemic levels;
- Natural gas output from horizontal wells has increased nearly 10 % combined in Ohio, Marshall and Wetzel counties over the past year, but production has fallen in Belmont County, Ohio;
- Measured unemployment in the region has been volatile in recent years. The jobless rate reached a pandemic high of nearly 16 % but has fallen to just below 6% in late-2021; and,
- The area's work force has declined steadily over the years, but the pandemic has added another strain to the labor market as nearly 3,000 people have left the workforce since early-2020.

Although the Wheeling area is expected to continue to recovery from its recent economic downturn, the region will see continued volatility over the next year or so due to pandemic-related factors. Growth will lag the state average over the remainder of the outlook period. Key aspects of this forecast are:

- The expectation that employment will increase at an average annual rate of 0.8 % in the region over the next 5-years. Job growth in the region is expected to be at its strongest during the first half of the outlook period, driven in large part by pandemic recovery;
- While the region's economic outlook is positive, growth could exceed expectations if growth in downstream natural gas industries is realized;
- Services sectors will lead the region in terms of job growth going forward, as consumer-driven sectors such as leisure and hospitality benefit from the waning impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Goods-producing sectors will grow slower than the regional average, though the energy sector is likely subject to considerable upside and downside risk during the outlook period;
- Unemployment is expected to moderate further over the next couple of years before stabilizing in the low to mid-5% range;
- Inflation-adjusted per capita income is expected to rise at an annual average rate of 1.8 % between 2022 and 2026;
- The region's population has declined by more than 18,000 residents over the past two decades. Poor health outcomes and a growing share of elderly residents have contributed to an increasing natural population decline;
- Population losses are expected to continue in the area during the outlook period, but declines will be smaller compared to the past few years; and,
- Ohio and Marshall Counties are expected to lose residents, with Wetzel County likely enduring the largest percentage decline going forward.

The Wheeling area has endured notable bouts of economic volatility over the past several years. The region served as an epicenter of the Appalachian Basin's natural gas pipeline development, gaining thousands of construction jobs and other high-wage jobs during 2017 and most of 2018. However, as work on these projects wound down, and other major pipeline projects were delayed, or eventually canceled, the area began to see payrolls turn lower by late-2018 only to see job losses accelerate over the next year or so due

to the closure of two major local hospitals (Ohio Valley Medical Center, Wheeling and East Ohio Regional Hospital, Martins Ferry). Also, market conditions for steam coal produced in area mines began to weaken appreciably over the course of 2019, leading to additional job losses in coal and its supporting industries. Unfortunately, the region was dealt another blow in early 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, leading to the loss of nearly ten thousand jobs (16%) in the four-county area during the initial public health response in March and April, 2020.

The Wheeling area has seen its economy bounce back to some extent over the past 18 months or so, but the region continues to lag broader statewide and national-level growth as several key sectors remain encumbered by continued public health concerns, supply chain constraints and labor shortages. The Wheeling area is unique in comparison to other economic regions in West Virginia as the region possesses both major coal mining operations and abundant natural gas and natural gas liquid (NGL) reserves. The Wheeling area's economy has developed into a major player in natural gas production thanks to its location in the heart of the Utica and Marcellus Shale plays. Tyler, Marshall, Wetzel and Ohio counties ranked first, second, fifth and eighth in terms of statewide natural gas production in 2020 and their recorded withdrawal volumes accounted for nearly 1/3 of the state's output. Marshall, Ohio and Wetzel counties rank first, third and fifth in the state in terms of coal production among the two dozen or so coal-producing counties in West Virginia. During 2019, Marshall County's production eclipsed a new record high of 18.3 million short tons, though output fell to 13.9 million short tons during 2020, for the lowest annual total since 2010. Coal output from Marshall County mines has increased more than 40 % during the first half of 2021 compared to the same 6-month period in 2020, though production does remain down 10% versus the first and second quarter total in 2019. Ohio County's coal production also achieved all-time highs in 2019, but registered a much smaller decline in output during 2020 as tonnage fell from 7.3 million to 6.8 million short tons. The energy industry will play an outsized role in the Wheeling Area's performance during the outlook period in a direct manner, but its influence will extend into other segments of the region's economy as well. A significant portion of the region's professional and business services sector has an interdependent relationship with the area's coal and natural gas industries vis-à-vis providing contract labor workers, as well as engineering, legal and other support services. During the forecast horizon, it is anticipated that the energy industry's growth, along with broader US economic gains that will buoy demand for business services firms, will cause payrolls to increase nearly 3% per year. Though occupying a smaller footprint in the Wheeling Area's economy compared to say 25-years ago, the manufacturing sector certainly remains a significant presence in the area thanks to a sizable concentration of chemicals, plastics and metals manufacturing businesses. The shale gas boom throughout the region has energized portions of the Wheeling area's manufacturing base, most notably the chemicals and plastics producers, which rely heavily on natural gas and by-products from shale deposits as feedstock. Energy production and manufacturing activity play a major role in the Wheeling area's economy, the trade, transportation and utilities super-sector rank as the largest source of private sector employment in the Wheeling Area. Prior to 2019, the super-sector was relatively stable in terms of payroll levels, though the performance was uneven across its underlying sectors. Retail trade was the weakest segment in the area by a wide margin. Traditional brick-and-mortar retail activity across the US has seen its struggles deepen in recent years as consumer spending activity continued to shift spending to online direct-ship or online order-and-pickup platforms. As a result, several retailers have closed in the region due to weak sales or as part of broader bankruptcy liquidations by their national corporate offices. Of course, the pandemic led to an abrupt loss in retail and transportation jobs locally due to the imposition of temporary business closures and capacity restrictions during the



initial public health response. Payrolls have recovered to some extent over the past year or so as healthy consumer balance sheets and strong levels of pent-up demand have boosted spending on goods much more so than services, both in-person and online. Education and health services contains nearly one-in-five of the region's jobs. While the sector's trends have been positive at the state and national level over the past decade, conditions locally have been less sanguine. The sector has experienced problems in recent years as several hospitals in the region have posted poor fiscal results amid rising costs and declining populations in the service area. Reynolds Memorial Hospital, Glen Dale, was purchased by WVU Medicine in 2016 while Wheeling Hospital and Wetzel County Hospital entered into management agreements with WVU Medicine within the past few years to make their respective facilities stronger.

Ohio County, which contains the region's namesake principal city of Wheeling, accounts for the largest share of jobs in the area. Although Ohio County was not growing rapidly prior to the pandemic, it had enjoyed some. The Wheeling area has seen modest growth thanks to an influx of several companies relocating their operations into downtown Wheeling and broader growth in the tri-state area's energy sector, particularly natural gas. The closure of the Ohio Valley Medical Center in late-2019, which resulted in the loss of more than 700 healthcare sector jobs, did stall the county's steady performance. The COVID-19 pandemic's impact has had a disproportionate impact on Ohio County over the past 18 months, due to the presence of Wheeling Island Casino & Hotel along with the numerous consumer service-oriented businesses located along the I-70 corridor. While these types of businesses generally do not have any capacity restrictions on them, activity has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. In addition, leisure and hospitality and other consumer service-based sectors, such as retailers, are facing worker shortages that make it difficult to operate at full capacity. Overall, Ohio County employers have recovered nearly two-thirds of the jobs lost during the start of the pandemic. Although Ohio County has experienced the largest swing in jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic, Marshall County has accounted for most of the regional economic volatility since 2016. Ohio County is expected to realize the fastest pace of job growth going forward at roughly 1% annually. Some of this will reflect a bounce back in activity as the effects of the pandemic begin to fade as well as a rebound or stabilization in a few sectors that have struggled significantly in recent years. Namely, venues such as Wheeling Island Casino & Hotel and consumer-oriented businesses ranging from restaurants, hotels, retailers and theaters that line the I-70 corridor benefit from the ebbing impact of the pandemic. In addition, the county should benefit from continued efforts at revitalization efforts and development activity in the City of Wheeling. Given the massive level of natural gas pipeline infrastructure development occurring within Marshall County, payrolls in the county surged by more than one third (three thousand three hundred jobs) between late-2016 and mid-2018. Since these projects have an end point, however, the completion and/or delay of these projects eventually resulted in a nearly equal number of jobs being lost during 2019. Energy sector payrolls struggled due to the combined effects of a general downward decline in coal-fired electricity generation and the global economic shock caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Coal and natural gas payrolls have begun to inch higher in recent months thanks to rebounding output, but their high levels of productivity and the ongoing labor shortages related to the pandemic have kept job gains very modest thus far. Overall, while Marshall County experienced the smallest percentage decline in payrolls as the COVID-19 pandemic began, only 25% of those jobs lost have been recovered over the past five quarters. The forecast calls for Marshall County to grow at 0.5% annually, but its trajectory is subject to the highest level of risk on either the upside or downside due to its exposure to coal and natural gas commodity markets. Wetzel County has a more "rural" economy and experienced the strongest rebound in economic activity from the beginning

of the pandemic. Payrolls have bounced back to their pre-pandemic levels due in large part to continued growth in the natural gas industry. Wetzel County is among the state's top natural gas producing counties and has seen withdrawal volumes rise steeply in the past 3-years or so, leading to a near doubling of gas industry payrolls over that period. Wetzel County is expected to post the slowest rate of growth but has opportunities for upside potential linked to the region's ability to develop mid- and downstream natural gas industries. After seeing a much larger-than-average contraction in employment during the pandemic, the Wheeling area is expected to see employment growth slightly trail the state and national average in terms of growth during the outlook period. However, given the region's exposure to highly-procyclical sectors such as energy, the area does have some potential for stronger-than-expected growth going forward. Overall, it is anticipated that total employment will increase by 0.8 % annually through 2026. The economy faces significant long-term challenges that will likely dampen potential job growth. Chief among these will be what is a decidedly mixed outlook for the region's energy sector, which will add jobs at a rate of just 0.6 %. The region's natural gas industry will experience some weakness over the next year or so due to the retrenchment in exploration and development activity and challenging capital market conditions, longer term prospects are more promising due to rising domestic and international demand for natural gas to generate electricity and for downstream manufacturing activity and other industrial applications. The Wheeling area's manufacturing sector has struggled to sustain any meaningful growth for much of the last few decades. The forecast calls for manufacturing payrolls to increase just over 0.3 % annually during the outlook period. Ohio County is expected to realize the fastest pace of job growth going forward at roughly 1.0 % annually. Venues such as Wheeling Island Casino & Hotel and consumer-oriented businesses ranging from restaurants, hotels, retailers and theaters that line the I-70 corridor benefit from the ebbing impact of the pandemic. In addition, the county should benefit from continued efforts at revitalization efforts and development activity in the City of Wheeling. The forecast calls for Marshall County to grow at 0.5 % annually, but its trajectory is subject to the highest level of risk on either the upside or downside due to its exposure to coal and natural gas commodity markets. Wetzel County is expected to post the slowest rate of growth but has opportunities for upside potential linked to the region's ability to develop mid and downstream natural gas industries.

The energy industry will play an outsized role in the Wheeling area's performance during the outlook period in a direct manner, but its influence will extend into other segments of the region's economy as well. Construction payrolls in the Wheeling Area are expected to grow 0.8 % annually during the outlook period. Other portions of the construction sector are expected to see a solid performance over the next 5- years. Public infrastructure investment is expected to be at a relatively high level as the region has projects ongoing under the Roads to Prosperity program (I-70 Bridges project) and the state's recent announcement to spend one billion on broadband development bodes well for high-skill construction activity. Further development of the tri-state Area's natural gas industry should benefit the 4-county region as well, as extraction companies set up their core and auxiliary offices in Ohio and Marshall counties, along with legal, accounting, engineering and other business services firms. Education and health services is expected to add jobs at a 1% average annual rate through 2026. Longer term, demographic factors suggest healthcare demand will likely increase going forward as the area's population ages further, but decades of declining population suggest limited upside for significant additions to hospital capacity. The emergence of WVU Medicine as a strategic partner for several facilities provide at least a stabilizing presence for the sector and could foster growth in certain types of specialty medicines not previously available to residents. Public

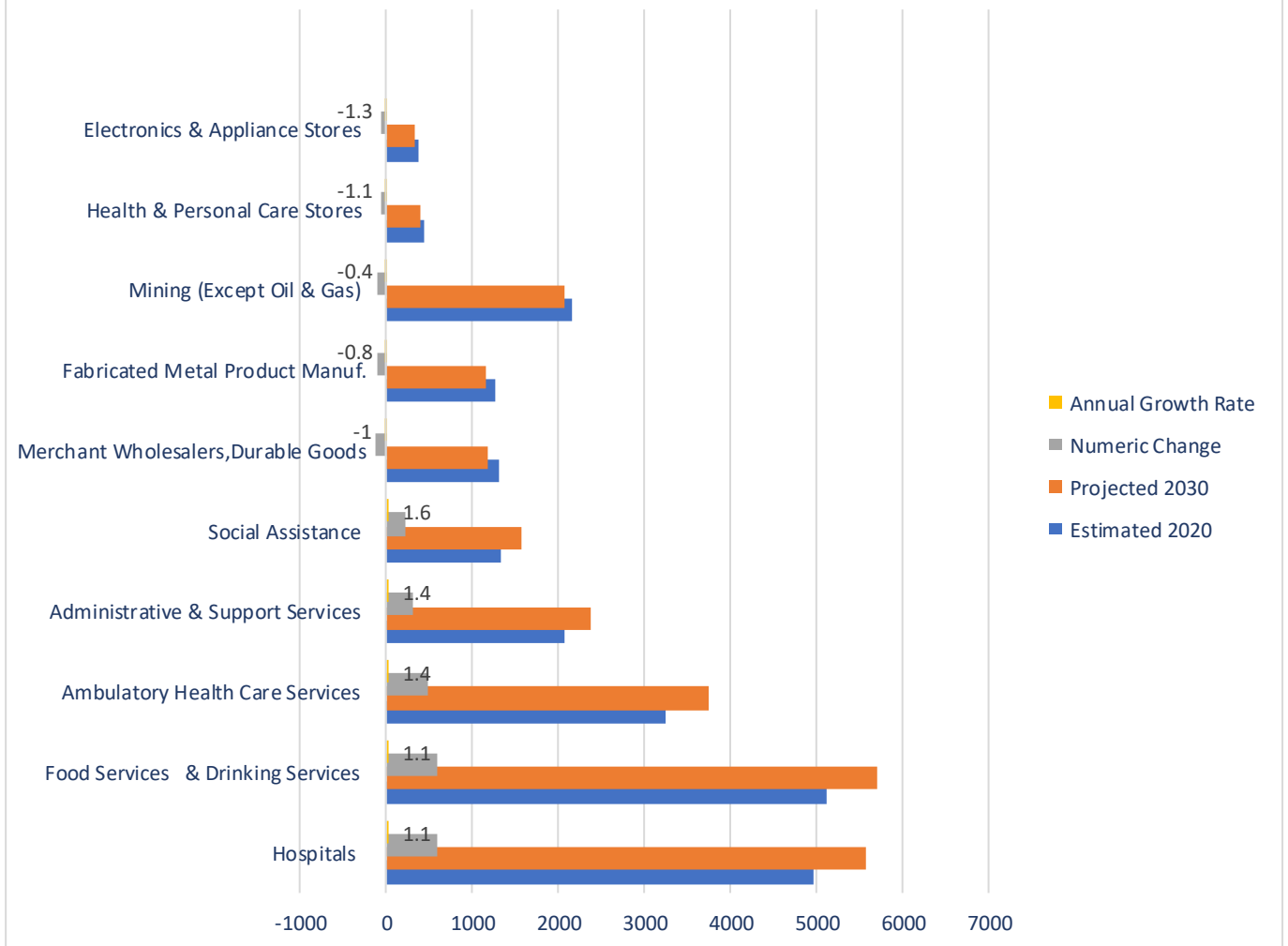
sector payrolls in the Wheeling Area are expected to increase by 1% per year. Most of the growth will occur at the local government level as state and local governments recover to more normal staffing levels after the pandemic prompted a spike in early retirements and job exits across many agencies. The economy of Tyler County employes three thousand people. The largest industries are Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services and Retail Trade. The highest paying industries are Utilities, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing and Manufacturing. Because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, from 2020 to 2021, employment in Tyler County declined at a rate of -1.48%, from three thousand and five employees to three thousand employees. Capitalizing on its position in the Utica Shale formation, Tyler County has become the largest producer of natural gas in the state.

Due to the large influx of pandemic-related federal relief in early 2021, inflation-adjusted personal income in the Wheeling Area is expected to increase only slightly between 2021 and 2026, but the period between 2022 and 2026 will likely see real income growth proceed at an average annual rate of 1.5 %. Job gains in high wage industries such as: public infrastructure, construction activity, natural gas and manufacturing, as well as continued growth in royalty payments from gas production, will support income gains through the middle and latter portions of the outlook period. Transfer payments will be a major buoy to incomes in the area as a growing share of residents become eligible for Social Security and Medicare programs; however, these safety net programs will account for a smaller share of total income going forward when compared to 2020 and 2021 as federal pandemic relief programs have ended and will not continue. Per capita personal income for the Wheeling Area was estimated at approximately \$51,200 during calendar year 2020, equaling a 6.7 % increase over 2019. Federal pandemic relief, in the form of expanded unemployment insurance and direct payments to households, provided a large boost to the transfer payments component of personal income, more than offsetting the loss of wage income observed within the region. Overall per capita income for the region has surged 45% since 2012 (not adjusting for inflation), surpassing income growth at both the state and national levels by more than 10 percentage points over this period. Even after adjusting for inflation, residents in the Wheeling Area have enjoyed healthy gains in real purchasing power over the last 7-years. Over the past decade, per capita income growth in the 4-county region has surpassed both state and national averages due to strong wage growth, particularly within coal, natural gas and more recently pipeline construction, rising royalty income paid to mineral rights owners and large increases in small business income. Transfer payments account for an above-average share of personal income in the Wheeling Area, though this is attributable to the region's high share of elderly residents. Ohio County residents received income levels of \$70,000 per person during 2020, ranking it as the highest among West Virginia's 55 counties and the only county in the state with average income levels exceeding the national average. Marshall and Wetzel counties fall short of the statewide average, with residents receiving an average of between \$42,000 and \$41,000 in 2020. In 2022, Marshall County reported the highest annual average wage in West Virginia at \$62,222, with Monongalia (\$60,762), Tyler (\$60,177), Putnam (\$60,081), Pleasants (\$58,889), Doddridge (\$58,720), Harrison (\$58,445), Kanawha (\$56,128), Jefferson (\$55,377), and Mingo (\$52,773) rounding out the top ten. Per capita income has grown well above state and national averages in recent years. Ohio County residents have the highest income levels in the state. The Wheeling Area is expected to continue its recovery from its recent economic downturn. The region will see continued volatility over the next year or so due to pandemic-related factors. Growth will lag the state average over the remainder of the outlook period. Key aspects of our forecast are as follows:

- The expectation that employment will increase at an average annual rate of 0.8 % in the region over the next 5-years. Job growth in the region is expected to be at its strongest during the first half of the outlook period, driven in large part by pandemic recovery.
- While the region’s economic outlook is positive, growth could exceed expectations if growth in downstream natural gas industries is realized, such as PTT Global’s proposed ethane cracker facility.
- Services sectors will lead the region in terms of job growth going forward, as consumer-driven sectors such as leisure and hospitality benefit from the waning impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Goods-producing sectors will grow slower than the regional average, though the energy sector is likely subject to considerable upside and downside risk during the outlook period.
- Unemployment is expected to moderate further over the next couple of years before stabilizing in the low to mid-5% range.
- Inflation-adjusted per capita income is expected to rise at an annual average rate of 1.8% between 2022 and 2026.
- The region’s population has declined by more than 18,000 residents over the past two decades. Poor health outcomes and a growing share of elderly residents have contributed to an increasing natural population decline.
- Population losses are expected to continue in the area during the outlook period, but declines will be smaller compared to the past few years.
- All four counties in the region are expected to lose residents, but Wetzel County will likely endure the largest percentage declines going forward.
- Per capita income has grown well above state and national averages in recent years. Ohio County residents have the highest income levels in the state.

Of the state’s 55 counties, 16 recorded per capita personal income exceeding the statewide unrevised figure of \$48,488 in 2021. These included Ohio (\$61,486), Jefferson (\$59,214), Harrison (\$57,205), Kanawha (\$55,897), Putnam (\$53,536), Monongalia (\$52,576), Wood (\$52,329), Tucker (\$52,251), Ritchie (\$52,040), Brooke (\$50,271), Pocahontas (\$50,236), Pendleton (\$50,144), Cabell (\$49,866), Hancock (\$49,823), Berkeley (\$49,759), and Pleasants (\$49,077). *Weirton Area Economic Outlook 2022-2026, WVU, John Chambers College of Business and Economics. Wheeling Area Economic Outlook 2022-2026, WVU, John Chambers College of Business and Economics. Data from the Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates. WV Economic Outlook 2022-2026.*

## Industry Employment Projections, 2020-2030



*2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.*

## Occupational Employment Projections, 2020-2030

1. Registered Nurses.
2. Cooks, Restaurant.
3. Home Health And Personal Care Aides.
4. Fast Food and Counter Workers.
5. Waiters and Waitresses.
6. Stockers and Order Fillers.
7. Nursing Assistants.
8. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers.
9. Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners.
10. Operating Engineers and other Construction Equipment Operators.
11. Medical Assistants.
12. Janitors and Cleaners, except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners.
13. Medical and Health Service Managers.
14. Construction Laborers.
15. Laborers and Fright Stock and Material Movers, Hand.

*2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.*

### Top 25 Private Employers, 2022

Rank	Company Name	Employment Range
1.	WVU Medicine	1000+
2.	Amer. Consolidated Natural Resources, Inc.	1000+
3.	Walmart	1000+
4.	Weirton Medical Center	1000+
5.	Cleveland Cliffs (Arcelormittal) Weirton Inc.*	1000+
6.	Williams Lea, Inc.	500-999
7.	Wesbanco Bank, Inc.	500-999
8.	Mountaineer Park, Inc.	500-999
9.	Northwood Health Systems, Inc.	250-499
10.	Kroger	250-499
11.	Fiesta Tableware Company	250-499
12.	Sportsman's Distribution Company, LLC	250-499
13.	The Health Plan of the Upper Ohio Valley, Inc.	250-499
14.	Tunnel Ridge, LLC	250-499
15.	Momentive Performance Materials USA	250-499
16.	Westlake Management Services, Inc.	250-499
17.	Bass Pro Outdoor World, L.L.C.	250-499
18.	Bellofram Corporation	250-499
19.	Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP	250-499
20.	Wheeling Island Gaming, Inc.	250-499
21.	Williams WPC - I, Inc.	250-499
22.	Cardinal Health, LLC	250-499
23.	Good Shepherd Nursing Home, LC	250-499
24.	Ziegenfelder Company	250-499
25.	Team Sledd, LLC	250-499

*2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5. (\*In February, 2024, Cleveland Cliffs announced they would be idling their Weirton tin plant effective April 15, 2024. This will result in the loss of approximately 900 jobs in the Weirton area).*

***B) An Analysis of the Knowledge and Skills required to meet the Employment Needs of Businesses in the Local Area, including Employment Needs for High Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations;***

Covid 19 changed our world in countless ways but one of the biggest was its impact on the war for talent. If the pandemic taught us anything, it was the worker shortages are the new norm and that new rules for talent attraction are being written daily. Labor participation rates hover at historic lows, supply chains for essential raw materials and finished goods are disintegrating quickly and remaining broken, competition for the best and brightest workers continue to ratchet up in intensity and workers with needed skill sets for many occupations remain in short supply. There are 3 most pressing issues facing the workforce: 1) Labor

participation; 2) Worker training; and, 3) Childcare. Getting labor participation up to modern standards is the most critical need today. On worker training, there is a growing need to take huge pieces of the traditional academic sector and focus them on workforce training, certification and reskilling. And to help solve the first problem, solving the child care work issues will go a long way toward getting many women back in the workplace. There is also a continuing shortage of workers. The shortage has led to higher wage rates, helping to fuel inflation. The 2 biggest items that will drive success or failure over the next couple of years will be workforce participation and skillset match. We have more jobs than people looking, so getting everyone that can participate to participate will be key. There are many people who are looking for jobs and can't find them because they do not have the skillset necessary to perform the work of today and the future. Other critical workforce issues of 2022 included: Increased automation to replace human workers; Continuing shakeup of retail workforce; Instead of people chasing jobs, now jobs are chasing people; and, Equity inclusion and diversity initiatives that are becoming the norm. To build demand we need to engage businesses, reduce barriers, build capacity, align funding with expectations and involve local communities. The development of career pathways needs to be based on current labor market data. Based on current labor market data at this time, the NPWDB, Inc. is in the process of developing career pathways in the following 16 career clusters:

1. Health Science;
2. Transportation, Distribution and Logistics;
3. Manufacturing;
4. Information Technology;
5. Architecture and Construction;
6. Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security;
7. Hospitality and Tourism;
8. Business Management and Administration;
9. Human Services;
10. Education and Training;
11. Education, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics;
12. Marketing;
13. Finance;
14. Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications;
15. Government and Public Administration; and.
16. Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources.

Education must be linked with employers to close the skills gap. Workforce development efforts are aimed to meet industry needs of the future by building a steady talent pipeline. Employers must clearly define the knowledge, skills and abilities they require. They must look at workers through a skills lens and provide pathways to help them obtain requisite learning. The "learn while you earn" approach will play an increasingly vital role in preparing people for work that machines will never be able to do. In order to help workers, education providers must adopt a more transparent, accessible and open-minded approach to awarding and valuing industry certifications and other short-term credentials. This is needed because 1 in 4

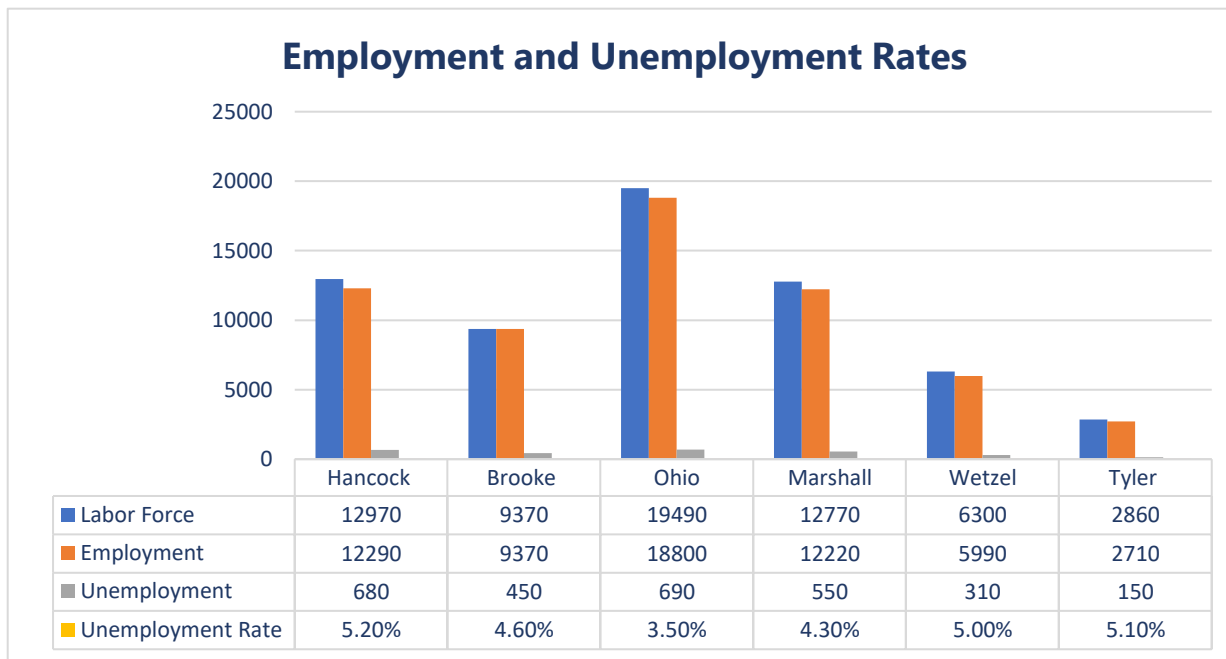


workers say they don't know where to acquire new skills and more than half are worried about how to pay for it. Additionally, we must expand the availability of employment and upskilling opportunities. These barriers must be knocked down before we can build a workforce ready to meet job growth. Alignment of relevant degrees and training with economic development aspirations is a must because local colleges and job trainers are not consistently responding to employer needs and training for some critical jobs in local industries are undersupplied. Skills need to be identified for jobs to grow in regional industries, including upskilling current workers and encouraging prospective ones. Skill gaps and underutilized skills need to be identified in the local workforce. Local economic development initiatives need to be partnered with schools and local communities. Workers making career decisions need to be able to connect job opportunities with training and education that produces a return on investment. Wrap around services like child care, mental health care and other crucial social support need to be readily available in the region. A well-functioning labor market must be able to provide affordable, effective training that can easily be verified by an employer looking to hire on skills not degrees. To help workers develop the skills they need, policymakers and education providers must adopt a more transparent, accessible and open-minded approach to awarding and valuing industry certification and other credentials. According to "Balance Careers," January, 2020, there are certain skills and qualities employers seek in all their employees, regardless of the position. These are soft skills and they are the personal attributes, personality traits, inherent social cues and communication abilities needed for success on the job. Examples of soft skills include: Adaptability; Communication; Creative Thinking; Teamwork; Work Ethics; Networking; Decision-Making; Time Management; Motivation/Initiative; Flexibility; Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking; Digital Literacy; Emotional Intelligence; and, Conflict Resolution. Every job requires employees to engage with others in some way. Being able to interact well with others is very important in any job. One of the reasons employers look for applicants with good soft skills is because they are transferable and can be used regardless of the job at which the person is working. This makes job candidates with soft skills very adaptable employees with unique and broad backgrounds that can diversify a company and help it run more efficiently. Soft skills are particularly important in customer-based jobs. Hard skills are more tangible or technical skills that most jobs require.

They are the specific knowledge and abilities required to do the actual job. It is important for a worker to show an employer he/she has both, soft and hard skills or a combination of hybrid skills, when applying and interviewing for jobs. Hard skills are acquired through formal education and training programs, including college, apprenticeships, short-term training classes, online courses and on-the-job training. Examples of hard skills include: Computer Programming; Web Design; Typing; Accounting/Finance; Automotive; Bookkeeping; Construction; Information Technology; Carpentry; Pipefitter; Nursing; Mechanical; Teaching; and, Word Processing. Most "key" technical skills that cut across all high-demand occupations are related to technology, including use and maintenance of equipment and effective communications through technology. Recognized credentials and/or proof of experience are often required to demonstrate occupation-specific technical skills. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) knowledge and competencies are among the most critical for most high-demand occupations. "*Workforce 2022.*" *Conway Data.*

***C) An Analysis of the Workforce in the Local Area, including Labor Force Employment and Unemployment Data, and Information on Labor Market Trends, and the Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce in***

*the Local Area, including Individuals with Barriers to Employment;*



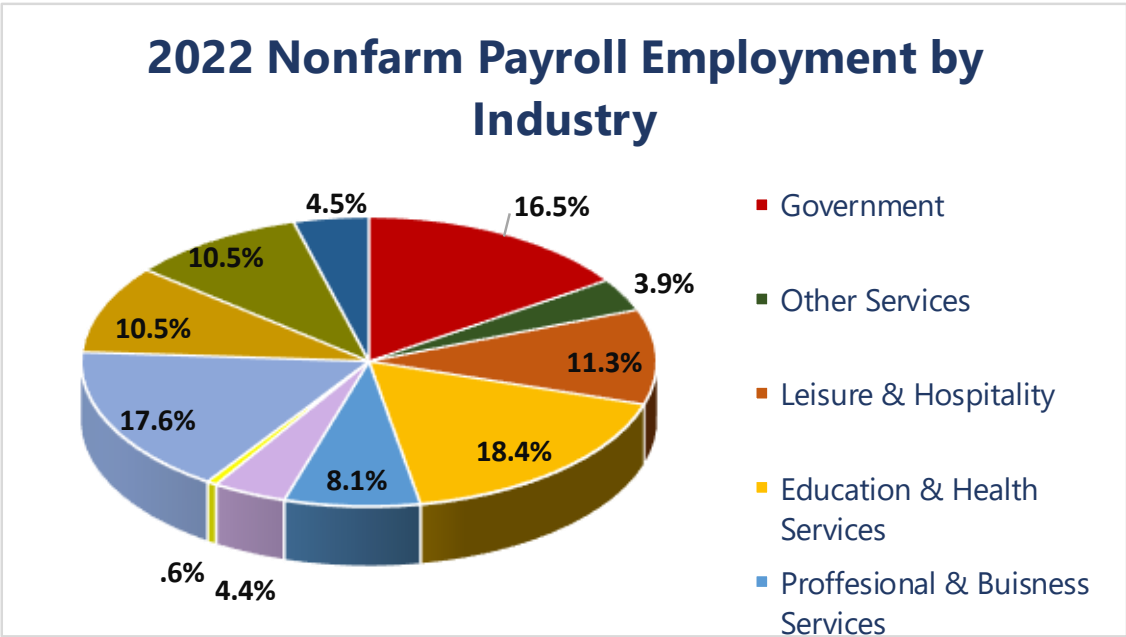
November, 2023, WorkForce WV LMI.

2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.

2022 Annual Labor Force Statistics					
	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment Rate	Unemployment	Labor Force Participation Rate
Hancock	9,877	9,428	4.5%	449	54.3%
Brooke	13,031	12,393	4.0%	638	54.3%
Ohio	13,063	12,409	5.0%	654	52.9%
Marshall	19,984	19,102	4.0%	792	60.7%
Wetzel	7,925	7,622	3.8%	303	40.5%
Tyler	6,462	6,102	5.6%	360	51.9%

2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.

## 2022 Nonfarm Payroll Employment by Industry



*2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.*

All 6 counties in the Northern Panhandle region had estimated population losses between 2021 and 2022. The region had an estimated population loss of 1.3%. Marshall County (-456) had the greatest decline while Tyler County (-60) had the smallest estimated loss.

Population Estimates			
County	2021	2022	Net Change
Hancock County	28,591	28,172	419
Brooke County	22,109	21,733	376
Ohio County	41,878	41,447	431
Marshall County	30,208	29,752	456
Wetzel County	14,195	14,025	170
Tyler County	8,243	8,183	60
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>145,224</b>	<b>143,312</b>	<b>1,912</b>

*2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.*

The steady population decline has been an ongoing challenge for West Virginia. The number of residents has dropped from a peak of just over two million in 1950 to 1,782,959 as of July 1, 2021, according to the

latest numbers from the US Census Bureau. The drop in population is the result of more deaths than births and people moving out of West Virginia. The state, as well as other parts of Appalachia, has been drained by the Hillbilly Highway, the name given to the emigration of people from rural areas to more industrialized regions. The result has been a “brain drain” of young people, a negative impact on the tax base, a dearth of new ideas, and a diminished labor force. West Virginia’s workforce participation rate is just 54.2%, second lowest in the country after Mississippi. However, the latest Census dark cloud does have a silver lining. Garrett Ballengee, Executive Director of the Cardinal Institute for West Virginia Policy, a conservative think tank, took a closer look at Census numbers and found an encouraging sign: the state’s net domestic migration is on the positive side. Between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2021, West Virginia had a net migration of two thousand three hundred forty-three—that many more people moved into the state than moved away. The state still had an overall population decline during that time of about seven thousand because more people died than were born. However, the net migration number stops, at least for the moment, the exodus. From April 2010 to July 1, 2019, the state had a negative emigration of over forty-three thousand. Again, think Hillbilly Highway, especially for young people. So, why the change over the last year? Mr. Ballengee has not researched it, and he was hesitant to venture a guess during an interview on Talk Line last week. “People choose to move for a lot of different reasons,” but he offered that it might have to do with a lower cost of living, a slower paced lifestyle, and how the pandemic may have impacted lifestyle and career decisions. “I’m a free market, conservative guy (and) I like to think that our business friendliness is getting better, our tax structure is getting a little bit better, we’ve got some interesting education reforms that have been passed,” Mr. Ballengee said. Notably, four of West Virginia’s five surrounding states had net migration losses—they had more people moving out than moving in. Maryland had the greatest exodus, with 20,000 individuals leaving over the last year. Only Kentucky had net positive domestic migration. One year does not make a trend, and West Virginia is still heading in the wrong direction because of the low birth rate compared with deaths. However, it is also possible that traffic on the Hillbilly Highway is beginning to slow and a few more vehicles are heading in the other direction. *“A Silver Lining to West Virginia’s Dark Census Cloud.” WV Metro News. June 26, 2023.*

The 2020 US Census Data released earlier this month showed that West Virginia’s population declined by 3.3% in the last decade, dropping to 1,792,147. All but eight counties lost population. Data shows a majority of our cities suffered population declines. In particular, Wheeling had a population of around 60,000 in the 30s, 40s and 50s. However, its numbers began to decline by 1960. Its population today is just over 27,000. More than 28,000 people lived in Weirton 60-years ago. Its population is down to just over 19,000 people. Weirton’s population has dropped 3% from 2010. *“West Virginia’s Population Decline Hits Cities Hard.” WV Metro News August 27, 2021.*

Marshall County Commission President John Mr. Gruzinskas said Monday that the county’s development of tax increment financing districts along the Ohio River is aimed at attracting business and industry into Marshall County, hopefully providing a long-term fix to population loss in addition to its more immediately obvious benefits. “We’ve established two TIF districts along the river, and that’s to attract more industry to the area,” Mr. Gruzinskas said. “We realize there’s always going to be an ebb and flow, because it’s a statewide trend, that the entire state is losing the youngest of our population.” “The industry we’re starting to see, as it relates to oil and gas, ... the technology requires younger individuals,” Mr. Gruzinskas

continued. "That's something we're just going to have to deal with, but we're trying to make our area as attractive as possible to industry, because industry will draw employees, and hopefully they'll be from out of our high schools." Ohio County Commission President Randy Wharton agreed, saying "the commission has worked to entice local businesses to expand, particularly at The Highlands, where businesses such as Silgan Plastics, East Coast Metals and Kalkreuth Roofing had expanded their operations. These expansions went a long way toward retaining local labor." "We've got a very strong local presence at The Highlands," he said. "Those were local businesses that we brought to The Highlands to retain those jobs in the area. ... The commissioners have highly incentivized those businesses to remain in the area as much as we could, and we will continue to do that, especially when it relates to manufacturing and light industry." "You get a double whammy on that – you get a boost of jobs to build them, and then you get permanent jobs, which in most cases are the higher-paying jobs," he added. "We have always done that, and we will continue to do that." Mr. Wharton pointed out that many counties struggle with enticing the younger population to stay local, especially in an age where remote employment is becoming more highly sought after by younger professionals. "It's a shame with some of these larger companies, especially software, technical (offices), large corporations don't realize how inexpensive it would be to have their employees working remotely from here," he said. "... We have reliable utilities. We're not suffering rolling blackouts, forest fires or things like that. We don't have a high crime rate. It boils down to, where do the people leaving want to live? That's a tough problem to deal with." *"Ohio Valley Looks To Stem Tide of Population Loss." Wheeling Intelligencer, March 29, 2022.*

Demographic issues continue to present significant headwinds for WV. Employers are desperate for workers; colleges need more students; and, merchants always want more customers. There have been some hints in recent years of more people moving to WV. The median age of West Virginians is 43 years. That has not changed in the last couple of year and it remains one of the highest in the country. And WV continues to get older. The number of residents 70-74 rose by 6,661 to 71,411 that was the most growth of any of the demographic categories one in five West Virginians is 65 or older. Ages 25 to 64 are the prime working years but the number of West Virginians in that category decreased over the 2 year period by over 21,000 to 887,500. However, there is one bright spot among the working age demographics. The number of West Virginians aged 30-34 increased by 4,183 to 108,130. Even so, there still are not enough young people in the pipeline. The number of West Virginians under 18 decreased by 7,576 to 351,922. The number of children under five recorded by the US Census Bureau cannot be directly attributed to birth rate. It is worth noting that the number of children in that category dropped by 2,480 to 87,997. *"West Virginia's Demographic Downer." WV Metro News June 26, 2023.*

Historical demographic trends for the Weirton Area (Hancock and Brooke Counties in West Virginia and Jefferson County in Ohio) are expected to persist into the outlook period as the forecast calls for the region's population to shrink at a rate of 0.5 to 0.6% annually during the forecast horizon, or a decline of nearly 800 residents per year. Population losses are expected to occur in all the region's counties. Three fundamental demographic issues could hinder the region's growth potential to some degree during the outlook period and over the longer term if they are not addressed in some fashion. First, workers must be educated and/or trained to meet the needs of the job market. Second, the population must be healthy and drugfree to consistently contribute to the economy and finally, a large and growing share of elderly population may limit potential economic growth as these households tend not to be part of the labor

force and generate less entrepreneurial activity on average. These issues pose roadblocks for labor participation. And, lack of improvement of these demographic characteristics could seriously undermine the area's ultimate potential for economic growth. The Weirton Area's resident population totals have declined in a steady fashion over the past few decades. Indeed, the region's population numbers have shrunk by more than 16,000 since 2000. Just as with the rest of the state, the Weirton Area's population has been negatively affected by deaths consistently outnumbering births. Part of this is due to the area's larger-than-normal share of elderly residents. Causes of death is due to a host of issues ranging from heart disease to drug overdoses which helps explain the region's high mortality rate. COVID-19 has also impacted the region's health outcomes and mortality over the past 2-years, as there have been more than 26,000 total confirmed cases and more than 560 deaths over the course of the pandemic. Finally, the three-county area lags both state and national averages in measures of attaining 4-year degrees or higher, with less than 18 % of residents aged 25 years and older possessing at least a bachelor's degree. At the same time, the region does perform well in terms of 2-year degrees and other types of vocational training as 12% of the 25 years and older population have received an associate degree, which is several percentage points higher than state and national averages. *Weirton Area Economic Outlook 2022-2026, WVU, John Chambers College of Business and Economics.*

Historical demographic trends for the Wheeling Area (Ohio, Marshall and Wetzel Counties in West Virginia and Belmont County in Ohio) are expected to persist into the outlook period as the forecast calls for the region's population to shrink at a rate of more than 0.3 % annually over the next 5-years, or a decline of nearly 600 residents per year. Population losses are expected to occur in all the region's counties, though Wetzel County is expected to lose residents at the fastest rate (0.8% average annual decline). Marshall and Ohio counties are expected to post population declines between 0.2 and 0.4% per year through 2026. The Wheeling Area's resident population totals have declined in a steady fashion over the past few decades. Indeed, the region's population numbers have shrunk by roughly 18,500. Each county in the region has lost residents. Just as with the rest of the state, the Wheeling Area's population has been negatively affected by deaths consistently outnumbering births. Part of this is due to the area's larger-than-normal share of elderly residents, but causes of death from a host of issues ranging from heart disease to drug overdoses help explain the region's high mortality rate. COVID-19 has also impacted the region's health outcomes and mortality over the past year or so, as more than 8,000 residents have been confirmed to be infected and more than 450 have died over the course of the pandemic. Finally, the four-county area lags both state and national averages in measures of attaining 4-year degrees or higher, with less than 21% of residents aged 25 years and older possess at least a bachelor's degree. At the same time, the region does perform well in terms of 2-year degrees and other types of vocational training as 10% of the 25 years and older population have received an associate degree. *Wheeling Area Economic Outlook 2022-2026, WVU, John Chambers College of Business and Economics.* Unemployment rates declined in all seven workforce development regions (WDR) between 2021 and 2022. Unemployment rates from highest to lowest were: Workforce Development Region (DRR 5) (Northern Panhandle region): 4.7, WDR 4 (Parkersburg region): 4.6, WDR 1 (Beckley region): 4.2, WDR 6 (Morgantown region): 4.0, WDR 2 (Huntington region): 3.9, WDR 3 (Charleston area): 3.8, and WDR 7 (Martinsburg region): 2.9. *2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.*

The Weirton Area's (Hancock and Brooke Counties in West Virginia and Jefferson County in Ohio)

unemployment rate has generally followed broader state and national trends over the course of the pandemic. The region's jobless rate peaked at more than 17% at the height of the pandemic response in April 2020 and has fallen sharply in the 2-years since then. Though the regional jobless rate is nearly 2 percentage points higher than state and national averages, the three-county area's average rate of unemployment is now at its lowest level since mid-2019 and is approaching levels recorded twice historically. In terms of the rate of unemployment for the three counties that comprise the Weirton Area, preliminary data indicate Brooke County has the region's lowest jobless rate at 5.3% as of the fourth quarter of 2021. Hancock County has an unemployment rate of 5.8% during the final 3 months of 2021. Reflecting a combination of underlying demographics and a secular decline in the region's manufacturing sector, the Weirton Area has long struggled with labor force attrition. The 3-county area saw its workforce shrink by nearly eight thousand between 2010 and 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the region's long-term trend of workforce attrition as nearly two thousand people have exited the labor force since the statewide average for West Virginia, but at approximately 55% the region still lags the national rate for workforce participation by 8 percentage points overall. On a positive note, the three-county area's low labor force participation rate can be explained in part by an older population, as individuals in the 25 to 54 age groups actively participate in the workforce at rates largely on par with the national average. After recording a smaller loss in economic activity during the pandemic and a solid rebound since lockdown conditions ended, the Weirton Area is expected to see a more moderate pace of recovery during the outlook period when compared to both state and national averages. Of course, the region is highly exposed to cyclical sectors such as manufacturing and energy, both directly and indirectly, so there is considerable risk (upside and downside) to growth during the forecast horizon. Overall, it is anticipated that total employment will increase by 0.5% annually through 2026. Regional growth will be hampered to some extent by the anticipated job losses in 2022 and 2023 associated with the closure of Mountain State Carbon, Follansbee and the probable deactivation of the Sammis Power Plant, Stratton, Ohio (and Cleveland Cliffs in 2024). The Weirton Area is anticipated to reach pre-pandemic levels of employment during the outlook period, the timing of the job losses discussed above and near-term constraints facing many sectors suggest this point will not be achieved until mid-to late-2023. *Weirton Area Economic Outlook 2022-2026, WVU, John Chambers College of Business and Economics.*

After declining appreciably between early-2016 and early-2019, the Wheeling Area's (Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel County in West Virginia and Belmont County in Ohio) unemployment rate started to trend higher even prior to the pandemic, nearly reaching 7% by the end of 2019. Just as it did in other parts of the US, the area's jobless rate spiked during the initial pandemic response as thousands of workers were added to the unemployment rolls in the four-county region during the months of March and April 2020. The regional unemployment rate peaked at nearly 16% in April 2020, but as in other parts of the state, it declined rapidly in successive months as the reopening process unfolded and capacity restrictions were loosened or removed entirely. Although the statewide unemployment rate has fallen to be roughly in line with levels that were observed in much of 2019, the jobless rate in the Wheeling Area remains above 2019 levels and has hovered in the upper 5% range for much of 2021. According to preliminary data, Ohio County has the region's lowest unemployment rate at 4.9 % as of the second quarter of 2021, while Wetzel County's jobless rate is 2 percentage points higher at 6.9 %. Reflecting a combination of the region's underlying economic volatility and underlying demographic trends, the Wheeling Area has recorded labor force attrition over much of the past decade or so. Overall, the region's workforce declined by roughly 5,000 people between

2010 and late-2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the drop-off in the region’s workforce, as numerous workers retired early, and others remain out of the workforce due to concerns over contracting the virus at the workplace. Overall, the region’s labor force has shrunk by more than 3,000 since the beginning of 2020. Workforce participation rates in the Wheeling Area tend to be at least on par with the West Virginia statewide average. Marshall County lags the statewide average by several percentage points overall, but like Ohio County, workforce participation among the prime working age (25 to 54 years) falls roughly in line with the national average. By comparison, Wetzel County’s workforce participation rate (46.6%) lags both state and national averages by a sizable margin and the county’s participation rate deficit persists across all age cohorts. *Wheeling Area Economic Outlook 2022-2026, WVU, John Chambers College of Business and Economics.*

The national labor force participation rate was 62.2% in 2022. In 2022, Monongalia County had the highest labor force participation rate in the state at 69.0%. Rounding out the top ten were Jefferson (68.8%), Berkeley (66.2%), Pendleton (65.6%), Preston (64.9%), Grant (63.0%), Pocahontas (62.9%), Harrison (62.6%), *Ohio (62.3%),* and Doddridge (61.5%). The 10 counties with the lowest labor force participation rates in 2022 were Mingo (31.9%), McDowell (33.4%), Boone (41.1%), *Tyler (41.9),* Logan (42.7%), Lincoln (43.0%), Wyoming (43.3%), Mercer (43.8%), Calhoun (44.1%), and Clay (44.3%). West Virginia ranked 50th in per capita personal income in 2022. Only Mississippi (\$46,248) ranked lower. The Northern Panhandle region had the smallest civilian labor force (70,300) among the state's seven development regions and the highest unemployment rate (4.75%) among the regions in 2022. Wetzel County (5.6%) had the highest unemployment rate in the region and Tyler County (3.8%) had the lowest unemployment rate in the region. The labor force participation rate (52.6%) ranked fourth among the seven regions. Tyler County (40.5%) had the lowest labor force participation rate in the region and Ohio (60.7%) had the highest. *2022 West Virginia Economic Review, Workforce West Virginia Research, Information and Analysis, Workforce Development Region 5.*

County	Pop. 55+	Pop with a Disability	18+ H.S. Graduates	25 Years and Older		10 to 24 Years Old	
				With Associate’s Degrees	With Bachelor’s Degrees	Some Collage or Associate’s	Bachelor Degree or Higher
Hancock	8,791	3,851	7,858	1,696	2,049	1,016	55
Brooke	11,408	5,210	9,554	2,475	2,466	690	227
Ohio	11,741	5,557	10,937	2,389	2,622	632	143
Marshall	15,325	6,482	10,958	2,475	5,820	2,484	367
Tyler	3,269	1,808	3,212	593	631	193	20
Wetzel	5,625	2,622	5,631	865	1,085	417	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,159</b>	<b>25,530</b>	<b>48,150</b>	<b>10,493</b>	<b>14,673</b>	<b>5,432</b>	<b>831</b>

*2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates.*

***D) An Analysis of Workforce Development Activities, including Education and Training, in the Local Area, including an Analysis of the Strengths and Weaknesses of such Services, and the Capacity to provide such Services, in order to address the identified Education and Skill Needs of the Workforce and the***



### ***Employment Needs of Employers in the Local Area;***

The local workforce development system is universally accessible, customer-centered and training is job-driven. The most promising strategies for serving job seekers with barriers to employment involve a concurrent mix of employment, training and support services. The goal is to effectively break down *barriers to accessing job-driven training and hiring for any individual who is willing to work, including access to supportive services and relevant guidance*. WIOA makes clear that low-income people and those with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities, are priority populations for funding access and delivery of programs and services. So, training strategies in the region will specifically target these populations. Strategies require collaboration among workforce development partners, education and training institutions and employment services agencies. Adults and dislocated workers are able to access any number of career and training services. Eligible youth are provided with access to required program elements of services. Employers can access a talented pool of qualified potential employees and the most current labor market data. Training is supported through an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) comprised of thousands of training providers with proven track records of securing family-sustaining employment for participants once training has ended. There are several work-based training options available in the region, like: On-The-Job (OJT); Customized Training; and, Incumbent Worker Training. The region is home to three 4-year colleges, no less than six Career and Technical Centers, a community college and a number of trade unions that educate and train eligible adults and youth to obtain skills in high-demand occupational sectors that ultimately lead to family-sustaining careers.

Strengths include the availability of a number of different career pathway services that involve collaboration among education, training, wage and outlook information for high-demand occupations and are provided in concert with core and required partners. There are 4-year educational institutions, a community college and a number of apprenticeship programs available that offer training programs in a number of high-demand occupational sectors. There are adult education and literacy activities offered that include: Basic Literacy instruction and/or instruction in English as a second language; General Education Development (GED) testing; Contextualized Career Cluster "Fast TRACK;" College Transition "Fast TRACK;" Integrated education; Training in Adult Career and Technical Education; and, Adult Workforce Training and Retraining. Strong partnerships are in place with core and required partners, local economic development groups, educational and training providers, area employers and community-based organizations. Coordinating with these groups allows for the consistent delivery of high-quality programs and services in the region. Additionally, the region has been experiencing some economic growth during the past few years. Form Energy, an iron air battery production facility, selected Weirton to open a facility that will ultimately employ approximately 750 individuals; Fanti USA opened a \$40 million dollar metal packaging facility in Brooke County; and, Pure Watercraft opened an all-electric pontoon boat manufacturing facility in Brooke County, to name a couple. Ongoing weaknesses include very limited public transportation available in the region and lack of available childcare. Post-pandemic challenges include identifying individuals who are actually looking for work (secure a job) and/or interesting in enrolling in a training/skills program.

### ***E) A Description of the Local Board's Strategic Vision and Goals for preparing an Educated and Skilled Workforce, including Youth and Individuals with Barriers to Employment, including Goals relating to the***

***Performance Accountability Measures based on Primary Indicators of Performance described in Section 116 (b)(2)(A) of the WIOA in order to support the Local Area, Economic Growth and Economic Self-Sufficiency;***

The NPWDB, Inc.'s vision is to have a highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of current and emerging industries. The region's goals were developed in alignment with the West Virginia WIOA Combined State Plan, 2024-2027:

***Goal # 1 – Expand Work-Based Learning by implementing High-Quality Opportunities for Adult and Youth Learners.*** The NPWDB, Inc. will increase its capacity to provide quality work-based learning opportunities and business-driven training options that will respond quickly to demand. The impact should improve the prime-age labor force participation rate; Increase youth employment (smooth connection between education and employment); Retain more high school students with area employment and employers; and, Improve job-matching for workers outside the labor market (dislocated, etc.). The local workforce development system will direct ample funding to work-based training programs like, on-the-job training, customized training for businesses with significant hiring needs, internships, and pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships as training paths for employment; and, Encourage more work-based opportunities at secondary education institutions and Career & Technical institutions.

***Goal # 2 - Increase Referrals and Integration of Services to improve access to Supportive Services customized for Individuals needing Education and Employment.*** The impact should improve the prime-age labor force participation rate. It is important to address prevalent barriers such as transportation and child care and address prevalent population risk factors such as substance use disorder, citizens returning to society (reduce recidivism) and low educational attainment. The local workforce development system supports the implementation of a comprehensive participant referral system and an increased organizational database of service providers and the consolidation of available supportive services and successful programs addressing top barriers to employment.

***Goal # 3 – Implement Sector Strategies that will be comprehensive in nature to reduce Skills Mismatches and enhance faster Labor Market attachment while informing Education and Training priorities.*** The impact should improve the prime-age labor force participation rate and provide a better, quicker response to rapid relocation and growth of businesses in the region. The local workforce development system supports the alignment of secondary and postsecondary education and training programs and creating direct linkages to employment opportunities, reducing unemployment duration. The local workforce development system will: Convene stakeholders (partners) to develop sector initiatives aimed at improving employment and skills of workers aligned to jobs; Implement and maintain cross-agency business engagement teams, including sharing data through customer relationship management system(s); Implement a small business sector strategies initiative to develop key activities that address small business workforce challenges, including challenges associated with a thriving wages; and, Incorporate work-based learning strategies into sector strategies design for small and large business growth.

***Goal # 4 – Implement Workforce Service Delivery to increase the efficiency of Service Delivery and efficiency in serving Businesses, Workers and Job Seekers.*** The impact should increase workforce investments; Increase the amount of WIOA funding being used for training services in the region;

Ensure job seeking and employer customers have a consistent customer experience; and, Increase engagement of state, local and community stakeholders in the service delivery and outcomes of the workforce system. The local workforce development system developed and printed a handbook that details local workforce and community partner programs along with available wraparound services that is distributed to community partners and eligible residents in the region. The integration of a participant data system (Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) System) allows all stakeholders to better share participant data/information.

**Goal # 5 – *Strengthen Working Relationships with Area Employers.*** Work up-front with employers to determine local or regional hiring needs and design training programs that are responsive to those needs. Training programs need to be aligned with area employer needs, especially those within high-demand industries. Whenever appropriate, employers will be engaged in the design of training programs and the mapping of career pathways. Employers play an active role in developing their individual Customized Training and/or Incumbent Worker Training Programs.

**Goal # 6 – *The Promotion of Career Pathways*** by making high-quality education and training available for skills that lead to family-sustaining employment in high-demand jobs. These services are diverse in nature, with multiple entry and exit points that allows individuals with varying degrees of ability and barriers to employment to have realistic access to pathways. Examples of career pathways already developed in the region for high-demand industries include: Advanced Manufacturing; CDL; Health Science; Audio/Video Technology & Communications; Finance; Education & Training; Business Management & Administration; Law, Public Safety & Security; Hospitality & Tourism; Architecture & Construction; Agriculture & Natural Resources; Transportation, Distribution & Logistics; IT. Government & Public Administration; Welding; and, Building Restoration, with more to be developed in the future. The goal is to create a Career Pathways system where education and training are provided in a multitude of high-demand industries and offer credentials that prepare individuals, regardless of their skill level(s) at the point of entry, for post-secondary education, training and/or employment. We will offer user-friendly information for job seekers to choose what programs and pathways work for them and are likely to result in jobs.

**Goal #7 – *Identify and Maximize Post-Secondary and Employment Opportunities for Area Youth.*** It is imperative to ensure area Youth have easy access to high-quality programs and services that produce the best results for them. Career Pathways services are made available to area youth. Along with our youth program training provider, Youth Services System Inc. (YSS, Inc.) and other core and required partners, we work vigorously to expose area youth to a wide range of available training and educational options in high-demand industries so they will be able to effectively identify their career path(s). Through a mix of meaningful work experiences, mentoring and training programs, we assist area youth in developing measurable skills necessary for successful futures, like, leadership, team-building, communications and problem solving.

**Goal #8. *Meet Performance Accountability Measures Yearly.*** We continue to strive to meet and/or exceed negotiated performance accountability measures each program year for our WIOA funded programs and services. We work closely with core and required partners, training providers, subcontractor(s) and other stakeholders to make them aware of the importance of meeting or exceeding measures through regular and ongoing communications. We regularly track measures by evaluating participants' employment and earning outcomes using the MACC System. Regularly tracking outcomes lets us know when we need to provide technical assistance and to which training provider.

***F) Taking into Account Analysis described in Subparagraph (A) through (D), Describe a Strategy to work with the Entities that carry out the Core Programs to align Resources available to the Local Area, to achieve Strategic Vision and Goals described in Subparagraph (E).***

We work collaboratively with entities of core programs and services to align and access available resources. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are in place with core and required partners that carry out these programs and services. MOUs set the groundwork to facilitate an integrated local workforce development system. Staff from core programs and services are housed, either on a full or part-time basis, at regional American Job Centers creating seamless access. Providers of core programs and services use a combination of co-location and technology strategies to ensure access to integrated services. The following priorities have been developed to carry out core programs, align resources and to achieve vision and goals: Provide effective oversight of funding to ensure greater return on investment; Assist area businesses to remain competitive by hiring and retaining talent essential to meet current and future workforce needs; Ensure that individuals with barriers to employment reach their full career potential by equipping them with the necessary skills and credentials to secure jobs with family-sustaining wages; Develop sector strategies in high-demand industries; and, Develop and maintain a local workforce development system that has a positive impact on the local and regional economy. Our aim is to create a stronger partnership between the NPWDB, Inc. and entities of core programs and build a network of Training Providers that seamlessly meet the needs of job seekers.

The Board of Directors created the following 4 sub-committees that are responsible for ensuring goals of the local workforce development system are being met. They are:

- ***The Executive Committee***: Develops and reviews NPWDB, Inc. budgets; Maintains accurate financial records of the NPWDB, Inc.; Approves expenditures on behalf of the NPWDB, Inc.; Sets policy direction for workforce activities in the region; Initiates corrective action for training providers, sub-grantee(s) and contractors as needed to ensure compliance with the WIOA; Oversees and addresses personnel and management issues at the NPWDB, Inc. and regional American Job Centers; and, Establishes priorities for the solicitation of Requests for Proposals (RFPs).
- ***The One Stop Committee***: Oversees the development and management of the American Job Center system; Ensures local performance accountability measures for the region are being met and/or exceeded by reviewing levels of performance on a regular and ongoing basis during the program year; Ensures that high-quality programs and services are being provided to individuals, especially those with barriers to employment; Solicits and reviews RFPs received from potential one stop operator(s), sub-grantees, contractors; and, Ensures Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs) are in place with core and required partners.
- ***The Youth Committee***: Oversees the successful delivery of programs and services to in-school and out-of-school youth; Solicits and reviews RFPs received from potential providers of youth programs and services; Recommends funding awards for sub-grantee(s) of youth programs and services to the Board of Directors; Ensures youth with disabilities are provided adequate and effective programs and services; and, Reviews levels of performance accountability measures for youth programs and services on a regular basis to ensure they are being met.

- ***The Committee that Serves Special Populations:*** Oversees the delivering of programs and services to individuals with disabilities; Assists in the development of educational and job opportunities for individuals with disabilities to ensure that a wide range of educational and job opportunities and Support Services are available to them; Ensures regional American Job Centers are in compliance with Section 188, and other applicable provisions, of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ensuring individuals with disabilities have programmatic and physical access to services, programs and activities; and, Ensure staff at American Job Centers is properly trained to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

## **SECTION 2: ALIGNMENT OF THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

***A) A Description of the Workforce Development System in the Local Area that identifies the Programs that are included in the System and how the Local Board will work with the Entities carrying out Core and other Workforce Development Programs identified in the State Plan. The Description should also include how the Local Board and the Programs identified plan to align and integrate Services to Customers. The Description should also include Programs of Study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006;***

Some of the principles that guide the local workforce development system are:

- The elimination of the sequence of services. Participants will not be required to pass through multiple layers of services before entering into training. Core and intensive services will be combined into a new category called “career services.” This change will give One Stop Operator and core and required partner staff the flexibility to provide access to training based on assessed need;
- More flexible training delivery options to meet the need of low-income individuals. Eligible training providers will supply training for jobs in high-demand occupations or industry sectors rather than solely relying on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). This increased flexibility will help to better scale innovative and effective models for obtaining industry recognized credentials, including integrated education and training approaches, Career Pathways, industry or sector partnerships and other evidence-based approaches that reflect best practices. Pay for performance contracts may be used as a form of training delivery. These options will help enhance services and avoid duplication of services;
- Improvements in the integration of education and training by creating effective Career Pathways that lead to industry recognized credentials. Work-Based Learning and use technology to accelerate learning and promote college and career success will be accessed;
- The delivery of extensive career and training services to participants;
- Priority for training programs that lead to post-secondary credentials and are aligned with high-demand industry sectors or occupations;
- Focus will be broadened for Adult Education, Literacy and English language services that will include transitions to post-secondary education and employment;
- The use of new models, such as integrated education and training and workforce preparation activities, will be encouraged; and,
- English Literacy and civics education for workforce training will be integrated.

Stakeholders in the local workforce development system are: job seekers; core program providers and their required partners; training providers including those in post-secondary educational; and, employers. Each of these stakeholders plays a distinctive yet integral role in the local workforce development system. They are responsible for maximizing resource sharing and holding entities accountable. Core and required partner programs and services are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational and other human resource programs that creates a seamless “customer-focused” local workforce development system that integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to programs’ services.

Regional American Job Centers house a team of core and required partners that provide a wide array of programs and services to job seekers and employers. An integrated intake and referral process for customers has been implemented by stakeholders. One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff are provided with capacity building and cross training sessions. There is a “cross-system” approach in the local workforce development system that address available employment, education and training opportunities. Collectively, we provide job seekers including those with barriers to employment such as individuals with disabilities, with the skills and credential necessary to secure and advance in employment in high- demand occupations with family-sustaining wages. We enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers. Stakeholders participate in rigorous evaluations of the local workforce development system, thereby allowing for the continuous improvement of American Job Center operations. We identify which strategies work better for the different targeted populations we provide services to. Core programs included in the local workforce development system are:

- **TITLE I – TRAINING PROGRAMS.**

These programs are the primary source for federal workforce development funding that help prepare low-income adults, dislocated workers and youth for employment, and also help them build on their skill levels once they are employed. A number of high-quality programs and services are made available to these target groups at regional American Job Centers, like: Objective assessments; Career pathways services; Case management and eligibility services; Soft skills training; occupational training in high-demand industries; Training that leads to industry-recognized certification; Pre and registered apprenticeship training; OJT Training Program; Basic skills training; Job development and placement services; and, supportive services. Additional services provided to dislocated workers include, but are not limited to relocation assistance and retraining programs. Additional services provided to youth include the acquisition of the required fourteen (14) program elements under WIOA, access to a GED, work experience programs and internships. Typically, training programs are provided on site and electronically.

- **TITLE II ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS.**

The WIOA provided new opportunities for the local workforce development system to work together with Adult Education (AE) and Literacy Programs. By coordinating with the AE system, there is more emphasis placed on serving low-skilled individuals with low levels of literacy skills or those who are English language learners. For individuals who are deficient in basic skills, AE is a critical partner in establishing career pathways services. AE services allow individuals to acquire basic skills and English

language services that are necessary to function in today's society, so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary school. AE services include: Work readiness; Workplace preparation; Career awareness and planning; and, Case management services. AE staff helps individuals address barriers to participation in AE Programs and help individuals use employment and/or postsecondary education or training to prepare and plan for entry into a career pathway. AE staff assists individuals in the preparation of a GED and offers testing for the GED at various sites and times in the region. Individuals are also connected to needed supportive services like: Child care; Transportation, Housing; and, Health care, to name a few. AE services are provided at regional American Job Center(s) by the Mountain State Educational Services Cooperative (MSESC). MSESC assists individuals in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency. They also assist individuals who are a parent or family members to become involved in the educational development of their children that will then lead to sustainable improvement in the economic opportunities of their family and assist individuals in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to post-secondary education and training including through career pathways. MSESC assists English language learners with improving their English reading, writing, speaking comprehension, mathematics skills and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government. MSESC also provides the following services in the region: Distribution of promotional and informational materials for the purpose of outreach; Intake and orientation that will include class locations, contact information and available services, resource and tools; Appropriate services, tools and resources to customers based on need and eligibility; Customized Training to select individuals based on need and eligibility in cooperation and collaboration with area employers, post-secondary institutions and other training providers for employment, continuing education; Upgrading of skills and preparation for a high school equivalency credential; Specialized training programs, like career pathways, that combine workplace training with related technology instruction which may include or result in eligibility for industry standard credentials; supportive services that may include, but are not limited to, career counseling, academic advising, career pathways and track options, job search strategies, employer contacts, post-secondary training and transition options and Internship options; and, A follow-up tracking system for customers served in AE program for the purpose of program reporting and data collection. These programs are provided on site and electronically. Applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy will be reviewed and ultimately approved by the Board of Directors. And, eligible providers will be ones that have demonstrated effectiveness in delivering Adult Education and Literacy activities. Eligible providers include but are not limited to: Local education agencies; Community-based organizations; Institutions of higher education; and, Libraries.

- **TITLE III – WAGNER-PEYSER SERVICES.**

Wagner-Peyser services are provided to individuals by WorkForce West Virginia staff at regional American Job Centers. Wagner-Peyser staff provides employment services to job seekers and employers. Services to job seekers include: Resume writing; Career exploration activities; Job search assistance and placement; Career counseling; Needs and interest assessments; Workshops; and, Case management services. Services for employers include: Developing and posting job orders; and, Referrals of qualified job seekers to job openings. Both job seekers and employers are provided with

labor market data. WorkForce West Virginia staff informs Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants of available partner training opportunities during new claims group meetings as well as in specialized workshops. WorkForce West Virginia staff makes referrals to partner training opportunities manually and through the MACC system. Proper training of staff and effective communications help to expedite participant referrals among partners without duplication of services. Information and data are collected and shared with partners. Program accessibility for those with disabilities is available via an onsite interpreter and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant technology. Proper ADA training is provided to WorkForce West Virginia staff regularly throughout the program year. These services are provided on site and electronically.

- **TITLE IV – VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES.**

Vocational Rehabilitation services help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain or maintain employment. Services are usually provided on an individual basis and are tailored to meet the individual's needs. Counselors assist clients by assessing needs and assisting them in identifying vocational goals and services. An individualized employment plan (IEP) is developed outlining vocational objectives, services, providers and responsibilities. Counseling and guidance diagnostic services, training restoration services assessment, information and referrals job development, and placement, as well as other supportive services like readers or sign language interpreters are available. These services are provided by West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) staff at regional American Job Centers. WVDRS staff strives to align its activities and services with other agencies, including Partners. WVDRS staff works in tandem with the Adult Education (AE) and Literacy Program Provider, referring customers as needed, to ensure individuals with disabilities have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education. These services will be provided on site and electronically.

The NPWDB, Inc. works closely with core partners to align resources in the delivery of core programs through co-location and participant referrals. Alignment of core partner programs includes establishing effective career pathways that combine education, training and supportive services to efficiently prepare individuals for jobs. Taking into account an individuals' needs and career goals, career pathways can help guide them to appropriate programs and services. The NPWDB, Inc. works continually to strengthen connections among core program providers to ensure the cohesive alignment of Title I Adult and Youth Programs and Services, Adult Education (AE) and Literacy programs, Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and Wagner-Peyser Programs in the region. Each core program provider delivers their respective programs and services in accordance with their governing laws. It is through the leveraging of these programs, services and resources that optimum outcomes are achieved within the local workforce development system. Core partner staff is aligned functionally rather than by program. Aligned functions include, but are not limited to: Initial intake and assessment of customers; Skill and career development assessment that includes the provision of career and training services; An understanding of current local labor market supply and demand; and, Business services that include building relationships with employers through career pathways design, sector partnerships and talent pipeline development. This alignment offers job seekers and employers direct access to a broad range of services that can be adapted and leveraged to address an individual's needs. Those seeking assistance through the local workforce development system can access job matching services online or in person. One Stop Operator and core partner staff is available to



provide direct assistance to customers in both group and individual settings. Self-service resources are available in Resource Rooms located at American Job Centers. One Stop Operator and core partner staff distribute information about their respective programs and services to job seekers and employers alike. A Strategic Plan highlighting how core programs and services are coordinated and delivered was developed by One Stop Operator and core/required partner staff.

### **OTHER REQUIRED PARTNERS**

- **PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER SECTION 403(A) (5) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;** These services and activities are introduced to customers at American Job Centers and enable adults to acquire job and educational training skills necessary to secure and maintain long-term employment and self-sufficiency. Types of services provided include training programs, job placement assistance, job search assistance and supportive services. These services are provided by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR).
- **ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED UNDER TITLE V OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT OF 1965;** Services and activities under the Title V Older American's Act of 1965 are made available to customers at American Job Centers to meet the needs of older Individuals. Assessment, job search assistance, counseling and other Supportive Services are provided for individuals, 55 years of age or older, searching for full or part-time employment. These services are provided by the National Council on Aging (NCOA). These activities will be provided on site and electronically.
- **POST-SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE CARL D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL AND APPLIED TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ACT of 2006;** Services include: Initial assessment of skill levels; Aptitude testing; Job placement assistance; Career guidance; Academic counseling services; and, Supportive services. These services are provided by the John D. Rockefeller Center and the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDOE). These activities will be provided on site and electronically.
- **ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED UNDER CHAPTER 2 OF TITLE II OF THE TRADE ACT OF 1974;** A variety of services are provided to eligible workers whose jobs were lost at no fault of their own. Funds may be granted after qualification determination is made. Services include: Eligibility/assessment determination; Job placement assistance; Career guidance; work; and, Supportive services. These services are provided by WorkForce West Virginia and are provided on site and electronically.
- **ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED UNDER CHAPTER 41 OF TITLE 38;** Activities authorized under Chapter 41 of Title 38, U.S.C., Veteran's Employment Programs. Services include: Assessment of skill levels; Referral Services; Occupational Skills Training; Job Placement assistance; Career guidance; Counseling Services; and, Supportive services. These services are provided by WorkForce West Virginia's Jobs for Veterans Program. The NPWDB, Inc. links with WorkForce West Virginia's Jobs for Veterans Program and other local Veteran agencies to provide various workshops for Veterans throughout the program year. These workshops address employment opportunities within high-demand industries among other things. These activities will be provided on site and electronically.
- **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT UNDER THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ACT;** Services and activities expand economic opportunities for low-to-moderate income individuals. Services include: Community revitalization; and, Redevelopment of property and assistance to for-profit businesses to special economic development activities. These funds help prepare eligible individuals for employment opportunities through education and Training

Programs. These services are provided by the recipient(s) of these funds. These activities will be provided electronically.

- **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT;** Services enable adults to acquire the job skills necessary to secure employment in today's world of work. Services provided by the recipient(s) of these funds include: Training Programs; Job placement assistance; and, Supportive services. These activities will be provided electronically.
- **PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION LAWS; AND,** Individuals have access to, and file a claim for, unemployment compensation. Services include: Assessment services; Job placement assistance; Job referral assistance; and, Career guidance and counseling. These services are provided by WorkForce West Virginia. Effective and regular communications is the key to strengthening ties between regional American Job Centers and Unemployment Insurance Programs. These activities will be provided on site and electronically.
- **PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER SECTION 212 OF THE SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007.** Programs enable ex-offenders and individuals from within the criminal justice system to acquire the job and training skills necessary to secure long-term employment. Services include: Work readiness skills training; Training Programs; Job placement assistance; and Supportive services. These services are provided by WorkForce West Virginia. Activities will be provided on site and electronically.

WIOA also authorizes programs for specific vulnerable populations, including the Job Corps, YouthBuild, Indian and Native Americans and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs. Other "optional" Partners may include: Provider(s) of Title IV of the Social Security Act Programs; Provider(s) of Programs authorized under Section 6(d)(4) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 and Work Programs authorized under Section 6 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977; Provider(s) of Programs authorized under the National and Community Service Act of 1990; and, Other appropriate federal, state, or local programs, including programs in the private sector.

***B) A Description of how the Local Board working with the Entities identified in A) will expand access to Employment, Training, Education and Supportive Services for eligible Individuals, particularly eligible Individuals with Barriers to Employment, including how the Local Board will facilitate the Development of Career Pathways and Co-Enrollment, as appropriate, and improve access to Activities leading to a Recognized Post-Secondary Credential including a Credential that is an Industry Recognized Certificate or Certification, Portable and Stackable;***

Efforts will be taken to further expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services by: Increasing focus on serving low-income adults and youth who have limited skills, lack work experience and face other barriers that stand in the way of economic success; Regularly expanding education and training opportunities; Helping eligible adults and youth "earn while they learn" through available supportive services. Available work-based training opportunities will give underprepared adults and youth the chance to earn income while also receiving training and developing essential skills that are best learned on the job. Training is tied to high-demand occupations (through encouraging employers and industry sectors to define needed skills); and, Making available effective employment-based activities. Examples of available supportive services include, but are not limited to: Intensive case management services; Rehabilitation services; Job coaching; and, In-depth assessment services that include disability

screening, functional needs assessment and vocation assessment which are made available by appropriate core and/or required partners. Far too often, educational programs at post-secondary institutions lag behind labor's needs. Subsequently, curriculum in high-demand programs of study is not always aligned with requirements of industry-based skills certifications that ensure graduates have the knowledge and skills required for jobs in today's workforce. With industry-based skills certifications, individuals would be able to validate the talent and skill levels they bring to the job. Graduates will increase their career opportunities and earning potentials. Transferable skills will be enhanced. And, employers will have a level of certainty about the skill level of an individual before hiring them; thereby reducing training costs and turnover, as well as enhancing workplace safety. The employer will witness increased productivity and an improved quality of his/her workforce. Industry-based skills certifications are beneficial to all. Individuals need to be provided with the opportunity to both learn and earn by acquiring shorter term credentials with labor market value even as they continue to build on these to access more advance jobs and higher wages. Industry-based skills certifications can validate an individual's knowledge and skills as compared to industry standards because it provides an objective assessment of skill level. Stackable industry-based skills certifications focus on basic academic and workplace skills. There needs to be a collaborative and shared responsibility among all stakeholders, especially those who are educational and training institutions. Implementing industry-related skills certification involves multiple steps that may take anywhere from several months to a few years. Below are some of the steps already taken, to be taken, to ensure successful implementation:

- **Identify State/Regional Economic Demands.** Use state and regional economic data to guide decision-making. Identify potential "high growth" industries, projected worker demands and high-demand occupations;
- **Identify Available Resources.** Consider all resources and expertise already available in the region that would support industry-related skills certification;
- **Engage Industry Leaders.** Build a pool of certified workers for area employers. Engage businesses and labor associations;
- **Recruit Community Support.** Involve not only core and required partners, but also community-based agencies, Chambers of Commerce, state and local leaders, business and labor organizations, etc. in the decision-making process;
- **Align Programs to Certification Requirements.** Encourage area colleges and schools to analyze existing curriculum against the needs of targeted industry-related skills certifications. Colleges and schools need to identify gaps in existing curriculum then develop new curriculum to fill gaps;
- **Build Partnerships to Support Efforts.** Identify core and required partners that can refer potential eligible individuals to AE and Community and Technical Schools. Collaborate with secondary, community and 4-year colleges and schools to develop necessary agreements to maximize transfers of course credits. Aggressively encourage STEM skills training (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) be implemented into career technical curriculum. Recruit core and required partners to assist with job placement. Meet regularly with core and required partners and educational and training institutions to share progress and best practices;
- **Design Effective Career Pathways Services based on high-demand occupations.** Develop career pathways services that connect levels of education, training, support services and credentials in a way that optimizes the progress and success of individuals with varying levels of abilities and needs. Objective assessments will be completed for youth for the purpose of identifying appropriate

services and career pathways. AE activities will be aligned with other available core programs in the region, including the development and delivery of career pathways. The career pathways system encompasses education and training strategies that go from the acquisition of skills and credentials to the advancement of higher levels of employment within high-demand sectors and industries. A strong career pathways system will provide individuals most at risk of dropping out-of-school or failing to graduate college with opportunities they need to obtain and build upon credentials. Career pathways services are linked to the State's ETPL to help job seekers understand viable options available to them and how training can be leveraged for success. Career pathways services have multiple on/off entrances and exits and is flexible so individuals can achieve goals with minimal disruption to their employment histories;

- ***Incorporate Real-World Learning Experiences.*** Work closely with employers to incorporate as many real-world experiences as possible into the program and curriculum design, like, job shadowing, Internships, Pre-Apprenticeship opportunities; and,
- ***Measure Performance.*** Identify performance accountability measures to serve as benchmarks for measuring progress. Collect participant data on a regular basis to assess actual vs. planned progress.

The NPWDB, Inc. places strong importance on serving individuals with barriers to employment. The NPWDB, Inc. works to leverage partnerships to expand access to programs and services and explore co-enrollment for this target group. The NPWDB, Inc. works with core and required partners to identify individuals who are considered "priority" at the point of entry at regional American Job Centers. Individuals identified with barriers to employment receive programs and services they need to be successful in the labor force. Planning and accountability procedures are aligned across the NPWDB, Inc., core and required partner programs and services to support a more unified approach to serving this target group. The NPWDB, Inc. adheres to state and local eligibility policies to identify individuals with barriers to employment.

Individuals with barriers to employment often need a comprehensive set of support that involves many services that help them ultimately earn secondary and post-secondary credentials and then transition into the labor force. So, to encourage more eligible individuals to enter in non-traditional occupations, One Stop Operator staff reviews the region's most current labor market data with them. Labor market data details high-demand industry occupations, and non-traditional high-demand occupations. Job Center staff carefully interprets labor market data to eligible individuals that includes average earnings per occupation, the type(s) and length(s) of training and degree/certification required for employment. Labor market data is used to inform, prepare and educate individuals on jobs and training in high-demand. One Stop Operator staff also reviews the region's long-term -and short-term ETPL of occupations. The NPWDB, Inc. encourages the facilitation of career pathways services and co-enrollment in a core program(s), as appropriate, in an effort to improve access to activities that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. So, if necessary and appropriate, the NPWDB, Inc. may arrange for an individual to be co-enrolled in career pathways services and a core program(s). Job seekers who are without a high school diploma, a GED or are basic skills deficient will be referred to the provider(s) of Title II Services for additional skills preparation before participating in Occupational Skills Training. Recognizing that the Title III Wager-Peyser program represent 1 of main entry points to the local workforce development system for a large share of job seekers, workshops may be offered that include a discussion of available Title I Services. The NPWDB, Inc. works

closely with core and required partner staff to identify models for co-enrollment for adults and youth with disabilities to ensure this target group is provided with a series of vigorous career services. The NPWDB, Inc., core and required partners will explore outside partnerships with local social service agencies to provide additional supportive services necessary for this target group while they work on their job readiness skills.

***C) A Description of the Steps taken by the Local Board to engage entities in A) in the Formulation of its Local Plan;***

The NPWDB, Inc. recognizes the value and importance of engaging the public and key stakeholders in the development of the Local Plan. Input is critical to ensuring that the Local Plan is a comprehensive document that works for every organization within the local workforce development system that serves job seekers and area employers. During the preparation of the Local Plan, NPWDB, Inc. staff requests input/comments from core and required partners and other key stakeholders, like: Area employers; Training providers; Educational and training institutions; Labor organizations; and, Economic development organizations. Core and required partners, in particular, assisted in preparing and drafting the Local Plan. Feedback received about the Local Plan is first reviewed by NPWDB, Inc. staff. NPWDB, Inc. staff then compiles feedback and presents it to the Board of Director's One Stop Committee for review and discussion. One Stop Committee members will approve that any feedback received be included in the Local Plan in consideration of WIOA rules and regulations. The One Stop Committee then makes recommendations for modification(s) to the Local Plan to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has final authority on all modifications made to the Local Plan based on feedback received. Modifications are then included in the final version of the Local Plan. All feedback received is maintained at the NPWDB, Inc. Office.

***D) A Description of the Strategies and Services that will be used in the Local Area;***

***1. To Facilitate Engagement of Businesses, including Small Businesses and Businesses in High-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations, in Workforce Development Programs.***

Coordinating with businesses, especially small businesses and businesses in high-demand industries, is obviously crucial to improving local economic conditions. Our priority is to increase training and education for job seekers, including those with barriers to employment, to meet the needs of employers, existing and emerging, small, mid-size or large, in high-demand industries. To do this, it is imperative we stay informed of current trends in employment including changes in education and training requirements. Through regular meetings and frequent communications among all stakeholders, we are kept informed of emerging careers and occupations through the sharing of current labor market data. It is important to ensure workforce development activities are meeting the needs of employers by facilitating effective employer utilization of the local workforce development system. The region has a Business Services Team (BST) in place that focuses on encouraging and promoting greater employer involvement at regional American Job Centers. There are 52 members of the BST that represent core and required partnering agencies, area educational institutions, local economic development groups, area Chambers of Commerce, local vocational and technical institutions, family resource networks and area businesses. Each member is cross-trained in understanding each other's services. One of the goals of the BST is to ensure

effective services are being provided to businesses within high-demand industry sectors. To facilitate engagement with businesses, the BST initiates outreach efforts to them to gain a better understanding of workforce needs and challenges, and establish industry sector partnerships to develop strategies and solutions to address any challenges that exist within a particular high-demand industry. AE, a core partner, plays an active role in helping provide career training to individuals who are entering the workforce. AE helps identify available outside resources for employers and coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and employers. One of the main objectives of the BST is to recruit businesses from high-demand industries, like, healthcare, construction, retail, utilities, manufacturing and professional and technical services to tap into American Job Center job seeker pools that will consist of individuals who have acquired the sought after occupational skills training. To meet the demands of employers, it is the goal of the BST to ensure job seekers are job-ready. The purpose of the BST is to “help businesses grow and create jobs by bringing a strategic and collaborative approach to solving their workforce issues and expanding their opportunities.” There will be 5 steps involved in the BST process. They are: Step 1: Target and prioritize businesses for outreach; Step 2: Create an effective interview process, whereby data/information will be provided directly by the employer; Step 3: Develop a responsive proposal with member input; Step 4: Create a plan of service for the employer; and, Step 5: Continually seek ways to assist businesses as they deal with changing workforce conditions over time.

One Stop Operator and WorkForce West Virginia staff make regular onsite visits to employer sites as a way to introduce American Job Center programs and services to them and periodically speak at area business events and functions in the region. American Job Centers coordinate with WorkForce West Virginia on executing employer job orders. One Stop Operator and WorkForce West Virginia staff encourage area employers to utilize space at American Job Centers for hiring, interviewing and screening of applicants. WorkForce West Virginia staff offers office space to business representatives for on-site job fairs. One Stop Operator staff coordinates and/or participates in in-state and out-of-state job fairs and workshops. One Stop Operator staff regularly sends mailings and e-mailings to businesses that describe available American Job Center programs and services. Employers can have access to the statewide MACC system to do self-postings of job openings and view job seeker searches. They can access the NPWDB, Inc.’s website which details available employer programs and services.

Local WorkForce West Virginia staff shares event notices so job seekers in other regions around the State are made aware of various work event happenings in the region in case they are willing to relocate. They also share job orders with other WorkForce West Virginia Offices for the same reasons. Labor market information that includes specific high-demand data that is relevant at the time is also provided to employers upon request. The NPWDB, Inc., core or required partner staff serve on the following business committees and groups in the region: Regional Economic Development Partnership (REDP); Economic Development Group of Brooke and Hancock counties; Local Chambers of Commerce; and, Other employer-specific organizations and public-private partnerships. These partnerships help us identify and address key workforce challenges. The NPWDB, Inc. values businesses as key customers in the local workforce development system and works to serve them effectively and efficiently through many business-driven programs. Employers need access to qualified individuals and assistance with recruitment, retention and upgrading skills of their existing workforce. The NPWDB, Inc. and members of its BST work to customize services for employers to meet their demands/needs at any given time. Career pathway services

developed for job seekers are employer-driven and consist of required skills and credentials needed for high-demand occupations. The NPWDB, Inc. facilitates employer connections to qualified, potential hires. The NPWDB, Inc. increases public awareness among the business community of American Job Center, core and required partner programs and services to employers. Job readiness services, including but not limited to: Career counseling; Workshops; and, Assessment are provided to potential hires, if needed. Access to American Job Center job seeker pools, recruitment and job matching provide employers with the ability to reach a new set of qualified individuals at a cost savings. Core partners, like Adult Education (AE) and the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS), provide services that assist job seekers, including those with disabilities, with job development and placement efforts that meet employer needs. Collaboration among partners aims to increase awareness among employers about resources and services available through the local workforce development system. After engaging employers and discussing their workforce needs, the NPWDB, Inc. and core and required partners provide appropriate solutions that involve the coordination and delivery of work-based training programs and services, like the OJT Program, Customized Training Program and Incumbent Worker Training Program, to name a few. Our goals are three-fold: 1) To improve an employer's workforce by tapping into our pool of talented job seekers; 2) To decrease hiring/screening costs; and, 3) To increase the retention of workers.

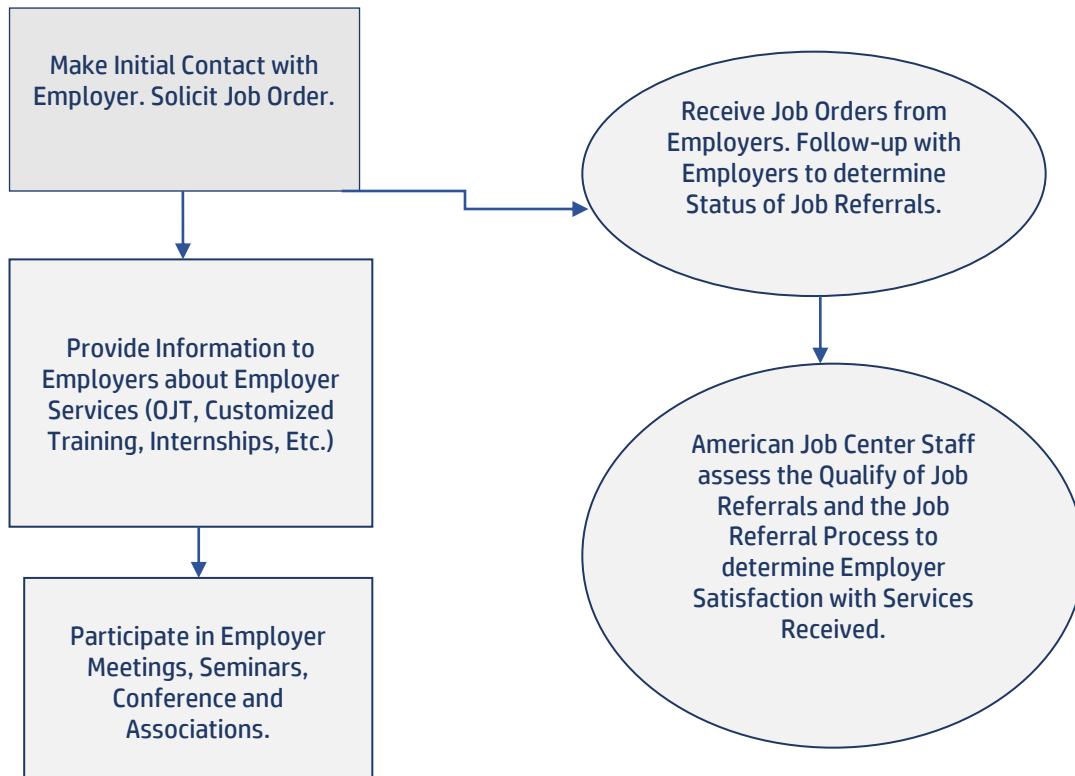
Along with local workforce development boards from the states of PA, Ohio and WV, the NPWDB, Inc. is a member of the Tristate Energy and Advanced Manufacturing (T.E.A.M.) Consortium. The T.E.A.M. Consortium was formed to respond to the need for a properly trained workforce for these industries. T.E.A.M. brings together partners from industry, higher education, and workforce and economic development to build clear and accessible pathways to energy and manufacturing jobs in the region. T.E.A.M. partners have committed to raising awareness about high-demand jobs, preparing workers with the knowledge and skills to be successful, and connecting people to work-based learning and career opportunities.

## *2. To Support a Local Workforce Development System that meets the Needs of Businesses.*

The NPWDB, Inc. values businesses as key customers in the local workforce development system and works to serve them effectively and efficiently through many business-driven programs. Employers need access to qualified individuals and assistance with recruitment, retention and upgrading skills of their existing workforce. The NPWDB, Inc. and members of its BST work to customize services for employers to meet their demands at any given time. Career pathways services developed for job seekers are employer-driven and consist of required skills and credentials needed for "high demand" occupations. One Stop Operator staff facilitates employer connections to qualified, potential hires. The NPWDB, Inc. increases public awareness among the business community of available programs and services to employers. Job readiness services, like, career counseling, workshops and assessment are provided to potential hires. There is access to American Job Center job seeker pools, recruitment and job matching that provide employers with the ability to reach a new set of qualified individuals at a cost savings. Collaboration among partners aims to increase awareness among employers about resources and services available through the local workforce development system. After engaging employers and discussing their workforce needs, One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff provide appropriate solutions that involve the coordination and delivery of work-based training programs and services, like the OJT Program Customized Training Program

and Incumbent Worker Training Program. Our goals are 3-fold: 1) To improve an employer’s workforce by tapping into our pool of talented job seekers; 2) To decrease hiring/screening costs; and, 3) To increase the retention of workers.

**Flow Chart for Employer Services**



***3. To Better coordinate Workforce Development Programs and Economic Development Partners and Programs.***

Partnerships with local economic development groups are in place and include frequent interactions. The NPWDB, Inc. works closely with these groups at the city, county and state levels. The NPWDB, Inc. maintains strong linkages with regional economic development groups like, the REDP, the Hancock-Brooke Business Development Corporation and the Wetzel and Tyler Counties Economic Development Group. A member of the REDP serves on the Board of Directors and provides valuable insight of the economic climate in the region. Collaboration with these groups ensures economic development partners are well-informed of the capability of the local workforce development system to providing employer services, like, OJT, Customized Training and Incumbent Worker Training, and can, in turn, help us effectively market them to the business community. NPWDB, Inc. staff is regularly invited to participate in meetings with area employers at the request of our economic development partners. Employer services and workforce and training issues are discussed during these meetings.

***4. To Strengthen Linkages between the American Job Center Delivery System and Unemployment Insurance Programs.***

Information about Unemployment Insurance (UI) Programs is available at American Job Centers through



Workforce West Virginia staff. The UI Program uses a number of strategies to align and integrate programs and services at American Job Centers, like: Information about all programs and initiatives are presented by UI Program staff during UI workshops; Referrals are made from one core and/or required partner to another; and, Follow-up on participant referrals outcomes is shared among Partners. The NPWDB, Inc. conducts targeted outreach efforts throughout the program year to ensure UI recipients are aware of training programs and services available at American Job Centers.

***E) A Description regarding the Implementation of Apprenticeship, Incumbent Worker Training Programs, On-The-Job Training Programs, Customized Training Programs, Industry and Sector Strategies, Integrated Education and Training, Career Pathways Initiatives, Utilization of effective Business Intermediaries and other Business Services and Strategies, designed to meet the needs of Businesses in support of the Strategy described in Section I;***

Apprenticeships are industry-driven models that combine on-the-job learning with job related instruction as an “earn and learn” model. Apprentices are employed and earn wages from the first day on-the-job. According to Apprenticeship USA, there are currently more than one thousand (1,000) occupations, including careers in welding, transportation and energy in which Apprenticeships are used to meet business needs for qualified workers. Using apprenticeships as work strategies contribute to higher performance outcomes in employment, retention, earnings and credential attainment. Since 2018, the NPWDB, Inc. has worked to ensure WIOA funding is directed towards the development of apprenticeships because we recognize that apprenticeships are extremely effective experiences that allow individuals to gain hands-on experience in building the skills that employers need/require. To date, the NPWDB, Inc. has funded about one hundred and eighty-six (186) individuals who are enrolled in the following Apprenticeship Programs: Roofers; Sheet Metal; Ironworkers; Bricklayers; Laborers; Painters; Plumbers/Pipefitters; Carpenters; Firefighters; Electricians; and, Insulators Heating & Frost. Along with the rise of new industries in the region comes a need to properly educate and train individuals seeking employment within these industries. The NPWDB, Inc. supports the development of apprenticeships in non-traditional industries. Incumbent Worker Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or a group of employers in high-demand industries to retain skilled workers or avert the need to lay off employees by assisting workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment. Incumbent Worker Training is conducted with a commitment by the employer to regain or avert lay-offs of the workers trained. Incumbent Worker Training funding is only considered for employers located in the region. The training period can last no more than 6 months. Incumbent Worker Training may be used for upskilling apprentices who already have established working/training relationships with the Registered Apprenticeship Program. The participating employer(s) is required to pay the non-federal share of the costs of providing training to their Incumbent Workers in accordance with a sliding reimbursement scale. The amounts of reimbursable hours to a participating employer(s) will depend on the total number of existing employees the employer has. In the fall of 2023, a group of local workforce development boards from PA, Ohio and WV (Region 5 - The Northern Panhandle region and Region 6 - The Morgantown/Fairmont region) began collaborating on an application for funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission's ARISE initiative. Our group is called "Tri-State Apprenticeship Consortium" and our goal is to find a way to make apprenticeships more appealing to employers. The apprenticeship registration process can be difficult to navigate and time-consuming for many employers. So, local workforce development boards from the states of PA, Ohio and WV plan on

working together to identify ways to remove these barriers and get more employers involved with registered apprenticeship programs. The concept paper submitted by the Consortium was recently approved in March, 2024 and we are now advancing to the next stage of the application process.

The NPWDB, Inc. engages area employers from high-demand industry sectors to participate in its OJT program. OJT opportunities benefit employers by helping them meet their hiring and skill needs. Occupational training is provided by an employer to an OJT participant in exchange for reimbursement to cover the extraordinary cost of providing training and supervision related to the training. OJT reimbursement is limited in duration depending on the occupation the new hire is being trained for, but will not, in any circumstance, exceed 6 months or one thousand forty (1,040) hours whichever comes first. Employer reimbursement occurs in accordance with the region's reimbursement sliding scale. The amount of reimbursable hours to a participating employer will depend on the total number of existing employees the employer has. An OJT contractual agreement can be written with a Registered Apprenticeship Program or a participating employer in a Registered Apprenticeship Program for the OJT portion of the Registered Apprenticeship Program. Depending on the length of the Registered Apprenticeships and available funding, WIOA funds may cover some or all of the Registered Apprenticeship Training. Through participation on the OJT program, an employer may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Customized Training is offered to an employer or group of employers to introduce workers or potential workers, including those with disabilities: To new technologies or new production or service procedures; To upgrading employee skills for new jobs; or, for other appropriate workforce development purposes in accordance with the WIOA. Customized Training contracts will be limited to the period of time required for an individual to reach a competency level required in the occupation for which the individual is being trained. However, under no circumstances will Customized Training exceed 30-days. Customized Training may be offered to no less than a total of 10 eligible participants. The employer pays for no less than 50% of total training costs. These services are provided to an employer or a group of employers when: Employees are not earning a self-sufficient wage; The training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers; When there is a commitment by the employer(s) to employ individuals upon successful completion of the training; If the employer(s) pays for a significant cost of training of total training costs; or, If the employer(s) is not delinquent in unemployment insurance or worker's compensation tax, penalties or interest. Through participation in Customized Training, an employer may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. In order to advance efforts of creating industry sector initiatives in the region, the NPWDB, Inc. and core and required partners will use focus groups, business panels and surveys to identify desired skills and to solicit input into programming. We need to work to develop solutions around the hiring needs of employers while focusing on the hard-to-fill jobs that struggle with retention. We regularly communicate with employers to better understand their challenges and needs. We bring together education and Training Providers to assess existing training options. Our goal is to determine if the types of training being provided are relevant to the skills needed in the workplace. We need to design and implement practices that engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information to develop industry and sector strategies. The NPWDB, Inc. will have a renewed focus on work-based learning. Integrated education and training may be offered by a core partner, like AE, or in partnership with other core programs. Regardless, we will need to rely on employer input through sector partnerships to ensure that integrated education and training programs are aligned with area employers' skill needs. Integrated education and training may include: Basic skills upgrading, Occupational Skills Training; and, Supportive

Services that will help individuals earn certifications in high-demand occupations. Career pathways will align education, training, employment and Supportive Services, as well as core academic, technical and employability skills that are needed by adults and youth, especially those with general workforce preparation and training for a specific high-demand occupation. The NPWDB, Inc. may include education offered concurrently with and in the same context as continue to work to increase partnerships with area employers to better serve their needs through cooperative strategies with core and required partners. In partnership with AE and Career & Technical Education Programs, the NPWDB, Inc. can integrate technical training and basic skills education that will lead to industry-recognized credentials and opportunities to continue on a career pathway. One Stop Operator and core and required partners will work to develop or expand work experiences, Internships and employment opportunities for adults and youth, especially those with barriers to employment. In addition to providing ITAs, the NPWDB, Inc. provides OJT Training and work-based learning opportunities and/or blend OJT Training and Internships with ITAs. Under the guidance of AE, core and required partners will implement career pathways initiatives and identify opportunities to expand access to existing career pathways as well as unmet skill needs of employers that may be addressed through the development of new career pathways programs or modification of existing career pathways. The delivery of career pathways will be diverse depending if an individual is low-skilled with multiple barriers to employment or not. Career pathways prepare individuals to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or post-secondary education options including apprenticeships. Career pathways will incorporate sector strategy principles by engaging employers to increase relevance and labor market value of participant skills and credentials which in turn improve a participant's employment prospects. The NPWDB, Inc. will cohesively combine public-private partnerships, resources and funding, policies, data and shared performance measures to successfully develop high-quality, sustainable career pathways. BST members maintain ongoing relations with area employers so they can provide them with access to a talent pipeline, especially for industry sectors experiencing a shortage of talent. The BST supports sector strategies by acting as a "business intermediary" between core and required partners and area employers within targeted high-demand sectors. This arrangement allows the leveraging of resources to the greatest extent possible and provides a more robust menu of work-based learning opportunities to area businesses. The BST conducts informational session where businesses can learn of grants, tax credits and other services available to them to help them become more competitive. The NPWDB, Inc. collaborates with other business intermediaries, like, local Chambers of Commerce, business development groups and area staffing service agencies. One Stop Operator staff assists these groups by offering access to quality employment opportunities to customers and when they are working with businesses that have good temp-to-hire ratios. Working relationships with business intermediaries are evaluated in terms of employee wages and retention. The goal is to streamline local workforce development efforts while addressing employers' needs.

***F) A Description of how the Local Board will coordinate Workforce Development Activities carried out in the Local Area with Economic Development Activities carried out in the Local Area in which the Local Area, or Planning Region, is located and promote Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services;***

One of the Board of Directors priorities is to link local workforce development activities with economic development strategies. Economic development and business representatives serve on the Board of Directors and on the BST. To ensure the local workforce development system is meeting the needs of employers, resources are leveraged, information is shared, outreach efforts are coordinated and business

events are often co-hosted. By understanding the needs of employers, the local workforce development system can better prepare individuals to acquire the skills they need to satisfy employer recruitment requirements.

The NPWDB, Inc. recognizes and supports entrepreneurship as a viable opportunity for job seekers, especially those with barriers to employment. If a job seeker indicates an interest in starting a small business, the job seeker will be directed to the West Virginia Small Business Development Center located on the campus of West Virginia Northern Community College (WVNCC) in Wheeling for information and guidance. Small businesses are the cornerstone of economic growth in the region. With assistance from a business coach, a job seeker can receive expert coaching and needed services at every stage, including market identification, business plan development, financial statement preparation and analysis, case flow preparation and analysis and identification of funding sources. In 2013, West Liberty University in partnership with the Wheeling Academy of Law and Science, established a business incubator in the City of Wheeling to create economic growth and encourage businesses to mature and remain in the region. The incubator assists with technology and office needs, business planning, identifying funding sources and locating clients. Microenterprise services are closely related to entrepreneurial services and may include training in business skills and best practices, tax and financial planning and credit building. Entrepreneurs and microenterprise services generally begin with only a couple of individuals. The BST works closely with small businesses and microenterprises to support the growth and development of the workforce including offering entrepreneurial and microenterprise workshops. The Board of Directors strongly supports small Veteran-owned businesses.

***G) A Description of how the Local Board will leverage and coordinate Supportive Services in the Delivery of Workforce Development Activities carried out in the Local Area. Specifically, the Local Plan should address how the Local Board will work with Local Management Boards and other Providers to deliver Supportive Services to Job Seekers;***

The NPWDB, Inc. recognizes the need and value of supportive services in helping economically disadvantaged adult and youth customers, including those with disabilities, overcome barriers and successfully complete training and/or enter family-sustaining employment. The NPWDB, Inc., and the network of core and required partners and training providers work to ensure appropriate and necessary supportive services are made available in the region. Partners are aware of the region's Supportive Service Policy and vice versa through cross-training efforts and ongoing communications. It is the responsibility of One Stop Operator, core and required partner and training provider staff to inform eligible individuals of what types of supportive services are available to them upon arrival at American Job Centers. Supportive services are made available to eligible individuals during their participation in any WIOA funded training activity. Supportive services are paid with WIOA funds, after documentation shows that a referral for like services was first made to access other potential funding sources and none were available or suitable. Documentation about the availability of supportive services in the area, as well as referrals made to a training activity, are maintained in participant files. Supportive services include, but are not limited to: transportation, child care, dependent care, housing and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities under the WIOA.

***H) A Description of how the Local Board intends to provide a great Business Voice in the Delivery of***

***Workforce Development Activities carried out in the Local Area. The Description should include how the Local Board will engage Businesses on Decisions regarding the Type and Context of Training Activities;***

The Board of Directors oversees and sets priorities for training in the region. To implement a strong “demand-driven” approach to training development, the Board of Directors uses sector-based training to determine skills and occupational training needs of high-demand industries. When needed, area educational and training institutions are asked to initiate alignment of curriculum with industry-related skills certification requirements. Partnerships are developed with employers in high-demand industries so they can provide input on skill levels required, including soft skills. Then, based on this input, educational and training institutions can develop and implement industry-related skill certifications into its regular curriculum. Educational and training institutions will most likely be at different levels of readiness with regard to implementing industry-related skills certifications. There are many vocational skills training opportunities being provided in the region. However, there is a need for more individualized training programs to address the skill development/advancement of incumbent workers. The Career and Technical Education system works to meet the needs of employers, education and training institutions, students and workers seeking to acquire education and training credentials that are both portable and stackable. The NPWDB, Inc. continues to forge stronger partnerships with the local educational and training community and area employers so we can continue to fund successful and relevant training programs for job seekers. Success depends on our ability to encourage key stakeholders to get involved.

***I) A Description of how the Local Board will promote and cultivate Industry-Led Partnerships in the Delivery of Workforce Training Opportunities;***

Industry-led partnerships are coupled with career pathways services and play an integral part of the Board of Director’s strategic plan for the region. The local workforce development system allows customers to receive Career Pathway Services at any stage. Industry-led partnerships inform and drive the delivery of Career Pathways and affect decision-making regarding types of training and skills offered in the region. Industry-led partnerships are developed to connect with the regional economic outlook at any given time. The needs of industry are tied to workforce projects that include training, recruitment industry-sector partnerships, Career Pathways development and enhancement of training options. The NPWDB, Inc. continues to meet with key business organizations in the region, like, local Chambers of Commerce, business groups and associations and economic development entities to engage or increase collaboration with industry sectors. Making up-to-date labor market data accessible assist post-secondary education and training programs to better align with labor market demand and allow them to more quickly adapt to changes in the labor market. The NPWDB, Inc. works to improve job seeker and employer matching because the needs of employers sometimes are disconnected from the qualifications of job seekers. Employers continue to struggle to find the talent they need and jobs seekers cannot find the jobs they want. So, we will continue to make available training programs and services that match needed skills with available jobs.

***J) A Description of the Role, if any, of Local Faith or Community-Based Organizations in the Local Workforce Development System.***

Area faith and community-based organizations provide essential resources and services that individuals can easily tap into. Some examples of faith and community-based organizations customers can be referred to

include: CHANGE, Inc. which provides transportation, housing assistance and weatherization to low-income individuals, supportive services to veterans and a summer food program for youth; Catholic Community Charities which provides food assistance, child care assistance, free work attire and mentoring services to needy adults and youth; The YWCA which provides free work attire to economically disadvantaged women; The Greater Wheeling Coalition for the Homeless which provides housing assistance and other needed supportive services to homeless individuals; and, a number of area churches that provide meals and attire to those in need. All of these organizations and groups regularly refer clients to regional American Job Centers for employment and training opportunities. Representatives of faith and community-based organizations participate in regular One Stop Operator and Partner meetings and cross-training sessions at American Job Centers. NPWDB, Inc. staff serves as board members on some of the faith and community-based organizations in the area. Upon request, faith and community-based organizations are able to be placed on the NPWDB, Inc.'s Request for Proposals (RFPs) mailing list.

### **SECTION 3: AMERICAN JOB CENTER DELIVERY SYSTEM**

#### ***A). List the American Job Centers in your Local Area, including Addresses and Phone Numbers. Indicate the One Stop Operator for each Site and whether it is a Comprehensive or Satellite Center;***

Eligible individuals, especially those with barriers to employment, are provided with the opportunity to actively participate in American Job Center activities, programs and services, as needed. Assistive technology is made available to meet the anticipated wide range of customer needs. If necessary, unique and individualized services are made available to eligible individuals. To make American Job Center services as accessible as possible for individuals, the NPWDB, Inc. has 2 comprehensive, full-service American Job Centers and 1 affiliate American Job Center in the region:

Wheeling American Job Center (Comprehensive Site)  
1275 Warwood Avenue  
Wheeling, WV  
Ohio County  
304-232-6280

Weirton American Job Center (Comprehensive Site)  
WV State Building Complex  
200 Municipal Plaza  
Suite 350  
Weirton, WV  
Brooke County  
304-723-5337

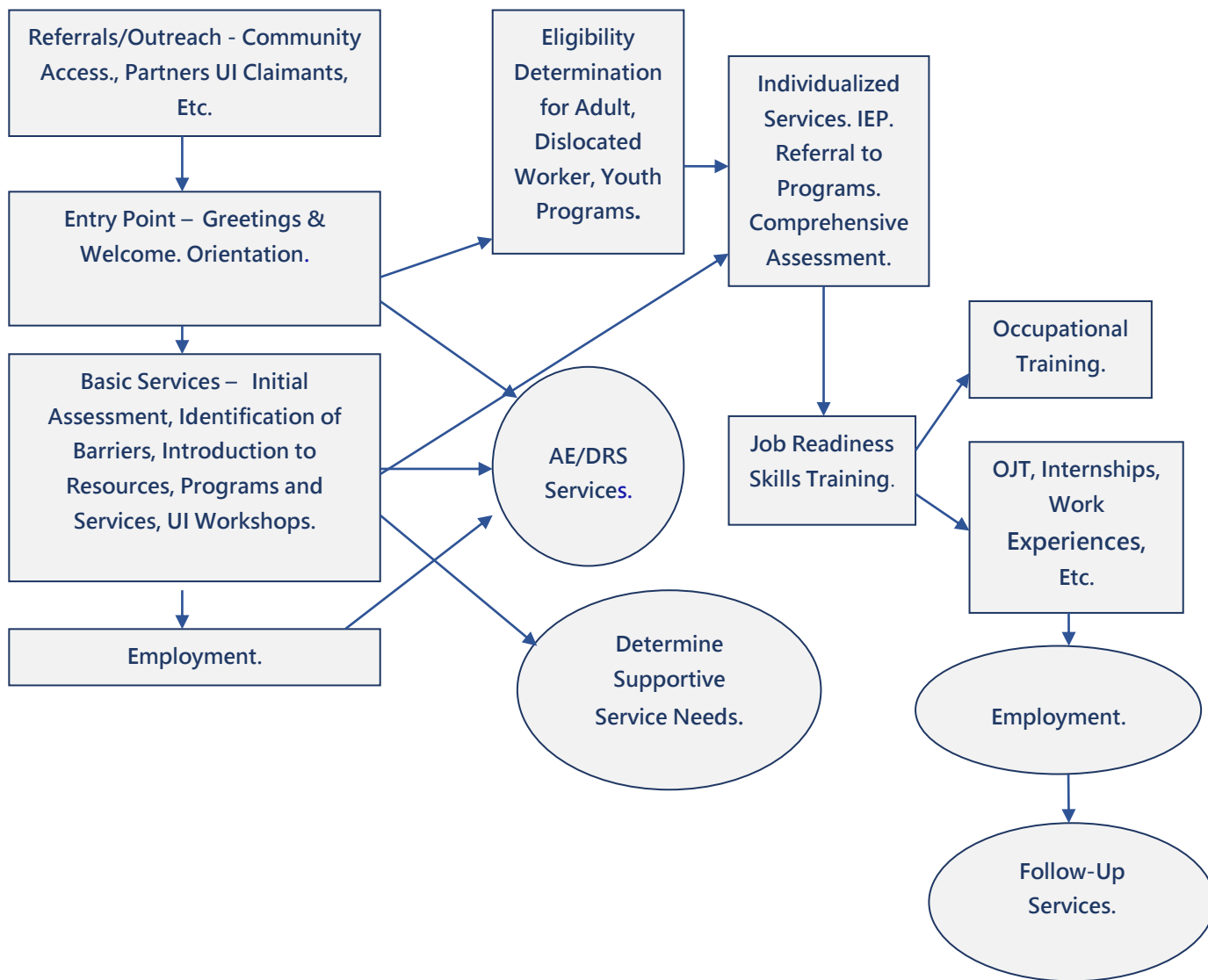
American Job Center (Affiliate Site)  
425 South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Room 21 B)  
Paden City, WV  
Wetzel County

Selection of American Job Center sites were based on the following criteria: ADA accessibility (handicap accessibility), easy access, spacious rooms/offices, available public transportation, ample free parking and for customer convenience/accessibility reasons, to name a few. American Job Center sites offer inviting environments to job seekers and employers.

Each regional American Job Center offers basic skills computer training to interested individuals. One Stop Operator staff provides regular job skills/career development workshops to Lee Day Report Center clients. American Job Center programs and services are detailed on iPads provided to inmates at the Northern Regional Jail. One Stop Operator staff assist these individuals with training and/or employment once they are released and become contributing members of their local communities once again. One Stop Operator staff developed a handbook that details core and required partners' programs and services, along with other local workforce and community partner programs that are available in the region. Each One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff are provided with a copy of this Handbook to better assist customers with their needs. In the fall of 2023, the NPWDB, Inc. implemented a pilot electronic participant referral system in the region called the "Services, Training and Referrals (S.T.A.R.) System." Twelve Kiosks/Standards were placed at partner and social service agency's worksite whereby individuals/customers can electronically access programs, services and resources that are available within the local workforce development system and in the area in general.

***B) Customer Flow System to describe the Customer Flow Process used in the Local Area. This Description should include Eligibility, Assessment, Individual Training Plans and Case Management;***

### Flow Chart for Customers



The local workforce development system continually strives to expand access to employment, training and educational opportunities and supportive services for eligible individuals. The system that is in place is committed to first addressing the needs of individual customers, then, specializing services depending on individual need. There is no wrong door to enter the local workforce development system. In fact, there are multiple entry points to services at American Job Centers. Collaboration and coordination between One Stop Operator, core and required partner, educational institutions, labor and non-profit staff allows us to leverage all available resources while creating a local workforce development system capable of “universal” service delivery to job seekers and employers. The NPWDB, Inc. fosters an environment of collaboration by cross-training staff from partner organizations throughout the local workforce system. Customers can freely access a number of American Job Center programs and services, like: Youth Workforce Investment Activities; Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment/Training Activities; Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services; Rehabilitation Act Programs and Services; Adult Education and Literacy Activities; and, Apprenticeship Programs. The local workforce development system promotes a seamless progression from one educational stepping stone to another, and across work-based training and education, so individuals’ efforts result in progress and success. All American Job Centers are ADA compliant. Entering a facility as “universal” as an American Job Center can be somewhat disorienting and overwhelming to a customer,



whether that customer is the president of a large corporation or a long-time welfare recipient looking to re-enter the workforce. The challenge facing One Stop Operator staff is to make the experience of entering an American Job Center less intimidating. One Stop Operator staff is committed to providing quality customer service. Upon entering an American Job Center, customers always have the choice of staff assistance, the degree of engagement, as well as the pace of how they intend to use services. Because there is no sequence of services, the customer is given the ability to choose self-paced, self-selected workshops and services but also have One Stop Operator staff available at their disposal who are ready to assist them directly and in the manner that best suits their needs. The option to discuss individualized services is always available through customer determination or staff assessment. Each American Job Center designates a "Greeter" who is responsible for welcoming customers. Greeters are trained and knowledgeable in American Job Center Programs and Services. Customers entering an American Job Center are served promptly, comprehensively, efficiently and professionally by a Greeter. The Greeter asks each job seeker or employer customer to "sign-in" in the Reception Area. Customers are then asked if he/she would like to be given a guided tour of the facility. Appropriate signage is on display at each American Job Center showing the layout of the facility. Depending on the needs of the job seeker, the Greeter may direct a new customer directly to the Resource Room where he/she can immediately begin to conduct an active job search and explore current job opportunities. Repeat customers can direct themselves to the appropriate area and begin working independently. After initial contact with a Greeter has been made, customers are referred to One Stop Operator staff who is responsible for processing and interviewing customers. One Stop Operator staff can offer resume writing or resume writing assistance to customers, if requested. One Stop Operator staff orientates job seekers on career and training services available. Orientation sessions fall into 2 broad categories: Orientation to American Job Center Programs and Services; and, Orientation to a specific career service and training program. Orientation sessions are provided on an individual or group basis. One Stop Operator, Core and Required Partner staff determine the content of the orientation session. However, at the very least, orientation sessions will include review of the following information: Education/Training Opportunities; Career/Employment Opportunities; Career Pathways Services and Planning; Available Supportive Services; Labor Market Data; Types of Career Counseling available; Eligibility/Work Registration; Placement Assistance; Referral to Jobs/Job Search Assistance; Information on Basic/Job Skills Training; Post-Employment and Follow-up Services; High School Equivalency Test (GED); Employability Skills (Job Preparation); and, Assistance in accessing Financial Aid for Training/Education.

A list of approved, eligible Training Providers is given to job seekers. Flyers are also distributed to customers that detail they can go to the Social Security website to set up an account and monitor their earnings and future social security benefits once training has been completed and a job secured. By informing job seekers of all services available, One Stop Operator staff upholds the principle of "customer choice." In short, orientation sessions stress four (4) major points: 1) Benefits and advantages of working; 2) Personal responsibility; 3) Types of assistance for WIOA eligible customers; and, 4) Career and training services. The orientation process is intended to be an all-inclusive informational session that facilitates informed customer choice. Orientation sessions include an overview of customers' rights and responsibilities. Sessions emphasize a seamless continuum of career and training services, providing important information to customers that allow them to make informed choices about which services are most appropriate and effective for them to seek. The ability of a customer to choose a realistic course toward training and/or employment requires significant assistance from One Stop Operator staff. The most important

consideration when selecting a training program is a simple question: Will the training increase my chances of obtaining employment once the training is completed? The more high-demand a skill is, the easier it will be to obtain employment after training if a particular skill set is completed. One of the goals of the One Stop Operator staff is to ensure that all customers are empowered to choose their future careers to the greatest extent possible. If warranted, a preliminary determination of eligibility may be made. This process includes a one-on-one interview with One Stop Operator staff. Subsequently, One Stop Operator staff will guide the customer in making an informed choice about what Programs and Services he/she will seek. One Stop Operator staff remains associated with customers until he/she has concluded all activities associated with an American Job Center. One Stop Operator staff will then refer job seekers to a Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinator to determine final program eligibility. Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinators will determine eligibility of the customer for enrollment into a WIOA funded program or service. Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinators will detail the documents the customer needs to provide to demonstrate eligibility. Eligibility determination for adults, dislocated workers and youth will be determined based on self-sufficiency standards for program eligibility. Individuals wishing to receive Employment and Training Services funded through Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs must meet all of the follow requirements: Be legally authorized to work in the United States; Be 18 years of age or older; and, Be properly registered for the Selective Service. Priority for Career and Training Services funded by and provided through the adult program will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient for receipt of Career Pathways Services determined appropriate to obtain or retain employment. Additional eligibility requirements for Dislocated Workers include: Has been terminated or laid off or has received a notice determination or layoff from employment; AND, Is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to Unemployment Compensation; OR, Has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce but is not eligible for Unemployment Compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under a State Unemployment Compensation Law; AND, Is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation. If a customer expresses an interest or need for individualized services or if a Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinator determines individualized services are the right approach after interaction with the customer, the customer will receive a staff-assist assessment to review their educational background, employment status, service needs, barriers to employment, what types of career services should be provided and level of Literacy. Appropriate referrals to core and required partners will be determined as needed to remove barriers or for additional support. Customers will be informed of the total range of career and training services available and will be provided with the opportunity to choose which services best meet their needs and goals. Once the WIOA application process is completed and appropriate documents collected, the Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinator will initiate a more intensive assessment and review process of the customers' needs and suitability for individualized services, including but not limited to training. The Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinator and the customer will develop an initial Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Service Strategy Plan (ISS) to identify customized employment goals and achievement objectives. Planning around labor market data and industry demand is integrated to ensure appropriate employment goals are set. The IEP or ISS is reviewed and updated regularly. Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinators will provide case management services to customers enrolled in a WIOA program or service. Case management services include: Assessment of a customer's skills, interests and abilities; IEP development with periodic reviews and updates; Regular contact with the customer to discuss goals; Job search activities; and, Training progress, if applicable. File documentation of all WIOA funded services, including training approval, supportive

services, employment outcomes and follow-up services for the customer will be maintained by Customer Career Planner/Data Control Coordinators. Recognizing employer customers are the link between job seekers and the opportunity for employment. One Stop Operator staff emphasize the importance of serving employers in a professional and timely manner. One Stop Operator staff continually works on developing and maintaining relationships with area employers to identify a wide array of job opportunities for customers, especially those with barriers to employment. Ongoing contact with area employers allows One Stop Operator staff to identify job “leads” and “fields” of career opportunity that help customers increase their chances for successful job placement. Partnerships with employers allow One Stop Operator staff to make recommendations to customers based on discussions with those employers about skills that are in high-demand. One Stop Operator staff makes regular onsite visits to employers.

American Job Center staff will work with core and required partners on any marketing efforts initiated. One Stop Operator staff understands the importance and need for a diverse and multi-faceted marketing and outreach plan to secure continued success for its local workforce development system. One Stop Operator staff is committed to continually improving quality of services. A calendar of events that include newsletters, job search seminars, job fairs, guest speakers and informational session about training programs are advertised on the region’s website – [npworkforcewv.org](http://npworkforcewv.org). Additionally, the local workforce development system uses a multitude of social media outlets to outreach and communicate to the public about center events. Sound communication networks in place for job seekers and employers include newsletters, follow-up cards, telephone calls, use of peer mentors during critical junctures of the customer’s progress, customer surveys, customer suggestion boxes and customer recognition programs.

***C) Describe how the Local Board will ensure Meaningful Access to all Customers;***

The NPWDB, Inc. remains committed to ensuring customers, especially those with barriers to employment, have meaningful physical and programmatic access to services. When individuals enter an American Job Center, they are thoroughly vetted to determine the delivery of services that would be most meaningful for them. One Stop Operator staff identifies a customer’s needs then ensures the prompt delivery of appropriate services. One Stop Operator staff is aware of all available supportive services and how customers can access them (The region published a “Partner Snapshot” Handbook that details all available resources in the region. Each One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff are in possession of this Handbook). Core and required partners, like the WVDRS, have assisted the NPWDB, Inc. in the setup and design of American Job Centers to enhance the delivery of services to customers, especially those with disabilities. AE is available to assist customers with limited English proficiency and Literacy skills. If necessary, One Stop Operator staff approach other organization’s sites like: Homeless shelters; Halfway houses; and, Juvenile facilities so they can offer services.

***D) A Description on the Process the Local Board intends to provide for the Solicitation and Selection of a One Stop Operator as identified in Section 107 of the WIOA;***

The Board of Directors, in conjunction with local elected officials (LEOs), identify a One Stop Operator(s) through an open and competitive procurement process in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Guidance at Chapter II of 2 CFR (2 CFR 200.318 through 200.326). Public notice of the search for a One Stop Operator(s) is advertised for at least 30-days in media where prospective local, state, and national bidders typically identify such opportunities (ie: print newspapers, on-line newspapers, the region’s

website and other community websites). The One Stop Operator(s) is selected via a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. RFPs are solicited for a One Stop Operator every 4 program years. It is the responsibility of the One Stop Operator(s) to effectively coordinate the service delivery of core and required partner, service providers at regional American Job Centers. Some of the information requested in the RFP include: Types, coordination of services to be provided to job seeking and employer customers at American Job Centers; Methods for referral of individuals between American Job Centers and core and required partners for appropriate services and activities; Proposed budget; and, Performance strategies. The One Stop Committee, which consists of board and non-board members, is tasked with reviewing and evaluating RFPs received. The One Stop Committee recommends a One Stop Operator(s) to the Board of Directors and LEOs, who have final approval on the selection of a One Stop Operator(s) for the region. The One Stop Operator(s) can be a single entity or a consortium of entities. Types of entities that may be a One Stop Operator include: An institution of higher education; A state employment service agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act; A community based organization, nonprofit organization, or workforce intermediary; A private for-profit entity; A government agency; A local board, with the approval of the chief elected official and the Governor; An interested organization or entity capable of carrying out the duties of One Stop Operator; Local Chamber of Commerce; Business organization; or, Labor organization. If a consortium of entities submits a RFP to serve as the region's One Stop Operator(s), One Stop Partners, it must include no less than 3 partners. Local workforce development boards, like the NPWDB, Inc., are also permitted to serve as the region's One Stop Operator. The NPWDB, Inc. has served as the One Stop Operator of regional American Job Centers since program year 2006. If the NPWDB, Inc. bids on providing One Stop Operator services in the region, an outside 3<sup>rd</sup> party is solicited in accordance with state and WIOA policy to prepare, review and evaluate the RFP. The outside 3<sup>rd</sup> party is responsible for recommending a One Stop Operator(s) to the One Stop Committee. The NPWDB, Inc. adheres to federal, WFWV Policy 4-17 and Local NPWDB, Inc. Policy #71 in selecting a One Stop Operator(s).

***E) A Description of how the Local Board will ensure the Continuous Improvement of Eligible Providers of Services through the System and ensure that such Providers meet the Employment Needs of local Businesses and Workers and Job Seekers;***

The NPWDB, Inc. works diligently to ensure the quality and continuous improvement of eligible providers, including contracted providers. The One Stop Committee, comprised of board members, meets to discuss strategies for continuous improvement of the local workforce development system, including opportunities for cross-training and collaboration across core and required partner programs. The selection of providers is based on: Past performance, Projected cost; and, Assurance that deliverables are in line with the need of employers. RFPs are publicly advertised on the NPWDB, Inc.'s website and in local print media. The One Stop Committee is responsible for reviewing and evaluating RFPs using a Program Evaluation Form/Rater Scoring System. Rating scores are then totaled and averaged among staff and Sub-Committee members who reviewed them. The One Stop Committee then makes a recommendation(s) to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors and LEOs are responsible for approving all awards/contracts to a provider(s). The NPWDB, Inc. stays apprised of employment trends and projected employment opportunities in the area when determining funding awards to providers. The One Stop Operator draws on the experience of core and required partners to assist in the update and improvement of providers so that the employment needs of employers and job seekers are being met. One Stop Operator staff collects customer satisfaction data at regional American Job Centers. Results of customer feedback are used to improve existing programs or

develop new ones. Through a comprehensive monitoring process, the NPWDB, Inc. can measure performance levels of Providers. The monitoring process can provide “warning signals” that a deficiency or problem may be developing so that improvement measures or corrective action can be taken swiftly. Monitoring of providers occurs no less than 2 times a program year. The monitoring process also allows the NPWDB, Inc. to ensure providers are: Meeting the needs of area employers by verifying customers went to appropriate placements, whether it be in jobs or training programs; and, Ensuring that the best possible matches between customers and employment or training opportunities have occurred. Failure of a Provider to meet performance measures will be considered a valid reason to remove that provider from the ETPL or to discontinue contract funding.

***F) A Description of how the Local Board will facilitate access to Service Providers through the American Job Center Delivery System, including in Remote Areas, through the use of Technology and through other Means;***

A key priority for the NPWDB, Inc. is to ensure job seekers and employers have access to the wide array of education training and support services. The focus is to provide programs and services to those most in need and hard-to-serve. The local workforce development system provides the highest quality of programs and services to job seekers and employers through the use of strategically located American Job Centers, technology and partnerships with core and required partners and training providers. We build on/upgrade existing technology with the local workforce development system as necessary, along with implementing new technology, to provide a more integrated delivery of intake and case management information to individuals with barriers to employment. To reach those living in remote areas in the region, we rely on social media outlets to convey information about available programs and services. Technology is an effective outreach tool for those customers who cannot physically visit an American Job Center. One Stop Operator staff provides information and instructional activities to area libraries, housing authorities, etc. for display and distribution to individuals who are physically unable to access American Job Centers. One Stop Operator and core and required partners are always exploring ways to leverage new technology that will help customers who cannot physically get to an American Job Center. The NPWDB, Inc. will encourage core and required partners to develop a link on their respective website home pages that direct customers to American Job Center programs and services. Under the direction and supervision of the WorkForce West Virginia Office, the region’s ultimate objective is to have job seekers be able to scan services and for employers to be able to apply for employer services virtually. Employers would be able to track referrals and communicate any progress made with new hires. Job seekers would also be able to sign up and register for American Job Center programs and services from any core or required partner office. Youth could complete applications for participation in work experience programs and be able to upload associated documents and forms. The NPWDB, Inc. to stakeholders in the region like community-based organizations, homeless centers and juvenile centers to connect community-based programs to WIOA programs and services. As a result, we will be able to more effectively exchange job seeker assessment and placement efforts, exchange best practices, streamline recruitment efforts and avoid duplication of efforts. Together, we will be able to better prepare individuals for high-demand occupations. Partnerships like these will enable us to pilot innovative strategies to expand the reach of American Job Centers. In the fall of 2023, the NPWDB, Inc. implemented a pilot electronic participant referral system in the region called the “Services, Training and Referrals (S.T.A.R.) System.” Twelve Kiosks/Stands were placed at partner and social service agency’s worksite whereby individuals/customers can electronically access a number of programs, services and resources that are available within the local workforce development system and in the area in

general.

***G) A Description of how Entities within the American Job Center Delivery System including American Job Center Operators and the American Job Center Partners, will comply with Section 188 of the WIOA, if applicable, and applicable Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities, including providing Staff Training and Support for addressing the Needs of Individuals Disabilities;***

Individuals with disabilities will have easy access to necessary and needed levels of services they require. One Stop Operator staff is responsible for evaluating customer usage to determine if the local workforce development system is meeting the needs of job seekers, especially those with disabilities, and employers. When an individual with a disability visits an American Job Center, the following technology is available: a TDD/TYY phone system for the deaf; information on the ADA and accessibility; a magnifying sheet; verbal presentations of the orientation process, etc.; orientation and eligibility packets written in braille; a specialized computer(s) & printer(s) to assist with resume writing, job applications, etc.; a document holder to assist with typing, testing or searches for online employment opportunities; formal referrals to appropriate core and required partner programs and services; and, supportive services. If necessary, One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff use pictorial, written and/or verbal models of communications. Adequate space for the use of assistance devices or personal assistants is provided for disabled customers. One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff receive regular training from the WVDRS staff, a core partner, on disability awareness throughout the program year. WVDRS staff provides training in areas like: Programmatic and physical accessibility; Serving individuals with disabilities that require Supportive Services; Disability etiquette; Sensitivity training; and, Assistive technology.

***H) An Acknowledgement that the Local Board understands that, while Section 188 of the WIOA ensures Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities, Sub-Recipients may also be subject to the Requirements of : Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits Discrimination against Individuals with Disabilities by Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance; Title I of the ADA, which prohibits Discrimination in Employment based on a Disability; Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and Local Government from Discrimination on the Basis of Disability; Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; and, West Virginia Anti-Discrimination Act;***

The NPWDB, Inc. acknowledges all sub-recipients will be subject to the following provisions of law: Section 188 of the WIOA which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medication conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency) , age, disabilities, political affiliation or belief and requires that reasonable accommodations be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities in certain circumstances; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of federal financial assistance; Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability; Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act which requires recipients to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, certain programs run by the U.S Department of Education; and, West Virginia Anti-Discrimination Act which prohibits discrimination based on race, color national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, citizenship status, AIDS/HIV and off-duty tobacco use.

***I) A Description of the Roles and Resource Contributions of the American Job Center Partners;***

American Job Center partners include entities that operate the following programs:

- Adult;
- Dislocated Worker;
- Youth;
- Job Corps;
- YouthBuild;
- Native American;
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers;
- Employment Services authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act;
- Adult Education and Literacy Activities authorized under Title II of the WIOA;
- Vocational Rehabilitation Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Senior Community Service Employment Programs authorized under Title V of the Older American Act of 1965;
- Career and Technical Education Programs at the Post-Secondary Level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins and Technical Education Act of 2006;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Activities under Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program authorized under Chapter 41 of Title 38; Employment and Training Activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant;
- Employment and Training Activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Programs authorized under State Unemployment Compensation Laws;
- Programs authorized under Sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007; and,
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act.

Core and required partners provide applicable career services within the local workforce development system and work collaboratively with the local workforce development board to establish and maintain the local workforce development system. Each core and required partner provide access to its programs and activities within the local workforce development system, in addition to making them available at other appropriate locations. Partners are required to use a portion of their funds to support the infrastructure and operational costs of regional American Job Centers to the extent consistent with the federal law authorizing the partner's program(s) and with federal cost principles. Partner contributions are based on a reasonable cost allocation methodology as described in the region's Infrastructure agreement (IFA), which is a part of the region's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU details roles, responsibilities and contributions to be provided for the sustainment of regional American Job Centers. Each core and required partner enter in a MOU with the local workforce board.

***J) A Description of how the Local Board will use Individual Training Accounts based on High-Demand, "Difficult to Fill" Positions identified with Local Priority Industries identified in Section 1(A);***

ITAs are vouchers funded by the WIOA that are used to provide training opportunities in high-demand industry sectors to WIOA eligible individuals via the ETPL. The ETPL is maintained and managed by the

WorkForce West Virginia Office and is updated annually. The ETPL has over one thousand (1,000) high-demand training occupations on it with high projected annual openings and high average wage earnings. Adults and dislocated workers and older youth, including those with barriers to employment, can select a training program of his/her choice through an ITA. An eligible individual's Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) is used to help identify employment goals and activities and Career Pathways direction necessary to obtain career objectives for the individual. Individuals who have met eligibility requirements may receive WIOA training funds through an ITA at a maximum amount of five thousand five hundred dollars (\$5,500) per program year per ITA participant, not to exceed eleven thousand dollars (\$11,000) for a two (2) year period. The maximum amount for the funding of an ITA includes any Supportive Services to be received by the individual. Potential Training Providers on the ETPL include: Institutions of higher education that provide a program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential; Entities that carry out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Program; and, Other public or private Providers of a program of training services which may include joint labor-management organizations and eligible Providers of Adult Education and Literacy activities under Title II of WIOA if such activities are provided in combination with Occupational Skills Training. A Provider of training needs to comply with the criteria, information requirements and procedures established in Section 122 of the WIOA to be included on the ETPL.

The NPWDB, Inc. adheres to the process and criteria developed by the WorkForce West Virginia Office with regard to the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the ETPL. The NPWDB, Inc. prioritizes Training Programs that lead directly to a credential, unsubsidized employment or a measurable skill gain. Potential providers of training will need to demonstrate alignment with high-demand industry sectors and be able to effectively detail performance information. Participation on the ETPL will be increased through active employer outreach in the region which will allow for a wider range of opportunities in high-demand industries like: Health Care; Manufacturing; Truck Driving Training; Oil & Gas; and, Utilities and Information Technology to assess their hiring needs and initiate a diverse mix of training opportunities. Once types of training have been identified and approved, they can then be included on the ETPL. The NPWDB, Inc. will work with the WorkForce West Virginia Office and Training Providers and economic development organizations, when necessary, to petition for additional high-demand occupations to be included on the ETPL. Current labor market data for the region, as well as other areas in which participants are willing to relocate to, will be used to support the inclusion of any new high-demand occupations for the ETPL. State and local providers of work-based training services, like OJT, Customized Training and Incumbent Worker Services, are exempt from requirements of the ETPL. Instead, there are local policies in place that oversee the delivery of these programs.

***K) A Description of how the Local Board will provide Priority of Service that conforms with the State Plan. This should include a Description of Additional Local Requirements or Discretionary Priorities including Data to support the Need and how the Local Requirements and/or Priority will be documented and implemented for the Adult Program;***

The "Priority of Services for Training Services" for adults is as follows: Veterans and eligible spouses, including those who are also recipients of public assistance; Other low-income individuals or individuals who are basic skills deficient; individuals who are not Veterans or eligible spouses but are recipients of public assistance, low-income or are basic skills deficient; Veterans and eligible spouses who are not



recipients of public assistance, who are not low-income or who are not basic skills deficient; and then, Individuals who do not meet the above priorities. A "low-income" individual is an individual who: Receives, or is a member of a family that receives, cash benefits under a federal, State or local income based public assistance program; Receives an income, or is a member of a family that receives a total family income, for the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved (exclusive of unemployment compensation, child support payments, payments described in subparagraph (A), and old age and survivors insurance benefits received under Section 202 of the Social Security Act that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of the poverty line for an equivalent period; or; Is a member of a household, 200% of the lower living standard income level for an equivalent period that received (or has been determined within the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved to eligible to receive) food stamps pursuant to the Food Stamp Act of 1977; Qualified as a homeless individual, as defined in subsection (a) and (c) of Section 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act; Is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or, In cases permitted by regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor, is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the requirements of the program, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements. Priority of Services for Training Services for Dislocated Workers is as follows: Veterans and eligible spouses, including those who are also recipients of public assistance; other low-income individuals or individuals who are basic skills deficient; individuals who are not Veterans or eligible spouses but are recipients of public assistance low-income or are basic skills deficient; Veterans and eligible spouses who are not recipients of public assistance, who are not low-income or who are not basic skills deficient; and then, individuals who do not meet the above priorities. Priority of Services for Training Services for youth is as follows: Individuals must be between the ages of 18-24; Individuals must meet WIOA eligibility guidelines 70% of the lower living standard income level); Individuals must reside within the 6-county region (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel and Tyler counties); Individuals who are deficient in basic Literacy skills; School Drop-Out; Homeless, Runaway and/or Foster Child; Pregnant or Parenting; Offender; Any individual, including an individual with disabilities, who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure/maintain employment; Children of Incarcerated Parents; and, Migrant and Farmworker youth. The NPWDB, Inc. will use its partner network to strengthen its reach to these targeted groups. Essential workplace skills and industry certifications will be made available. Other services to be delivered by Job Center, Core and Required Partner staff include: Work-Based Skills Training; Life skills; Job readiness training; Career exploration skills enhancement; Occupational training; Follow-up; and, Retention. Basic skills and Occupational Skills Training may be blended to more efficiently serve these target groups. Supportive Services will be made available. Barriers to employment will be addressed and removed. Participant data can be accessed via the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) system and at American Job Centers to ensure that we are adhering to the priority of services policy as outlined by the WorkForce West Virginia Office. The NPWDB, Inc. may, in the future, identify other local priority populations through local policy. The NPWDB, Inc. uses its partner network to strengthen its reach to targeted populations. The NPWDB, Inc. identifies priority populations through data collected via the MACC system and at American Job Centers. The NPWDB, Inc. identifies outside training and service providers who serve same or similar target populations. One Stop Operator staff gathers information and collects data on the different target populations served.

***L) A Description of how the Local Board will utilize Funding to create Incumbent Worker Training Opportunities;***

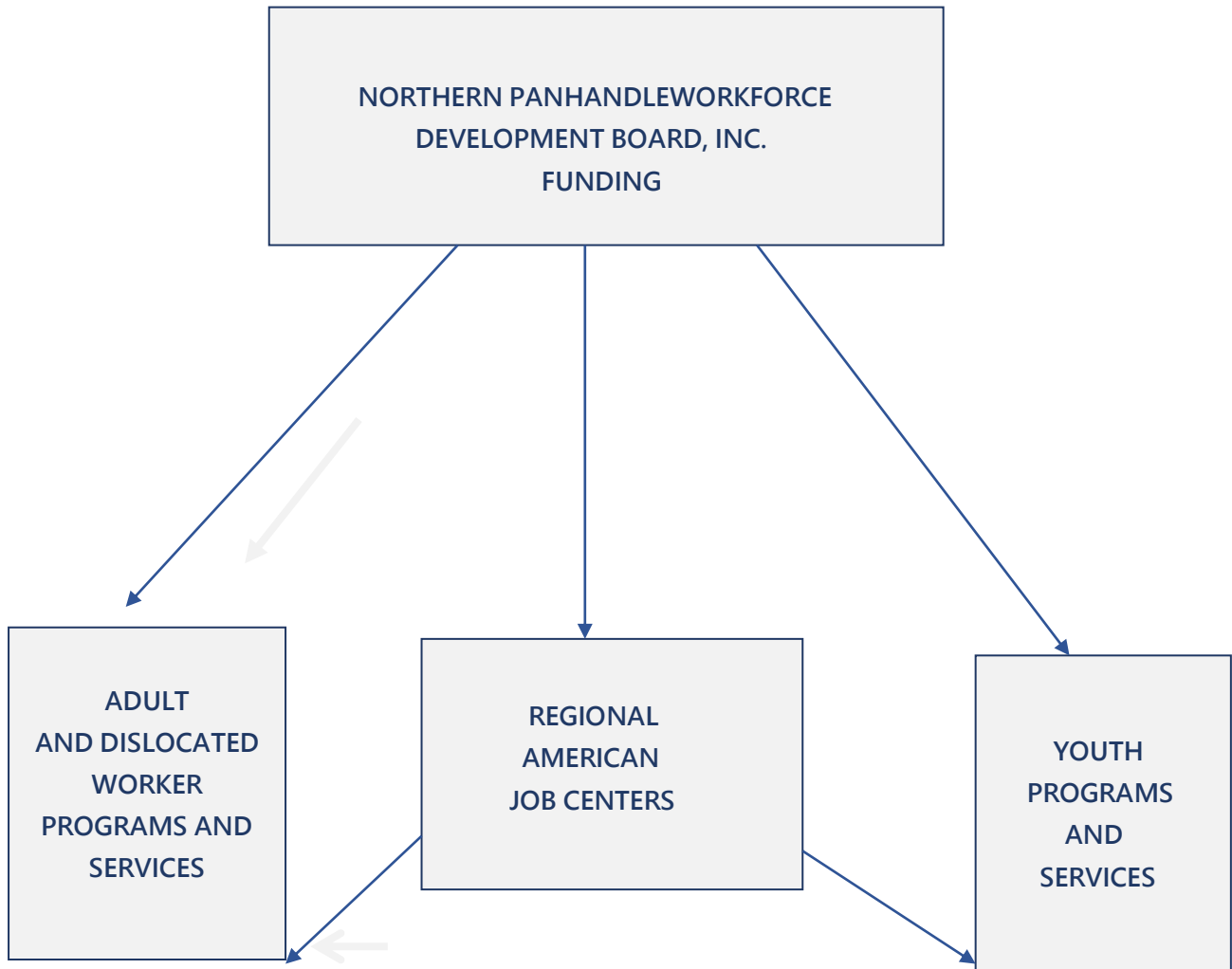
The NPWDB, Inc. allocates up to 10% of its adult and dislocated worker training funds to create training opportunities for incumbent workers. Incumbent worker training supports the delivery of career pathways for existing workers and will create more entry-level positions for job seekers. The NPWDB, Inc. engages in working partnerships with local business and economic development groups, like the REDP, the Hancock-Brooke Business Development Corporation and the Wetzel and Tyler Counties Economic Development Group. These partnerships benefit businesses and industries alike because it will support skill development of current employers. When considering a request for incumbent worker training funds, the NPWDB, Inc. considers the characteristics of the employer's workers like: Length of unemployment; Current skill level; and, If any workers have barriers to employment. Incumbent worker training can be provided to an employer or group of employers in the private business sector only. Incumbent Worker Training funding is only considered for employers located in the region. For an employer to be considered for Incumbent Worker funding, the NPWDB, Inc. ensures: The training to be delivered is in a targeted high-demand industry as identified by the NPWDB, Inc.; and, Employees are going to receive training to address a documented skill shortage in the local labor market; The number of participants the employer plans to train or retrain is no less than 25; The training to be provided relates to the competitiveness of participants and the employer(s); That high-quality training will be delivered, like: industry recognized, portable credentials and advancement of job opportunities; Job upgrade(s) are available for participants as a result of training and any backfill position(s) created at the entry level; participants receive a measurable wage gain, an increase of no less than \$1.00 per hour post training; and, There is an increase in, or maintenance of, benefits earned. If applicable, training will be provided in new equipment or new technologies as a result of new products or processes that will enhance an employer's competitiveness or avoid or avert the possibility of a pending layoff; and, the employer has a commitment to retain or avert layoffs of Incumbent Workers being trained. The incumbent worker training period will last no more than 15-days. Incumbent worker training may be used for upskilling apprentices who already have established working/training relationships with the Registered Apprenticeship Program.

***M) A Description of how the Local Board will train and equip Staff to provide Excellent WIOA- Compliant Customer Service.***

Front-line staff at regional American Job Centers is expected to provide outstanding customer service by being courteous, polite, responsive and helpful at all times to job seekers and employers alike. Staff is knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics and keenly aware of available WIOA training services. They are sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with barriers to employment and are prepared to provide necessary accommodations when and if needed. The One Stop Operator, core and required partners work together to offer intensive training to front-line staff no less than twice a program year. Training focuses on: Customer service; Instructions on serving clients with disabilities; Properly assessing individuals with barriers to employment; How to access outside resources; and, The introduction of new regulations, policy, procedures, etc. that impacts the delivery of services to job seekers and employers. Front-line staff participates in cross-training sessions offered at American Job Centers. Cross-training sessions focus on familiarizing staff about any changes in the delivery of core and required partners' programs and services or about any new programs and services being offered in the region. Front-line staff are knowledgeable about basic eligibility requirements and core and required partner functions so they have the expertise to assist customers properly and efficiently.

**SECTION 4: TITLE I – ADULT, YOUTH AND DISLOCATED WORKER FUNCTIONS**

***A) A Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities in the Local Area;***



Programs and services are designed to begin, advance or transition eligible individuals on a career pathway to employment in high-demand industries. Adults, dislocated workers and youth can improve their economic and/or training opportunities depending on their ability to access education and training that prepares them for college and career success.

ACTIVITY	PARTNER
WIOA Eligibility	Core Partners
TABE Testing	NPWDB, Inc./ WorkForce West Virginia/ AE & Literacy Provider
Outreach, Intake and Orientation	Core Partners
Initial Assessment	Core Partners
Labor Market Information	NPWDB, Inc./ WorkForce West Virginia
Referrals to Programs	Core Partners/Title I Providers
Supportive Services Information	Core Partners/Title I Providers
Unemployment Insurance Information	WorkForce West Virginia
Financial Aid Information	Core Partners
Comprehensive Assessment	Core Partners
Individual Employment Plan	NPWDB, Inc./Core Partners
Career Planning and Counseling	NPWDB, Inc./Core Partners
Work Experiences	NPWDB, Inc./Core Partners
Financial Literacy Services	NPWDB, Inc./Title I Providers
English Language Services	AE/ Literacy Provider
Workforce Preparation	Core Partners
Occupational Skills Training	Training Providers
Skill Upgrading	Training Providers
OJT Training	NPWDB, Inc.
Customized Training	NPWDB, Inc./AE & Literacy Provider
Incumbent Worker Training	NPWDB, Inc./AE & Literacy Provider
Adult Education and Literacy Activities	AE & Literacy Provider
Job Readiness Skills Training	Core Partners

***B) A Description of how the Local Board will coordinate Workforce Development Activities carried out in the Local Area with Statewide Rapid Response Activities as described in Section 134 (a) (2) (A);***

Rapid Response is a process that provides information and services to area employees experiencing job loss. When a layoff is announced, Rapid Response links community services to employees to assist them in securing new jobs. Involuntary job loss can be one of the most stressful events in a person's life. This support increases the chances of employees to successfully adjust to the situation and securing new employment. Rapid Response services were created to coordinate transition assistance to impacted employees. The WorkForce West Virginia Office created a statewide Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit and regional Rapid Response Units that respond to company layoffs and closures. The Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit receives "WARN" and/or "Sub-Warn" notices (The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act which helps ensure advance notice in cases of qualified plant closings and mass layoffs) that will trigger a need for Rapid Response services. Rapid Response efforts begin as soon as job loss is verified. The Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit is made up of representatives from several different State and local agencies/groups. Agencies/groups that make up the Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit are: the NPWDB, Inc., One Stop Operator staff, UI staff, Resource Center peer advocates, local

Wagner-Peyser staff and other stakeholders. The Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit and the NPWDB, Inc. are responsible for gathering, collecting and updating any and all information obtained through local Rapid Response services. This information may be shared with other workforce development areas in the State. In accordance with the WIOA, Rapid Response activities are delivered quickly to the affected company/plant and workers in order for employees to be provided the opportunity to secure new employment as soon as possible. If Rapid Response activities are rejected, alternative(s) methods will be identified as a means of making affected employees aware of available services. Some alternate methods that are used to increase employee awareness of available services are: newspaper articles, community information sessions, union communications or direct mailings to affected workers' home addresses. Members of the Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit hold an employee information session. Some of the information detailed during the employee information session is: WIOA eligibility requirements, current job openings with skill level requirements and an overview of WIOA programs and services. This overview includes: An in-depth discussion of WIOA funded training services for demand occupational fields, eligibility requirements for unemployment benefits and their impact on severance packages, welfare payments, including food stamps, application for TAA and/or NAFTA funding (Trade Adjustment Act or North America Free Trade Agreement), if appropriate, supportive services and other available services offered by such agencies as the Veterans Administration, Department of Education, etc. Other additional topics that may be addressed are: How to survive a layoff; How to plan your finances; The wellness impact on the affected worker and his/her family; How to interview; and, How to properly write a resume. A substantial number of affected employees will be interested in retraining to increase their competitiveness in the labor market. The local Rapid Response Team promotes labor-management cooperation with affected employers, employees, union and other community partners. Members of the local Rapid Response Team regularly communicate and network with key stakeholders in the business and labor community even before the need for Rapid Response services arise. This way, local Rapid Response activities will have a wide base of support for Rapid Response efforts. Local Rapid Response Team members will have a thorough understanding of available employment and training services. Knowledge of these services assists local Rapid Response Team members in anticipating types of services to provide when addressing a layoff. The Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit and the local Rapid Response Team identifies available fiscal and staff resources at the State and local levels. Individuals are instructed on how they can access available training and education resources and information. WIOA training services are detailed and offered to affected workers.

***C) A Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Youth Workforce Development Activities in the Local Area, including Activities for Youth who are Individuals with Disabilities, which Description and Assessment shall include an Identification of Successful Models of such Youth Workforce Investment Activities;***

Social and economic challenges young people face have been heightened by the growing economic crisis of high unemployment and low high school graduation rates. With many young people out of work or stuck in dead-end, low wage and low skills jobs, economic growth slows and social changes increase dramatically. To tackle youth unemployment and support the needs of today's economy, Youth and their families need to be informed about all education options available to them including college and career pathways that don't necessarily include pursuing a 4-year degree immediately. Youth who connect to high-quality training programs have a chance to find a way out of poverty and a real chance at economic success. One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff remain committed to increasing the number of

young people who get on a pathway to economic success by being college and career-ready. We strive to build on and maintain a youth workforce development system that steers youth to post-secondary education and sustainable employment. To do this, the NPWDB, Inc. entered into a contract with Youth Services System (YSS, Inc.), the region's Youth Provider, and coordinates with the education community and area employers in order to provide a seamless continuum of career exploration, work readiness activities, life skills development, Youth will be provided with seamless access to high-quality and career pathway aligned paid work experiences. The NPWDB, Inc. and YSS, Inc. have developed and implemented strategies that connect youth with meaningful training, and subsequently, family-sustaining careers through past experiences, research and best practices. It is important that we increase a youth's access to a coordinated education and workforce system that provides the services and support needed to prepare them for postsecondary educational success, employment and long-term career advancement. The NPWDB, Inc. has identified the following objectives that will help the region achieve a stronger and more cohesive local workforce development system for youth in the region:

- Serve youth, especially those with disabilities, through a high-quality youth workforce development system;
- Provide intensive year-round programs and services that meet the education and employment needs of youth;
- Establish strong links with career technical schools and post-secondary schools to align programs and services with career pathways and current labor market data;
- Ensure youth activities will lead to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or a recognized post-secondary credential or preparation for post-secondary education and training opportunities; and,
- Support the development of alternative evidence-based programs and other activities that will enhance choices available to youth.
- Pull together resources and funding streams – public, private and foundation - in a strategic way and will draw on the strength of community Providers to create supported pathways that provide youth with education, skills and access to good jobs and successful careers.
- Offer a wide range of options, helpful supportive services and the flexibility to connect youth to the most appropriate set of services, including skills like: teamwork, leadership, oral and written communications and ethical responsibility.
- Work to eliminate the stigma attached to career and technical education (Classes dedicated to robotics, coding and welding provide skills training employers desperately need. The One Stop Operator, core and required partners need to make greater investments in developing new and effective models of career-focused education that align with the needs of emerging high-demand industries.

To be eligible to participate in WIOA Title I Youth Programs and Services, a youth must be either an in-school or an out-of-school youth, be a citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the United States, meet Selective Service Registration requirements and meet WIOA eligibility guidelines. Participating youth, especially those with significant barriers to employment, receive a preliminary assessment of academic levels, skill levels, aptitudes and supportive service needs. This information will serve as the basis for the development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) that will identify employment goals, career pathways, achievement objectives and supportive services that need to be provided to a youth in order for him/her to

meet career goals. The ISS will be flexible in nature due to the youth's age and experience. YSS, Inc., core and required partners will provide youth with information regarding the full array of applicable and appropriate services and programs that are available to them. Resources like: educational support, employment opportunities integrated with educational pursuits, work readiness skills, adult mentoring and other guidance or intervention, as well as follow-up services to ensure retention will be made available and accessible to youth. YSS, Inc. will help eligible youth develop the skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education. YSS, Inc. will systemically enrich academic preparation through service learning, internships, career exploration, work readiness training and post-secondary planning. Work readiness skills training will help prepare youth for success in the workplace; helping them gain industry-recognized credentials with a focus on finding and retaining employment.

IN-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES	OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES
An Individual who is: Attending School as defined by State law including Secondary and Post-Secondary School; Not younger than Age 14 (unless it is an Individual with a Disability who is attending School under State law) and not older than age 21 at the Time of Enrollment;	An Individual who is not attending any School as defined under State Law; not younger than 16 or older than 24 at the Time of Enrollment;
A Low-Income Individual;	A School Dropout;
An Individual with 1 or more of the following: Basic Skills Deficient; or, is unable to Compute or Solve Problems or Read, Write or Speak English at a Level necessary to Function on the Job, in the Individual's Family or in Society;	An Individual who falls within 1 or more of the following Categories; 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 6; A Recipient of a Secondary School Diploma or its Recognized Equivalent who is low-income and is either is Basic Skills Deficient or an English Language Learner; An Individual who is subject to the Juvenile or Adult Justice System; A Homeless Individual as defined in Section 41403 (6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, A Homeless child or youth as defined in Section 725 (2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, A Runaway, In Foster Care or has aged out of the Foster Care System, A Child eligible for assistance under Section 477 of the Social Security Act or in an 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.
An Individual with Disabilities;	
An English Language Learner;	
An Offender;	
A H Child or Youth;	
A Runaway in Foster Care or has aged out of the Foster Care System;	
A Child or Youth a child eligible for assistance under Section 477 of the Social Security Act or in an Out-of-Home Placement;	
An Individual who is eligible to receive a Free or Reduced Priced Lunch under the Richard B., Russell National School Lunch Act; and,	
An Individual who lives in a High Poverty Area.	

YSS, Inc. provides comprehensive industry-specific career exploration and training for in-school youth. YSS, Inc.'s goal is to ensure youth participants graduate high school, and upon graduation, pursue some



form of post-secondary training or education in a viable career pathway(s) or successfully gain employment in a high wage, high-demand occupation. YSS, Inc. works closely with local school systems to expand access to career exploration activities for in-school youth. Whenever possible, in-school youth can be dual-enrolled in occupational skills training, Internships or work experiences while working to complete their high school diploma. Local school-to-work resources are coordinated with WIOA funded youth programs and services. YSS, Inc. provides comprehensive industry-specific career exploration and training for out-of-school youth as well. Activities for out-of-school youth include workforce preparation and integrated education and training. This linkage presents an opportunity to coordinate and align Title I and Title II services to ensure successful education and integrated outcomes for out-of-school youth. Out-of-school youth are equipped with work readiness preparation, academic instruction and occupation skills training. YSS, Inc. focuses on developing work readiness and skill learning to employment and employer recognized credentials. YSS, Inc. staff assists out-of-school youth who did not earn a high school diploma earn one or a High School Equivalency Test (GED), its equivalent. Out-of-school youth can receive preparation for career pathways employment that focuses on skills upgrading and can be placed into occupational skills training, Internships or paid work experiences while pursuing the completion of their GED. YSS, Inc. helps out-of-school youth pursue some form of post-secondary training or education in a viable career pathway(s) or successfully gain employment in a sufficient wage, high-demand occupation. Year-long youth programs and services are complimented with 4 work experience programs that are administered by YSS, Inc.; The "Summer Youth" Work Experience Program; The "Fall Works" Experience Program; The "Winter Works" Experience Program; and the "Spring Works" Experience Program. These programs provide eligible youth, ages 14-24, with an opportunity to work in high-demand occupations all year long. These work experience programs increase opportunities for youth to explore different career pathways. Additionally, YSS, Inc. staff oversees and maintains a S.T.E.M. Youth Room (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Youth Room) at the Wheeling American Job Center for area youth to visit and learn. The S.T.E.M. Youth Room was put in place to introduce youth to high-demand training occupations and subsequently, entice youth to enter a training program in any of these fields. The S.T.E.M. Center has: A XYZ Da Vinci 1.0 Printer with 3 colors of filament that can create projects with a computer attached to it to create items, etc.; A Lego Mindstorms Robotics Kit as well as S.T.E.M. curriculum for it that operates through the corresponding laptop; 5 VEX Robotics S.T.E.M. Kits for various building projects tied to engineering and technology; A Laptop set up for NASCAR S.T.E.M. Program to do various activities through the NASCAR Acceleration Nation Site for younger youth and through the Ten80 Student Racing Challenge for older youth; A Weighted Math Building Kit to use math and engineering to build structures; and, A growing Library of 50 books based on S.T.E.M. Curriculum to read and learn from. The NPWDB, Inc. and YSS, Inc. work diligently to serve youth with disabilities. The WVDRS, a core partner, assists YSS, Inc. in identifying youth with disabilities who could benefit from participating in year-long youth programs and services. Year-long programs and services help prepare this target group for competitive employment following high school or post-secondary education. Youth with disabilities are recruited to participate in work experience programs that connect them to different career pathways with employers in high-demand occupations. Some different approaches that are taken when serving youth with disabilities are: Identifying and responding to the distinctive needs of youth with disability; Building staff capacity (aka: preparedness); Expanding services and funding; Providing employment and community service opportunities; Proactively targeting and customizing program resources; and, Increasing work opportunities to improve workplace skills, including Internships and apprenticeships. YSS, Inc. refers youth with disabilities to the WVDRS as necessary once it has been determined the need for these types of services exist based on assessment, testing and through

observations. WVDRS provides the following programs and services to in-school youth with disabilities: 1) Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to high school students beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. PETS include: Job exploration; Counseling; and, Work-based learning experiences in an integrated environment in the community that includes internships, counseling or enrollment in comprehensive training or post-secondary education programs and workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living and instruction in self-advocacy including peer mentoring. 2) Each high school in the region has a WVDRS Counselor assigned to guarantee service provisions of students with disabilities. WVDRS Counselors take part in the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students with disabilities when they are invited to do so. Counselors stay in contact with educators to discuss and resolve any educational difficulties as they arise; and, 3) The Student Transition to Employment Program (S.T.E.P.). This program uses school personnel to facilitate a more seamless transition from high school to post-secondary activities for students with disabilities. By allowing students to continue working with an individual who has provided them with classroom instruction and/or transition services while in high school, they are working with people who are most familiar with their interests, skills, and barriers to employment. The S.T.E.P. also includes the use of science and math teachers to provide students with further career exploration opportunities in S.T.E.M. fields. Engaging high school students early will help them have a better understanding of the labor market and the value of obtaining a post-secondary credential. Students with disabilities that are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services may, in accordance with their IEP, receive assistance from the WVDRS on obtaining post-secondary training. WVDRS monitors the education achievement of its students.

To be successful, the NPWDB, Inc. and YSS, Inc. needs to maintain strong partnerships with post-secondary institutions, area employers, core and required partners, parents of participating youth, former youth participants and other community-based organizations with experience operating programs and services for area youth, like: local housing authorities, the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Panhandle, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the Lee Day Center. Core and required partners assist us by: Identifying and recruiting youth for participation in our programs; Providing youth referrals; Helping market our programs to area youth; Providing transportation to youth to/from regional American Job Centers; and, Providing YSS, Inc. staff with office space to talk with interested youth. These entities are regularly asked to input in both the design and the implementation of youth programs and services in the region to maximize resources and avoid duplication of services.

Every other program year, the NPWDB, Inc., One Stop Operator and YSS, Inc. Staff sponsor a 2- day Expo for youth participants. Expos introduce youth to high demand occupational training and jobs. For program year 2022 - 2023, a "Registered Apprenticeship Program" Expo was held. Requirements for participating youth were: Have already been determined WIOA eligible prior to the Expo; Must be between the ages of 18-24; Agree to attend both days of the "Expo"; Must complete all required Forms/Documents; Increase Work Readiness Skill Levels by no less than 10%; Develop a Resume; Participate in Mock Interviews; and, Participate in the On-Site Tour at the Ironworkers Local 549. On the first day of the Expo representatives from the following trades unions/groups spoke to participating youth: Wheeling Fire Department; IUPAT; IBEW Local 141; Ironworkers Local 549; and, Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers District Council of WV. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the expo, youth participated in a career fair; learned how to write a resume; participated in mock interviews; participated in work readiness training then ended the day by taking a tour of the Ironworkers

Local 549 facilities.

***D) A Description of how the Local Board will coordinate Education and Workforce Development Activities carried out in the Local Area with relevant Secondary and Post-Secondary Education Programs and Activities to coordinate Strategies, enhance Services and avoid Duplication of Services;***

One Stop Operator and core and required partner staff developed Common Referral and Participant Information Release Forms. A shared tracking system, the MACC is used by all parties. These efforts help decrease duplication of efforts spent on data and information collection for everyone, and more importantly, make the service delivery process more effective and efficient for customers. Regular ongoing discussion and open communications also prevent any duplication of services. AE career pathways materials are used as a way of coordinating education and workforce activities with relevant secondary and post-secondary activities. MOUs are in place with the region's 6 county school systems, career and technical centers and the John D. Rockefeller Center, the provider of Carl D. Perkins Acts funds and a required partner. One Stop Operator staff regularly attends Northern Panhandle District Consortium Meetings that address current and future curriculum needs based on most recent labor market data relevant to post-secondary populations. These meetings help guide and implement new programs of study in the region. A post-secondary education, particularly a degree or industry-recognized credential related to jobs in high-demand is the most important determinant of difference in a worker's lifetime earnings and income. Education and training goals increase a family's financial resources and helps parent(s) stay employed and maximize their wages. Programs at post-secondary institutions are strongly supported. To prepare and inform individuals about post-secondary education opportunities, the One Stop Operator makes available the most current labor market data, with median earnings. The purpose of providing this data is to educate individuals which occupations are in high-demand. YSS, Inc. meets regularly with high school guidance counselors to encourage their input and feedback about career planning and preparation activities offered for youth at regional American Job Centers. The WVDRS always strives to provide high quality career-based employment outcomes for its customers. They have a long history of providing customers with the necessary training that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential because they understand the importance of having a recognized post-secondary degree. The WVDRS has assigned a number of counselors to work solely with high school students with disabilities on pre-employment transition services that include: Job exploration; Counseling; Work based learning experiences which may include In-school or after school opportunities or experiences outside the traditional school setting; Internships that are provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible; Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education; Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and, Instruction in self-advocacy which may include peer monitoring.

***E) A Description of how the Local Board will coordinate Workforce Development Activities carried out under this Title in the Local Area with the Provision of Transportations, including Public Transportation and other Appropriate Supportive Services in the Local Area;***

Transportation has been identified as one of the major barriers to employment in the region. There are only 2 counties that have public transportation available: Ohio County and Hancock County. And, Hancock County's public transportation system is only available on a part-time basis. One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff actively participate in conversations around the issue of available workplace

transportation on a state, regional and local level. Carpooling, transportation allowances, use of taxi services and the use of technology in connecting participants to training and employment opportunities have all been explored and/or implemented.

***F) A Description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Adult Funding based on Adult Priority Groups as specified in the State Plan;***

State and federal guidelines that address "Priority of Services" are adhered to. In particular, One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff works diligently to increase Veteran access to career services and work-based training programs. There is also an emphasis to increase employer use of work-based training programs that results in the hiring of Veterans and other identified target populations. The One Stop Operator works closely with core and required partners to develop new, innovative ways to address customers' barriers to employment and to ensure they have essential workplace skills and industry-related certification to meet their full career potential. Front-line staff at regional American Job Centers who work with targeted populations focus on the delivery of intensive services and needed supportive services. Front-line staff is proactive in determining the needs of customers and direction they need to take to achieve career success. Examples of services provided to individuals include workplace skills training, life skills training, job readiness training, career exploration, occupational training, work-based training, and follow-up. There is also close collaboration among stakeholders in the local workforce development system that ensures the alignment and availability of adequate supportive services to target groups.

***G) A Description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Dislocated Worker Funding;***

A dislocated worker is an individual who has been terminated or laid off from employment; is eligible for or has exhausted unemployment compensation; is unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation; was self-employed but is now unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community in which the individuals resides or because of natural disasters; is a displaced homemaker; is a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty; or, is a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who has experience a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty -station of such member. This target group is provided with opportunities to gain skills that would allow them to quickly reconnect to jobs with family-sustaining wages. The skill and education levels of a dislocated worker are assessed to define skills gaps, transferable skills and create an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Barriers to re-employment are addressed. The IEP identifies a career pathway and related occupational training that will ultimately lead to certification, credential attainment and/or employment opportunities for that individual. Credentials are important because they allow the individual to be marketable within a high-demand industry or occupation. Employment opportunities provide the individual a chance to obtain work experience and skills through performance in an actual job. To support challenges that dislocated workers face in obtaining employment and training, supportive services are made available. Referrals to core and required partner services are made as necessary.

***H) A Description of how the Local Board will define "Self-Sufficiency" for Employed Adults and Employed Dislocated Worker Participants;***

An individual is considered "self-sufficient" if he/she is considered to be non-reliant, or is a member of a family that is no longer reliant, on cash payment (TANF) or non-cash benefits (Food Stamps) under a

Federal, State or local income-based assistance program; and, He/she is employed with a fringe benefit package that includes medical; and, is employed with a family income annualized at being greater than 125% of the Lower Living Wage Standard Income Level according to the West Virginia Lower Living Standard Income Levels Guideline Chart.

***I) A Description of the Local Board's Definition of "Unlikely to return to Previous Industry or Occupation" when required for Eligible Dislocated Workers Services;***

"Unlikely to return to work" refers to an individual who has family or personal issues and a lack of necessary skills or difficult financial circumstance whereby it is affecting the individual's likelihood to return to a previous industry or occupation. This individual is laid off without a recall date and the projected annual increase in employment growth according to labor market data is fewer than 30 jobs in the previous occupation. Eligibility documentation criterion consists of a letter stating that the layoff is permanent or a copy of the WARN Notice stating closure of business where individual was employed is permanent or a self-attestation statement from the individual stating the same.

***J) A Description of how the Local Board will interpret and document Eligibility Criteria for "Requires Additional Assistance to complete an Education Program or to secure or hold Employment" as set for the in the State Youth Guidance Policy and WIOA Sections 129 (a)(1)(B) (iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C) (iv) (VII);***

A youth who has had only low-wage employment, short-term employment or an inability to secure a wage at a self-sufficient level for a single adult will be considered as "requiring additional assistance." Eligibility documentation criterion includes a copy of the Individual Service Strategy (ISS), case notes, an intake application, a registration form and an applicant statement. These documents must include a barrier to employment, other than an eligibility requirement barrier.

***K) A Description of the Documentation required to Demonstrate "A Need for Training;"***

A need for training is a collaborative decision made with input from the individual and his/her customer career planner/data control coordinator. Past activities, experience and education levels, job readiness level and the IEP will determine the need for training. Eligibility documentation criterion includes a layoff notice if applicable, proof of unemployment, a self-attestation statement, proof of low-income, proof of public assistance and a justification statement.

***L) A Description of how the Local Board will provide the Fourteen Required Program Elements for the WIOA Youth Program Design;***

YSS, Inc. develops an ISS or an IEP, aka: "action plans," for each eligible youth based on needs and goals. YSS, Inc. has the discretion to determine what specific programs and/or services will be provided to youth based on an objective assessment for the purpose of identifying appropriate career services to be delivered. As an example, if YSS, Inc. staff identifies any "barriers" a participating youth has, basic skills deficiencies are addressed and whether there exists a need for the youth to obtain a high school diploma or a GED. Afterwards, the youth can work towards an occupational training goal, which will encompass work readiness skills training, and ultimately, employment. However, in all instances, YSS, Inc. ensures youth have access to the 14 required program elements of services in accordance with the WIOA. YSS, Inc. makes every effort to identify additional, available outside services and resources that may be accessed for/by the youth

at no cost. However, because of special needs of some at-risk youth, funding for certain programs or services is directly provided by YSS, Inc. to ensure success for the participating youth. Fourteen elements of training for youth are:

1. **Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Drop-Out Prevention** - From note-taking and homework skills to time management and test taking, this training helps youth achieve academic success. Intensive one-on-one tutoring is provided with an emphasis on improving Literacy and skills so youth can become gainfully and successfully employed. Drop-out prevention strategies will be used for youth who are still in-school. Youth are provided with instructional support and homework assistance while remedial tutoring is provided to out-of-school youth who learn the skills and knowledge needed to graduate or pass the GED exam. This type of training helps participating youth achieve grade level proficiency in math, reading, and writing. It also fosters good study habits so youth can be better prepared for employment.
2. **Alternative Secondary School Services/Dropout Recovery Services** - These services focus on those youth who have dropped out-of-school. Most dropouts are likely to have behavioral difficulties, academic failures, pregnancy, family or job obligations or experience problems like: poverty, incarceration, and economic hardship. The goal is to recruit these youth back into an educational setting while providing the necessary support for the attainment of a diploma or the GED. Dropouts can choose an alternative form of education where skills and services offered meet their needs and skills that will ultimately help prepare them for employment. Curriculum of drop-out prevention programs focuses on encouraging youth to remain in-school. Drop-Out prevention classes may be coordinated with local school districts or AE.
3. **Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences** - Work experience programs are structured learning experiences. Opportunities for career exploration and skill development will also be available. Participating in these programs help eligible youth establish work history, credibility and move out of poverty. Career awareness and development training helps youth define their career options and understand the relationship between education and the world of work. Work-based learning involves actual work experiences that are conducted to promote contextual learning opportunities. Integration of the classroom and the worksite is always encouraged. These types of programs will take place in workplaces that may be private for-profit, non-profit or public. Length of training will be for a specific period of time. Work experiences may be created in STEM fields and in other high-demand occupations within specific industry sectors. These opportunities will vary from paid Internships to training and may be subsidized or unsubsidized. WIOA funds may be used to pay wages to youth participants on a work experience program. Types of work experience programs include: A "Summer Works" Program; A "Fall Works" Program; A "Winter Works" Program; and, A "Spring Works" Program. which are all administered by YSS, Inc. In addition to the actual work experience component, this program provides youth with competencies like, computer Literacy, customer service, job readiness, interpersonal communications, problem solving and financial Literacy. Work experience programs run for about 8 weeks throughout the program year. Priority is given to youth already enrolled in year-long youth programs and services. Newly recruited youth who are accepted into the Summer Youth Work Experience Program are required to enroll in year-long youth programs and services after participation in the Summer Youth Work Experience Program has ended. Job placements will be made in high-demand occupations with private for-profit career

pathways businesses, non-profit and public organizations in the region. Services are delivered to participating youth by YSS, Inc. in this program. NPWDB, Inc. staff monitors youth activities on a regular basis to ensure compliance with safety and child labor laws. Program procurement rules and regulations require the training provider(s) of youth programs and services to ensure safety and child labor laws are adhered to at all times. Hard copy Child Labor Laws are distributed to appropriate training programs and work sites for public posting. Work and training sites for youth are notified in writing of any and all non-compliance issues or deficiencies and the need for corrective action.

4. **Occupational Skill Training** – The region’s OJT Program is made available to older youth ages 18 - 24, including those with disabilities. This program matches employer needs with a youth’s qualifications. Area employers from high-demand industries participate in the OJT program. Occupational training is provided by an employer to a youth participant in exchange for reimbursement based on the region’s employer reimbursement sliding scale to cover the extraordinary cost of providing training and supervision related to the training. An OJT contractual agreement must be limited to a specific period of time required for a youth participant to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is being provided. However, in no instance will an OJT contractual agreement exceed a 6-month period or 1040 hours. An OJT contractual agreement may be written with a registered apprenticeship program or a participating employer in a registered apprenticeship program. Depending on the length of the registered apprenticeships and available funding, WIOA funds may cover some, or all, of the registered apprenticeship training for a participating youth. These opportunities mean the organization of high-quality education, training and other services to help youth with different needs accelerate their education and career advancement. These opportunities are used to support a youth’s transition from education into and through the workforce. YSS, Inc. regularly invites representatives from regional educational institutions to speak to youth at training workshops held throughout the program year.
5. **Educational Training Opportunities** -YSS, Inc. includes representatives of training providers who provide training in non-traditional occupations like: truck driving, mining and welding. Graduates for non-traditional training programs are invited to share their educational and job experiences with youth. Older youth, ages 18-24, are provided with an opportunity to participate in the region’s ITA Program. They can select a high-demand occupational training program of his/her choice. Participating youth can receive \$5,500 per program year not to exceed \$11,000 for up to 2-years of training. Pell grants, established under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, or any other grant assistance available to pay for the costs of training, must be accessed first before WIOA funds can be used.
6. **Leadership Development** -Leadership development activities to be made available to youth are: Analyzing strengths and weaknesses; Setting personal and vocational goals and building self-esteem, confidence, motivation and abilities to carry them out fully; Participating in community life and effecting positive change; Guiding or directing others on a course of action, influence, opinions and behavior of others; and, Serving as a role model. Leadership development training will promote positive life skills learning.
7. **Supportive Services** -Supportive Services may be provided, if needed and necessary, to participating youth. These services include, but are not limited to: transportation, child care support, food stamps, health assistance, dependent care costs, housing assistance, work attire, medical child health assistance, earned income tax credit, referrals to medical services, etc. If needed, comprehensive guidance assistance, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling as well as referral to appropriate

outside counseling group(s), may be provided.

8. **Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling** -These services will be in place to support a youth's transition throughout school, achievement of a diploma or GED or preparation for post high school "next steps." Comprehensive guidance and counseling are an integral part of the "support" system that advances high-quality learning and job opportunities. It promotes successful transitions by providing opportunities for youth to acquire and master critical academic, career, personal, social and community involvement skills. These skills enable youth to learn, work, interact with others and contribute.
9. **Adult Mentoring** -An adult mentor is a person who devotes time to a youth to help them achieve their potential and discover their strengths. These services provide youth with assistance in defining career goals and objectives that can include job shadowing and career exploration, encouraging positive choices and supporting academic achievement.
10. **Follow-Up Services** - Follow-up services are conducted for both in-school and out-of-school youth. Follow-up services include, but are not limited to, career exploration, group or individual meetings to discuss career and education opportunities, use of the internet to research education and career information, mentoring, tutoring and job shadowing. Follow-up services are conducted by YSS, Inc. and are provided for a period of no less than 12-months. The scope of these services may vary on an individual basis and may be more intensive for youth who participated in a youth program(s) for longer periods of time.
11. **Financial Literacy Education** - Services provided include helping youth create household budgets, initiate savings plans and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building or other savings goals, manage spending, credit and debt including credit card debt, be aware of the availability and significance of credit reports and credit scores in obtaining credit including determining their accuracy and their effect on credit terms, understand, evaluate and compare financial products services and opportunities, etc. These activities also address financial Literacy needs of non-English speakers including providing support through the development and distribution of multilingual financial Literacy and education materials.
12. **Entrepreneurial Skills Training** -This training helps youth develop the skills necessary to start and run their own businesses. It offers youth the opportunity to gain critical skills that will open up a world of possibilities. Youth learn resilience, professionalism, self-confidence, leadership, teamwork and a host of other abilities that will prepare them for a pathway to success.
13. **Labor Market Data** -Youth are provided with access to the most recent labor market data and trends for the region and state that will enable them to acquire the educational skills and training necessary to get good jobs with high wages.
14. **Post-Secondary Education and Training** -Older youth, ages 18 -24, who are eligible to access post-secondary education or training services, may do so through the ITA Program. ITAs are vouchers funded under the WIOA and are used by older youth to access training in high-demand occupations. YSS, Inc. will study the youth's IEP to identify educational and employment goals and activities and the necessary career pathways the youth need to take to achieve their career objectives. The maximum amount of an ITA is \$5,500 per program year not to exceed \$11,500 for up to a 2-years. The maximum amount for the funding of an ITA includes any Supportive Services payments to be received by the older youth.



***M) A Description of the Steps the Local Board will take to ensure as least 20% of Youth Funds are used for Work-Based Training Activities;***

At least 20% of youth funds must be spent on paid and unpaid work experiences that incorporate academic and occupational education for in-school and out-of-school youth. Allowable expenditures beyond wages include staff time spent identifying potential work experiences opportunities, staff time working with employers to develop the work experience, staff time spent working with employers to ensure a successful work experience, staff time spend evaluating the work experience, youth participants' work experience orientation sessions and classroom training or the required academic education component directly. There is an internal tracking form in place for YSS, Inc. staff to use when tracking these expenditures exclusively. These expenditures are reported to the NPWDB, Inc. in monthly and close-out reports. Work experience expenditures are also tracked in the MACC system. The percentage of funds spent on work experiences is calculated based on the total local area youth funds expended for work experiences rather than calculated separately for in-school and out-of-school youth. Administrative costs are not subject to the 20% minimum work experience expenditure requirements.

***N) A Description of the Local Board plan to serve 75% Out-of-School Youth and identify Specific Steps that have been taken to meet this new Goal;***

At least 75% of the region's total youth program budget is allocated and spent on serving out-of-school youth. YSS, Inc. staff tracks funds spent on serving out-of-school youth to the NPWDB, Inc. in monthly and close-out reports in accordance with their contractual agreement. The contractual agreement clearly states that no less than 75% of YSS, Inc.'s total budget award must be spent serving out- of-school youth. The NPWDB, Inc. charts and tracks these expenditures in the MACC system no less than once monthly. To ensure the meeting of this expenditure requirement under the WIOA, YSS, Inc. staff has established effective working relationships with the local school system, alternative schools, juvenile centers, housing authorities and simply through word-of-mouth.

***O) If the Local Area has contracted with Youth Service Providers, provide a List and Description of Services;***

To be eligible to participate in youth programs and services, youth must be between the ages of 14 and 24 and meet WIOA eligibility requirements. YSS, Inc. staff works to develop and implement strategies for connecting youth with meaningful careers or training. Objectives for youth programs and services are two-fold: 1) Providing quality programs and services in high-demand occupations to area youth; and, 2) Developing effective career pathway services that establish linkages with community and technical centers and post-secondary schools that align with labor market demand. YSS, Inc. partners with area businesses, employers, labor organizations, training partners, and philanthropy across all sectors to ensure the delivery of high-quality career pathways for young people.

YOUTH PROVIDER	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES
Youth Services Systems, Inc. (YSS, Inc.)	<p><u>DELIVERY OF THE FOURTEEN (14) REQUIRED PROGRAM ELEMENTS TO BOTH IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>IN-SCHOOL YOUTH ACTIVITIES</u></p> <p>Assessment of academic levels, skill levels, aptitudes and supportive service needs; Industry-specific career exploration and training in family-sustaining employment in either a high wage in a high-demand occupation or in pursuing post-secondary training or education toward viable career pathways. (Whenever possible, in-school youth participants can be dual-enrolled in Occupational Skills Training); Internships or work experiences while completing a high school diploma; Developing skills needed to succeed in post-secondary training or education; Opportunities for career exploration and skill development; Academic preparation through partnerships, career exploration, work readiness training and post-secondary planning. (Whenever possible, in-school youth participants can be dual-enrolled in credit earnings and non-remedial college courses while completing their high school diploma).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ACTIVITIES</u></p> <p>Assessment of academic levels, skill levels, aptitudes and supportive service needs; Identify unsubsidized employment opportunities; Build work readiness skills necessary to succeed in the workplace including helping them gain industry-recognized credentials; Delivery of career pathways employment by placing participants into occupational skills training or paid work experiences while they earn their GED; Develop life skills such as leadership and effective communications; Work experience opportunities. OJT training opportunities; Post-secondary occupational training using ITAs; Opportunities for career exploration and skill development; Apprenticeship opportunities; Internships and job shadowing.</p>

***P) A Description of how the Local Board will provide Basic and Individualized Career Services to Customers. The Description should explain how Individualized Career Services will be coordinated across Programs/Partners in the American Job Centers, including Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF and Adult Education and Literacy Activities. This Description should specify how the Local Area will coordinate with these Programs to prevent Duplication and improve Services to Customers.***

To streamline the referral and service delivery process, One Stop Operator, core and required partners have coordinated the delivery of basic and individualized career services. We have developed a Common Referral and Information Release Form and a Common Intake Form that is being used by partners. Participant information through the MACC system is shared. Steps taken have reduced the burden on the customer to produce similar information and data multiple times. Basic and/or individualized career services are

provided to customers at the first point of entry into the local workforce development system. Basic career services include a determination of eligibility, an assessment of Literacy and English language proficiency levels, access to labor market data, information about high-demand industry sectors, job search and placement assistance if needed, and performance and program cost information on eligible training providers. Individualized career services include a comprehensive assessment of skills and services needed by the participant, the development of an IEP to identify employment goals, objectives and appropriate combination of services to help the participant achieve his/her employment goals, individual counseling and mentoring, career planning, job readiness and a referral to occupational skills training, if wanted. The type, level and degree of basic or individualized career services to be delivered is dependent on the customer's needs and desires as identified in the initial assessment. If the first point of entry is at an American Job Center, an orientation to all available services is conducted by One Stop Operator staff for customers seeking employment and/or training information. The orientation process allows customers to access a wide range of career services, inclusive of core and required partner services. Basic or individualized career services are also offered to customers during workshops conducted by WorkForce West Virginia staff, a core partner not located at an American Job Center, basic or individualized career services can be provided by the partner at their office location. If a partner determines the customer would be best served through individualized career services, the partner will make a referral(s) for other/additional services. If customers access career services through core or required partner programs another partner can provide additional individualized career services and make an appropriate referral. Any assessments done on customers either at an American Job Center or through a partner program(s) is shared among programs. If an IEP is developed for the customer, it too will be shared among all programs. The same goes for case management notes. These steps eliminate duplication and maximize available services and funding. The lines of communications have been significantly streamlined at the American Job Center in Wheeling because Title I programs, WorkForce West Virginia, the WVDRS and AE are co-located there either on a full-time or part-time basis. The same can be said for other American Job Centers in the region, but on a limited basis. Co-location allows us to blend our services so they are more responsive to customers' needs. One Stop Operator staff is familiar with TANF programs and refer customers to TANF or Food Stamps programs when deemed necessary. In 2018, the WVDHHR began offering its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) out of the American Job Center in Wheeling. The SNAP Program is made available to eligible individuals from Hancock, Brooke, Ohio and Marshall counties only. Regular, ongoing conversations and meeting are held between One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff to share information about programs and services and work for continuous improvement of customer-focused processes at regional American Job Centers.

***Q) Describe the Local Board's Follow-Up Policy. This should include Follow-Up Requirements, Frequency of Contact and Required Documentation.***

Follow-Up services are provided to each adult and youth participating in a WIOA funded program or service. Follow-up services may include referrals to medical or community resources, tracking progress on-the-job, assistance securing a better paying job, career development and further education planning, assistance with work-related problems, adult mentoring and leadership development. Hard copy documentation that supports follow-up services were provided to adult and youth participants are maintained in participant files by One Stop Operator staff. Follow-Up services to adult participants are provided by customer career planner/data control coordinators no less than once a quarter for a period of

no less than 12-months upon completion of training or exit from the local workforce development system. Documentation of follow-up services is entered into the case notes section of the MACC system by customer career planner/data control coordinators. Hard copy documentation of follow-up services is provided to the region's MACC Coordinator who enters the information in the Outcome Screen Page of the MACC system for that adult participant. Follow-Up services for youth participants who are enrolled in year-long programs and services are conducted by YSS, Inc. for a period of no less than 12 months upon - completion of the program. Follow-Up services for older youth enrolled in the ITA Program are conducted by customer career planner/data control coordinators. Documentation of follow-up services is entered into the case notes section of the MACC system by either YSS, Inc. staff or customer career planner/data control coordinators. Hard copy documentation of follow-up services is provided to the region's MACC Coordinator who enters the information in the Outcome Screen Page of the MACC system for that youth participant. During each quarter for adults and each month for youth, Follow-Up contacts are made to the participant to confirm whether or not he/she is employed. Adult and youth participants who are not working, or enrolled in advanced training, may request help in securing additional needed services. Follow-Up services are done each quarter after an adult or youth participant completed training or exits. Even though, performance measures are based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter at employment or exit, we begin providing follow-up services during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter and continue through the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to make certain we do not lose contact with the participant, to ensure all participant data is captured and entered into the MACC system and to ensure participants are getting all the services needed. The scope of follow-up services may vary on an individual basis depending on the participant's needs. Follow-Up services help participants complete training and/or maintain employment and provides a continuous link to the local workforce development system as a whole. Follow-Up contact is meaningful and client-centered. It can be a simple phone call or text or a one-on-one visit.

## **SECTION 5: WAGNER-PEYSER FUNCTIONS**

### ***A) A Description of Plans and Strategies and assurances concerning Maximizing Coordination of Services under the Wagner-Peyser Act and Services provided in the Local Area through the American Job Center Delivery System to improve Service Delivery and avoid Duplication of Services;***

Wagner-Peyser staff is present at each regional American Job Center. They are fully engaged in the delivery of American Job Center programs and services to job seeking and employer customers. Wagner-Peyser staff delivers many basic and individualized career services to customers at American Job Centers. Wagner-Peyser staff conducts regular job search workshops for customers. WIOA Employment and Training programs and services are discussed at these workshops. The NPWDB, Inc. and core and required partners developed a Common Referral and Information Release Form and a Common Intake Form that are being used by core and required partners. Participant information is shared in the MACC system. Wagner-Peyser staff hosts employer job fairs and recruiting events with One Stop Operator staff and other core and required partners. They share the following information and data with One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff: State and local workforce data which will allow individuals, employers and Training Providers to obtain information related to job opportunities, labor supply, labor market and workforce trends within particular high-demand industries. Roles and responsibilities for Wagner-Peyser programs will be outlined in the MOU. Wagner-Peyser staff serves on the Board of Directors and the BST. Wagner-Peyser

staff provided input on this local plan and collaborated with the NPWDB, Inc., core and required partners in the development and implementation of a regional Strategic Plan that it is in alignment with WIOA regulations and the Board of Director's goals.

***B) A Description of how the Local Board will utilize the Wagner-Peyser Program to provide access to Local Workforce Development Services for Unemployment Insurance Claimants;***

Individuals receiving unemployment benefits are provided with regular workshops and informational sessions to help them get back to work as quickly as possible. Due to co-location, Wagner-Peyser staff works closely with the NPWDB, Inc. and other core and required partners to assess individuals who have barriers to return to work and quickly enroll them in programs and services under dislocated worker funding.

***C) If applicable, a Description of how the Local Board will ensure that Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in the Local Area will be provided Employment Services.***

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) Outreach Specialist will conduct outreach to employed and unemployed MSFWs who are not visiting the WorkForce West Virginia Office to ensure these workers are aware and have access to employment, training and supportive services. This information will be provided either written or verbally and in a language readily understood by MSFWs. While conducting outreach, the Specialist will use the specified application to offer MSFWs the full range of employment services, benefits and protections, including the full range of counseling, testing and training services. Core and required partner staff, like the community college and higher education, social service agencies, etc. will contact employers and provide services as well. Outreach efforts will also be coordinated with public and private service agencies as deemed necessary.

**SECTION 6: TITLE II – ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY FUNCTIONS**

***A) A Description of how the Local Board will coordinate Workforce Development Activities in the Local Area integrating the Provisions of Adult Education and Literacy Activities under Title II of WIOA including, but not limited to, the implementation of the Career Pathways Model;***

The Mountain State Educational Services Cooperative (MSESC) is the regional Provider of Adult Education and Literacy services through the WV Adult Ed Program. Adult Education staff is co-located at the American Job Center in Wheeling and is available on an as-needed basis at the other American Job Centers in the region. The NPWDB, Inc. has had a long-standing, effective working relationship with MSESC, and RESA 6 (Regional Education Service Agency 6) before that, for a number of years. They facilitate education services and provide basic Literacy and AE Services to those in need of their services throughout each county in the region. MSESC partners with the NPWDB, Inc. in the development and delivery of Career Pathways Bridge and Pre-Bridge Programs in high-demand sectors. They also: Assess the Adult Education and Literacy needs of customers at American Job Centers, and other points of service, and accept appropriate referrals for services; Conduct outreach, intake and orientation services; Provide academic support to adults who are preparing for the High School Equivalency Test (GED), post-secondary transition or other secondary level credential options; Provide English for Speakers and other Language Instruction Services; Assist the NPWDB, Inc. with providing Customized Training for employers; Provide technology

training that combines workplace training with related technology instruction which may include cooperative education and result in eligibility for an industry standard credential; and, Collect participant data and complete progress reports that are then relayed to other core and required partners. Roles and responsibilities for Adult Education and Literacy activities are outlined in the MOU. A representative from MDESC serves on the Board of Directors, the BST and the Youth Committee. MDESC staff provided input on this Local Plan and collaborated with the NPWDB, Inc., core and required partners in the development and implementation of a regional Strategic Plan that is aligned with the WIOA regulations and the Board of Director's goals. The Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success (SPOKES) Program, which was created by the West Virginia Department of Education's (WVDOE's) Office of Adult Education, is offered by MDESC at various locations throughout the region which is available for those who qualify for the WV Works Program through the Department of Health Services (DOHS, formerly referred to as DHHR).

***B) A Description of how the Local Board will coordinate Efforts with Title II Providers to align Basic Skills and English Language Assessment. The Description should include:***

***1. An Outline of the agreed upon Steps that will be taken to align Basic Education Skills and English Language Assessment within the Local Area, including, but not limited to, any Memorandum of Understanding entered in by the Workforce Development and Adult Learning Partners;***

An outline of agreed upon steps taken to align AE skills and English language assessments in the region is included in the MOU between the NPWDB, Inc. and the MDESC, the provider of AE and Literacy activities in the region. MDESC provides assessment and instructional services in academic and life skills and English language skills. In an effort to align assessments, the NPWDB, Inc. and core partners ensure the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) is administered to participants in need of skills remediation. MDESC is charged with the sole responsibility of conducting English language assessments for those participants in need of this type of assessment on behalf of the NPWDB, Inc. and other core and required partners. Using common standardized assessment tools facilitates accurate information shared among the NPWDB, Inc., core and required partners.

***2. An Identification of how Assessment Scores will be shared among WIOA Title I Areas and Title II Providers in consideration of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);***

A universal Referral Form was developed and includes basic demographic information and participant assessment scores. An Information Release Statement is included in the Referral Form and signed by participants giving us authority to share their information and assessment scores. The Referral Form is sent to the contact person(s) for the One Stop Operator, core and required partners. Information contained in the Referral Form is also entered into the MACC system by the appropriate stakeholder. One Stop Operator, core and required partners use the MACC system to gain access to pertinent participant information.

***3. An Identification of who will conduct which of the approved Assessments (including Trade Participants), and when such Assessments will be conducted, consistent with this Policy;***

In addition to MDESC administering the TABE test to participants, One Stop Operator staff is trained to administer the TABE test to participants as well. The TABE test is used to assess all participants at American Job Centers. Wagner-Peyser staff administers the TABE test to trade participants. The WVDRS administers

specific assessments to individuals with disabilities. Once a participant decides on a training of his/her choice, the training provider may require other specific assessments which they will be responsible for administering.

***4. An Outline of how the Local Area will coordinate Testing between Workforce Development and Adult Education Providers; and,***

One Stop Operator staff assesses participants who are eligible for participation in WIOA funded programs and services. If participants are identified as lacking a high school diploma or English language proficiency, they are referred to MDESC for appropriate services. Referrals are made to and from MDESC as appropriate.

***5. An Outline of how the Local Area will ensure that Test Administrators are trained in accordance with the Policy and applicable Testing Guidelines as set forth by the applicable Test Publisher.***

One Stop Operator and MDESC staff are responsible for training core partners to use the TABE test as an assessment tool.

***C) A Description of how the Local Board will ensure that the Individual appointed to represent Title II Services on the Board will coordinate with all Title II Grant Administration in the Local Area in a Uniform, Regular and Consistent Manner;***

Providers of Title II Services are represented on the Board of Directors and are members on some of the board's sub-committees, such as the One Stop Committee and the Youth Committee.

***D) A Description of how Adult Education Services will be provided in the American Job Center System within the Local Area.***

AE services are provided at the American Job Center in Wheeling on a regular basis and at the other American Job Centers in the region on an as-needed.

**SECTION 7: VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION FUNCTIONS**

***A) A Description of the Cooperative Agreements between the Local Board or other Local Entities described in Section 101(a)(11) (B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Local Office of a designated State Agency or designated State unit administering Programs carried out under Title I of such Act and subject to Section 121(f) in accordance with Section 1010(a)(11) of such Act with respect to Efforts that will enhance the Provision of Services to Individuals with Disabilities and to other Individuals, such as Cross-Training of Staff, Technical Assistance, Use and Sharing of Information, Cooperative Efforts with Employers and other Efforts at Cooperation, Collaboration and Coordination;***

The NPWDB, Inc. partners with the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS), a core partner, to further enhance the delivery of services for individuals with disabilities. This working relationship is formalized through a MOU between the NPWDB, Inc. and the WVDRS. A WVDRS representative serves on the Board of Directors and sub-committee "The Committee to Assist Individuals with Disabilities." WVDRS is an active partner at regional American Job Centers. A WVDRS representative is a key member of the American Job Center's BST. WVDRS staff provided input on this Local Plan and collaborated with the One Stop Operator, core and required partners in the development and implementation of a regional Strategic Plan that is aligned with WIOA regulations and the Board of Director's goals. Some of the services the

WVDRS provides to individuals with disabilities are: Intake and orientation; A comprehensive assessment; Development of IEP for participants; Guidance and counseling; Follow-Up services; and, Supportive services. Programs and devices for individuals with disabilities are coordinated through regular cross-training sessions of One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff. WVDRS staff provides One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff with ongoing training on American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliancy, Tele-printer (TTY), benefits, counseling and disability awareness and sensibility, programmatic and physical accessibility, serving individuals with disabilities that require Supportive services, disability etiquette, sensitivity training and assistive technology. WVDRS staff also provides specialized technical assistance, to One Stop Operator staff, core and required partner staff when needed and on an individualized basis. As a result, One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff is better able to identify advanced opportunities for individuals with disabilities as well as the possibility for co-enrollment. In order to meet business needs and expectation of current and future workers, WVDRS staff gathers and collects information about employer needs, which is shared with the One Stop Operator and other core and required partners to optimize its coordination with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for individuals with disabilities. WVDRS staff takes a multi-faceted approach. They use their own personnel in addition to partnering with the local workforce development board to coordinate with employers across the State. The WVDRS has specific program and strategies to identify employment and career exploration opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The Employer Services section of WVDRS specializes in providing employers with disabilities- related information, services and pre-screened job seekers. Employers are provided with business options and assistance in: Staffing; Employee retention strategies; Education on disability- related issues; Job accommodations; and, Information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities. WVDRS staff provides the following additional services to employers: Consultation and training for potential employees who have a disability; Technical assistance on ADA; Accessibility options and solutions; Employer on-site disability awareness training; and, Information on tax credits available to participating employers. Direct contact with employers is key to identifying competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for individuals with disabilities. WVDRS staff uses labor market data to identify employers in high-demand industries. WorkForce West Virginia has a large database of both job seekers and job openings in the State. The One Stop Operator, core and required partners are able to tap into this database to identify statewide employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

***B) A Description of how Individuals with Disabilities will be serviced through the American Job Center System in the Local Area.***

Adaptable equipment and software are already in place and ready for use at regional American Job Centers. Through a MOU with the WVDRS, individuals who need specialized equipment not available at American Job Centers are referred to the WVDRS. Youth with disabilities are encouraged to participate in Youth Programs and Services. The universal Participant Referral Form being developed for use between the One Stop Operator, core and required partners will enable individuals, in particular those with disabilities, to connect with programs and services they need. The goal is to ensure that information and services provided at American Job Centers are readily accessible to this target group.

**SECTION 8: JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT FUNCTIONS**



***A) A Description of how the Local Board will provide Priority of Service to Veterans and their eligible Spouses;***

Priority of services will be afforded to Veterans and their eligible spouses at the point of entry to the local workforce development system. They will be made aware of the full array of employment and training programs and services available to them. Veterans and their eligible spouses who are determined to have barriers to employment will be referred to appropriate Wagner-Peyser staff for intensive case management services. Wagner-Peyser staff will work closely with Veterans and/or their eligible spouses to identify and remove any barriers to employment to ensure they have the skills necessary to meet the demand of area businesses. The referral of a Veteran, and their eligible spouses, who has been determined to have a significant barrier to employment, should be made to appropriate Wagner-Peyser staff. Wagner-Peyser staff will further assess eligibility for Disabled Veteran Outreach Program services. The NPWDB, Inc. will work diligently to increase access to career services and work-based training programs for Veterans and their eligible spouses. We will work to increase employer use of work-based training programs as an incentive for them to hire Veterans or their eligible spouses.

***B) A Description of how the Local Board will engage the Local "Veterans Employment Representative" in providing Services to Local Businesses.***

The local WorkForce West Virginia Employer Services Representative works specifically with area businesses. This staff member also serves as a member of the BST.

**SECTION 9: FISCAL, PERFORMANCE AND OTHER FUNCTIONS**

***A) An Identification of the Entity responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds described in Section 107(d)(12)(B)(I)(III) as determined by the Chief Elected Official or the Governor under Section 107(d)(12)(B)(i);***

As determined by the LEO consortium, NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff serves as the fiscal agent, as well as the grant recipient, for the receipt and distribution of WIOA funds in the region in accordance with WIOA regulations. Practices and procedures implemented within the internal financial system employ a checks and balances system to ensure continuous accountability of WIOA funds and property. Funds are used solely for WIOA purposes. All financial information is kept on site at the NPWDB, Inc. Office. Federal and state oversight entities can readily access financial information as needed and necessary.

***B) A Description of Financial Sustainability of the American Job Center Services with Current Funding Levels, and a Description of the Ability to make Adjustments should Funding Levels change;***

WIOA allocation formulas are used by the Governor of WV to determine local workforce development systems' funding amounts and play a significant role in the sustainability of American Job Centers. An IFA is used to identify, accumulate and distribute allowable shared infrastructure, operational and other additional costs in accordance with the WIOA and identifies allocation methods that will be used for distributing costs. The IFA is used to support the appropriate distribution of regional American Job Centers overall operational costs to contributing core and required, and non-required, partners. When contributing to American Job Centers' operational and infrastructure costs, parties to the IFA will comply with the Section 121 (h) of the WIOA and all other laws, circulars, regulations, etc. depending on contributing core and

required partners,' and non-required partners, organization type(s) and funding source(s). One Stop Operator management and fiscal staff will routinely review and reconcile the budget(s) to actual costs as appropriate, but by no less than once every 6-months. One Stop Operator management and fiscal staff will provide all contributing core and required, and non-required, partners and the NPWDB, Inc. with a quarterly expenditure report for each American Job Center. This report will be due to stakeholders by no later than 15- days after the end of the quarter being reported. The report for the last quarter of the program year will be due to contributing core and required, and non-required, partners by no later than August 15<sup>th</sup>. A contributing core and required, or non-required, partner may request to review any American Job Center-related invoice, bill, fee, etc. at any time. The IFA is part of the MOU A new IFA and/or MOU may be put in place no less than once every 3 program years to ensure appropriate funding contribution levels and the effective delivery of career and training programs, activities and services to customers by core and required, and non-required, partners. The IFA may not be effective for more than 1 year without annual review, reaffirmation/approval by core and required partners.

***C) A Description of the Competitive Process to be used to award the Sub-Grants and Contracts in the Local Area for Activities carried out under this Title including Risk Assessment of potential Sub-Grantees and Contracts;***

**PROCESS TO AWARD FUNDS – GOODS AND SERVICES**

The NPWDB, Inc. has a procurement policy in place that is compliant with the Uniform Code and State policies. Additionally, procedures and practices were developed in accordance with WIOA requirements, as well as U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) guidelines, to oversee the procurement, control and disposition of property. Sub-Grantees and contractors purchasing property with WIOA funds will contractually be required to adhere to the same WIOA and DOL guidelines for the purchase and management of property. The Property Officer completes a Supply Request Form detailing supplies needed by staff on an as-needed basis. The Executive Director, or Assistant Director, must sign the Supply Request Form, indicating approval, before any purchases can be made. NPWDB, Inc. staff will purchase only American- made equipment and products whenever possible. Purchases of supplies or 1-time services of less than \$3000 may be made at the discretion of the Executive Director, or Assistant Director, without competitive quotations but should be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers. Fixed price type contracts such as office cleaning, printing of contracts, etc. are procured on a competitive proposal basis of written quotations electronically and by direct mailings. Risk assessment factors are detailed in the proposal to ensure adequate delivery of services and high-quality of supplies. No less than annually, an inventory will be taken of all equipment and property, including hardware and software. At least 3 quotations should be obtained if possible. If a sole source contract is awarded by the NPWDB, Inc. one or more of the following conditions have occurred: There is prior approval from the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity; The item or service is available only from 1 source; a public exigency or emergency exists; or, Competition was determined to be inadequate. If there is a supplier or Service Provider who has previously exhibited a pattern of failing to provide high-quality supplies or adequate services, the NPWDB, Inc. will not contract with that supplier or service provider in the future.

**PROCESS TO AWARD FUNDS - ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES**

The NPWDB, Inc. competitively and openly solicits bids for programs and/or services via a RFP process

electronically and by direct mailings. The Board of Director's One Stop Committee, with assistance from NPWDB, Inc. staff, is responsible for reviewing RFPs received and making recommendations for funding to the Board of Directors. The criteria for an award of funding is based on: Past performance, if applicable; Cost effectiveness; Program design; Demonstrated need for a particular type of high-demand training; Demonstrated overall program effectiveness; Group(s) targeted for services; Placement and retention efforts; Ability of the eligible provider(s) to meet performance goals; The ability to meet administrative; and, Fiscal grant responsibilities. A Program Evaluation Form is used to rate complete RFPs. Evaluation Forms are scored, averaged and totaled. The One Stop Committee then provides their recommendation(s) to the Board of Directors, which includes a proposed level of funding, among other things. The Board of Directors has final approval of all contracts awarded to an eligible provider(s). If a provider is not awarded funds, the bidder is provided an opportunity to appeal the Board of Director's decision in accordance with the RFP. The NPWDB, Inc. uses a performance-based contracting method with an eligible provider(s).

### **PROCESS TO AWARD FUNDS - YOUTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

About every 3 program years, the Board of Directors, on the recommendation of its Youth Committee, competitively and openly solicits a sub-grantee(s) to deliver youth programs and services to in-school and out-of-school youth via a RFP process. The successful bidder(s) must provide youth programs and services in all 6 counties in the region. Solicitation of a sub-grantee(s) is done on a competitive basis electronically and by direct mailings. The Youth Committee, with assistance from NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff, is responsible for reviewing RFPs received and making recommendations for funding to the Board of Directors. The criteria for an award of funding is based on: Past performance, if applicable; Cost effectiveness; Demonstrated overall program effectiveness; Youth group(s) targeted for services; Placement and retention efforts in offered education or employment programs; Ability of the sub-grantee(s) to meet performance goals with prior grant funding; Level of customer satisfaction with past programs; Ability to meet administrative and fiscal grant responsibilities; The ability to provide an objective assessment of academic levels skills levels and service needs of youth participants; Effective delivery of high-quality career pathways services that include education and employment goals; The delivery of activities that lead to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized evaluation; Preparation for post-secondary education and training; The delivery of programs and services that provide strong links between academic and occupational education preparation for unsubsidized employment and effective connections to employment; and, The ability to effectively deliver the 14 program elements identified in WIOA. A Program Evaluation Form is used to rate complete RFPs. Evaluation Forms are scored, averaged and totaled. The Youth Committee then provides their recommendation(s) to the Board of Directors, which includes a proposed level of funding. The Board of Directors has final approval of all contracts awarded to sub-grantee(s). YSS, Inc. has delivered youth programs and services in the region for the past 9 program years. YSS, Inc. has continually met and/or exceeded performance measures. YSS, Inc. staff is housed at regional American Job Centers to ensure youth have easy access to available WIOA Title I Youth Workforce Investment Activities. YSS, Inc. offers on and off-site program programs, services and activities on a daily basis at regional American Job Centers. Services include: Improving educational achievement of youth; Preparing youth for success in employment; Supporting youth during and after services; and, Developing youths' potential to become productive citizens and leaders. Youth services are aligned with the vision and

goals of the WIOA and WorkForce West Virginia. Youth services are provided in an efficient, cost-effective manner. If a sub-grantee(s) is not awarded funds, the sub-grantee is provided an opportunity to appeal the Board of Director's decision in accordance with the RFP. The NPWDB, Inc. uses a performance-based contracting method with sub-grantees, like YSS, Inc.

***D) A Description of the Local Levels of Performance negotiated with the Governor and Chief Elected Official pursuant to Section 116 (c) to be used to measure the Performance of the Local Area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the Performance of the Local Fiscal Agent, where appropriate, Eligible Providers under Subtitle B and the American Job Center Delivery System in the Local Area;***

The WIOA creates a single set of performance measures for adults across all core programs, including occupational training and AE programs and a similar set of performance measures across all youth programs and services. Negotiated performance levels provide a means for the public to assess how effectively the local workforce development system is in providing high-quality programs and services to customers and helping unemployed individuals find family-sustaining employment in high-demand occupations. Negotiated levels of performance account for challenges in serving certain target groups and account for the number of participants steered toward career pathways. Levels of performance include a set of goals for adults, dislocated workers and youth in terms of: Employment; Median earnings; Credential attainment rate; and, Measurable skill gains. The NPWDB, Inc. and core partners are committed to meeting and/or exceeding assigned performance levels by establishing a highly functioning local workforce development system. The NPWDB, Inc. adheres to established performance measures for core programs as a way to support greater integration of services. More coordinated data sharing enables the NPWDB, Inc. to accurately evaluate program performance to ensure the employment and training programs we are funding are effective. Meeting and/or exceeding negotiated performance levels helps ensure more adult and dislocated worker job seekers are placed in career pathways and related employment while earning a family-sustaining wage. Youth participants without a GED or high school diploma are required to obtain targeted credentials while working in occupational skills training. Negotiated performance levels illustrate a commitment in serving individuals with barriers to employment. The NPWDB, Inc. works with core partners to improve data sharing, including data from unemployment insurance wage records. The NPWDB, Inc. tracks the number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each core program, with specific breakdowns by sub-population, on a quarterly basis throughout the program year. The NPWDB, Inc. also reports the number of individuals with barriers to employment that are served in adult and dislocated worker programs, with specific breakdowns by subpopulations, race ethnicity, sex and age on quarterly basis.

**Program Year 2024 - 2025 levels of performance for the local workforce development system have not been negotiated at this time.**

*WIOA ADULT*	PY 24	PY 25
Employment (Q2 Post Exit)		
Employment (Q4 Post Exit)		
Median Earnings b v		
Credential Rate		
Measurable Skill Gain		
Customer/Employer Satisfaction		
*WIOA DISLOCATED WORKER*		
Employment (Q2 Post Exit)		
Employment (Q4 Post Exit)		
Median Earnings		
Credential Rate		
Measurable Skills Gain		
Customer Employer Satisfaction		
*WIOA YOUTH*		
Placement in Employment, Education, Training (Q2 Post Exit)		
Placement in Employment, Education, Training (Q4 Post Exit)		
Median Earnings		
Credential Rate		
Measurable Skills Gain		
Registration at Local American Job Centers		
Employment Preparation (for Region 5 Youth Provider Subcontractor(s))		
*LABOR EXCHANGE*		
Employment (Q2 Post Exit)		
Employment (Q4 Post Exit)		
Median Earnings		

**E) A Description of the Actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a High Performing Board. This should include a Description of the Process used by the Local Board to review and evaluate Performance of the Local American Job Center(s) and the One Stop Operator;**

The NPWDB, Inc. has a history of: Providing strategic leadership; Maintaining fiscal and programmatic accountability; and, Good performance. The NPWDB, Inc. aligns programs and services with local, state and federal priorities. The NPWDB, Inc. refers to federal performance measures to evaluate performance of sub-grantees, contractors, the One Stop Operator and American Job Center activities no less than twice each program year. Monitoring performance measures this frequently allows us an opportunity to correct any performance deficiencies promptly. The NPWDB, Inc. works closely with the WorkForce West Virginia Office to track performance measures on a quarterly basis. The NPWDB, Inc. uses only performance-based contractual agreements. The NPWDB, Inc. and its core and required partners developed a Strategic Plan for the region that focuses on: Staff and partner capacity building; Financial stability; Developing strategic partnerships; Maintaining current labor market information; and, Initiating effective community and employer outreach efforts. NPWDB, Inc., One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff are encouraged to participate in offered training, like;

training that focuses on meeting performance measures and professional development training. The local workforce development system is evaluated no less than annually to ensure high performance. If any deficiencies are noted, they are addressed swiftly.

***F) A Description, including a Copy of the Local Area's Individual Training Account Policy. The Description should include Information such as Selection Process, Dollar Limits, Duration;***

ITAs are used as a mechanism for providing WIOA eligible adults, dislocated workers and older youth, ages 18-24. ITAs empower individuals through: Comprehensive assessment and evaluation of skills, aptitudes, abilities and values. ITAs allow participants to acquire marketable skills in high-demand industries to successfully enter or re-enter the workforce at family-sustaining wages. Individuals in need of training are provided with an in-depth orientation that introduces them to the ITA policies and procedures and the application requirements. Older youth, ages 18 and up, may be enrolled in the ITA Program using adult funds. To be eligible to receive ITA funding, an individual must be determined WIOA eligible. For an individual to secure ITA funding for a college level training program, the individual must have a score of at least a 12<sup>th</sup> grade level in 2 out of 3 areas of reading, math, and/or English on a generally accepted standardized test approved for use in the region. The NPWDB, Inc. uses the TABE and the region's Career Pathways Manual to assess adults, dislocated workers and older youth. The cost limit for an ITA under WIOA funding is \$5,500 per program year per ITA participant, not to exceed eleven \$11,000 for a maximum period of 2 program years.

***G) A Description of how Training Services under Chapter 3 of Subtitle B will be provided in accordance with Section 134 (c) (3) (G), including, if Contracts for the Training Services will be used, how the use of such Contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Accounts under that Chapter and how the Local Board will ensure Informed Customer Choice in the Selection of Training Programs regardless of how the Training Services are to be provided;***

Training is made available to those customers in need of training services to obtain or regain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment. A training priority is to support programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials aligned with high-demand industry sectors in the region. In any case, training services selected must be directly linked to high-demand employment opportunities in the local area or the region, or in another area where the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. Training services are made available to eligible individuals who have been determined in need of training services through assessment or evaluation and through the delivery of career planning services. The NPWDB, Inc. continues to use ITAs which maximized customer choice. Customers are provided with a copy of the ETPL and are given guidance about the quality and performance of training providers to help them make an informed decision about a training provider. After the customer reviews the data and makes his/her selection of a training provider, the customer is provided with a referral to that training provider. In addition to ITAs, other types of training services that may be provided to eligible individuals are occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional occupations, OJT, incumbent worker training, skills upgrade and retraining, job readiness, AE and Literacy activities and customized training. The NPWDB, Inc. may also decide to select a training program(s) of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the region by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve eligible individuals with barriers to employment. If the NPWDB, Inc. decides to do this, it will be done on a competitive RFP basis and the training program(s) chosen for funding

will be required to enter into a performance-based agreement with the NPWDB, Inc.

***H) A Description of the Process used by the Local Board, consistent with Subsection (d), to provide an Opportunity for Public Comment, including Comment by Representatives of Business and Comment by Representatives of Labor Organizations and input in the Development of the Local Plan, prior to Submission of the Plan;***

The NPWDB, Inc. released a draft of the Local Plan modification on April 16, 2024, making it available for a 14-day public comment period. The draft Local Plan was announced on the NPWDB, Inc. website and in local print media. A hard copy of the draft Local Plan was made available at the NPWDB, Inc. Office, Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. Notification that the draft Local Plan was available for review was electronically sent to stakeholders in the local workforce development system like, the Board of Directors, LEOs, core and required partners, area employers, labor unions, training providers and community-based organizations. If any public comments are received to the draft Local Plan, they will be addressed promptly. A copy of the final version of the Local Plan will again be made available for another 14-day public comment period using the same processes that were used when advertising the draft Local Plan. If any comments are received during that public comment period, the NPWDB, Inc. will address them promptly, including those comments that are in disagreement with Local Plan contents, and include them with the Local Plan. The Local Plan covers the period July 1, 2024-June 30, 2028. The Local Plan is approved by the region's Chief LEO and the Board of Directors. The Local Plan will be updated as necessary.

***I) A Description of how the American Job Centers is utilizing the MACC as the Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information System for Programs carried out under WIOA and Programs carried out by American Job Center Partners;***

The NPWDB, Inc., core and required partners provide customer service through a common data base – the MACC system. When a customer accesses the local workforce development system, One Stop Operator staff assists him/her with identifying goals and the service needed to achieve desired goals. One Stop Operator staff provides intake, registration, skill assessment and an initial needs assessment. One Stop Operator staff is trained to identify services needed for the customer and the appropriate core or required partner(s) he/she will be referred to. Any participant data collected during the intake and initial service delivery is entered into the MACC system. This action results in integrated data collection that core and required partners can access and view. Participant referrals will not require a separate intake process since core and required partner staff are co-located at American Job Centers and because of the shared database. In many cases, customers will not even be aware that they have been transferred from one program to another. The same holds true when customers are receiving services simultaneously. In these cases, transfers are made and services are provided uninterrupted. Employers can have access to the MACC system to do self-postings of job openings and view job seeker searches. The NPWDB, Inc. and WorkForce West Virginia's websites can also be accessed by job seeking customers and employers.

***J) A Description of the Local Board's Procedures for conducting Oversight and Monitoring of its WIOA Activities and those of its Sub-Grantees and Contractors. The Monitoring Plan shall address the Monitoring Scope and Frequency and shall include the following:***

***1. The Roles and Responsibility of Staff facilitating this Procedure;***

Monitoring reviews are conducted by NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff, on behalf of the Board of Directors. Board of Director's sub-committees are responsible for reviewing overall performance of sub-grantees and contractors. The Assistant Director is responsible for monitoring adult and dislocated worker training programs and services and American Job Center program and fiscal operations; The Program Coordinator and the Assistant Director are responsible for monitoring youth programs and services; and, The MACC Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the performance levels of adult, dislocated worker and youth training programs and services, as well as participant performance of regional American Job Centers. The Executive Director reviews and approves results/outcomes of all monitoring reports.

***2. A Requirement that all Sub-Grantee Agreements and Contracts be monitored at least annually;***

There is at least 2 announced monitoring reviews performed each program year for each contracted sub-grantee and/or contractor. Should any deficiencies or problems be identified, additional monitoring reviews, both announced and unannounced, are conducted throughout the program year.

***3. Procedures for determining that Expenditures have been made against the Cost Categories and within the Cost Limitation specified in the Act and WIOA Regulations;***

A fiscal review occurs every time a payment is made to a sub-grantee or contractor. Expenses are immediately compared to the approved budget(s) before any payments are made. All costs are evaluated to determine whether they are in compliance with applicable WIOA rules and regulations, as well as with local fiscal policies and procedures. Supporting document must accompany each invoice, ITA or participant timesheet to ensure accuracy and compliance. The Fiscal Officer and Assistant Director reviews and approves all requests for payment prior to submission to the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for final approval of all payments to be made. If any discrepancies are noted, they will be addressed and resolved prior to compensation. Sub-grantees and contractors submit monthly financial reports to the NPWDB, Inc. where expenditures will be compared against funding stream and line item as detailed and approved in the contractual agreement or financial arrangement. The Executive Director reviews internal fiscal reports prepared by the Fiscal Officer no less than once a month. Any problems/issues identified are corrected immediately. The Treasurer of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee review fiscal reports on a monthly basis. MACC-generated fiscal reports reflecting expenditures each quarter are prepared by the subcontracted CPA, Fiscal Officer and the Assistant Director. Any other fiscal reports required by WorkForce West Virginia Office are completed in the MACC system.

***4. Procedures for determining Compliance with other Provisions of the Act and Regulations and other Applicable Laws and Regulations, including the Methods of Monitoring to be used for Sub-Grantees and Contractors;***

The following activities are monitored, as applicable, through onsite visits, desk reviews, data collection, file reviews, policies reviews, or a combination of activities:

- a) Program Goals and Objectives;
- b) Program Quality;
- c) Procurement;



- d) Fiscal Accountability;
- e) Labor Standard;
- f) Audit/Audit Resolution;
- g) Actual Expenditures;
- h) Grievance Procedures;
- i) Equal Opportunity;
- j) Expenditures against Cost Categories and Limitations;
- k) Provisions of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA);
- l) Property Management;
- m) Internal Monitoring;
- n) Administration Procedures;
- o) Program Performance;
- p) Program Accountability;
- q) Eligibility Verification; and,
- r) Other Activities as determined by the Board of Directors.

The NPWDB, Inc. provides advance notification to sub-grantees and contractors prior to monitoring reviews. Unannounced visits are made to sub-grantees and contractors when there is a reason to believe such visits are necessary. A Desk Monitoring Report is used for desk reviews to ensure all pertinent records and information is documented.

Data is collected, reviewed and analyzed for all grant-related activities. A desk review includes fiscal, program and general compliance. An Onsite Monitoring Report is used for onsite visits to ensure that pertinent data is being collected, reviewed and analyzed. This report includes administrative, fiscal, program and general compliance. Additionally, Monitoring Reports include the dates of the review and areas covered, a listing of findings, if applicable, a description of the findings or violation, if applicable and recommendations for each finding which will set forth the most appropriate action that needs to be taken to correct noted deficiencies or violation, if applicable, and a signature page that is signed by NPWDB, Inc. staff conducting the review, the sub-grantee's or contractor's representative and the Executive Director. All findings resulting from a monitoring review are clearly documented in the Monitoring Report. The documentation includes a description of the specific violation or finding of federal, state laws, policies, regulations or contractual provisions. A monitoring report is prepared and provided to the sub-grantee or contractor within 15 working days of the actual review. Because federal funds are being used, comprehensive monitoring reviews are necessary to ensure that program operations and expenditures are within the guidelines established by federal, state and local cognizant agencies. The monitoring review process allows the NPWDB, Inc. to know what is happening at any given time during a program year and can provide "warning signals" that a deficiency or problem may be developing so that improvement measures or corrective action can be taken swiftly. One of the reasons for the strong emphasis on monitoring is to assist in reducing the possibility of audit exceptions, sanctions, and/or unallowable costs. In addition to monitoring reviews that are conducted by the NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff, Workforce West Virginia and DOL staff also conduct monitoring reviews.

***5. Provisions for the Recording of Findings made by the Recipients' Monitor(s), the forwarding of such Findings to the Sub-Grantee or Contractor for Response and the Recording of all Corrective Actions;***

The analysis of deficiencies and problems usually occurs after the fact. A monitor observes conditions and performance issues caused by events that have already occurred. The process of correcting deficiencies or problems is pro-active and future-oriented. Findings and any deficiencies realized during the monitoring review are documented in the Monitoring Review Report. Findings and deficiencies are discussed with a representative of the sub-grantee or contractor during the exit conference. The representative is provided with a copy of the Monitoring Review Report which will detail findings and deficiencies. Depending on the nature and seriousness of deficiencies or problems, the monitor(s) will request the sub-grantee or contractor develop and submit a Corrective Action Plan to the NPWDB, Inc. for review and comment within 7 working days from receipt of the Monitoring Review Report. The Corrective Action Plan specifically describes the steps and actions that will be put in place to ensure that any noted deficiencies or problems are corrected promptly. Objectives are included in the Corrective Action Plan with specific mention to what is to be done, by whom, how, when, etc. Options may also be mentioned in the Corrective Action Plan providing alternative approaches in resolving any noted deficiencies and problems. The NPWDB, Inc. has 7 working days to accept or reject the submitted Corrective Plan of Action. If the Corrective Action Plan is accepted and approved by the NPWDB, Inc., the monitor(s) will conduct more frequent, special monitoring reviews to ensure continued and ongoing resolution of noted deficiencies or problems. Implementation of corrective action will be closely followed-up on by the monitor(s) to determine to ensure deficiencies and problems have been rectified timely, efficiently and effectively. Failure to respond within 7 working days with a Corrective Action Plan or rejection of the Corrective Action Plan by the NPWDB, Inc. warrants a termination notice which becomes effective 30 working days after receipt of the Corrective Action Plan. After termination results, the NPWDB, Inc. is only liable for appropriate payments of services rendered prior to the termination date. Follow-up monitoring reviews will be determined by the nature of the finding(s) and the sub-grantee's or contractor's response. A follow-up monitoring review may be an onsite review, a desk review or a combination of both.

***6. Provisions of Technical Assistance as Necessary and Appropriate; and,***

Technical assistance is formal or informal training provided to sub-grantees and contractors by a monitor. It can be provided in conjunction with monitoring reviews or independently. Technical assistance is typically provided to strengthen overall program performance, as well as to prevent weaknesses from becoming problem areas that require correction at a later time. It may be as simple as identifying a lack of a procedure or an inappropriate procedure which, if continued, will result in deficiencies or problems. Technical assistance will automatically be provided by the monitor at the start of a contractual agreement period. Thereafter, technical assistance is provided by the monitor as requested and needed or if the monitor feels there is a significant need for additional technical assistance.

***7. Specific Local Policies developed by the Local Board for Oversight of the American Job Center System, Youth Activities and Employment and Training Activities under Title I of WIOA.***

In accordance with the NPWDB, Inc.'s Monitoring Procedures Manual, it is the responsibility of the monitor(s) to ensure that terms, conditions, policies and procedures of all contractual agreements and financial arrangement in place are being adhered to by One Stop Operator staff, sub-grantee and/or contractors. One Stop Operator staff, sub-grantees and/or contractors are expected to adhere to established federal and state policies, procedures, rules, regulations, etc. while doing business with the NPWDB, Inc. Since WIOA funds are being used, comprehensive oversight and monitoring reviews are

necessary to ensure that program operations and expenditures are within the guidelines established by federal, state and local cognizant agencies. The oversight and monitoring review process allows the NPWDB, Inc. to know what is happening at any given time during a program year and can provide “warning signals” that a deficiency and/or problem may be developing so that improvement measures or corrective action can be taken swiftly. Subsequently, the reason for the emphasis on monitoring is to assist in reducing the possibility of audit exceptions, sanctions, and/or unallowable costs. The local workforce development system, sub-grantees or contractor, of youth programs and services, and employment and training activities under Title I of the WIOA are monitored by NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff no less than twice a program year in accordance with the NPWDB, Inc. Monitoring Procedures Manual. Contractual agreements, or financial arrangements, in place with these entities state that regular monitoring reviews will be conducted onsite. In accordance with the NPWDB, Inc. Monitoring Procedures Manual, activities to be monitored include program goals and objectives, program quality, procurement, fiscal accountability, Labor Standard, audit/audit resolution, grievance procedures, EO policies including provisions of the American with Disabilities Act, review of expenditures against cost categories and limitations, property management, program performance and eligibility verification to name a few. Advance notification is provided prior to monitoring reviews. Unannounced visits are made when there is a reason to believe such visits are necessary or could be performed on a sample basis.

***K) A Description of the Local Board’s Policy and Procedures regarding the Handling of Personally Identifiable and Confidential Information;***

A financial software program, QuickBooks, has been installed on the Fiscal Officer’s computer. Access to this program includes password protection. Only the Executive Director, Assistant Director and Fiscal Officer have access to the password identity. The password(s) is kept in a locked, fireproof safe. The Fiscal Officer is responsible for securing all blank checks in a locked, fireproof safe. Only the Executive Director, Assistant Director and Fiscal Officer have a key to the safe. The Executive Director and Fiscal Officer secure all personnel files, which contain personal information in locked, fireproof safes. The payroll register, payroll checks, payroll tax reports and check registers are also kept in the safe. Staff computers, which contain records, documents, etc., also require password protection. NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff only can access said records, documents, etc. on NPWDB, Inc. owned computers. The Executive Director and Assistant Director shall have access to these password identities. The MACC Coordinator/Property Officer keeps equipment and property lists in a locked, fireproof safe. The insurance register, insurance policies and all leases will also be kept in a locked, fireproof safe.

**L) A Description of the Local Board’s Procedures for Handling Grievances and Complaints from Participants and other Interested Parties affected by the Local American Job Center System, including Partners and Service Providers. Provide a Separate Description for the:**

**1. Complaints alleging Discrimination on the Grounds of Race, Color, Religion, Sex, National Origin, Age, Disability, Political Affiliation or Belief and for Beneficiaries only, Citizenship or Participation in any WIOA Title I- Financially Assisted Program or Activity.**

Section 188 of the WIOA, and the implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 37, prohibits exclusion of an individual from participation in, denial of the benefits of, discrimination in, or denial of employment in the administration of or in connection with any programs and activities funded or otherwise financially assisted in whole or in part under Title I of WIOA because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth

or related medical conditions, gender identity, and transgender status), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability or political affiliation or belief, citizenship status, or participation in any WIOA Title-I financially-assisted program or activity. The WIOA's nondiscrimination regulations prohibit discrimination in all aspects of the administration, management and operation of WIOA programs and activities. A complainant must file a complaint within 180-days of the alleged act(s) of discrimination or retaliation. The filing period may be extended for good cause in some limited circumstances. However, only the Director of the Civil Rights Center may extend the filing time. Complaints can be accepted by an employee in an American Job Center or the EO Officer of the NPWDB, Inc. The employee or NPWDB, Inc. EO Officer will immediately accept the complaint and forward the complaint to the WorkForce West Virginia EO Officer. The complainant may file with WorkForce West Virginia or the U.S. Department of Labor, Director of the Civil Rights Center (Federal). Filing a complaint with WorkForce West Virginia does not affect a complainant's right to file a complaint with the CRC if he or she is not satisfied with the resolution provided by WorkForce West Virginia. State complaints may be submitted to: Lea Basford, EO Officer, WorkForce West Virginia, 1900 Kanawha Blvd East, Charleston, WV 25305, Phone: (304) 558-1600, WV Relay7-1-1. Federal complaints may be submitted to: Naomi M. Berry-Perez, Director, U.S. Department of Labor Civil Rights Center (CRC), 200 Constitution Avenue, Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210, Phone: (202) 693-6502, TDD: (202) 693-6515.

### **Forms Used to File Complaint**

- **State Level** - An individual may file a complaint at the state level by completing and submitting the WorkForce West Virginia Discrimination Complaint Form which may be obtained from the WorkForce West Virginia EO office or the NPWDB, Inc.;
- **Federal Level** - Complainant may file a complaint with the Civil Rights Centers by completing and submitting the "Civil Rights Center's Complaint Information and Privacy Act Consent" forms. Forms may be obtained from the WorkForce West Virginia EO Officer or from the CRC. Forms are available electronically on CRC's website, and in hard copy via postal mail upon request. Hard copy complaints may be sent to the CRC. (Reference 29 CFR Part 38.70); and,
- **State Level Complaint Processing** - The complaint may be filed with either the recipient, WorkForce West Virginia (state) or the DOL, CRC (federal). WorkForce West Virginia has chosen mediation as the method of ADR. The complainant will be requested to notify the WorkForce West Virginia EO Officer within - days of receipt of the written notice if the complainant wishes to participate in mediation. Or the complaint can follow the customary state level complaint process. Any person electing to file at the state level shall allow WorkForce West Virginia 90-days from the date of receipt of complaint to process the complaint. (Reference 29 CFR Part 38.72) (If the Notice of Final Action is issued during the 90-day period and the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision, the complainant has a right to file a complaint with the CRC, within thirty (30) days of the date on which the complainant receives the Notice of Final Action). Respondent will be notified that a complaint alleging discrimination has been filed and is being processed.

### ***2. Complaints and Grievances not alleging Illegal Forms of Discrimination. This includes Grievances from Individuals alleging Labor Standard Violations.***

Any WIOA Title I program participant or other interested party adversely affected by a decision or action by the local workforce development system, including decisions by One Stop Operator, core/required partners, and services providers, has the right to file a grievance or complaint with the local workforce development board. It must be filed within 30-days of the date the incident occurred. The local workforce development board shall issue a written decision of a hearing within 60-days. The local workforce development board shall notify the complainant and the respondent of the opportunity for an informal resolution. When the complaint has been resolved through the informal resolution process, the local workforce development board shall attempt to contact the complainant and have him or her provide a written withdrawal of the complaint within 10-days. Hearings on any grievance or complaint shall be conducted within 30-days of filing of a grievance or complaint. The complainant and the respondent must be notified in writing of the hearing 10-days prior to the date of the hearing. The local workforce development board will seek impartial hearing officers. Not later than 60-days after the filing of the - grievance or complaint, the hearing officer shall mail a written decision to both parties by first class mail. Either party has the right to request a review of the decision by the State Review Panel within 10-days of the receipt of the decision. If a complainant does not receive a decision at the local workforce development board level within 60-days of the filing of the grievance or complaint, or receives an adverse decision, the complainant then has the right to file an appeal with the state. The complainant may request a state hearing by submitting a written notice of appeal to: WorkForce West Virginia EO Officer, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Building 3, Suite 300, Charleston, WV 25305. For further explanation of this policy, including State and Federal Level Grievances and Grievance Forms, please refer to Attachment F.

***3. Remedies that may be imposed for a Violation of any Requirement under WIOA Title I, limited to, Suspension or Termination of Payments under the Title; Prohibition of Placement of a Participant with an Employer that has violated any Requirement under WIOA Title I; Reinstatement of an Employer, Payment of Lost Wages and Benefits, and Reestablishment of other Relevant Terms, Conditions and Privileges of Employment, where applicable; and other Equitable Relief as Appropriate.***

Remedies will be tailored to the specific circumstance and violation and may include, but not limited to: Provisions of services, benefit or employment opportunity denied; Monetary payment for loss of employment opportunity or benefit; Disciplinary action against the individual found to have discriminated; Training for individual found to have discriminated and for other appropriate individuals; Nullification of an adverse action; Removal of adverse records or documents from customer's personnel files; and, Preparation of statement of no retaliation.

***M) A Description of the Local Board's Policy and Procedures with regard to Aid, Benefits, Services, Training and Employment, include a Statement of Assurance that you will provide Reasonable Accommodations to qualified Individuals with Disabilities unless providing the Accommodations would cause Undue Hardship;***

In servicing individuals with disabilities, One Stop Operator staff provides reasonable accommodations to allow for full program participation including, but not limited to, providing auxiliary aides and services and ensuring effective communications through alternation formats.

***N) A Description of how the Local Board will ensure Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Description should include how the Local Board will provide Reasonable Accommodations regarding Materials, Technology and Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities. The Description should also include how the Local Board will provide Staff Training and Support for addressing the Needs of Individuals with Disabilities;***

As a condition to the award of financial assistance under WIOA, the NPWDB, Inc. assures that it complies fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the WIOA, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1964, as amended: The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Title II Subtitle a of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs; and, Section 188 of the WIOA Title I, which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medication conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participate in an WIOA Title I financially assisted programs and activities. The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR Part 38 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. The assurance applies to the grant applicants' operation of the WIOA Title I financially assisted programs and activities and to all agreements the grant application makes to carry out the WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the U.S. has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

<b>INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES            NORTHERN PANHANDLE REGION            WITH A DISABILITY            UNDER AGE 65, 2018-2022</b>	
HANCOCK COUNTY	11.9%
BROOKE COUNTY	13.8%
OHIO COUNTY	9.9%
MARSHALL COUNTY	13.7%
WETZEL COUNTY	15.6%
TYLER COUNTY	17.0%
<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b>	<b>13.0%</b>

*US Census Bureau, Quick Facts, July 1, 2023.*

To provide easy access to local workforce development system facilities and programs for individuals with disabilities, the NPWDB, Inc., core and required partners assure compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In local workforce development system facilities, we will be responsible for continued compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations. WVDRS staff regularly meets with One Stop Operator staff to identify opportunities for improvements at regional American Job Centers including, cross-training, technology assisted equipment and materials at regional American Job Centers, coordinating programs and services among all stakeholders to better address the diverse needs of disabled job seekers and reducing duplication of efforts. Regional American Job Centers, core and required partner staff share valuable data among each other in an effort to fully integrate the delivery of programs and services to this target group. One Stop Operator, core and required partner staff

provide individuals with disabilities access to a variety of resources, programs, services and information, including information about available training opportunities. Intensive Supportive Services are provided to help an individual better manage his/her disabilities. MDESC has special, unique programs and activities in place for individuals with disabilities.

***O) A Description of the Local Board's Policy and Procedures in place to ensure that Communications with Individuals with Disabilities, including Individuals with Visual or Hearing Impairment, are as effective as Communications with Others;***

The NPWDB, Inc. works with sign language translators to deliver programs and services to this target group, when necessary. Sign language translators are provided by the WVDRS. Assistive technology is available at regional American Job Centers that includes technology for the visually impaired.

***P) A Description of the Steps the Local Board will take to meet the Language Needs of Limited English-Speaking Individuals who seek Services or Information. The Description should include how the Local Board proposes that Information will be disseminated to Limited English-Speaking Individuals;***

For individuals who speak limited English, written materials in Spanish and other languages are available, as required and use interpreting services offered by One Stop Operator and partnering agency staff.

***Q) A Description of the Local Board's Procurement System, including a Statement of Assurance that the Procedures conform to the Standards in USDOL Regulations set forth in 2 CFR 200.***

The NPWDB, Inc. gives its assurance that procedures will conform to the Standards in USDOL Regulations set forth in 2 CFR 200. The NPWDB, Inc. will comply with 2 CFR 200.318 which states non-federal entities will reflect applicable state laws and regulations "which conform to applicable federal law." All purchases must also follow West Virginia Code Section 5A-3-1 et seq., and the Code of State Rules Section 148-1-1 et seq. The Purchasing Division Procedure Handbook can be found at:

<http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Handbook/default.html>. Purchases of supplies or one time services of \$3000 or less may be made without competitive quotations, but should be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers. All purchases must have prior written approval by the Executive Director. All purchases over \$3000 are made on the basis of formal written quotations from an adequate number of qualified sources. At least 3 quotations must be attained. All purchases must have prior written approval by the Executive Committee. Selection of a service provider (s) will be done via a competitive bid or a RFP format. Selection of a service provider(s) will be based on the vendor's ability to demonstrate prior effectiveness of performance, provide fiscal accountability and cost effectiveness and serve the target population. When appropriate and necessary, consultant services or professional services are publicly solicited. Once the solicitation process is completed, a Professional Services Rating System Form is completed by the Property Officer. The Executive Director, or the Executive Committee, will then review, and approve, the Property Officer's recommendation on this Form. Once an award has been approved, a written contract is initiated between the NPWDB, Inc. and the vendor or service provider. A written contract will clearly define the work to be performed. The written contract will be signed by the Executive Director or Assistant Director and the vendor or service provider. The qualifications of the consultant and reasonableness of fees will be considered in hiring consultants. Consultant services will be paid for as long as work is performed. The Board of Directors or the Executive Committee will approve all audit and other

significant contracts. Sole source contracts may be necessary for services not available by multiple vendors. Sole source procurement will be justified because one or more of the following conditions have occurred: There was prior approval from the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity; The item or service is available only from one (1) source; A public exigency or emergency exists; or, Competition was determined to be inadequate. Duplication of services or facilities available from federal, state or local funds will not occur unless it can be demonstrated that alternative services or facilities are more effective. The NPWDB, Inc. will provide maximum opportunities to minority and women-owned entities to obtain contract(s). We will: Place qualified small businesses and minority and women-owned businesses on regional solicitation lists; Ensure that small business and minority and women-owned businesses are solicited whenever they are potential sources; Encourage maximum participation of small businesses and minority and women-owned businesses; Establish delivery schedules that encourage participation by all businesses, including small businesses and minority and women-owned businesses; Use services and assistance, as appropriate, from entities such as the Small

Business Administration (SBA) and Minority Business Development Agency; and, Require prime contracts to follow the previously identified requirements. Any variance or additions to these procedures must be approved in writing by the Board of Directors. The NPWDB Inc. publicly solicits provider(s) of training programs and services via a RFP process every 1 to 3 program years. Assigned sub-committee(s) of the Board of Directors will be responsible for soliciting, reviewing and rating RFPs received. Sub-committee(s) will also be responsible for recommending what level of funding, if any, should be awarded to a Provider(s). Once completed RFP packets are returned to the NPWDB, Inc., they are evaluated using a Program Evaluation Form/Rater Scoring System. Rating scores are totaled and averaged among those staff and sub-committee members who reviewed, then rated them. Sub-Committee(s) then voice their recommendation(s) to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for approving all awards/contracts to Provider(s). The NPWDB, Inc. provides maximum opportunities to community-based organizations. The NPWDB, Inc. will not give non-competitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts, award contracts that pose an organizational conflict of interest, specify only a brand name product instead of allowing an equal product to be offered, engage in other any arbitrary action in the procurement process and will not provide geographical preference in awarding a contract with federal funds.

***R) A Description of Documentation to demonstrate that the Acquisition, Management and Disposition of Property adheres to the Property Management Procedures taken from USDOL Regulations 2 CFR 200;***

Equipment with a current fair market value of \$5,000 or less may be retained, sold or disposed of with no further obligation. Equipment with a current fair market value in excess of \$5,000 may be retained by the NPWDB, Inc. or sold. If sold, the DOL is entitled to an amount calculated by multiplying the current market value or proceeds from the sale by the NPWDB, Inc.'s percentage of participation in the cost of the original purchase. If the equipment is sold, the DOL may permit the NPWDB, Inc. to deduct and retain its share of \$500 or 10% of the proceeds, whichever is less, for its selling and handling expenses. The NPWDB, Inc. may transfer title to the property sold to the DOL or to an eligible third party provided that in such cases the NPWDB, Inc. must be entitled to compensation or its attributable percent of the current fair market value of the property. The Property Officer is notified of all cases of loss, damage or destruction of equipment and



will make a report to the Executive Director. The Property Officer is responsible for conducting an investigation of said equipment. Once the investigation is completed, the Property Officer immediately notifies the Executive Director. Any equipment disposed or destroyed must first have the prior approval of the Executive Director. Equipment disposed/destroyed is taken to a dumpster or the city dump. Prior to disposing/destroying any equipment, the Property Officer ensures any and all valuable information stored in said disposed equipment is erased and/or transferred. Equipment with a current fair market value of \$5,000 or less may be retained, sold or disposed of with no further obligation. The acquisition, management and disposition of property is detailed in the region's Cost Allocation Plan and was developed in accordance with DOL Regulations 2 CFR 200. If the total cost of leasing equipment over a 3-year period or less exceeds the purchase price, the equipment should generally be purchased.

***S) A Description of any Policies or Procedures the Local Board adopted to avoid Conflicts of Interest or the Appearance of such Conflicts in the Exercise of their Responsibilities, particularly those related to the Awarding of Contracts;***

The region strictly adheres to a Code of Ethic Policy to avoid any potential conflict of interest, or the appearance of, in the exercise of their responsibilities to award contracts. LEO, board members and staff sign a Conflict-of-Interest Statement and a Code of Ethics Statement at the start of their term or first day of employment respectively. The NPWDB, Inc. By-Laws set the standards for governing the local workforce development system and the performance of board members and staff, especially since they engage in the procurement of good and services using federal funds. LEOs, board members or staff cannot solicit gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from suppliers, or potential suppliers and do not participate in the selection, award or administration of any type of procurement, where to the individual's knowledge, any of the following individuals have a financial or other substantive interest in an organization which may be considered for an award: An officer, employee, agent, member of his/her immediate family, a partner, a person or organization which employs any of the above or with whom any of the above has an arrangement concerning prospective employment; and, Any LEO or board member or his/her immediate family or place of business. Any violation of law or established standard or conduct by LEOs, board members or staff or members of their families or others may be subject to penalties, sanctions, or other forms of disciplinary actions to the extent permissible by federal, state and local law. All parties involved in the procurement process are fair to all offers. Fairness impartiality is extremely important when reviewing proposals/bids. A proposal/bid must be reviewed on what it says, taking into account past performance and capabilities of the proposer to fulfill the requirements of the proposal/bid when applicable.

LEOs, board members and staff are bound by a Code of Ethics Policy. The Code of Ethics Policy consists of: Conducting oneself, on a personal and professional level, with honesty, integrity, respect, fairness and good faith in a manner which will reflect well upon the Board of Directors; Providing training and employment services consistent with available resources and assure the existence of a resource allocation process that considers ethical ramifications; Assuring the existence of a process to evaluate the quality of services rendered; Avoiding exploitation of relationships for personal advantage; Avoiding practicing or facilitating discrimination; Assuring the existence of procedures that will safeguard the confidentiality and privacy of Providers, participants and others who are served. In particular but not exclusively, board members will follow confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations; Assuring he/she

is not in a position to benefit directly or indirectly by using authority or inside information, or allows a friend, relative or associate to benefit from such authority or information; Assuring he/she will not use authority or information to make a decision to intentionally affect the organization in an adverse manner; Conducting all personal and professional relationships in such a way that all those affected are assured that decisions are made in the best interest of the organization and the individuals served by it; Disclosing to the appropriate authority any direct or indirect financial or personal interests that might pose potential conflicts of interest; Accepting no gifts or benefits offered with the expectation of influencing a board decision; Informing the appropriate authority and other involved parties of potential conflicts of interests related to appointments or elections to boards or committees inside or outside the organization; Working to identify and meet the training and employment needs of the community; Refusing to represent special interests or to use this board for personal gain and/or for the gain of friends of supporters; Abiding by the procedures, rules, and regulations of the WIOA, policies adopted by the NPWDB, Inc. and all applicable laws of the U.S. and West Virginia; and, Accepting no employment offers by any contracting agency, any organization or individual contracting with the agency during the board's procurement process. Nor authorize the employment of a present or former employee of the contracting agency by contractors during the board's procurement process. If any violations of the Code of Ethics Policy are made, the Executive Committee reviews and investigates the infraction. The Executive Committee is responsible for detailing any findings and make recommendations to the Board of Directors for corrective and/or disciplinary action, if warranted. LEOs, board members and staff are bound by a Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Each LEO, board member and staff pledges its support of the NPWDB, Inc. Conflict of Interest Policy via signature at the start of their term or first day of employment. LEOs, Board Members and staff certify that they have no other interest or relationship which might be expected to be affected by any action taking by the NPWDB, Inc., or which, in the public interest, should be disclosed except for the following: The WIOA law does not prohibit a State or local officer or employee from voting on matters as he/she chooses or from expressing his/her individual opinion on political subjects and candidates; and, The WIOA law also does not prohibit an employee from voluntarily engaging in partisan political management or campaigning. Candidacy for political party office is not prohibited. However, an employee may be a candidate in non-partisan elections. Volunteer work for a partisan candidate, campaign committee, political party or nominating convention of a political party is permitted.

**T) A Description of the Local Board or (Fiscal Agent's) Accounting Procedures, including the Procedures used in preparing Reports to the State. In addition to the Requirements that all Financial Transactions be conducted in Compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the Fiscal Management System must include the following in the Accounting Procedures. This Description must address how the Fiscal System:**

**1. Tracks Funding Types, Funding Amounts, Obligations, Expenditures and Assets.**

The subcontracted CPA, with assistance from the Fiscal Officer, prepares a general journal entry to record each type of funding award received. The Fiscal Officer lists each type of funding award on the Grant and Contract Register Form. The subcontracted CPA and the Fiscal Officer carefully review requirements, etc. of each funding award to ensure that all financial provisions are in compliance. Then, the Assistant Director and the Executive Director carefully review each funding award to ensure that all program provisions are in compliance. Original copies of all grants and contracts are maintained at the NPWDB, Inc. Office. The subcontracted CPA and the Fiscal Officer track all funds using the accrual method of Generally Acceptable

Accounting Principles (GAAP). The NPWDB, Inc.'s Independent Auditor also uses this method of accounting when auditing sub-grantees and contractors also track awarded funds using the accrual method of GAAP. The NPWDB, Inc. maintains WIOA funds in non-interest-bearing account(s). Financial budgets are prepared by the Fiscal Officer based on amounts of funding awards provided by the WorkForce West Virginia Office. The Fiscal Officer ensures financial budgets are on file for all grants and contracts. Any changes to financial budgets are submitted by the Fiscal Officer to the Executive Director for review and approval as soon as they are realized. The subcontracted CPA and the Fiscal Officer ensure: Expenditures do not exceed total funding awards and/or budget amounts; Expenditures are being charged off to the correct and appropriate budget award(s); and, Administration cost limitation within each budget award does not exceed 10%. The Fiscal Officer and the Assistant Director ensure sub-grantee or contractor expenditures do not exceed the total funding award and expenditures are being charged off to the appropriate line items correctly and appropriately. The Assistant Director and Program Coordinator monitor sub-grantees and contractors' fiscal activities no less than 2 times each program year. To ensure expenditures stay within the funding awards and the budget amount(s) and cost limitations, internal fiscal forms and reports have been developed and are used by the Fiscal Officer and the subcontracted CPA to track expenditures for the NPWDB, Inc. and its sub-grantees and contractors. Internal forms and reports are reviewed by the Executive Director at least once a month. The Fiscal Officer and the Executive Director are responsible for developing contracts and budgets for each funding award received.

Any modification to a funding award is updated by the Fiscal Officer. Each funding award is charged for direct costs relating to a specific program, activity or service. Expense accounts in the general ledger correspond to the award budgets. The Executive Director reviews fiscal recordings and trial balance(s) at the end of each month for accuracy. In accordance with Section 133 (b) (4) (A) (B) of the WIOA, the NPWDB, Inc. may transfer up to 100% of funds between adult and dislocated worker funding sources. If so, the NPWDB, Inc. will submit the necessary documentation and effective date of transfer to the WorkForce West Virginia Office. The reason for the requested transfer of funds will be documented. The Fiscal Officer maintains inter-fund transfers between operating accounts and other accounts in checkbook registers. The Executive Director must provide written prior approval for all funds being transferred.

## ***2. Permits the Tracking of Program Income, Stand-In Costs, and Leveraged Funds.***

The NPWDB, Inc. may, if necessary, carry out fundraising projects and solicit non-WIOA program funds. The NPWDB, Inc. may use non-WIOA program funds to match and/or leverage other outside resources, grants or funding. The NPWDB, Inc. must use non-WIOA program funds to pay a disallowed cost. If needed, a stand-in cost may be substituted for a disallowed cost. A stand-in cost does not include in-kind contributions. Program-related income will be generated back into WIOA program activities to reduce the total cost of the program(s) generating the income. Donations of cash and non-program related income will be accounted for and tracked separately.

## ***3. Is adequate to prepare Financial Reports required by the State.***

The Fiscal Officer develops and maintains a listing of all required fiscal and expenditure reports with their due dates. It is the responsibility of the subcontracted CPA and Fiscal Officer to ensure that fiscal and expenditure reports are submitted to the appropriate individual or group of individuals at the WorkForce

West Virginia Office in a timely manner. The subcontracted CPA and Fiscal Officer prepare monthly, quarterly and annual expenditure reports for all funding awards. After the Executive Director reviews, approves and signs off on fiscal and expenditure reports, they are submitted to the WorkForce West Virginia Office via the MACC system.

***U) An Identification of Key Staff who will be working with WIOA Funds;***

The Board of Directors formulates financial policies, reviews and oversees financial operations and activities on an ongoing and regular basis and delegate administration of financial policies to NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff. NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff is responsible for all operations and activities, including financial. The Assistant Director, Fiscal Officer and subcontracted CPA are responsible to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors for financial operations and activities. Lines of authority are detailed in the NPWDB, Inc.'s fiscal organizational chart and are followed by all staff. Job descriptions are maintained for staff who have fiscal responsibilities and perform fiscal duties. Financial duties and responsibilities are separated among appropriate staff so that no one has sole control over cash receipts, disbursements, and payroll. The subcontracted CPA is responsible for reconciling and preparing: bank reconciliation statements, financial spreadsheets, trial/cash balances, cash disbursement journals, the general ledger and the chart of accounts. The subcontracted CPA and the Fiscal Officer are responsible for documenting and maintaining records of all contracts and grant awards.

***V) A Description of how the Local Board's (or Fiscal Agent's) Financial System will permit Tracking of Funds to a Level adequate to establish that Funds have not been used in Violation of WIOA Standard or USDOL Regulations;***

Funds are drawn down by the Fiscal Officer on an as-needed basis in accordance with federal and state regulations. The amount of funds drawn down is determined by anticipating future expenditures for the allowed period. Requests for drawdown of funds are supported with proper back-up documentation justifying the amount of funds being requested. Drawdown of funds must have prior written approval from the Executive Director. Funds drawn down are provided to the NPWDB, Inc. via electronic transfer from the State WorkForce West Virginia Office. The NPWDB, Inc. receives email notifications that funds drawn down have reached its bank account. All fiscal staff are bonded for protection against potential loss and wrongful acts and covered by a fidelity bond. Deposit slips are completed in duplicate by the Fiscal Officer. Deposit slips include: The source; Account number; and, Amount of each receipt. Documentation for all receipts, including a copy of the deposit slip, copy of check, letter, etc. will be attached and filed accordingly. Deposits are made by the Executive Director or the Assistant Director on an as-needed basis. The Fiscal Officer maintains duplicate copies of all deposit slips. The Fiscal Officer records cash receipts in the cash receipts journal. Any checks made out to the NPWDB, Inc. are endorsed as follows: "For Deposit Only" Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board, Inc. (NPWDB, Inc.). About 27-years ago, LEOs and the Board of Directors hired a CPA on a part-time basis to provide oversight of the NPWDB, Inc.'s financial system and to ensure a solid check and balances system is in place that further supports fiscal accountability. Some of the responsibilities of the subcontracted CPA include: To develop and maintain an accounting system using a double entry accounting system, general ledger, cash receipts and cash disbursement journal; To prepare federal-FICA payments, submit federal and state quarterly and yearly forms and payments; To prepare monthly, quarterly and annual fiscal reports and financial statements; To

prepare balance sheets; To prepare fiscal reports and records; To reconcile bank statements on a monthly basis; and, To complete and file all federal, State and local income tax payments throughout the program year. Invoices, vouchers, timesheets, etc. are date stamped upon receipt, prepared and charged off to the appropriate funding award. Invoices, vouchers, timesheets, etc. must be originals and must be signed off and approved by the Executive Director of the NPWDB, Inc. prior to payment being made. NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff records all invoices, vouchers, timesheets, etc. in the appropriate check register. A general ledger is kept showing all checks written against the WIOA account, receipt of funds and a trial balance. On a monthly basis, NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff prepares a report detailing: Expenditures among WIOA funding awards; Receipt of funds; Activity in interest account, etc. for the Executive Committee to review and approve. On behalf of the Executive Committee, the Treasurer of the Board of Director is responsible for signing off on the report. The Fiscal Officer maintains all financial documents, checks, etc. in a locked, fireproof safe at all times during and after the regular workday. The Fiscal Officer executes and oversees staff payroll. Staff payroll is prepared and disbursed to staff by the Fiscal Officer after Itinerary Reports and Timesheets have been submitted, reviewed and approved by the Executive Director. Reconciliation of checking account(s) and ledgers is done on a monthly basis. The Fiscal Officer and subcontracted CPA prepare required federal and State reports. The financial system is capable of generating necessary and required information and reports required under the WIOA. This information assists staff with its monitoring and management efforts of WIOA funded training programs and services. All financial records, checks, ledgers, etc. are maintained and stored by the Fiscal Officer in a locked, fireproof safe on a daily basis.

The NPWDB, Inc.'s travel policies are applicable to all LEOs, board members and staff. All work-related travel in and out of the region of service is approved in advance by the Executive Director or the Executive Committee, as appropriate. Staff completes the Request for Authorization Form prior to travel and submit it to the Executive Director for approval. The Executive Director or the Executive Committee will approve all out-of-area travel. Disapproved requests will be returned to the staff and marked "disapproved." Once work-related travel has been completed, LEOs, board members and staff will complete a Travel Expense Voucher Form. Hard copy receipts must be attached to the Travel Expense Voucher Form supporting any lodging and/or common carrier transportation. Hard copy receipts for tolls and parking are required as well. No hard copy receipts equals no reimbursement. Incomplete Travel Voucher Expense Form (Mileage Form) will be returned to the staff member for completion. The reimbursable mileage rate will not exceed the current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) approved mileage rate. There will be no loans made to any employee of the NPWDB, Inc., sub-grantee or contractor under any circumstances. The same holds true for LEOs and board members. Debts are unallowable. The Executive Director reviews all leases prior to submission to the Executive Committee for final approval. All significant leases are approved by the Board Chairperson, Executive Director and/or the Executive Committee. Other less significant leases can be approved and signed by the Executive Director. Leases correspond to program years whenever possible. Copies of all signed leases are immediately forwarded to the Property Officer who files them in a locked, fireproof safe. The Property Officer lists each lease on the Lease Register Form which is maintained in a locked, fireproof safe. The NPWDB, Inc. is the custodian of all financial and program records, files, participant folders and documents. All records, files, participant folders and documents are safely stored and kept in locked, fireproof filing cabinets at NPWDB, Inc. facilities. Current and past records, files, participant folders and documents are periodically checked to ensure safekeeping and to ensure they have not been altered, damaged, deleted or destroyed. No original records, files, participant folders or

documents are removed from a NPWDB, Inc. facility. They will be retained by the NPWDB, Inc. for a period of no less than 6 program years. However, if there is any type of litigation involving a particular issue or matter, those records, files, participant folders or documents are retained for an extended period until litigation is resolved and finalized. Records, files, participant folders or documents may be transferred among NPWDB, Inc. facilities by NPWDB, Inc. or sub-grantee and contractor staff only. When use of/work in records, files, participant folders or documents are completed, NPWDB, Inc., sub-grantee or contractor staff must return these documents to the headquarter facility site. All protected personally identifiable information and other sensitive data are safeguarded.

Should a disaster be projected and time is limited, only information and data considered to be the most critical will be saved so as to avoid a potential disruption in programs and services. If a disaster unexpectedly occurs, NPWDB, Inc. administrative staff immediately recovers all critical information, data, property and equipment so business can be restarted immediately. Good communication lines among staff, the Board of Director, core and required Partners, sub-grantees and contractors will be frequent and open during any disasters.

The Fiscal Officer prepares and maintains an Insurance Register which is stored in a locked, fireproof safe. Insurance policies are maintained in an insurance file by the Fiscal Officer and will be stored in a locked, fireproof safe as well. Insurance policies correspond to the program year whenever possible. Insurance policies are carefully reviewed by the Fiscal Officer and the Executive Director before renewal. Reasonably adequate coverage is maintained for property and liability insurance. Records, programmatic and financial, are retained for at least a 3 year period from the date of submission of annual final expenditure reports. Should there be any outstanding litigation, claims or audit findings at the end of this 3-year period, the records will be retained for an additional 3-years or until all litigation has been resolved. The same holds true for any designated sub-grantee, contractor or training provider of WIOA programs and services in the region. All staff, including sub-grantee and contractor staff, backs up all electronic information and data with thumb or flash drives. Backup of electronic information and data is completed by NPWDB, Inc., sub-grantee and contractor staff no less than once weekly and then be stored in a locked fireproof safe. A clear audit trail is in place. An independent auditor performs an annual audit of all NPWDB, Inc. WIOA expenditures. Results of this independent audit are reviewed and discussed with the Board of Directors. A copy of it is then provided to the WorkForce West Virginia Office for review. A copy of the independent audit is filed with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse with Form SF-SAC. If there are any findings noted in the audit, the NPWDB, Inc. works closely with the independent auditor to resolve findings under the guidance and direction of the WorkForce West Virginia Office. The independent auditor prepares the following on behalf of the NPWDB, Inc.: The Form 990; Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax; and, Filing of all Income Tax Extensions. The Executive Director or an Officer of the Board of Directors signs Form 990. Incidents of fraud, especially financial ones, are well-documented and immediately reported to the appropriate governing entities, like: the Board of Directors; WorkForce West Virginia Office, DOL, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

***W) Provide a Brief Description of the following:***

**1. Fiscal Reporting System.**

The Executive Director, Assistant Director, subcontracted CPA and Fiscal Officer maintain administrative and program costs reports generated from the MACC system indicating the amount of funds spent on each program, activity and/or service in each title of funding. These reports are submitted to the WorkForce West Virginia Office through the MACC system on a monthly basis. Administrative and program cost reports are signed off on and approved by the Executive Director prior to submission. Reimbursements/adjustments may be made to a title of funding based upon these reports at the end of the quarter.

## **2. Obligation Control System.**

Once actual award amounts are known, the NPWDB, Inc. prepares internal budgets for each of its funding streams: adult, dislocated worker and youth. Associated delivery of program and services, with estimated amount allocated for the program year, are detailed within each budget. Internal budgeting allows us to control the total obligation level of each funding stream. NPWDB, Inc. staff monitors obligations and expenditure levels of each budget, program or service no less than 2 times a program year to ensure costs are in line with total available funding. The same process is used when the NPWDB, Inc. is awarded other funding stream(s), besides adult, dislocated worker and youth funding.

## **3. ITA Payment System.**

The expenditure limit for an ITA under WIOA funding is \$5,500 per program year per ITA participant, not to exceed \$11,000 for a maximum period of 2-years. The Training Provider first completes a Cost Data Sheet for each ITA participant wanting to enroll in an approved training program or course on the ETPL. The Training Provider sends this Sheet to the NPWDB, Inc. for prior approval of all costs associated with the ITA Participant training. Once the NPWDB, Inc. approves costs associated with the ITA Participant's training, the Training Provider completes an ITA Invoice Sheet to request payment. The total amount invoiced for each ITA participant cannot exceed the amount detailed on the ITA participant's Cost Data Sheet. Backup documentation is available for review if requested. The training provider invoices the NPWDB, Inc. for tuition costs a total of 3 times per ITA participant based on the payment schedule below: 40% of tuition cost at enrollment in the training program or course. Enrollment is defined as: ITA participant has been accepted into a training program or course and has attended at 5-days of Training Program; 30% of tuition cost at mid-point of training program or course. Mid-point of training program or course is defined as: ITA participant has completed no less than one-half of the training program curriculum; and, 30% tuition costs upon completion of training program or course. Completion of training program or course is defined as: ITA participant has completed 100% of the required training program or course curriculum. For long-term training programs, 1 to 2 years that has semester/quarter based tuition costs, the above schedule will be adhered to on a semester/quarter basis. The above payment schedule will be followed by all Training Providers unless an otherwise mutually agreed upon payment schedule for higher education and/or state operated institution of learning has been negotiated. If an invoice from a training provider for an ITA participant includes several items, like, tuition, books and supplies, a breakdown of said charges must be included with the invoice. Payments for any fees will not be made prior to it occurring. Payments for fees such as parking, graduation, etc. must have backup documentation attached to the invoice detailing said costs. Invoices for WIOA funded ITA Training Programs are due to the NPWDB, Inc. Office on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of each month by 4:00 pm. If the 10<sup>th</sup> or the 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday, invoices will be accepted through 4:00 pm on the next workday. If an invoice is received after 4:00 pm on the due date, it will be processed on the next invoice cycle. Requests for payments will be processed and paid no later than

5 working days after due date. Payments will be mailed to payee. ITA participants will only be paid attendance per diem, if approved, for actual classroom attendance as initialed and signed by instructors. Child care, if approved, will be paid for time the ITA participant is in scheduled training only. Child care payments are not made to parents and/or any other individual who lives in the same household. Under no circumstances can a parent of a child receive childcare payments. The costs of any repeated course(s), lost books, etc. shall not be borne by the NPWDB, Inc.'s WIOA funds. For a payment(s) to be made, the ITA participant must be making satisfactory progress, as defined by 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) or better.

#### ***4. Chart of Account System.***

A Chart of Accounts is kept to identify all expenditures by cost categories. The Chart of Accounts is maintained by the Fiscal Officer and the subcontracted CPA to track financial accounts. The Chart of Accounts includes, but is not limited to: Account #, Type, Account Description and Tax Line #. The NPWDB, Inc. uses a double entry system for accounting of its funds. The Fiscal Officer records all receipts and checks in the cash receipts and disbursements journal/check register on a daily basis. The subcontracted CPA prepares general journal entries. The Executive Director approves all general journal entries. Adequate documentation is maintained to support all general journal entries. At the end of the month, the subcontracted CPA: Totals cash receipts in the disbursements journal; Posts totals in the general ledger; Posts the general ledger; and, Prepares a trial balance.

#### ***5. Accounts Payable System.***

Checks issued are pre-numbered. The Fiscal Officer prepares checks based on supporting, hard copy documentation. Payments made electronically to vendors are supported by back-up documentation as well. One signature, the Executive Director's, or Chairperson's, or Treasurer's, is required on all checks. The Fiscal Officer stamps all invoices "Paid." Checks are distributed as follows: Original – Mailed to the payee by the Fiscal Officer. Duplicate or Copy of Check – Filed at the NPWDB, Inc. Office, with all supporting documentation attached to it, alphabetically by vendor. In no event will checks: Be prepared unless these procedures are followed; Be prepared from monthly statements or copies of invoices; Be used other than in chronological order; Be prepared and signed in advance; Be made out to "cash", "bearer", "petty cash", etc.; or Be prepared on verbal authorization. Original Checks when canceled are filed monthly at the NPWDB, Inc. Office with back statement and bank reconciliation for cross reference. A voided check has "void" boldly written in ink across the face of the check and the signature portion of the original check will be perforated or cut out. The original voided check is filed with bank statements and canceled checks in chronological order. The reason the check was voided is recorded on canceled check. Bank statements are received by the Executive Director and given to the subcontracted CPA unopened who will prepare the bank reconciliation and then provide it to the Executive Director for review, approval and signature. The subcontracted CPA provides signature on the bank reconciliations. Checks paid are examined for date, name, cancellation and endorsements periodically. The reconciled bank balance is compared to the Cash in Bank account in the general ledger on a monthly basis and approved by the subcontracted CPA. Vendors are notified of all checks outstanding over 60-days. Monthly expenditures are recorded in the cash disbursement journal on a monthly basis. The Fiscal Officer records checks in the check register as well as in QuickBooks. The cash disbursement journal is posted to the general ledger detailing each check written and



summarizing the disbursement by the Chart of Accounts. All subsequent adjustments, to properly split account allocations, are recorded as adjusting journal entries and are posted at the end of each month.

#### ***6. Staff Payroll System.***

QuickBooks software is maintained on the Fiscal Officer's computer and is password protected. Only the Fiscal Officer, the Executive Director and Assistant Director have access to the password identity. The password is kept in a locked, fireproof safe. The Executive Director approves the hiring of all staff, except enrollees. A staff's hiring is not effective until a Change of Status Form, a Form W-4 and all Insurance Forms have been completed. The Change of Status Form is used to detail the new staff starting salary and when any salary adjustments are made thereafter. Each staff member is responsible for completing and signing off on a Timesheet and Itinerary Form on a daily basis that details the type of work performed under each funding award. Itinerary Forms are submitted to the Fiscal Officer who allocates staff hours worked among funding awards each pay period. The Fiscal Officer then provides Itinerary Forms to the Executive Director for review, approval, signature and filing. Timesheets are submitted to the Fiscal Officer who allocates staff hours worked among funding awards at the end of each month. The Fiscal Officer then provides Timesheets to the Executive Director for review, approval, signature and filing.

The Fiscal Officer prepare a payroll register. Payroll checks, the check register and the EFTPS worksheet for 941 payroll taxes are provided to the Executive Director for review. The Fiscal Officer then: Phones in the 941 payroll taxes; Records the Acknowledgement Number, and, Records payroll figures in the check register. The Executive Director signs off on all staff payroll checks. In order to maintain a separation of duties, the subcontracted CPA signs off on the Executive Director's payroll checks using a signature stamp of the Chairman or Treasurer of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director or Fiscal Officer distributes payroll checks to staff. Staff is required to sign off that he/she is accepting his/her payroll check. The Fiscal Officer records staff payroll in the checkbook and in the Staff's Earnings Record Report. The subcontracted CPA maintains all payroll tax reports. The Executive Director signs off on the reports. The subcontracted CPA prepares all quarterly payroll tax reports. The Executive Director approves and signs off on all quarterly payroll tax reports. The Fiscal Officer prepares all payments for taxes and records payments in the check register. The Fiscal Officer makes he payment(s) electronically. State Income Tax Reports are completed by the Fiscal Officer.

#### ***7. Participant Payroll System.***

YSS, Inc., the region's Youth Provider, is responsible for executing and overseeing the payroll system for youth enrolled in the "Summer Youth Work Experience" Program; the "Fall Works Experience" Program; the "Spring Works Experience" Program; and/or, the "Winter Works Experience" Program. Youth work Monday thru Thursday, 8-hours per day. Hours worked per week do not exceed 32. There are no paid holidays. There are no paid sick days. There are no paid lunch periods. Youth participants are paid for time worked only. Youth participants complete Timesheets at the end of each work day. Each youth participant must sign the Timesheet with his/her full name at the end of the pay period to verify time reported. Hours of work are not reported until the work is performed. Timesheets must be signed by the appropriate parties at the end of each pay period. Completed and signed Timesheets must be received by YSS, Inc. no later than 2-days after the pay period has ended. Only original timesheets are accepted and processed. Timesheets

with original signatures are maintained on file at the YSS, Inc. Office. Payroll is bi-weekly. Checks are delivered to participating worksites by YSS, Inc. staff no later than 5 working days after the end of the payroll period. At that time, payroll checks are distributed to youth participants. Youth participants must provide proper identification to receive their paycheck. They must also sign a Check Register upon receipt of their paychecks. Signatures certify the delivery and receipt of paychecks were made to the correct individuals and amounts of paycheck are correct. The Check Register is a tool to avoid check distribution problems. The Check Register is maintained at the YSS, Inc. office. Should an individual not be available to receive his/her paycheck, the paycheck is given back to YSS, Inc. staff who is then responsible for ensuring that the individual receives and signs for his/her paycheck. NPWDB, Inc. Monitors are responsible for monitoring work experience programs, including fiscal practices.

#### ***8. Participant Stipend Payment System.***

The NPWDB, Inc. Assistant Director is responsible for providing ITA participants with NPWDB, Inc. approved Reimbursement Forms which the participant is expected to use/complete when claiming Needs-Related Payments (NRPs). Forms are to be properly completed/signed by the participant and returned to the NPWDB, Inc. by no later than 4:00 pm on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. Should the 10<sup>th</sup> or the 25<sup>th</sup> fall on a weekend or holiday, Forms will be due to the NPWDB, Inc. by 4:00 pm on the next scheduled business day. The Assistant Director reviews Forms. Once the Assistant Director determines these Forms to be complete, accurate and signed by the participant, The Assistant Director provides signature. The Assistant Director provides Forms to the Fiscal Officer and Executive Director for further review and signature as well. A check is then processed by the Fiscal Officer in the participant's name for the approved amount of NRP's. The Fiscal Officer provide the participant's check to the Assistant Director who is responsible for mailing the check to the participant by no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> business date after the due date. The participant is also provided with the option of personally picking up his/her check at the NPWDB, Inc. Office. The Assistant Director is responsible for tracking all participants who receive NRPs, the amounts of payments and the date NRPs were made through an internal participant tracking system. In the event of overpayment or fraudulent activity on the part of the participant, all NRPs made to the participant will immediately cease and attempts for recovery will be initiated. All cases of fraud will be immediately forwarded to the appropriate legal authorities for prosecution.

#### ***X) A Description of the Local Boards (or Fiscal Agent's) Cash Management System, providing Assurance that no Excess Cash will be kept on hand and that Procedures are in place to monitor Cash;***

The NPWDB, Inc. provides assurance that no excess cash will be kept on hand. Procedures are in place to ensure an appropriate level of WIOA funds exists to cover organizational and program expenses. Financial account amounts will be kept as a minimum and limited to only actual, immediate costs needs. Cost reimbursement requests are submitted to the WorkForce West Virginia Office about twice a month on an as-needed basis. WIOA funds are received electronically from the WorkForce West Virginia Office approximately 10-days after requests are made. Receipt of WIOA funds is immediately recorded in the NPWDB, Inc.'s accounting system, including QuickBooks. When preparing cash reimbursement requests for WIOA funds, the NPWDB, Inc. estimates cost projections for an expected time period. Cost projections include actual payments being requested from sub-grantee(s), contractors and training providers. They also include recurring costs, like: staff payroll, rent, utilities, etc. The NPWDB, Inc. pays vendors, sub-grantees,

contractors and training providers at least twice a month. Staff payroll is paid on a bi-weekly basis. The amount of WIOA funds on hand is reviewed by the Subcontracting Accountant and the Executive Director no less than twice a month.

***Y) Description of the Local Board's Cost Allocation Procedures including:***

***1. Identification of Different Cost Pools.***

Costs that are considered "Direct Costs" are ones that can be satisfactorily assigned to a particular activity, service, etc. within a specific funding award, with appropriate, supporting backup documentation. Direct Costs are those that are directly charged to a cost category. Examples of Direct Costs are: Employee wages; Fringes; and, Benefits. Indirect costs are those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. Subsequently, Indirect costs do not have a direct relationship to a particular funding award and will be treated as such. After direct costs have been determined and assigned directly to awards or other work as appropriate, Indirect Costs are those remaining to be allocated to benefitting cost objectives. Examples of indirect costs are membership fees, conference and workshop travel, supplies and equipment for staff and facility expenses. These costs are "pooled" monthly. Indirect costs will be consistent and measurable and be supported by appropriate backup documentation. The Indirect Cost Rate used no more than 10% De Minimis Rate. There are 2 categories of indirect costs incurred by the NPWDB, Inc.: 1) Operational costs (These are costs incurred directly by the NPWDB, Inc.); and, 2) American Job Center, core and required partner costs. These are costs incurred to operate regional American Job Centers.

***2. Procedures for Distribution of Staff Costs between Cost Categories (ie: Administrative, Program and Indirect Cost).***

Benefits received by each program dictate how costs are distributed and reported by program title, subtitle or cost category. Staff is required to keep daily record of time and attendance that indicates the allocation of costs between funding streams based on effort and benefit by program activities. The cumulative percentage of time allocable to each funding activity is established each month and allocated back to the appropriate cost category and funding source(s). Staff maintains and submits a monthly Travel Voucher Expense Form (Mileage Form) to the Fiscal Officer. Mileage reimbursement includes a distribution of miles traveled in support of individual funding stream(s). Membership fees, conference or workshop travel or other related staff costs are directly charged to the appropriate function and/or project once determination of the funding stream and cost category benefitted has been identified.

***3. Procedures used for Distribution of Funds from each Cost Pool.***

Direct costs are directly assignable to a particular funding award(s) based on daily or monthly itinerary reports completed/kept by all staff. Work hours detailed in the daily or monthly itinerary reports for each staff are totaled. The total number of hours is multiplied by funding stream by each staff member's hourly rate. This amount is then directly allocated to a particular funding award(s) and/or the administrative line item. These costs are allocated monthly and are the basis for the allocation of all related indirect costs. Any activity or cost that can be specifically assigned to a particular cost center is a direct cost. Examples are: Staff

travel; Sub-Grantee and contractor costs; Marketing; Printing; Supplies; and, Materials. These costs are allocated based on benefit received and charged to each program component (adult, dislocated worker, youth) in the same manner as staff salaries. Indirect Costs include: Rent; Telephone; Office and printing expenses: Insurance; Utilities; Dues and subscriptions; Postage; Computer maintenance; Salary and fringes for One Stop Operator staff; and, Miscellaneous expenses.

#### ***4. Description of Funds included in each Cost Pool.***

Funds included in each Cost Pool include: WIOA adult; dislocated worker; and, youth funds. Also included are other types of funds that are awarded to the NPWDB, Inc. on a limited basis and/or temporary basis, like: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Program funding and Opioid Grant funding.

#### ***5. Description of the Cost Allocation Plan for American Job Centers.***

The IFA (aka: Cost Allocation Plan) is part of the MOU and ensures appropriate funding contribution levels to regional American Job Centers and the effective delivery of career and training programs, activities and services to customers by core, required, and non-required, partners. It is the intent of the IFA to maintain compliance without imposing undue burdens on any particular participating party. The IFA is a document that identifies and distributes allowable shared infrastructure, operational and other additional costs in accordance with the WIOA and identifies allocation methods that will be used for distributing costs. This IFA is used to support the appropriate distribution of regional American Job Center(s) overall operational costs to contributing core and required (and non-required) partners. When contributing to American Job Centers' operational and infrastructure costs, parties to the IFA will comply with the Section 121 (h) of the WIOA and all other laws, circulars, regulations, etc. depending on contributing core and required partners', and non-required, partners' organization type(s) and funding source(s). It is the responsibility of core and required partners to use a portion of their funds to create and maintain the local workforce development system including the infrastructure. The source of funds that may be used to pay for regional American Job Center infrastructure costs depends on the requirements regarding the use of funds under the law authorizing the partner program that is contributing the funding. The One Stop Operator, core and required partners have approved to use the square footage allocation basis when determining infrastructure costs. Infrastructure methodology is based on the premise that federal programs are to bear an equitable proportion of shared costs based on the benefit received by each program. All partners, required and additional, that participate at an American Job Center must contribute to the infrastructure costs of that Center, whether they are physically located there or not, based on their proportional use and relative benefits received. One stop infrastructure is generally described as the costs of non-personnel resources such as building leases, equipment, supplies and resource rooms as an example. The purpose of the partner programs sharing the costs of infrastructure is to: 1) Maintain the local one stop delivery system to meet the needs of local communities; 2) Reduce duplication by improving program effectiveness through the sharing of services, resources and technologies among program partners; 3) Reduce overhead by streamlining and sharing financial procurement and facilities costs. 4) Encourage efficient use of information technology; 5) Ensure that costs are appropriately shared by partners by basing contributions on proportionate share of use (Proportional use refers to a partner program contributing its fair share of the costs). Costs of "shared services" include Initial intake; Assessment of needs; Appraisal of basic skills; Identification of appropriate services to meet such needs; 5) Referrals to other one stop partners and business services; and, 6) Ensure that services provided by one stop partners reduce duplication of services and/or increase financial

efficiency at local one stop centers. While not part of infrastructure costs, the One Stop Operator, core and required, and non-required, partners also negotiate sharing "additional costs," that includes personnel costs, for various programs and support activities and operating costs and services that are necessary for the general operation of an American Job Center. The method of payment for costs are applied consistently. One Stop Operator management and fiscal staff will routinely review and reconcile budgets to actual costs as appropriate, but by no less than once every 6-months. One Stop Operator management and fiscal staff will provide all contributing core. Required, and non-required, partners with a quarterly expenditure report for each American Job Center.

***Z) A Description of the Local Board's (or Fiscal Agent's) Procedures for collecting Debts/Disallowed Costs involving WIOA Funds.***

All good faith efforts are made to collect a disallowed cost. Collection of a disallowed cost from a sub-grantee, contractor or vendor is made to the NPWDB, Inc. by direct payment prior to the close of the program year for which the disallowed cost occurred. WIOA program funds are not used to pay a disallowed cost. Liens will be placed on the assets of any sub-grantee, contractor or vendor who fails to repay a disallowed cost. A sub-grantee, contractor or vendor who fails to repay a disallowed cost will be forbidden from participating in any future WIOA funded programs operated and sponsored by the NPWDB, Inc.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW ATTACHMENTS TO THE  
LOCAL PLAN OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR  
COMMENTS ABOUT THE LOCAL PLAN  
PLEASE CONTACT:**

**ROSEMARY GUIDA  
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