



**Regional and Local Workforce Strategic Plan
2024-2027**

LWDA #3 – Northeast Minnesota

State Strategic Vision, Goals and Strategies for 2024-2027

2024-2027 WIOA Strategic Vision

The strategic vision of the One Minnesota Workforce Development Vision is a healthy economy where all Minnesotans have equitable access to a workforce development system in which partners across the state are working toward a collective goal of providing workforce development programs that are responsive to employer needs in in-demand occupations and lead to good jobs with family-sustaining wages.

2024-2027 WIOA State Plan Goals

1. Increase interagency and local area coordination and alignment around shared goals, maximizing efficiency and coordination of workforce funding and programs and improving system integration, and creating a “no wrong door” approach for individuals or employers engaging in the workforce system.
2. Build employer-led industry-sector partnerships across the state to create or expand responsive and equitable workforce development programs and career pathways with embedded work-based learning or on-the-job training, including Registered Apprenticeships, focused on closing gaps in participation and representation based on race, ethnicity, disability, gender, veteran status, and age.
3. Create a more inclusive, equitable, accessible, and proactive workforce system to serve all Minnesotans, preparing employers and the current and emerging workforce for the changing nature of work including new and emerging technology, changing labor market demands, and for the state’s shifting demographics, including our new Minnesotans.

2024-2027 WIOA State Plan Strategies

For the state to achieve the One Minnesota Vision for workforce development, each workforce partner across the state should be working toward implementing the Governor’s major workforce priorities in a unified manner. For the 2024-2027 State, Local and Regional plans, we request that plan writers describe how they are implementing any or all of the priorities put forward by the Governor and those requested by DOL and the U.S. Department of Education who oversee and approve the State plans.

The strategies described below are intended to support and advance the coordination of statewide initiatives and strategies and better understand how these strategies can be implemented at a program or local level. This will also help with improving alignment between

federally funded and state-funded programs, ensuring that all programs are moving in similar strategic directions.

- Drive for 5: The Drive for 5 Initiative was created to prepare more Minnesotans for high-demand jobs in five occupational categories: technology, the trades, caring professions, manufacturing, and education. Plan writers are encouraged to consider how their programs, local areas, or regions prioritize any or all of the five in-demand sectors.
- Targeted Populations: This state-wide initiative was created to bring workers who have been overlooked for employment – particularly people of color – into the workforce at family-sustaining wages. Plan writers are encouraged to consider who their program’s Targeted Populations are and their plans for providing pathways to family sustaining wages.
- Office of New Americans (ONA): ONA was created to support immigrant and refugee inclusion, reduce barriers to employment, and improve connections between employers and job seekers. Plan writers are encouraged to consider how they will work with ONA to support immigrants and refugees in their programs.
- Good Jobs Principles: The U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Commerce released the Good Jobs Principles to create a shared vision of job quality across workforce partners. Plan writers are encouraged to consider how they will support their employer clients in adopting Good Jobs Principles to provide high-quality employment opportunities and improve retention.
- North Star Promise: Minnesota is implementing a free college program beginning in the fall of 2024. Plan writers are encouraged to examine eligibility criteria as compared to their existing clients and consider how they will account for changes in uses of funds in light of the free college program.
- Individualized Career Services: Career services to job seekers play a critical role in supporting placement, and providing more individualized career services as described in section 134(b)(2)(A)(xii) of WIOA are an evidence-based model for improving individual’s earnings. Plan writers are encouraged to describe how they will be utilizing this strategy to improve outcomes for job seekers, and how they may potentially shift funding to career services as funding for workforce training becomes more readily available with the implementation of the North Star Promise Program.
- Attracting and retaining workers: Minnesota continues to face challenges with population growth, which makes attracting and retaining workers all the more important to supporting a healthy and thriving economy in our state. Plan writers are encouraged to describe what strategies they are implementing to support employers in improving job quality and marketing of job opportunities to support attraction and retention strategies.

- Supportive Services: Providing wraparound or supportive services is critical to ensuring that underrepresented populations or individuals with barriers to employment have access to the resources they need to enroll or complete workforce development programs and are retained in employment. Plan writers are encouraged to describe how they are providing supportive services, leveraging partnerships to expand access to such services, or potentially shifting resources to provide supportive services as funding for workforce training becomes more readily available with the implementation of the North Star Promise Program. Please see the WIOA TEGL for more implementation ideas.

Local/Regional Plan Section Summary

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Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota 2024-2027 Plan

SECTION A: REGIONAL VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

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

The Region 2 - Northeast Minnesota vision for a skilled workforce is to convene and collaborate with partners and key stakeholders to build on our region’s strengths and leverage opportunities that will support local businesses, attract workers, and connect job seekers to employment that offers family-sustaining wages and connection to career advancement.

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

The State’s vision highlights a healthy economy, equitable access, and responsiveness to employer needs – all of which aligns with regional priorities. Region 2 - Northeast Minnesota’s strategic plan aligns with state goals and strategies in a number of ways:

1. Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota identifies partnerships as one of its greatest strengths. The Duluth and Northeast Workforce Boards convene and collaborate with a wide array of workforce system partners, including K-12, post-secondary, and adult education institutions; community-based organizations; labor unions; industry associations; government and economic development entities; and employers from a variety of industries. In alignment with State Plan Goal #1, Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota maintains a continuous focus on coordination to improve system integration and create a “no wrong door” approach for both job seekers and businesses.
2. In alignment with State Plan Goal #2, Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota convenes long-established employer-led industry-sector partnerships focused on Healthcare and Construction and is currently working to launch an effort focused on Manufacturing. These sector partnerships help focus investments in workforce initiatives, and align programs and resources around common goals. The Construction industry-sector partnerships, in particular, maintain a strong focus on closing gaps in participation and representation based on race, ethnicity, and gender.
3. In alignment with State Plan Goal #3, Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota is a leader in advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives among employers and ensure they are prepared for the current and emerging workforce. This includes development and dissemination of tool kits, employer workshops and learning sessions, and active participation in a variety of regional DEI-focused groups and programs.

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.**

There are a number of areas of strength in our region, which could be considered for replication or scale:

- The **Talent Development Program** is our region's Incumbent Worker Training effort, which has grown and gained momentum over the past few years. In addition to helping employers avert layoffs and add jobs, and helping workers advance in their careers, TDP is a good example of regional coordination and alignment. Duluth Workforce Development and JET aligned local-level program rules, forms, and branding so employers experience a seamless, no-wrong-door opportunity to access support for employee training. This model has been shared with other local areas around the state for possible replication.
- The **Diversity & Inclusion Employer Action Guide** is a guide that includes vetted, practical tools and resources to help employers implement DEI efforts in four areas: Recruiting, Hiring, Onboarding, and Retention. The Employer Action Guide was crowd-sourced from employers, who shared best practices and specific resources like sample job descriptions, interview guides, and onboarding processes. The Guide has been shared by other workforce boards around the state and was picked up by the US Department of Labor for sharing among employers and workforce providers nationwide.
- The **Employer Champions Initiative** was initiated to launch the Employer Action Guide in a way that was interactive and useful. Employers were invited to send teams of Human Resources and other staff to both learn and share best practices. After a series of monthly virtual workshops to kick off the Initiative, we have continued with a lunch and learn series that takes a deep dive on areas where employers have faced challenges in advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within their organizations. What has emerged is a supportive peer learning network that shares a commitment to positive change.
- **218 Trades** is a marketing campaign that raises visibility and awareness of construction careers. Launched as a website with information for students, parents, and job seekers, 218 Trades has expanded to offer workshops that travel to area high schools to present about careers in the trades, tabling events and job fairs – including two large Construct Tomorrow events each year, and one-on-one guidance to help individuals navigate entry into the trades. 218 Trades has the support and engagement of unions, apprenticeship programs, and contractors, and has many success stories resulting from its efforts.

- **Discover Healthcare** is a career exploration event built on the success of Construct Tomorrow. Held annually in Duluth, Northwest Wisconsin, and on the Iron Range, the event invites employers to set up interactive booths to expose attendees to a wide range of healthcare careers. With support from Perkins, high school students from around the region attend the event and have the chance to try on different healthcare occupations through games and hands-on activities. The first round of events were attended by hundreds of students, with anticipated expansion over the next year.

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.

There are several strategies in place to align resources, carry out core programs, and achieve the strategic vision and goals of the local area boards and the state:

- Core program partners sign Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) outlining shared responsibility for operating CareerForce locations and offering workforce services.
- The One Stop Operator selected through a competitive process by both the Duluth and Northeast workforce boards is a consortium that includes Duluth Workforce Development, the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (JET), the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA), DEED Job Service, State Services for the Blind, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). This group meets monthly to provide oversight and coordination of core programs and service delivery across all CareerForce locations in the region and identify opportunities for alignment.
- Operations Committees within each CareerForce location include staff representatives from each co-located agency who meet quarterly to identify opportunities for coordination and collaboration.
- The Workforce Strategy Consultant meets with the Duluth and Northeast LWDA Directors on a monthly basis to coordinate employer engagement, share insights and resources, and develop effective approaches to employer workforce needs.
- CareerForce partners work with individuals and organizations across the region in the community to maintain connectivity and facilitate alignment of resources. This is often accomplished through participation on boards and committees, engaging in community conversations, partnering on grant proposals, and other activities.

- Partners organize a Regional Professional Development Day once per year for all CareerForce staff in the region to come together, share updates, and engage in professional development sessions.
- Where clients are shared across organizations, a Release of Information is signed to allow case managers to communicate and coordinate with each other in the best interest of that client, and to avoid duplication of services.

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

There are a few additional goals set by regional leadership in response to immediate needs and with a focus on the long-term economic health of the region:

- **Explore ways to support entrepreneurs and hospitality & tourism industry businesses**, both of which play a critical role in the region’s economy.
 - Programs to support entrepreneurs typically function in separate silos from the workforce system, and there is work to do to understand how these programs can improve their focus on workforce strategies and how workforce entities can better support job seekers with the goal of becoming small business owners.
 - Hospitality & tourism businesses play a critical role in creating jobs and generating revenue – but workforce system partners struggle to engage with and support this sector because wages are often low and there aren’t credentialed training programs serving this sector. Regional leaders will continue to explore how to best support these businesses while also connecting job seekers to opportunities that offer family-sustaining wages and opportunities for advancement.
- **Continue to research and track clean energy job opportunities in the region.** As we work together to build climate resilience and mitigate the impacts of climate change, there are emerging opportunities for both job seekers and businesses. Many of those will be among existing occupations adding new skills or working with new technologies or focusing their work on new end products. This includes electricians installing solar panels or EV charging stations, HVAC technicians installing high efficiency heating systems, and manufacturing workers making solar panels. This also creates an opportunity to attract workers to traditional occupations in manufacturing, transportation, and the trades as they spend more time on climate-focused projects.

- **Expand regional efforts focused on talent attraction.** The population in our region is aging, and the workforce is shrinking. We need to attract more workers and their families to fill jobs and maintain our economic strength. This means building housing, expanding childcare, and ensuring that communities are welcoming of diversity. There are many opportunities to collaborate with partners in this effort.

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)).

There are many existing efforts which ensure our region is well positioned with a workforce prepared for state and federal Investing in America investments.

- Duluth was selected to be part of Good Jobs Great Cities, a cohort of cities from across the nation working to advance workforce initiatives. The focus of our work is launching a regional manufacturing sector strategy initiative, which aligns with broader statewide work tied to the CHIPS Act.
- With multiple major infrastructure construction projects in the region, all of our construction sector work has gained a new significance.
 - The Duluth Workforce Development Board’s Construction Working Group will continue to be a place for coordination and alignment at the local and regional level, and with state efforts.
 - 218 Trades will continue its campaign to excite youth and adults about careers in construction.
 - The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) awarded a five-year grant to Duluth Workforce Development to support a team of Community Liaisons – BIPOC community members who conduct deep outreach, facilitate career exploration, and mentor youth and adults interested in entering a career in the trades.
 - MnDOT is also facilitating deeper connections to tribal representatives, to help connect band members to construction training and job opportunities.
 - Both the Duluth and Northeast workforce boards support a number of construction training programs, including high school Career Technical Education programs, YouthBuild, and programs at Community Action Duluth and SOAR Career Solutions.

SECTION B: REGIONAL OPERATIONS

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

A Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis of the regional workforce system was completed by the Regional Leadership Team in early 2024.

- **Strengths:** Education system/institutions and teachers, workforce attraction – people want to live in area, state support and infrastructure, strong collaboration and partnerships, unions offering good jobs, training opportunities for job seekers, strong sector partnerships, healthcare and construction working groups, targeted events/efforts, strong and engaged boards, many individuals/organizations working on important initiatives;
- **Weaknesses:** Aging workforce, ageism, limited employment services specific for older workers, lack of population growth, low employment participation rate, low international migration rates, no support system for New Americans, lack of employer engagement, navigating apprenticeship system – confusing and not cohesive, lack of transportation/dependence on cars, evolving work ethic, low high school graduation rates - especially for people of color, regulatory requirements such as paid family leave putting pressure on businesses, union wages make it hard for non-union businesses to compete, silos, lack of collaboration/connectivity, lack of regional coordination, duplication of efforts;
- **Opportunities:** Clean energy/manufacturing, climate migration to region, change/grow/adapt/evolve to new paradigms, trades training – increase training of non-traditional populations, on-the-job training, funding availability, update of Diversity & Inclusion Employer Action Guide, retaining both high school and college graduates in the region, artificial intelligence, beautiful clean environment, remote work trends, recruitment campaigns, high paying jobs available, evolution of industry/new technology to stay on top of new skills and workforce needs, expanded Career Technical Education in high schools, engagement of older and youth workers, agency collaboration/partnerships, attracting New Americans/immigration;
- **Threats:** Funding limits and changing priorities of funders, unskilled/uneducated workers, business climate not friendly to business, public policy/anti-mining policy, aging workforce, not enough people in the workforce means businesses suffer, perception that young people must leave region to succeed, new Minnesota residents leave because communities are not welcoming, flat population growth, housing shortage/affordability, child care shortage, status quo/resistance to change, industry and business are evolving quickly, in real-time - can they keep up and adapt? How do we stay on the cutting edge?

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 Regional Leadership Team is comprised of the Executive Committees of the Duluth and Northeast workforce boards, plus key regional staff including the DEED Labor Market Analyst, Workforce Strategy Consultant, VRS and Job Service Regional Managers, and the Executive Directors of Duluth Workforce Development, JET, and AEOA.

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 Leadership Team meets a minimum of twice per year, with one meeting focused on strategic planning, with review of labor market information and assessment or update of regional goals and strategies. The other meeting each year will focus on oversight and assessment of progress toward goals in the regional plan. Additionally, the Duluth and Northeast workforce boards will monitor customer feedback and performance outcomes of workforce programs within the region, to ensure they are successfully contributing toward regional goals.

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

Our region's best work to ensure partner engagement includes diverse representation happens at the local level and through the two local workforce boards. Efforts taking place at the regional level include:

- Engagement with tribal representatives to connect enrolled members living outside reservation lands to workforce services and programs;
- Engagement with Tribal Employment Relations Officers (TEROs) to connect tribal members to employment opportunities on area construction projects;
- Participation in the Welcoming Communities project led by Northforce, which brings together diverse stakeholders in rural communities to build inclusive social systems and networks;
- Ongoing efforts to connect with partners in the region to enhance our ability to serve immigrants and refugees seeking employment and training;
- Active partnership with high schools in the region to serve students with disabilities and other barriers to success through our youth programs as they prepare to transition into adulthood.

We are also exploring new partnerships and implementing pilot projects with partner agencies to address housing/homelessness, transportation challenges including difficulty obtaining a driver's license, employment for older adults, and childcare navigation. Through these partnerships, our two workforce boards play a key role in

identifying needs and gaps, and advocating for funding or policy changes to better serve populations experiencing barriers to employment.

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

There are two types of formal agreements which outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner. The One Stop Operator for CareerForce locations in the region has typically been a consortium of co-located partners, with a Memorandum of Understanding defining the nature of the partnership. In addition, the One-Stop MOU, and Infrastructure Funding Agreement detail how all partners in the region will work together to provide consistent and quality services, as well as share costs.

Existing informal agreements between CareerForce partners in the Northeast region that continue to work effectively will also remain in place. For example, determination of which WIOA provider at the Duluth Workforce Center serves Duluth residents vs. non-Duluth residents is clear and referrals occur seamlessly: Duluth Workforce Development staff generally work with City of Duluth residents, and JET and AEOA staff work with non-Duluth residents. If situations arise that necessitate adjustments to the established process, partners simply maintain open lines of communication and adjust accordingly to ensure the needs of program participants are met.

JET, AEOA and DWD are committed to system alignment through shared policies and practices. All are providers of WIOA programs and MFIP Employment Services in St. Louis County, which necessitates some consistency in how services are delivered. To improve coordination and consistency, JET, AEOA, and DWD improved alignment between our respective support service policies when working together on a dislocated worker project grant over the past few years. JET and DWD aligned our incumbent worker training policies and forms under the shared Talent Development Program. JET and DWD both work with students at East High School but have carved out separate niches and areas of focus within the building.

To further support regional priorities, cooperative efforts in the following areas are also taking place:

1. Coordinated professional development for staff.

Each year, the Northeast Region sets aside regional planning funds to support a full-day professional development conference for all CareerForce staff, with opportunities to share information across organizations, build connections among staff, and engage in learning sessions of shared relevance.

2. Coordinated marketing and communication of CareerForce programs, events, and initiatives.

While each organization maintains its own identity, we are unified by and lead with CareerForce as a shared identity. We regularly promote programs and

events hosted by all partner organizations in the region through the CareerForce email list and event calendar. We also have a strong social media presence in the region, which is an increasing source of connection to our programs and services. And we have good connections with local earned media, which is very supportive and willing to share information about our programs and services.

3. Coordinated Career Pathways Efforts

Strong, employer-led sector partnerships are critical to meeting the needs of job seekers and employers across the entire Northeast region, specifically in the areas of healthcare, skilled trades/construction, and manufacturing. To maximize the time and effort employers are willing and able to invest, working groups and sector initiatives are coordinated – with opportunities to come together as a region to identify shared priorities.

Partners in the northeast region also work collaboratively on special projects and frequently facilitate cross-referrals and co-enrollments between agencies. For example, individuals served through WIOA, or other programs may also co-enroll with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), AEOA's Youth Build program or AEOA's Adult Basic Education program. Job counselors may promote program eligible participants to training opportunities available through another partner's special project (i.e. Duluth's career pathway training classes).

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.

The CareerForce partners in the Northeast region maintain a Memorandum of Understanding for each comprehensive location which outlines how they will work cooperatively to deliver services using a 'no wrong door' approach that is responsive to both customer and employer needs. Coordination and collaboration occur at both the staff and manager level to help promote a consistent customer experience within the region and in alignment with state policy. Additionally, Job Service and RESEA maintain a cooperative service arrangement statewide to connect Unemployment Insurance recipients to CareerForce services and programs. Job Service also maintains a cooperative service arrangement with the state Department of Human Services to conduct outreach to SNAP recipients and connect them to CareerForce services.

SECTION C: PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY

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

Industry Employment

Employment, which was relatively steady prior to the coronavirus pandemic, declined in 2020 at rates greater than other areas of the state, largely due to the disproportionate impacts on service-providing sectors and industries that are relatively more concentrated in the Northeast region, and Local Area 4 in particular. Employment growth has also been weaker in Northeast Minnesota since 2020, reflecting an ongoing and uneven recovery.

Prior to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in March of 2020, Northeast Minnesota saw relatively stable employment levels. From 2019-2020 total employment in the region declined by 11,800 or 8.2% which was larger relative to the 6.6% statewide decline (Table 1). Since 2020, the region has added back 5,675 jobs or just under half of the employment loss in 2020. Meanwhile, the state has recovered over 90% of the jobs lost between 2019 and 2020. Of the two workforce service areas in the region, WSA 3 lost relatively fewer and gained back relatively more compared to the WSA 4 - City of Duluth. The number of establishments, by contrast, has increased since 2019, by the count of 400 (+4.5%).

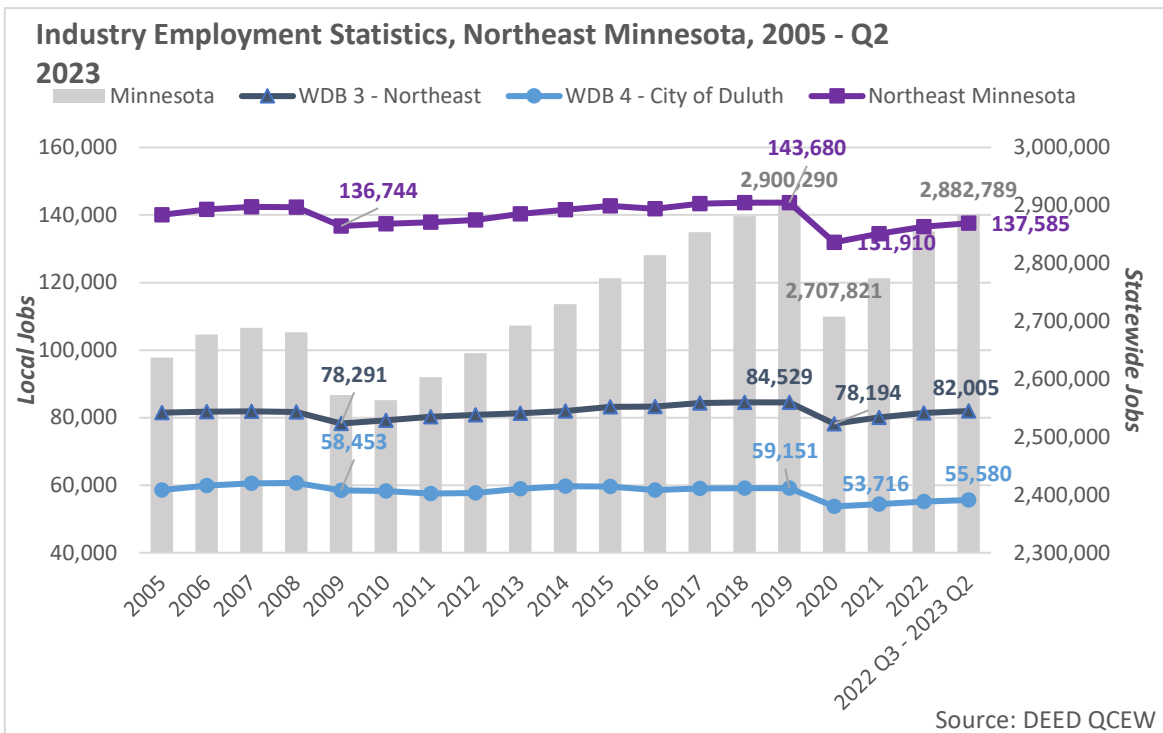


Table 1. Industry Employment Statistics, 2014-2023										
	Q3 2022 – Q2 2023 Avg.				2014-2019		2019-2020		2020-2022/23	
	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll (\$1,000s)	Avg. Annual Wages	Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
WDB 4 - City of Duluth	2,554	55,580	\$3,346,055	\$60,190	-535	-0.90%	-5,435	-9.19%	+1,864	3.47%
WDB 3 - Northeast	6,680	82,005	\$4,319,726	\$52,676	+2,605	3.18%	-6,335	-7.49%	+3,811	4.87%
Northeast Minnesota	9,234	137,585	\$7,665,781	\$55,717	+2,070	1.46%	-11,770	-8.19%	+5,675	4.30%
State of Minnesota	204,888	2,882,789	\$205,278,795	\$71,208	+170,677	6.25%	-192,469	-6.64%	+174,968	6.46%

**2022/23 employment data is the average of Q3 2022-Q2 2023. Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program*

Industry Breakdown

Through concentration or scale, there are several industries that play important roles in the economy of Northeast Minnesota, with Healthcare and Social assistance continuing to lead employment. The impacts of the pandemic fell on all industries, but especially on service-based industries such as Retail, Other Services, and Leisure & Hospitality. The employment recovery is on-going and varies by sector.

Total employment in the region remains down 4.6% (-6,100 jobs) compared to 2019 levels, despite the addition of nearly 5,700 jobs since 2020. **Healthcare and Social Assistance** continues to be the largest industry in Northeast Minnesota, accounting for 32,404 jobs as of the 4 quarters ending Q2 2023 – nearly a quarter of all employment in the region (Table 2). Losing 4.3% of jobs through Q3 2020 under the pandemic, the industry initially weathered the associated downturn better than the region’s average, but the subsequent recovery has not been as strong, and the sector remains down 6.6%. Current Employment Statistics show that in the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the Education and Health Service supersector remained down -3.7% relative to pre-pandemic levels, compared to -2.2% for all sectors.

The next largest industries in Northeast Minnesota are **Retail Trade** (12.3% of jobs), **Accommodation and Food Services** (10.3%), **Educational Services** (8.3%), and **Public Administration** (7.9%). Of those four sectors, Retail Trade (-1%) and Public Administration (-2.8%) were the closest to their 2019 employment levels. Accommodation & Food Services and Educational Services remain down -8.8% and -4% respectively.

Relative to 2019 levels, **only four sectors had more employment in 2023: Construction** (+5.1%), **Manufacturing** (+0.8%), **Utilities** (+0.1%), and **Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services** (+6.9%). These four sectors were buoyed by large local construction projects as well as their relative insulation from the worst of the pandemic’s impacts. The sectors that remain the furthest below their respective pre-pandemic levels are Information (-19.9%), Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation (-14.6%), Other Services (-11.9%), and Finance & Insurance (-10.2%). Arts and Other Services were hit hard by the pandemic specifically

while Information and Finance had been on longer term employment declines prior to 2020.

The average annual wage for the region in 2023 was \$55,705, up 6.6% from 2021 and 12.6% from 2020 (Table 2). Since 2020 wage growth was strongest for Mining (+38.1%), Accommodation & Food Services (+27.2%), Finance & Insurance (+23.4%), and Real Estate Rental & Leasing (+19.3%). And while all sectors saw wage growth over three years, the smallest gains occurred in Information (+0.7%), Educational Services (+5.0%), Utilities (+5.8%), and Other Services (+5.9%). Wage gains were seen across the wage spectrum. The sectors with the highest wages in 2023 were Mining (\$123,032), Utilities (\$106,990), Management (\$106,379). The sectors with the lowest average wages were Accommodation & Food Services (\$22,165), Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation (\$29,588), Other Services (\$33,111), and Retail Trade (\$33,319).

Lastly, the sectors with the **highest employment concentration** relative to the state were **Mining** (14.9 times more concentrated in NE MN), **Utilities** (2.3), **Public Administration** (1.6), **Accommodation & Food Services** (1.4), and **Health Care & Social Assistance** (1.4). Retail, Other Services, Construction, Educational Services, and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation were all slightly more concentrated in the region. The least concentrated sectors were Management (0.2), Wholesale Trade (0.5), Information (0.5), Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting (0.5), and Administrative Support and Waste Management Services (0.5).

Table 2. Industry Employment Statistics, 2019-2023								
Northeast Minnesota	Q3 2022 - Q2 2023 Data				2019-2020		2019-2022/23*	
NAICS Industry Title	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Percent of Jobs	Avg. Annual Wage	Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Total, All Industries	9,234	137,585	100%	\$55,705	-11,773	-8.2%	-6,098	-4.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	128	540	0.4%	\$46,046	-21	-3.6%	-40	-7.1%
Mining	35	3,918	2.8%	\$123,032	-328	-7.8%	-300	-7.7%
Construction	1,069	7,335	5.3%	\$74,152	-576	-8.2%	328	5.1%
Manufacturing	332	8,956	6.5%	\$70,109	-542	-6.1%	65	0.8%
Utilities	50	1,467	1.1%	\$106,990	-35	-2.4%	1	0.1%
Wholesale Trade	259	2,868	2.1%	\$72,670	-180	-6.0%	-117	-4.2%
Retail Trade	1,263	16,925	12.3%	\$33,319	-873	-5.1%	-158	-1.0%
Transportation and Warehousing	348	3,832	2.8%	\$62,270	-344	-8.2%	-385	-9.9%
Information	146	1,086	0.8%	\$52,078	-178	-13.6%	-225	-19.9%
Finance and Insurance	432	3,924	2.9%	\$76,674	-297	-6.8%	-412	-10.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	279	1,222	0.9%	\$41,015	-141	-10.9%	-68	-5.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	584	4,658	3.4%	\$77,675	-12	-0.3%	300	6.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	47	726	0.5%	\$106,379	-25	-3.3%	-28	-3.8%
Administrative Support and Waste Mgmt Services	348	3,267	2.4%	\$36,140	-463	-13.5%	-167	-5.6%
Educational Services	267	11,422	8.3%	\$52,403	-646	-5.4%	-454	-4.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,053	32,404	23.6%	\$62,192	-1,494	-4.3%	-2,184	-6.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	277	3,360	2.4%	\$29,588	-966	-25.6%	-411	-14.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	974	14,171	10.3%	\$22,165	-3,399	-22.3%	-1,043	-8.8%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	961	4,651	3.4%	\$33,111	-991	-19.3%	-494	-11.9%
Public Administration	382	10,847	7.9%	\$61,984	-260	-2.3%	-310	-2.8%

*2020 employment data is the average of quarters 1, 2, and 3. Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program

Industry and Occupational Projections

2020-2030 employment projections indicate strong growth in industries that experienced the largest employment losses at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the forecasted growth can be attributed to recovery, and to exit openings. Indeed, many occupations are facing a wave of impending retirements creating a need for a new generation of skilled workers to step in.

Table 3. Regional Employment Projections, 2020-2030							
Occupational Group	Northeast Minnesota						
	2020 Estimate	2030 Projection	2020-2030 Percent Change	Total Job Growth Change	Labor Force Exit Openings	Transfer Openings	2020-2030 Total Hires
Total, All Occupations	148,527	156,642	5.5%	8,115	67,147	99,223	174,485
Management	8,808	9,385	6.6%	577	2,535	4,753	7,865
Business & Financial Operations	6,134	6,460	5.3%	326	1,713	3,631	5,670
Computer & Mathematical	2,036	2,245	10.3%	209	442	1,055	1,706
Architecture & Engineering	2,473	2,564	3.7%	91	623	1,272	1,986
Life, Physical, & Social Science	1,689	1,760	4.2%	71	369	1,203	1,643
Community & Social Service	5,032	5,497	9.2%	465	1,799	3,450	5,714
Legal	712	757	6.3%	45	200	281	526
Education, Training, & Library	8,484	9,141	7.7%	657	3,631	4,049	8,337
Arts, Design, Entertainment, & Media	2,153	2,337	8.5%	184	859	1,443	2,486
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	12,366	13,327	7.8%	961	3,284	3,868	8,113
Healthcare Support	10,342	11,632	12.5%	1,290	6,744	6,502	14,536
Protective Service	3,340	3,589	7.5%	249	1,403	2,095	3,747
Food Preparation & Serving Related	12,121	14,188	17.1%	2,067	9,637	13,448	25,152
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	5,405	5,931	9.7%	526	3,401	4,001	7,928
Personal Care & Service	4,551	5,075	11.5%	524	2,966	3,794	7,284
Sales & Related	13,691	13,101	-4.3%	-590	7,506	10,910	17,826
Office & Administrative Support	16,490	16,025	-2.8%	-465	7,812	10,062	17,409
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	674	855	26.9%	181	290	861	1,332
Construction & Extraction	8,095	8,371	3.4%	276	2,492	5,674	8,442
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	7,224	7,423	2.8%	199	2,286	4,559	7,044
Production	7,052	6,811	-3.4%	-241	2,588	4,892	7,239
Transportation & Material Moving	9,655	10,168	5.3%	513	4,567	7,420	12,500

Source: DEED 2020-2030 Employment Outlook

Industry	Estimated Employment 2020	Projected Employment 2030	Percent Change 2020-2030	Numeric Change 2020-2030
Total, All Industries	148,527	156,642	+5.5%	+8,115
Health Care & Social Assistance	32,183	35,151	+9.2%	+2,968
Public Administration	14,780	15,572	+5.4%	+792
Retail Trade	16,275	15,391	-5.4%	-884
Accommodation & Food Services	11,734	14,134	+20.5%	+2,400
Educational Services	11,884	12,440	+4.7%	+556
Manufacturing	8,329	8,166	-2.0%	-163
Construction	6,111	6,368	+4.2%	+257
Other Services	5,703	6,304	+10.5%	+601
Transportation & Warehousing	4,783	4,977	+4.1%	+194
Professional & Technical Services	4,617	4,948	+7.2%	+331
Finance & Insurance	4,616	4,755	+3.0%	+139
Mining	3,911	3,659	-6.4%	-252
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,613	3,397	+30.0%	+784
Wholesale Trade	3,122	3,127	+0.2%	+5
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt.	2,916	3,095	+6.1%	+179
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & hunt	1,027	1,359	+32.3%	+332
Information	1,145	1,210	+5.7%	+65
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1,144	1,128	-1.4%	-16
Utilities	1,295	1,097	-15.3%	-198

Source: DEED 2020-2030 Employment Outlook

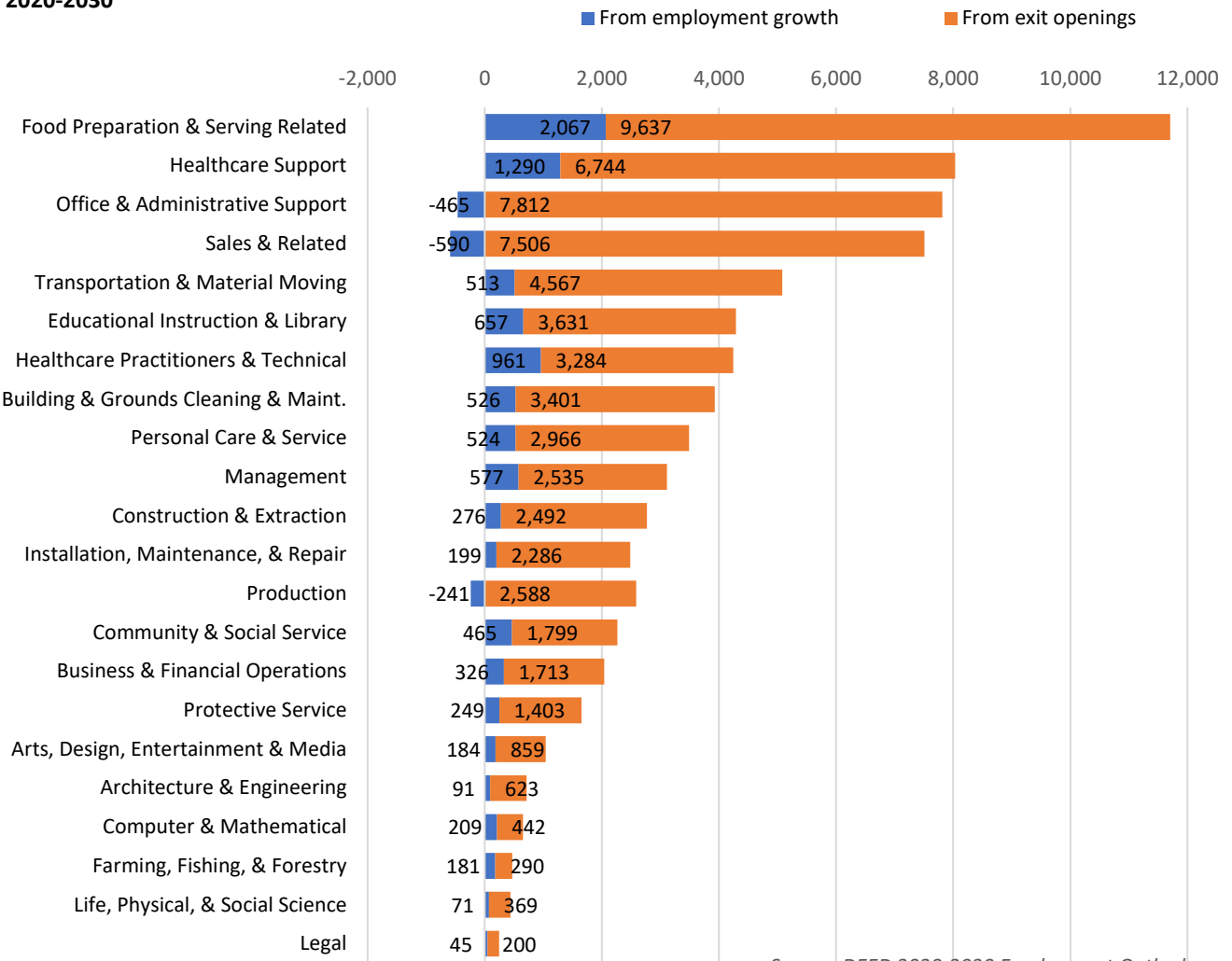
DEED’s Employment Outlook tool also provides industry and occupation employment projections for the period 2020-2030 including openings created due to exit openings, often from retirements (Table 3). This is an important data point, as 36.5% of the population in Northeast Minnesota is over age 55, has already retired, or will reach retirement age in the next decade. This is expected to create a critical need for skilled workers, particularly in certain occupations where larger shares of workers are older.

Overall, the Northeast planning area is projected to grow 5.5% from 2020 to 2030, a gain of 8,115 new jobs (Table 4). In addition, the region is also expected to need 174,485 replacement openings to fill jobs left vacant by retirements and other career changers over a decade. The notable increase in projected employment growth is largely attributable to the continued recovery from pandemic-related employment losses. Accordingly, Food Prep. & Serving is the occupational group expected to add the most jobs, followed by Healthcare Support, Office & Admin. Support, and Sales & Related occupations (Figure 15). The largest percent growth is expected for Farming, Fishing, & Forestry, Food Prep., Healthcare Support, and Personal Care.

By industry the trends are similar. The sectors forecast to see the largest percent growth are Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting (+32.3%), Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation

(+30.0%), Accommodation & Food Services (+20.5%), and Other Services (+10.5%) (Fig. 2). Healthcare & Social Assistance is close behind with 9.2% projected employment growth, but also the largest number of projected added new jobs at nearly 3,000. Accommodation & Food Services is the only other sector forecast to add more than 1,000 new jobs over the decade with 2,400. The sectors expected to see job declines were Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Mining, Real Estate Rental & Leasing, and Utilities. Of these sectors several are anticipated to be more susceptible to advances in automation.

Figure 2. Northeast Minnesota Regional Employment Projections by Occupational Group, 2020-2030



Source: DEED 2020-2030 Employment Outlook

Occupational Distribution and Projections

Employment is less concentrated in a single occupational group than by industry, yet the same emphasis in service-oriented occupations is evident.

Like the state, the largest share of employment in the 7-county Northeast region in 2020

was in Office and Administrative Support (11.7%), despite recent employment declines in that occupational group (Table 5). The next largest occupational group was **Food Preparation and Serving Related** (10.0%), which was more concentrated than in the rest of Minnesota. **Healthcare Support and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical** accounted for a combined 15.1% of regional jobs, again, more concentrated than the corresponding statewide share (12.3%). **Construction and Extraction** (5.1%), **Installation, Maintenance & Repair** (4.7%), **Community & Social Services** (3.2%), and **Protective Services** (2.2%) employment were also notably more concentrated in the region. Sales & Related, Education & Training, and Office & Admin Support occupations made up 26.4% of employment, each about equal to the statewide share for those occupational groups.

Relative to the state, the Northeast region had notably smaller employment shares in Production (4.9%), Business and Financial Operations (4.3%), Computer and Mathematical (1.3%), Arts, Design, Entertainment, & Media (0.9%), and Legal (0.4%).

The regional median wage for all occupations was \$22.57, nearly \$2 lower than the statewide median (Table 5). About 12% of jobs in the region had wages below \$16.29 per hour. The occupational groups with the lowest median wages were Food Prep & Serving Related (\$14.05), Sales & Related (\$15.06), and Personal Care & Service (\$15.33). The occupational groups with the highest median wages were Management (\$42.60), Legal (\$41.44), Computer & Mathematical (\$39.38), and Architecture & Engineering (\$38.75). The three lowest paying occupational groups accounted for 20.8% of jobs. The four highest-paying occupational groups accounted for 9.4% of jobs.

Table 5. Occupational Employment Statistics, 2023

Occupational Group	Northeast Minnesota				State of Minnesota		
	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment	Share of Total Employment	Location Quotient	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Statewide Employment	Share of Total Employment
Total, All Occupations	\$22.57	136,490	100.0%	1.0	\$24.25	2,827,310	100.0%
Management	\$42.60	7,720	5.7%	0.8	\$51.58	193,760	6.9%
Business & Financial Operations	\$32.03	5,910	4.3%	0.6	\$38.19	201,940	7.1%
Computer & Mathematical	\$39.38	2,150	1.6%	0.4	\$49.73	99,250	3.5%
Architecture & Engineering	\$38.75	2,340	1.7%	0.9	\$40.60	53,100	1.9%
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$32.18	1,680	1.2%	1.2	\$39.37	29,070	1.0%
Community & Social Service	\$24.43	4,310	3.2%	1.6	\$25.82	54,820	1.9%
Legal	\$41.44	530	0.4%	0.6	\$47.87	18,730	0.7%
Education, Training & Library	\$25.02	8,450	6.2%	1.1	\$24.82	158,830	5.6%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	\$23.52	1,280	0.9%	0.7	\$28.80	37,630	1.3%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$37.53	11,460	8.4%	1.3	\$41.07	186,700	6.6%
Healthcare Support	\$17.05	9,180	6.7%	1.2	\$17.40	162,400	5.7%
Protective Service	\$25.66	3,020	2.2%	1.5	\$25.83	40,620	1.4%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$14.05	13,630	10.0%	1.3	\$14.89	216,970	7.7%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	\$16.29	4,560	3.3%	1.2	\$18.26	76,210	2.7%
Personal Care & Service	\$15.33	3,110	2.3%	1.1	\$16.96	58,120	2.1%
Sales & Related	\$15.06	11,540	8.5%	1.0	\$18.14	239,500	8.5%
Office & Administrative Support	\$20.75	16,030	11.7%	1.0	\$23.06	345,830	12.2%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$23.49	240	0.2%	1.2	\$19.84	4,060	0.1%
Construction & Extraction	\$30.65	6,950	5.1%	1.3	\$31.00	113,930	4.0%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$29.17	6,400	4.7%	1.3	\$27.95	98,670	3.5%
Production	\$22.97	6,640	4.9%	0.7	\$22.07	209,380	7.4%

Transportation & Material Moving	\$19.53	9,370	6.9%	0.9	\$21.05	227,780	8.1%
<i>Source: DEED Occupational Employment Statistics, Qtr. 1 2023</i>							

Occupations in Demand

Led by Healthcare and Social Assistance/Service, a wide array of occupations, with varying wages and educational requirements, were in demand in 2023.

According to DEED’s Occupations in Demand Tool, in 2023 there were about 280 occupations with moderate-to-high demand in the region (Table 6). **Of the 94 occupations considered to have the most favorable demand conditions, 29 were in Healthcare, Personal Care, Education, or Social Service occupations.** Production, Maintenance, Transportation, and Construction & Extraction occupations accounted for 23 of the most in-demand occupations and Food Preparation & Serving Related and Office & Admin occupations represented an additional 12 and 10 of the most in-demand jobs respectively. The in-demand occupations were spread across most industry sectors with concentrations in Healthcare, Personal, and Social Support and Assistance. The most in-demand occupations also showed varying education requirements, however eight of the top 10 occupations with the most projected openings in the region all required a high school diploma or equivalent.

Table 6. Occupations in Demand by Typical Required Education in Northeast Minnesota with Median Wage, 2023			
High School or Less	Vocational Training	Associate Degree	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher
Home Health & Personal Care Aides \$32,409/yr	Nursing Assistants \$38,023/yr	Registered Nurses \$78,892/yr	Substance abuse, behavioral & mental health counselors \$47,421/yr
Retail Salespersons \$30,436/yr	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses \$50,965/yr	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers \$69,705/yr	General & Operations Managers \$74,719/yr
Cashiers \$28,649/yr	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics \$48,638/yr	Clinical Laboratory Technologists & Technicians \$62,998/yr	Secondary School Teachers \$64,162/yr
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General \$51,214/yr	Medical Assistants \$44,580/yr	Dental Hygienists \$80,434/yr	Social & Community Service Managers \$65,308/yr
Waiters & Waitresses \$23,385/yr	Industrial Machinery Mechanics \$67,655/yr	Radiologic Technologists & Technicians \$67,078/yr	Elementary School Teachers \$62,554/yr
Janitors & Cleaners, exc. Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners \$34,993/yr	Dental Assistants \$54,500/yr	Surgical Technologists \$62,349/yr	Accountants & Auditors \$66,865/yr

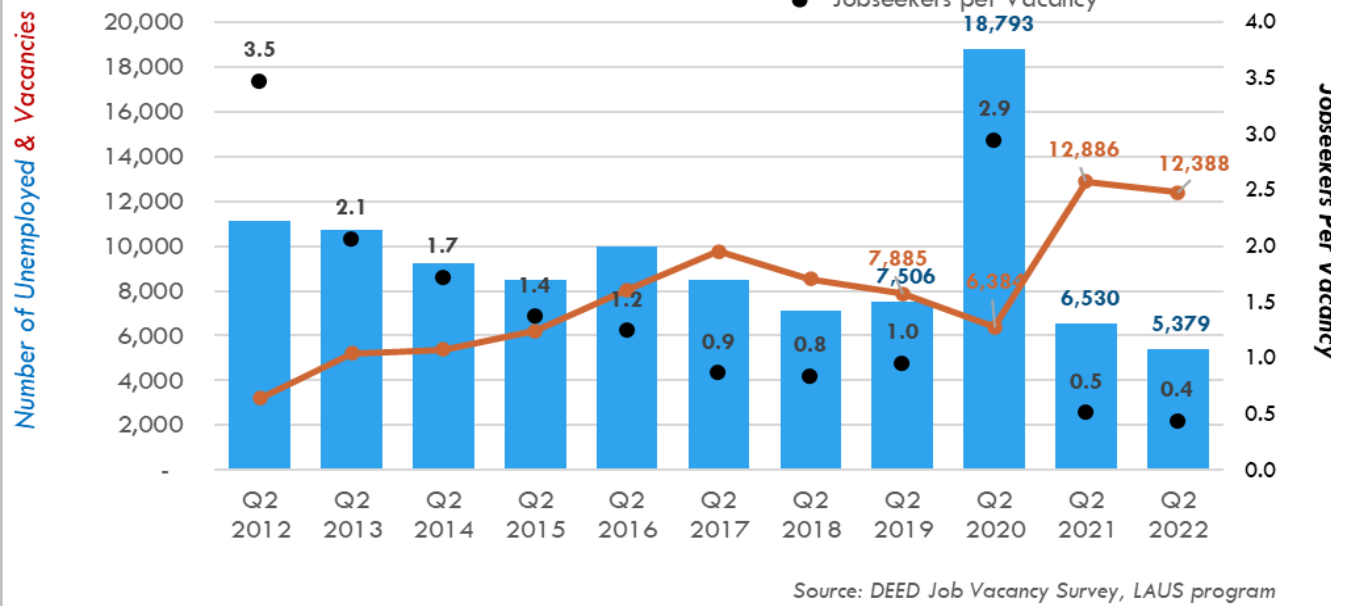
Driver/Sales Workers \$27,752/yr	Electricians \$77,859/yr	Forest & Conservation Technicians \$49,163/yr	Pharmacists \$137,104/yr
Fast Food & Counter Workers \$28,490/yr	First-Line Supervisors of Personal Service Workers \$41,164/yr	Respiratory Therapists \$75,469/yr	Human Resources Specialists \$63,477/yr
Stockers & Order Fillers \$32,400/yr	Computer User Support Specialists \$56,023/yr	Cardiovascular Technologists & Technicians \$79,749/yr	Preschool Teachers \$34,916/yr
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners \$30,367/yr	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, exc. Engines \$63,006/yr	Computer Network Support Specialists \$70,683/yr	Child, Family, & School Social Workers \$66,072/yr
<i>Source: DEED Occupations in Demand</i>			

Job Vacancy Survey

Despite a decline over the year, job vacancies remained near record high levels in Northeast Minnesota in 2022, while unemployment fell to record lows. The result is a labor market that is estimated to be very tight, with more than 2 job vacancies per every jobseeker (unemployed person). At the same time, African American and Indigenous populations as well as individuals with disabilities continue to face higher rates of unemployment, and recent college graduates face ongoing challenges connecting to employment in their fields of study.

The number of job vacancies in Northeast Minnesota fell by just under 500 from 2021 into Q2 of 2022 (Fig. 3). Despite this drop vacancies remained much higher relative to the number of unemployed persons in the region, creating a record low ratio of jobseekers to job vacancies (0.4) in 2022. When this ratio falls under one, it represents a tight labor market where job candidates and applicants are more difficult to find for employers across many industries and occupational groups.

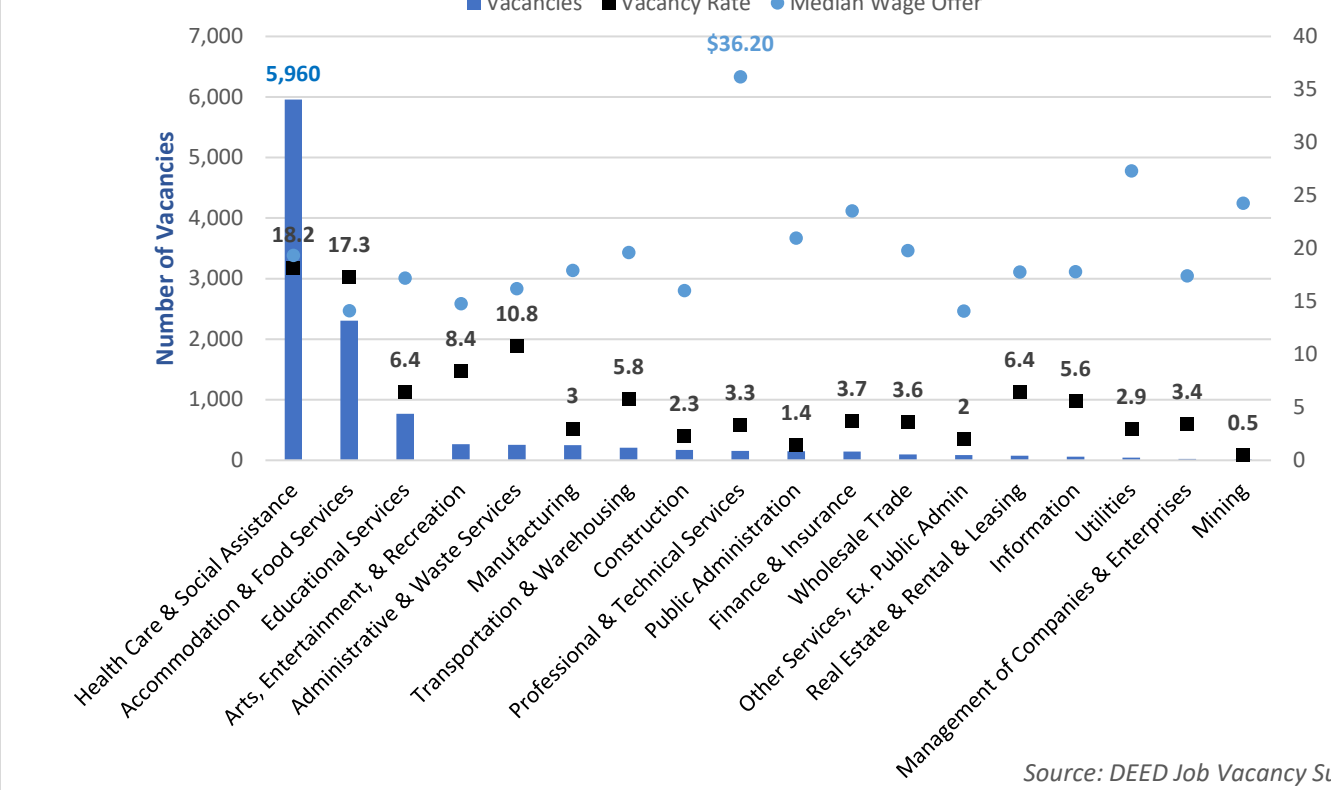
Figure 3. Jobseekers Per Vacancy in Northeast Minnesota, 2012-2022



The total vacancy rate for all industries in Northeast Minnesota as of Q2 2022 was 9.2%, meaning that open positions represented nearly one out of every ten jobs in the region. The statewide vacancy rate for the same period was a lower 6.9%. Prior to 2020, the regional vacancy rate varied from 5% to 6%. In the 2nd quarter of 2022, the industries with the highest vacancy rates were Health Care & Social Assistance (18.2%), Accommodation & Food Services (17.3%), Administrative & Waste Management Services (10.8%), and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (8.4%). The more service and tourist-oriented Accommodation & Food Services and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation in general have higher systemic turnover elevating average vacancy rates. Health Care & Social Assistance has experienced increased turnover during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, elevating vacancy rates for occupations in that sector as well.

The sectors with highest shares of part-time vacancies were Other Services (78% of vacancies), Educational Services (65%), Accommodation & Food Services (51%), and Transportation & Warehousing (49%). The sectors with the highest share of vacancies for temporary or seasonal positions were Construction (85%), Educational Services (59%), Transportation & Warehousing (38%), and Real Estate Rental & Leasing (32%). The sectors offering the highest median wages were Professional % Technical Services (\$36.20), Utilities (\$27.31), Mining (\$24.27), and Finance & Insurance (\$23.52). Those four sectors accounted for less than 3% of all regional job vacancies.

Figure 4. Job Vacancies and Median Wage Offers by Industry, Northeast Minnesota, Q2 2022



Occupational Detail in Sectors of Focus

In Educational Services the occupations with the highest numbers of vacancies were Teaching Assistants (145), Preschool Teachers (90), Substitute Teachers (76), and Secondary Teachers (44). Vacancy rates were the highest for Substitute Teachers (56%), Tutors (52%), Preschool Teachers (20%), Teaching Assistants (8%), and Special Education Teachers, Secondary (8%).

In Healthcare and Social Assistance, there were numerous occupations with high numbers of vacancies and/or high vacancy rates. The highest number of openings were for Personal Care Aides (1,260), Registered Nurses (507), Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (364), and Nursing Assistants (353). Those four occupations alone combined for 20% of total vacancies and two-thirds of all Healthcare vacancies. Mental Health Counselors accounted for another 576 vacancies. Vacancy rates exceeded 40% for several occupations including Psychiatrists, General Internal Medicine Physicians, Physicians, All Other, Psychiatric Technicians, LPNs, Cardiovascular Techs, and Dental Assistants.

The most vacancies among Construction, Installation, Maintenance & Repair, and Production occupations were for Maintenance and Repair Workers, General (336), Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics (185), Construction Laborers (162),

and Other Production Occupations (135). Other than Other Production occupations, each of these occupations had vacancy rates exceeding 16%. The Transportation and Material Moving occupations with the most openings were Light Truck Drivers (265/32% vacancy rate), Stockers and Order Fillers (156/10.5%), and Bus Drivers, School (154/36%).

Finally, Leisure & Hospitality-related occupations with the highest number of openings were Waiters and Waitresses (489), First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers (295), Cooks, Restaurant (268), Food Preparation Workers (266), and Bartenders. Those with vacancy rates exceeding 30% were Chefs and Head Cooks, First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Cooks, Fast Food, First-Line Supervisors of Personal Care and Service Workers, and Amusement and Recreation Attendants.

At the same time, African American and Indigenous populations as well as individuals with disabilities continue to face higher rates of unemployment, and recent college graduates face ongoing challenges connecting to employment in their fields of study (Table 7).

Table 7. Employment Characteristics, 2022						Percent of Total Labor Force	
	Northeast Minnesota			Minnesota		<i>Northeast Minnesota</i>	<i>Minnesota</i>
	In Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate		
Total Labor Force	160,415	59.1%	4.8%	68.7%	4.0%		
16 to 19 years	8,997	51.5%	8.1%	53.0%	9.8%	5.6%	5.1%
20 to 24 years	19,199	80.4%	7.1%	83.1%	6.7%	12.0%	9.7%
25 to 44 years	62,093	85.2%	5.0%	88.8%	3.5%	38.7%	42.8%
45 to 54 years	30,548	82.8%	3.6%	87.8%	2.9%	19.0%	19.0%
55 to 64 years	30,024	61.4%	3.3%	72.8%	3.1%	18.7%	17.6%
65 to 74 years	8,083	19.1%	4.0%	27.6%	3.3%	5.0%	4.9%
75 years & over	1,509	5.2%	5.0%	6.6%	3.2%	0.9%	0.8%
Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin							
White alone	147,667	59.1%	4.4%	67.8%	3.4%	92.1%	81.3%
Black or African American	1,485	44.5%	22.9%	71.5%	8.7%	0.9%	6.1%
American Indian & Alaska Native	3,023	52.7%	14.1%	57.6%	11.9%	1.9%	0.7%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	1,484	69.2%	3.5%	73.9%	3.6%	0.9%	5.2%
Some Other Race	958	67.4%	1.7%	76.1%	6.1%	0.6%	2.3%
Two or More Races	5,854	64.0%	6.4%	74.3%	6.6%	3.6%	4.3%
Hispanic or Latino	2,710	66.7%	5.5%	77.0%	6.3%	1.7%	5.4%
Employment Characteristics by Veteran Status, 18 to 64 years							
Veterans, 18 to 64 years	6,364	73.8%	4.2%	81.1%	4.0%	4.3%	3.4%
Employment Characteristics by Disability, 20 to 64 years							
With Any Disability, 20 to 64 years	11,100	46.4%	9.2%	54.4%	10.2%	7.8%	5.9%
Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment, 25 to 64 years							
Population, 25 to 64 years	122,663	77.3%	4.3%	84.4%	3.3%	76.5%	79.5%

Less than H.S. Diploma	4,321	54.5%	6.1%	67.2%	4.6%	3.5%	4.7%
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	26,247	66.5%	2.7%	76.8%	2.5%	21.4%	19.0%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	50,643	79.2%	4.1%	85.1%	3.6%	41.3%	32.8%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	41,460	87.6%	2.0%	90.3%	2.0%	33.8%	43.4%
<i>Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates</i>							

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.**

Using a combination of labor market information and engagement with employers through our workforce boards and sector strategy groups, Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota has selected four industry sectors of focus, based on the significance for our region, the total number of jobs, projected job growth and/or anticipated exit openings due to retirement, and the potential for family-sustaining wages and career advancement:

- Healthcare & Social Assistance:** With 32,519 jobs at 1,060 establishments, Health & Care and Social Assistance is the largest sector in the region, accounting for 23.6% of employment through Q3 2023. Employment in the sector is 1.4 times more concentrated in Northeast Minnesota than the sector statewide. 2020-2030 employment projections forecasted 9.2% growth in the sector for the region, an estimated addition of 3,000 jobs over 10 years. Job vacancy data show a high number of openings (5,960) in 2022, which represented 48% of all openings in the region at that time. That high number of openings equated to an 18.2% vacancy rate, the highest among all sectors. This sector also offers multiple entry points and opportunities for advancement, with family-sustaining wages and benefits. The sector had an average annual wage of \$62,608, which was nearly \$7,000 higher than the all-sector average and 9th-highest out of 20 sectors. Since 2021, the average wage grew 8.9%, faster than the 6.6% for all sectors over the same period.
- Construction:** The Construction sector accounted for 7,310 jobs at 1,073 establishments, making it the 7th largest in the region in terms of employment. While this industry sector currently represents just 5.3% of total employment for the region, Construction is projected to lose roughly a third of its workforce to retirement over the next decade. This occurs at the same time we will see a significant construction boom related to the Blatnik Bridge replacement and other major infrastructure projects, as well as a boom in desperately needed housing construction. Since 2019, the sector added 303 jobs (+4.1%), the fastest

growing of all 20 sectors over that period. Since 2021, the sector also grew, adding 363 jobs (+5.2%), double the average percent growth of all sectors over the period. 2020-2030 employment projections forecasted an addition of 257 jobs (+4.2%). Job vacancy data in 2022 indicated an estimated 169 openings for a vacancy rate of 2.3%. The average annual wage of \$74,581 is nearly \$19,000 higher than the all-sector average wage and made it the 6th highest wage among 20 sectors in the region. Wage growth since 2021 was also above average, expanding 8.8% over 2 years.

- **Manufacturing:** The Manufacturing sector in Northeast Minnesota had 9,024 jobs at 331 establishments, good for 6.5% of area employment, making it the 6th largest by employment. While manufacturing is projected to lose some jobs due to automation, the industry sector will need to replace a much larger share of workers due to retirements. Additionally, some of our largest manufacturing employers are planning for expansion, and many manufacturing workers will need training to learn new skills and adapt to new processes and technologies. Since 2019, the sector added 133 jobs, growing 1.5% compared to the -4.2% decline of all sectors. Since 2021, the sector grew more rapidly, adding 646 jobs (+7.7%), the third fastest growing sector over that period. The sector was projected to decline slightly over the 2020-2030 period (-2%). 2022 job vacancy data indicate 251 openings in the sector for a vacancy rate of 3%. Since 2018, vacancies in the sector ranged from 63 to 451 and the vacancy rate was typically below the all-sector average. The sector had an average annual wage of \$69,823, about \$14,000 higher than the all-sector average and the 8th highest of 20 sectors. The average wage grew 5.2% from 2021. The median wage offer for the sector in 2022 (\$17.91) was nearly \$7 higher than in Q2 2020.
- **Educational Services:** With many school districts, seven technical colleges, and two universities in the region – not counting the college and university located in Superior, Wisconsin – this sector represents an important asset in our region. This is a sector that is experiencing significant workforce challenges post-pandemic, particularly among high-need roles in special education and post-secondary instruction. This is also a sector that is critically important for training, to ensure workers enter employment with the skills employers need. The Educational Services Sector accounted for 11,457 jobs at 268 establishments in the region, good enough to make it the 4th largest sector. The sector has lost 419 jobs (-3.7%) since 2019 but added about 150 jobs (+1.4%) since 2021. The sector was forecasted to add 556 jobs over ten years (2020-2030), growth equal to 4.7%. 2022 job vacancy data showed 767 openings and a 6.4% vacancy rate. The number of vacancies in 2022 was the highest since 2015. The median wage offer in 2022 was \$17.18, just below the all-sector median of \$17.36. The average

wage for the sector in 2023 was \$52,793, about \$2,900 below the all-sector average. Since 2021, Educational Services wages have grown 5.5%, slightly slower than the all-sector average of 6.6%.

- **Leisure & Hospitality:** While not selected as a targeted sector for the region in this plan, the Regional Leadership Team identified Leisure & Hospitality as critical to the regional economy. This sector is home to many small businesses and often struggles to recruit and hire enough workers, and was deeply impacted by the pandemic. It is also frequently the sector where many people in the region work at some point in their working lives. The Leisure & Hospitality supersector consists of the smaller Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation and Accommodation & Food Services sectors. Combined they accounted for 17,525 jobs at 1,252 establishments, which would make it the second largest sector in the region by employment. Separately, Accommodation & Food Services was the 3rd-largest and Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation was 13th-largest among 20 sectors. Both sectors have higher than average concentrations of employment when compared to the rest of the state. Leisure & Hospitality saw larger-than-average employment losses early in the pandemic and remains down 7.7% and 1,459 jobs compared to 2019. However, more recently the supersector has seen above-average growth adding 1,017 jobs since 2021 for a growth of 6.2%. Reflecting the large losses early in the pandemic, long-term projections forecast 22.2% growth from 2020-2030, equivalent to an addition of 3,180 jobs. Job vacancy data showed 2,572 job vacancies with a vacancy rate near 15%, higher than the all-industry average. The average annual wage in Leisure & Hospitality was \$23,681, which is far below the median for the region. Accommodation & Food Services (\$22,243) and Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation (\$29,770) were the sectors with the two lowest wages. Since 2021 average wage growth for Accommodation & Food Services was 13.4% and wages rose 4.7% for Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation workers. Combined, Leisure & Hospitality wages rose 10.9% over two years as employers looked for ways to attract workers. Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota will continue to find ways to support this sector by connecting employers to job seekers and building connections with career pathways that offer a family-sustaining wage.

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 four industry sectors of focus all align with Drive for 5. Healthcare and Social Assistance falls under Caring Professions. Educational Services, Construction Trades, and Manufacturing are all identified as Drive for 5 areas of focus. Region 2 –

Northeast Minnesota will seek to collaborate with and contribute to statewide efforts to meet workforce needs and advance sector initiatives within these four areas.

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

Industry-led sector partnerships focused on Construction and Healthcare have been in existence for some time in our region. The Construction Working Group includes representation from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the City of Duluth, which fund construction projects and set diverse workforce goals for these projects; building trades unions and apprenticeship program representatives; community organizations that recruit, train, and place adults with barriers to employment into construction careers; Community Liaisons who conduct outreach and facilitate career exploration; and a wide range of union contractors. This group has an established work plan focused on short- and long-term goals, and meets monthly to discuss workforce challenges and strategies to overcome barriers to entry into construction careers.

The Healthcare Working Group was launched after a series of workforce summits that took place in 2018-2019. The group includes both large hospital systems, as well as a variety of smaller long-term care providers, health clinics, and treatment centers as well as local colleges and workforce organizations. The group has an established work plan, and implements strategies using a collective impact approach to address workforce needs.

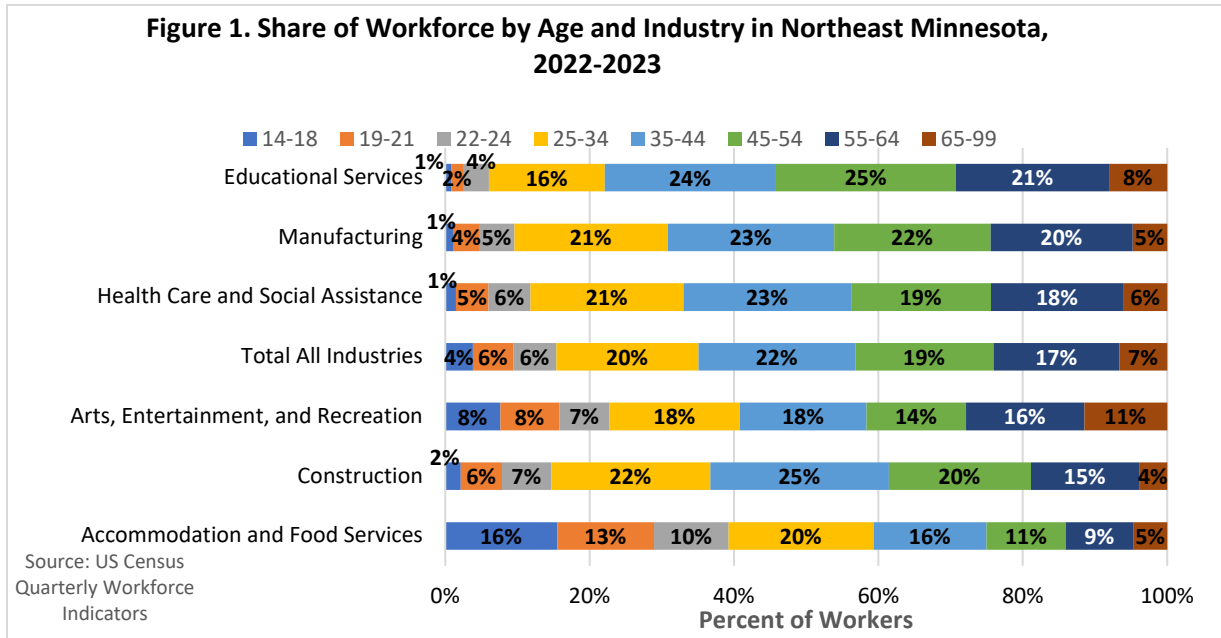
The Manufacturing Working Group is in its early phase, and is currently focused on firms located in and around Duluth. Participants include both large and small manufacturers of a variety of product types; K-12 and post-secondary education systems; and workforce agencies. This group is currently working to develop an action plan, and will begin implementing strategies over the coming year.

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.

Age

The prime working ages of 25-54 accounted for 61% of all workers in Northeast Minnesota as of Q2 2023. Each of the sectors of focus had higher shares of their workforce in that prime age group: Healthcare & Social Assistance (64%), Manufacturing (66%), Educational Services (65%), and Construction (66%). Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation and Accommodation & Food Services had much higher shares of workers 24 or younger at 23% and 39% respectively. Sectors that had below average shares of workers aged 24 and under were Educational Services (6%), Manufacturing (10%), and Healthcare & Social Assistance (12%). Workers aged 24 or younger accounted for 15% of all workers.

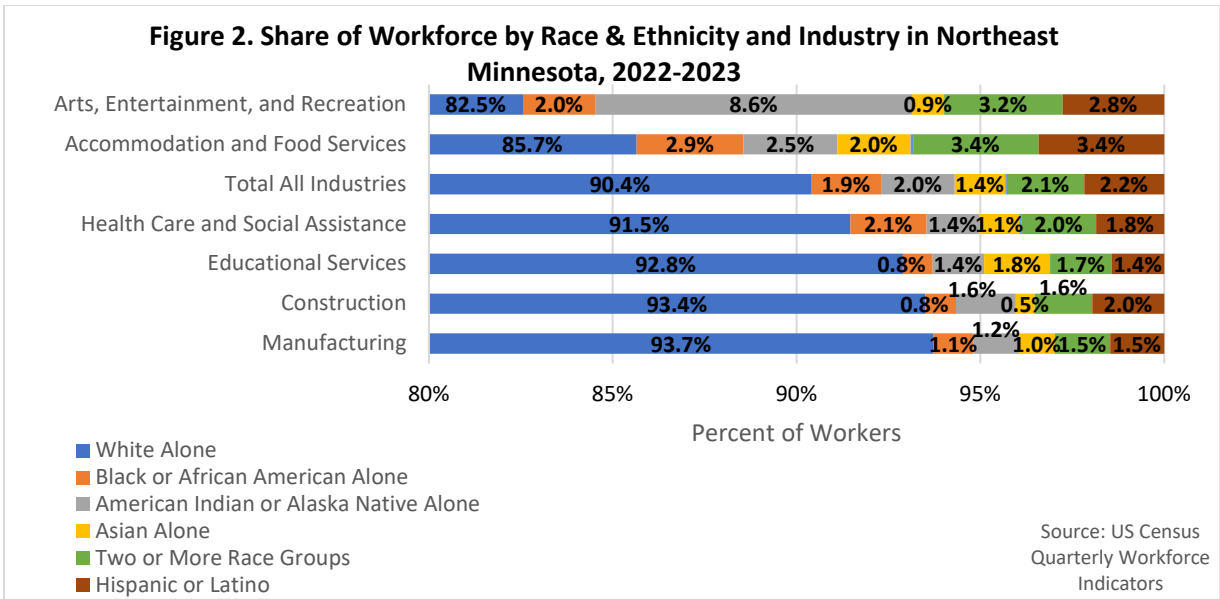
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation also had an above average share (28%) of workers 55 or older. Educational Services had the highest share of 55+ workers with 29% of the sector workforce. Healthcare and Manufacturing both had slightly higher shares than average. Construction had the second-lowest share of older workers (19%) behind Accommodation & Food Services (14%). Workers aged 55 or older accounted for 24% of all workers across all industries (see Figure 1).



Race & Ethnicity

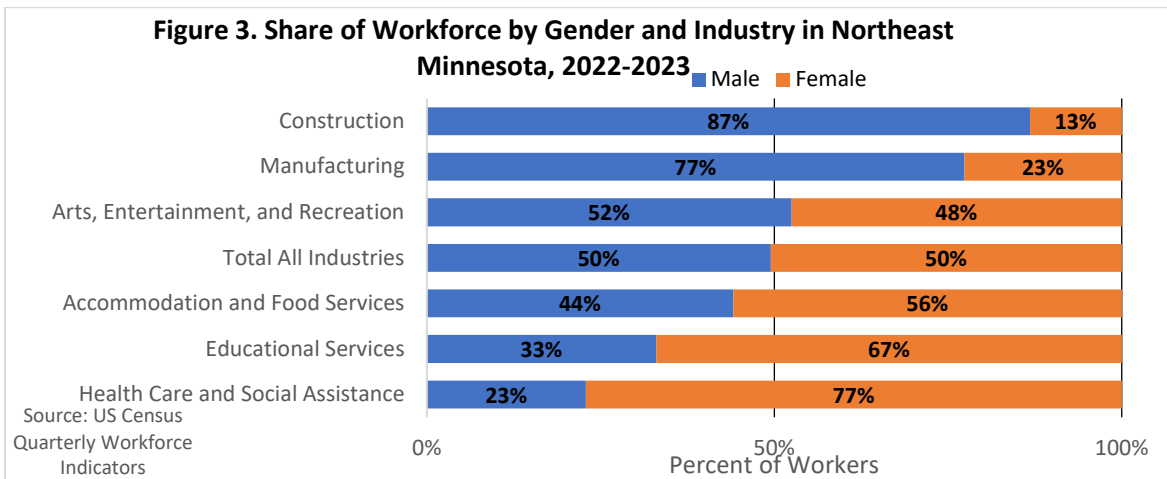
Workers of color accounted for 10.6% of the workforce in Northeast Minnesota in 2023. That was slightly below the total population (11.1%) and slightly higher than the share of the labor force identifying as people of color (9.7%). By sector, the two sectors in the Leisure & Hospitality supersector were the most diverse with 17.5% (Arts, Entertainment, & Rec.) and 14.3% (Accommodation & Food Services). Each of the sectors of focus had smaller than average shares of workers of color with Manufacturing, Construction, and Educational Services having between 6.3% and 7.2% workers of color (see Figure 2).

In the four sectors of focus, Construction had the highest shares of Hispanic or Latino (2%) and Indigenous (1.6%) workers. Educational Services had the highest share of Asian workers (1.8%) and Health Care and Social Assistance had the highest shares of Black or African Americans (2.1%) and workers of Two or More Races (2%).



Gender

There is considerable variation of each sector’s workforce by gender. The split is even across all industries. Construction (87%) and Manufacturing (77%) skewed much more male while Educational Services (67%) and Health Care & Social Assistance (77%) had higher shares of their workforces reporting as female. Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation and Accommodation & Food Services were closer to an even split on either side of average (see Figure 3).

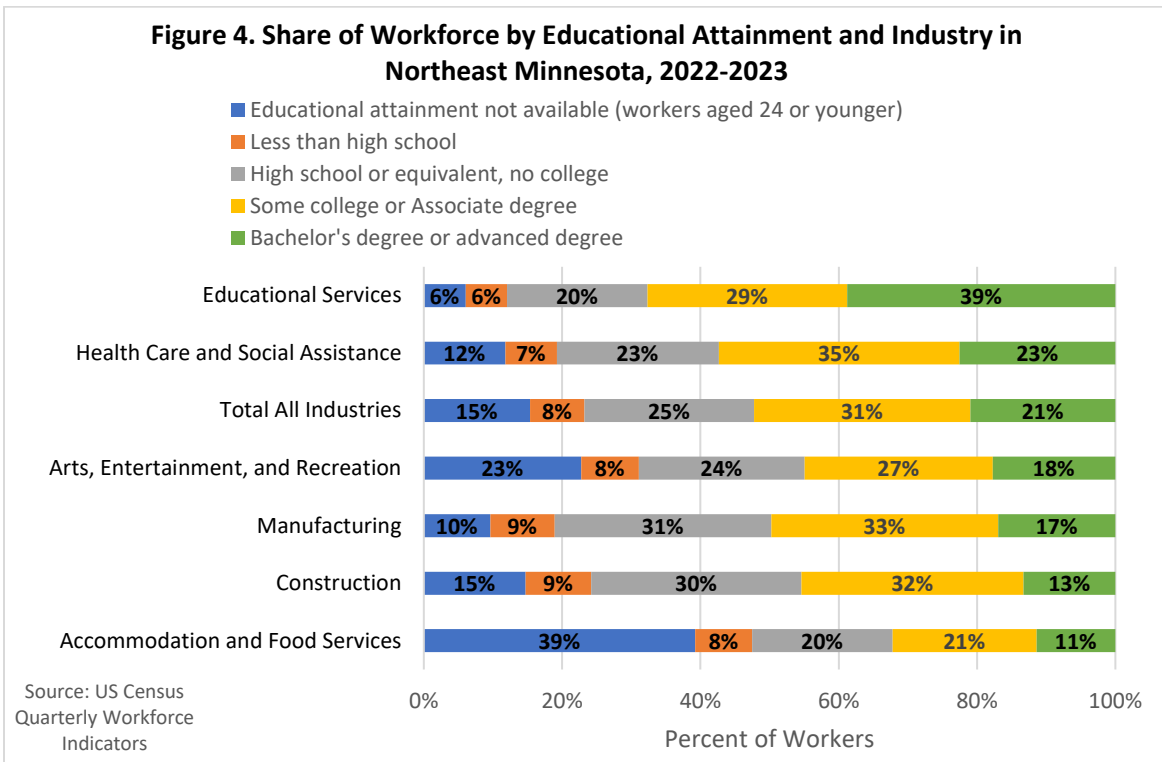


Educational Attainment

In many ways Educational Attainment reflects the requirements and training associated with jobs in a given sector. It can also reflect the age of workers in an industry. As demonstrated above, Educational Services has an older workforce, but it also often has higher educational requirements for workers in positions such as administrators and teachers. These factors combined, the sector had the highest share of workers holding a

Bachelor’s degree or higher at 39%. Health Care & Social Assistance, which has many occupations that also require higher educational attainment or training has the second highest share with 23%, but also has the highest share of workers with some college or Associate degrees. Educational Services and Health Care & Social Assistance had the smallest shares of workers with less than a high school degree.

Manufacturing and Construction both had high shares of workers with high school degrees or equivalent, but also above average shares of workers with some college or associate degrees. The two Leisure & Hospitality sectors had the highest shares of workers with educational attainment unavailable due to being younger than 25 (see Figure 4).



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.

There are many ways the Duluth and Northeast boards make opportunities in our key industry sectors known to customers. All counselors receive training in how to use DEED labor market information tools, and regularly use them when guiding participants through career exploration. CareerForce partners regularly host job fairs across the region, with specific priority on inviting employers in the targeted industry sectors. Youth programs host classroom presentations and field trips to talk about careers and educational pathways in

the targeted industry sectors. And our two largest events – Construct Tomorrow and Discover Healthcare – focus on two of our priority industry sectors.

Over the next four years, there are several areas where we hope to expand our efforts. The manufacturing sector strategy group hopes to host a Manufacturing Expo similar to Construct Tomorrow, and launch and marketing campaign about careers in the industry. 218 Trades hopes to expand its work, reaching more schools and engaging in more outreach opportunities to raise awareness of careers in construction. Both workforce boards are exploring the potential of expanding high school-based Career Technical Education and employer-based registered apprenticeship opportunities, particularly in healthcare and manufacturing. And we are exploring opportunities to partner with Perkins consortia to expand career exploration camps and paid work experience opportunities for high school students across the region.

CareerForce Partners continue to explore ways to serve the neediest of our region, including collaborative efforts internally and with outside agencies. This includes outreach for those who are experiencing: homelessness, mental health or substance abuse disorders, and justice-involved individuals. Specific partnerships include training CareerForce Partner staff to conduct coordinated entry assessments and hiring a homeless resource navigator. These steps provide a direct connection between external homeless agencies in our region and employment and training programs. Another growing partnership includes CareerForce Partner staff serving on local treatment courts and providing employment and training services to justice-involved individuals with substance abuse disorder and/or mental health concerns.

Employers will continue to be key partners in developing and implementing these initiatives. Through our sector initiative working groups, they identify occupations of focus, help define recruiting strategies, and lend resources and capacity for project implementation. Employers participate in job fairs, hire graduates from training classes, and host work experience participants and college student interns.

CareerForce locations currently provide “Employer of the Day” services to businesses looking to attract and hire job seekers on a local level. These events often include businesses presenting to CareerForce staff information about their hiring needs, job postings, and more so that staff can help with recruitment and application efforts. Recently, CareerForce Partnering staff started exploring the idea of expanding this event on a regional and virtual level. The idea, while in its infancy, is to host a reoccurring and regularly scheduled virtual session where one CareerForce partnering staff person is required to attend from each office, ensuring a robust audience from a regional perspective. The purpose of the virtual event would be to allow businesses a regional platform to promote their hiring needs with CareerForce staff in all offices. The vision is to set up a virtual calendar where businesses are able to select the pre-set, but reoccurring available date and time that aligns with their own schedule. They would then be provided with a time slot to present to CareerForce staff and engage in valuable discussion regarding promoting,

recruiting, and training needs. More planning and stakeholder involvement and interest is needed before moving this project from an idea to reality.

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.

Both workforce boards regularly review labor market information to identify occupations in demand, and cross reference this information with input from industry employers. Boards use this information to guide investments in programs and strategies, to ensure they remain responsive to regional workforce needs. Over the next four years, we will continue to work with both Perkins and college partners to find alignment between parallel efforts to engage employers in providing input that guides employment and training services. Our goal is to create a streamlined process, where sector strategy initiatives are multi-purpose, serving the requirements to gather employer feedback for college programs, Perkins, and workforce boards. The result will be better alignment and integration of programs, with less demands on time and capacity of our region's employers.

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

Participating entities will include workforce board members, as well as those who participate in sector strategy groups who are not members of local workforce boards. Additional stakeholders who are industry employers or part of the region's workforce system will be invited to engage in sector strategy groups as they express interest and capacity to contribute in a meaningful way.

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

Outcomes will be determined using a number of performance measures:

- Program performance measures tracked and reported to DEED, which measure number of people served and the employment, education, and income results of those services;
- Demographics of program participants, to ensure underrepresented populations and adults with barriers to employment remain the priority focus of our programs and services;
- Shared metrics, gathered annually across all CareerForce partners within each location to assess common measures of job seeker services;
- Labor Market Information, looking specifically at employment/unemployment rate by age, race, and disability status; job growth and vacancy rate by industry; and median household income by race.

Local Plan Template

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.

Strategic Vision: To foster an inclusive and dynamic workforce ecosystem, through diverse and effective partnerships, which empowers individuals with the skills and opportunities to thrive to meet the needs of a changing and evolving economy.

This strategic vision is well aligned with the designated state priorities under WIOA including the “Drive for 5” initiative which prepares our local area job seekers for high-demand jobs in the five occupational categories of: technology, trades, caring professions, manufacturing, and education. In addition, we are committed to serving targeted populations of workers who have been overlooked for employment and supporting movement in and throughout the workforce system to ensure all people have access to family sustaining wages. The emerging workforce is going to be a more diverse workforce as the generations move out of the workforce, this supports our efforts to work with the Office of New Americans and pursue grants and initiatives that will help us support new Americans as they enter and create a livelihood in our local area communities. We currently have a strong focus on providing high-quality individualized services and support services to all those we serve. Finally, we have a passion for supporting employers through training, mentorship, and shared expertise to ensure they are aware of and implementing the Good Jobs Principles which will help them find and retain skilled workers.

The Northeast Workforce Development Board will be working diligently to align our local and regional strategic vision for a skilled workforce with state priorities under WIOA. This effort includes:

1. Convening business and industry sector leaders, educators, and community-based organizations to identify and create sector-based, career pathway programs and apprenticeship opportunities for skill development in the occupational categories of technology, trades, caring professions, manufacturing, and education.
 - Working to create a bridge between educational institutions and business and industry by identifying skills needs and communicating them to educational partners.
 - Targeted populations for the Northeast local area include those who have been engaged with the criminal justice system and those with mental and chemical health barriers as they represent a significant portion of the population who are out of the workforce and are interested in working if given adequate support and guidance. In addition, people of color,

particularly Native American populations within our service area, have always been a focus of our work and we continue to strive to build effective and meaningful collaborations with the Tribal Nations in our local area, including Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, and Mille Lacs.

2. Developing and supporting initiatives which increase the labor supply for high demand industries, both current and future, in cooperation with state and local economic development partners and local education institutions by partnering on the North Star Promise to ensure all Minnesotans have access to higher education whether through WIOA, North Star Promise, or other sources of funding.
3. Providing support to existing and emerging businesses and industries, and to help generate and implement strategies that expand these types of business in the area and attract and retain talent through coaching and mentoring local leaders on the Good Jobs Principles.

The Northeast Board also understands the complexities of workforce development and is acutely aware of how important stakeholder engagement is to identify and implement local strategies that will positively affect workforce equity issues and employment disparities. The Board will reach out to and coordinate with local service providers and representatives from disparate communities, particularly those with an employer perspective, to identify barriers and develop specific strategies that address barriers to success, both from an employer and job seeker perspective.

The alignment and coordination of local employment, education and training programs and providers is an integral component of the Northeast Board's strategic vision. To facilitate this, the Northeast Board is considering hosting local stakeholder group meetings to not only gain insight from community members, job seekers, business professionals, employers, and community base organizations, but to also educate and engage with those stakeholders in an effort to ensure WIOA/DEED programs and services are well understood and utilized.

It is our goal to utilize this platform to discuss specific strategies for increasing coordination of services among agencies and identifying opportunities for leveraging financial and human resources. Additionally, it will help local providers better understand what each public and private organization contributes to ensuring all people in our local area can achieve their career goals and our economy can thrive by building and maintaining a skilled, reliable workforce.

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.

The Northeast Board's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce for all individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, revolves

around developing strong career pathway programming and apprenticeship opportunities for key sectors of the local economy. As a prevailing theme under WIOA, the career pathway model offers a holistic approach to providing vocational training specifically to groups experiencing barriers to employment. Part of this process is to more deliberately engage the employer community in the development of career pathways programming, including innovative and unique apprenticeship opportunities which inherently will strengthen the ability of the public system to prepare an educated and skilled workforce. Central to this theme is cultivating the existing relationships we have with educational organizations and working collaboratively with employers and job seekers to design training programs that meet the variety of needs experienced by the populations that we serve.

Specific goals related to the development of career pathways programming include:

- Well-developed career ladders and lattices in targeted sectors vetted with private sector;
- Deep understanding of career pathway systems & philosophy shared between workforce system and higher education;
- Comprehensive cataloguing of all regional training programs and providers and the specific credentials their programs award;
- Developed educational options that are progressive, modular, accelerated, and contextualized, including short-, moderate- and long-term training options, that lead to industry-recognized and/or stackable credentials;
- Identification of entry points into career pathways, including corresponding certifications/credentials that lead to employment; and
- Continue growing work on the identified sectors of healthcare and construction trades and develop initiatives based on additional identified regional sectors.
- Develop measures to determine whether or not career pathways models have met employer expectations and whether participant expectations were met as well.

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.

The CareerForce system is accustomed to working within the parameters of performance accountability measures, including Adult and Dislocated Worker programming, Youth programming, the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator Grant, the Minnesota Family Investment Program, and the Diversionary Work Program. Over the last several years, accountability measures have gotten more stringent, and we have mirrored those expectations and implemented innovative and proactive approaches to ensure we are meeting and exceeding these parameters and are proud of the consistent achievement of these standards.

WIOA Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

1. Initial Employment Indicator - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
2. Subsequent employment retention - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
3. Initial Earnings - The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
4. Credential Attainment - The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause 4 (iii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program. This includes the attainment of: a high school diploma or equivalence; pathway license, industry certification, or apprenticeship certificate; pathway certificate and diploma; or pathway associate degree attainment.
5. Measurable Skill Gain - The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

Additional Performance Measures Tracked (non-WIOA/DEED Programs)

1. The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Employment Services:
Work Participation Rate - The percent of Universal Participants who fulfill participation requirements

Self-Support Index - The three-year Self-Support Index is an outcome measure that tracks all adults receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) or Diversionary Work Program (DWP) cash assistance in a quarter and calculates what percentage have left cash assistance or are working at least 30 hours a week during the corresponding quarter three years later. The measure focuses on what happens *for* people rather than program requirements.
2. Youth Programs:
Those funded through state formula and competitive grants track participation in career pathway exposure and employment readiness training, participation in work experience, and satisfactory performance reviews from work experience supervisors. Performance indicators for the Minnesota Youth and Youth at Work programs for enrolled participants include tracking individual achievement for

the following: work readiness or education goals; academic credit; and service-learning credit.

- 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.

There is already a strong system of aligning core program resources in the local area and a variety of strategies in place to align resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals of the local area board and state. As active members of CareerForce governance via the Partner Group as well as active members of the Board, core program partners will be a part of the development of initiatives to support the local area goals and strategies. There will be a strong push to enhance the cohesiveness of the system and promote ownership of the effectiveness of programs and services by encouraging all core partners to contribute resources in various capacities.

Strategies:

- All Partners required under WIOA, sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement outlining shared responsibility for infrastructure and shared costs related to operating the CareerForce locations, and how they will work together to deliver workforce services.
- Partners meet monthly to ensure resources in the local workforce development area are coordinated and leveraged to achieve maximum impact and support the vision and goals of the local workforce development board.
- Monthly CareerForce Huddles facilitate information-sharing among staff and keep partners informed of new and emerging initiatives, resources, and opportunities for collaboration and alignment.
- Strong partnerships with community organizations create opportunities for referrals, off-site service delivery, and co-enrollment across programs. Staff often braid funding and resources to ensure access to all of the services needed by a given individual. Where enrolled participants are shared across organizations, a Release of Information is signed to allow staff to communicate and coordinate with each other in the best interest of that participant.
- CareerForce partners work with individuals and organizations in the community to maintain connectivity and facilitate alignment of resources. This is often accomplished through participation on boards and committees, engaging in community conversations, partnering on grant proposals, and other activities.

Core Partner Roles:

- **ABE:** just-in-time contextualized literacy “bridges”; college and career preparation; co-enrollment of students in workforce programming and basic referral of participants

- **Job Service:** labor market intelligence needed in the development of initiatives; referrals of job seekers and veterans; facilitation of job search workshops
- **JET - Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training:** provision of WIOA training and support service funding to support eligible participants in career pathways exploration and programming
- **AEOA:** referrals to WIOA programming; leverage of agency resources to further develop programming that connects with the overall regional plan; provision of support services such as transportation, fuel assistance, and other supports for individuals with barriers to employment.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** referrals to career pathways exploration and programming; provision of support services for eligible individuals; collaboration, coordination, and co-enrollment to maximize services.

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.

- Pell WIOA Coordination Documentation form – this is a form created by JET staff that allows us to seamlessly coordinate funding through our Individual Training Account process to ensure we are fully assessing program planners and anticipated credits, cost of attendance, non-WIOA grants and funding, and pro-rated funding based on enrollment timeline in the determination of allowable WIOA funding. This form automatically calculates based on the inputs and accurately indicates the amount of funding we can support per semester to ensure we are offering equitable funding across programs and communities and avoiding duplication of funding sources for an individual. It has been useful in monitoring to show how we calculate the contribution of funding for enrolled individuals.
- Incumbent Worker/Talent Development Program – seamless in our region between both local areas and other local areas have asked to mirror our incumbent worker program from it (Career Solutions).
- Use of Adobe Acrobat Electronic Documents and E-Signatures
- Use of standardized templates to ensure compliance with complex and detailed WIOA and other program policies for enrolled participants (case notes and employment plans).
- Appointing individual staff as a Program Lead for dedicated training, policy guidance and mentoring for each program area: MFIP/DWP, Dislocated Worker/Adult, and Youth.
- For rural areas specifically: Weekly All-Staff Check-In Meeting and regular Program Lead Meetings. The All-Staff Meeting purpose is to provide agency wide updates and information, this meeting is typically brief, no longer than fifteen minutes. The Program Lead meetings are longer and more in depth, providing

opportunities for specific teams to receive training on programming (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, MFIP/DWP) and case consultations.

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;

The sectors of focus for LWDA 3 – Northeast mostly align with those for the region, with small differences based on the significant mining focus on the Iron Range and surrounding areas outside of Duluth. In addition to leisure and hospitality playing a vital role in many of our rural communities, such as Two Harbors, Grand Marais, and International Falls.

WSA 3 – Northeast MN

Construction

The Construction sector accounted for 5,256 jobs at 917 establishments in 2023, making it the 7th-largest sector in the workforce area with 6.4% of employment. Since 2019, the sector has added 336 jobs and grown 6.8% while overall employment declined for the region.

Regional employment projections forecast the addition of 257 jobs from 2020-2030, an increase of 4.2%, and increased federal and state funding for projects may increase future demand for Construction workers. The Construction industries expected to see the highest growth are Utility Systems Construction (+18.6%), Building Foundation/Exterior Contractors (+8.4%), and Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction (+5.4%). Regional job vacancy data in 2022 indicated an estimated 169 openings for a vacancy rate of 2.3%. The highest number of openings were for Construction Laborers. In addition to Construction Laborers, Electricians, Carpenters, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters, First-Line Supervisors, and Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators were also in high demand in the region.

The average Construction wage in the area in 2023 was \$75,866, more than \$20,000 above the area average. Over the year, Construction wages grew 4.1%.

Healthcare & Social Assistance

The largest sector in the area, Healthcare & Social Assistance sector had 14,770 jobs at 705 establishments accounting for 17.9% of employment. Since 2019, the sector has lost 707 jobs (-4.6%), but over the longer term has seen stronger than average employment growth. From 2003-2019 the sector grew 26%, adding over 3,100 jobs. The sector also added 248 jobs into 2023. Strong growth is expected to continue as long-term employment projections forecast 9.2% growth from 2020-2030 in Northeast Minnesota, which translates to an estimated addition of 300 jobs a year for ten years. Projected growth for all sectors is forecast at 5.5%.

Regional job vacancy data show a high number of openings (5,960) in 2022, which represented 48% of all openings in the region at that time. That high number of openings equated to an 18.2% vacancy rate, the highest among all sectors.

Average wages in the sector (\$53,422) were just below the area average of \$54,999 and were up 5.7% from 2022.

Manufacturing

The Manufacturing sector had 5,527 jobs at 249 establishments for 6.7% of jobs in the area, making it the 6th-largest employer among 20 sectors. Since 2019, the sector has lost 66 jobs for a decline of 1.2%. The sector has seen growth in recent years. From 2021-2023 the sector added 271 jobs and increased 5.1%.

2022 regional job vacancy data indicate 251 openings in the sector for a vacancy rate of 3%. Since 2018, vacancies in the sector ranged from 63 to 451 and the vacancy rate was typically below the all-sector average. The number of vacancies for Production occupations was slightly higher, at 300, mostly consisting of openings for Other Production Occupations (135).

The average Manufacturing wage in the area was \$68,421, which was almost \$14,000 higher than the area average of \$54,599 in 2023.

Mining

The Mining sector accounted for 4,062 jobs (4.9% of all jobs) at 35 establishments, making it the 8th-largest sector in the area. Since 2019 the sector has experienced the loss of 156 jobs (-3.7%). Since 2003, the sector has grown by 501 jobs and 14.1%. Long term employment projections forecast a 6.4% decline between 2020-2030. Employment in the sector is very concentrated in Northeast Minnesota where 71% of all Mining jobs in the state are located.

One of the defining features of the Mining sector in WSA 3 is its high wages. As of 2023, the sector had an average wage of over \$125,000, making it the highest paying in the area and more than double the area average wage of \$54,600 per year.

Leisure & Hospitality*

The Leisure & Hospitality supersector consists of the combined Accommodation & Food Services and Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation sectors. Between them, they had 11,305 jobs at 908 establishments, accounting for 13.4% of all jobs which makes it the third-largest employer behind Retail Trade and Healthcare & Social Assistance. Since 2019, the two sectors have lost 493 jobs (-4.2%). In 16 years prior to 2020, the supersector grew by 957 jobs (+8.8%) and has added 808 jobs (+7.7%) since 2021. Strong growth (+3,200 jobs, +22%) is projected from 2020-2030 as the supersector continues its recovery.

The two sectors are often characterized as having higher numbers of vacancies relative to employment levels. In 2022, regional vacancy data show a combined 2,572 vacancies, accounting for more than one out of every five in the region. The most common openings

were for Waiters & Waitresses (489), First-Line Supervisors of Food Prep and Serving Related Workers (295), Restaurant Cooks (268), and Food Prep Workers (266).

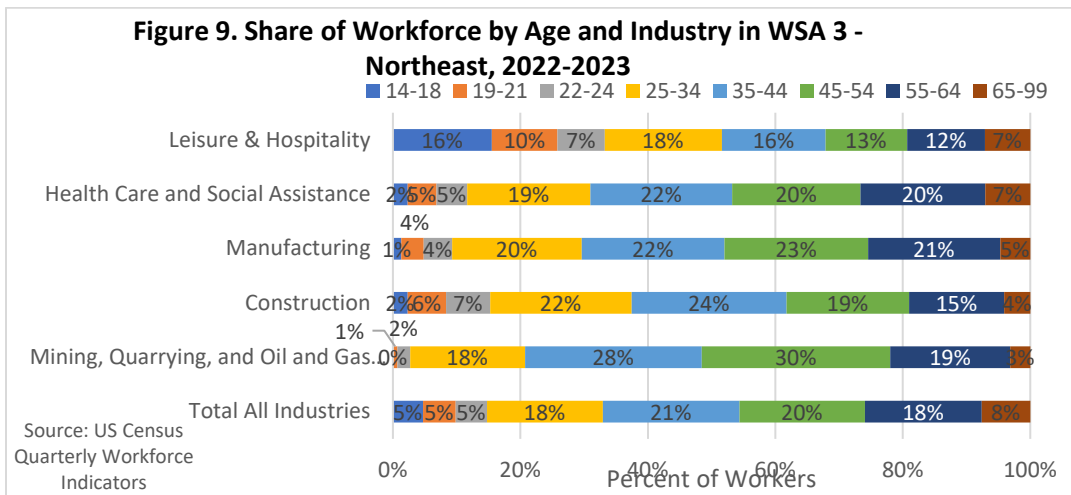
Wages in the two sectors are lower than average (\$23,819) but have seen stronger than average growth in recent years. From 2021-2023 Leisure & Hospitality wages in WSA 3 grew 11.3% while overall wages grew 6.9% over that period. Since 2019, Leisure & Hospitality wages in the area are up 28.3%.

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;

Sector Demographic Comparisons

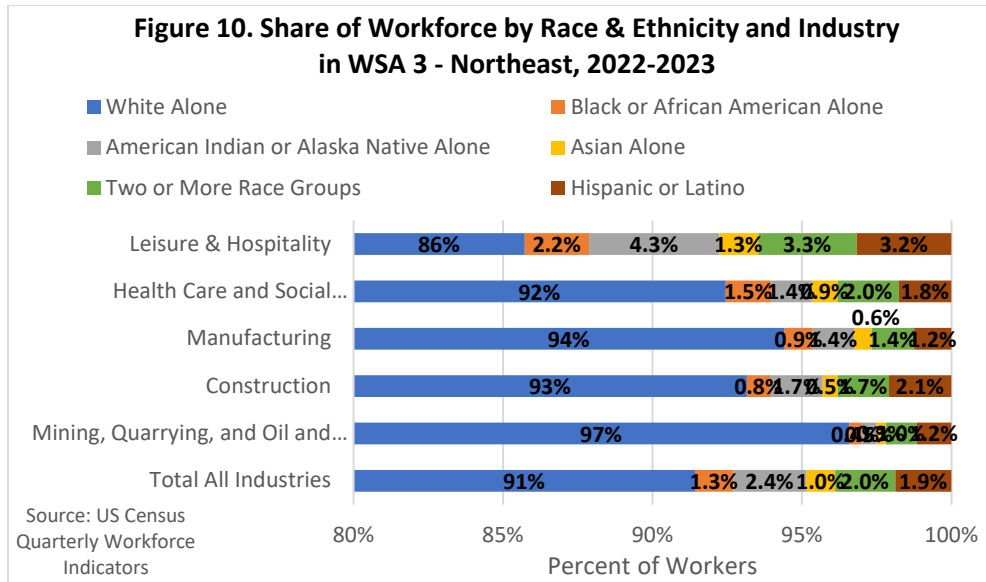
Age

The prime working ages of 25-54 accounted for 59% of all workers in WSA 3 as of Q2 2023. Except Leisure & Hospitality (47%), each of the sectors of focus had higher shares of their workforce in that prime age group: Mining (75%), Construction (66%), Manufacturing (65%), and Healthcare & Social Assistance (62%) (see Figure 9). As a result, none of the sectors had shares of workers older than 65 that were above the all-industry average (7.6%). Leisure & Hospitality (33.2%) and Construction (15.3%) each had above average (14.8%) shares of under 25 workers. Mining, conversely, had the smallest share with only 2.7% of its workforce under 25.



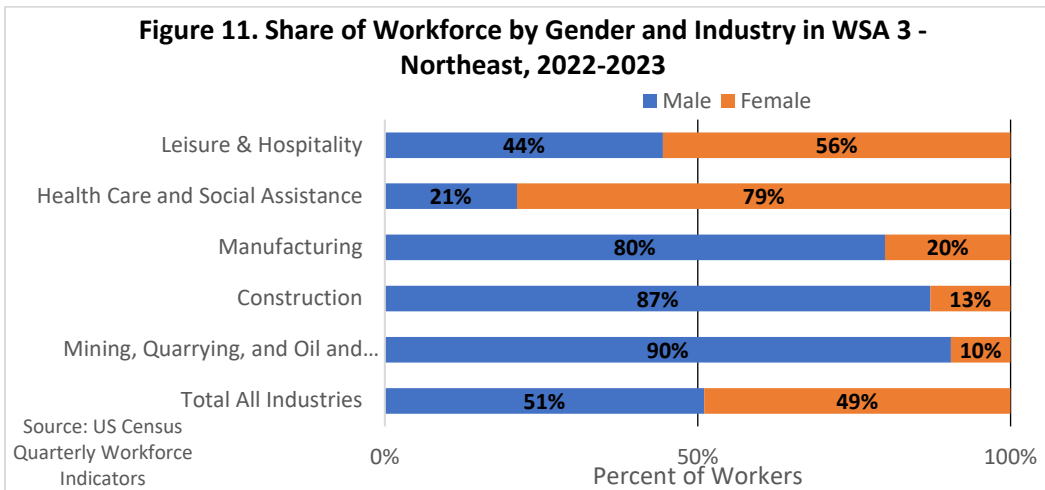
Race & Ethnicity

Compared to the workforce at large (8.6% workers of color), only Leisure & Hospitality (14.3%) had a higher share of its workforce identifying as people of color. Driving the difference were relatively large shares of Indigenous, Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino workers, combining to account for 9.7% of that sector’s workforce. Mining (3.4%), Manufacturing (5.6%), and Construction (6.9%) had the smallest shares of workers of color among the sectors of focus (see Figure 10).



Gender

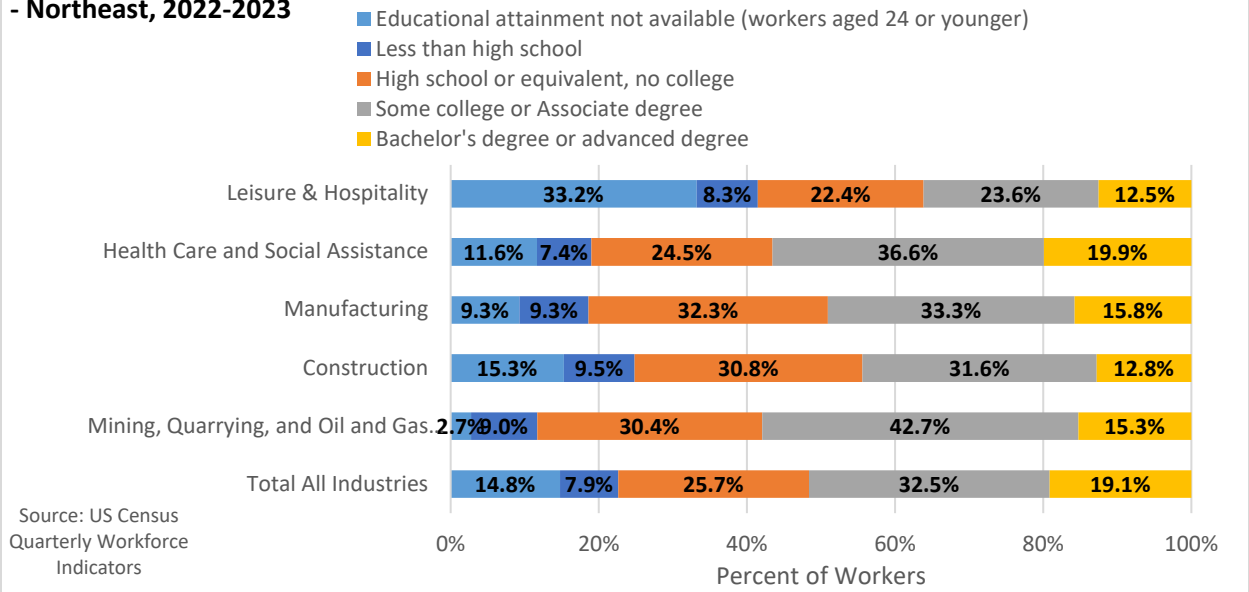
The workforces of the sectors of focus varied significantly by gender. Manufacturing, Mining, and Construction all skewed male. In each of those three sectors, at least 4 out of every five workers identified as male. Health Care & Social Assistance had the highest share of women workers of all 20 sectors, at 79%. Leisure & Hospitality had slightly more female workers, but was the closest of the sectors of focus to the all-sector average. (see Figure 11).



Educational Attainment

The area's sectors of focus have a good diversity of typical educational requirements and that is reflected in their respective workforces. Health Care & Social Assistance has a slightly higher than average share of its workforce with a bachelor's degree or higher. The Mining sector (43%) has a larger than average share (33%), as does Healthcare (37%). Mining, Construction, and Manufacturing all have higher than average shares of their workforces with high school degrees or below. Leisure & Hospitality and Construction have higher shares of their workforces with unreported educational attainment due to being under age 25.

Figure 12. Share of Workforce by Educational Attainment and Industry in WSA 3 - Northeast, 2022-2023



Reducing Disparities

The Northeast Workforce Development Board is planning to focus efforts to try and close gaps – particularly gaps in employment and income by gender, disability status, and race. Our youth programs focus heavily on supporting BIPOC and low-income individuals, as well as those with barriers to employment, and include connection to college programs that offer opportunities for continued post-secondary education. We also have access to and utilize a toolkit entitled, The Diversity & Inclusion Employer Action Guide, developed by our regional partner, Duluth Workforce Development Board which has resources for employers on how to improve DEI outcomes in recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and retention. Key leadership in our local area has participated in the Employer Champions Initiative which provides ongoing support for a network of employers deeply engaged in advancing workplace DEI initiatives.

The Board will also increasingly participate in DEI workshops for employers hosted by the local Chambers of Commerce, Northforce, the Northland Human Resources Association, and others. In 2024, the Board hopes to implement the Inclusive Workforce Employer (I-WE) Designation which supports and recognizes employers who are committed to an inclusive workplace and reflect it in their values, mission, and policies; learning how diversity, equity and inclusion influence their work and culture; and provide diversity, equity and inclusion education for staff and leadership.

- 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.

There are many ways the Northeast Workforce Development Board makes opportunities in our key industry sectors known to customers. All counselors receive training in how to use DEED labor market information tools, and regularly use them when guiding participants through career exploration. CareerForce Duluth hosts monthly Hiring Now! job fairs, with a priority on highlighting employers in our targeted industry sectors and other CareerForce locations regular hold hiring events and job fairs. Career Counselors host classroom presentations and field trips to talk about careers and educational pathways in the targeted industry sectors. And our two largest events – Construct Tomorrow and Discover Healthcare – focus on two of our priority industry sectors.

Over the next four years, there are several areas where we hope to expand our efforts. The manufacturing sector strategy group hopes to host a Manufacturing Expo similar to Construct Tomorrow, and launch a marketing campaign about careers in the industry. Our 218Trades initiative focuses on our targeted industry sectors, supporting post-secondary education, paid internships, and job placement and we hope to mirror that model for other sector initiatives in manufacturing and healthcare.

Another area is increasing visibility of area employers, and of lesser-known occupations that are in demand. The Board previously supported development of infographics highlighting the wide variety of career pathways in healthcare, with corresponding information sheets highlighting specific occupations. Similar work was done by 218Trades for construction. Over the next year, the goal is to create something comparable highlighting occupations in manufacturing, and elevating visibility of manufacturing companies throughout Northeast Minnesota.

Employers will continue to be key partners in developing and implementing these initiatives. We hope to implement sector initiative working groups, where they identify occupations of focus, help define recruiting strategies, and lend resources and capacity for project implementation. Employers also currently participate in job fairs, hire graduates from training classes, and host work experience participants and college student interns.

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 Local Plan will be made available throughout the region for public viewing and comments utilizing the internet and electronic communication. The plan will be posted on the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training's website (www.nemojt.org) and a copy of the plan with how to access the document electronically will also be available

at each CareerForce location. The Board will notify their business and partner networks as well as organized labor communities when the public comment period opens and how to access it and provide feedback. Stakeholders have been involved with the development and subsequent implementation of this plan via representation on the Board and by invitation to participate in upcoming development of initiatives.

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)).

There are many existing efforts which ensure our region is well positioned with a workforce prepared for state and federal Investing in America investments.

- Many of our efforts are in alignment regionally since both the Northeast and Duluth Boards overlap on strategies and initiatives due to the geography of our region. When Duluth was selected to be part of Good Jobs Great Cities, a cohort of cities from across the nation working to advance workforce initiatives, the Northeast Board was invited and was excited to participate and support that work. The focus of the work is launching a regional manufacturing sector strategy initiative, which aligns with broader statewide work tied to the CHIPS Act.
- With multiple major infrastructure construction projects in the region, all of our construction sector work has gained a new significance.
 - The Northeast Workforce Development Board is in the midst of revitalizing the Board as a whole, with many new and increasingly engaged members. We envision a subsequent revitalization of our Skilled Trades Committee and look forward to it continuing to be a place for coordination and alignment at the local and regional level, and with state efforts.
 - 218Trades will continue its campaign to excite youth and adults about careers in construction and has expanded these efforts outside of our local area due to high-interest and high-demand for the information and expertise of those working with the 218Trades initiative.
 - The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDoT) awarded a five-year grant to Duluth Workforce Development to support a team of Community Liaisons – BIPOC community members who conduct deep outreach, facilitate career exploration, and mentor youth and adults interested in entering a career in the trades. The Northeast is Board is looking to work collaboratively with the Duluth Board to enhance that effort by finding a means to fund and support a dedicated staff to

apprenticeship navigation through the region – this would increase the awareness on apprenticeships, assist job seekers in navigating the process, and enhance the pipeline of individuals moving into the workforce.

- MnDoT is facilitating deeper connections to tribal representatives, to help connect band members to construction training and job opportunities and local Partner staff have engaged in creating those connections through direct outreach and collaboration on hiring events and job fairs.
- Both the Northeast and Duluth Boards support a number of construction training programs, including high school Career Technical Education programs, YouthBuild, and programs at many of the area high schools which promote the Career Academy model of education.

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.**

Both directors from Region 2 participate on the Joint MAWB/DEED WIOA One Stop Operations Committee, where the WIOA criteria for comprehensive CareerForce locations has been reviewed. This effort includes examination of the regulations regarding comprehensive centers, affiliate sites, and standalone partners. Based on this, the designated comprehensive center for WDA #3 is the Hibbing CareerForce location. The six other CareerForce locations in the Northeast region operate as affiliate sites based on the criteria which is needed in order to deem them Comprehensive sites.

The Hibbing CareerForce location has all core titles providers co-located within the building, except Perkins which is housed at our local secondary and postsecondary educational institutions where many CareerForce staff have on-campus office hours and/or regular visit sites to provide outreach and services.

All CareerForce locations continue to provide:

1. Career Labs for the general public to access career and program services, access to LMI and job listings, and information on filing a UI claim
2. Access to persons with disabilities
3. A non-discriminatory and welcoming environment to all customer groups
4. A site that complies with statewide branding policies
5. Services to businesses

6. Services to job seekers
7. Active and engaged outreach to community partners and participants

The Board will adhere to the Minnesota CareerForce System Certification Standards policy which states that each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) must operate at least one Comprehensive CareerForce in their local area that provides access to the required programs designated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. LWDBs may also designate CareerForce Affiliate sites and provide services in stand-alone partner sites.

In order for a site to obtain certification as a Comprehensive or affiliate CareerForce:

1. The Center must be identified in the LWDB's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the local One Stop system.
2. Co-location of programs (Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Minnesota Youth, State Dislocated Worker, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services) is required in Comprehensive sites and co-location of additional partners is encouraged for more efficient customer access to programs and financial savings. Staff from these programs must be physically present on site and available on a regular and predictable schedule.
3. The Comprehensive CareerForce site must also provide access to the other required One-Stop System partners outlined in WIOA. At a minimum, "access to" means that CareerForce staff are trained to make appropriate referrals. "Access to" also means that program staff can be physically present or direct links to program staff using technology are available. LWDBs may require a financial contribution from other partners for the operations or staffing of the Comprehensive CareerForce if partner program regulations allow for the contribution. These programs include:
 - Jobs for Veterans
 - Unemployment Insurance programs
 - Trade Adjustment Assistance
 - State Services for the Blind
 - Adult Basic Education
 - Minnesota Family Investment Program (i.e. Federal TANF program)
 - Job Corps
 - YouthBuild
 - Native American programs
 - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs
 - Senior Community Service Employment Program
 - Carl D. Perkins career and technical education programs

- Community Services Block Grant programs
 - Department of Housing and Urban Development employment and training activities
4. Procedures are in place to assure coordination of and avoid duplication among CareerForce system partner programs.
 5. Facilities, programs, websites, and documents must be accessible to all populations including people with disabilities.

The Board will also follow recommendations for designating Affiliate sites, based on the criteria below:

1. Providing access to one or more of the following:
 - WIOA Career Services
 - Training services
 - Services or programs from CareerForce system partner agencies
 - Workforce and labor market information
 - Access to job listings
 - Job search resources
 2. Accessibility to persons with disabilities
 3. A non-discriminatory and welcoming environment to all customer groups
 4. Provision of procedures that promote a safe environment for customers and employees.
- B.2. Describe the strategies to ensure proper connectivity and coordination among the physical sites within the local workforce development area.**

Connectivity and coordination occurs throughout the workforce service area through monthly meetings of partner program management, known as the Partner Group. Since the inception of the one-stop system under WIA, Northeast region partner management has met monthly to discuss center operations, determine and clarify policy, deal with staffing or programmatic issues, identify opportunities for collaboration, ensure appropriate access to programs and services, and provide updates on what is happening within each represented agency. This group includes local WIOA providers from both WDA 3 and 4 (JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training and Duluth Workforce Development), DEED Job Service, Vocational Rehabilitation and State Services for the Blind management, and Arrowhead Economic and Opportunity Agency (AEOA), the largest community action program provider in the region and long-time partner in the CareerForce system. All these partners also contribute to the infrastructure costs at the Comprehensive CareerForce location in our local area.

At each meeting, partner management also reviews minutes from Operations Committees from each CareerForce location in the region, further ensuring consistent coordination among physical sites. These Operations Committees consist of front-line staff from each partner in a specific CareerForce location who meet monthly to discuss operations, staffing, programs, and opportunities for coordination. Where the Operations Committee ensures connectivity and coordination within a CareerForce, it is up to the Partner Group to ensure there is connectivity and coordination between physical sites.

- **Operations Committee Meetings:**
Meetings which involve at least one staff member from each core partner organization and occur quarterly. Committee members monitor overall operational effectiveness of the CareerForce locations and discuss matters that include but are not limited to: flow, process, safety, continuous improvement, and customer service. They are also charged by management to fulfill certain responsibilities including documentation of procedures, supply ordering, and ensuring compliance with required postings and notifications within each CareerForce location. Members of the committee all work directly with program participants and serve as the eyes, ears, and voice of what is happening. They will often bring communication back to partner managers if they believe any action is needed.
- **Monthly Partner Group Meetings:**
Meetings which involve management from each core partner organization that forms part of the One Stop Operator consortium. Partner meetings provide an opportunity to discuss items that impact all partners. Topics may include discussion of key issues related to the operation of CareerForce locations within the region, information-sharing, programmatic or funding updates, opportunities for collaboration, agency needs, cost-allocation-planning, policy review, and more. These meetings promote open dialogue among partners and facilitate positive working relationships across agencies. Partners also review Operations Committee reports and provide direction and/or feedback as needed.
- **The Employer Navigators:**
This is a team of individuals from partner agencies (including representatives from Duluth Workforce Development, JET, Veteran's, Wagner Peyser, and VRS) across the region who meet monthly and who work with employers. Discussion focuses on employment trends, recent successes and challenges, and forecasted needs of area employers. Meetings provide opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources.
- **CareerForce Huddles.**
These meetings are held monthly in-person for all staff at the Duluth

CareerForce location, and virtually for staff of partner agencies throughout the region. They feature a different organization, program, or topic each month. Huddles ensure all staff stay up-to-date on opportunities for cross-referral between programs as well as community resources. All staff also receive regular email communications about various employment and referral opportunities for clients.

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

The same tactics mentioned above regarding connectivity and connection among physical sites apply to coordination among service providers in the Northeast region. The Partner Group includes decision-makers from all the relevant service providers and the Operations Committees includes front-line staff from service providers and programs and services are routinely discussed to ensure effective coordination. Examples include streamlining referral systems, developing common intake procedures or forms, ensuring cooperative staffing of Career Labs/Reception, workshop facilitation and sharing knowledge or resources that would benefit other service provider program participants. These monthly meetings will continue to be the mechanism by which connectivity and coordination among service providers will be achieved.

Additional Specific Strategies:

- Actively engaging in workshops and community conversations focused on key issues, such as the Childcare Task Force and Employer Champions Initiative;
- Utilizing the State digital communication platform (Gov Delivery) as well as email lists to inform service providers and interested community partners of programs and events hosted by CareerForce;
- Collaborating on grant-funded projects such as Youth at Work and potentially the New Americans grant;
- CareerForce staff participation in events hosted by other service providers and organizations, including tabling at community events like Juneteenth, Construct Tomorrow, and Northforce/Minnesota North Career Fairs;
- Facilitating information sharing with other providers and/or employers who participate on the Northeast Workforce Development Board;
- Visiting service provider worksites to better understand what they do and who they serve;
- Maintaining an active presence on social media;
- Co-facilitating meetings of MFIP Employment Services providers and St. Louis County Financial Workers focused on resource and best practice sharing.

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.

Strategies to maximize access to services often revolve around special circumstances, such as setting up temporary satellite locations for dislocated worker projects or providing services during non-traditional hours for dislocated worker groups prior to their anticipated layoff. As the Northeast region includes many remote areas where large-scale layoffs have occurred, staffing an office that is located in the town where the layoffs have occurred has been an effective way to reach workers and can sometimes lead to greater participation in programming.

Additionally, many CareerForce partner staff, particularly WIOA and ABE staff, hold regular hours at local community colleges, such as Lake Superior College, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, and Minnesota North campuses. These staff usually have dedicated space within a community college and are there to support existing clients attending school, but also to encourage others to access CareerForce services and resources. It has proven an effective mechanism for increasing the visibility of CareerForce as well as strengthening relationships with training providers. Other ways services have been expanded include delivering workshops at local libraries and schools and Housing Redevelopment Authorities providing virtual intake, orientation, and enrollments, holding virtual trainings and Job Clubs, and also strengthening partnerships with community stakeholders.

Wagner-Peyser staff host office hours at some of the local libraries for both scheduled and drop-in assistance with resumes and job search. CareerForce partners are exploring the possibility of co-locating with the library in Duluth in a proposed new building that is currently under discussion. Finally, many Partners are actively engaged in our communities – seeking out those most in need of services and meeting them where they're at. Staff regularly participate in Drug Court and Mental Health Court, attend Individual Education Plan meetings, and participate in initiatives such as the Hibbing Housing and Redevelopment Authority's EMPOWER program where staff go on site monthly to provide program information and present on workforce topics. These are just some examples of how our local area maximizes services and access to services.

We have also increased efforts to market programs and services through increases engagement through social media and ensuring partner websites, such as JET and AEOA, are updated make connection with CareerForce more accessible, including creation of online application portals.

The final aspect of service access relates to a creating and maintaining a welcoming environment where all customers feel comfortable and supported. If customers do not feel welcome, find accessing services too complicated, or feel that available services are not responsive to their needs, they are left feeling like CareerForce isn't for them. Throughout LWDA #3, we continue to work to create spaces that are welcoming, comfortable, and accessible, despite the reduction in funding contributions from all core

partners at our Affiliate locations. We have invested in maintaining Career Labs which are accessible and having staff available through multiple avenues to meet the needs and access preferences of all those we serve. Job Service offers one-on-one appointments available to anyone, creating a place for customers to receive quick help with resume and job search. Through these entry points, staff carefully assess what the customer needs and determine how best to meet that need. When a referral is made, staff attempt to ensure a warm handoff, so customers are not asked to share the same information over and over with multiple people. This will continue to be an ongoing area of focus at CareerForce locations throughout our local area.

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.

Both directors from Region 2 participate on the Joint MAWB/DEED WIOA One Stop Operations Committee, where Career Services required under WIOA are discussed and best practices are shared. CareerForce locations in the region operate comprehensive Career Labs to assist job seekers in a variety of ways, including internet access, the provision of labor market information, and access to workshops. Career Services are routinely provided to youth and individuals with barriers to employment already, and strategies to develop additional Career Services will also be made available to these groups. In addition, we offer a variety of online resources through our JET, 218Trades, and CareerForce websites, along with social media platforms and virtual engagement and informational events.

All elements of Career Services defined in WIOA are available, through both in-person, virtual, and online resources as outlined below.

Basic Career Services

- Outreach and orientation to the services, programs, tools, and resources takes place through a number of channels: Social media marketing, email newsletters through GovDelivery, RESEA phone calls to Unemployment Insurance recipients, job fairs, tabling at community events, presentations to employers and community groups, virtual workshops, one-on-one appointments with Wagner-Peyser staff, visits to the CareerForce or JET websites, and visits to the Career Lab.
- Eligibility determination typically takes place during an initial conversation with Adult, Dislocated Worker, Older Worker, or Youth staff. Clients may also submit an online application to indicate initial interest and screen for eligibility.
- Intake and orientation to services available through the CareerForce system takes place once eligibility is established, and is conducted by the job counselor.

- Initial assessment of skills, aptitudes, abilities, skill gaps, and support service needs are completed one-on-one with job counselors as part of program enrollment. For programs that require assessment of math and reading levels, AEOA's Adult Basic Education offers TABE testing at any of their local ABE classrooms.
- Job search and job placement assistance is available to the general public on a drop-in basis through our Career Lab, or one-on-one through in-person or virtual appointments.
- Information about available supportive services and referrals to other programs and services is provided to enrolled clients by job counselors, based on assessments of needs and barriers to employment. Participants are given support service policies, and must sign acknowledgement of receipt of this information as part of enrollment paperwork. Where clients are identified as eligible for SNAP, Earned Income Tax Credit, Childcare Assistance, Medicaid, or other public benefit and assistance programs, referrals are made to county and/or community partner agencies to assist with enrollment.
- Information on in-demand sectors and occupations, as well as labor market information, is provided by a DEED Labor Market Analyst housed within the Duluth CareerForce location and through online tools accessed through the DEED and CareerForce websites. The Labor Market Analyst publishes reports and data summaries, and offers in-person and recorded presentations summarizing local and regional labor market characteristics, employment trends, job vacancy rates, and information about in-demand occupations.
- Information about eligible providers of training can be accessed through the DEED website. Computers in the Career Lab are available for public use to access this information.
 - Performance information is reported to the Northeast Workforce Development Board on an annual basis, and is recorded in minutes which are posted on the JET website.

Information and meaningful assistance on filing an Unemployment Insurance claim is accessed through the UI website or phone number. The Career Lab offers public access to computers and a phone, as well as assistance navigating the UI online application.

Information and assistance in applying for financial aid is provided to all youth program participants with support from JET Career Counselors and is available to visitors of the Career Lab as needed.

Individualized Career Services

- Comprehensive skill level and service needs assessments are conducted by Career Counselors as part of intake for program enrollment.

- Assessment results are used to develop Individual Employment Plans, which set goals and objectives and map out service needs.
- Individual counseling and career planning, as well as case management takes place one-on-one with Career Counselors in person or by phone or web meeting.
- Group counseling is available virtually through CareerForce statewide.
- Literacy training and English Language Learning is available as needed through AEOA's Adult Basic Education (ABE). CareerForce staff can make referrals to ABE for literacy services.
- Workforce preparation includes both in-person one-on-one assistance and virtual group workshops on resumes, interview skills, job search, computer skills, and more.
- Internships and work experiences are available to youth, adult, and senior participants, and are coordinated by CareerForce partner agencies in partnership with area employers.
- Instructions in self-advocacy are provided by Vocational Rehabilitation Services to enrolled participants.
- Follow-up services are available to any participant previously enrolled in WIOA programs, based on individual program rules.

Specific career service areas we have highlighted in recent years are listed below.

Assistance with establishing eligibility for non-WIOA financial aid programs: Staff are accustomed to advising eligible clients on the breadth of financial aid available to supplement program funds and we have created a mechanism of advising the general public on these opportunities through providing staff training and collaborating with the local high schools and community colleges to host events on financial aid opportunities. We have financial aid workshops developed for other purposes (i.e. for the Career EdVenture initiative to provide career planning services to local schools) which we share with the public through our weekly Job Clubs and other regular workshop at each CareerForce. This four-part series includes units on education costs; completing the FAFSA; grants, loans, and work study; and scholarships.

- **Financial Literacy Services:** Financial literacy can be delivered by ABE partners as well as WIOA program staff using a variety of tools. Similar to the financial aid workshop mentioned above, we have developed a financial literacy and money management series that is available for use in area schools that has been adapted into a workshop for the universal customer. This resource was developed using Wells Fargo curriculum and includes a four-part progressive series focused on such topics as introduction to the basics of financial literacy, basic money management, taxes and credits, financial aid, investing, and protecting your money. Our ABE partner utilizes the Four Cornerstones of Financial Literacy curriculum to address personal budgeting; savings; debt

reduction and asset building; building good credit; consumer protection; and how to engage with financial institutions. These workshops are available throughout the region.

- Certain business services: As outlined in WIOA, there is an expectation for expanded services to business, including HR consultation services such as writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks, developing performance evaluation and personnel policies, creating orientation sessions for new workers, honing job interview techniques, analyzing employee turnover, and explaining labor laws to comply with wage/hour and safety/health regulations. The region is not currently equipped to meet these demands as there is no DEED Business Services Representative in the service area; however, we do have staff dedicated to providing business services along with their other program and operational duties. As an organization, we are committed to delivering consistently growing services to the business community.

Our 218Trades initiative has developed and continues to develop relationships with local unions, businesses, and contractors. We work closely with the skilled trades sectors to build relationships and programs to create career pathways for youth and adults in our service area. Our 218 Trades campaign and social media presence highlights the opportunities to work in the trades and connect with businesses and employers in a variety of fields, including carpentry, pipefitting, welding, electrical, iron working, and plumbing.

In addition to the business services referenced here, we also offer customized assistance/referral in the development of registered apprenticeship programs and our 218Trades team has skill and expertise in connecting with businesses to develop these opportunities.

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.

In spite of advances from digital equity efforts during the pandemic, the Northeast Board recognizes that enhancements to technology must be in the forefront of our work as we continue to adapt and finetune this new world of service delivery to increase access to programs in more remote areas of the region. Even those with a computer and internet may struggle with basic computer skills needed to access online services and resources. We must take our community's diverse needs, abilities, and preferences into account when considering ways to facilitate access to services through technology. Strategies to facilitate access through technology include:

- Creation of an online intake system, including electronic enrollment documents like the program applications and other documents like individual service strategies and employment plans. Using technology to better enable the enrollment process will also help to streamline the case management process, allowing technology as an avenue for addressing the all-too-common transportation barrier that sometimes prevents individuals from accessing services.
- Utilizing platforms such as Workforce One, Workforce One Connect, Teams, Adobe Sign, and website forms and links
- ABE services are provided in almost 30 classrooms throughout the region allowing for workforce program outreach in even very rural communities. Additionally, ABE is able to provide services utilizing online distance learning platforms including advising and case management via Zoom, Teams, and other virtual platforms.
- Live and recorded virtual workshops are available through the CareerForce website.
- Program applications, forms, timesheets, manuals, and other materials that can be accessed and completed online;
- Use of social media to extend connectivity (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn);
- Computer literacy training offered through AEOA's Adult Basic Education
- Virtual appointments, and an engagement portal on JET's website
- Piloting of e-appointments and e-enrollments where customers are able to arrive at a CareerForce location and log onto a computer for a virtual appointment with a Career Counselor who may be located in another office throughout the region while still be able to provide high-quality, personalized services

Additionally, we will ensure compliance with accessibility standards by:

- Providing assistive technology at the CareerForce locations
- Meeting established standards for IT accessibility, including access to local provider websites for all users.

While technology makes accessing services easier for some, others prefer or require in-person services and access to technology. We remain committed to offering in-person services and technology support through our staffed CareerForce locations and community-based service sites.

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.

Programs operated by the current workforce system use Workforce One for case management, utilizing all the tools that system provides, including case noting, tracking

activities, documenting milestone achievements like credential attainment, and automatic follow up reminders.

In addition, we have fully integrated electronic processes in the intake process, orientation, and enrollment processes. This included developing electronic, fillable forms such as the application, employment plans, self-assessments, and individual service strategies that can be downloaded from a website, emailed, or shared through Office 365 and submitted back electronically to the appropriate personnel. We also have the ability to offer electronic signatures when acceptable, through Adobe software.

Also included in the effort to create a more technology-enabled system is expanding the ability to communicate with participants via text message, the Workforce One Connect app, and virtual platforms such as Teams and Zoom. To this end, CareerForce locations have instituted a communication form that is completed by drop-ins should their counselor not be available. This form specifically asks for the method of communication the client prefers counselors use to follow up with them – text, email, virtual meeting, or phone. The form includes instructions for counselors on how to send a text from an email to facilitate this form of communication, as many people are using smart phones as their primary way of communicating and often prefer the ease and expediency of texting or utilizing applications.

Other efforts at better integrating technology into the current system will be for local program providers to ensure their websites are accessible by individuals with disabilities or English language learners and are optimized for mobile platforms. These are two relatively simple strategies which have a large impact on greater accessibility of the system.

One of the limitations to moving toward a technology-enabled system in this largely rural region is the availability of broadband services to remote areas of the region.

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.

In the Northeast region there is a high degree of existing coordination among service providers, including the provision of supportive services. Supportive service needs for individuals seeking employment or participating in training are coordinated through close working relationships among front-line program staff, who are aware of supportive services offered through all partner programs. Often cross referrals and co-enrollment are used to ensure that participants in any one program benefit from other service provider resources.

In such a rural area with the absence of mass transit options, transportation is a major barrier for many of the people we work with, and we are fortunate to have strong partnerships with AEOA, the region's largest Community Action Program (CAP) agency. AEOA operates Arrowhead Transit, a dial-a-ride service available throughout the entire region. Routes are available between the region's cities and even to farther destinations like Brainerd.

Furthermore, Duluth Workforce Development, AEOA, and JET are all MFIP Employment Service Providers co-located within the Duluth CareerForce location, with AEOA and JET co-located at the other six CareerForce locations in our local area. This offers direct connection to cash assistance, childcare support, and other resources available through the County and organically creates coordination to better serve individuals.

Staff also often work with non-CareerForce providers of support services to support the success of program participants. Because we live and work in small communities, available resources are generally well-known and referrals to those services are often made. An example of how this is accomplished are monthly 'cross-functional' meetings with both northern and southern St. Louis County Department of Health and Human Services and many of these community partners to discuss needs common among programs and agencies, often leading to opportunities to partner to deliver services across organizations. We work with many non-profit and community partners to connect participants to resources such as professional clothes closets, the Sharing Fund which provides funds for emergencies that aren't covered through CareerForce programs, food shelves and other community-based supportive services. In addition, specific events developed and implemented by partner staff at JET, called, Building Effective and Collaborative Organizational Networks (BEACON) are hosted annually in Aitkin and Carlton counties. BEACON events provide a platform for service providers to network and learn from one another annually. Several areas also participate in Community Connect Events where rural community-based organizations come together to provide services and resources in a full day event. These have happened in the past in St. Louis, Aitkin, and Lake counties.

CareerForce Operations - Accessibility

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

Technology is currently used in a variety of ways in the region. The Cybrarian system is used on many Career Lab computers, including preloaded tabs and bookmarks of appropriate career services. Gov Delivery is used to communicate with over 2,000 business and job seeker subscribers in the region to broadcast information on

community events and job resources and the CareerForce website is a comprehensive location with information for partner staff and customers.

We have created electronic intake systems, such as online applications, Individual Service Strategies, resume worksheets, and MFIP plans. We are examining each aspect of our enrollment process in the effort to streamline intake using technology – both for the convenience of our clients as well as counselors. We currently have all of our enrollment materials available in electronic format. Our website is compliant with accessibility standards to ensure that any online process is available to everyone who wishes to access services.

CareerForce locations are also utilizing social media resources like Facebook and LinkedIn to connect with the wider community. Many CareerForce Partners in the region have developed dedicated Facebook pages as a way of staying in touch with program participants and general job seekers. They use this tool to share information about job openings, workshops, and available program resources. Also, social media has become an invaluable follow up tool for staying connected with program participants as they exit services and obtain employment.

JET broadcasts information in a monthly electronic newsletter that is sent to nearly 1,000 subscribers which generates a communication mechanism and expands the network of individuals connected to programs and services, as well as utilizing the Workforce One Connect App for communications with clients.

JET and AEOA use their Agency Facebook pages to post information related to seeking and retaining employment, training opportunities, and program eligibility criteria. Additionally, the Adult Education program maintains its own Facebook page to connect with learners across the region as well as a page specifically for distance learners within the program. ABE also engages learners via multiple online resources such as iPathways, SkillsTutor, GoToMeeting, Zoom, and Google applications. These platforms allow for outreach and engagement into remote communities that otherwise may struggle to access workforce resources.

With such a vast region with many isolated communities, maximizing the use of technology to increase access to services is an issue that has been addressed through agency-wide initiatives and proactive delivery methods. In addition, we pursued and were awarded CARES Act funding to upgrade technology region-wide to ensure we have the means to deliver services to all individuals, communities, and businesses in our area and will continue to pursue funding to ensure we have adequate access to technological resources to serve our local area.

- 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 Northeast 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 locations to provide access to a wide variety of services. Each CareerForce 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. The Northeast 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. The local Board sponsors local job fairs and other events in which Vocational Rehabilitation participates.

- 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.**

On a statewide level, an accessibility assessment is completed at each CareerForce prior to certification and at intervals on an ongoing basis. CareerForce locations are equipped with accessible equipment and either the Department of Employment and Economic Development or a Partner agency, depending on the type of CareerForce location

(Comprehensive or Affiliate), monitors this equipment to ensure it is current and in working order.

Software developed by DEED for the CareerForce locations are designed to be fully accessible. All programs within the Minnesota CareerForce system are expected to be fully accessible to all Minnesotans. Vocational Rehabilitation Services and State Services for the Blind located within the CareerForce locations are available for consultation with other programs, should unexpected issues of accessibility occur. There is frequent co-enrollment and collaboration between Vocational Rehabilitation and the other partners, which further enhances overall accessibility.

AEOA ensures all Adult Education facilities comply with all federal and state guidelines regarding accessibility of facilities and programming. All ABE staff are provided quarterly professional development training on engaging with students with perceived and documented physical and learning disabilities. The State ABE Office also provided ongoing resources to ABE staff via supplemental service provider PANDA that provides disability support, knowledge, and resources to increase academic opportunities for students.

Printed materials about services at partner locations will comply with accessibility requirements and standards. Where possible, printed materials will be provided in multiple languages. Partners have Language Line accounts established to serve customers who speak languages other than English. These accounts can be accessed by staff from DEED Job Service, VRS, DWD, AEOA, and JET. For customers who are hearing impaired, staff are comfortable using the customer's chosen method for communication. Video-based ASL interpreters are available if needed. Vocational Rehabilitation Services located within the Hibbing CareerForce location is available to program staff for consultation, should unexpected issues of accessibility occur. There is co-enrollment and collaboration between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the other CareerForce partners, which further enhances overall accessibility. In addition, necessary paperwork, meetings, and workshops are all offered with an option of alternative formats. Staff have been trained in the use of adaptive technology for services to ensure compliance and equal access.

Together, Partners continue to make efforts to ensure our customer service environment feels welcoming and inclusive. CareerForce staff regularly participate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training. All partners have policies in place to address non-discrimination. All agencies have clients sign an equal opportunity form as part of enrollment that includes information on the process for filing a complaint if the client feels they have been treated unfairly.

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 X

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

Yes X

B.14. Does the local workforce development area have in place an agreed upon WIOA Discrimination complaint process per the [regulations](#)?

Yes X

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

The CareerForce locations in LWDA #3 use the Language Line for live translation services as needed, and has information posted at the front desk to inform customers in their own language of how to request this resource. We also have brochures and flyers available in other languages for Unemployment Insurance and basic CareerForce services, and both the CareerForce and Unemployment Insurance websites include language translation features.

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).

As outlined in our One-Stop MOU, CareerForce Partners in LWDA #3 conduct outreach in a number of ways to raise awareness of available services, open hours, and programs. Basic information about the CareerForce locations is available on CareerForceMN.com.

This website also includes more detailed program information, virtual workshops, assessments, and other resources for job seekers and employers across the state. More detailed information about programs available to LWDA #3 customers is available on the JET website.

Jobseeker Outreach:

- JET, AEOA, and Duluth Workforce Development all maintain an active presence on social media;
- We maintain GovDelivery email lists for job seekers in the area, and regularly send out information about programs and events;
- JET maintains a community partner email list that was built with a focus on organizations that serve Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals and other underrepresented populations, and sends out flyers and information about programs and events;
- The JET and AEOA support outreach through press releases that generate earned media coverage;
- Partner organization staff host presentations at college campuses, and staff a CareerForce office at many college campuses, including Lake Superior College, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, and Minnesota North campuses;
- DWD, JET, and VRS staff work on-site in area secondary schools, connecting with teachers, integration specialists, and other staff and delivering career exploration and work readiness curriculum with a focus on BIPOC students and those with disabilities;
- JET staff conduct presentations to county and community organization case managers, probation officers, and others who may refer clients to CareerForce;
- CareerForce Corners in several area libraries, with information and office hours;
- VRS staff meet with county social workers and waiver providers quarterly to collaborate;
- CareerForce partners collaborate to host job fairs, career exploration events like Construct Tomorrow and Discover Healthcare, table at career nights and other events, and host on-site and virtual employer-of-the-day events.

CareerForce Partners

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

One-stop partners work together to offer universal basic career services to all customers, as well as more intensive services to enrolled clients at our Comprehensive CareerForce location in Hibbing. All required partners under WIOA are part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) to

outline roles, resource contributions, and cost sharing agreements. Required Partners not housed within the CareerForce location may make a financial contribution toward operation of the Comprehensive one-stop center, also outlined in the IFA. Both the MOU and IFA are re-negotiated every three years and require quarterly reconciliation.

JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training

JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training provides a number of employment, job training, and career assistance programs for individuals who live in the counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis, not including within the city limits of Duluth. JET is the WIOA Title I provider at each CareerForce in the region, including the provision of Dislocated Worker, Adult and Youth programming. In addition, JET is the administrator of the state dislocated worker and Minnesota Youth programs as well as one of two MFIP providers co-located within CareerForce locations in Northeast Minnesota.

- The **Youth Program** provides education and employment services for youth 14-24 years of age. Youth participants can receive assistance with: GED completion, education and career planning, job search, paid work experience, education (including funding for eligible training programs), follow-up, and related services including mentoring and connection to other supports.
- The **WIOA Adult** Program serves individuals 18 years old or older who fall under one of our Priority of Service categories and are eligible to work in the United States. Male participants born after 1960 must be in compliance with Military Selective Service requirements, and all participants need to have a willingness and ability to make a commitment to staying in regular contact with a job counselor while in the program. WIOA Adult enrollees can receive assistance with: Comprehensive assessments, career planning, job search, job training (including funding for eligible training programs), support services, follow-up, and related services.
- The **Dislocated Worker** Program offers services to help individuals who have lost a job through no fault of their own and need help finding suitable employment. Services provided may include career planning and counseling, job search assistance, vocational assessments, and funding for counselor-approved training, as well as assistance in starting a business for those who select the CLIMB track. This program also serves individuals eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).
- JET also provides employment and training services for the **Diversionsary Work Program (DWP)** and **Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)**. DWP is a 4-month program that provides services and support to eligible families to help them move immediately to full time work rather transitioning to MFIP. MFIP is a *Work First* focused program designed to assist public assistance recipients and enhance their efforts so they can successfully transition to economic self-

sufficiency. Participants receive wraparound case management, supportive services, support for GED and post-secondary training, and job search support. This is provided through a Trauma Informed Care lens focused on empowerment and choice.

AEOA (Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency)

AEOA is a private not-for-profit agency that provides various programs throughout the Arrowhead region of Minnesota. AEOA provides a number of employment and training services to the unemployed, underemployed, and those seeking new or different job opportunities within the seven counties of Northeast Minnesota (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis). The counselors are co-located at all seven CareerForce locations throughout Northeast Minnesota and provide Employment and Training services to individuals through Youth, Dislocated Worker, SNAP, and MFIP and DWP including job search assessments, career counseling, funding for training, on the job training and support services. AEOA staff also contribute time to staff Career Labs at both the Comprehensive and Affiliate locations.

AEOA also administers the Older Worker program in several counties throughout Northeast Minnesota, which helps individuals who are 50 or older to build the experience, skills, and confidence they need to find permanent employment. Combining the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) with other resources, Older Worker participants can receive assistance with skill and interest assessments, work readiness skill development, digital literacy and other kinds of training, job search, and paid internships.

In addition, AEOA's transportation department administers Arrowhead Transit which supports the transportation need of participants seeking work or attending training.

State of Minnesota

Job Service is the program through which several of DEED's key services to job seekers are delivered. Services target three main areas: Universal Customers, Veteran's, and Reemployment Assistance for recipients of Unemployment Insurance. Staff also assist customers through one-on-one appointments and virtual workshops.

State Services for the Blind (SSB) helps people who are blind, visually impaired, or DeafBlind to live and work as independently as possible. Services include training people to adjust to blindness and vision loss, exploring assistive technology, and teaching adults how to prepare for, find and keep jobs. The customer and counselor work together to produce the right mix of services for an employment plan. A new customer, for example, may need the full spectrum of services, including assessment, cane travel, braille, and adjustment to blindness training before enrolling in an educational program that will lead to employment. In the Northeast region, these services are provided throughout the region by staff located at the Hibbing CareerForce.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) specializes in working with individuals with disabilities that impact employment, post-secondary training, independent living, and community integration. VRS provides pre-employment transition services, vocational assessments, job tryouts, community-based evaluations, job search assistance, job coaching, case management, tuition assistance and supportive services. Staff from Vocational Rehabilitation Services are available as needed, to consult with partners who happen to be working with individuals with disabilities. Additionally, VRS regularly co-enrolls consumers with other one-stop partners to ensure wrap around services for the consumer.

Adult Basic Education

AEOA's Adult Basic Education program provides math and reading skills assessments required for program enrollment, as well as GED preparation and testing, English Language Learning, and computer skills. ABE also provides contextualized math and reading skills instruction as part of post-secondary education preparation.

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

Often opportunities for continuous improvement are relatively spontaneous as we become aware of activities, seminars, and training that occur throughout the year. Staff are encouraged to participate in any training that further hones their customer service and service delivery skills. In the Northeast region, continuous improvement activities are coordinated on behalf of the Board by the Partner Group, a coalition of all the managers of CareerForce partners. The Partner Group routinely discusses opportunities to improve coordination of services, which often includes cross-agency training on topics that are common among programs. Some examples of this effort to ensure continual improvement is the two-day Bridges Out of Poverty training facilitated by well-known trainer Jodie Pfarr, our annual Regional Professional Development Days which focus on topics such as diversity, equity, and inclusion, effective communication, and building partnerships, and Customer Service and Migrant Seasonal Farmworker training. Bridges Out of Poverty focuses on the impact of poverty on an individual's processing and response to situations and provides practitioners with concrete understanding of how to work with this population more effectively. As many of our programs serve individuals striving to climb out of poverty, offering this collectively to all CareerForce partner staff as well as to county financial and social workers made sense and served to strengthen the local system as a whole. In addition, all CareerForce partner staff participated in the Intercultural Diversity Inventory (IDI) training which has laid the foundation for our ongoing equity and diversity work.

In addition to the Partner Group, each CareerForce has an Operations Committee that meets monthly and consists of two representatives from each partner agency. CareerForce operations are discussed from a front-line staff perspective and meeting

minutes are forwarded to the Partner Group for review and discussion. Each Partner Group meeting includes discussion of specific questions, issues, or requests as identified by the Operations Committee from ordering supplies to continuous improvement activities or requests. While at first glance this arrangement may seem complicated, it in fact engages staff at every level and is an effective way of sharing information across the region and represents a system staying in touch with CareerForce operations, including the identification continuous improvement opportunities.

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

Co-enrollment between partners at the CareerForce locations throughout Northeast Minnesota is increasingly common as we improve collaboration among programs. To ensure services and administrative costs are not duplicated, each participant maintains a primary Career Counselor who holds responsibility for their case, including maintaining records in Workforce One. During intake and enrollment, participants are asked which other agencies they are currently working with, and a check is done in Workforce One to see if they are currently enrolled with another CareerForce Partner agency. Anytime a participant is co-enrolled with another program, they are asked to sign a Release of Information to allow staff to communicate and coordinate around provision of training funds, support services, or other cost items to ensure duplication is avoided.

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.

One-stop partners in WDA #3 sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that accurately reflects the services to be provided by each partner and how they will be coordinated and delivered through the system. Additionally, an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is negotiated and signed by all required partners to outline cost sharing related to operation of the Comprehensive CareerForce location and is required to be reconciled quarterly. Elements in the MOU will include but are not limited to:

- How the costs for services and operating costs will be funded including funding through cash and in-kind contributions, as well as infrastructure costs;
- Methods to ensure the needs of workers, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment are addressed, including access to technology and materials made available through the One-Stop system;
- The duration of the MOU and the procedures for amending the MOU, including assurances that the MOU shall be reviewed at least every three years.

The Northeast Workforce Board reviews the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) every three years to ensure it clearly describes operations, services provided and coordinated, funding, and referrals.

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.

All required partners under WIOA are included as part of the Infrastructure Funding Agreement, which maps out both cash and in-kind contributions toward the operation of the Comprehensive CareerForce location in Hibbing. Since then, only two remaining Partners in the other five Affiliate locations (Cloquet, Grand Rapids, Aitkin, and International Falls, and Virginia) are JET and AEOA, their infrastructure costs are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU governs partner roles and outlines how cross-referrals and co-enrollments will take place, in addition to how shared costs are allocated at Affiliate locations. Discrepancies and disagreements are first discussed by One-Stop Operator consortium partners in monthly Partner Meetings.

Per DEED policy, if the partners are not able to reach agreement on an IFA, the local workforce development board will convene all partners and attempt to resolve the dispute. If an agreement still cannot be reached, the Local Workforce Development Board must notify DEED that an impasse has been reached. DEED will review the process and make a dispute resolution recommendation. If this is not successful the State Funding Mechanism will take effect, taking into consideration the distribution and allocation of services of all required partners within the local area.

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.

N/A: The Northeast Minnesota Board does not contract for 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.

JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training adheres to requirements pertaining to the procurement for State and local governmental grantees and sub grantees of goods and services both competitive and non-competitive listed in 29 CFR 97.36. The Northeast Workforce Development Board shall make recommendations to the Local Elected Official Board on the most effective designation of administrative entities, grant recipients, and program operators for the region with the exception of the State of Minnesota Job Service, as the administrative entity and grant for Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Title 38 programs, and Unemployment Insurance.

Should the Northeast Workforce Development Board wish to identify a new service provider, a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process would be instituted. The RFP process includes solicitation for bids that request comprehensive information addressing the following elements: knowledge of identified need, experience of administration and staff, services to be provided, performance outcomes, commitment to partnership and collaboration, budget and costs, and operational capability. Each one of these criteria is assigned a point value and ranked for a total score. The solicitation contains a description of program requirements and basic design elements to which bidders respond. Eligibility for bidding includes organizations which have adequate administrative controls and personnel to achieve the goals and objectives of the program. This includes but is not limited to governmental units, public or private non-profit corporations, educational institutions, a tax supported organization or a private or for-profit entity.

The board will select the One Stop Operator every four years, as required under WIOA. Additionally, the Board will conduct a competitive process that includes a cost contribution analysis to ensure bids accurately reflect the cost of operating the one-stop center as required by WIOA.

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.

WIOA Section 107 (d)(12)(B)(i)(I) states that the chief elected official in a local area shall serve as the local grant recipient for, and shall be liable for any misuse of, the grant funds allocated to the local area. In Local Workforce Development Area 3 (Northeast Minnesota), this is the Local Elected Official Board as designated by our Joint Powers Agreement.

WIOA Section 107 (d)(12)(B)(i)(II) states that the chief local elected official may designate an entity to serve as a local fiscal agent to assist in the administration of grant funds. The entity that has been designated under this provision that serves as the local fiscal agent is JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, under the oversight of Executive Director, Marie Domiano. JET staff are located in the Aitkin, Duluth, Cloquet, Grand Rapids, Hibbing, International Falls, and Virginia CareerForce locations. Fiscal management and accounting of grant funds is done by JET’s Fiscal department, with oversight from the Financial Director, Randy Lampton, and annual financial audits by RSM US LLP.

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.

The Board expects that local service providers will, at a minimum, meet the performance standards negotiated with the Governor and chief elected officials, as they apply to each program/Title. Overall performance accountability measures for the state are negotiated every two years between DEED and the U.S. Department of Labor, covering all WIOA programs. LWDA 3 then works with DEED to set local performance targets to track and demonstrate progress toward our goals. These targets are based on past performance and local conditions and are balanced with performance targets elsewhere in the state to ensure fair contribution toward statewide goals.

Targets for state formula and competitive grants are set in negotiation with DEED. LWDA 3 proposes performance targets, which are approved by DEED as part of annual reviews of work plans. These targets may be adjusted through work plan modifications throughout the year if needed. Historically the LWDA 3 has met or exceeded all performance standards under WIOA.

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.

With the restructuring of the Northeast Workforce Development Board in 2023 at the direction of the Local Elected Official Board in order to ensure composition compliance with WIOA and adequate representation from diverse populations, industry sectors, and geographical locations, the Board is now positioned to engage and focus on becoming a high-performing Board, consistent with the factors developed by the state board.

The Northeast Workforce Development Board will be forming a Governance Committee which will undertake a number of initiatives to help ensure the board becomes aligned with the standards for a high-performing board. Historically, the Northeast Board has worked closely with the Duluth Workforce Board and sees the Duluth Board as a superior model of a high-performing board. With that, the Northeast Board has looked to their successes and initiatives as a foundation for building our board and is in the infancy stages of becoming a high-performing board with great confidence that the current membership, and local area staff, will move us forward successfully. These initiatives include:

- Setting a Board vision and goals that align with the Governor’s Workforce Development Board vision and goals, as well as local workforce priorities (2024).
- Creating Bylaws to ensure compliance with WIOA (2023), updated as needed to reflect changes to state policies and local priorities.
- Developing:
 - Conflict of Interest policy (2021)
 - Task Calendar, which outlines annual tasks (e.g. update policies, chair/vice-chair nominations, term renewals, new member orientation) (early 2024)

- Updated Board attendance policy (2023)
- Creating onboarding process for new members, which includes:
 - Orientation with Workforce Director (2023, Fine Tuning to Come - 2024)
 - Electronic application (2021)
 - Interview between interested candidates and Governance Committee member (January 2021)
 - Board orientation manual (Updated 2023)
- Conducting board assessments related to:
 - Member satisfaction/engagement (2025)
 - Committee engagement and participation (2025)
 - Board and committee diversity (2025)
- Developing job descriptions for Board members, Board chair, Secretary, and Vice-chair (2025)
- Working with committee chairs to develop, for each committee:
 - Committee chair job descriptions (2025)
 - Committee descriptions (2025)
 - Member rosters (Updated regularly)
- Developing Workforce Board Appointment Process Map to guide recruitment efforts. The map outlines the step-by-step process for reaching out to interested members, reviewing applications, recommending members to the executive committee, approving members, and orientation (2025).
- Creating:
 - Exit interview (2025), for members who recently retired from board
 - Board member onboarding interview (2025), for newer members who have served for 6 months to a year
 - Mentoring program, which pairs new board members with those who have been involved for a longer period of time to help answer questions and ensure they feel connected and engaged (2025)
- Developing an annual calendar to help the board stay on top of yearly monitoring and implementation tasks (2025)
- Participating in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training segments at each Board meeting (2025);
- Convening two employer-led sector initiatives focused on healthcare and construction, and launching a third focused on manufacturing (Current);
- Participating in the Regional Leadership Team to discuss regional issues and priorities (Current).

In addition, the Governance Committee continues to work on member recruitment, with a special focus on increasing board representation among people of color. Part of

this work includes building new strategic partnerships with organizations led by people of color in the community, with a focus on board committees as a key nexus for relationship building.

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.

An extensive process is used to recruit new Workforce Development Board members who have major decision-making, ownership, or management authority, and represent the geographical, industrial, and cultural diversity of Northeast Minnesota.

Consideration is given to women, minorities, the disabled and veteran nominees. Letters of recruitment describing the Workforce Development Board as an active, interesting group that meets six to nine times per year to design and oversee employment and training services as well as activities of the local CareerForce locations in Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis counties are sent to appropriate, representative organizations. Such organizations include both public and private entities including economic development and organizations that provide community services like housing and various support services. Businesses in high-growth occupations such as healthcare and technology are also targeted for recruitment.

All nominations are reviewed by the entire Local Elected Official Board. Discussion takes place regarding a candidate’s merit and how they could contribute to the composition of the Board. The LEO Board then appoints members based on information supplied by nominees such as qualifications, interests, and how the applicant feels he/she can best contribute to the goals of the Workforce Development Board. Applicants also provide information regarding their current duties and positions. Preference is given to nominees who have identified optimum policy-making authority and have the necessary expertise to contribute to developing and overseeing innovative and cost-effective employment and training activities.

Consideration is also given to nominees who could best donate time and energy to Workforce Development Board activities and who share a goal of developing a skilled workforce in northeastern Minnesota. The current composition of the board to is in compliance with board structure under WIOA.

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.**

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.**

Several strategies are being used to expand access to employment opportunities for eligible individuals. Chief among them is the expanded use of career pathways methodology, including the identification of career ladders and lattices within key sectors. Often it is simply the lack of accurate and compelling information about how to access good career opportunities that prevents individuals from preparing for and entering the workforce. Under a career pathways system, better information will be available to the general public and eligible program participants about in-demand opportunities, with the goal of increasing access to these opportunities.

One key sector where this methodology has been implemented is the skills trades sector through our regional 218Trades initiative which broadcasts information widely through existing core program networks and beyond, including CareerForce Career Counselors, school districts (both students and personnel) via the Northeast Career EdVenture initiative, and through technological resources including social media and local provider websites. The type of information that is broadcast will include the progression of occupations within a career pathway, entrance and exit points into corresponding training, the kinds of employers who hire individuals along a pathway, wages and progressive earning potential, and opportunities to learn more about careers along a pathway. As these career pathway efforts will be led by the Board, where all core partner programs are represented, coordinating efforts to expand access to employment for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment, can be accomplished.

Another initiative that may shed light on how the system can help expand access to employment is the Blandin Foundation study of unemployment in Itasca County. Part of this study is to identify issues that prevent public assistance recipients from seeking or obtaining work, a population with a host of barriers to employment. This information promises to help inform both county health and human service programs and the public workforce system on the need for different strategies to address identified issues, including identifying possible gaps in workforce services. Also included in this study is

the intent to determine what preconceived notions held by the unemployed affect their willingness to seek work within specific sectors that are particularly in need of workers in Itasca County, such as retail and service sectors. Gaining these insights presents a unique opportunity to design service delivery strategies to increase access to employment opportunities.

Additionally, the Range Area Business Team (RABT), an inter-program team of representatives from all partners in the local system, meets monthly to share information that each partner has learned from the business community, from job openings to skill and education requirements. Identified openings are then broadcast to program customers in a concerted effort to refer system participants.

Specific to core program partners, each plays a unique role in expanding access to employment for individuals with barriers to employment:

AEOA: Being one of the largest community action agencies in the state, AEOA has a long history of working with a broad range of people facing unemployment and underemployment. Services specific to this work include the following programs:

The Senior Community Service Employment (SCSEP) is designed to promote part-time, temporary employment through which program participants are engaged in community service and receive work experience and job skills that can lead to unsubsidized employment. We believe that older workers provide a valuable resource to assist employers in meeting the needs of the current workforce.

Lives in Transition is a program designed to assist individuals who have not been in the workforce for at least two years, have provided unpaid household services and lost their primary source of income due to separation, divorce, death or disability of a spouse or partner. We provide counseling and assistance in helping the individual determine a future path whether it be work or education.

The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) is a Work First focused program designed to assist public assistance recipients and enhance their efforts so they can successfully transition from Welfare-to-Work.

The Diversionary Work Program (DWP) is a four-month program that provides services and supports to eligible families to help them move immediately to work rather than go on public assistance.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is designed to assist low-income individuals, generally without dependents and ineligible for cash assistance, with job

search and employment enhancing activities that will lead to self-sufficiency and an exit from public assistance.

Blandin Adult Scholarship Program, through the support of the Blandin Foundation, provides adults the financial support to pursue post-secondary degrees that are in career areas that have current needs as well as growth potential in the Itasca County area.

AEOA's Adult Education program provides a myriad of education options fashioned to increase the individual student's access to employment opportunities. These include GED education, basic skills training, college and career preparation, English Language Learning, and industry specific training opportunities including carpentry pre-apprenticeship, ServSafe Food Manager certification, paraprofessional certification, and more. Even though ABE eligibility does not include income limits, the program works to engage students most in need and performs outreach to high barrier populations such as those experiencing homelessness, people of color, women seeking nontraditional careers, and students co-enrolled in public assistance and workforce programming. ABE has been co-located on community college campuses for over 10 years and has participated in both FastTRAC and Adult Work career pathways programming across the region aimed at engaging individuals with barriers to employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services: The mission of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is to empower Minnesotans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living, and community integration. Employment for those with disabilities will be in integrated, competitive positions in the community, at or above minimum wage. Wages are not less than that customarily paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by non-disabled individuals. All of the individuals that VRS serve have disability related barriers to employment at a minimum. In addition, many of those individuals are from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, are individuals with criminal histories, and or experiencing barriers related to poverty.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services provides services to transition aged youth through the Pre-ETS program, in the areas of job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.

Services for the Blind (SSB): SSB doesn't see limitations, only opportunities, for people with a significant vision loss who want to become employed or remain employed. Individuals who are blind, visually impaired, or Deafblind can apply for services as early as age 14. SSB counselors work with eligible individuals to help them obtain the skills of blindness as well as the vocational training they require to become successfully

employed. Once the person is stable on the desired job, their case is closed with SSB. However, should the person need future assistance with keeping their job, getting another job, or advancing in their career field, they can reapply for services. Counselors are knowledgeable about the multiple electronic devices, both hardware and software, utilized by the blind/visually impaired and Deafblind to access print and be successful in school or work. SSB assistive technology specialists can provide comprehensive assessments of the technology skills and needs of a student on a statewide basis. These specialists will make detailed recommendations of the assistive technology a student would require to succeed in school or work.

Job Service: Job Service/Wagner Peyser staff will coordinate with Unemployment Insurance staff delivering Reemployment Assistance sessions to increase awareness of CareerForce programs and services to individuals identified as most likely to exhaust benefits. These sessions, held multiple times per week in most regional CareerForce locations, reach individuals seeking employment and/or training. In addition to serving those on unemployment insurance, Job Service staff serve veterans and those not enrolled in eligibility-based programs. Veterans with barriers to employment are case managed by the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff to find appropriate employment. The Senior Veteran Employment Representative, a new hire for our region, works with regional businesses to promote veteran employment as well as monitor, report on, and ensure that performance standards are met or exceeded as specified in the Jobs for Veterans State Grant.

JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training: As the administrator of WIOA programs throughout the region, JET will continually explore ways of increasing enrollment in dislocated worker, adult, and youth programming. Specifically with regard to youth, we are focusing efforts at expanding engagement of out of school youth, including increased access to employment opportunities for this population with a high incidence of barriers. JET uses income-based eligibility for enrollment in the Adult program, specifically serving individuals with a range of barriers to employment. Through this program, many strategies for addressing employment barriers are incorporated into the case management process. In conjunction with AEOA and higher education partners, JET has operated a number of initiatives that specifically serve to engage individuals with barriers to employment, an effort that will expand in the future under career pathways programming under WIOA.

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.

Providing access to supportive services for eligible individuals is an integral part of the existing case management system for all core partners in the region. There is no

program offered through the local system that does not incorporate supportive services such as access to transportation resources, assistance with childcare costs, and a variety of supportive services for individuals attending training (tutoring, study skills, test prep, etc.). Most programs offered by core partners also include provisions for clothing or equipment required for a new job and resources for medical needs, relocation, and emergency financial assistance.

All CareerForce partners have policies on supportive services that ensure eligible individuals have access to the supports they need for both training and employment. Supportive services such as transportation, childcare and dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized and consistent with the provisions of WIOA. The need for and provision of supportive services is documented in the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

Core partners determine need for supportive services by conducting an initial assessment to identify an individual's skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency) and aptitudes and abilities (including skills gaps) as well as barriers to employment. This assessment provides information that allows Career Counselors to facilitate referrals to and coordinate with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system and those provided by other organizations and agencies in the local area. Information and referrals for specific programs and services provided by external partners may include but are not limited to: Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP), TANF/MFIP, Child Support, SNAP, health insurance, transportation assistance, housing navigation, financial literacy, GED completion, and Earned Income Tax Credit.

Also, the Northeast region has a strong resource in the United Way 211 First Call for Help that allows staff to have a one-stop resource referral source. Additionally, JET staff are certified Coordinated Entry Assessors, and we have Housing Resource Navigators through the AMPACT program at our Hibbing and Duluth CareerForce locations which provide more concentrated assistance for individuals facing barriers and needing to utilize a variety of support services.

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.

Region 2 has selected healthcare and skilled construction trades as the first two sectors around which to build career pathway partnerships and initiatives and have now added manufacturing as a key industry sector to focus on. It is our intent to develop a model for building career pathways that can be honed through experience and applied to any

sector. This includes identifying the career pathways, ladders and lattices within each sector and engaging service providers, training institutions, and employers within each sector in deliberate and meaningful ways.

Employer engagement will focus on validating pathways and training opportunities, assisting in the development of training curriculum, engaging in experiential learning opportunities and work experience, and sharing their industry expertise. The Northeast Board will lead the career pathway development efforts in skilled trades while the Duluth Board will take the lead on healthcare career pathways, while manufacturing will be a comprehensive, joint leadership effort.

Infused throughout this effort will be the identification of co-enrollment opportunities focused on the obtainment of industry recognized postsecondary credentials. Portability and stackability of training offerings will be determined as career pathway efforts progress to the education design phase; work in this realm has already begun by making a concerted effort to educate higher education partners on this aspect of career pathways. In the Northeast region, this will likely be accomplished through strong partnerships with the Minnesota North colleges, Lake Superior College, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, and corresponding customized training entities as they of have the capability of designing flexible and non-traditional models of education that can closely align with the career pathways under development.

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

JET's Adult Career Services provides career counseling, job search assistance, paid internships, and when appropriate, education and training funding to eligible adults. Participants work one-on-one with a Career Counselor to determine eligibility based on our priorities of service and, if eligible, are enrolled in WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, or State Dislocated Worker. Across our Adult Career Services, activities can include:

- Identifying skills and strengths via structured interview and appropriate skills and vocational assessments;
- Career exploration using online tools like O*Net Online, Career One Stop and My Skills My Future;
- Researching labor market information to determine a match between interests, abilities and opportunities in our area including marketability of skills;
- Developing a plan outlining steps the participant will take to achieve their goal and what support the counselor and program will provide while they are working towards their goal;

- Connecting with training that leads to occupations in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in our area including researching training options and financial aid options for the student and funding for tuition, books, and fees for approved training programs;
- Case management including barrier identification and reduction while the student is upskilling or retraining;
- Assistance with job search during and after training including resume development and tailoring, interview practice, job search techniques and guidance;
- If appropriate, internship or work experience to build resume content during or after training;
- On the job training funding for those with job goals that could be learned while working in partnership with an area employer;
- Supportive services to overcome barriers identified in plan development;
- Job retention counseling to ensure employment fits job goal and participant is on track for success prior to successful exit from the program;
- Follow-up services to support employment retention and access to further training.

JET also offers the Talent Development Program, our region’s offering to support incumbent worker training. This resource helps employers invest in and retain their current workforce, avoiding layoffs and supporting business growth. This program has seen increased demand over the past few years as a result of a tight labor market paired with a strong economy, and has helped support critical areas of need such as childcare.

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.

Youth workforce investment activities are provided by JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, serving youth and young adults ages 14 to 24, with a goal of increasing access to career pathways. The program’s mission and outcomes align with local economic priorities to meet labor market demands while serving and supporting marginalized youth populations including youth with disabilities. Support is provided through effective collaboration across systems addressing the needs of youth including career development, work readiness, individual health and mental health needs, and the provision of support services.

Program elements support success in education and employment goals through a variety of activities.

Education activities include:

- Basic skills development in math and reading;
- Classroom training including secondary, alternative secondary, GED and post-secondary;
- Prioritizing supports leading to credential attainment;
- Supporting youth in their transition from secondary to post-secondary education and occupation skills training.

Employment activities include:

- Work readiness skill building;
- Career exploration, including informational interviews and job shadowing;
- Individualized strengths-based identification of skills transferable across positions and occupations;
- Work experience including subsidized employment opportunities, on the job training, job shadowing and entrepreneurial skill building;
- Transition to employment including job search skills, labor market research and financial literacy.
- Identifying and overcoming barriers to success in education and employment includes the following program model:
- The development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) with a youth-centered, strengths-based approach;
- Long-term mentoring;
- Collaboration with education systems and employers, as well as supportive service agencies to address independent living skills and health needs;
- Incentives that reinforce learning to encourage participation in activities and/or achievement of goals;
- Follow-up services to assist youth sustaining a successful transition.

Workforce investment activities are delivered effectively through the development of sustainable public-private partnerships between government, education institutions, employers, and the existing and emerging workforce. Youth serving agencies and workforce development entities connect with these stakeholders as we support and improve our workforce system.

Key partners that support youth with disabilities are part of coordinated efforts. JET actively works with providers of physical and mental health services, disability services in secondary and post-secondary institutions and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Coordinated strategies address aspects of identity and ability by assessing and building skills in self-awareness, goal-setting and self-advocacy. Youth are given access to a variety of vocational assessments such as interest inventories, aptitude testing, and functional capacities testing, as well as employment opportunities that provide feedback and skill building.

Commitment to accessibility for marginalized groups includes addressing the willingness and success of potential employers to hire and employ youth. Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion includes the development and strengthening of partnerships with employers. Our Career Counselors work closely with employers on ongoing skill building and implementation of DEI practices. As a result, employers move from seeing youth as “too risky” to seeing youth as a viable asset and investment in our community.

Over the next four years, JET will continue its strong support of dropout prevention in partnership with local area schools, and GED completion in partnership with AEOA’s Adult Basic Education program. We also hope to build out a stronger program for 14-15 year olds, who increasingly seek out engagement opportunities. We will also continue engagement in efforts to end homelessness among young adults, as a partner and employment/education services provider.

- 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.**

To maximize informed customer choice and to provide training services, JET staff, working with the individual, identify possible eligible training providers and, upon the individual’s selection of a training provider, coordinate funding sources and arrange for payment to the training provider through an Individual Training Account if the training services are directly linked to a locally in-demand career. It is anticipated that all training services for WIOA Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker participants will be provided through Individual Training Account, and that the local board will not provide training through a training contract unless the local board determines that providing training through a contract is necessary and that the requirements for implementing a training contract have been met.

- 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.**

System coordination is threaded through every level of CareerForce through a variety of regularly planned meetings with partners, staff and, in some cases, stakeholders. Training and information regarding initiatives and regulations are provided at Wagner-Peyser (Job Service) Managers meetings and are then brought to local CareerForce Job

Service staff through regular bi-weekly meetings and e-mails. Directors of the Workforce Development Areas meet monthly through the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB) and have regular updates from DEED leadership. Local and regional partner and staff meetings are held monthly to discuss service delivery, CareerForce operations, initiatives, and plans.

A referral and resource database is accessible to all Job Service staff electronically to facilitate referrals for each CareerForce partner and staff throughout the state. This means that no matter which CareerForce office a customer calls, we will be able to provide a warm handoff to the person within the system who can best serve their needs.

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.

Programs of study authorized under Carl D. Perkins represent a wide range of sectors important to the economy of Northeast Minnesota. There are four Perkins consortiums that operate within the region and efforts are currently underway to identify opportunities to align their core programs of study with the career pathways efforts of the Northeast and Duluth boards, specifically related to skilled trades and healthcare sectors. The largest consortium operating in the region, the East Range School-to-Work and Tech Prep Partnership, represents 12 schools in 9 districts.

Through their programs of study, this consortium is closely aligned with the Applied Learning Institute (ALI), an innovative educational partnership that provides technical and vocational training to high school students through higher education instructors and facilities, which will also be aligned with regional career pathways efforts in healthcare and skilled trades (and others as career pathway development progresses).

This work will be accomplished in part through the efforts between key CareerForce staff and career and technical education staff who has participated in a day-long training session sponsored by the East Range School-to-Work and Tech Prep Partnership developed for school counselors, Perkins instructors, secondary principals, and Perkins college representatives. The purpose of this training was for state-level Career and Technical Education staff to provide an overview of programs of study and technical skill assessment, including the history and current and future expectations for Perkins consortiums. To have staff from the CareerForce system participate in this training provides an excellent opportunity to not only learn about programs of study, but also to meet the players from both the secondary and postsecondary levels with whom we hope to work closely with on the development of career pathways in the region.

Information gleaned from this training along with strategies for aligning core program supports across all CareerForce programming.

CareerForce staff are also engaged with regional Tech Prep consortium boards and have assisted with the development of consortium plans. Additional to this effort to align with Perkins programs of study, consortium staff also participate in the ongoing Northeast regional NGA policy forum to assist in establishing youth experiential learning policy among technical education entities, including Perkins programs. Their feedback on ways for secondary and postsecondary students to gain work skills and industry exposure will help to further this important partnership, hopefully leading to opportunities for the CareerForce system to play a critical role in the development of experiential learning opportunities related to programs of study.

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.

Education and workforce investment activities under WIOA are coordinated with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs in a variety of ways but also offer opportunities for achieving better alignment. One population of youth that has already been identified as one not currently connected to system resources in some way, are homeschooled and online learning students. Part of the effort to coordinate youth services will be to identify the number of individuals in the region who are classified as such and find ways of connecting to these populations.

There are over 40 K12 districts in the region, the majority of who participate in progressive workforce investment activities such as the Applied Learning Institute (ALI) and Career EdVenture programming, efforts in which WIOA-eligible students participate along with the general student population. ALI is an innovative partnership between secondary and postsecondary schools to provide technical training to high school students. This is done by providing secondary students access to postsecondary vocational programming by transporting students to local college campuses for credit-based classroom and applied training in a variety of sectors including healthcare, construction trades, and engineering.

Though WIOA-eligible students most certainly participate in ALI classes, there is an opportunity for better alignment in several areas: 1) using ALI as a mechanism for program participant outreach and enrollment; 2) developing work-based learning opportunities for WIOA-eligible ALI students that align with their program of study; 3) providing Career EdVenture services to ALI students to help them understand the job market for which they are preparing. An additional opportunity for aligning more closely with secondary schools will be including True North Stars Perkins consortium directors and information about their Programs of Study in the development of career pathways

and sector initiatives under WIOA. The Board intends to explore these opportunities for better alignment as they develop a career pathways system.

Within higher education, there are seven colleges that operate in the region, including the five Minnesota North campuses (Mesabi Range – Virginia/Eveleth, Hibbing, Rainy River, Vermilion, and Itasca), Lake Superior College in Duluth, and the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College in Cloquet. Not only is the majority of WIOA tuition funding for a wide range of vocational training programs expended at these institutions, but each has collaborated on a number of workforce development initiatives, including those that are eligible for WIOA funding. Such collaborations include a number of Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) projects, Adult Worker grants, Department of Commerce Innovative Training grants, and foundation-funded projects.

The Board is excited about the North Star Promise Program that will cover the cost of tuition and fees for high-demand two-year programs at local Minnesota State campuses. Several programs through the Northeast Higher Education District will qualify for this program and the local CareerForce system is ready to collaborate on implementation, including referrals of students and assistance with mentorship.

AEOA's Employment and Training Department operates the Blandin Adult Scholarship program, which supports and promotes individuals living within the Itasca County region to further their education and employment opportunities through post-secondary education. The program offers supports which include career counseling, tuition, books, childcare, as well as support needed to maintain a household while attending school on a full-time basis.

CareerForce program staff coordinate with higher education in a variety of ways, from staffing regular office hours to advise current and prospective program participants to participating on program advisory boards. Local college academic advisors are connected to CareerForce staff and routinely communicate opportunities for funding under WIOA programs to students. Adult Basic Education is co-located on each community college campus allowing for coordination with higher education throughout the region. To that end, ABE provides integrated classes co-teaching with Minnesota North instructors on multiple campuses, is embedded in campus learning community courses providing learning labs, provides college prep bridges and boot camps to prepare students for entry into coursework, and acts as a resource for students struggling with basic literacy or English language learning.

These strong partnerships ensure that potentially program eligible students who register for training are connected with workforce system resources. Opportunities to increase alignment with higher education include: 1) educate a wider higher education audience about WIOA programs, including instructors and financial aid staff, in order to increase program participation and identify ways of better supporting mutual students; 2) continue to increase the presence of ABE at local campuses; 3) develop a more far-

reaching navigation service to provide prospective and existing students with a better foundation for understanding occupational opportunities available in the region as they relate to education; and 4) develop a mentorship system using past WIOA participants as mentors to new students with similar occupational interests.

Embarking on the development of a career pathways system will help identify other opportunities for better alignment and ways of enhancing shared services, ultimately reducing duplication among service providers.

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.

As mentioned previously, providing access to supportive services for eligible individuals is an integral part of the existing case management system for all core partners in the region. There is no program offered through the local system that does not incorporate supportive services such as access to transportation resources, assistance with childcare costs, and a variety of supportive services for individuals attending training (tutoring, study skills, test prep, etc.). Most programs offered by core partners also include provisions for clothing or equipment required for a new job and resources for medical needs, relocation, and emergency financial assistance.

Transportation represents a widespread barrier that can prevent participants from accessing programs and services or attending training to gain skills needed to increase employability. A common barrier in rural areas, the Northeast region is fortunate to have innovative solutions to address this barrier through programs operated by CareerForce partner AEOA. AEOA is the region's largest Community Action Program (CAP) agency and operates many support programs, including Arrowhead Transit. Arrowhead Transit is a regional dial-a-ride service with regular routes between communities, including to area CareerForce locations. It has been in operation for 42 years, operates 96 buses, and serves eight counties and hundreds of communities. Annually, they provide over 570,000 rides and travel over 1,630,000.

AEOA also offers a host of other supportive services for which strong cross-referral mechanisms are in place. Examples include:

- Housing Services operates the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) which provided services to over 8,000 households in 2022 and Minnesota Power's CARE Program provided services to 5,000 households. Housing also offers services through the Fix Up Fund Home Improvement Loans Homeownership Program, Deferred Rehabilitation Loans, Rehabilitation/Emergency and Accessibility Loans, Weatherization Assistance Program, Small Cities Development Program, and Foreclosure Prevention and Homeless Services.

- Head Start provides comprehensive early childhood programming for low-income families in Cook, Lake, and St. Louis counties. They partner with families to provide support, education/special education and community connections in education, school readiness, family literacy, employment, health/nutrition, mental health, self-sufficiency, and self-esteem. They provide services to over 400 children and their families per year.
- Senior Services provides essential community-based services that allow older adults to maintain their health, independence, and quality of life at home in this community. In 2022, Senior Services provided over 402,000 nutritious meals to 6,700 seniors. Of those meals, 220,000 were delivered to older people who are homebound. The Northeast Minnesota Food Shelf Network provided food assistance to 6,400 families and distributed 890,144 pounds of food. Through Arrowhead’s Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), 1,551 volunteers provided 177,572 hours of service to deliver meals, build homes, help children to read, improve our environment, and help feed needy families.

A regional effort to identify expanded sources of support that can be accessed by system participants included an asset mapping initiative by the Northeast and Duluth Boards as part of the previous regional planning process. This initiative identified the depth and breadth of services related to supporting job seekers and uncovered some sources of support resources that aren’t presently accessed by CareerForce staff. Such sources were introduced to the CareerForce system to enhance referral processes in order to increase access to supportive services.

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.

AEOA’s Adult Education (ABE) program is an active partner in the local and regional workforce system, being collocated at almost all the community college campuses and collaborating with all the CareerForce partners. ABE administers the skills assessment (TABE) for dislocated workers and MFIP participants on behalf of area employment service providers, co-enrolls and cross-refers students to employment service programs and works to provide just-in-time literacy programming for career pathways across the region. ABE has built programming and partnerships to create multiple points of entry for students along several career pathways and is eager to work more closely with the local area board to embed this work further across the region.

Every Adult Education program in the state provides a program narrative to the State Department of Education every five years to approve their service model and

programming. The narrative includes provisions for local ABE programs to provide evidence that programming aligns with the local and regional WIOA plan. These components include verification of common referral, co-location, program collaboration, alignment of assessment processes, and helping select and design key occupational pathways. Under this provision of WIOA, the narrative is expected to be shared with the local area board once approved by the State Department of Education. Plan creation will occur considering the local and regional workforce strategies in mind.

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.

On the job seeker front, connecting individuals to education, providing support services for those in education, providing career navigation to ensure individuals are entering the appropriate training program for them, and providing employment placement and retention services after credential attainment is the foundation of what eligible providers do. When a WIOA-eligible individual who is seeking training sits down with a Career Counselor, the first thing that occurs is determining the ultimate goal of the client, identifying the field they wish to enter, and the skills they wish to improve or gain. Sometimes that goal requires several steps to reach, steps along a 'career pathway', where supports are built in along the way to improve the chances of reaching that ultimate goal. Because of the limitations of WIOA funding no more than two years of training expenses, we must identify the full career pathway at the outset in order to determine where WIOA resources are best plugged in. Many clients have plans to eventually build upon their vocational training, whether by finishing a bachelor's degree or other specialized training. Ensuring that CareerForce services provide the necessary foundation for those future plans precisely illustrates our capacity to fully meet the needs of job seekers.

Further evidence of this capacity is through our partnership with ABE. Often WIOA-eligible clients come to us wishing to enter a post-secondary training program but don't have the skills and discipline necessary to initially succeed in that environment. Instead of discouraging that client from their goal, we first ensure they have the developmental tools necessary to succeed in basic areas like math, reading for information, and critical thinking strategies. Part of a successful career pathways strategy is ensuring clients are not set up for failure but rather have the appropriate skills in place before they set out on their pathway.

All WIOA-funded clients are closely followed through their career pathway and provided a myriad of necessary supports to keep them going. Critical among these supports for many non-traditional students is the provision of childcare assistance and transportation assistance for those that travel a great distance to attend school. Chief among our services is the provision of placement assistance upon graduation. We offer

a series of placement services including resume development, mock interviews, Creative Job Search, and other workshops designed locally including 'Accessing the Hidden Job Market' and 'Job Searching with Social Media'. Incidentally these workshops and services are also available to the unemployed who may have been working on their own career pathway independently.

Meeting the needs of incumbent workers has been successful for us and we are excited to continue to develop resources and effective processes for assisting employers and workers utilizing WIOA funds. The opportunity to gain skills that enhance one's current position or lead to positions of greater responsibility or pay is critical not only to those workers who participate, but also the competitiveness of the participating business, enhancing the economic stability of that employer.

- 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.

Working closely with employers is the cornerstone of a successful workforce development programs.

We engage and assist employers in a number of ways:

- **Assistance with Recruiting:**
 - Assist with posting jobs through Minnesota Works
 - Invitations to present to Career Counselors
 - Host hiring events at CareerForce locations and CareerForce Corners
 - Host large job fairs, including Construct Tomorrow (St. Louis County), the Iron Range Job Fair (St. Louis County), the Spring Job Fair (Carlton County), the Interactive Career Fair (Aitkin County), multiple high school-based job fairs, and many others
 - Assist CareerForce customers with completing online job applications
- **Assistance with Hiring:**
 - Allow employers to conduct interviews on-site at CareerForce
 - Allow CareerForce customers to participate in virtual interviews at CareerForce
 - Connect employers to resources like On the Job Training subsidies and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit
 - Provide paid work experience opportunities through our Adult, Youth, and Older Worker Programs
- **Strategic Workforce Development:**
 - Support incumbent worker training through the Talent Development Program
 - Connect employers to MJSP, JTIP, and other state resources to support training
 - Work with employers to develop strategies to meet their workforce needs, such as apprenticeship and career pathway training

- Engagement with regional talent attraction efforts
- Engagement in collaborative work focused on key issues such as housing, childcare, broadband access, and reducing homelessness

Employer engagement is facilitated by CareerForce Employer Navigators along with CareerForce Partner staff. Networks are formed through the Chambers of Commerce, industry associations, and other business groups to make connections and inform employers about our services.

Employers also engage through their involvement on the Local Workforce Development Board, where at least 51% of membership is from private business. Board Members provide oversight of workforce development activities, share information on targeted sectors or occupations, establish credibility and access to employer networks, and/or engage other employers in program activities. Through our partnerships with the True North Star Perkins Consortium, Minnesota North, Northforce, and local career academy high schools, we are looking for ways to streamline and coordinate employer engagement so that we are not all competing for attention from the same group of individuals.

The Northeast Workforce Development Board also engages employers to lead and/or participate in efforts to reduce disparities in employment. The Duluth and Northeast Workforce Development Boards sponsored the 2023 Workforce Solutions Series hosted by Northforce, which included four large forums over three years that addressed topics like demographic trends and strategies for recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce. The Duluth board's Equity Committee also hosts the Employer Champions Initiative, a peer sharing network that meets through facilitated conversations on specific equity topics, and to connect employers who are committed to being equity champions. Many Partner management team members and employers in the Northeast region have participated in the Employer Champions initiative.

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 Northeast Minnesota Workforce Development Board brings community leadership together with the common goal of ensuring that all customers are provided with a comprehensive array of services to enable them to become successful in the workforce. In Northeast Minnesota, collaborative efforts have created service strategies that can effectively meet the needs of the area's employers and participants. One example is the Range Area Business Team (RABT), a cross- program team of individuals from all partners in the local system. The RABT meets monthly to share information that each partner has learned from the business community, from job openings to skill and education requirements, to ensure there is no duplication of employer services among

partner staff. These workforce activities and strategies are closely linked to the local labor market needs as well as assessment of employer needs.

An important way the Northeast Workforce Development Board will ensure the local workforce system meets the needs of employers is a renewed focus on our career pathways effort, along with building and enhancing access to apprenticeship opportunities, all of which are entirely based on the needs of employers in key sectors. The first sectors we engaged in for career pathways development were healthcare and skilled trades/construction and we are now adding manufacturing. The first step in this process is to vet labor market information with employers within these sectors and identify ways of maintaining engagement throughout the process. This might include:

- Determining which occupations within targeted industries and sectors should be included within the career pathways system;
- Vetting the set of foundational academic, work readiness, and technical skills, abilities, and knowledge that are chosen as required for key occupations;
- Vetting the certificates and credentials that are required for key occupations
- Collaborating with training institutions to design programs;
- Participating as instructors or training sites in the skill training programs;
- Providing training funds for individuals through tuition reimbursement or class- size training projects;
- Participating in the skill certification/credentialing process;
- Serving as mentors and job shadowing sites
- Providing paid or unpaid internship positions for students; and/or
- Hiring individuals who have obtained the required certificates and credentials.

The key employers will be engaged in every step along the way in the design of a career pathways system, from validating labor market information to the design of education and training programs, to ensure the system meets their needs for workers.

Additionally, the sector initiative staff will work to ensure that the wider workforce development system, including CareerForce providers and higher education, meet the needs of local employers through strategic engagement. These staff will be closely tied to the Board and are charged with assisting with the development of regional sector initiatives, including key employer outreach.

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

Members of the Board are currently engaged in many ways with economic development throughout the region, including involvement with a host of economic development entities including:

- The Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB): Workforce Development Board membership includes key representatives from this organization, including Roy Smith, Regional Workforce Director employed by IRRRB (Mr. Smith is also a member of the GWDB). CareerForce programs are included as part of the workforce services packaging for new business recruits and staff are often included in meeting with prospective employers to speak to workforce availability. IRRRB funds are available to school districts in the Taconite Assistance Area to offset the cost of transportation and substitute teachers for career activities. JET administers these funds to struggling area school districts.
- The Iron Range Economic Alliance: a group of county and municipal economic developers which includes representation from the CareerForce system, the Small Business Administration, and other related entities. Often opportunities to partner with these smaller economic development entities are identified at quarterly meetings, including the promotion of CareerForce services like On-the-Job Training and hiring/recruiting services available through the one stop system.
- JET collaborates with Itasca Economic Development Corporation as a key partner in applying for grant funding for the Forge and taking initiative on events such as the Spark Initiative and Workforce Summits.
- JET presents at regional Chamber of Commerce events and many staff actively serve on committees.

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.).

Our local area's Dislocated Worker program uses a variety of methods to connect with laid-off workers. Since RESEA sessions now take place over the phone, we no longer have the opportunity to make a direct connection with Unemployment Insurance recipients. Those who indicate an interest in additional assistance during the RESEA call are referred to Job Service for a one-on-one appointment conducted by phone or in person. If the individual indicates during that appointment an interest in pursuing training, they are referred to the Dislocated Worker program administered either by JET or AEOA for further screening and potential enrollment.

CareerForce Partner staff also connect with Unemployment Insurance applicants who visit the Career Labs for assistance submitting their application, as well as through job fairs and referrals from college financial aid offices. Dislocated Worker counselors also reach out directly to businesses experiencing layoffs of less than 50 people, to promote

Dislocated Worker services. Services are also marketed via social and earned media coverage.

MinnesotaWorks also provides a connection to CareerForce services through Job Service (Wagner-Peyser) staff who periodically review the job bank for new registrations and connect with those individuals to provide information about available services. Additionally, Job Service staff will search the database for qualified job seekers to match relevant business job openings. Online resume review assistance is available to anyone and is specifically offered to all UI recipients to help them build employer-friendly, searchable content in MinnesotaWorks.

In addition, the Northeast Board will strengthen links with unemployment insurance programs through education and promotion of services to job seekers, employers, and community members, including On-the-Job Training and access to training and education, referrals to community resources and supports, along with the supportive services available to program enrollees.

We also continue to promote Incumbent Worker Training and have experienced high demand this past year as employers have become champions of this important program. We partner with Duluth Workforce Development to pool our resources, allowing more employers to be served through IWT across the region. Over the past few years, we have directed IWT funds toward high-need sectors, including both manufacturing and childcare. As our region continues to face a workforce shortage, we will promote IWT as a solution to retain and upskill an existing workforce to meet employers' evolving needs. As a result, the Northeast region is well positioned to support both laid off workers and employers.

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.

The Northeast region has a successful history of facilitating small business development and entrepreneurial activities from prior involvement with Project GATE and GATE II. Both initiatives were delivered in area CareerForce locations and built a delivery system that provides the foundations for business start-up training, career counseling and entrepreneur assessments, core activities needed for entrepreneurs. Partnerships with The University of Minnesota - Duluth, Center for Economic Development, and the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund leveraged the regional expertise and business start-up resources. Services involved business mentoring opportunities, related classroom training offerings, and financial literacy activities. We now administer the CLIMB, a component of the state Dislocated Worker program that supports laid-off workers in

starting their own business program and have seen a growing interest in the program each year. Demand for these types of entrepreneurial programs continue to increase, necessitating stronger connections with the Northland Small Business Development Center and other entrepreneurship resources.

Additionally, our Northeast Career EdVenture initiative to provide career exploration and work readiness resources to area schools includes a workshop on entrepreneurialism using Junior Achievement curriculum. These sessions have been delivered to groups of 11 and 12 graders using staff from local Small Business Administration offices in order to inspire youth to start thinking about entrepreneurship as they consider their future.

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?

JET – Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training ensures that all staff comply with the procedures for Rapid Response as noted on the DEED website. Rapid Response policy has been integrated into the local Dislocated Worker Program handbook. Staff continue to stay abreast of changes with policies and procedures for Rapid Response through feedback from agency leadership who is well connected to policy updates through the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards, including Program Lead’s attendance at the Job Seeker Services Committee meetings, as well as by receiving targeted e-mails, Partner Express newsletters, reviewing the DEED website (hyperlinked in the local Dislocated Worker program handbook) , and attending state-sponsored workshops and the Job Seeker Conference.

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)?

Timely communication is the key to success between JET and the State Rapid Response team. Within 24 hours of learning about a mass layoff event of any size, whether actual or potential, JET contacts the State Rapids Response Team. This contact can be in the form of a telephone call, e-mail, regular mail, or by personal contact. The Rapid Response team is a critical partner in any local layoff. All information about a specific event is shared by both partners, so that the service delivery can begin as soon as possible.

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.

When a closure of an area business is recognized either through state notification or by staff, the Rapid Response Team is an integral partner of the workforce investment activities and services provided to local dislocated workers. JET and CareerForce partners have always worked very closely with the state's Rapid Response Team on all dislocated worker projects. The Rapid Response Team is considered one of the primary modes of gathering pertinent information about the needs and wishes of the affected workforce. The survey administered by the Rapid Response Team is essential to the development of the dislocated worker proposal and to the provision of services to the affected workers.

Rapid Response team members often conduct joint orientation meetings with partner staff where each partner in the dislocated worker project process presents program information and resources.

In many cases, JET staff members are able to begin the enrollment process at these initial meetings, completing paperwork and making individual appointments with workers. In addition to describing services and initiating enrollment, worker needs begin to be evaluated.

The State's Rapid Response Team has been crucial to the overall development of Northeast Minnesota's workforce by being a responsive and flexible partner of the CareerForce system. The continued coordination with the Workforce Development Board, JET, AEOA, and the state's Rapid Response team is seen as integral to the future success of the CareerForce system and the provision of services to the dislocated workers.

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

If TAA is reauthorized by Congress, we will follow our existing process, which begins when JET staff notify TAA staff immediately via email if they think there is a company that may be potentially TAA certified. Staff have helped laid off workers to file TAA petitions, as needed as well. We then continue to follow the petition to find out if it's been certified, even involving elected officials as needed.

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?

When a mass layoff occurs involving a company that is Trade Act certified, coordination begins immediately. Any and all dislocated worker activities that are scheduled are done in partnership with the local WDA and state TAA staff. TAA representatives are a crucial component of the local service team providing

dislocated workers with critical information regarding approved activities, services, application process, reporting forms and training funds available to eligible workers through the TAA program.

All TAA-eligible individuals are co-enrolled with the dislocated worker program and all training plans must be approved through the local dislocated worker program counselors before being sent to St. Paul for final approval by TAA unit staff. Each eligible dislocated worker receives an individualized assessment and employment plan developed by local WDA staff. Local staff then act as a liaison between the TAA office and the client, gathering and submitting required documents, adjusting training plans, or communicating policy guidance. Dislocated worker counselors work closely with TAA staff to ensure that participants are granted the full complement of services available to ensure a successful reentry into the labor force.

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.

Staff at JET adhere to a comprehensive Support Service Manual that encompasses service guidelines for all programs, including WIOA programs, the Minnesota Dislocated Worker and Youth programs, and the Minnesota Family Investment Program. All support service provisions are described in detail and include the maximum amounts that can be funded for each service by program. Requests for payment or reimbursement for supportive services are made using a 'Request for Reimbursement Form', which is completed by the Career Counselor, verifying that the amounts requested are within guidelines. These forms are reviewed as needed by Program Leads, the Operations Director, or Executive Director for authorization and are once more checked for policy compliance by the fiscal staff that processes payment. If deviation from policy is discovered at any stage in this process, the request form is turned back to the Career Counselor to correct any discrepancies.

Services to Military Service Members and Spouses

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?**

Career Counselors work closely with Veteran’s Employment Representatives on a regular basis to identify veterans and facilitate the exchange of program information. It is common practice to automatically refer veterans identified during another program’s intake process to local Veterans Employment Representative staff for vet-specific services. The process also works in reverse: when a Veterans Employment Representative works with a client seeking training or another service available through WIOA programs, they refer that client to an appropriate JET Career Counselor.

All CareerForce staff have or will receive annual training on the Veteran’s Priority of Service rule in order to best and most efficiently serve all veterans. There are a number of ways to identify Veterans in the CareerForce:

- As individuals enter the center, the receptionist greets customers at the front desk. Through a series of questions, we learn how to best serve the individual. Often during this exchange, veterans will self-identify their military background.
- Career Lab staff ask about Veteran status and encourage vets to complete a questionnaire to determine barriers and needs
- Persons applying for WIOA programs are asked about military service during intake/application.
- County Veteran’s Service office refers individuals to CareerForce for services as well.
- Individuals signing into a Career Lab Cybrarian system indicating Military Service are flagged as Veterans and contacted via e-mail, phone, or letter.

Veterans and their spouses have priority of service in every CareerForce office. Signage is visible at points throughout our public spaces. CareerForce staff and management support and actively work toward providing preference to all Veterans coming into the local CareerForce. Staff will continue to watch for opportunities to increase services to veterans and promote the hiring priority

with area businesses. CareerForce staff from all partners will receive on-going training and updates at local CareerForce meetings to ensure compliance.

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

As referenced in the response to the above question, individuals are asked about their status as a vet by Career Lab personnel. Self-identifying vets are referred to programs that suit their needs, including WIOA programs. Provider websites clearly advertise the priority of service for veterans. No veteran is ever turned away for service, including enrollment into programs.

To ensure that all staff are deeply familiar with priority of service provisions for veterans, all staff participate in priority of service training throughout the region.

Staff, particularly those who staff Career Labs and Reception areas, will also have the opportunity to participate in online training through NVTI (National Veterans Training Institute) geared toward educating one stop staff about veteran priority of service.

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?

No CareerForce in the region has a unified presence on the internet outside of the DEED CareerForce site, but program providers all have their own websites. For providers who operate WIOA programs, each website clearly includes language regarding priority of service for Veterans.

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

Staff who work the Career Lab and/or Reception area at each CareerForce location in the region use a questionnaire to identify current or former military service members with significant barriers to employment, though this information is self-identified by the veteran. These questionnaires are given to each person who uses the CareerForce who affirms they are a military service member when asked by Career Lab and/or Reception staff. Veteran representatives are given all completed surveys and follow up with individuals who express a need for services.

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?

If they qualify for services with the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist, we immediately give or scan the questionnaire to the DVOP who contacts the Veteran for services. DVOPS do outreach services and every office has a DVOP assigned. We also

make sure to meet any immediate needs through one of our CareerForce staff. We are all able to guide them with information, services, and resources to reach their employment goals, and immediate assistance is always a priority.

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

DVOP and LVER staff are centrally located in the Northeast region with the DVOP operating out of the Duluth area and the LVER operating out of the local Comprehensive CareerForce location in Hibbing. The DVOPs provide intensive case management services and often refer the customer to CareerForce partners for appropriate services based on their individual needs such as WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs for a training plan or VRS for services to accommodate a disability. LVERs are the direct contact with employers in the region to help with Veterans job placement and job referral services. LVERs and DVOP's are invited to all CareerForce staff meetings, and to present information to our staff when they have programmatic or information to share. The LVER also participates in the Employer Navigators to share insight on employer engagement with other employer-focused staff. They hold regular and predictable office hours at all the Hibbing CareerForce location where they routinely connect with local program staff to ensure referrals are made, to follow up on common clients, answer any veteran-related questions from clients or staff, and collect and follow up on completed.

The region's LVER travels throughout the region visiting with businesses and clients responding to customer needs at each CareerForce location.

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 individuals who come into a Northeast CareerForce location are asked if they are registered on MinnesotaWorks and if they have posted their resume in MinnesotaWorks so employers can view the resume. If a customer does not have a resume, staff informs the customer about the resume workshops held in each CareerForce location and encourages everyone to post to Minnesotaworks.net once a resume is developed. Also, a customer is given the opportunity to complete a worksheet questionnaire detailing their employment history to aid in the development of a resume. A component of all service delivery, whether through established programs or career services, include resumes posted on MinnesotaWorks that are closely linked to the local labor market needs and the labor needs of the area employers. Special care has recently been taken requiring that each program counselor ensures enrolled clients have a professional resume posted to the site. All Unemployment Insurance recipients are asked to create their Minnesota Works account with a viewable resume. Wagner-Peyser staff do outreach to follow up with UI recipients and help them with this task if it is not completed. We also encourage employers to post their job openings and to create

their account on Minnesota Works to be able to search the database for job seekers who have the targeted skills they are looking for. Employers can then reach out to the job seekers directly for recruitment purposes.

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

SECTION D: ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

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 origin, 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

Local Workforce Development Area #3

Local Area Board Name

Northeast Workforce Development Board

Name and Contact Information for the Local Area Board Chair:

Name

Janelle Klinke

Title

Human Resource Director

Organization

Fairview Range

Address 1

750 East 34th Street

Address 2

City, State, ZIP Code

Hibbing, MN 55746

Phone

218-362-6409

E-mail

janelle.klinke@fairview.org

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

Name

Travis Leiviska

Title

County Commissioner

Organization

Aitkin County

Address 1

District 3

Address 2

City, State, ZIP Code

Aitkin, MN 56431

Phone

218-513-8613

E-mail

Travis.leiviska@co.aitkin.mn.us

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 Janelle Klinke

Name Travis Leiviska

Title Local Area Board Chair

Title LEO Board Chair

Signature

Signature

Date

Date

Attachment A

REGIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

**Regional Workforce
Development Area**

Region 2

**Local Workforce Development
Area**

#3

Name	Title/Role	Organization	LWDA
Angie Frank	Manager	Duluth Adult Education	4
Carol Turner	Operations Manager	Duluth Workforce Development	4
Carson Gorecki	Labor Market Analyst	DEED	3&4
Claire Farmer-Lies	Vice Chair	Duluth Workforce Development Board	4
Elena Foshay	Director	Duluth Workforce Development	4
Emily Edison	Healthcare Working Group Chair	Duluth Workforce Development Board	4
Jan Francisco	Director of Employment and Training	AEOA	3
Janelle Klinke	Chair	Northeast Workforce Development Board	3
Jennifer Oakes	Job Service Supervisor	DEED	4
Jon Frimanslund	Secretary	Northeast Workforce Development Board	3
Julie Sachs	Job Service Manager	DEED	3
Kari Paulsen		JET	3
Kayla Dietzmann	Chair	Duluth Workforce Development Board	4
Kristy Dobson	Assistant Director of Employment and Training	AEOA	3
Marie Domiano	Executive Director	JET	3
Monica Haynes	Secretary, Governance Committee Chair	Duluth Workforce Development Board	4

Randa Lundmark	Area Manager	Vocational Rehabilitation Services	3
Ricky Roche	Vice Chair	Local Elected Official Board	3
Shayla Drake	Workforce Strategy Consultant	DEED	3&4
Sonia Vinnes	Area Manager	Vocational Rehabilitation Services	4
Tom Proulx	County Commissioner – Carlton; Secretary	Local Elected Official Board	3
Travis Leiviska	County Commissioner – Aitkin; Chair	Local Elected Official Board	3
Wade LeBlanc	Vice Chair	Northeast Workforce Development Board	3

Attachment B

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA CONTACTS

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Rapid Response Liaison for Mass Layoffs	Randy Back	218-623-5970	randy.back@nemojt.org	Marie Domiano
Equal Opportunity Officer	Randy Back	218-623-5970	randy.back@nemojt.org	Marie Domiano
Program Complaint Officer	Randy Back	218-623-5970	randy.back@nemojt.org	Marie Domiano
Records Management/Records Retention Coordinator	Randy Back	218-623-5970	randy.back@nemojt.org	Marie Domiano
ADA Coordinator	Randy Back	218-623-5970	randy.back@nemojt.org	Marie Domiano
Data Practices Coordinator	Randy Back	218-623-5970	randy.back@nemojt.org	Marie Domiano
Language Access Coordinator	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Art Larsen

CareerForce Center in Hibbing

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Wendy Rue	218-322-6084	wendy.rue@nemojt.org	Kari Paulsen
Job Service Manager	Julie Sachs	218-396-0523	julie.sachs@state.mn.us	Art Larsen
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Randa Lundmark	218-521-0400	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	Marie Domiano	218-735-6102	marie.domiano@nemojt.org	LEO Board; Commissioner Travis Leiviska - Chair
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Beatrice Castellano	218-969-2806	beatrice.castellano@aeoa.org	Tracy Chase
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Jane Shade	218-322-2464	jane.shade@minnesotanorth.edu	Toni Wick
Adult	Teelyn Minkel	218-421-6072	teelyn.minkel@nemojt.org	Kari Paulsen
Dislocated Worker	Teelyn Minkel	218-421-6072	teelyn.minkel@nemojt.org	Kari Paulsen
Youth	Wendy Rue	218-322-6084	wendy.rue@nemojt.org	Kari Paulsen

Attachment C

LOCAL AREA BOARD MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP
LWDA #3**

WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2)(A)			
Business Representatives – Majority of the board must come from this category.			
Representatives of businesses in the local area who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policymaking or hiring authority <li style="text-align: center;">-or- ii. represent businesses, including small businesses, or organizations representing businesses, that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area (Must be nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations)			
<u>Business or Agency Name</u>	<u>Member Names</u>	<u>Nominated By</u>	<u>Term Expiration Date</u> If Vacant, Date to be Filled
Hibbing Taconite	Tina Erickson	WDB/Hibbing Taconite	06/30/2026
Minnesota Diversity Industries	Jon Frimanslund	WDB/Minnesota Diversity Industries	06/30/2024
Yanmar Compact Equipment North America	Linda Haensel	WDB/Yanmar Compact Equipment North America	06/30/2024
Heliene Manufacturing	Jamie Herhusky	WDB/Heliene Manufacturing	06/30/2024
Talon Metals Corp.	Breanne Johnson	WDB/Talon Metals Corp.	06/30/2025
Fairview Range	Janelle Klinke	WDB/Fairview Range	06/30/2025
North Shore Oil and Propane	Wade LeBlanc	WDB/City of Silver Bay	06/30/2025
Essentia Health	Terri Nystrom	WDB/Essentia Health	06/30/2026
Packaging Corporation of America	Traci Saari	WDB/Packaging Corporation of America	06/30/2025
St. Luke’s	Todd Scaia	WDB/St. Luke’s	06/30/6024

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP

WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2)(B)

Representatives of the workforce within the local area – At least 20% of the total board membership must represent the categories in this section.

<u>Membership Category</u> Name of labor organization, CBO, etc.	<u>Member's Name</u>	<u>Nominated By</u>	<u>Term Expiration Date</u> If Vacant, Date to be Filled
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(i) Representatives of labor organizations (for a local area in which employees are represented by labor organizations), or (for a local area in which no employees are represented by such organizations) other representatives of employees;

Minimum of two representatives

(Must be nominated by local labor federations or other employee representative group.)

National Electrical Contractor's Association	Sam Dugan	WDB/National Electrical Contractor's Association	06/30/2025

(ii) Representative of labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or if no such joint program exists in the area, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the area

Minimum of one representative, if such a program exists in the area

Plumbers and Pipefitters	Jason Quiggin	Not Applicable	06/30/2024

(iii) Representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities (**Optional category**)

Individuals with Disabilities		Not Applicable	
Veterans			

(iv) Representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth (**Optional category**)

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	Jan Francisco	Not Applicable	06/30/2026
Cook County Higher Education	Karen Blackburn		06/30/2026

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP

WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2)(C)

Each local board shall include representatives of entities administering education and training activities in the local area.

When there is more than one local area provider of adult education and literacy activities under Title II, or multiple institutions of higher education providing workforce investment activities the CLEO must solicit nominations from those providers and institutions, respectively, in appointing the required representatives.

<u>Membership Category</u> List Business or Agency Name	<u>Names</u> Member's Name	<u>Nominated By</u> Organization Name	<u>Term Expiration Date</u> If Vacant, Date to be Filled
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A representative of eligible providers administering adult education and literacy activities under title II of WIOA

Minimum of one representative

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	Tracy Chase	WDB/Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	06/30/2026

A representative of institutions of higher education providing workforce investment activities (including community colleges)

Minimum of one representative

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College	Jeannie Kermeen	WDB/Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College	06/30/2025

Representatives of local educational agencies, and of community-based organizations with demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the education or training needs of individuals with barriers to employment (**Optional category**)

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP

WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2)(D)			
Each local board shall include representatives of governmental and economic and community development entities serving the local area.			
<u>Membership Category</u> List Business or Agency Name	<u>Names</u> Member's Name	<u>Nominated By</u> Organization Name	<u>Term Expiration Date</u> If Vacant, Date to be Filled
Representatives of economic and community development entities (Minimum of one representative)		Not applicable	
Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation	Roy Smith	WDB/Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation	06/30/2026
Representative from the State employment service office under the Wagner-Peyser Act serving the local area (Required)		Not applicable	
Department of Employment and Economic Development	Julie Sachs	WDB/Department of Employment and Economic Development	06/30/2024
Representative of the programs carried out under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 serving the local area [other than section 112 or part C of that title] (Required)		Not applicable	
Department of Employment and Economic Development	Randa Lundmark	WDB/Department of Employment and Economic Development	06/30/2025
Representatives of agencies or entities administering programs serving the local area relating to transportation, housing, and public assistance (Optional)		Not applicable	
Representatives of philanthropic organizations serving the local area (Optional)		Not applicable	
<i>Other</i>		Not applicable	

✓ I certify that I have accurately reported the above information included in this document. I understand that misreporting this information could result in decertification of the local workforce development board for my area.

Maria Doniano
1/10/2024
(Signature)

Attachment D

LOCAL AREA BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area	Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota
Local Workforce Development Area	LWDA 3 – Northeast

Committee Name	Objective/Purpose
Executive Committee	<p>The work of the Executive Committee revolves around the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set overall direction of the Board’s work, ensuring alignment with local and regional plans; • Provide input on agendas for Board meetings; • Coordinate development of strategic planning process and monitor progress toward goals; • Handle urgent issues and act on behalf of the Board between meetings as needed; • Act as liaison to the Executive Director; • Review and make final recommendation for new members to the LEO Board.
Governance Committee	<p>The Governance Committee oversees Board structure and functioning, ensuring alignment with WIOA requirements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Board member roster is in compliance with bylaws, recruiting new members as needed; • Developing and administering policies and governing documents (e.g. bylaws, conflict of interest policy, board calendar, member roster, etc.); • Maintaining and updating Board documents and files, including member orientation manual and Dropbox archive; • Tracking member attendance and engagement to ensure an active Board; • Conducting board evaluation and assessment and making recommendations to Executive Committee regarding necessary trainings and facilitation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing oversight, guidance, and support to committees, including designation of committee Chair based on member recommendation.
<p>Skilled Trades Committee</p>	<p>The Skilled Trades Committee engages employers, union representatives, education entities, and workforce development organizations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help connect people to careers in the construction trades • Ensure our region is prepared for expected demand for construction workers • Engage in group problem solving to address persistent challenges with hiring and retention • Create programs to help disadvantaged adults access jobs in construction • Work with unions and contractors to serve as leaders and role models in creating an inclusive workplace
<p>Equity Committee</p>	<p>The Equity Committee’s purpose is to drive equitable workforce outcomes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging Board members, workforce staff, job seekers and community partners in embracing and attracting diversity; • Addressing opportunity gaps affecting underrepresented populations in the Northeast Minnesota; • Introducing new perspectives and developing better solutions by ensuring People of Color and workforce clients are represented on the Board and committees; • Working to address and overcome implicit bias among workforce staff, Board members, and employers.

Attachment E

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SUB-GRANTEE LIST

**Regional Workforce
Development Area**

Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota

**Local Workforce
Development Area**

LWDA 3 - Northeast

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**

Region 2 – Northeast Minnesota

**Local Workforce
Development Area**

LWDA 3 - Northeast

Name and Location (City)	Program Service Delivered
Minnesota North College – Eveleth/Virginia	WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
Minnesota North College – Hibbing	WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
Minnesota North College – Rainy River	WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
Minnesota North College – Itasca	WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
Minnesota North College – Vermilion	WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
Virtual	RESEA/Unemployment Insurance
Public Libraries – Hibbing, Cloquet, International Falls	Wagner-Peyser; WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
Hibbing Housing Redevelopment Authority	WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, WIOA and State Dislocated Worker
High Schools – Rock Ridge, Mesabi East, Mt. Iron-Buhl, Ely, Northwoods, Chisholm, Hibbing, Nashwauk, Floodwood, Grand Rapids, Deer River, Aitkin, Carlton, Cromwell, Duluth East, Two Harbors, South Ridge, Hermantown, Proctor	WIOA Youth, Minnesota Youth Program, Youth at Work

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.

As detailed in LWDA 3 - Northeast Section A, there are five key industries in our region, the first four of which have been identified as targeted industries for regional workforce development activities:

1. Healthcare & Social Assistance
2. Construction
3. Manufacturing
4. Educational Services
5. Leisure & Hospitality