

Regional and Local Plans

7/1/2024 – 6/30/2027

RWDA: Regional Workforce Development Area #1

LWDA: Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. LWDA #2

Regional Plan

SECTION A: REGIONAL VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- A.1. Describe the regional workforce development area's vision for a skilled workforce.

The vision of **Regional Workforce Development Area One**, which includes Local Workforce Development Area One and Two, in Northwest Minnesota, is a healthy economy where employer and employees alike are given the opportunity to thrive. Employees succeed with family sustaining employment and employers in successful prosperous business. Through sector partnerships our goal is to see all individuals through a lens of equity and inclusion and to promote business culture that thrives in the daily practices of acknowledgement of everyone's strengths.

- A.2. Describe the region's strategic alignment with the State's Vision, Goals and Strategies.

We are in alignment with the State's Vision, Goals, and Strategies for success. Sector partnerships have never been as important as they are within the 2024-2027 plan. The need to recognize the value that is gained through intentional collaboration within business, education, workforce, and economic development is crucial to success. Region One has long understood this need for alliance and has worked to establish a strong Regional Workforce Alliance group that brings employers, educators, local and state resources, and tribal entities to the table. Through funds awarded through the Drive for 5 competitive grant, we identified multiple employers that are committed to supporting individuals enrolled in workforce initiatives that will fill the need in the most high-demand occupations in the state. In the future it is our intention to build stronger alliances through the local regional workforce alliance that will initiate training through WIOA and State funds that support Inclusive workforce and increased knowledge across the workforce in emerging technology, labor market demands and resources for new Minnesotans.

- A.3. Describe best practices or area of strength of the region as it relates to the State's Vision, Goals and Strategies that should be considered for replication or scale across the state.

In alignment with DEED's mission of a healthy Minnesota economy for everyone, the Minnesota Indigenous Workforce Initiative should be developed and promoted statewide. Though it is a statewide initiative, the heaviest concentration of cohort members resides in the Northwest. Native communities are the poorest communities in our state, and the best way to provide families with an opportunity to break from generational poverty is to provide native job seekers with meaningful work with

equitable pay. The NW Region has prioritized developing Inclusive Worksites and has been building strong partnership with local businesses that share in the vision of a diverse and talented workforce. Over the coming years we would like to develop goals to measure the success of a truly inclusive workforce. This will start with identifying groups that are facing the largest disparities in family sustaining wages such as Native Americans, new Americans, and those who have been justice-involved and clearly setting measurements of success.

- A.4. Describe the strategy to work with the entities within your region to carry out the core programs to align resources available in the region to achieve the strategic vision and goals of the local area boards and the state.

The Community Workforce Inclusion Councils (CWIC) will continue to develop the Inclusive Workforce Employer (I-WE) designation program and support designees. However, the intent in 2024 is to bring the three regional CWIC groups into one more cohesive and effective unit. This will allow for greater opportunity to develop marketing and “aftercare” programs that will allow the I-WE designation to scale up in our region.

- A.5. Describe any additional goals being set by the regional leadership or individual local area boards.

The northwest region continues to recognize and adjust to demographic shifts, not only within the workforce, but also within our communities. As the birthplace of both the Inclusive Workforce Employer designation and the Minnesota Indigenous Workforce Initiative, northwest Minnesota will continue to address the changes that come with the new workforce.

This includes understanding workforce priorities that will be demanded of employers in the years to come. As such, Region 1 will promote and celebrate The Department of Labor and Commerce’s GOOD JOBS PRINCIPLES as standards of work in our region. Through data collected in a recent workforce survey completed February 2024 several priorities have been identified within our region as areas of concern that we will focus on over the next three years. Significant issues such as skills gaps, labor shortages and shifting resources within our rural communities top the list of local challenges. These issues will be addressed through partnerships including the Regional Workforce Alliance, Local Workforce Boards, and community sector partnerships.

- A.6. Describe how the region is working together to prepare the workforce for state and federal investments in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Creating Helpful

Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) (collectively referred to as Investing in America (IIA)).

Under the umbrella of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the NW region will continue to support education in advanced manufacturing and technology. We will support regional chip manufacturers and suppliers and will promote the practice of developing universal job descriptions currently being developed and implemented by CHIPS partners in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan. By creating incentives for paying prevailing wages and utilizing qualified apprentices from registered apprenticeship programs in clean energy projects, Region 1 will support the inflation Reduction Act. Apprenticeships programs are one of the most impactful methods of training and retaining skilled workers and are essential to the success of the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Bill. The Regional Workforce Alliance has prioritized increasing the use of apprenticeships and has engaged with the MN Department of Labor to expand on the use and share knowledge. The goal is to assist in filling well-paying union jobs and support proven pathways into the industry that allow workers to earn while they learn. Additionally, using WIOA funding job counselors will continue to highlight the benefits of careers within STEM pathways that will meet the needs of our future infrastructure demands.

SECTION B: REGIONAL OPERATIONS

- B.1. Provide a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis of the regional workforce system.

Through a region-wide survey completed February 2024, followed by review and collaboration, the following concepts were identified at the March 2024 Regional Workforce Alliance Group as a method of planning for workforce initiatives and the following factors drew most attention.

Strengths: Proactive, strong sector partnerships. Employer Flexibility, Employers are taking action to improve workplace culture.

Weakness: Continued barriers within transportation, childcare and housing and technology in rural communities. Population changes that impact small rural communities that are changing the make-up of the small town. Continued disparity in attachment to labor force perpetuating generational poverty and limited resources.

Opportunity: Support of Inclusive Workforce initiatives around equity and diversity. Structured guidance on Minnesota's Job Quality Principles for Employers, Emerging groups designed to assist employers such as the Reasonable Accommodations fund.

Threat: Aging population, workforce shortages, skills gaps, inflation, and corporate agriculture.

- B.2. Describe the selection process for the membership who will provide the leadership to oversee the development and coordination of the regional plan.

The Region 1 Workforce Development Boards (WDB) are largely composed of employers, we are well-positioned to help the local workforce system with employer linkages, apprise the CareerForce Center partners of local business trends, and bring innovative ideas to the system. Three of our members also serve on the Governor's Workforce Development Board. The WDB members participate in Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards and the National Association of Workforce Boards Conferences. Our full Local Workforce Development boards oversee the development of the Regional Plan.

- B.3. Describe how the selected organizations from the region will provide oversight to development and implementation of the regional plan. Complete Attachment A - Regional Oversight Committee

The Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA) will assist in developing and implementing the plan that will focus on training and solutions within our workforce. The RWA meets quarterly to discuss up and coming initiatives that are facing employers, such as benefits, culture, recruitment, and Diversity, equity training.

- B.4. Describe how the approach used will ensure that partner engagement includes diverse representation, specifically among populations experiencing barriers to employment.

A regional approach supporting diversity has been the hallmark of past efforts within the WIOA Regional Plan. Elements of our past and future initiatives call for an increase in the awareness of diversity in the workforce in the 26-counties in Northwest Minnesota. While both LWDBs in the region have taken specific actions to address diversity, specific attention to diversity and the development of an action plan will continue, including steps to re-address and refresh previous actions. This plan has helped identify various sectors that make up local diversity and set forth a plan to address diversity on a region-wide approach. Through guidance derived from the DEED Regional Analyst we will identify populations with the most disparities and the elements that perpetuate low employment, poverty, and skills gaps. This is a significant task that will take place over time and will require strategic investment of multiple levels of community members including employers, educators, community-based organizations, public and private entities. Success will not only be measured by the number of employers that commit to inclusive workforce practice but also in attachment to labor force based on population representation.

- B.5. Describe how the local area boards will direct system alignment within the region through shared policies and practices.

The WDB sets the direction of the local workforce system and provides valuable input and feedback into the activities designed to meet the needs of employers and participants. They review performance measures and results, are active in environmental scanning, and enable us to structure program components, plan service levels and prioritize services to participants. The WDB also serves as oversight for the local workforce system and approves various measures, budgets and initiatives. All providers provide regular reports to the WDB on data, activities, and initiatives.

- B.6. Describe any cooperative service arrangements being planned for the region and how they will promote consistency within the regional workforce development area and with state policy.

All partners follow state policy regarding Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). Core partners use state policy as a guideline when negotiating commitment of resources that lead to the development of the MOU.

SECTION C: PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY

- C.1. Describe the condition of the regional economy (cite the sources of data and analysis);

According to DEED's Regional Profile, updated September 2023. NORTHWEST MINNESOTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGIONS 1, 2, 4, 5 Covering the following counties: Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Morrison, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Roseau, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin

- **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Northwest Minnesota is a mostly rural, 26-county region located in the central and northwest areas of the state, bordering North Dakota and Canada. Covering four Economic Development Regions (EDRs), Northwest is the third largest of the six planning regions in the state, accounting for 10.2% of the state's total population. The area population increased by nearly 27,500 residents from 2010 to 2022, a 5.0% increase, compared to a 7.8% rise statewide. Half of the 26 counties in the Northwest planning region have grown in population since 2010, while the other 13 declined. Ten of the eleven counties in the region with less than 10,000 residents declined in population from 2010 to 2022. In contrast, the larger counties in the region have generally had more population growth. As part of the fast-growing Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area, Clay County added 6,930 new residents, a 11.7% increase, making it the 8th fastest growing county (of 87) in the

state. Crow Wing County, the largest county in the region with 67,948 people in 2022, was the 17th fastest growing in the state. Eight of the nine counties in the region with more than 30,000 residents saw population growth. Northwest Minnesota's population increase from 2020 to 2022 was driven by net migration – more people moving in than moving out. This handily overcame the natural decrease – more deaths than births. The bulk of the net migration was from other places in the U.S. (that is, “domestic”), with the remaining net gain from international migration.

- **LABOR FORCE**

According to data from DEED's Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, Northwest Minnesota had an average of just under 297,000 workers in 2021. Despite some ups and downs, the labor force generally increased from 2002 to 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a sharp drop from 2020 to 2021 of 8,394 workers, or -2.7%. This was a similar but lesser drop than the -3.3% statewide labor force decline. Past declines in the Northwest's labor force began two to three years after the peak unemployment rates of the 2001 and 2008 recessions and had been more gradual. Northwest's labor force hit a peak in 2004 at 289,374 and continued down until 2007 resulting in a -0.5% decline. The next peak was 2010 at 297,986, dropping until 2013 resulting in a -0.9% decline. In contrast, after the 2020 recession the number of workers and the unemployment rate quickly dropped. In 2022, the labor force rapidly rebounded. However, with the large Baby Boomer population cohort in the Northwest, labor force growth going forward will be more constrained due to retirements. Averaging a net gain of 4,426 additional labor force participants per year between 1990 and 2000, employers were able to tap into a large and growing pool of talented workers. Although the regional labor force and economy continue to grow, the rate of labor force growth is slowing considerably, adding an average of only 740 workers per year from 2010 to 2020.

Applying current labor force participation rates to future population projections by age group creates labor force projections for the region. Despite Northwest Minnesota's 3.4% projected population increase, the regional labor force is expected to grow only 2.8% from 2025 to 2035. This is due to the aging Baby Boomers exiting the labor force. The largest decline is projected for the 55 to 64 age group, with a decrease in those aged 65 to 74 as well. Those aged 45 to 54 gain the most as Millennials move into that age group. Those aged 20 to 24 also increase, while those aged 75 and over have the fastest growth. The anticipated change in labor force age distribution may lead regional employers to adapt their management and hiring practices to attract employees from the growing age cohorts.

- **EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

With just over 63% of the population over 16 years of age in the labor force, Northwest had a much lower labor force participation rate than Minnesota's 69%. In addition, all but the youngest age group had lower labor force participation rates than those statewide, and the overall rate is lower because a higher percentage of the region's labor force is in the oldest age groups. Participation rates varied by race in Northwest, but also lagged state averages. American Indians were the only race that had a higher participation rate than the state. The participation rate of Hispanic or Latino residents were similar to statewide. Like statewide, the region's unemployment rates were higher than whites for every race and ethnicity group, except for Asians. In sum, unemployment rates were higher and participation rates lower among young workers, minorities, people with lower educational attainment, and workers with disabilities.

- **HOUSEHOLD WAGES**

Median household income was lower in Northwest Minnesota than statewide, \$62,128 compared to \$77,706. Northwest had the second lowest median household income of the 6 planning regions. Over 40% of households in the region had incomes below \$50,000 in 2021 compared to just 31.4% statewide. The share earning \$75,000 to \$99,000 was similar to statewide, but only 26.4% earned \$100,000 or more compared to 37.7% statewide. The median hourly wage for all occupations in Northwest Minnesota was \$21.67 in the first quarter of 2023. As such, Northwest has the lowest median wage of Minnesota's six planning areas. Further, Northwest's median wage was \$2.58 below the state's median hourly wage. Compared to surrounding areas, Northwest's median hourly wage was \$1.04 per hour less than Central and \$0.90 less than Northeast. However, wages in The Northwest increased more than in these surrounding areas since last year.

- **ECONOMY**

According to DEED's Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program, Northwest Minnesota was home to 18,086 business establishments providing 221,564 covered jobs in 2022, with a total payroll of nearly \$11 billion. That was about 7.8% of total employment in the state of Minnesota. Average annual wages were \$49,394 in the region, which was \$21,331 lower than the state's average annual wage.

With 38,260 jobs at 1,868 establishments, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry employs the most people in Northwest Minnesota, accounting for 17.3% of total jobs in the region. The share of Health Care and Social Assistance jobs dropped from 18.1% in 2020 as the pandemic and its aftereffects have been a challenge for

worker recruitment and retention. The sector's 2019 to 2022 employment decline was driven by the loss of 1,293 jobs (-10.7%) in the Nursing & Residential Care Facilities subsector. Hospitals also lost jobs, down 520 (-4.2%), as did Ambulatory Health Care Services, down 176 (-2.1%). However, Social Assistance, the smallest of the four healthcare subsectors, gained 1,055 jobs (16.8%) from 2019 to 2022. The second largest industry in Northwest is Manufacturing, with 29,870 jobs or 13.5% of total jobs. Manufacturing increased employment from 2019 to 2022, with 392 (1.3%) more jobs than prior to the pandemic recession. In addition, average annual wages in manufacturing (\$61,349) were nearly \$12,000 higher than the overall regional average (\$49,394). Retail Trade is the third largest industry, with 12.6% of total employment, while the closely related Accommodation and Food Services industry was fifth largest with 9.3% of total employment. Combined, these industries offer more than one in every five (21.9%) jobs in the region, but annual wages are still relatively low in these service-providing industries. Other large industries in Northwest include Educational Services, Public Administration, Construction, and Wholesale Trade which all have greater concentrations of employment in the region than statewide.

C.2. Describe the sectors or occupations of focus for region, including:

- a. How the region will use the labor market information and conduct outreach to business and industry to select the targeted sectors for developing sector partnerships for occupations in demand that provide family sustaining wages. If sectors and occupations have been already selected, describe them within this response.

Our WDB is comprised of a majority of private sector employers. RMCEP, NWPIC and CareerForce staff are involved in local boards, sector partnerships and Trade Associations, which create a catalyst for influence to foster workforce development initiatives. The WDB will sponsor listening sessions every two years at which we engage businesses in discussion with Labor Market analysts to provide accurate data about the sectors in demand in our region. Healthcare, Manufacturing, Agriculture, Trades and Transportation are the local key industry sectors identified in our Regional Plan. Career pathway partnerships will continue to strengthen our ability to increase the number of qualified applicants for those jobs in demand.

Additionally, staff host job fairs, including occupationally-specific job fairs, diversity-focused job fairs and industry-specific job fairs. This past year we have expanded our job fairs to welcome individuals who have had a justice-involved past and those that have been struggling with some of the most difficult barriers

such as addiction and homelessness, by offering these “second chance” opportunities we are acknowledging that our labor force has been closed to groups of individuals that can no longer be overlooked. Additionally, employers are invited on site when available through such activities as Job Clubs and “Employer of the Day” to discuss their needs and openings with job seekers. Providers work one-on-one with individual employers to develop job sites and OJT opportunities. Through the use of Incumbent Training projects more employers are receiving specific training on site supported by the local WDB that are sustaining employment and increasing the skill levels of employees in the region.

- b. Alignment to the five sectors of focus in Drive for 5, including which local area in the region is focused on each or any of the Drive for 5 sectors. Complete Attachment G – Local Workforce Development Area Key Industries in Regional Economy.

The NW Region supports and recognizes Equity, Innovation and Inclusion and is committed to the appreciation of differences, innovative approaches, and the importance of finding and retaining high paying jobs in fields of demand. Through the Drive for Five, industry sectors of technology, labor, the caring professions, and manufacturing will be supported through recently awarded grant funding. We will assist in identifying training, eliminating barriers, and supporting industry recognized in-demand occupations in the four sectors listed above that lead to family-sustaining wages. We will build and enhance sector relationships with employers, educational institutions, and other training providers to identify those with the most need. We have identified Economic Development Regions through connections with the Regional Workforce Alliance, the local workforce board and employer connections established within previous WIOA and State Dislocated worker programing. Health Care sector job vacancies in the NW region are up 19% from 2021. Manufacturing accounts for 13.1% percent of total employment and employment grew by 1,867 jobs from 2020 to 2022 these openings require skilled laborers that the area is lacking. Finally, trade and technology related occupations are also in demand in NW MN.

- c. The make-up of the sector partnerships will be determined and the expertise and resources they bring to the partnership.

Sector partnerships are fluid within economic regions and communities; the relationships often match the prevailing industry needs. Partnerships often align with regional issues, characteristics and or community needs. Such as childcare barriers, in the Bemidi area there is an active sector partnership working towards

improving childcare accessibility. In our western counties partnerships came together to align with programs focused on assisting with re-entry programs designed to improve the employment outcomes of individuals leaving incarceration.

- C.3. The demographic makeup of the labor force in those sectors as compared to the regional labor force, and how the region will work to close any identified gaps.

Employment by Race & Ethnicity, All Industries, Northwest Minnesota, 2002-2022

People of color held 10.9% of the jobs in the Northwest Minnesota Planning Region, according to data from the Quarterly Workforce Indicators program. In 2022, that equaled 23,906 jobs held by BIPOC workers, compared to 195,748 jobs held by workers who were White Alone. BIPOC workers held just 5.8% of total jobs in 2002, meaning their employment almost doubled (a 1.9-fold increase) over 20 years. Workers of color have filled an additional 12,503 jobs in the region since 2002, accounting for over 55% of the 22,696 new jobs added. With 8,713 jobs, Hispanic or Latino was the largest group of color in the region's economy, after increasing more than 175% (two-and-three-quarter-fold) since 2002.

American Indian or Alaska Native was the next largest group of color in the region's economy, with 5,719 jobs in 2022 and growing over 27%. However, American Indians had the largest pandemic declines, losing 14.1% of their jobs since the peak of 6,661 in 2019 due to a subdued casino employment rebound since the pandemic.

Jobs held by white workers declined by 2.9% from 2019 to 2022, while jobs held by BIPOC workers increased 1.5%. Jobs held by Hispanic or Latino workers increased the most at 921, and also the fastest at 12%.

Most industry sectors in Northwest Minnesota are non-diverse, but there are industries that rely more heavily on workers of color. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting had 23% of jobs held by people of color, the largest share of any industry sector, and with a high representation of Hispanic or Latino workers filling 1,017 jobs. Arts, Entertainment and Recreation had 19% of jobs held by people of color, with 408 American Indians, reflecting casino employment. Likewise, the Public Administration workforce was 15.5% people of color with 1,411 American Indians, which reflects tribal government employment. The Accommodation and Food Services workforce was 16.1% people of color, with broad representation of racial and ethnic groups. In addition to employing the largest number of BIPOC people, Manufacturing also had an above average 14.1% share of people of color, with significant numbers from every group. Manufacturing also had the largest numbers of Hispanic or Latino, Asian, and Native

Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander workers of any industry sector. The Food Manufacturing subsector is staffed by 26% Hispanic or Latino workers. While Health Care & Social Assistance had the second largest number of workers of color, its 10.7% share of BIPOC workers is slightly below average for all industries. However, the Nursing and Residential Care subsector has a larger than average 13.1% share of workers of color.

Through multiple competitive grants that have provided direct funds to work with populations at most risk NW MN has worked to improve outcomes.

- C.4. How the local board will make opportunities in these areas known to customers, including employers and job seekers, and how the local board will create, modify or expand responsive workforce development programs and initiatives.

Starting in 2018, under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Regional Planning, a regional summit strategy was enacted in the 26-county region of Northwest Minnesota to bring a wide range of stakeholders together to discuss occupations in demand and the underlying conditions causing the shortages of available workers. The emphasis was on methodology to validate the data surrounding occupations in demand, and for workforce development professionals to become more aware of the specific challenges affecting business in each of the four EDRs in the Northwest Region. Keeping in mind that each EDR is distinctly unique, it was important to listen more than talk; therefore, the underlying design was to provide a business panel as well as a roundtable discussion at each summit for an uninhibited exchange of ideas. The emphasis of these meetings has been on the efficacy of developing inclusive and equitable recruiting and retention strategies. Our goal over the next several years is to address the barriers that lead to underemployed and unemployed individuals for specific groups. Through identifying the barriers that are inhibiting re-entry into the workforce or support career advancement pathways, we can build our workforce and strengthen our economy. In our region, there is a large portion of the Native American labor force that has left the workforce and is not actively seeking work due to limited job opportunities and a lack of employers practicing inclusive workplace cultures. Through steps to support responsive workforce development, including targeted diversity and inclusion training, we aim to develop measurable goals, starting first with base-line data that will guide initiatives that will increase workforce attachment, increase skills, and strengthen our economy.

- C.5. Based on the regional/local assessment of workforce development system services, describe how strategies will be created to pursue a more responsive alignment of employment and training services.

Moving forward, it is our goal to connect with each EDR to re-fresh the “Core Team” of committed business and seek out new members to represent workforce and economic development professionals. The goal will be to engage on a monthly basis to discuss issues and to plan for actionable intents to help solve some of the most pressing issues. Specific workforce deliverables that have occurred in the past and need to be reviewed and maintained include “Infographics,” Inclusive Workforce Employer Designation,” and the “Employability Skills Certification” and the “National Career Readiness Certificate”.

- C.6. Describe how the entities responsible for participating in this process will be selected, including their expected roles and responsibilities.

Developing strategies to address in demand sectoral and occupational needs has been conducted under the purview of the two LWDBs in the Northwest Region for decades. These boards worked with the local Regional Labor Market Analyst to pioneer the process of identifying regional Occupations in Demand. Local business, education, labor, government and non-profit leaders meet in each EDR to use statistics and personal knowledge to identify industry workforce needs and project occupations in demand.

- C.7. Describe how outcomes will be determined in terms of employment and training services.

Continuation of summits and regionally planned events are part of the ongoing plans for serving the needs of the region’s businesses. Many future activities have already been funded by the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB). The intent is to stay current with business needs and to be able to react in a timely manner for development and implementation of innovative ideas.

Local Plan

SECTION A: LOCAL BOARDS VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- A.1. Describe the local area board's strategic vision for preparing a skilled workforce and how it aligns with the State's Vision, Goals and Strategies.

The RMCEP Board of Directors has developed a strategic vision for WDA 2. We are focusing on Diversity and Inclusion and Employer Services. Good jobs, serving persons with disabilities and other employment barriers, employer engagement, and developing and maintaining effective partnerships are also focus areas in the Board's strategic vision. These focus areas, in turn, align with the priorities and vision of the Sector Strategies outlined in our Regional Plan, which align with the state strategies. As we look at business-led strategies, we can see the common threads of workforce development issues carrying through from the macro-regional level to the micro-local levels.

- A.2. Describe the local area board's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth, individuals with barriers to employment, and individuals underrepresented in the local labor force.

RMCEP believes that the key to a successful life is employment and the key to a successful business is trained employees. Successful businesses, in turn, result in vibrant local economies. The mission in LWDA 2 is to provide employers with the skilled workers that they need to succeed. Through development of extensive partnerships; the creation of innovative strategies, projects, and delivery systems; the strong administration of WIOA, State, and grant programming; and working together with system and community partners, we are able to provide services and programming that meet the needs of today's consumers and businesses, as well as strengthen our local economies.

We constantly work with employers, institutions of higher education, Adult Basic Education, and other partners to ensure we are able to leverage the strengths of each entity in order to provide our customers with the skills needed to meet the demands of employers and enter into career pathways in demand. We regularly review Occupations in Demand data, Labor Market Information, and informally survey our business members of the Workforce Development Board and site supervisors to keep abreast of local area economic and employment trends. This information is used throughout our system and partnerships to provide career planning and counseling services designed to meet the employment needs of this region.

Using a client-centered, strengths-based approach, we address any barriers to employment on an individual basis.

- A.3. Describe how these goals relate to the performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

As described above, by focusing on employer and individual needs, local and regional occupations and career pathways in demand, developing strong partnerships and delivery systems, and using a client-centered approach, RMCEP has consistently met or exceeded performance measures. By maintaining the resiliency to change to meet new needs and continually to improve our services and delivery, we will support individual self-sufficiency, regional economic strength, and growth. These are proven strategies that have had a positive effect on our performance accountabilities.

- A.4. Describe the strategy to work with the entities within your local workforce development area that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals of the local area board and the state.

As stated earlier in this document, we have developed and maintained strong, positive relationships with our partners. Each partner is represented on the WDB. All partners participate in the development of strategic vision and goals. RMCEP also has a Youth Council that meets eight times each year to discuss priorities of service for youth including alignment of funds that best meet the needs of area youth, identification of local resources, and staff training opportunities that support our local vision and goals.

- A.5. Describe a best practice or area of strength of the local area as it relates to the State's Vision, Goals and Strategies that should be considered for replication or scale across the state.

The Inclusive Workforce Employer Designation is a hallmark of the work that has been occurring in NW MN that recognizes the value and purpose of employers recognizing the importance of differences. Through a combined effort our group has developed clear guidelines that have engaged employers in not just intent but action that is clearly seen and practiced.

- A.6. Describe the sectors or occupations of focus for the local area board, including:
- a. How those sectors compare to the sectors of focus within your workforce region;

Our Board is broadly represented by employers and community-based organizations that promote a wide range of occupations to include healthcare, education, trades, and manufacturing.

- b. The demographic makeup of the labor force in those sectors as compared to the local labor force, and how the local area will work to close any identified gaps;

Discussions around gaps in employer needs occur regularly as we invite a local regional analyst to discuss current employment trends and characteristics. RMCEP leaders remain connected in local boards including the M-State Advisory Board, Region 5 Economic Development and currently two of our Local Workforce Development Board members sit on the Governors Workforce Board.

- c. How the local board will make opportunities in these areas known to customers, including employers and job seekers, and how the local board will create, modify or expand responsive workforce development programs and initiatives.

Through recently expanded policy around costs associated with outreach opportunities, the MN Association of Workforce Boards is working towards developing opportunities for boards to share more broadly the work that is accomplished through the local boards. Recently, RMCEP has promoted workforce services for Dislocated Workers, Youth and Employers through multiple social platforms. RMCEP works very closely with the rapid response team at DEED to connect with businesses experiencing closures or layoffs to very quickly connect dislocated workers with resources. This has been a successful practice and has benefited all involved.

- A.7. Describe the process used by the local area board to provide opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives from businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.

The Board provides an opportunity for public comment by publishing the below announcement and a copy of the DRAFT plan on the agency's website. In addition, comments are solicited through the WDB membership, which includes representatives of business and labor organizations.

PUBLIC NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT PUBLIC NOTICE to submit the 2024-2027 Workforce Annual Plan for the utilization of State and Federal Employment and Training Funds in Local Workforce Development Area 2 (LWDA2) and 30-day opportunity for Public Comment.

LWDA 2 encompasses the following counties: Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin. Services will be provided to employers, job seekers and workers through CareerForce Centers. The operator of the centers is a partnership consisting of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Rural Minnesota CEP (RMCEP), Rehabilitation Services and State Services for the Blind. The Workforce Development Board will ensure that the workforce investment system meets the labor market needs of its customers. RMCEP fully endorses the promotion of equal opportunity and non-discrimination in all aspects of employment and training including recruitment, selection, appointment, promotion, compensation and any other personal or programmatic action for RMCEP staff, participants or subcontractors. Comments should be submitted by May 20, 2024, to: Tina Jaster, Executive Director, Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc., 803 Roosevelt Avenue, P.O. Box 1108, Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-1108. Full Plan can be found on the website at www.rmcep.com

- A.8. Describe how the local area is working together to prepare the workforce for state and federal investments in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) (collectively referred to as Investing in America (IIA)).

Board members remain diligent in referring partners to opportunities that support positive outcomes for the communities we serve. Recently, through a grant provided by DEED, RMCEP partnered with The Initiative Foundation, Leech Lake, and Region 5 Economic Development to submit an RFP to provide clean energy jobs in NW MN. The opportunities presented through the investment in bipartisan infrastructure will continue to be identified as we look to connect employers, students, job seekers, and educators to make the most of the investment in America. The board is also committed to increasing the use of apprenticeships within the region; we will continue to promote educational opportunities for industries to learn more about how to develop successful apprenticeship programs. This has already started with training provided by the Department of Labor.

SECTION B: PROGRAM OPERATIONS

CareerForce Operations – Connection to Services

- B.1. Describe how local area boards will work with each other, core title providers and available data to designate at least one CareerForce Center per local workforce

development area as comprehensive and make recommendations on recognizing affiliate and standalone partner sites.

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) meets monthly and includes the core title providers in membership. Additionally, the CareerForce Area Managers (CAM) have formed a small group several years ago that meets on a regular basis to discuss issues, initiatives and other business affecting all partners at any one of the nine CareerForce locations in our service area.

When considering CareerForce locations, affiliates, and standalone partner sites, the WDB, the CAM, and the Local Elected Officials will jointly determine locales and consider demographics, labor market data, local industries and community need. Community input and support are critical components of location analysis.

- B.2. Describe the strategies to ensure proper connectivity and coordination among the physical sites within the local workforce development area.

The CareerForce locations in LWDA 2 are primarily staffed by Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. (RMCEP), however, it is important to note that partners are either co-located or provide itinerant services in the nine CareerForce locations in this region. This co-location and periodic service provision allows for almost daily connectivity and coordination among the partners. Connectivity and coordination with other partners are also achieved through communications with the Workforce Development Board and the CAM. As noted above, the CareerForce Area Managers have formed a small group that meets on a regular basis to discuss issues affecting all partners at any one of the CareerForce locations, including Mobile Workforce Services, in our service area. There are nine CareerForce offices, including Mobile Workforce Services, in our region. The managers include Julie Sachs, representing Job Service/Wagner-Peyser, Jeri Lynn Werner, representing Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), along with local area VRS managers, Curt Anderson of Workforce Impact, and Tina Jaster of RMCEP, and when available, a representative from State Services for the Blind. Together we call this group the CareerForce Area Managers (CAM) group. During these meetings, we develop solutions and strategies, depending on the issue, to ensure proper connectivity and coordination among the physical sites and services provided. A strong, positive relationship exists among the partners and communications are frequent.

- B.3. Describe the strategies to ensure proper connectivity and coordination among the service providers within the local workforce development area.

RMCEP is the service provider partner for WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, State Dislocated Worker, Minnesota Youth Program, and the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). Through MOUs with partner agencies, services are coordinated by local staff. Wherever possible, service providers are co-located in the CareerForce locations. We are continually increasing opportunities to have a greater Adult Basic Education (ABE) presence at the CareerForce locations with a common referral for similar clients. This co-location allows for ease of connecting with and coordinating services among and between the partners. Partners work together to provide appropriate referrals and services to our mutual customers and clients. We also work closely with Rehabilitative Services through the Ticket to Work and SOAR programs in providing benefits analysis to rehabilitative customers on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) who are seeking to return to work or need assistance in applying for benefits. A close relationship has also been developed with Job Service, RMCEP, and Unemployment Insurance (UI) in which the referrals have become more seamless for the customer and integrated into the regular service delivery of each partner.

- B.4. Describe other strategies that will be used to maximize services and access to services, such as non-traditional hours or using partner facilities.

Core partners conduct outreach in the communities we serve through the use of technology that we call the Mobile Office. We provide services on an itinerant basis in county facilities, college campuses or K-12 facilities. Non-traditional hours are available to accommodate specific events. Additionally, we maximize services through relationship development and cross-referral with other external agencies and entities. RMCEP embraces all opportunities to serve customers and clients via virtual or remote means through the use of technology. Additionally, we refer customers to the CareerForceMN.com platform and use the resources available to us on the site to provide virtual services.

- B.5. Describe the strategic approaches to ensure all elements of Career Services are available at service locations or online, including services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment or service access.

RMCEP is fortunate to have partners from DEED at four of our eight CareerForce locations who are trained professionals providing elements of career services. On site you will find RMCEP and partner professionals that include job counselors, job search instructors, youth counselors, rehabilitation counselors, Wagner-Peyser staff, and REAs. This group of partners provide all elements of career services as a functioning team at the local CareerForce or through mobile, virtual and remote services. For a

comprehensive explanation of career services provided and availability, please see response to questions in section C, program services and delivery.

All Career Services are available at all service locations and can also be accessed online. We have assistive technologies and trained personnel on staff in their use to serve individuals with disabilities as needed. Access for youth and individuals with barriers to employment are designed as appropriate based on individual need. Additionally, DEED Job Service has developed CareerForceMN.com, a service delivery guide to ensure that career services are offered to all customers.

- B.6. Describe how the local area board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

CareerForce staff are well-versed in the use of technology for services and ensure compliance with accessibility standards. We utilize assistive technology devices for persons with disabilities and have been certified as ADA compliant at all sites through DEED. Additionally, we have established strong relationships with agencies such as PACER as external resources. We use Mobile Office technology to ensure accessibility to outlying areas.

- B.7. Describe how the one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and programs carried out by one-stop partners.

Minnesota is compliant with an integrated technology-enabled case management information system. RMCEP is fully engaged in the Workforce One (WF1) system and uses this system as an integrated intake and case management information system. Additionally, several of our staff members were on the WF1 re-write team and remain active as field staff advisory to DEED in WF1 updates. Veterans Services and Job Service also use WF1 software. RMCEP often volunteers to be a part of pilot projects intended to improve the use of technology that expands our services. For example, we are currently working with DEED to pilot a new measurement platform that will impact all providers under the "Dashboard Pilot Project".

- B.8. Describe how supportive services, such as transportation and other needs, will be coordinated to better serve individuals with specific barriers to training, education and employment.

Supportive Services are provided in support of the Individual Service Strategy Plan (Employment Plan) and are based on individual needs. We use a team approach to approve supportive services and the type of service and the need rationale is case noted.

Each CareerForce location develops and maintains local community connections and networks with whom to coordinate needed services. Examples of these connections include relationships with Adult Basic Education, secondary and post-secondary education, HUD, homeless organizations, county social services, community action organizations, culturally specific agencies, juvenile justice system, veterans' resources and services, and many others.

Our local CareerForce partner teams are familiar with services provided by other agencies and work regularly with them to incorporate services into the individual employment plan. All partners meet regularly with other agencies to share updated information on available services.

CareerForce Operations - Accessibility

- B.9. Describe strategies that will be used to leverage technology for services and ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

CareerForce staff are well-versed in the use of technology for services and ensure compliance with accessibility standards. We utilize assistive technology devices for persons with disabilities and have been certified as ADA compliant at all sites through DEED. Additionally, we have established strong relationships with agencies such as PACER as external resources. We use Mobile Office technology to ensure accessibility to outlying areas.

- B.10. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11) of WIOA) between the local area board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit administering programs carried out under title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121(f)) in accordance with section 101(a)(11) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11) 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 local Workforce Development Board and Vocational Rehabilitation Services collaborate to enhance services to individuals with disabilities, individuals with other barriers to employment, and individuals living in poverty. To the extent possible, services are co-located in CareerForce offices to provide access to a wide variety of services. Each CareerForce location provides an orientation to services available to assist jobseekers make an informed decision on choice of service provider. Direct service staff participate in cross-training to ensure they understand the services offered by the various partners, and the eligibility criteria for each program.

Vocational Rehabilitation staff are available for consultation without the need for the person to apply for services. Typical topics include how and when to disclose a disability, effective use of assistive technology, Social Security work incentives, and benefits planning. There is currently a joint effort to provide joint financial planning and work incentives planning for individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance. Disability Benefits 101, a software program developed using Medicaid Infrastructure grant funding, is available to all partners to assist staff inform jobseekers about the impact earned income will have on federal and state benefits, including public health insurance.

The Workforce Development Board consults with Vocational Rehabilitation Services as they are developing initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, customized training programs, career pathways initiatives, youth services, and other business services.

Local Workforce Development Boards sponsor local Job Fairs. Vocational Rehabilitation participates in the Job Fairs and other community events. The local partners also share job leads, and Vocational Rehabilitation may purchase placement services from the local Board as part of a performance-based funding agreement.

RMCEP provides Social Security Administration (SSA) certified benefits planning and financial education services as part of the Ticket to Work program. RMCEP through staff trained in Social Security Advocacy under the SOAR method, will also assist individuals who are not capable of competitive employment and are at risk of homelessness to complete needed paperwork to gain Social Security Disability Benefits.

Local boards include representatives from secondary and postsecondary education and adult education. Through these connections activities are coordinated and training is discussed to include prioritization of youth initiatives and grant opportunities. Adult education partners are essential in developing contextualized education opportunities and resources for limited English learners.

- B.11. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system will comply with section 188 of 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 with disabilities.

All of the CareerForce offices in LWDA 2 have been certified as ADA compliant by DEED. The RMCEP Human Resources Manager and the ODEO of DEED have worked closely over several years to ensure RMCEP is in compliance with section 188, and applicable provisions of the ADA of 1990 in terms of physical access, program access and training through policy. Over the last few years, RMCEP staff have been trained by PACER and other experts in the use of assistive technology to assist persons with disabilities access needed services and resources.

Through RMCEP's tenure in implementing the Disability Employment Initiative, we have integrated the Guideposts for Success model to provide a holistic approach to serving all customers, including those with disabilities. This has also allowed us to develop and maintain a stronger relationship and collaboration with our Vocational Rehabilitation Partners as well. This best practice continues to this day.

Finally, as a Ticket to Work provider, our staff are versed in the resources available to assist social security disability recipients to develop and follow a plan to re-enter the workforce.

CareerForce Operations – EEO Compliance

- B.12. The local workforce development area and their partners are aware of the responsibilities of the Equal Opportunity Officer, including attending DEED sponsored EO Training?

Yes

- B.13. The local workforce development area is aware of and conducts annually a physical and program accessibility review.

Yes

- B.14. Does the local workforce development area have in place an agreed upon WIOA Discrimination complaint process per the regulations?

Yes

- B.15. Does the local workforce development area have in place an agreed upon WIOA Program Complaint Policy per the regulations?

Yes x

- B.16. Does the local workforce development area have in place a language access policy and plan? Describe your local workforce development areas language access policy.

Yes x

RMCEP's language policy is embedded into multiple service policies to inform staff of the required elements in communication with all participants and partners. Staff complete training on the use of the language line, including how and when to access alternative language resources. Teams have onsite staff that are bi-lingual in multiple languages. All required forms are provided with language blocks that allow for interpretation. Posters are displayed in multiple languages as available as well as brochures and outreach materials.

- B.17. Describe the affirmative outreach strategies your local workforce development area will employ to recruit participants that are representative of the populations in your region. (You may also attach an outreach or engagement plan if one exists for your LWDA).

We use community outreach, a client-centered approach, technology, and assistive technology to expand access to employment opportunities for all eligible individuals, including those with barriers to employment. We also focus on continuous improvement and always look for new ways or strategies to increase access or enhance access to employment opportunities. Some of these continuous improvement initiatives have resulted in the development of Certified Work Incentive Practitioners to assist in SSI/SSDI Benefits Planning under the Ticket to Work program, the implementation of the Guideposts for Success, and the Re-Entry Pilot. RMCEP is the MFIP provider for 19 counties and has been providing Social Security Advocacy for individuals who, due to health issues, cannot participate in competitive employment.

We conduct joint staff training regarding reducing disparities for underemployed and underserved populations. DEED has close partnerships with county jails, providing pre-release workshops to inmates to prepare them to get a job upon release. We provide the "New Leaf Workshop" and have two Certified Community Workforce Development Professionals in our region. DEED does outreach to Probation Officers for referrals and does workshops at transitional facilities. The Regional Workforce Alliance (through Regional Planning efforts) help provide information and best practices to employers about hiring tomorrow's workforce with an emphasis on hiring people from disparaged

communities. Of note is our emphasis on providing a systemic curriculum to earn certification for employers as an Inclusive Workforce Employer.

In addition, through sector partnerships developed over the years we have identified employers and partners that support diversity, equity and inclusion in the workforce. For example, successful outcomes have been identified by connecting with employers that are accepting towards employing individuals who have been justice-involved, by identifying these employers we are making connections that provide good jobs for participants resulting in family sustaining wages.

CareerForce Partners

- B.18. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

There are four main one-stop partners within LWDA 2. They include Job Service, whose primary role is to work with individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance and Veterans with significant barriers to employment. They also work with businesses on workforce shortage solutions through the Workforce Strategy Consultant. Vocational Rehabilitation Services, whose primary role is to assist consumers with disabilities; State Services for the Blind, whose primary role is to assist consumers with sight-impairments; and RMCEP, whose primary role is to operate the Employment and Training Programs such as WIOA Adult, State and WIOA Youth programs, State Dislocated Worker Programs, MFIP, SNAP and similar programs, as well as serve as the WIOA administrative entity. All partners have a strong role in workforce development. The resource contributions will be determined through the MOU and cost allocations that will be developed under state policy. Our most current Partner MOU and IFA are on file with DEED.

- B.19. Describe how the local area board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system.

Our joint boards have a focus on continuous improvement in all its operations. Most recently, RMCEP has been engaged in a concentrated effort to increase knowledge, efficiencies and partnerships with agencies providing services to persons of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, refugees and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) population. Two additional areas of continuous improvement are the focus on providing employer services and referrals, and the use of technology to provide services and coordinate and refer services to other agencies. Staff training on a continual basis also promotes service delivery improvement. Both NWPIC and RMCEP have staff members that are on state WIOA committees and staff are actively engaged with DEED personnel in terms of developing and clarifying DEED

policies and procedures. Both are also active members in the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB) and RMCEP is a member of the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB).

The WDB and Local Elected Officials of LWDA 2 recently updated the Vision Statement and Strategic Plan for the agency in 2022-2023.

Performance measures are key in determining the success of program outcomes. The Board of RMCEP has developed a proxy measure system in which RMCEP can monitor the progress of performance measures long before official results are published. This allows us to identify and correct any performance issues in a timelier fashion. Additionally, the Board has set higher internal expectations in terms of performance measures than those required of the state, thereby enhancing the ability of the agency to meet or exceed the measures.

- B.20. Describe the local workforce development area's processes to ensure non-duplicative services and avoid duplicate administrative costs.

Through the use of clearly written Memorandums of Understanding, internal and external monitoring procedures and timely independent Audits.

- B.21. Describe how the Memorandum of Understanding will be or has been developed and used to ensure commitment of resources from service providers and required partners.

All partners follow state policy regarding Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). Core partners use state policy as a guideline when negotiating commitment of resources that lead to the development of the MOU.

- B.22. Describe how local area boards will ensure state policies on infrastructure funding requirements are adhered to and the process for addressing any discrepancies or disagreements.

The Workforce Development Board ensures that all partners adhere to state policy. Discussions on discrepancies or disagreements are resolved through the CAM, who then make recommendations to the WDB. Ultimately, resolutions to disagreements are decided by the WDB. Additionally, DEED partners follow their prescribed methods and forms and coordinate to complete the paperwork process. Approval is negotiated and requested of all local partners.

- B.23. Describe how local area boards, who contract out for provider services, will ensure that providers fully participate in infrastructure funding requirements and the alignment of service delivery within the local workforce development area 134(c)(3)(G) of WIOA.

RMCEP does not subcontract for provider services.

- B.24. Describe the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local workforce development area for activities carried out under section 107(d)(16) WIOA.

RMCEP does not subcontract for provider services.

- B.25. Describe and identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) of WIOA.

RMCEP does not subcontract for provider services.

Levels of Performance

- B.26. Describe how the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official will be used to measure the performance of the local workforce development area and to be used by the local area board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent, eligible providers under subtitle B of WIOA and the One-stop delivery system.

RMCEP is continually active in negotiating performance for our region. We make great effort to prepare for negotiations at both the state and local levels that best represent the current economic conditions that impact outcomes. Knowledge of local labor markets, community characteristics, population, local initiatives, agricultural, and “main street” reality impact how and where services are successful. The LWDB provides current “live” data on the issues that are improving or challenging communities. Using the One-Stop Delivery system and the seamless system of delivery we can connect with partners to identify trends and needs, such as how individuals are connecting and with whom to meet their employment challenges.

- B.27. Describe the actions the local area board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the state board.

Our local board is committed to the highest of standards that have historically been associated with RMCEP. We are extremely fortunate that the chair of our LWDB and the

chair of our Youth council who is also on the LWDB both reside on the Governor's workforce board. As members of the MN Association of Workforce Boards and the National Association of Workforce Boards, RMCEP is poised to remain knowledgeable and responsive to the required measurements set forth by our stakeholders.

Local Workforce Board Governance

- B.28. Briefly describe the local area board's policy and timetable for filling vacancies, replacing/reappointing individuals whose terms have come to an end. Include in your description any plans to fill the terms that will be expiring as of June 30, 2024.

RMCEP has a clearly defined set of bylaws that detail the terms and steps to replace members. At-large members of the Board of Directors shall be appointed for three (3) year terms. A portion of a term will not be considered a full term. An at-large member may be appointed at the discretion of the Board of Directors for up to three (3) terms. Once a member is appointed to a Board term that member shall retain that term. Any member not eligible for an additional term because of term limits may be considered for membership again one year from the date of the next annual meeting. Members representing the Workforce Development Board shall serve terms which are consistent with the bylaws of the Workforce Development Board as well as with these bylaws. In the event of a vacancy involving an at-large member of the Board of Directors, the remaining members of the Board, or a quorum thereof, may select a member from one or more nominations that are solicited or presented for its consideration by the Nominations Committee of the Board of Directors. Candidate qualifications and geographic representation, as defined by the Board of Directors and the Nominations Committee, will be among factors considered to fill a vacancy. A majority vote of the Board of Directors is required to fill the vacancy.

In the cases of vacancies involving representatives of the Workforce Development Board, the Board will accept representatives elected by the Workforce Development Board at its annual meeting or interim appointments to complete a vacated term except that one (1) of the three (3) representatives shall be Chairperson of the Workforce Development Board.

- B.29. Is your local area board currently in compliance with WIOA?

Yes X

No

If No, what steps will be taken to bring your local area board into compliance by June 30, 2024

- B.30. Please include in Attachment B the composition of your board, including the sectors represented on the board, and to the extent practicable, the demographic makeup of your board.

Attached.

SECTION C: PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Local Area Board Program and Service Delivery

- C.1. Describe how the local area board, working with the entities carrying out core programs will expand access to employment opportunities for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

As stated elsewhere, RMCEP is the provider of Title I core programs in our area. We use community outreach, a client-centered approach, technology, and assistive technology to expand access to employment opportunities for all eligible individuals, including those with barriers to employment. We also focus on continuous improvement and always look for new ways or strategies to increase access or enhance access to employment opportunities. Some of these continuous improvement initiatives have resulted in the development of Certified Work Incentive Practitioners to assist in SSI/SSDI Benefits Planning under the Ticket to Work program, the implementation of the Guideposts for Success, and the TANF Innovative Program. RMCEP is the MFIP provider for 19 counties. RMCEP is also currently working with VRS in providing Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) services.

We conduct joint staff training regarding reducing disparities for underemployed and underserved populations. DEED has close partnerships with county jails, providing pre-release workshops to inmates to prepare them to get a job upon release. We provide the "New Leaf Workshop" and have two Certified Community Workforce Development Professionals in our region. DEED does outreach to Probation Officers for referrals and does workshops at Halfway Houses. The Regional Workforce Alliance (through Regional Planning efforts) help provide information and best practices to employers about hiring tomorrow's workforce with an emphasis on hiring people from disparaged communities. Of particular note is our emphasis on providing a systemic curriculum to earn certification for employers as an Inclusive Workforce Employer.

- C.2. Describe how the local area board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

Access to supportive services has been expanded through outreach to various partners to leverage the availability of supportive services based on individual need. Examples include providing SSI and SSDI Benefits Analysis under Ticket to Work and SOAR programming. Additionally, we provide SNAP and Emergency Assistance services. We have strong partnerships with other entities that provide needed services that are not within our realm to provide, such as housing assistance programs, community action partners and others.

- C.3. Describe how the local area board will facilitate the development of career pathways, co-enrollments (as appropriate) and activities that lead to industry recognized post-secondary credentials that are portable and stackable.

RMCEP has led the way in the development of career pathways over the years through our involvement with sector work, identification of local Occupations in Demand, development of Career Pathway programming and other initiatives involving the input of both industry and Minnesota State Colleges and University partners. We continue to maintain these partnerships in the development of career pathways, co-enrollments with both our College and ABE partners, and other activities that lead to industry-recognized credentials that can be built upon. It has long been the practice of RMCEP to co-enroll participants in programs in which they could benefit from those program offerings.

The Regional Workforce Alliance is a strategy group representative of our regional stakeholders and employers. Business-led sector strategies have been formed with a Private-Sector champion for each one in each LWDA and this will also facilitate these efforts on a more local basis as well.

- C.4. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local workforce development area.

ADULT SERVICES

BACKGROUND: The purpose of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) is to 1) provide a system of employability services that will increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants; 2) improve the quality of the workforce; 3) reduce welfare dependency; and 4) enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation's economy. WIOA authorizes career and training services which are based on the customer's need. Services are provided through the one stop CareerForce. Providing excellent customer service will be our focus.

WIOA services provided by RMCEP include career and training services. There are three types of career services: basic career services, individual career services, and follow-up. Enrollment is not required for adults to access basic career services. Individualized career services and training services require enrollment. WIOA enrollment is available to individuals who are unable to obtain employment or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency through basic career services as determined by RMCEP staff and who meet the WIOA priority for services.

A. BASIC CAREER SERVICES

1. Basic Career Services primarily involve direction to facilitate self-service or are informational in nature. The following Basic Career Services will be available:
 - a. Eligibility determination
 - b. Outreach, intake and orientation
 - c. Initial assessment (literacy, numeracy, English as a Second Language (ESL), aptitudes, abilities, supportive service needs)
 - d. Labor Exchange such as job search and placement assistance; career counseling (in-demand or non-traditional occupations)
 - e. Workforce programs referral/coordination
 - f. Labor Market Information (LMI)
 - g. Training program performance and cost
 - h. Our performance
 - i. Supportive service information and referral
 - j. Assistance with financial aid eligibility for non-WIOA training
 - k. Assistance with Unemployment Insurance (UI)
2. Basic Career Services will be provided mainly in the CareerForce Career Lab.
3. Group services such as career planning and job search or job club are also available as Basic Career Services.
4. Career planning as a Basic Career Service does not include staff-assisted development of a career or employment plan. The expectation for Basic Career Service is that the customer uses the information provided to self-serve. Customers who need staff assistance to develop their plan must be enrolled to access an Individualized Employment Plan.
5. Job search information can be provided as a group activity. Those customers who need individualized staff support to conduct their job search should be enrolled in individualized career services for case management.

B. INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES

1. Individualized Career Services do require program enrollment. Individualized Career Services are available to people whom the CareerForce has determined will be needed to obtain or retain employment. The following Individual Career Services will be available in all CareerForce locations.
 - a. Comprehensive and specialized assessment (for example: NCRC, Benefit Planning)
 - b. Development of Individual Employment Plan (IEP)
 - c. Group/individual counseling/mentoring
 - d. Career planning (case management)
 - e. Pre-vocational services: Includes employability skills such as time management, professional communication skills and worksite expectations. In some instances, pre-apprenticeship programs may be considered as short-term pre-vocational services. Workshops such as resume writing, interviewing techniques, online job searches, career exploration or interest assessments are available as pre-vocational services.
 - f. Internships/work experience linked to careers
 - g. Workforce preparation activities (Referral to ABE)
 - h. Financial literacy
 - i. Out-of-area job search
 - j. ESL; integrated education/training programs
 - k. Work Readiness Services: assist an individual to acquire a combination of basic academic, critical thinking, digital literacy, and/or self-management skills. These include services that build competencies in:
 - Utilizing resources;
 - Using information;
 - Working with others;
 - Understanding systems;
 - Skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment; and
 - Other employability skills that increase an individual's preparation for the workforce
2. Priority of service applies. The staff-assisted assessments are completed with customers. The customers' needs are assessed through a formal guided interview. Staff will present the assessment information to the team. The team will recommend additional basic services, referral to other agencies, or enrollment for Individual Career, and/or Training Services. This consists of using the assessment tool in a guided interview to identify strengths, barriers, employability development needs, and a completed application. It also

includes literacy assessment and one-on-one interpretation of interest and/or aptitude assessment results.

3. Every participant in individualized career services will have an Employment Plan which identifies the employment goal, appropriate objectives, and the services needed for the participant to achieve those objectives. Workforce One Employment Plan will be used.
4. Staff Assisted Job Placement consists of any of the following three services:
 - a. Job Development: Staff seek job openings with the skills and employment objectives of a particular job-seeking customer in mind. This includes talking with employers about their needs and interest in interviewing the specific job seeking customer.
 - b. Job Referral: Staff refer job seekers to job openings that are currently available.
 - c. Out of Area Job Search: Supportive services for job seekers who have staff verified job interviews or job offers that would require relocation.
5. Staff Assisted Job Search System: This activity is for individuals who need a guided job search, including supportive services to participate in the Job Search System (JSS). Staff monitor the implementation of skills learned in JSS.
6. One-on-one career counseling is available to help the participant reach a successful outcome. Career Counseling is focused on issues such as career exploration, career change, personal career development and career related issues. It is the process of helping individuals explore career options, or experienced professionals contemplating a career change to select a course of study that may help them to obtain a job or make them employable. A career counselor helps individuals to get into a career that is suited to their aptitude, personality, interest and skills.
7. Non-Credentialed Training: which is an organized program or course of study but does not result in an industry-recognized credential when successfully completed.
8. GED: The participant is working with ABE to obtain a GED or high school diploma.
9. Work Training: Adult Internship or Work Training including Transitional Jobs. Some adults benefit from hands on experience to try out a job, or to gain recent work history and a local reference, or to apply skills they have

discussed in a classroom. Work experience activities can be customized to the needs of the job seeker.

10. National Career Readiness Certificate Testing: This activity is used when an enrolled individual is taking the three (3) WorkKeys tests to obtain a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).
11. Planned Extended Leave: Individuals in this activity do not enter the administrative separation process explained below.
 - a. This activity is for individuals who will enter training but will experience a planned gap in service greater than eighty-nine (89) days due to a delay in the start of training.
 - b. This activity also signifies a planned extended leave for individuals who have been called to active duty in a branch of the military. Individuals will remain in this activity until they return home and can again begin participation in their WIOA service plan.
12. Partnering: Partnering indicates that the customer is currently receiving WIOA authorized services which are not paid for through WIOA funds (i.e., DRS assessment and plan; Veterans Employment Assistance; TAA).
 - a. Non CareerForce agencies may also be partners to serve the needs of WIOA customers if the services they provide are authorized in WIOA such as adult basic education or occupational skills training programs that we are not funding. The participant's Employment Plan will document the partnering agency, the WIOA service that is being provided and the planned duration of the partnering service.
 - b. Staff must identify the partnering program on the status change when enrolling a participant in Partnering.
 - c. RMCEP staff will maintain contacts with participants in partnering to determine progress and the need for any changes to the participant's plan (ISS).

13. Financial Literacy

C. TRAINING SERVICES

1. Participants interested in attending training first complete a training proposal in consultation with their job counselor. A training proposal determines if a particular training is needed. The proposal will compare training institutions, cost, availability/start date, length of training and labor market data related to that specific training. Short-term training is supported with a focus on training that results in a credential.

Services are documented in the participant's Employment Plan. A participant is not required to receive career services before receiving training services.

All participants seeking training funding will have a documented interview, evaluation or assessment AND career planning or other means by which eligibility for WIOA-funded training services can be determined.

Training services may be provided if the participant:

- a. is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone; and
- b. is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and
- c. has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services; and
- d. selected a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or the planning region, or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or relocate; and
- e. is determined eligible in accordance with the priority system in effect for adults (WIOA Adult program participants only; see the Employment and Training Division's policy on WIOA Adult Eligibility and Priority of Service.

Additionally, a determination should be made whether the participant:

- a. is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training, including state-funded training funds or Federal Pell Grants; or
- b. is currently waiting for a Trade Adjustment Assistance petition determination. If the petition is denied, the participant can still continue training under WIOA.

Training services include:

- Registered Apprenticeships
- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment (also known as Credentialed Training or Classroom Training)
- On-the-job training
- Incumbent worker training
- Training programs operated by the private sector
- Occupationally specific skill upgrading and retraining Entrepreneurial training programs that assist qualified unemployed individuals who are seriously interested in starting a business and becoming self-employed

(note: TAA participants cannot have a goal of self-employment, and entrepreneurial activities are not allowed under TAA law)

- Job readiness training provided in combination with any of the above training services, with the exception of registered apprenticeships (note: job readiness training alone does not constitute a training service)
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training
- Non-credentialed training, which is an organized program or course of study that provides occupationally specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at intermediate or advanced levels but does not result in an industry-recognized credential when successfully completed.

2. When WIOA funds are used to pay for training services the training provider must be listed on the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) unless the training is on-the-job training, customized training, or incumbent worker training, which are excluded under federal law. Internships, transitional jobs or unpaid work experience opportunities, which are career services, are also excluded. To be considered a training course that qualifies for a WIOA credential, the training must be WIOA certified. Paying for training courses that have not been certified will be considered Non-Credentialed Training.
3. The following services provide specific job/occupational skills for participants, and all require credential attainment. Staff must obtain a copy of the credential and keep it in the client's field file.
 - a. Other Academic Classroom Training (Not Funded by RMCEP WIOA). Staff use this activity when TAA or another source is paying for the training and RMCEP staff will need to obtain verification of the credential for performance measure.
 - b. WIOA Certified Classroom Training. This activity is classroom training that provides a license or credential upon completion. This includes entrepreneurial training (training is allowed but start-up business costs are prohibited).
 - c. Credential Attained without Training: A course of study has been completed prior to request for assistance with license or certification. Assistance is being provided to obtain a license or certification now.
 - d. On-the-Job Training (OJT) (Public or Private).
 - e. Customized Training: The contract will identify the specific training to be provided, RMCEP paid costs, employer paid costs, the training schedule, and a list of employees who will be trained.

4. **Credentials:** Programs' providers have a number of sources they can use to collect data needed to calculate the credential attainment rates. Credentials may include degrees, diplomas, certificates, licenses, other forms of certification for certain skilled and professional occupations, employer attestations, and job placement. For this WIOA Adult program, an updated case note documenting contact and confirmation from a school or institution official verifying the date of graduation and credential type is allowed.
5. **On-the-Job Training:** The standard employer reimbursement is 50%. Contracts which meet all of the following factors may be increased up to 75%.
 - The characteristics of the participants – long-term unemployed or having barriers to employment as defined under WIOA.
 - The size of the employer – small and medium businesses having fewer than 250 employees.
 - The quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities – training for in-demand occupations as defined by the local Workforce Development Board.
 - Participants successful in OJT's will submit measurable skills gains.

D. FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

WIOA participants who enter employment at termination will have access to non-financial support services for 12 months after exiting the program.

DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES

BACKGROUND: Dislocated worker programs provide assistance to dislocated workers as a result of plant closings, layoffs, failure of individual businesses or farm operations, and displaced homemakers. Federal and State regulations require notice of plant closing, union consultation, Expedious Response or coordination with the State Rapid Response Unit.

Dislocated workers are to be encouraged to enroll immediately and made aware that these services exist to be customer-centered and job-driven. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

The needs of dislocated workers vary considerably. While some individuals will have a substantial need for program services, others can succeed in finding good jobs with

limited assistance. This policy formalizes general guidelines for determining which dislocated workers are appropriate for Individualized Career or for Training Services.

A. Expeditious Response

1. RMCEP and DEED/Job Service initiate contact within one week of receiving notification of a layoff or plant closure of 49 or fewer people to begin expeditious response. If 50 or more people are affected, the local Team Leader (as site supervisor), must notify the Director of Operations, (RMCEP's designated state rapid response coordinator), who will then contact the State Rapid Response Unit. The Rapid Response Unit may request that RMCEP take the lead with the business in situations where there is no competition for layoffs larger than 50.
2. The RMCEP Director of Operations will appoint a RMCEP staff to coordinate with the DEED representative to jointly plan an orientation meeting for the affected workers. The orientation planning will include:
 - a. a method for the identification of community resource people
 - b. conducting worker needs assessment surveys
 - c. a liaison plan with local economic development agencies to assist in efforts to avert the dislocation
 - d. established roles and methods for providing program information to the dislocated workers
 - e. established time frame for prompt intervention
 - f. and when feasible, development of a layoff aversion plan to present to the business owner/officials.
3. Layoff Aversion Strategies will be discussed with the business owner/official to determine if the layoff or closure can be averted or minimized. Layoff aversion may include a wide array of possible strategies or activities, including but not limited to:
 - a. Ongoing engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with businesses in the community, in order to create an environment for successful layoff aversion efforts and to enable the provision of assistance to dislocated workers in obtaining reemployment as soon as possible;
 - b. Providing assistance to employers in managing reductions in force, which may include early identification of firms at risk of layoffs, assessment of the needs of and options for at-risk firms, and the delivery of services to address these needs;

- c. Funding feasibility studies to determine if a company's operations may be sustained through a buyout or other means to avoid or minimize layoffs;
 - d. Developing and managing incumbent work training programs or other worker up skilling approaches;
 - e. Connecting companies to state Short-Time Compensation or other programs designed to prevent layoffs or to quickly reemploy dislocated workers, business loan programs for employee skill upgrading; and other Federal, state and local resources as necessary to address other business needs;
 - f. Establishing linkages with economic development activities at the Federal, state and local levels including Federal Department of Commerce programs and available state and local business retention and expansion activities;
 - g. Partnering or contracting with business-focused organizations to assess risks to companies, propose strategies to address those risks, implement services, and measure impacts of services delivered;
 - h. Conducting analyses of the suppliers of an affected company to assess their risks and vulnerabilities from a potential closing or shift in production of their major customer;
 - i. Engaging in proactive measures to identify opportunities for potential economic transition and training needs in growing industry sectors or expanding businesses; and
 - j. Connecting businesses and workers to short-term, on-the-job, or customized training programs and apprenticeships before or after layoff to help facilitate rapid reemployment.
4. Economic development agencies will be contacted to prevent or mitigate the loss of jobs.
 5. Workers will be informed of available services. Only Basic Career Services are
- B. Basic Career Services
1. RMCEP will perform the following services:
 - a. outreach of potential applicants;
 - b. intake and eligibility determination; and
 - c. provide Expeditious Response.
 2. Early intervention for eligible dislocated workers is critical. Services are to be made available as soon as possible upon notification that employees will be terminated due to business closure or layoff.

3. Basic Career Services such as orientation, career lab assistance and job club will be available to all dislocated workers.
4. RMCEP staff will complete the needs assessment with dislocated workers who express interest in services.
5. Before any client may receive Individualized Career or Training Services, the client must be enrolled using the standard RMCEP process.
6. The Reading and Math Test must be administered to each Dislocated Worker prior to enrollment.

C. Individualized Career Services:

1. The following Individual Career Services will be available to Dislocated Workers in need of such services to assist them to obtain or retain employment:
 - a. Comprehensive and specialized assessment (for example: NCRC, Benefit Planning)
 - b. Development of individual employment plan
 - c. Group/individual counseling/mentoring
 - d. Career planning (case management)
 - e. Short term pre-vocational services
 - f. Internships/work experience linked to careers
 - g. Workforce preparation activities (Referral to ABE)
 - h. Financial literacy
 - i. Out-of-area job search
 - j. ESL; integrated education/training programs
2. Persons selected for dislocated worker services will be enrolled, complete a staff assisted assessment, Employment Planning and have their Employment Plan developed within two weeks of selection. Every participant in individualized career services will have an Employment Plan which identifies the employment goal, appropriate objectives, and the services needed for the participant to achieve those objectives. Workforce One Employment Plan will be used.
3. Services are provided in the following manner:

The staff person will develop an individual employment plan with the dislocated worker based on the dislocated worker's readiness for immediate work or desire to redirect his or her life. Dislocated workers who select immediate work will complete an assessment with a focus on immediate staff assisted job development for the most job ready, or training services through the development of an appropriate OJT. The OJT should include a way to

achieve a credential. A credential is needed as the OJT itself does not qualify as a credential.

Dislocated workers who need skill upgrading will have a plan developed to include skill upgrading.

Whenever possible, participant retraining should build on existing skills of an individual to more quickly facilitate reemployment. Shorter length of training to provide credential or licensure needed for reemployment is preferred over longer retraining programs. In determining whether retraining services will be provided, staff must consider financial need, client commitment, client selection of a demand occupation, client skills, training needs, and the likelihood of employment being obtained in a field chosen by the client. These services include: Academic Training, Occupational Skills Training and OJT.

4. Staff Assisted Job Placement consists of any of the following three services:
 - a. Job Development - Staff seek job openings with the skills and employment objectives of a particular job-seeking customer in mind. Includes talking with employers about their needs and interest in interviewing the specific job seeking customer.
 - b. Job Referral - Staff refer job seekers to job openings that are currently available.
 - c. Out of Area Job Search - Supportive services for job seekers who have staff verified job interviews or job offers that would require relocation.
5. Staff Assisted Job Search System - This activity is for individuals who need a guided job search either in or out of the area, including supportive services to participate in the Job Search System (JSS). Staff will monitor the implementation of skills learned in JSS.
6. One-on-one career counseling is available to help the participant reach a successful outcome. Career Counseling is focused on issues such as career exploration, career change, personal career development and career related issues. It is the process of helping individuals explore career options, or experienced professionals contemplating a career change to select a course of study that may help them to obtain a job or make them employable. A career counselor helps individuals to get into a career that is suited to their aptitude, personality, interest and skills.
7. Non-Credentialed Training: which is an organized program or course of study but does not result in an industry-recognized credential when successfully completed.

8. GED Training - The participant is working with ABE to obtain a GED or complete a high school diploma.
9. Work Training Linked to Careers; Adult Internship Linked to Careers. These activities are allowed for dislocated workers when the activities are linked to careers. Work experience activities can be customized to the needs of the dislocated worker to try out a career, to gain relevant work history or to apply skills discussed in a classroom.
10. WorkKeys NCRC Testing: Referrals will be made on an individual basis to the local ABE site for those whose skills need to be upgraded for NCRC testing outcomes desired and/or training/employment sought.
11. Planned Extended Leave: Individuals in this activity do not enter the administrative separation process explained below.
 - a. This activity is for individuals who will enter training but will experience a planned gap in service greater than eighty-nine (89) days due to a delay in the start of training.
 - b. This activity also signifies a planned extended leave for individuals who have been called to active duty in a branch of the military. Individuals will remain in this activity until they return home and can again begin participation in their WIOA service plan.
12. Partnering: Partnering indicates that the customer is currently receiving WIOA authorized services which are not paid for through WIOA funds (i.e., DRS assessment and plan; Veterans Employment Assistance; TAA).
 - a. Non CareerForce agencies may also be partners to serve the needs of WIOA customers if the services they provide are authorized in WIOA such as adult basic education or occupational skills training programs that RMCEP is not funding. The participant's individual Employment Plan will document the partnering agency, the WIOA service that is being provided and the planned duration of the partnering service.
 - b. RMCEP staff will maintain contacts with participants in partnering to determine progress and the need for any changes to the participant's employment plan (EP).

D. Training Services

1. Individuals who are unable to obtain or retain employment through intensive services will be referred to training if they meet the following requirements:
 - a. The goal in the Employment Plan can only be met with the proposed training.

- b. Labor Market Information (LMI) supports employment opportunities after training in the geographic location that the individual is willing to reside.
- c. Average wage can lead toward self-sufficiency.
- d. Individual is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to fully cover the comprehensive cost of the training.
- e. The individual can meet the admission requirements.
- f. There is reasonable expectation based on assessment that the individual will complete the training.

2. Training eligibility.

- a. Importance of the Employment Plan (EP). Just as not every laid off worker is automatically eligible for the Dislocated Worker program, not every Dislocated Worker program customer is automatically eligible for training. All training that RMCEP pays for using Dislocated Worker funds must have a basis in the employment and training plan (EP) that the customer and counselor have agreed upon.
- b. Training with a Credential Participants must have the skills and qualifications necessary to successfully participate in the selected program of training and have selected a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or the planning region, or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or relocate.

Training services, when determined appropriate, will be provided through a training contract. Only training providers listed on the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) are used. The exceptions are on-the-job training, customized training, or incumbent worker training, which are excluded under federal law. Internships, transitional jobs or unpaid work experience opportunities, which are career services, are also excluded. Training services paid for using state Dislocated Worker funds must be licensed, registered, or legally exempt by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) or other appropriate state agency. It is a best practice to use the ETPL for all training services regardless of the funding source.

- c. Classroom Training Providers must be WIOA certified to provide a WIOA recognized credential.
- d. Determination of Need.
 - 1) Based on an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning, and
 - 2) Be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment without training; and

- 3) Have skills and qualifications to successfully participate in selected program of training; and
 - 4) Select training for demand occupations.
3. The following services provide specific job/occupational skills for participants, and all require credential attainment. Staff must obtain a copy of the credential and keep it in the client's field file.
 - a. Academic Training (Not Funded by RMCEP WIOA): Staff use this activity when TAA or another source is paying for the training and RMCEP staff will need to obtain verification of the credential for performance measure.
 - d. WIOA Certified Classroom Training: This activity is classroom training that provides a license or credential upon completion. This includes entrepreneurial training (training is allowed but start-up business costs are prohibited).
 - e. Customized Training: The contract will identify the specific training to be provided, RMCEP paid costs, employer paid costs, the training schedule, and a list of employees who will be trained.
 - f. Credential Attained without Training: A course of study has been completed prior to request for assistance with license or certification. Assistance is being provided to obtain a license or certification now.
4. Credentials. Program providers have a number of sources they can use to collect data needed to calculate the credential attainment rates. Credentials may include degrees, diplomas, certificates, licenses, and other forms of certification for certain skilled and professional occupations. For this WIOA Dislocated Worker program, an updated case note documenting contact and confirmation from a school or institution official verifying the date of graduation and credential type is allowed.
5. On-the-Job Training: The standard employer reimbursement is 50%. Contracts which meet all of the following factors may be increased up to 75%.
 - a. The characteristics of the participants – long-term unemployed or having barriers to employment as defined under WIOA.
 - b. The size of the employer – small and medium businesses having fewer than 250 employees.
 - c. The quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities – training for in-demand occupations as defined by local WIB.
 - d. Successful OJT's will submit a measurable skill.

- E. Coordination with DEED for Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
 - 1. Staff will coordinate services with the DEED TAA Unit for dislocated workers eligible for that program.
 - 2. Dislocated workers remain open in this title until their TAA activity has been closed. Participants must be put into partnering when they are still receiving ATAA services as we are unable to close them on WF1.
 - 3. Coordination of services may result in leveraging additional reimbursement for OJT. TAA provides 50% reimbursement and WIOA may provide an additional 25% reimbursement based on the criteria described above for On-the-Job Training.

- F. Follow –Up Services
WIOA participants who enter employment at termination will have access to staff follow-up services, such as workplace counseling and non-financial support for twelve (12) months after exiting the program.

C.5. Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local workforce development area, including youth with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

WIOA Young Adult

BACKGROUND: WIOA outlines a broader young adult vision that supports an integrated service delivery system and provides a framework through which states and local areas can leverage other Federal, State, local, and philanthropic resources to support in-school young adults (ISY) and out-of-school young adults (OSY). WIOA affirms the Department of Labor’s (DOL) commitment to providing high-quality services for all young adults, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations, such as pre-apprenticeships or internships, and culminating with a good job along a career pathway, enrollment in post-secondary education, or a Registered Apprenticeship. All of DOL’s young adult-serving programs promote evidence-based strategies to assist in achieving high-levels of performance, accountability, and quality in preparing young people for the workforce.

ELIGIBILITY:

In-School Young Adult (ISY):

- (1) Attending school (as defined by State law); and

- (2) Not younger than 14 or (unless they are an individual with a disability who is attending school under State law) older than age 21 at time of enrollment; and
- (3) A low-income individual; and
- (4) One or more of the following:
 - (A) Basic skills deficient.
 - (B) An English language learner.
 - (C) An offender (an individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system);
 - (D) A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, an individual who is 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 an individual who is in an out-of-home placement.
 - (E) An individual who is pregnant or parenting.
 - (F) An individual with a disability.
 - (G) A youth who is a publicly supported foster child.
 - (H) An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. This is defined by the Workforce Development Board approved barriers.

The Workforce Development Board approved barriers which meet the required additional assistance area in (H) listed above:

- Single parent household member
- One or more grade levels behind their peers
- Unemployed more than 15 weeks
- Lacks significant work history
- Not in the labor force
- A history of substance abuse
- A refugee household member
- Geographically isolated
- English as a second language
- Migrant youth
- Incarcerated parent
- Behavior problems at school
- Family literacy problems
- Domestic violence
- Chronic health conditions
- High School Graduation Incentive (HSGI)
- Persons of color

ELIGIBILITY:

Out-of-School Young Adult (OSY):

- (1) Not attending any school (see definition of); and
- (2) Not younger than 16 or older than age 24 at time of enrollment. Because age eligibility is based on age at enrollment, participants may continue to receive services beyond the age of 24 once they are enrolled in the program; and
- (3) One or more of the following: (For C - G below, it doesn't matter if they have a H.S. Diploma or GED)

Non-Income related:

- (A) A school dropout (see definition of).
- (B) A young adult who is within the age of compulsory school attendance (see definition of) but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter. School year calendar quarter is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters.
- (C) An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system.
- (D) A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, an individual who is 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 an individual who is in an out-of-home placement.
- (E) An individual who is pregnant or parenting.
- (F) An individual with a disability.
- (G) A youth who is a publicly supported foster child.

Or

Low-income related:

- (H) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is:
 - 1) either basic skills deficient; or
 - 2) an English language learner.
- (I) A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment (See Note 1 below).

Program Elements. WIOA section 129(c)(2) includes 14 program elements which consist of the following which we have incorporated into our service delivery:

- (1) Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a

- secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential;
- (2) Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
 - (3) Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences:
 - summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
 - pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - internships and job shadowing; and
 - on-the-job training opportunities.
 - (4) Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in WIOA sec. 123;
 - (5) Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
 - (6) Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;
 - (7) Supportive services;
 - (8) Adult mentoring for the duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation;
 - (9) Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation;
 - (10) Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual young adult;
 - (11) Financial literacy education;
 - (12) Entrepreneurial skills training;
 - (13) Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
 - (14) Activities that help young adults prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

Minnesota Youth Program

BACKGROUND: The Minnesota Youth Employment Program (MYP) is designed to provide meaningful work and skills training to eligible 14 through 24-year-olds so that their future employability will be enhanced. The primary activity will be work training. Youth will be enrolled in a variety of activities that demonstrate the breadth of service youth receive in MYP.

The performance measures and outcomes for this program are:

1. Attained Work Readiness and Education Goals in Individual Employment Plan (EP);
2. Received Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit;
3. Obtained High School Diploma or GED;
4. Obtained a Certificate or Degree;
5. 80% of the youth will remain/return to school, enter employment or enter another training program; and
6. Youth customer satisfaction.

Definition of "at-risk"

MYP eligibility can also occur through the definition of at-risk youth. For purposes of determining eligibility, the following list of individuals are considered to be at-risk for MYP:

- pregnant/parenting youth;
- youth with Limited English Proficiency;
- dropouts or potential dropouts (as identified by school professional);
- juvenile offenders/diversion program youth;
- youth receiving public assistance and/or group home services;
- youth with disabilities including learning disabilities;
- homeless or runaway youth;
- chemically dependent or children of drug or alcohol abusers/dependents;
- youth with basic skills deficiency;
- youth with educational attainment one or more levels below grade level appropriate to age; and
- foster children.

Youthbuild

BACKGROUND: The Minnesota Youthbuild program provides education and training services to targeted youth who have not been effectively served by the current educational system. The program is to include a work experience component that results in the rehabilitation, improvement, or construction of:

- (1) Residential housing for homeless or very low-income individuals or families;
- (2) Improvement to energy efficiency and environmental health of residential units or other green job purposes;
- (3) Facilities to support community gardens; or
- (4) Public or non-profit education, social service, or health facilities principally serving homeless or very low-income individuals or families.

Youthbuild is a community-based pre-apprenticeship program that provides job training and educational opportunities. Targeted youth are at-risk persons, ages 16-24, who are economically disadvantaged or eligible for the high school graduation incentives program; and are at risk of dropping out of school or not attending any school and have not received a diploma or equivalent.

Youth learn vocational skills in construction. Youth also provide community service through the required construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods. Youth split their time between the vocational training work site and the classroom, where they earn their high school diploma or equivalency degree, learn to be community leaders, and prepare for post-secondary training opportunities, including college, apprenticeships, and employment. Youthbuild includes significant support systems, such as mentoring, follow-up education, employment, and personal counseling services, and participation in community service and civic engagement.

ELIGIBILITY:

- (1) All eligible Youthbuild applicants must be:
 - a. ages 16 through 24 at enrollment and be economically disadvantaged, or eligible for the High School Graduation Incentives (HSGI) Program.
 - b. If HSGI eligible, they must fall within one of the two following categories:
 1. Not attending any school and have not received a secondary school diploma or GED, or
 2. Currently enrolled in a traditional or alternative school setting or a GED program and, in the opinion of an official of the school, are in danger of dropping out of school.

Youth at-risk for dropping out of school may include:

- A pregnant or parenting youth,
- A youth with limited English proficiency,
- A potential or actual school dropout,
- A youth in an offender or diversion program,
- A public assistance recipient or a recipient of group home services,

- A youth with disabilities including learning disabilities,
- A chemically dependent youth or child of drug or alcohol abusers,
- A homeless or runaway youth,
- A youth with basic skills deficiency,
 - A youth with an educational attainment of one or more levels below grade level appropriate to age, or
- A foster child.

Note: A signed letter from the school will be required of going the “eligible for the High School Graduation Incentive Program,” route as listed in b. above.

- (2) A 5% window request can be made for all non-economically disadvantaged applicants who are:
- a. eligible for High School Graduation Incentives Program, and be part of one of the following:
 - b. not attending any school and have not received a high school diploma or GED, or
 - c. currently enrolled in an education program and are at risk of dropping out of school.

TANF Innovation Project

BACKGROUND: DEED's Office of Youth Development has announced the availability of funding provided by the Minnesota Department of Human Services for projects to provide work experiences to teen parents receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and youth aged 14 - 18 who are on a grant in MFIP households. Funds may be used for work experience activities and associated staff costs. Administrative costs are limited to 5%. Work experiences may be in the private sector, the for-profit sector, the non-profit sector or the public sector.

Eligibility for Services:

Youth must fall into one of two categories below to be served with these funds.

- Teen parents, ages 16-24, who are receiving MFIP benefits; and
- Younger youth, ages 14-18, who are on the grant in MFIP households.

Project Objectives:

- To provide direct services in the form of work experiences and related support services to youth on MFIP.

- To demonstrate effective interagency collaborations and local partnerships that better meet the varied needs of teen parents on MFIP.
- To identify best practices that can be shared across states and local workforce system providers and other youth-serving agencies across the country.

Performance Indicator: Work Readiness Indicator

The work readiness indicator of the skill attainment rate will be the performance indicator used for youth who participate in the program.

Career Advising

BACKGROUND: RMCEP's curriculum for Career Planning provides information on selecting post-secondary education or employment, financial aid for education, and career pathways as well as individualized assessment and occupational information. Our career advisors meet with students individually or in groups to help them explore careers, assess their interests, skills, research occupations, industries, organizations and become familiar with job seeking strategies.

We develop individual plans with students to meet their needs and to identify a starting point for their career development activities. We start with career interest assessments when developing the individual plan based on their career pathway of interest. The RMCEP career counselor will guide students in the use of the Internet for the career planning process using tools such as MCIS, ISEEK, MnCareers, Naviance, USscience, MinnesotaWorks.net, and other career tools introduced by the Department of Labor. Sophomores may need beginning career planning; Juniors build on what they have already explored; Seniors continue to develop their post-secondary plans. We can provide a career exploration curriculum in the classroom or individually.

1. Deliverables and Strategies:

A. Career Exploration

- 1) Provide instruction based on curriculum from Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.
 - a. Interest, Values, and Skills Assessment (may use previous assessment results)
 - b. Integrate instruction with tools and classes that are offered at the school
 - c. Career research tools and procedures (Career Ready 101, ISEEK or school based MCIS and Naviance access)
 - d. Tour or Job Shadow
- 2) Document the Career Exploration Process
 - a. Establish or continue a Career Plan/Portfolio

- b. Document experience and accomplishments unique to students with limited or no work experience
 - c. Promote career development/planning as a lifelong process
- B. College Information**
- 1) Provide College Exploration Information
 - a. Introduce concepts of value of continued education/training using labor market information
 - b. Introduce concepts of high demand occupations using labor market information
 - c. Introduce concepts of post-secondary education/training costs, financial aid and scholarships
 - 2) Provide College Preparation Information
 - a. Assistance with college and scholarship applications
 - b. Developing a plan for college
 - c. Assist with college financial aid applications
- C. Job Search Assistance**
- 1) Provide Instruction on Job Search Strategies
 - a. Tools for locating job openings, CareerForce office, ISEEK
 - b. Approaches for locating job openings, networking, hot and cold contacts
 - c. Expose students to an array of resources through the CareerForce offices
 - 2) Provide Instructions on Job Search Processes
 - a. Resume
 - b. Interview Skills
 - c. Common or key interview questions, and the right answers
 - d. Job Application
 - 3) Document Job Search Processes
 - a. Registration on the Minnesota Works Job Bank
 - b. Completion of resume, job application and practice interview
 - 4) Job Fair/CareerForce Office
 - a. Seniors who plan to work after graduation will be invited to a Job Fair held at the nearest CareerForce office. RMCEP staff can facilitate CareerForce orientations for groups of students
- D. Skills for Education or Employment**
- a. Prepare students to test for the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)

Guideposts for Success Integrated into service delivery:

The Guideposts are based on the important following assumptions:

1. High expectations for all youth, including youth with disabilities;
2. Equality of opportunity for everyone, including nondiscrimination, individualization, inclusion, and integration;
3. Full participation through self-determination, informed choice, and participation in decision making;
4. Independent living, including skills development and long-term supports and services;
5. Competitive employment and economic self-sufficiency, which may include supports; and;
6. Individualized, person-driven, and culturally and linguistically appropriate transition planning.

The five (5) Guideposts are:

1. School-Based Preparatory Experiences,
2. Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning Experiences,
3. Youth Development and Leadership,
4. Connecting Activities,
5. Family Involvement & Supports.

The Guideposts for Success Model (brief description):

Building on thirty (30) years of research and experience, the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth), in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), created the Guideposts for Success, a comprehensive framework that identifies from a developmental perspective what all youth need to succeed during the critical transition years. There are also areas of focus to include the following populations: youth in foster care, who have involvement in the Juvenile Corrections system, those with learning disabilities, and mental health needs. This model contains five (5) guideposts that all youth need to transition from youth to adulthood.

These five (5) areas of focus as taken directly from the Guideposts for Success second edition are:

Guidepost 1 – School-based preparatory experiences – In order to perform at optimal levels in all education settings, all youth need to participate in educational programs grounded in standards, clear performance expectations, and graduation exit options based upon meaningful, accurate, and relevant indicators of student learning and skills.

Guidepost 2 – Career preparation and work-based learning experiences – are essential in order for youth to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers.

Guidepost 3 – Youth development and leadership – is a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them gain skills and competencies. Youth leadership is part of that process.

Guidepost 4 – Connecting activities – Young people need to be connected to programs, services, activities, and supports that help them gain access to chosen post-school options.

Guidepost 5 – Family involvement and supports – Participation and involvement of parents, family members, and/or other caring adults promotes the social, emotional, physical, academic and occupational growth of youth, leading to better post-school outcomes.

Integrated Resource Teams

The Guideposts will be used as the basis for creating Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) whereby each of the Guideposts are represented by a person(s) who can assist with strategies and services. These representatives will work together towards a common goal and take ownership of their actions to meet the need of the youth.

Creating new or augmenting existing IRTs is the primary strategy for providing intensive services for school year youth along with an employment experience. The IRT is led by the participant. The core members of the IRT will include the participant, family members (family includes adult mentors), and the RMCEP Youth Coordinator. Other members will vary depending on the individual youth's needs. Examples of possible IRT members include case managers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, teachers, or employers. The members of the IRT will engage the participant as partner in the youth's decision making leading to an increase in skills, abilities, and employability. The Youth Coordinator will identify, facilitate and strengthen any new partnerships that may improve employment outcomes for each participant.

The Youth Coordinator will conduct an intake interview by going through a Youth Profile which will identify the characteristics, strengths and supports of the youth. While completing the form, the Youth Coordinator will gather the contact information (e.g., phone numbers, emails) from all partners so the Youth Coordinator can gather additional information and upon completion, distribute both a draft and finalized copy of a visual Roadmap for Success.

Upon completion of the intake, the RMCEP Youth Coordinator will gather all available academic, occupational, behavioral, cognitive and emotional assessments while developing an individualized and collaborative Roadmap for Success. This time period should not exceed thirty (30) days for high school seniors, post-secondary students, or out-of-school youth. High school juniors and below should be done within sixty (60) to

ninety (90) days depending on IRT member availability. Within this timeframe, the RMCEP Youth Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the next IRT meeting, ensuring that the family and professional stakeholders can attend.

During the second (follow up) IRT meeting, the Youth Coordinator will facilitate a discussion by reviewing the Roadmap for Success. The Youth Coordinator will present each activity to the participant who will make a decision on whether the activity will remain on the final product. All members of the IRT, including the participant, can suggest additions, deletions or modification to each activity. This discussion will guide the participant, in collaboration with the rest of the IRT, in the creation and implementation of a Youth Action Plan (i.e., a Collaborative Individual Employment Plan or EP). The Guideposts for Success model will provide a pathway in the development of this transition plan. This plan will include high expectations for achievement centered on an occupational goal beyond the initial job placement. The plan will include achievable milestones that, if achieved, will focus the participants on a career pathway or provide skills within a desired career cluster.

The IRT will assist the participant with identifying and enrolling in academic classes, programs or training that will improve both basic and occupational skills needed for the successful attainment of the participant's occupational goals. The IRT will identify and develop work experience that logically follows the participant's chosen career pathway. The Youth Coordinator will facilitate a review of the Youth Action Plan during each IRT meeting and update as necessary. The Youth Coordinator will update the participant's EP when the changes require an action step/activity that the youth need to complete as part of the participant's career pathway goals.

Upon completion of the second IRT meeting, the Youth Coordinator will send out the final revised copy of the Roadmap for Success for review. Once this review is complete, the Youth Action Plan will also be sent out. All activities on the Roadmap will be added to the Action Plan.

Unless otherwise included in the Roadmap and Action Plan, no further IRT meetings are necessary as long as there are no significant changes or disruptions. If the plan needs to be revised because of the participant's choices, the participant's actions, or a lack of availability/access to programs included in the plan, the Youth Coordinator will coordinate another IRT to revise the Roadmap and the Action Plan.

A structured needs assessment and Individual Service Strategy:

The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is based on an objective assessment of academic level, interests, and service needs of each participant. The ISS identifies those services that address the youth's individual needs. The purpose of these services is to prepare youth for post-secondary educational opportunities, link academic and occupational

learning, prepare youth for employment, and provide connections to the job market and employers. Staff interaction with youth is based on the individual needs and values of each youth, who voice preferences for goal setting, plan development, work site experience, and future career direction. Staff model the identification and accessing of resources, and support youth to do the same to build self-advocacy skills.

The Youth Assessment used at intake has been updated to be more inclusive of the five (5) areas listed in the Guideposts for Success. This allows staff to gather information about the youth and their current situation as well as attachment to various supports or providers to better determine the needs and strengths of the participant and include them in the ISS. Updates are provided to the ISS as the youth proceeds through the transition steps towards self-sufficiency.

The use of the Resource Mapping Tool we used with our past Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) will also assist staff in determining barriers that need to be addressed and solutions implemented for successful activity participation and outcomes desired. This tool has been incorporated for use with all youth program participants.

Through the use of the Integrated Resources Team (IRT) concept, youth who need additional support can benefit from this partner collaboration to identify and develop a plan for solutions to employment or school barriers. This integrated plan lays out a path to achieve the youth's career goal even beyond where many of the IRT members' service plans with the youth would end. By enlisting the support and ideas of the youth's parent's, guardians and advocates as well as providers of resources and services within the youth's community, we can collectively work together to assist the youth with the steps in their individual plans and provide them the support that will allow them to successfully complete their plan and reach their goals.

Youth at Work

BACKGROUND: RMCEP seeks to improve its ability to help youth learn these skills by focusing on Career Pathways in Occupations in Demand and coupling this training with a work-based learning program in an entry-level position within their chosen career pathway. The primary goal in this initiative will be to provide a recognized credential in one of the identified career pathways and pair the training with a related work-based learning experience. Each youth participant who is placed in work-based learning will be mentored for the development of employability skills.

To support completion of educational programs this grant will develop incentives for those participants that complete planned training and/or earn an industry recognized credentials. Work-based learning will be provided to further develop employability skills and build work history in high demand occupations.

The focus for participants in this program will be youth aged 16-24 with the priority of service to youth from a community of color, a youth with a disability, or a youth who meets the priority for enrollment into WIOA OSY/ISY or Minnesota Youth Program. Additionally, all participants, worksite supervisors, and staff involved in the project will receive training on Racial Equity and Inclusion.

RMCEP proposes to serve a total of 100 youth over a two-year period with individual or cohort-based training and a work-based learning experience that will provide for the development of essential work skills needed by today's employers. Fifty (50) youth will be served during this time period. There is an opportunity for a second year of this grant at which.

The outcomes expected for this project are:

- 80% will Attain Work Readiness or Education Goals in the Individual Service Plan.
- 80% of youth remain or return to school, enter employment, or enter another training program.
- 100% of all participants will receive Racial Equity and Inclusion awareness training.

- C.6. Describe how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B of WIOA will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G) of WIOA, including, if contracts for 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 area board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Through our Career Planning and Exploration activities, clients are informed about local occupations in demand and explore the various educational options that align with their career pathway. In this manner, the client is able to make an informed choice in the selection of both their career pathway, as well as their training program.

The purpose of Classroom Training is to assist those individuals with the greatest need for vocational training or retraining for employment and who are least likely to obtain it without RMCEP intervention. While the participant's financial and training needs will be the primary determination of selection, the participant's chances of successfully completing the training objective will be taken into consideration in the selection process.

WIOA authorizes Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for adults and dislocated workers to support their training in demand occupations. ITAs allow eligible adults and dislocated workers to choose a certified training program that best meets their needs. This choice

is to be made after full consultation and agreement with the training counselor at the local CareerForce office.

The WDB and DEED Regional Labor Market Analyst identify Occupations in Demand in the three economic development regions of the RMCEP Workforce Service Area to inform the workforce development system. Training services must be linked to occupations in demand.

Selection for training is a decision based on the participant's need for occupational skills, financial need, and ability to benefit from vocational instruction methods, as assessed during the customer's interaction with RMCEP staff. The NCRC is used as a tool for determining ability to benefit.

The need for training must be justified and documented in the individual's Employment Plan (EP) on Workforce One.

ITAs can only be used for eligible adults and dislocated workers in accordance with adult and dislocated worker eligibility policies. Individuals who are eligible for WIOA services must meet additional requirements to be eligible for an ITA:

- a. The goals in the individual's employment plan can only be met with the proposed training; and
- b. Based on available labor market information, there is a reasonable expectation that there is a demand for full-time employees where the participant will (or is willing to) reside upon completion of the program; and
- c. The average wage for employees with this training can lead toward self-sufficiency; and
- d. The participant is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to fully cover the comprehensive cost of such training; and
- e. The participant can meet the requirements for admission into the program; and
- f. There is a reasonable expectation that the participant will complete the training program based on current assessment information.

The ITA is signed off by both the customer and the RMCEP classroom training counselor. The signed copy is given to the customer.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is another method of training provided to RMCEP clients. Through assessment, an OJT may be determined by the Counselor and the client to best fit the training needs and is documented and justified in the Employment Plan. OJT must be provided through a written contractual arrangement. OJT contracts may be written with employers in the private sector, the private non-profit sector, and public employers. The OJT contract must identify the occupation, the skills and competencies

to be learned, and the length of time the training will be provided. The OJT contract is a training alternative suitable for participants who may benefit from, or prefer, a “hands-on” learning environment over a classroom situation.

The reimbursement to the employer is compensation for the extraordinary costs associated with the training of participants. Some of these costs include more intense supervision, above average material wastage, abnormal wear on tools, downtime, and a lower rate of production. Extraordinary costs need not be documented. The OJT participant/employee is considered to be an employee on a “hire-first and train-later” basis. The participant/employee must receive wages and fringe benefits equal to those similarly employed by the employer. The reimbursement is not a wage subsidy. It is a reimbursement of the extraordinary costs of training incurred by the employer in preparing the employee for successful entry level employment. It is expected that the participant/employee will be retained on a full-time basis after successful completion of contract. It is also expected that the participant/employee will continue to receive compensation and benefits commensurate with his/her job performance.

- C.7. Describe the plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of service provided by the state employment service under Wagner-Peyser Act, and services provided in the local workforce development area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.
- The Creative Job Search Workshop has been parsed out into five mini workshops which can be taken one at a time depending on the customer’s needs. In addition, several new emerging workshop topics are available as live workshops or recorded webinars which are available 24/7 on the state’s YouTube channel. New Leaf sessions are offered on a statewide basis for justice involved individuals to make the most they can out of their job search.
 - Wagner Peyser staff work with CareerForce partners on planning and implementation of job fairs.
 - The “Good Jobs Now” campaign is DEED’s comprehensive model bringing employment and economic development services to job seekers and employers. In this two- pronged approach, WorkForce Strategists reach out to employers to explain the resources and services available to them and then follow up with DEED Small Business Assistance office and other resources, to provide a list of Employers and positions available to Job Service staff for job seeker referrals. The Unemployment Insurance division and Wagner-Peyser Job Service staff call individual Unemployment beneficiaries to explain CareerForce services and give job referrals.

- Job Service and Re-employment Specialists call the individuals to conduct a brief assessment and give an orientation to CareerForce Services and connect them with referrals and resources that will help them prepare for and get a job.
- Information is given to employers and job seekers about CareerForceMN.com, how to create an account for the state's labor exchange system MinnesotaWorks.net, and about service providers and programs available to assist with job preparation and job search.
- The Wagner-Peyser staff role has evolved significantly into a hybrid model of service following the Career Services Guide for Job Service staff.
- These activities are coordinated with the programs and partners within the LWDA.
- WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES
- The State assures the following:
 - o The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with at least one Comprehensive one-stop center per region, and in some Affiliate centers.
 - o The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker one-stop centers;
 - o If a State Workforce Development Board, department or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and
 - o State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded

Interagency Coordination

- C.8. Describe how the local workforce development system will work with entities carrying out core programs to align and support services with programs of study authorized under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

The primary training providers in our service area are institutions within the Minnesota State College and University System, each of which have programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Additionally, many RMCEP staff serve on various local college campus advisory boards. A Perkins Consortia

representative serves on our Youth Council, and another serves on our Workforce Development Board. We have developed and maintained strong relationships with our colleges over the years on many initiatives and projects.

- C.9. Describe how the local area board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out under this title with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Youth activities such as work experience are coordinated with local school districts to ensure activities are aligned with education and career goals. RMCEP relies on ABE to provide education in basic skills to adults as well as within career pathway bridging activities.

Minnesota State Community and Technical College is our primary post-secondary partner and provides the majority of certificate and degree training to WIOA participants. RMCEP and its educational partners continue to seek innovative ways to collaborate. We recently co-located the CareerForce office in Fergus Falls at the M-State campus in that town.

Through the regional planning efforts, we plan to continue to assess current strategies as well as seek new strategies for collaborative efforts. We have very close relationships with secondary and post-secondary institutions and often collaborate on strategies and services such as training for occupations in demand, incumbent worker training, job fairs, or career advising. The WDB has been instrumental in working with Central Lakes College in developing a new program of student in meat-cutting, an occupation in demand in our region with no other training opportunities currently in existence.

- C.10. Describe how the local area board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out under this title with public transportation and other appropriate supportive services.

RMCEP provides supportive services necessary to enable an individual to participate in employment and training activities. Supportive services are based on individual need. The participants' needs are assessed, community resources are utilized, assistance is provided equitably, and accountability of funds is maintained.

DEFINITIONS:

Financial Supportive Services: Payments to provide services such as transportation, health care, special services and materials for individuals with disabilities, job coaches,

childcare and dependent care, temporary shelter, assessment or counseling services not covered by other means, and other reasonable expenses required for participation in program services and to continue employment. Other examples of supportive services include:

- Personal grooming items;
- Household goods such as towels and cooking utensils;
- Translator services;
- Relocation expenses when necessary for employment;
- Car payments when the automobile is owned by the participant.

Please note that some individual program policies may allow or prohibit specific supportive services.

It is imperative to note that there is little to no public transportation infrastructure in the rural areas that lend well to the job seeker or the worker. In some of the larger towns, there are public bus systems. Some of the smaller towns have a “Friendly-Rider” bus service, but this service runs on limited hours and not during non-traditional hours to assist those on shift work. Therefore, car repair and maintenance are the primary transportation-related support service needed in this region. Also of note is the lack of adequate childcare, again, especially for those on shiftwork.

Working with Economic Development Agencies, Chambers of Commerce our Regional Workforce Alliance and other entities, RMCEP has been involved in discussions regarding innovative practices and solutions to the transportation issue. Although no solution has been implemented, these discussions are on-going and promising.

- C.11. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local workforce development area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II, including a description of how the local area board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of WIOA, and the review of local applications submitted under title II of WIOA.

A member of the local Adult Basic Education Consortia is a member of the LWDB. Additionally, RMCEP has entered into an MOU with each entity in the ABE Consortia. The purpose of this collaboration is to enable both entities to have a seamless partnership in which referrals for adult education and literacy activities can be coordinated through a client-centered approach. We have worked together on several initiatives and projects such as Pathways to Prosperity, Career Pathways and the local

provision of literacy activities. We will continue this partnership and coordination that has been well-established in this region. We intend to explore the possibilities of including ABE in the MFIP orientation and other program orientations as appropriate, which will allow for seamless delivery to adult basic education and literacy activities.

Employer & Economic Development Engagement

- C.12. Describe how the local area board will ensure that eligible providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and job seekers.

The WDB sets the direction of the local workforce system and provides valuable input and feedback into the activities designed to meet the needs of employers and participants. They review performance measures and results, are active in environmental scanning, and enable us to structure program components, plan service levels and prioritize services to participants. The WDB also serves as oversight for the local workforce system and approves various measures, budgets and initiatives. All providers provide regular reports to the WDB on data, activities, and initiatives.

As the WDB is largely composed of employers, it is well-positioned to help the local workforce system with employer linkages, apprise the CareerForce Center partners of local business trends, and bring innovative ideas to the system. Two of our members also serve on the Governor's Workforce Development Board. The WDB members participate in Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards and the National Association of Workforce Boards Conferences.

Employers are again experiencing labor and skills shortages in specific occupations as the economy begins to strengthen. While more job seekers are shifting positions or re-entering the labor market, they do not possess the skills needed by employers. Aging baby boomers continue to leave the workforce, creating a vacuum of expertise and institutional knowledge.

Employers continue to remark on the lack of basic soft skills and work readiness skills found in entry-level employees. Additionally, employers are seeking additional resources to provide training for their workers to meet the continual advances in technology and to promote workers to fill the gaps in skill sets lost to attrition or retirements. Employers also remark on the lack of a transportation infrastructure in the rural communities along with significant shortages in affordable housing and childcare. These issues make it difficult to attract and retain workers.

RMCEP has ramped up its efforts offering On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training services based on the increased needs of employers, largely as a result of the effects of the Pandemic on the local labor force.

Job seekers continue to need assistance with setting career goals, focusing their job search or choosing appropriate training. Jobseekers are not necessarily aware of the occupations in the region that can offer a living wage and economic stability. It is for this reason that LWDA 2 remains focused on providing occupational information for high-growth, high-pay jobs in the region.

Job-seekers request assistance with the job search process and preparing for job search, such as resume writing, job search strategies, finding job leads, and interviewing techniques. Older workers are also seeking assistance with job search and retraining as well as dealing with unemployment issues unique to the older worker.

Clients who have a desire to enter post-secondary training may need basic skill remediation and instruction from ABE. If or when clients need academic skills to be successful in the college classroom, they are directed to ABE. ABE can provide academic bridge and pathway support.

In sum, jobseekers need assistance with career exploration and guidance, occupational information, access to resources, information about and access to training options, job search assistance, work experience, and education in soft skills and workplace behaviors. Supports that remove barriers to employment success and identify strengths will continue to be a strong need.

The Workforce Development Board has determined that funds are not limited and therefore a priority in the WIOA Adult Program eligibility for intensive and training services will continue to include those whose income does not exceed the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL). This action to expand eligibility beyond 70 percent of the LLSIL is allowed in WIOA law. Additionally, up to 10 percent of participants may exceed the LLSIL if they have significant barriers to employment.

RMCEP will consider anyone enrolled in any other RMCEP program to be eligible for the WIOA Adult program, for example, older workers participating in SCSEP will be eligible for WIOA Adult services. Dual enrollment in programs, if warranted, allows for the leverage of funding available to ensure jobseekers receive all services necessary to prepare to enter employment.

The WDB has stated that individuals participating in a Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership (MJSP) OR a Career Pathways program will be eligible for WIOA Adult services. Those

who are employed but require intensive services to achieve self-sufficiency are also appropriate for these components.

Workers: Many workers cannot expect to work for the same employer over their career or that an employer will necessarily take a vested interest in their professional development and future. Because of this, workers will need to become increasingly responsible for their own employability. As noted above, the need to master new technologies in the performance of one's job will become increasingly important. For this reason, workers will require incumbent worker training or accessible and affordable training tied to their workforce needs.

Increasingly, workers and their employers are requesting additional training in both soft skills, leadership skills, inclusion and diversity skills, and specific occupational skills. Workers need applied occupational training specific to their jobs. Request for additional training is the primary request from both groups.

Workers are also expressing a concern over competitive wages in the region and lack of affordable health care benefits as these issues become increasingly difficult for area employers to provide.

LWDA 2 will make available up to 20 percent of the formula WIOA Title I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker Program available allocations for training incumbent workers or as allowed by WIOA and DEED regulations.

The above labor market picture outlines the major issues on which the LWDB has placed focus. Through initiatives, service delivery, partnerships, developments of career pathways and other activities, LWDA 2 will continue to work to address these issues in our workforce development strategies.

- C.13. Describe how the local area board will facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers, and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs.

Our WDB is comprised of a majority of private sector employers. RMCEP and CareerForce staff are involved in local boards, sector partnerships and Trade Associations, which create a catalyst for influence to foster workforce development initiatives. Healthcare, Manufacturing, Agriculture and Transportation are the local key industry sectors identified in our Regional Plan. Career pathway partnerships will continue to strengthen our ability to increase the number of qualified applicants for those jobs in demand.

Additionally, RMCEP staff host job fairs, including occupationally specific job fairs, diversity focused job fairs and industry specific job fairs. We will continue to offer multiple formats of job fairs to include options such as “Drive-In,” “Trunk,” and “Virtual” job fairs. Employers are invited on site when available through such activities as Jobs n Java and Employer of the Day to discuss their needs and openings with job seekers. RMCEP works one-on-one with individual employers to develop job sites and OJT opportunities.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have been focused on providing Employer Services in a stronger sense in our local region. We have a trained Employer Navigator at each location, continually train, coordinate and share with Liz Jennings (Employer Engagement Specialist for DEED).

- C.14. Describe how the local area board will support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local workforce development area.
102(b)(4)(ii).

The WDB will continue to support MinnesotaWorks.net and CareerForceMN.com. The Workforce Strategy Consultant (WSC) works alongside RMCEP to assist businesses on a broad scale to identify and resolve issues they are facing. The state and RMCEP share the priority to address the disparities gap which would include assisting minorities and persons with disabilities enter, advance and retain employment. RMCEP addresses this issue through consistently training staff, partnering with demographically focused agencies, providing Ticket to Work programming and the Inclusive Workforce Employer certification.

The activities of the WSC and RMCEP staff, as well as other partners, are coordinated within the LWDA. The Wagner-Peyser program also provides services to businesses with the focus of contacting businesses in the key industry sectors identified in the local and state plans, help the business solve their workforce issues, and promote job openings to job seeking customers in the CareerForce locations.

RMCEP is involved with sector work, helping industries identify root causes of workforce issues. We are involved with industry associations and have developed local employer committees. We are active in Chambers of Commerce, attend Business after Hours events and other activities that allow us to understand the needs of businesses in the local workforce development area, and work with our partners to address those needs.

Through our Regional Planning efforts, the Regional Workforce Alliance specifically focuses on issues and root causes that cause barriers in the local workforce. In addition, staff will be trained at a basic level to respond to basic needs including job orders, information and referrals. Additionally, local Veterans Employment Representatives conduct outreach to employers on behalf of veterans.

- C.15. Describe how the local area board will better coordinate programs and services with local and regional economic development providers.

Key partner staff are actively engaged with our regional economic development providers. We have representation from our regional economic development providers on our WDB. Additionally, we maintain strong partnerships with local economic developers and share in initiatives and strategies on the local level. Through these connections and partnerships, we continue to develop new initiatives and strengthen ones in-place that are effective. Regional economic development providers are also members of our Regional Workforce Alliance.

- C.16. Describe how the local area board will strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs by offering services to laid-off workers and possible lay-off preventative services for businesses, such as incumbent worker training that up-skills the workers and meets the needs of employers (can include but not be limited to, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, etc.).

The WDB intends to reserve and use not more than 20 percent of the funds allocated to the local area to pay for the Federal share of the cost of providing training for incumbent workers for the purpose of upskilling to retain employment or avert a layoff. RMCEP and Job Service staff work closely together to ensure services are provided to businesses to help avert lay-offs and to dislocated workers. RMCEP operates the WIOA and the State Dislocated Worker program and provides On the Job Training for dislocated workers. RMCEP and Job Service also work closely to engage the state's Rapid Response if necessary. This past year we have seen a marked increase in demand for incumbent worker training services and with our available funds and focus on employer needs, we have increased our offerings in this area as well.

The UI staff present UI re-employment sessions virtually and by use of individual phone calling. While this is an efficient method of connections with UI recipients it has been a slower process of connecting individuals with WIOA services than when orientations were completed at CareerForce locations. RMCEP has seen a significant reduction in referrals due to this procedure change, however, both Careerforce and RMCEP are working together to increase referrals and warm hand-offs that engage those who have

been laid off. It is best practice that staff thoroughly assess job seekers' needs and refer to the appropriate partner or community service.

- C.17. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities with economic development activities, including the promotion of entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

RMCEP and Job Service have strong relationships with the local economic development agencies and the Economic Development Regions in its service area (EDRs 2, 4 and 5). One of our WDB members is a member of a regional Economic Development Board, and two members of our WDB are representatives of economic development. We meet with our Economic Development Representatives on a regular basis and work in conjunction on various initiatives, including promotion of entrepreneurial training and assistance for small businesses.

RMCEP also operates the CLIMB program, which is designed to assist aspiring entrepreneurs in the state-funded Dislocated Worker program with training and consulting to assist in a successful business launch or growth.

Dislocated Worker Supports

- C.18. How does the local workforce development area ensure staff comply with the policies and procedures for Rapid Response as communicated on DEED's website?

As described below, RMCEP has identified one Rapid Response liaison to work with the Rapid Response office. This person is tasked with knowing the relevant policies and procedures well and ensuring staff and partners follow the processes outlined in DEED's Dislocated Worker Policies, which include communicating with Rapid Response and participating in the competitive process as appropriate.

- a. How does the local workforce development area inform the state Rapid Response team within 24 hours about an actual or potential dislocation event when there is possibility of a mass layoff (50 or more dislocations)?

RMCEP has identified one Rapid Response liaison to work with the Rapid Response office. This system has allowed for greater efficiency in service coordination. When a mass dislocation occurs in LWDA 2, RMCEP or partner staff inform the RMCEP Rapid Response liaison. The liaison immediately contacts the State Rapid Response office to inform them of the event and to provide the company's contact information.

In the event where the State Rapid Response office is the first point of knowledge, a representative from that office contacts the RMCEP liaison either directly or through announcements. The manner of communication may depend on whether or not a competitive process will be required.

At that point, the RMCEP liaison and the State Rapid Response staff work together to provide information to the company and the dislocated workers. As the Rapid Response administers and tabulates the dislocated worker needs assessment and develops the Employee Planning Committee, this information is provided to the RMCEP liaison. Service delivery strategies are then developed with the Planning Committee and RMCEP.

- b. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local workforce development area with statewide rapid response activities.

The RMCEP Rapid Response liaison works with each site supervisor, manager and the State Rapid Response team very closely to ensure information is gathered and disseminated to the appropriate parties. Because the site supervisor is most closely connected to their local businesses, this person is involved early in the process and works directly with the company, the Rapid Response Team, and the LWDA Rapid Response liaison. We are fortunate in that the LWDA has developed and maintains a positive and close working relationship with the State Rapid Response Team that allows all of us to collaborate in securing and disseminating information at the earliest possibility and begin planning the next steps.

- C.19. How does the local workforce development area inform the state Trade Act staff of companies that are potentially TAA certifiable?

The RMCEP staff and State Rapid Response Team begin working with the affected companies and their dislocated workers early in the process. The potential of a TAA certifying event is discussed and explored. The RMCEP staff and/or the State Rapid Response Team provide the State Trade Act contact information and informs the State Trade Act contact as soon as possible.

- a. How does the local workforce development area cooperate with the state Trade Act staff where the layoff involves a company that the DOL trade-certified?

The Team Leader (Site Supervisor) at each CareerForce location is identified as the local contact person. TAA works with the Team Leader whenever possible to arrange for meetings with the affected dislocated workers to explain the TAA

program and benefits. The Team Leader and/or local staff also attend these meetings to begin the coordination of services. To maximize the efficiency of funding under dislocated worker programs and TAA, RMCEP will assist clients to access TAA for classroom training, TRA income support, job search cost, and relocation. DEED will provide benefit administration from their main office in St. Paul. RMCEP case management services will be funded through dislocated worker program funding. RMCEP staff attend training by the TAA staff to better understand expectations and increase communications.

- b. Is the local workforce development area willing to participate in TAA Counselor Training and TAA Participant Training when a trade-certification occurs?
- Yes X
- _____

- C.20. The local workforce development area has developed and implemented local Supportive Service policies that are consistently applied for all participants.

Yes X

Describe the steps taken to ensure consistent compliance with the policy.

RMCEP has an Operations Services Department that reviews all of our supportive services for required validation and alignment with specific program regulations. Additionally, the majority of requests are reviewed with a team to assure that all possible resources are considered, and the long-term impact of the support is reviewed.

Services to Military Service Members and Spouses

SECTION D: ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- C.21. Are all WIOA-funded partners complying with the guidance provided in TEGL 10-09 regarding Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses?

Yes X

- C.22. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members coming into your CareerForce Center?

LWDA 2 complies with Policy Guidance from DEED on Veterans and Dislocated Workers. All staff understand appropriate service delivery and priority of service to veterans. Veterans have priority of service in all employment and training programs in accordance

with the Job for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288, November 7, 2002), and all succeeding appropriate laws, rules and regulations. Priority service to veterans is also outlined in internal policies. The Minnesota Veterans Questionnaire is used to identify veterans. We ask customers that come to the CareerForce Center if they ever served in the U.S. military. If the answer is yes, we ask them to complete the Veterans Questionnaire. Non-JVSG staff do the initial assessment/review of the questionnaire, and make appropriate referrals based on the responses on the questionnaire. On-site signage helps the customers to self-identify themselves as U.S. military members.

RMCEP has established that veterans and their eligible spouses (hereafter, together referred to as “veterans”) who meet program eligibility requirements have the first priority for all services. CareerForce Career Labs are the primary entry point into employment and training services. Career Lab personnel are specifically trained to assist all customers to include assessing customers’ needs and confirming expectations as a part of the initial greeting. During this process, veterans are identified either through self-identification or staff inquiry.

All veterans coming to the reception desk have the option of self-identifying and asking for specific services such as referral directly to a veterans’ staff representative. They may also receive initial assessment or services and be referred to RMCEP staff to pursue eligibility for programs and services as needed.

Career Lab resources and services are readily visible and available to veterans. Staff serve veterans one-on-one for core services, so veterans are aware of resources designed specifically to meet their needs. For example, many on-line and hard copy resources are available specifically targeted to assist veterans. Community resource brochures are readily available. Another example is a link on the resource area organizer, <http://www.careeronestop.org/militarytransition>, designed to assist veterans’ transition back to civilian life. RMCEP has taken proactive measures to provide training for staff with the issues faced by many veterans returning from active duty. We work closely with Veterans Services partners. Staff have attended Veteran Reintegration Training to better assist veterans and their families return to normal life after combat.

DEED Job Services works with the REA staff to identify veterans who are currently UI Applicants. DVOP’s are scheduled to attend all UI Orientations that have veterans on the invitee list.

- C.23. How do you inform current or former Military Service Members coming into your CareerForce Center about “Veteran Priority of Service?”

LWDA 2 complies with Policy Guidance from DEED on Veterans and Dislocated Workers. All staff understand appropriate service delivery and priority of service to veterans. Veterans have priority of service in all employment and training programs in accordance with the Job for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288, November 7, 2002), and all succeeding appropriate laws, rules and regulations. Priority service to veterans is also outlined in internal policies. Veterans are identified through staff inquiry or self-identification. Staff inform current or former Military Service Members of priority of service as soon as the veteran or current service member is identified.

Signage in the CareerForce offices advises Veterans and other eligible persons of Veterans priority of service (POS). Information on priority of service is also provided during various program orientations, from staff, and during workshops. LVER staff train and update local staff and management on the provisions of POS and PL 107-288.

- C.24. If your CareerForce Center has a presence on the Internet (outside of your local DEED CareerForce Center site) how do you promote Public Law 107-288, "Veterans Priority of Service" to veterans on that website?

RMCEP's website includes a message about veterans having priority of service. Additionally, all websites associated with the CareerForce offices provide information regarding veteran's priority of service.

- C.25. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members with "significant barriers to employment?"

Through program eligibility determinations, an Initial Assessment is conducted through a formal guided interview. Staff present the assessment information to the RMCEP client services team. The team recommends veterans for additional core services, referral to other agencies, or intake for intensive services based on eligibility, need, and availability of resources. As stated above, this policy also covers those spouses of veterans identified by law as having priority for services.

Veterans also receive services from Wagner-Peyser and WIOA funded staff. Staff are trained by veteran's staff on veterans' preference and priority of service. Veterans' staff may either provide or work with other partners to provide assistance with registration, referrals to jobs, counseling, referrals to supportive services, job development, Creative Job Search workshops, resume preparation assistance, and other services. Veterans are given maximum exposure to suitable jobs and priority assistance in competing for those jobs.

Individuals leaving active duty from the regular armed forces, National Guard or Armed Forces Reserves, for reasons other than dishonorable discharge, are eligible for Dislocated Worker Services.

Dislocated Worker services eligibility for veterans will consider the following:

- a). The individual no longer has a civilian job upon his or her return; or
- b). The civilian job still exists but is no longer appropriate because of the individual's increased skills obtained in the military, leaving the individual essentially underemployed given his or her skills; or
- c). The civilian job still exists but it pays significantly less than the military paid during the time of active service.

Job Services will provide all veterans that attend the REA Orientation with the opportunity to take the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) assessment and to receive advice and training on how to use the NCRC in their job seeking efforts.

The Minnesota Veterans Questionnaire, a DOL approved standard process, is used to identify veterans with a significant barrier to employment (SBE). The questionnaire identified DOL designated SBE's per VPL03-14, including Change 2.

- C.26. When a current or former Military Service Member with a significant barrier to employment is identified, how do you refer them to an appropriate intensive service provider when there is no Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist in your CareerForce Centers?

The guided interview Initial Assessment is the key that allows us to appropriately refer a veteran to program staff or, as appropriate, to a Local Veteran Employment Representative and/or to Disabled Veterans Outreach Personnel. A referral may also be included in the development of an employment plan. The communication is usually virtual as there are not DVOPs in our CareerForce offices on a regular basis.

CareerForce staff work closely together as a team to provide customer service. Communication is both formal, at established CareerForce partner meetings, and informal through staff-to-staff discussion.

The team approach of the partners at our CareerForce locations is illustrated as follows: The local Veteran's Representative knows of a veteran who would be a likely candidate for a position opening or On-the-Job experience. RMCEP staff then writes an On-the-Job Training contract with the employer to get the veteran on the job.

Priority services to veterans and spouses of certain veterans are provided by Veterans Representatives and DVOPs. They oversee the provision of all services and actively promote integration with all CareerForce services. By doing so, they ensure preference to eligible veterans in the provision of workforce development services. They will also actively participate in employer marketing and public relations, coordinating with other staff involved in employer services, and job development. DVOPs promote recruitment of disabled vets and provide individual case management services. All CareerForce locations in LWDA 2 are served at least weekly by veteran's staff from within the region, either through permanent assignment or on an itinerant basis.

This local area had identified partner staff (in each CareerForce) to provide services (including intensive services) to SBE veterans in the absence of a DVOP. These staff have had training on serving veterans via the NVTI webinar, "HELPING VETERANS TO MEANINGFUL CAREERS," and from LVER staff one on one, and during staff and partner meetings.

CareerForce staff conducts an initial assessment with current or former military service member with a significant barrier to employment and then refers them to the designated intensive service provider with the DVOP is not available.

C.27. How are DVOP and/or Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) staff integrated into the overall service delivery strategy in your CareerForce Centers?

RMCEP provides all services through the CareerForce offices whether or not a DEED Veterans Service Representative is located onsite. This partnership is ideal to ensure coordination and collaboration of services. Services include the full range of WIOA adult and dislocated worker services, in addition to the specific veterans' services provided by the Veterans Representatives. In some areas, the Veterans Representatives come to the CareerForce office on a regularly scheduled itinerant basis. RMCEP staff maintain regular contact with them to ensure that veterans are informed of services available at the CareerForce locations and this allows for a seamless referral process.

The DVOPs are working in partnership with our local UI/REA representatives (where available) to identify all veterans. The DVOP will attend the REA events along with the Job Service staff in order to provide customized veteran's services. Veterans are given priority service for Creative Job Search as well as the National Career Readiness Certificate.

Available local DVOP and/or LVER staff attends staff and partner meetings and orientation, participate on CareerForce teams, collaborate with CareerForce partners on

various events and LVER staff provide training to partner staff and management regarding the JVSG program.

C.28. What is your strategy to ensure that job-ready job seekers enrolled in your programs (including non-program universal customers) are registering in MinnesotaWorks.net and are making their resumes viewable to employers?

All job-ready customers utilizing the Career Lab are assisted with registration in the Minnesotaworks.net system and are encouraged to complete a resume and have it uploaded into the system.

All job-ready enrolled customers participate in job seeking activities which include a component in which they register in Minnesotaworks.net and upload their resume.

C.29. Are all WIOA-funded partners complying with the guidance provided in [TEGL 11-11, Change 1](#) and [TEGL 11-11, Change 2](#) regarding Selective Service?

Yes X

Training and Employment Guidance and State Law Compliance

Conflict of Interest and Integrity: Local area boards must make decisions in keeping with several laws and regulations. Indicate below that your local area board is aware and that the local workforce development area's conflict of interest policies are in compliance with DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter [\(TEGL\) 35-10](#) and [Minnesota OGM 08-01](#) and its relevant federal laws and regulations, including being aware of the:

- A) referenced statute on Government Records
- B) requirement to retain documentation for six years.

Yes X

Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information: The local workforce development area is complying with the guidance provided in [TEGL 39-11](#).

Yes X

Human Trafficking: The local workforce development area is aware of [TEGL 09-12](#) and will follow the procedures for working with trafficked persons.

Yes X

Gender Identification: The local workforce development area is aware of [TEGL 37-14](#) (and associated Attachments [1](#) and [2](#)) and will follow the procedures for developing a similar policy including key terminology and have in place regarding working with customers who may be lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Local workforce development areas will also participate in any related training.

Yes X

Uniform Guidance: The local workforce development area is aware of [TEGL 15-14](#) regarding Uniform Guidance.

Yes X

Assurances

By signing and submitting this plan, the local area board is assuring on behalf of itself and the subgrantee, where applicable:

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and any other DEED/Workforce Development Employment and Training funds, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions and other assurances of the following laws:

- **Accessibility** - [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended](#) - Requires that federally funded program providers make their electronic information and technology accessible to people with disabilities;
- **ACORN** – [Funds may not be provided](#) to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or any of its affiliates, subsidiaries, allied organizations or successors;
- **Audits** – [2 CFR 200.501](#) and [Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996](#) - organization-wide or program-specific audits shall be performed;
- **Buy American**- Buy American Act – award may not be expended unless the funds comply with [USC 41, Section 8301-8303](#);
- **Data Sharing** – [MN Access to Government Data](#), [MN Duties of Responsible Authority](#); [MN Access to Information](#); [MN Administrative Rules Data Practices](#); [DEED Policy – Data Practices](#);

- **Disability** - that there will be compliance with the [Architectural Barriers Act of 1968](#), [Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), as amended, and the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#);
- **Drug-Free Workplace** – [Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988](#) – requires all organizations to maintain a drug-free workplace;
- **Equipment** – [2 CFR 200. 313](#), [200.439](#) – must receive prior approval for the purchase of any equipment with a per unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, and a useful life of more than one year;
- **Fire Safety** – [15 USC 2225a](#) – ensure that all space for conferences, meetings, conventions or training seminars funded in whole or in part complies with the protection and control guidelines of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act ([Public Law 101-391](#));
- **Fraud/Abuse** - that the provider has policies on fraud and abuse and will contact DEED for potential fraud and abuse issues; [20 CFR 667.630](#); [DEED Policy – Fraud Prevention and Abuse](#);
- **Health Benefits** – [Public Law 113-235, Division G, Sections 506 and 507](#) – ensure use of funds for health benefits coverage complies with the [Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015](#);
- **Insurance** - that insurance coverage be provided for injuries suffered by participants in work-related activities where Minnesota's workers' compensation law is not applicable as required under Regulations [20 CFR 667.274](#);
- **Insurance** – [Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973](#) – provides that no Federal financial assistance to acquire, modernize or construct property may be provided in identified flood-prone communities in the United States, unless the community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and flood insurance is purchased within 1 year of the identification;
- **Limited English** - [Executive Order 13166](#) - Improving access to services for persons with limited English proficiency;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions in the administration of programs and activities for all eligible individuals, including individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998](#) (WIA) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions in the administration of programs and activities for all eligible individuals, including individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#) – Prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin under any program receiving federal financial assistance;

- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in employment;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008](#) - Prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of genetic information;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965](#) - Prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national original, age disability or political affiliation or beliefs in any program funded in part with Senior Community Services Employment Program funds;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended](#) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions, based on sex, in educational programs;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title I \(Employment\) Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) - Prohibits state and local governments, from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title II \(State and Local Governments\) Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) - Prohibits qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in services, programs, and activities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 31](#) Nondiscrimination in federally-assisted programs of the Department of Labor, effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 32](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving or benefiting from federal assistance;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 33](#) Enforcement of nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by the Department of Labor;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 35](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance from the Department of Labor;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 37](#) Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 38](#) Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;

- **Nondiscrimination** - [Executive Order 13160](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, and status as a parent in federally conducted education and training Programs;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Executive Order 13279](#) - Nondiscrimination against grant seeking organizations on the basis of religion in the administration or distribution of federal financial assistance under social service programs, including grants, contracts, and loans;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [The Minnesota Human Rights Act of 1973, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363A](#) - Prohibits discrimination in employment and providing public services on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, natural origin, sex, marital status (employment only), disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status (employment only), citizenship, or age (employment only), and local human rights commission activity (employment only);
- **Nondiscrimination** - that collection and maintenance of data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIA and [WIOA Section 188](#), as provided in the regulations implementing that section, will be completed;
- **Opportunity** – [Executive Order 12928](#) – encouraged to provide subcontracting/subgranting opportunities to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Institutions and to Small Businesses Owned and Controlled by Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals;
- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** – [Training and Guidance Letter 39-11](#) – must recognize and safeguard PII except where disclosure is allowed by prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order;
- **Procurement** – Uniform Administrative Requirements – [2 CFR 200-317-36](#) – all procurement transactions to be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition;
- **Publicity** – no funds shall be used for publicity or propaganda purposes, preparation or distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before the Congress or any state/local legislature or legislative body, except in presentation to the Congress or any state/local legislature itself, or designed to support or defeat any proposed or pending regulation, administrative action, or order issued by the executive branch of any state or local government. Nor shall grant funds be used to pay the salary or expenses of any recipient or agent acting for such recipient, related to any activity designed to influence the enactment of legislation, appropriations regulation, administrative action, or Executive Order proposed or pending before the Congress, or any state government, state legislature or local legislature body other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships or participation by an agency or officer of a state, local or tribal government in policymaking and administrative processes within the executive branch of that government;

- **Salary/Bonus** – [Public Law 113-235, Division G, Title I, Section 105](#) – none of the funds appropriated under the heading “Employment and Training” shall be used by a recipient or sub-recipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of [Executive Level II](#). Further clarification can be found in [TEGL 5-06](#);
- **Seat Belts** - [Executive Order 13043](#) – Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States;
- **Text Messaging** – [Executive Order 13513](#) – encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging while driving company-owned or –rented vehicles or GOV or while driving POV when on official Government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the Government;
- **Trafficking of Persons** – [2 CFR 180](#) – OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government wide Debarment and Suspension – may not engage in severe forms of trafficking, procure a commercial sex act or use forced labor in the performance;
- **Veteran Priority of Service** - [Public Law 107-288: Jobs for Veterans Act](#) - Priority of service for veterans (including veterans, eligible spouses, widows and widowers of service members) in qualified job training programs;
- **Veterans** - [Public Law 112-56: Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011](#) - Establishes guidelines for service providers who are providing employment, training, academic or rehabilitation services for military veterans;
- **Veterans** - that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in WIA and WIOA Section 134, and the activities authorized in Chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38 US code, and in compliance with the veterans' priority established in the Jobs for Veterans Act. ([38 USC 4215](#)), U.S. Department of Labor, [Training and Employment Guidance Letter 5-03](#) and Minnesota's Executive Order 06-02;
- **Voter Registration** - that the required voter registration procedures described in [Minnesota Statutes 201.162](#) are enacted without the use of federal funds;
- **Voter Registration** – [52 USC 20501 – 20511](#) – National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

Certifications

By signing and submitting this plan, the local area board is certifying on behalf of itself and the subgrantee, where applicable:

- A. That this ***Regional and Local Workforce Development Area Plan*** was prepared and is in accordance with all applicable titles of the WIOA Act of 2014, Title V of the Older Americans Act, applicable Minnesota state statutes and that it is consistent with Minnesota’s current and future state plans;
- B. that it has provided at least a thirty day period for public comment and input into the development of plan by members of the local area board and the public

- (including persons with disabilities) and has provided information regarding the plan and the planning process, including the plan and supporting documentation, in alternative formats when requested and that any comments representing disagreement with the plan are included with the local plan forwarded to DEED (as the Governor's representative) Section 118(c); Section 108 (d)
- C. that the public (including individuals with disabilities) have access to all of the local area boards and its components' meetings and information regarding the local area board's and its components' activities;
 - D. that fiscal control and fund accounting procedures necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid through the allotments funded through the contract/master agreement issued by DEED have been established;
 - E. that it is, and will maintain a certifiable local area board;
 - F. that it will comply with the confidentiality requirements of WIA Section 136 (f)(3) and WIOA Section 116 (i)(3)
 - G. that the respective contract/master agreement and all assurances will be followed;
 - H. that it will ensure that no funds covered under the contract/master agreement are used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing;
 - I. that this plan was developed in consultation with the local area board;
 - J. that it acknowledges the specific performance standards for each of its programs and will strive to meet them;
 - K. that the local area board members will not act in a manner that would create a conflict of interest as identified in 20 CFR 667.200(a)(4), including voting on any matter regarding the provision of service by that member or the entity that s/he represents and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or to his or her immediate family;
 - L. that local area board and staff are aware of local WorkForce Center services, and are working with and referring to the WorkForce Center services as appropriate;
 - M. that all staff are provided the opportunity to participate in appropriate staff training;
 - N. that, if applicable, the local area board must maintain the currency of its information in the System Award Management until submission of the final financial report or receive the final payment, whichever is later;
 - O. that sponsored (in whole or in part) conferences are charged to the grantee as appropriate and allowable; and

- P. that funds are not used for the purpose of defraying costs of a conference unless it is directly and programmatically related to the purpose of the award.
- Q. that the local area board and its sub-grantees must also adhere to the same certifications and assurances that DEED must assure.

WIOA Guidance

This list of guidance is non-exhaustive and applies only to ETA programs. ETA has published a number of documents to guide the operationalization of WIOA, with the most recent and popular listed below. Find the full library of guidance [here](#).

- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 04-23](#)
 - *Conveys to states the Administration's priorities, State Plan requirements, submission process, and deadline for WIOA Unified and Combined State Plans (State Plans) for PY 2024 through 2027, consistent with WIOA Sections 102 and 103.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 05-23](#)
 - *Provides information to the public workforce system and other entities that receive federal financial assistance under Title I of WIOA, as well as education and training programs or activities receiving DOL financial assistance, regarding the prohibition on discrimination based on actual or perceived religion, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 09-22](#)
 - *Guidance and planning information to states, local workforce areas, and other recipients of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I youth formula funds on the activities associated with the implementation of WIOA.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 07-22](#)
 - *Increasing Employer and Workforce System Customer Access to Good Jobs.*
- [Training and Employment Notice \(TEN\) 16-22](#)
 - *The Employment and Training Administration is Implementing Grant Solutions for Grant Award Processing and the Payment Management System for Financial Reporting.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 22-20](#)
 - *Program Year (PY) 2021 Funding Allotments and Instructions for the Indian and Native American (INA) Programs.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 23-20](#)
 - *Program Year (PY) 2021 Planning Guidance for National Farmworker Jobs Program Career Services and Training Grantees and Housing Grantees.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 07-20](#)

- *Effective Implementation of Priority of Service Provisions for Most in Need Individuals in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult Program.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 08-19](#)
 - *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Training Provider Eligibility and State List of Eligible Training Providers (ETPs) and Programs.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 19-16](#)
 - *Guidance on Services provided through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES), as amended by title III of WIOA, and for Implementation of the WIOA Final Rules.*
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 21-16](#)
 - *Third Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth Formula Program Guidance.*

SIGNATURE PAGE

Local Workforce Development
Area Name

LWDA #2 Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.

Local Area Board Name

LWDA #2 Workforce Development Board

Name and Contact Information for the Local Area Board Chair:

Name Ms. Carol Anderson

Title Owner/Operator

Organization Anderson Farms

Address 1 316 E. Broadway

Address 2 PO Box 356

City, State, ZIP Code Little Falls, MN 56345

Phone 320-632-5466

E-mail mcdc@fallsnet.com

Name and Contact Information for the Local Elected Official(s):

Name Ms. Lori Schwartz

Title Executive Director

Organization Lakes and Prairies CAP

Address 1 715 11th St. N.

Address 2

City, State, ZIP Code Moorhead, MN 56560

Phone 218-512-1506

E-mail loris@caplp.org

We, the undersigned, attest that this submittal is the Local Plan for our Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Area and hereby certify that this Local Plan has been prepared as required and is in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

Local Area Board Chair

Local Elected Official

Name Carol Anderson

Name Lori Schwartz

Title Local Area Workforce
Development Board Chair

Title RMCEP Board of Directors Chair

Signature *Carol Anderson*

Signature *Lori Schwartz*

Date 5/22/24

Date 5/22/24

Attachment A

REGIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

**Regional Workforce
Development Area**

Regional Workforce Development Area 1

**Local Workforce Development
Area**

Northwest Private Industry Council (LWDA 1) and Rural
Minnesota CEP, Inc. (LWDA 2)

MEMBER (Name, Title)	ORGANIZATION	LWDA	COMMITTEE ROLE
Carol Anderson	Anderson Farms	LWBD2 and LEO WDA2	
Terry Blake	Ada-Felton County Store	LWBD2 and LEO WDA2	
James Whirlwind Soldier	DEED		Executive Committee Member
Ed Bolas	DyCast Specialties	LWBD2 and LEO WDA2	
Nate Dorr	Northwest Minnesota Foundation		
Brianna Efta	DEED-VRS		
Sally Erickson	Ericco Manufacturing	LWBD1	
Kirsten Fuglseth	Northwest Service Cooperative	LWBD1	
Don Hickman	Initiative Foundation		
Madison Jansky	MSCTCC		
Tina Jaster	Rural MN CEP, Inc.		Executive Committee Member
Amy Johnson	Cardinal Consulting		
Cindy Hager	Alexandria Technical College		

Catherine Johnson	Inter-County Community Council	LWBD1	Executive Committee Member
Jeff Bjornson	DEED	LWBD2 and LWBD1	
Sarah Kerbeshian	Delta Dental of Minnesota-Bemidji		
Janelle Klink	Fairview Range Medical Center	LEO WDA2	
Sonja Merrild	Blandin foundation		
John Preuss	Inter-County Community Council		Executive Committee Member
Julie Sachs	DEED	LWBD2	
Tammy Schatz	Moorhead Schools	LWBD2	
Ahmed Shiil	United Way of Cass-Clay		
Karen Pifher	Creative Community Consulting		
Curtis Anderson	Beltrami County		
Bonny Stechmann	DEED		
Mary Thompson	Heartland Lakes Development		

Attachment B

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA CONTACTS

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Rapid Response Liaison for Mass Layoffs	Arlyce Cucich	218-847-0735	arlycec@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster
Equal Opportunity Officer	Melissa Kain	218-847-0721	melissak@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster
Program Complaint Officer	Melissa Kain	218-847-0721	melissak@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster
Records Management/Records Retention Coordinator	Bill MacFarlane	218-847-0713	billm@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster
ADA Coordinator	Melissa Kain	218-847-0721	melissak@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster
Data Practices Coordinator	Bill MacFarlane	218-847-0713	billm@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster
Language Access Coordinator	Arlyce Cucich	218-847-0735	arlycec@rmcep.com	Tina Jaster

CareerForce Center in Alexandria CareerForce

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Robbie Stier	320-391-9262	robbies@rmcep.com	David Smith
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Eric Wittbrodt	218-739-7565	Eric.wittbrodt@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Julie Fietek	320-762-3312	jfietek@alexschools.org	Lynn Jenc
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Carrie Hanson	320-762-4943	carrieh@alextech.edu	VP of Student Services
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

CareerForce Center in Bemidji CareerForce (Westridge)

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Billie Jo Greene	218-444-0732	billiejog@rmcep.com	Brian Gapinski
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen

Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Randa Lundmark	218-333-8205	Randa.lundmark@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Kirsten Fuglseth	218-681-0900	kfuglseth@nw-service.k12.mn.us	Bruce Jensen
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Sarah Behrens	218-755-4902	Sarah.behrens@ntcmn.edu	Dr. Richard Hanson
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

CareerForce Center in Brainerd CareerForce

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Brandon Larson	218-892-3341	brandons@rmcep.com	Brian Gapinski
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Andrea Chirhart	320-249-1136	andrea.chirhart@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde

Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Jessica Cass	218-855-8165	Jessica.cass@isd181.org	Cori Reynolds
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Paul Preimesberger	218-855-8163	Paul.preimesberger@clcmn.edu	VP of Student Services
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

CareerForce Center in Detroit Lakes CareerForce

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Kelley Nowell	218-847-0700	kelleyn@rmcep.com	David Smith
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Eric Wittbrodt	651-373-7317	eric.wittbrodt@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Amy Fish	218-844-5760	afish@detlakes.k12.mn.us	Mark Jensen
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Troy Haugen	218-737-6511	thaugen@lcsc.org	Jeremy Kovash

Adult	Same as Site Representative
Dislocated Worker	
Youth	

CareerForce Center in __ Fergus Falls CareerForce __

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Nichole Norgren	218-739-7675	nicholen@rmcep.com	David Smith
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Eric Wittbrodt	218-739-7565	Eric.wittbrodt@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Tammy Schatz	218-284-3460	tschatz@moorheadschools.org	Bruce Jensen
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Troy Haugen	218-737-6511	thaugen@lcsc.org	Jeremy Kovash
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

CareerForce Center in Little Falls CareerForce

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Samantha Froelich	320-232-2006	samanthaf@rmcep.com	Brian Gapinski
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Andrea Chirhart	320-249-1136	andrea.chirhart@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Bryan Tollefson	320-732-4609	btollefson@fed.k12.mn.us	Jerry Nesland
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Paul Preimesberger	218-855-8163	Paul.preimesberger@clcmn.edu	VP of Student Services
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

CareerForce Center in Moorhead CareerForce

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Bill Burnside	218-287-5060	williamb@rmcep.com	David Smith
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-333-8205	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen

Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Jeff Bjornson	218-331-5998	jeffrey.bjornson@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Tammy Schatz	218-284-3460	tschatz@moorheadschools.org	Bruce Jensen
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Troy Haugen	218-737-6511	thaugen@lcsc.org	Jeremy Kovash
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

CareerForce Center in __Wadena CareerForce_____

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Becky Costner	218-631-7665	beckyc@rmcep.com	Brian Gapinski
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	Julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Arthur Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Eric Wittbrodt	218-739-7565	Eric.wittbrodt@state.mn.us	Jeri Werner
State Services for the Blind Manager	Jon Benson	651-539-2332	Jon.benson@state.mn.us	Natasha Jerde
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Tina Jaster	218-847-0720	tinaj@rmcep.com	Board of Directors

Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Bryan Tollefson	320-732-4609	btollefson@fed.k12.mn.us	Jerry Nesland
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Paul Preimesberger	218-855-8163	Paul.preimesberger@clcmn.edu	VP of Student Services
Adult	Same as Site Representative			
Dislocated Worker				
Youth				

Attachment C

LOCAL AREA BOARD MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Please Click on the link below to access Attachment C:



Attachment C_
Local Board Member

Attachment D

LOCAL AREA BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area	Regional Workforce Development Area 1
Local Workforce Development Area	Local Workforce Development Area 2 (Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.)

Committee Name	Objective/Purpose
Youth Council	Oversee the planning and funding of effective youth programs operated by WDA 2.
Workforce Development Board Business Committee	Review the funding and performance progress and status for all programs operated by WDA 2.

Attachment E

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SUB-GRANTEE LIST

**Regional Workforce
 Development Area**

Regional Workforce Development Area 1

**Local Workforce
 Development Area**

Local Workforce Development Area 2 (Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.)

Name of Sub-Grantee	Services Provided	Funding Source	Sub-Grantee located in which CFC?	If not in CFC, provide Address, City, State, ZIP Code
N/A				

Attachment F

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA NON-CFC PROGRAM SERVICE
 DELIVERY LOCATION LIST**

**Regional Workforce
 Development Area**

Regional Workforce Development Area 1

**Local Workforce
 Development Area**

Local Workforce Development Area 2 (Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.)

Name and Location (City)	Program Service Delivered
N/A	

Attachment G

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA KEY INDUSTRIES IN REGIONAL ECONOMY

Based on your most recent analysis of regional economies, provide a list of the key industries in your regional economy.

Key Industries in the Regional Economy for Northwest Minnesota are:

- Healthcare/Social Assistance
- Manufacturing
- Education
- Transportation
- Agriculture
- Trades