



## **Regional and Local Plans**

### **Minnesota's Workforce Development System under WIOA**

**Program Years 2016 & 2017**

Submitted by

RWDA: Northwest Regional Workforce Development Area -  
RWDA #1

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LWDA: Northwest Private Industry Council – LWDA #1

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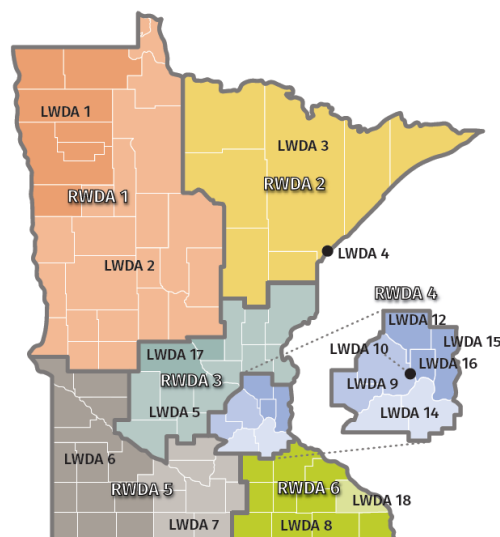
## INTRODUCTION

The purposes of the WIOA are the following:

- (1) To increase, for individuals in the United States, particularly those individuals with barriers to employment, access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services they need to succeed in the labor market.
- (2) To support the alignment of workforce investment, education and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system in the United States.
- (3) To improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education and economic development efforts to provide America's workers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages and to provide America's employers with the skilled workers the employers need to succeed in a global economy.
- (4) To promote improvement in the structure of and delivery of services through the United States workforce development system to better address the employment and skill needs of workers, jobseekers and employers.
- (5) To increase the prosperity of workers and employers in the United States, the economic growth of communities, regions and states and the global competitiveness of the United States.
- (6) For purposes of subtitle A and B of title I, to provide workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce development systems, that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increase attainment of recognized post-secondary credentials by participants, and as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet the skill requirements of employers and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.

### Workforce Development Areas

Minnesota has designated six Regional Workforce Development Areas (RWDAs) in the state that represent a combination of Local Areas, as defined in WIOA, and Economic Development Regions, as defined in other federal law. These Workforce Development Areas have been approved and adopted by the Governor and the chief local elected officials of the Local Areas.



Each Regional Workforce Development Area is responsible for submitting a Regional Plan, inclusive of the Local Plans of the Local Workforce Development Areas. The Regional and Local Plans will align with the strategic vision set by the Governor, address the regional needs of the workforce and business communities and comply with the planning requirements as determined by the State of Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development and the U.S. Department of Labor and applicable federal and state statutes.

## **Minnesota's Vision for the Workforce Development System**

### **Vision Statement:**

*A healthy economy, where all Minnesotans have or are on a path to meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage, and all employers are able to fill jobs in demand.*

This vision statement was developed through Minnesota's participation in the National Governor's Association's Policy Academy on Career Pathway Models. Minnesota's effort engaged seven state agencies and has influenced workforce development thinking at the system level. It is fitting to continue to move forward with pursuing the implementation of WIOA under this inclusive effort.

### **Mission:**

The creation of a Career Pathway System that aligns local, state and federal resources, policies and services to meet the workforce needs of business and industry and improves access to employment, education and training services for Minnesota's current and future workforce.

### **Rationale:**

The economic conditions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century require a more responsive approach to meeting the needs of business and industry; and the growing diversity of the workforce population. As economies become more global, competition will continue to increase and pressures on the inputs of production, specifically the timing, availability and skill base of the workforce. Rediscovering the value proposition of the Workforce Development System is critical to responding to the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

A Career Pathway System approach will position the needs of a skilled workforce at the center of the system, recognizing the important role of a "dual customer" approach – businesses and workers. Businesses will lead sector strategies that address the most critical growth needs in occupations that support family sustaining wages. The diverse needs of workers will impact the design and delivery of employment and training programs and services to fulfill these employment needs and their career goals.

## SECTION A: REGIONAL PLAN

### REGIONAL LEADERSHIP APPROACH

*The regional leadership approach describes how the local area boards within each regional workforce development area will define and coordinate the strategic priorities established by the Governor under WIOA.*

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

Through a joint meeting, key personnel from NWPIC and RMCEP were selected as the core leadership group to oversee the development and coordination of the regional plan. This included the Executive Directors from both LWDA's, the Regional Career Counselor Coordinator, and the RMCEP Director of Operations, who serves as lead plan writer.

2. 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**.

Through local area Workforce Development Board (WDB) meetings in each LWDA, a core group of Workforce Development Board members will join the above described Regional Leadership Planning Team to provide oversight and development of the regional plan. This oversight and development includes meetings of this joint group, integration of input, and approval of the direction and final written plan.

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

Diverse partnership engagement is ensured through the outreach to and inclusion of persons, leaders, and entities who represent these populations. Examples include the inclusion at various stakeholder meetings of membership from the Native Population Reservations that exist in Regional Planning Area 1, entities that work with the refugee and immigrant population, and social services. At two recently held stakeholder meetings, attendance by entities representing diverse populations and those who serve populations with barriers to employment included social services financial workers, membership from the local Tribal College, ABE, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, to name a few.

4. Describe how performance negotiations will be managed among the local workforce development areas within the region.

Performance measures and how they will be measured at the local levels has not yet been established by the state. LWDA's 1 and 2 will work collaboratively in the negotiations process once clarity has been obtained from DEED.

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

At present, the regional leadership has set goals for the next year as follows:

- 1) Conduct SWOT analysis or Risk Assessment on Region-wide basis;
- 2) Develop common vision for a skilled workforce; and, (see chart below)

Event	Lead	Timeframe	Complete
<u>Regional Planning/RC3</u> - Develop plan to continue work	Executive Staff Committee	May/June 2016	
<u>RC3</u> - Engage Secondary/Post Secondary Perkins Consortiums/ Service Coops.	Craig	May/June 2016	
<u>Regional Planning</u> - Engage RDC's (Develop MN Plan) and strategies to collaborate	Craig	June/July 2016	
<u>Regional Planning</u> - Engage WFC Partners Summer Meeting	Craig/Julie Sachs/Kristine Anderson	July 2016	
<u>RC3</u> - Engage Post Secondary Education.	Craig	July/August 2016	
<u>RC3</u> - Engage Secondary Education.	Craig	August/September 2016	
<u>Regional Planning</u> - Engage Business and Trade Associations	Craig	September/October 2016	
<u>Regional Planning/RC3</u> - Review Plans and progress	Executive WDC Committee	Sept/October 2016	
<u>RC3</u> – Update Plan for Legislature	Executive Staff Committee	September/October 2016	
<u>Regional Planning/RC3</u> – Report Progress to both WIBS	Craig/Dan/Kristine Anderson/Vicki	October/November 2016	

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

NWPIC and RMCEP began sharing policies and best practices prior to the concept of Regional Planning. We have begun to formalize this process through sharing of policies, adapting practices and providing training. We plan to continue to effort and have already had several meeting of Executive level personnel along these discussion.

7. 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.

NWPIC and RMCEP will consider and determine the need, format, and content of a cooperative service agreement to promote consistency within the region and align with state policy as we continue in our Regional Planning efforts. We will begin by reviewing current service arrangements of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) in both LWDA's.

## REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING

*The strategic planning component of the Regional Plan addresses three elements: strategic analytics, strategic approach and strategic operations. The overarching theme is to engage regional stakeholders in the process of establishing the strategic plan and to ensure that decisions are data driven and that the data can be used to measure gains and identify needs for improvement.*

**Strategic Analytics:** *The assessment of the regional workforce development area focuses on key conditions. These conditions are detailed in the following response needs.*

8. Describe the condition of the regional economy and cite the sources of data and analysis.

Northwest Minnesota has consistently reported higher unemployment rates than the rest of Minnesota. The unemployment rate in this region has been about 1% above the state rate from 2005 to 2008, even though this gap was narrowed in 2009 at the height of the recession. In June 2015, the unemployment rates for Economic Development Regions (EDR) 1, 2, and 5 were 4.8 percent of higher than the state rate. This unemployment trend is a strong reflection of the condition of the regional economy. There are pockets of economic strength around the larger cities, but most of this region is very rural.

Household incomes are significantly lower in the Northwest Region than the rest of the state. The median household income ranged from \$36,928 in Wadena County (the lowest in the state) to \$54,206 in Stevens County. 52% of the households in this region had incomes below \$50,000 in 2013, compared to 42.4% statewide. This compares to the cost of living in this area, which averages to \$57,408 for a family of 4, with one full-time working adult, one part-time working adult, and 2 children. The highest monthly costs are for transportation, food and housing.

Per capita incomes were also lower in this region than the state, at 25,037 in 2013, compared to \$30,913 statewide. Per capita incomes ranged from \$22,349 in EDR 2 to \$26,205 in EDR 4.

Northwest Minnesota has seen employment growth over the past decade, gaining 5,615 net new jobs from 2004 to 2014. However, the region experienced ups and downs during the last 10 years. The region was growing more slowly than the state prior to the recession, but also saw smaller declines during the recession and therefore had a shorter road to recovery. Like the state, the region fully recovered all of the jobs lost during the recession by 2013, enjoying a 4.2 percent gain between 2010 and 2014, compared to the state's faster 6.5 percent increase. According to DEED's Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program, Northwest Minnesota was home to 16,547 business

establishments providing 216,219 covered jobs through 2014, with a total payroll of just over \$7.7 billion. That was about 8 percent of total employment in the state of Minnesota. Average annual wages were \$35,776 in the region, which was over \$15,000 lower than the state's average annual wage. EDR 4 – West Central is the largest economic development region in Northwest in terms of employment, with 87,025 jobs at 6,737 firms; followed by EDR 5 – North Central with 60,547 jobs at 4,840 firms. EDR 2 – Headwaters was the smallest economy with 30,646 jobs, while EDR 1 – Northwest had the highest average annual wages in the region at \$39,000, though that was still \$12,500 less than the state. EDR 4 saw the largest job growth from 2010 to 2014, adding almost 4,000 jobs in that time. However, all four regions in Northwest added jobs since 2010, with the fastest increase occurring in EDR 2. All four regions in Northwest also gained jobs in the past year, with the region nearly matching the state's rate of job growth from 2013 to 2014.

From the *The Northwest Minnesota Economic and Business Conditions Report - 4th Quarter 2015*:

A steady pace of economic activity is expected in Northwest Minnesota over the next several months according to the predictions of the St. Cloud State University (SCSU) Northwest Minnesota Index of Leading Economic Indicators (LEI). Two of the five components of the leading index were lower in the fourth quarter and the LEI was essentially unchanged at -0.24 points. A fall in the Rural Mainstreet Index (which signals a more challenging macroeconomic environment for rural America) and a rise in initial jobless claims were the two components that helped drag down the LEI. Increased new filings for incorporation and limited liability companies (LLCs) and a rise in the number of residential building permits in the Fargo/Moorhead and Grand Forks/East Grand Forks areas contributed favorably to the regional outlook. Improvement in consumer sentiment was also a positive indicator in the fourth quarter.

There were 923 new business filings with the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State in Northwest Minnesota in the fourth quarter of 2015 — representing a 7 percent increase from one year ago. 112 new regional business incorporations were recorded in the most recent quarter, a 7 percent increase from the same quarter in 2014. In the fourth quarter, new LLC filings in Northwest Minnesota were up 6.1 percent from one year earlier—increasing to 504. New assumed names totaled 259 in the fourth quarter—1.5 percent fewer filings than the same period in 2014. There were 48 new filings for Northwest Minnesota non-profits in the fourth quarter—41.2 percent more filings than one year ago.

Employment of Northwest Minnesota residents increased by 3.6 percent over the year ending December 2015. The regional unemployment rate was 5.2 percent in December, significantly

lower than one year ago. Initial claims for unemployment insurance in December were 789 higher (an increase of 16.7 percent) than in December 2014. The average weekly wage rate in Northwest Minnesota was \$680 in the second quarter of 2015, an annual increase of 2.6 percent. The regional labor force expanded by 11,517 (a 3.9 percent increase) from one year earlier and the region's total bankruptcies fell to their lowest level in several years.

The Fargo/Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) experienced a mixed economic performance over the past quarter. This MSA tallied gains in overall employment (but decreased employment in two key sectors), a rise in average hours worked, an increased work force, and a lower unemployment rate. This was offset by reduced valuation of residential building permits, lower average hourly earnings, higher initial jobless claims, and a higher cost of living. Economic activity in the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks MSA was similarly mixed in the fourth quarter. Higher overall employment, a lower unemployment rate, a rising labor force, and higher average hourly earnings were offset by declining weekly work hours, a reduction in the value of residential building permits, increased initial jobless claims, and flat manufacturing employment.

#### Citations

- MacDonald, Richard A. and Banaian, King, "Northwest Minnesota Economic and Business Conditions Report - Fourth Quarter 2015" (2016). *Northwest Minnesota Economic and Business Conditions Report*. Paper 8.  
[http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/qebcr\\_nw\\_mn/8](http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/qebcr_nw_mn/8)
- Bodin, Chet. "2015 Regional Profile" (October 1, 2015)
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Labor Market Information (LMI).
- DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAU)
- DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 "American Community Survey 5-year Estimates."
- DEED Cost of Living Tool

#### 9. Describe the condition of the regional workforce and cite the sources of data and analysis.

To understand the condition of the regional workforce in this region, it is important to understand its population characteristics. One of the fastest growing non-metro area in the state, the population in Northwest Minnesota has increased by 6.1% from 2004-2014, as compared to a 10.9% increase in the state. The population in the northwest region is older than in Minnesota as a whole. Fully one-third of the population is above the age of 55. This region has over 5% fewer people in the 24-54 year-old age group than the state. Northwest Minnesota is expected to continue to see population growth for the next 20 years (projected 7.1%) as compared to the state at 10.8. Most of this population growth will be in the older age groups.

*LABOR FORCE LABOR FORCE CHANGE, 2000-2014:* According to data from



DEED's Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, Northwest Minnesota had an annual average labor force count of just over 297,000 workers through 2014. In line with the region's population increase, Northwest added over 22,000 workers since 2000, increasing from 275,256 available workers in 2000 to 297,374 workers in 2014. This 8.0 percent increase in available workers was the second highest growth rate of the six planning regions in the state, behind just Central Minnesota and ahead of the Twin Cities. Northwest Minnesota added nearly 10,000 workers during the recession from 2007 to 2011, but since then has seen less growth.

*LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS, 2015-2025:* Even if Northwest Minnesota's population changes at the projected described above, the region would be expected to see a decline in the labor force over the next decade. Applying current labor force participation rates to future population projections by age group creates labor force projections for the region, which show a small drop in workforce numbers due to the Baby Boom generation.

The labor force will see a significant shift over time, with small but rapid gains in the number of workers aged 65 years and over against huge declines in the number of workers aged 45 to 64 years. However, the region is still expected to see gains in the number of entry-level workers and 25 to 44 year olds, which will remain the largest segment of the workforce. This will lead to a tight labor market in the future, with employers needing to respond to changing labor force availability in the region.

*EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS, 2013:* With just 64.9 percent of the population aged 16 years and over in the labor force, Northwest had much lower labor force participation rates than the state's 70.3 percent. The region had lower labor force participation rates for every age group except 16 to 19 year olds. Age groups 55 and older had the lowest labor force participation rates when compared to state averages. Northwest also had much lower participation rates for most race groups, except American Indian and Asian workers. However, American Indians had a huge unemployment rate disparity in the region, as did Hispanic or Latino workers. Northwest had more than 17,000 veterans in the labor force in the region, with relatively low unemployment rates. In contrast, unemployment rates were highest for young people, minorities, workers with disabilities, and people with lower educational attainment.

#### Citations

- Bodin, Chet. "2015 Regional Profile" (October 1, 2015)
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Labor Market Information (LMI).
- DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAU)
- DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages
- Minnesota State Demographic Center

10. Describe the condition of the regional workforce development system and cite the sources of data and analysis (SWOT analysis).

In the Northwest Workforce Development Area, the local board had previously designated a single Workforce Center located in Thief River Falls. This location is centrally located in the seven county local area and the physical office is located on the Northland Community and Technical College campus. Local staff at the Workforce Center includes the following core partners: Northwest Private Industry

Council (local board and WIOA administrative entity); Inter-County Community Council (contracted provider for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth career services, as well as independent recipient of Minnesota Youth Program and Senior Employment Services funding); State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development/DEED Job Service Staff/Wagner-Peyser, Contracted provider of MFIP/TANF and SNAP employment services for several local counties, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Adult Basic Education also has a classroom on the Northland college campus, but does not co-locate in the same office suite. Other core services that are available for phone referral include Veterans Services and Business Services.

In LWDA 2, Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. is the service provider and WIOA administrative entity, administering WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, MN State Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, Minnesota Youth, and Senior Community Service Programs. RMCEP also contracts with 19 counties to provide MFIP/TANF and SNAP services.

There are eight Workforce Centers in LWDA 2: Alexandria, Bemidji, Brainerd, Detroit Lakes, Fergus Falls, Little Falls, Moorhead and Wadena. The RMCEP Administrative Offices are located in Detroit Lakes. All services are provided through these WorkForce Centers. Core partners in the WorkForce Centers include Wagner-Peyser staff who provide DEED Job Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Services for the Blind. Not all partners are permanently located at each center, but all centers have access to partners through itinerant, scheduled visits to each center.

Our ABE partners are located in their respective communities and often are co-located with our MnSCU partners.

Both the NWPIC and RMCEP have traditionally worked together on various projects and programs and have already begun to share best practices, policies and procedures. The regional efforts begun with this plan are a natural progression in this partner relationship.

Over the course of the next year as a function of Regional Planning, we plan to jointly conduct a SWOT analysis or Risk Assessment that will assist us as we move forward in these efforts. SWOT or Assessment topics may include strategic, financial, governance, operational and regulatory issues.

11. Describe the regional workforce development area's vision for a skilled workforce.

The Region's vision for a skilled workforce will be developed through our regional planning efforts in this upcoming year. Regardless, both LWDA's hold as priorities meeting employers' workforce development needs through training potential employees to meet those needs. We believe that work is the key to a successful life; from providing a sustaining wage to individuals to providing skilled workforce to area employers, who can then provide goods and services allowing for stronger economies in Northwest Minnesota.

**Strategic Approach:** *The core areas of the strategic design focus on priorities of the Governor and the system of service delivery.*

## Area 1 – Sector Partnerships

12. Describe how the region will use the labor market information and conduct outreach to business and industry to select the targeted sectors for developing career pathways for occupations in demand that provide family sustaining wages. If sectors and occupations have been already selected, describe them within this response. Complete **Attachment G – Local Workforce Development Area Key Industries in Regional Economy**.

The Stakeholder meeting held on April 6, 2016 thoroughly reviewed labor market information via the Regional Profile to identify workforce demographics, projections and occupations in demand. Our local Labor Market Analyst is a member of our core stakeholder group. NWPIC and RMCEP constantly utilize the DEED LMI site as well as other reliable source data to determine local and regional workforce development conditions, projections and needs.

At this particular meeting, the stakeholders identified several industries of note (see Chart G) and also held a detailed discussion of area labor market trends that also need to be addressed in Planning Region 1.

Final industries, sectors and/or occupations to target for developing career pathways have not yet been finalized, but will be based on labor market data.

13. Describe how the make-up of the sector partnerships will be determined and the expertise and resources they bring to the partnership.

The make-up of the sector partnerships will be determined once the targeted industries/sectors have been finalized. We expect not only industry representatives of the respective sector, but also entities that provide training (MnSCU, ABE), agencies that work with issues that are barriers to employment, and agencies that work with minorities and other disparities, youth, and service providers to be involved in the sector partnership. This broad, yet specific partnership will be able to bring their respective expertise to address issues and begin to map a valid career pathway that will lead to sustainable employment.

14. Describe how the partnership(s) will work toward developing and implementing a career pathway sector strategy during the two years of this plan. If sectors and occupations have not been selected, address the process for these decisions within this response.

We plan to develop the partnership as describe above. Several stakeholder meetings will be held to address the issues and trends of the identified sector, identify any current career pathway model within that industry, and develop a comprehensive career pathway as a result of the expertise brought to the table by the partnership.

Key to this effort is that the pathway must be business-led.

Through these efforts, our plan is to:

- Be responsible for mapping the pathway according to sector input
- Ensure core program activities are aligned with the sector partnership
- Identify the skills and credentials for occupations in the pathway according to sector input and along a continuum of career advancement

- Identify ways to include experiential learning in the pathway
- Train service provider staff in providing targeted career services for the pathway
- Ensure the focus on educational pipelines that link skills and credential requirements from K-12 to ABE to post-secondary opportunities
- Identify additional supports and strategies to serve low-skill, low-wage individuals

## Area 2 – Stakeholder Engagement

15. Describe the process for identifying the characteristics, size and scope of populations not fully benefiting from the economic recovery, experiencing factors such as high unemployment, lack of credentialed skills and other barriers to employment.

Using data available through the Regional Profiles, LMI, State Demographics, Census, Unemployment Statistics, and other valid resources, we will identify these criteria. Through our stakeholder meetings, we will verify the data and gather local trend data with this group. The resulting data and verifying process will provide us with solid information to begin to develop strategies to address these discrepancies.

For example: We know that our Native American populations face very high unemployment on the 3 reservations within our collective service area. We also know there are high levels of poverty within our service area counties as well. We plan to expand our exploration to focus on developing strategies to more closely align workforce development efforts to meet these specific needs.

16. Describe who will be included in the broad stakeholder engagement to address a targeted number of socio-economic issues faced by diverse populations.

Once we have identified the issues through the process described in above, we will include stakeholder entities that a) work with populations facing the identified socio-economic issues and, b) represent that population. An example is the inclusion of entities that assist refugees and immigrants, tribal council members, or MFIP service providers. Employers are also key to this engagement because they bring to the table their expertise, solution and/or barriers they have already experienced in employing diverse populations with socio-economic issues.

NWPIC and RMCEP already have well-established partnerships with community organizations and entities who have specializations in working with diverse populations. Inclusion of these partners in our stakeholder groups is a natural part of the regional planning process.

17. Describe how this engagement will impact the development and implementation of the selected sector strategies during the first two years of this plan.

As noted above, this engagement will allow us to identify the causes of barriers and recommend additional strategies, supports and resources that can be brought to ensure successful access to employment and training services and career

pathways.

### Area 3 – Employment & Training Program Design

18. 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, based on career pathway thinking.

Again, part of our plan is to conduct a SWOT analysis or Risk Assessment to identify ways we can build on our collective strengths and successes and strengthen our collective weaknesses to better provide services to our customers and clients across the region. We will develop these strategies through our stakeholder engagements to provide for a broad perspective.

We will more closely align the entry to career pathways with our ABE partners, as appropriate. The contextualized bridge courses that work with basic skills along a career pathway continuum has proven effective for this region in the past. We hope to expand and create a more seamless entry point, as appropriate with clients, in this venue with ABE.

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

Largely as a result of the outcomes of our analysis, the entities responsible will be identified. As noted above, for example, we have already identified a need to more closely align career pathway entry with our ABE partners. Training providers, business and industry, service providers, social assistance providers, entities that work with diverse populations or with specific socio-economic disparities will most likely be among those identified in the analysis.

20. Describe how the outcomes will be determined in terms of employment and training services modeling career pathway thinking by the end of the two year plan.

We want to work toward developing a focus on expanding access and strategies that will open more opportunities for learning, more options in starting training, shorter training periods (laddering), more provision for experiential learning, and more work-based training opportunities. We want to focus employment and training services on developing and implementing more culturally diverse approaches and expanding access to these services. Career pathways can be entered and progressed via multiple methods and access points along a continuum.

## SECTION B: LOCAL PLAN

**Strategic Operations:** *The core elements of strategic operations focuses on operating policies and procedures related to the one-stop system and physical locations of service delivery.*

1. Describe how local area boards will work with each other, core title providers and available data to designate at least one WorkForce Center per local workforce development area and make recommendations on recognizing affiliate and standalone partner sites.

In the Northwest Workforce Development Area, the local board has previously designated a single Workforce Center located in Thief River Falls. This location is centrally located in the seven county local area and the physical office is located on the Northland Community and Technical College campus.

Local staff at the Workforce Center includes the following core partners:

- Northwest Private Industry Council (local board and WIOA administrative entity)
- Inter-County Community Council (contracted provider for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth career services, as well as independent recipient of Minnesota Youth Program and Senior Employment Services funding)
- State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development/DEED
  - Job Service Staff/Wagner-Peyser
  - Contracted provider of MFIP/TANF and SNAP employment services for several local counties
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is a Title II provider under WIOA. There are two ABE consortia in LWDA#1: Northwest Service Cooperative (NWSC) ABE is based out of Thief River Falls and oversees 16 ABE classrooms in 27 school districts located within LWDA's #1 & 2. Tri County Community Corrections ABE is based out of Crookston, with classrooms in Fosston and at the county jail in Crookston. Adult Basic Education has a seat on the Workforce Development Board, represented by a member of NWSC ABE who assists in representation of ABE partner programs.

Adult Basic Education also has one classroom co-located on the Northland college campus, but does not co-locate in the same office suite. Workforce Center and ABE staff are trained to make appropriate referrals between agencies. Other ABE classrooms outside the WFC are available for phone referral.

Other core services that are available for phone referral include:

- Veterans Services
- Business Services

The local board will continue to work with core providers on site selection and discuss methods to designate affiliate sites. Our core partners have physical locations in the many area communities in the local area as described in Attachment F.

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

Since we currently only have one full Workforce Center in our service area, physical coordination is not an issue the board will consider at this time. In the event the local board considers adding affiliate sites, connectivity and coordination between the Workforce Center and those sites would be considered.

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

The Northwest Private Industry Council has recently amended our bylaws to include the addition of a one-stop committee. This committee has not yet begun its work, but it is anticipated that the members will collectively act to coordinate the work of the service providers within our local workforce development area. Members will also consider ways in which the core partners can best share information, and coordinate staffing levels to avoid the duplication of services. Members will review and consider state guidance on this issue and look to other workforce development areas for ideas on best practices.

Coordination and connectivity between service providers (such as the Workforce Center and the DEED offices in Roseau, East Grand Forks and Crookston) is achieved through itinerant staff that travel between locations. Service providers are knowledgeable about ABE services in their areas, and are able to connect and refer clients to ABE classrooms in the communities within their workforce service areas.

ABE will soon establish a classroom that is co-located with the DEED office in Crookston. Physical co-location of partner services in that community will allow for better referral and seamless educational services delivery to all clients.

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

The current hours of operation at our Workforce Center and partner sites is from 8 am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. Non-traditional hours are available to accommodate special needs such as evening facilitation of workshops, including recently introduced Job Search Workshops at public libraries on Saturdays. Additional strategies that can maximize client services, especially those with barriers will be considered.

ABE programs are located throughout the region in a variety of locations, including county jails, churches, schools, community centers, college campuses and libraries. Services are offered at varied times throughout the week, and online learning platforms provide access to content and instruction during non-traditional hours.

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.

WIOA identifies specific areas of Career Services. The local board, either by staff or through contracts and MOUs with local partners, provides the following services to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system:

- Outreach,
- intake and orientation
- Initial assessment
- Labor exchange services
- Eligibility for services
- Referrals to programs
- Performance and cost information
- Information on unemployment insurance
- Financial aid information and
- Follow-up services

Recent regional planning efforts have emphasized the importance and desire for customers of the WorkForce Center and its partner agencies to create a service delivery system where there “no wrong front door.” The vision behind this goal is to eliminate barriers to accessing services.

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

Our local board recognizes the entire workforce development system needs to enhance online services that virtualizes the WorkForce Center experience and augment services provided at WorkForce Centers. However, due to the size of technological investment that is necessary to accomplish this goal, the local board is unable to make significant contributions as a single entity. We support the increased state set-aside amount to accomplish this goal for all providers in the state, and will work with our state partners in testing promising strategies for their effectiveness in our rural area.

ABE programs embed technology in all classes and continue to expand access to distance learning platforms throughout the state. Access to digital platforms allows students with mobility challenges to access technology based instruction. The North Star Digital Literacy assessment is available to all ABE consortia classrooms statewide to help assure that learners master basic computer skills in a variety of areas, and students have the option of taking the assessment under a proctored environment to earn a portable North Star Digital Literacy certificate. All ABE sites within the region meet accessibility standards.

7. 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.

One of the benefits of having Inter-County Community Council as the provider of program services for our WIOA programs is the ability of staff to more easily blend other supportive services available in the area. Inter County Community Council is a private, non-profit Community Action Organization that was established in 1965. Its mission is to provide services, assistance and other activities of sufficient scope and magnitude to give promise



of progress toward the alleviation of poverty, its symptoms and its causes. ICCC is the contracted program provider for WIOA Adult, DW, State DW and WIOA Youth activities. In addition, ICCC assists families and individuals throughout our service area by offering a number of programs designed to help people meet their basic needs while supporting their movement toward greater economic self-sufficiency. These supportive services consist of:

- The Family Service Department
- The Food Shelf
- Energy Assistance
- Crisis Fuel
- Weatherization
- Housing
- Minnesota Youth Employment and Training program (direct grant recipient)
- Senior Employment
- Early Head Start and Head Start

ICCC's core service area includes Pennington, Red Lake, East Polk and Clearwater counties. ICCC works closely with the two other Community Action Organizations in our area (Northwest Community Action in Badger and Tri-Valley Community Action in Crookston) to help clients living in those service areas access these same supportive services.

8. 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.

Upon receipt of these policies from our state partners, the local board will review, consult with our local partners, and begin work to implement policies on the local level to ensure compliance with infrastructure funding.

At the present time we utilize a cost allocation plan for the Thief River Falls WorkForce Center that is coordinated with our partners from Job Service and Vocational Rehabilitation. This plan includes calculations for costs associated with space, communications, reception area and resource area usage, as well as a site manager. This plan is updated annually to reflect changes in staffing, lease increases and program participation.

When considering "costs of infrastructure" with respect to the WorkForce Center, we use the federal definition that "means the nonpersonnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the one-stop center, including the rental costs of the facilities, the costs of utilities and maintenance, equipment (including assessment-related products and assistive technology for individuals with disabilities), and technology to facilitate access to the one-stop center, including the center's planning and outreach activities."

In the event that the local board, chief elected officials, and our local partners are unable to reach consensus agreement on methods of sufficiently funding the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers for a program year, we will utilize the methods identified in WIOA law.

Due to our relatively small allocation, the local board welcomes direct allocations from the Governor as outlined in WIOA for purposes of assisting in funding the costs of

infrastructure of one-stop centers, especially those in rural areas where the infrastructure costs can be proportionally much greater than in larger areas. It is critical that as partners in the larger statewide system, our local area has adequate resources to be able to continue to provide high quality service for employers and job seekers in this far northern corner of the state. While the NWPIC receives a very small percentage of the State's allocation, we still must comply with all the administrative and programmatic requirements of the largest programs. In the past five years, our allocations have fallen by more than 50 percent, while infrastructure costs have risen.

9. 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.

Following the guidance in the WIOA law, but not yet having final rules, the local board understands that the method for determining the appropriate portion of funds and noncash resources to be provided by the one-stop partner for each program for a one-stop center shall be determined as part of the development of the memorandum of understanding. We look forward to forthcoming communication from the State board regarding "guidance to facilitate the determination, for purposes of the memorandum of understanding, of an appropriate allocation of the funds and noncash resources in local areas, consistent with the requirements of section 101(d)(6)(C)."

The local board and partner agencies have begun preliminary discussions on future space planning, due in large part to the high costs associated with the current location. It is anticipated that these discussions will continue over the next several months as we work collaboratively to identify potential options that may be more cost effective for all organizations and programs, while also increasing our presence and service to the community.

10. Describe how the Memorandum of Understanding will be developed and used to ensure commitment of resources from service providers and required partners.

The local board understands that WIOA expands upon the concept of infrastructure funding and programs required to participate. Absent final federal regulations, we also understand that the state will continue to enforce the existing Cost Allocation Policy which is under review for potential updates. Our local area board will continue to have the responsibility to ensure that this policy is adhered to by workforce system partners they contract with or have other agreements with, via MOUs or other documents.

The local board further understands that the WIOA law calls for our local board, with the agreement of the chief elected officials, to develop new Memorandums of Understanding with our local partners concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area. Pursuant to WIOA each new memorandum of understanding shall contain provisions describing the following items:

- 1) the services to be provided through the onestop delivery system, including the manner in which the services will be coordinated and delivered through such system;
- 2) how the costs of such services and the operating costs of such system will be funded, including—funding through cash and in-kind contributions (fairly evaluated), which contributions may include funding from philanthropic organizations or other private entities, or through other alternative financing options, to provide a stable and equitable funding stream for ongoing one-stop delivery system operations; and
- 3) methods of referral of individuals between the one-stop operator and the one-stop partners for appropriate services and activities;
- 4) methods to ensure the needs of workers and youth, and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, are addressed in the provision of necessary and appropriate access to services, including access to technology and materials, made available through the one-stop delivery system; and
- 5) the duration of the memorandum of understanding and the procedures for amending the memorandum during the duration of the memorandum, and assurances that such memorandum shall be reviewed not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services.

As final regulations are announced and state policies are provided, our local board will review, consult with our local partners and then begin work to implement policies on the local level to ensure compliance with infrastructure funding.

11. A. Describe the local area board's strategic vision and how it aligns with the designated state priorities under WIOA.

The local board is working during this period of WIOA transition to more fully engage key stakeholders into the discussion of a building a revised local vision and mission statement for the seven county area. In doing so, the goal will be to develop strategies alongside key community partners that will better connect community, government, business and education to implement the state's vision statement: *a healthy economy, where all Minnesotans have or on the path to meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage, and all employers are able to fill jobs in demand.*

The Northwest WDB has not engaged in a full strategic planning process for several years. The timing of WIOA and changes in leadership at the local level make this issue ripe for the work of the local board over the next two years. It is anticipated that the local board will use the Governor's Workforce Development Board as a resource and as a "jumping off point" to establish local goals that align with the state's vision. As that process is developed and flushed out at a local level, findings and comments will be filtered up to the state board for consideration.

The preliminary goal is to develop a process whereby our key stakeholders are engaged in a collective process designed to find solutions based on our strengths that help solve our unique challenges. Reaching this goal will require active engagement from our employers, educational institutions, and communities in a way that ensures we identify skills deficiencies, encourage collaboration and avoid duplication of efforts on activities

related to workforce and economic development. Part of this work will also include efforts that coincide with the larger statewide effort to build brand awareness and support of the larger workforce development system.

As this process takes shape in the coming months, employers in Northwest Minnesota continue to express a high-need for skilled workers with strong soft skills. As such, aligning the work skills of job seekers with the needs of Northwest Minnesota employers remains a key priority for the Northwest WDB. In order to ensure the continued economic vitality of our region, we recognize that full workforce participation is essential, including those traditionally under represented and those with the most barriers to employment. The Northwest WDB will continue to work with core partners to ensure job seekers receive high quality job search assistance, and career guidance, and that training opportunities are consumer-driven to lead to employment in in-demand occupations within the region.

The goals outlined in Minnesota's State Plan cannot be accomplished through the work of one agency, but need to be part of a multisystem effort. The local board acknowledges this and will continue to build relationships with key stakeholders within the region, including job seekers, employers, WorkForce Center Partner agencies, institutions of higher education, and community based organizations.

- B. Describe the local area board's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

Connecting individuals to education, and providing support services for those in education including career navigation, employment placement and retention is the foundation of existing programs. When a WIOA-eligible client, including an eligible youth who is seeking training first talks with a Career Counselor, the first thing that occurs is a discussion of the ultimate goal of the client, or identifying the field they wish to enter or 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 obtaining that ultimate goal. Because of the limitations of WIOA funding of no longer 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 WIOA clients, including youth, have plans to eventually build upon their vocational training, whether by finishing a bachelor's degree or other specialized training. Ensuring that WIOA services provide the necessary foundation for those future plans precisely illustrates our capacity to provide career pathway services to youth.

Another way to consider this capacity is through our partnership with ABE. Often clients, including youth with barriers to employment come to us wishing to enter a post-secondary training program but don't have a diploma or 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 youth are not set up for failure but rather have the appropriate skills in place before they set out on their pathway.

All WIOA-funded youth will be closely followed through their career pathway and provided a myriad of necessary supports to keep them going. Critical among these supports for

many students is the provision of transportation assistance for those that travel a great distance to attend school. Chief among our services is the provision of placement assistance upon graduation. Local Workforce Centers offer a series of placement services including resume development, mock interviews, Creative Job Search, and other workshops designed locally. Incidentally these workshops and services are also available to universal customers who may have been working on their own career pathway independently. Identifying both career pathways and stackable credentials for career planning helps youth to chart a viable path for life-long learning and career development. Stackable credentials and clearly identified career pathways like these that exist in health care occupations allow youth to start careers with entry level employment and move upwards with additional skill attainment. Close working relationships formed by counselors within business and industry provide insights and credible information about the skills they desire from their workers.

By utilizing the MN Careers book and the most recent NW Regional pamphlet on high growth and in-demand occupations in the region, youth are introduced to the importance of choosing a career path that aligns with individual strengths, abilities and aptitudes. ISEEK.org has a number of tools to assist youth in the process of choosing an appropriate and achievable career pathway.

ICCC has long standing partnerships with providers of Adult Basic Education, Alternative Learning Centers, high school counselors, and special education teachers. The local college counselors, Homeless Youth services (ICCC), DW/Adult, MFIP, DWP caseworkers, VIP, the Department of Corrections. Headstart Staff (ICCC), are just a few of the partners who may also serve/come in contact with young adults with barriers.

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

For purposes of this local plan, NWPIC will provide the PY15 performance indicators until which time PY16 Measures have been negotiated.

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

The strategic goals and vision of the local board will be developed over the course of the next two years. As those broad goals are created in collaboration with our core partners, we will look for improved methods of service delivery and implementation in our local area.

12. 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.

Despite the reduction in funding for the in-school youth population under WIOA, activities related to the outreach and recruitment will continue. These actions will include:

- Strengthened connections with school districts in the service area, including Alternative Learning Centers to educate and inform school staff about WIA/WIOA programs with an emphasis on guidance counselors, social workers' and special education teachers, to ensure program information is available to students most "at risk."
- Encourage present and past participants to share program information with their friends and family members.
- Participate in community events such as career expos, Including the Northern Valley Career Expo, as well as other community outreach events in the service area.
- Establish regular contact with county employment services staff in the area to determine if they have any clients or their family members who may benefit from youth services. This includes working with county social services and other agencies that serve "at risk", youth and their families such as food shelves, mental health services, homeless youth and domestic violence advocates to identify youth that could benefit from services.

The local workforce development partners are crucial partners with post-secondary entities and business, working to helping untrained workers obtain skills that lead to meaningful careers. Every effort will be made to link job seekers with academic and technical training relevant to their career goals, across secondary and postsecondary education.

According to DEED's Occupations in Demand tool, about 150 occupations are showing relatively high demand in the region, with training and education requirements ranging from short-term on-the-job training to postsecondary education to advanced degrees. These occupations are spread across different sectors but are also concentrated in the region's major industries. For example, nursing assistants, secondary school teachers, and light truck drivers are the top three occupations based on the consistent need for workers in these industries. Six of the top 25 jobs are in health care, and 5 are production-related. Examples of education and credentials that individuals may need to find employment in the industry sectors listed above are contained in the table below.

Less than High School	High School or Equivalent	Some College or Assoc. Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers (\$27,671)	Office Clerks, General (\$29,371)	Nursing Assistants (\$24,468)	Secondary School Teachers (\$52,419)
Janitors & Cleaners, exc. Maids & Housekeeping (\$26,921)	Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks (\$34,974)	Registered Nurses (\$58,999)	Industrial Engineers (\$69,849)
Cashiers (\$19,601)	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers (\$30,181)	Licensed Practical Nurses (\$38,936)	Network & Computer Systems Admins. (\$60,570)
Retail Salespersons (\$22,857)	Tellers (\$26,766)	Emergency Medical Techs. & Paramedics (\$27,186)	Mental Health & Substance Abuse Social Workers (\$46,845)
Home Health Aides (\$23,771)	Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselors (\$45,842)	Medical Assistants (\$31,555)	Accountants & Auditors (\$59,980)
Packers & Packagers, Hand (\$28,170)	Social & Human Service Assistants (\$29,004)	Heating, Air Conditioning, & Refrig. Mechanics (\$63,108)	Pharmacists (\$137,490)
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers (\$18,211)	Customer Service Representatives (\$34,024)	First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers (\$52,394)	Family & General Practitioners (\$178,235)
Machine Feeders & Offbearers (\$33,073)	Order Clerks (\$36,871)	Mechanical Drafters (\$42,975)	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Mfg. (\$66,223)
Personal Care Aides (\$22,821)	Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks (\$34,320)	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (\$36,660)	General & Operations Managers (\$67,722)
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, & Aquaculture (\$20,703)	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators (\$29,070)	Computer User Support Specialists (\$50,944)	Child, Family, & School Social Workers (\$51,795)

*Source: DEED Occupations in Demand*

13. A. 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.

According to our Regional DEED report, the Employment characteristics (2013, most recent available) for our seven county area is defined as follows:

With just 67.6 percent of the population aged 16 years and over in the labor force, Region 1 had lower labor force participation rates than the state's 70.3 percent. However, the region actually had higher labor force participation rates than the state for most age groups, yet the overall rate was lower because a higher percentage of Region 1's labor force was older.

In contrast, the region had lower participation rates than the state for all but two race groups; and

	Region 1			Minnesota	
	In Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
<b>Total Labor Force</b>	<b>45,919</b>	<b>67.6%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
16 to 19 years	2,584	54.3%	15.4%	50.9%	20.2%
20 to 24 years	3,812	78.7%	9.6%	81.6%	11.2%
25 to 44 years	17,036	89.4%	4.9%	88.2%	6.3%
45 to 54 years	11,457	87.6%	4.1%	87.5%	5.6%
55 to 64 years	8,508	74.1%	3.6%	71.7%	5.5%
65 to 74 years	2,133	29.4%	3.6%	26.5%	4.5%
75 years & over	383	5.1%	6.3%	5.8%	4.6%
<b>Employment Characteristics by Race &amp; Hispanic Origin</b>					
White alone	43,787	67.7%	5.0%	70.5%	6.3%
Black or African American	302	59.5%	12.6%	67.6%	17.5%
American Indian & Alaska Native	434	63.6%	17.3%	60.1%	18.8%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	492	79.0%	13.0%	69.8%	8.5%
Some Other Race	377	64.2%	11.4%	77.6%	10.9%
Two or More Races	503	59.7%	8.9%	69.0%	14.4%
Hispanic or Latino	1,343	69.2%	12.5%	75.1%	10.4%
<b>Employment Characteristics by Veteran Status</b>					
Veterans, 18 to 64 years	2,813	79.1%	6.0%	77.8%	7.7%
<b>Employment Characteristics by Disability</b>					
With Any Disability	2,711	55.4%	9.6%	51.6%	14.6%
<b>Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment</b>					
Population, 25 to 64 years	36,993	84.8%	4.4%	84.2%	5.9%
Less than H.S. Diploma	2,092	71.6%	8.7%	66.9%	14.6%
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	11,291	80.9%	6.2%	79.4%	8.0%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	15,624	88.0%	3.6%	85.6%	6.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	7,985	89.0%	2.0%	89.1%	3.4%

*Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates*

had large unemployment rate disparities for most minority groups, with the exception of American Indians and workers of Two or More Races. Region 1 had about 2,800 veterans and 2,700 workers with disabilities in the labor force, with both having much lower unemployment rates in the region than the state.

Given this data, the local board, together with our core partners, will be considering how we can develop strategies that target opportunities for young people, minorities, workers with disabilities, and people with lower educational attainment.

A primary strategy in this regard will be to expand the use of career pathways methods and models, including the identification of career ladders and lattices within the key sectors or occupations in demand within the region. One core partner, Northwest Service Cooperative Adult Basic Education, provides a range of educational options throughout the region, aimed at increasing a student's access to employment. These include: development of basic literacy skills, instruction aimed at attaining an adult high school diploma or GED, English as a Second Language, digital literacy instruction, and college and career readiness preparation. Industry specific training opportunities have taken place in a number of areas, including Certified Nursing Assistant programming, Manufacturing Certificate training for New Americans, pre-Healthcare, and pre-Welding math instruction. ABE has been co-located on several college campuses, including Thief River Falls and East Grand Forks, for a number of years, and works extensively to remediate learners experiencing barriers to college success, including Accuplacer prep courses and support of instruction within Developmental Education classrooms. 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 student co-enrolled in public assistance and workforce programming.

- B. 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.

Our current local policy regarding supportive services is designed to address barriers to employment that many eligible individuals experience in our local area. Our current local policy reads, in relevant part, as follows:

The term "supportive services" means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA, consistent with the provisions of WIA.

The intent of this policy is to provide guidance to insure participant needs are assessed, community resources are utilized, assistance is provided equitably and accountability of funds is maintained.

**Policy and Procedures:** The following policy and procedures are the basis for providing client support services within the Northwest Workforce Service Area.



1. Support services are based on the individual client need determined by the objective assessment.
2. Supportive service needs must be specified in the Individual Service Strategy.
3. Case Managers should make every effort to utilize other existing community resources and programs such as mental health centers, food shelves, housing programs, county social services, fuel assistance programs, Community Action Agencies, and other identified community resources to meet identified client needs. This should be accomplished through referral to other agencies and the referral documented in the client record. Follow-up should be conducted on all referrals to ensure that the needed resources were received by the client.
4. The reason for support services must be documented and must relate to the need as defined in the Individual Service Strategy. All support service transactions must be noted in the client's case notes in Workforce One. A Support Service Request form must be completed by either the client or the case manager and must be retained in the client records. (Attachment A). Case managers must be aware of the current funding available in each fund source to insure that sufficient funding is available to assist clients with support services.
5. All supportive service requests require team approval. Individual case managers are not to authorize approval of any support without the involvement of other staff. Reasons for approval or denial of the client request must be documented in the client record.
6. The amount of funding available for support services is limited. To ensure that every client has the opportunity to access these funds as needed, the maximum amount any one client may receive under support service is \$3,000. The \$3,000 limit applies to the life of the participant's enrollment. The Individual Participant Support Services Log must be used to track cumulative support service amounts for each client in order to guarantee that the \$3,000 limit is not exceeded. In addition, Support Service requests of \$500 or higher must have the approval of the NWPIC prior to authorizing any expenditure. The Case Manager is to track the amount of each participant's cumulative support services on the Individual Participant support Services Log (Attachment B).
7. All client support service expenditures must be submitted to the NWPIC for approval and for payment utilizing the NWPIC Payment Invoice (See Attachment C) and by following these procedures:
8. [The policy also outlines the procedure for processing of the payment invoice.]
9. Case Managers are to insure that support services, once approved, are utilized within an appropriate time frame. Case Managers are to review client files on a monthly basis and approved support services that are not going to be used should be de-obligated.
10. An individual may receive support services following exit from the WIA program for up to 90 days after exit from the program. The goal of follow-up services is to ensure job retention, wage gains and career progress. The client must not be able to obtain support services from other programs or agencies providing such services and the need for support must be documented in the client record and must be necessary to

ensure the client's job retention.

11. A review of the most common types of support follows along with some discussion as to what should be considered when requests for these items arise.

**Child Care** - This service is provided to help clients meet their family care needs during participation. Child care is a crucial element for many of our local clients. If a client has children who may need child care this should be identified in the client case notes as a potential need. The clients assessment should also include information on family members who may be available to provide child care and eligibility for child care assistance from county social services, MFIP or any other non-WIA provider. Because child care can consume program funds at a very rapid rate, all other providers of child care must be exhausted prior to authorizing child care under WIA. The NWPIC has issued a separate child care policy. Interested parties should refer to Northwest Workforce Service Area Letter 109.1 for the complete child care policy and the forms necessary to comply with the policy directive.

**Transportation Expenses** - This is service provided to ensure mobility between home and location of employment or training. Examples would be public transit fares, gas, oil, tires, vehicle repairs and maintenance and insurance. The payment of vehicle repairs or insurance may only be paid on vehicles owned and driven by the participant. Documentation needs to be in the client record verifying ownership of any vehicle by the client before any support service funding can be spent on vehicle expenses, with the exception of gasoline purchases. Vehicle repair requests should be accompanied by a quote from an accepted vendor in our area. Accepted means that repair is performed at a professional level even though this may not be the least expensive. Backyard repairs by the client or by friends are not allowed. Vendors should be aware that anything not on the original quote by the vendor or is added after the quote will not be paid without pre-approval.

Crucial vehicle systems should receive priority. Brake systems, tires, or components that have a direct and immediate impact on the safety of the client should have priority immediately after repairs that allow the vehicle to operate.

Payment of auto liability insurance for clients is permissible. Payment of auto insurance is to be limited to a maximum of three months. Case managers should assist clients in planning for their insurance coverage after the three months.

**Clothing Costs** - A service which will allow the client to improve job search and interview potential or to provide items required for training or as a condition of employment, upon completion of training. Clothing for work, interviews and school are allowed costs. The case manager and the client need to agree on the specific items of clothes authorized and the maximum cost allowed to the client for approved clothing. Programs such as Dress for Success and the use of thrift shops are ways to maximize the assistance provided to clients. All receipts submitted for payment need to be carefully scrutinized to ensure that clients or vendors are not billing for non-authorized items of clothing or non-clothing items.

**Rent and Deposits** - This service exists to help the client maintain or obtain adequate shelter. The NWPIC will not pay rent deposits. Payment of rent will only be covered on a one time basis for existing housing. Payment of the first month's rent for relocation for a job would be acceptable even though rent had previously been

paid. The employment must be verified and documented in the client record prior to authorizing payment of rent in this situation.

**Licenses and endorsements** - Drivers licenses and endorsements can be paid. Fines cannot be paid when the reinstatement of a Driver's License includes fines. Licenses and certifications such as Nursing licenses, teaching licenses, Nursing Assistant Certification needed by the client to obtain employment are allowable costs.

**Moving Expenses** - Clients can be assisted with relocation expenses that involve transportation of self and possessions to another community for the expressed purpose of beginning new employment. The employment must be verified and documented in the client record. Payment of moving expenses without verified employment is not allowed.

**Telephone and Utilities** - NWPIC will not pay for phone connections, re-connections, costs or bills, unless it can be shown that the services are a necessity to client performance of employment, or that the client is dependent on the phone to summon emergency medical help for an existing condition, or if the client safety requires assistance because of a dangerous or abusive environment.

Utilities are not an allowable cost unless the client is in danger or having electrical or gas service shut off and is unable to get assistance from another agency. Notice from the utility company threatening service shut off must be retained in the client record.

**Medical Cost** - As a rule medical costs are not allowed. Exceptions would be the first month of health insurance payments, eye exams and glasses, and dental exams. Payments for purchase of health insurance without which the client would not be able to participate in employment or training activities is permissible. Case Managers should work with the clients not covered by medical assistance to obtain Minnesota Care or COBRA coverage.

**Tools:** A service to provide items required for training or as a condition of employment. The case manager must work with the employer or if the training provider to identify only those items necessary for training or employment. Funds should not be used to purchase tools or related items that are over and above what is initially needed to adequately perform their job duties or to meet their training requirements. The client and the Case Manager must complete and sign the NWPIC Tool Agreement.

This was not meant to be an all inclusive list but rather to provide a guideline for case managers on the most common types of expenditures. Questions regarding other types of support should be directed to the NWPIC for clarification prior to authorizing the expenditure at the client level.”

This supportive service policy, along with all other policies, will be reviewed as final WIOA regulations are announced.

- C. 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.

Connecting participants to education, providing support services, case management, job search and placement assistance are all essential components of the services and programs provided by sub-contractors of the Northwest Private Industry Council.

The Northwest Workforce Service Area acknowledges that for career pathways programs to be successful, they need to be part of a multi-system effort and not the responsibility of a single agency. As such administrative and program staff have worked toward establishing positive working relationships with other agencies that provide services to adult learners, such as DEED, local MnSCU institutions, community based organizations and the Northwest Service Cooperative ABE.

While the inter-agency relationships needed for implementation exist, we have been very limited in our success of getting all of the necessary partners on the same page to pursue additional funding opportunities that would support those learners with the most barriers in meeting their educational and employment goals. The Northwest WIB and the Northwest Service Cooperative Adult Basic Education fully support the concept of career pathways and continue to advocate the importance of this type of programming with area partners. However, we do not believe that a successful, sustainable career pathways system can be developed in our region until all of the necessary partners fully support this type of system and are willing to invest the resources necessary for sustainability. During the next year we will continue to focus on education and professional development with regard to Adult Career Pathways for NWPIC staff, members of the WIB, and staff of partner agencies. We will also be conducting outreach with local area employers to determine training needs and encourage interest and participation in career pathway development.

**NCTC Manufacturing Certificate Program For New Americans** Locally, there has been recent movement on the development of a more robust career pathway in the manufacturing sector and assisting New Americans in the East Grand Forks area. This newly developed program is being coordinated by Northland Community and Technical College as part of a larger Department of Labor TAACT grant. The program is currently being offered to the first cohort group on the Northland Community and Technical College, East Grand Forks Campus. The course is a 17-week program, with 153 hours of instruction that includes:

*American Manufacturing Workforce Basics (81 hours – 9 weeks):* The first 9 weeks is taught by local ABE instructors. The curriculum was developed and designed with input from local manufacturing human resource professionals. This component includes basic language and math skills, foundational computer skills, and use of the Northstar Digital Literacy assessment. Students will also learn about workplace culture and common workplace matters for New Americans including how to handle family illness and family emergency and reasonable accommodation guidelines for religious observances, dress, and related – understanding rights and expectations, accommodations, and so forth within workplace environment.

*Job Search Nuts and Bolts (9 hours – 1 week):* During this component students will be taught the basics of resume development/writing and will leave program with a personal resume. This portion of the course will be taught by local Workforce

Center partner staff.

*Manufacturing Workplace Skills (63 hours -- 7 weeks):* This portion of the course will cover the following topics: Safety (includes OSHA 10 Hour training and certification), Manufacturing 101, general measuring tools, schematic/print reading/diagrams, hand and power tool – basic safety and use.

**Health Care Career Pathways Working Group:** This group has begun its work in the past year and is currently surveying area employers to better understand the workforce needs they are experiencing in the health care industry. The group consists of one-stop partners from job service and NWPIC, employers from health care (including mental health), community and technical college, ABE, and county social service directors. Members are exploring what career pathway models have been successful in other parts of the state.

14. A. 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.

Local employers are engaged as active board members and as key members of the working groups described above. (Discussed the New American and HealthCare Career Pathways Working Group). In the past two years, new board members have been targeted for recruitment from in-demand industry sectors to ensure those industry needs are represented at a board level. In addition, several board members are also active within their own industry in gathering input and sharing regional concerns across among local area professionals.

For example, two of our board members from the manufacturing sector meet twice a year with other human resource leaders in the manufacturing sector to share workforce concerns and brainstorm solutions. This NW MN HR group, is an “unofficial” group that includes HR top leaders and professionals from Marvin Windows and Doors, Polaris, Central Boiler, Digi-Key, Arctic Cat and ANI Pharmaceuticals. Key information from this group helps inform larger workforce development programs.

Board Members also serve on the Northwest Minnesota Manufacturers Association. This group meets ten times during the year and includes Marvin, Polaris, Central Boiler, Wabanica and QC Techniques, plus professionals from the local banking industry who provides information and insight regarding other industry sectors. This group includes HR representatives, CEO's, Presidents and other executives from each company in similar discussions.

Most recently (since the publishing of the draft plan), a group has started meeting to brainstorm and look into the possibility of hosting a Northwest Minnesota Small Business & Entrepreneurship Conference in the Spring of 2017. This initial group consists of representatives from the NWPIC, DEED Job Service, University of Minnesota Crookston Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, Thief River Falls Chamber of Commerce, Pennington County Economic Development. We hope to include additional partners from the Small Business Development Center, the Northwest Regional Development Commission, and the Northwest Minnesota Foundation. We are talking with the planners of the Incredible

Ely Conference and will use their knowledge and past experience to craft and plan a similar event to serve businesses and start-ups in this corner of the state.

- B. 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.

Our local businesses are in dire need of skilled and entry level workers with strong soft skills. Local businesses have for a significant amount of time recruited outside the local area for jobs that require certain levels of education or training. For example, engineering positions are much more difficult to fill than entry level positions. However, during the past several years our larger local employers, specifically in manufacturing, are increasingly recruiting outside of our region to fill even entry level positions. While commitment to the region remains strong, several of our larger manufacturers have been compelled to expand their operations to other communities outside of our region due to the lack of available workers locally.

The workforce shortage is not a problem limited to our large employers. Our larger local businesses offer competitive benefits and wages and are hiring on a consistent basis. This in turn creates hiring difficulties for smaller local businesses who perhaps cannot afford to offer similar hiring incentives. In recent years, an increasing number of local retail and food establishments have increased their starting wage above minimum wage as an effort to attract and retain workers in these entry level jobs.

Our local businesses have developed strong recruitment strategies and offer competitive wages and benefits however; they continue to have difficulty in getting new workers to move to the area because of the lack of available housing. This issue is especially prevalent in the communities of Thief River Falls, Roseau and Warroad, but effects many of the communities in our region to some degree. Businesses need quality, affordable housing options that will assist them in their efforts to recruit and retain their workers.

There is increasing concern and vocalization regarding workplace values (soft skills). Because of the current workforce shortage, most local businesses are willing to invest time and resources to train workers for entry level positions. However, for many employers, retention of workers has become an issue because a significant number of job seekers lack the “soft skills” needed to be successful in the workplace.

Retirement of workers age 55 and older continues to contribute to the local area workforce shortage. These retirements create challenges for employers because of the knowledge and experience that is lost when these individuals leave the workforce. Businesses need to develop succession planning strategies that will allow at least a portion of this knowledge to transfer to incoming workers. This problem is compounded further by the outward migration of youth from the local area leaving to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities. Many youth do not return to the area after they have completed their educational programs.

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

Our long-standing Memorandum of Understanding with the seven county boards in our local area calls for the use of the executive committee of the Northwest Regional Development Commission to act according to a joint powers agreement as the Chief Elected Official. This allows for a natural coordination of programs and services with the regional economic development organization. We are considering ways how we can further strengthen this cooperation in the future.

Another broad initiative that coordinates the activities of our regional economic development providers is through the participation and work of IMPACT 20/20. This is a group of public and private sector business leaders brought together to develop a business driven vision for the regional economy. The members of this group represent 12 counties in Economic Development Regions I and II. Taskforces, consisting of IMPACT 20/20 members and their support staff, have been formed to complete the work required to achieve several strategically focused objectives that have been defined by the group. The initiatives and objectives of IMPACT 20/20 are as follows:

**Education IMPACT:**

- Improve four year on-time graduation rates in high schools in Northwest Minnesota, and
- Increase the number of local college students obtaining two- and four-year degrees from local institutions.

**Broadband IMPACT:**

- Ensure that all communities in the region of 500 or more residents will have business-grade broadband access speeds of greater than 20Mb-download/10Mb upload within five years, and
- That all residents of the region will have access to broadband speeds of 10Mb-download/5Mb-upload within the same time frame, and
- The Federal Universal Service Fund (USF) will be expanded to recognize the inclusion of broadband service within five years.

**Workforce IMPACT:**

- The goal of the Workforce Impact taskforce is to enhance the career success skills of students preparing to enter the workforce.
- Identify key players/partners and define their roles, including the role of the WDB.

The Northwest Minnesota Foundation has taken on the responsibility of organizing and convening the activities of the Leadership Council and its Taskforces. The Leadership Council is composed of representatives from the Northwest Department of Natural Resources, University of Minnesota-Crookston, Red Lake School District, the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, the Northwest Regional Development Commission, University of Minnesota Extension Service, Red Lake Reservation, North Region Health Alliance, Northwest Technical College, Sjoberg Cable, the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute, Titan Machinery, Mahube Community Council, Ottertail Power, the Northwest Service Cooperative, Northland Community and Technical College, Headwaters Regional Development Commission, the White Earth Nation, Rural Minnesota CEP, Northwest Mental Health Center, the Praxis Strategy group, and the Northwest Private Industry Council.

Each Taskforce is composed of members from the Leadership Council and their support staff. The NWPIC Executive Director has been an active participant on the IMPACT 20/20

Leadership Council and has participated in the development of the regional vision of the initiative. The Executive Director also actively participates in the activities of the Workforce Taskforce. The group has recently added a Housing taskforce as part of the group. The NWPIC Executive Director is an active participant on the Leadership Council and the Workforce Taskforce.

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

The local board is very interested in strengthening the linkages with the unemployment insurance programs. In fact, one of our key recruitment strategies for our dislocated worker programs has been for our program staff to provide a brief overview of dislocated worker services during the UI reemployment sessions. Unfortunately, these sessions are no longer offered at any physical location in our seven county service area. The local board would support a system-wide approach that would include the re-introduction of these regular UI sessions being offered at a minimum of one location in our service area.

15. 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 Northwest WDB is supportive of entrepreneurship as a valid method of re-entering the workforce after dislocation. In many cases, individuals pursuing entrepreneurship can benefit from career guidance, business related training, assistance in the development of a business plan, and/or assistance in obtaining needed startup financing. The Northwest WIB and its service providers will provide assistance and/or referrals for other services based on the goals/needs identified in the person's Individual Service Strategy.

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

The Northwest WDB is committed to providing staff development opportunities for program staff and the staff of contracted services providers. At this time, the following areas are targeted for staff training:

- Program Performance Measures
- WorkForce One
- Labor Market Information and Tools
- Creative Job Search Train the Trainer
- Occupations in-demand



- Resource Area and Reception Certification Training
- Social Media in Job Search
- National Career Readiness Credential and WorkKeys Assessment
- Customer Service
- Career Pathways
- Customer Registration System Training
- MN Performs and Rosters Training
- PWIR and CSWIR Training
- Rapid Response Process and Reporting Requirements
- Reintegration of ex-offenders

This is by no means an exhaustive list, and will be revisited as other training opportunities arise. ABE is developing training for Navigator/Career Counselor roles within ABE in the coming year. Career counselors from the Workforce Center are invited to ABE programs, and may benefit from some of the training that is being developed by ABE.

The WDB will continue to support training that can be done locally and will continue to encourage staff to attend quality statewide training and conferences. In addition, regional partnerships with Rural Minnesota CEP will be developed to expand staff training throughout the region.

The Northwest Private Industry Council administrative staff conducts monthly desk reviews of program spending and performance. Reports are provided to the WDB on a quarterly basis and action plans for improvement are developed as needed. Administrative staff also conducts internal monitoring of participant files for each program annually. This provides program staff and contracted service providers with feedback on their performance. The reports generated from the internal monitoring are then shared with the WDB. The purpose of this monitoring is helpful for both the program provider and the WDB so that together we can refine our internal processes and identify any existing training needs.

Administrative staff meet with program and contracted service provider staff on a regular basis to review program performance and standards, provide training, update staff on new and updated policies and procedures, and discuss program and service related issues.

NWPIC is also a member of the Minnesota Workforce Council Association (MWCA). This membership assists this region in capacity building, evaluation and reporting, and continuous improvement. One of the activities of MWCA is the Mystery Shopper program. The reports generated from this evaluation of services are shared with the WIB and also with the members of the WorkForce Center management team. The management team meets regularly to discuss common issues, customer services, and to identify joint training needs and opportunities.

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

**Employers**

Our local employers are in dire need of skilled and entry level workers with strong soft skills. Local businesses have for a significant amount of time recruited outside the local area for jobs that require certain levels of education or training. For example, engineering

positions are much more difficult to fill than entry level positions. However, during the past several years our larger local employers, specifically in manufacturing, are increasingly recruiting outside of our region to fill even entry level positions. While commitment to the region remains strong, several of our larger manufacturers have been compelled to expand their operations to other communities outside of our region due to the lack of available workers locally.

The workforce shortage is not a problem limited to our large employers. Our larger local businesses offer competitive benefits and wages and are hiring on a consistent basis. This in turn creates hiring difficulties for smaller local businesses who perhaps cannot afford to offer similar hiring incentives. In recent years, an increasing number of local retail and food establishments have increased their starting wage above minimum wage as an effort to attract and retain workers in these entry level jobs.

Our local businesses have developed strong recruitment strategies and offer competitive wages and benefits however; they continue to have difficulty in getting new workers to move to the area because of the lack of available housing. This issue is especially prevalent in the communities of Thief River Falls, Roseau and Warroad, but effects many of the communities in our region to some degree. Businesses need quality, affordable housing options that will assist them in their efforts to recruit and retain their workers.

There is increasing concern and vocalization regarding workplace values (soft skills). Because of the current workforce shortage, most local businesses are willing to invest time and resources to train workers for entry level positions. However, for many employers retention of workers has become an issue because a significant number of job seekers lack the “soft skills” needed to be successful in the workplace.

Retirement of workers age 55 and older continues to contribute to the local area workforce shortage. These retirements create challenges for employers because of the knowledge and experience that is lost when these individuals leave the workforce. Businesses need to develop succession planning strategies that will allow at least a portion of this knowledge to transfer to incoming workers. This problem is compounded further by the outward migration of youth from the local area leaving to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities. Many youth do not return to the area after they have completed their educational programs.

### **Workers**

There is great need for incumbent worker training to grow the work skills of the worker on the job. As businesses and their equipment become more technically and mechanically advanced, workers will need continued training and updating of skills. The need for continued training also relates to defined career laddering within businesses that provide a worker with the opportunity to advance to other positions within a firm as the worker’s skill level and experience grow. This is especially true for the small businesses that may lack the resources to provide a great deal of incumbent worker training. Many of the larger employers have been able to devote time and resources to develop internal training or to seek professional level training through outside resources.

### **Job seekers**

Job seekers in the local area need and want good career planning information. They want to be provided with industry specific information about the qualifications needed to obtain high-demand, high-growth, and high-wage jobs with employers in the local area. Job seekers have also indicated the need for low cost, short term training that would allow them to enter the work place sooner or that would allow them to obtain better

employment without spending two or more years in a formal training program. Many job seekers feel that they are in dead end jobs but find it difficult to move into something better because of their lack of experience or because of their lack of specific work skills.

Current job seekers need good “soft skills.” Many employers have expressed that they are willing to invest the resources needed to train individuals with good “soft skills.” There are quality jobs available but employers want to hire individuals who have good communication skills and a strong work ethic. Job seekers who do not have a good understanding of standard workplace expectations like timeliness, regular attendance, and workplace behavior are at a distinct disadvantage compared to job seekers who do understand these expectations. Addressing the lack of “soft skills” in job seekers is not any easy task as behavioral norms are often established early in life.

Basic computer skills are becoming increasingly important for job seekers as businesses become more dependent on technology. Most jobs today require some level of interaction with computers or other types of technology, and many organizations are moving to online job applications. To address this issue, job seekers will need affordable training opportunities that will allow them to develop their computer knowledge and skills.

- C. 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.

Due to the small size of our local area and limited resources available for significant investments in technology, our local one-stop looks forward to working with our statewide partners in their continued work on an integrated case management system for all one-stop partners.

- D. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system will comply with section 188, 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.

Due to the small size of our local area and limited resources we look to the state DEED office for technical assistance and guidance in meeting these provisions. On a statewide level, an accessibility assessment is completed at each WorkForce Center, prior to certification and at intervals on an ongoing basis. The WorkForce Center is equipped with accessible equipment and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) monitors this equipment to ensure it is current and in working order. Software developed by DEED for the WorkForce Centers are designed to be fully accessible. All programs within the Minnesota WorkForce system are expected to be fully accessible to all Minnesotans. Vocational Rehabilitation Services located within the WorkForce Centers are available for consultation with other programs, should unexpected issues of accessibility occur. There is co-enrollment and collaboration between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the other partners, which further enhances overall accessibility.

## E. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

Local staff at the Thief River Falls Workforce Center includes the following core partners:

- Northwest Private Industry Council (local board and WIOA administrative entity)
- Inter-County Community Council (contracted provider for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services, as well as independent recipient of Minnesota Youth Program and Senior Employment Services funding)
- State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development/DEED
  - Job Service Staff/Wagner-Peyser
  - Contracted provider of MFIP/TANF and SNAP employment services for several local counties
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Services

These three agencies are or will be part of the Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) for the Workforce Center space. Costs are determined on space usage and customer/program visits, among other factors outline in the CAP.

Other core services that are available for phone referral include:

- Veterans Services
- Business Services

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

Local Labor market information on high-growth, high-wage occupations is available to all job seekers through the local WorkForce Center, NWPIC and DEED offices. Also, all program staff are trained and kept up to date on regional occupations in demand. Case Managers who work directly with job seekers are responsible for incorporating information on high-growth, high wage occupations into their career counseling sessions with program participants. This information is used to better inform job seekers of the opportunities available within the local region and allows job seekers to make informed decisions about their future career choices.

Those individuals who are pursuing training and placement in high-growth, high demand and high-wage industries and occupations that are supported by the local labor market are the first persons selected for occupational skill training funding, once all priority of service conditions for veterans have been satisfied. Once veterans and persons pursuing training in high-growth and high-demand industries in the local area are selected, training for other occupations will be considered as funding permits. The same selection process is used when contracting with local businesses for on-the-job training opportunities.

18. 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.

*Dropouts and potential dropouts:* Our ultimate goal for out-of-school youth will be placement and retention in unsubsidized employment at livable wage in high growth, demand occupations as well as the completion of an occupational skills training.

Strategies we will employ to help youth meet that goal include:

- Assistance in obtaining a high school diploma/GED
- Basic Skills: Ensure youth have the basic skills necessary to succeed in education/employment.
- Occupational Skills: Youth to obtain a credential in an occupational skills training
- Work Readiness Skills: Ensure youth have job seeking and job keeping skills

These strategies will require the coordination of services with local school districts, GED/ABE programs, college prep programs, post-secondary education and WorkForce Centers.

Youth will be encouraged and supported to complete their high school diploma or GED and attain some type of post-secondary education. A four-year college degree is not for everyone so youth will be informed of other training opportunities such as two year degrees or one year certificates at community and technical colleges, apprenticeships, On-The-Job Training, and occupational licensures or certifications.

For potential high school dropouts, services will be individualized to address their specific needs. As significant barriers are identified, a service strategy is developed to overcome the barrier. Depending on the needs of the youth, the strategy may be more frequent contact for intensive one-on-one services. Often the strategy includes a referral or coordinating other community resources such as Rehabilitation Services, Adult Basic Education (ABE/ESL/GED), Human Services, corrections.

There are two ABE consortia in LWDA#1: Northwest Service Cooperative (NWSC) ABE is based out of Thief River Falls and oversees 16 ABE classrooms in 27 school districts located within LWDA's #1 & 2. Tri County Community Corrections ABE is based out of Crookston, with classrooms in Fosston and at the county jail in Crookston. Adult Basic Education has a seat on the Workforce Development Board, represented by a member of NWSC ABE who assists in representation of ABE partner programs.

NWSC Adult Basic Education also has 1 classroom co-located on the Northland college campus in Thief River Falls but does not co-locate in the same office suite. Workforce Center and ABE staff are trained to make appropriate referrals between agencies. Other ABE classrooms outside the WFC are available for phone referral.

*Youth in foster care and aging out of foster care:* Youth staff will work closely with several organizations to identify youth that could benefit from these services including: Human Services, corrections/probation, foster care agencies, foster parents, mental health professionals and schools.

Homeless youth or runaways: ICCC is the service provider for the Family Homeless Prevention Assistance Program (FHPAP) and also Homeless youth up to age 21. The goal of these program is to stabilize families or individuals in their current housing unit or re-house without a day of homelessness. The program also assists families or individuals who are homeless find permanent housing and maintain that housing. FHPAP provides case management services and support services to assist with rent, other housing costs, transportation, or education expenses. Youth ages 14-21 are a priority group to receive these services.

Youth offenders and at-risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system: In addition to the work readiness, basic skills (including high school diploma/GED) and occupational skills training that is assessed and addressed, we will pay particular attention to the barriers that youth face due to their adjudication. We may provide the youth a work experience or internship in their local community or connect them with opportunities in another community if there are reputation issues.

Our youth providers will work with youth one-on-one to explore issues that may have caused adjudication and refer them to other community resources as needed such as drug/alcohol, mental health, financial and legal counseling. Also important are other provided services such as:

- Intensive job search assistance
- Assistance developing employment plans and goals
- Resume workshops and personal resume development assistance
- Mock interviews, interview practice and coaching
- Short-term training resulting in credentials
- Internships, work experience, On the Job Training and volunteer work
- Promotion of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and Federal Bonding Program incentives for employers
- Ongoing support services to ensure/encourage job retention
- Referral to support services

Youth with disabilities: In addition to the work readiness, basic skills (including high school diploma/GED) and occupational skills training that is assessed and addressed, staff will identify barriers that need to be addressed due to disabilities. Staff work closely with special education at high schools in the area.

Teen parents: In addition to the work readiness, basic skills (including high school diploma/GED) and occupational skills training that is assessed and addressed, staff will identify barriers that need to be addressed due to being a teen parent. Our youth providers will refer and coordinate with other community resources such as county human services, Public Health, Women Infants and Children (WIC), Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), etc.

ICCC staff also provides specialized services to teen parents on the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) in the seven county are, through a MFIP Innovation Grant. Teen parents work with a single point of contact that act as a mentor to assist teens in navigating and accessing community resources. The program includes comprehensive services that promote high school completion, prepare teens for the world of work through work experience opportunities, connects teens to community resources to improve personal development and supports healthy lifestyle decisions for teen parents and their children.

ICCC provides specialized services to teen parents who are also receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) benefits through the Teen Parent Project that was funded by the Department of Human Services. The Teen Parent Project provides work experiences to teen parents receiving MFIP benefits where they can work an average of 29 hours per week, while meeting their MFIP work participation requirements.

ICCC has long standing partnerships with providers of Adult Basic Education, Alternative Learning Centers, high school counselors, and special education teachers. The local college counselors, Homeless Youth services (ICCC), DW/Adult, MFIP, DWP caseworkers, VIP, the Department of Corrections, HeadStart Staff (ICCC), are just a few of the partners who may also serve/come in contact with young adults with barriers.

19. 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.

In addition to the Outreach to schools that is done by Inter-County staff as part of their Minnesota Youth grant work, the NWPIC works with the following additional events:

Northern Valley Career Expo - The objectives of the Northern Valley Career Expo are:

- To expose secondary students to regional in-demand occupations and training programs that will help them prepare for employment in the region in high-wage rewarding careers.
- To educate the youth of the Northern Valley about Workplace Values and the importance they play not only in business but in life in general.
- To enhance collaboration between business, education, and the public sector.
- To highlight shared assets that make our communities and region a dynamic place to live and work.
- To provide an avenue for business and industry to showcase their products and services to help educate youth about the career opportunities within the region.

The planning committee for the Career Expo is a small sub-set of the original North Dakota/Minnesota Collaborative. Minnesota group members include representatives from the East Grand Forks Economic Development and Housing agency, Northland Community and Technical College, East Grand Forks Public Schools, and the Northwest Private Industry Council. North Dakota partners include representatives from the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation, Job Service North Dakota, Grand Forks Public Schools, UND Office of Workforce Development, and the UND Office of Lifelong Learning and Professional Development.

The University of North Dakota representatives have taken the lead on planning logistical details and have assigned a staff to act as coordinator for the event. Representatives from the North Dakota Economic Development Corporation and UND have taken the lead in recruiting sponsors and exhibitors for the event, but all partners continue to work on garnering support through their individual agency contacts. All partners are responsible for marketing the event to local businesses as an opportunity to connect and educate local youth on the opportunities that are available within the region.

The NWPIC Executive Director and the Job Service North Dakota representative work closely with the Grand Forks and East Grand Forks Public Schools to assist with the development/selection of the pre-expo career exploration activities and also to ensure that the Expo's events are focused on high-wage, high-demand career opportunities within the region.

The Northwest WIB and Youth Committee fully support this initiative.

The 4th Annual Northern Valley Career Expo was held in November 2015 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, North Dakota. The event was attended by over 1,200 tenth graders from 23 area high schools. The Expo continues to gain momentum thus attracting the attention of several additional schools and many new sponsors/exhibitors in its second year. The planning group continues to focus on continuous improvement as it moves into its third year of the planning process.

The WIB has been involved in this initiative since its beginning. The Northwest Private Industry Council Executive Director regularly attends full group planning sessions.

This event serves students and schools that are west of Highway 32. Though coordination with the Impact 20/20 project with the Northwest Minnesota foundation, a similar event is planned and hosted for schools east of Highway 32 in Bemidji.

21. 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.

Transportation issues remain a major barrier to many job seekers in our region. The distance and cost for job seekers to transport themselves long distances are additional challenges to worker recruitment and retention. This is exacerbated by the limited availability of public transportation in Northwest Minnesota. However, there have been some inroads made to provide public transportation in the Crookston and Thief River Falls areas for those persons commuting each day for employment.

Finding adequate child care and the cost of this service are other issues that are barriers for job seekers especially for those individuals living in rural areas or small communities. Finding child care for children less than a year old is extremely difficult in all parts of the region.

The availability of housing is an increasing issue for job seekers within the region. Housing shortages prevent the mobility of our local workforce and those wishing to move to the region. The lack of quality affordable housing is especially prevalent in the communities of Roseau, Warroad, and Thief River Falls, but also affects the surrounding communities as workers expand their housing search when they have exhausted their efforts to find housing in the community in which they want work. The lack of housing is directly related to transportation issues as many workers are required to travel long distances to reach their place of employment.



Job seekers are also looking for jobs that provide them with benefits, especially health care benefits. Many small employers or employers providing low wage employment do not offer health care benefits. This has become even more important due to rising health care costs throughout the nation.

22. 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.

Minnesota's WIOA State Plan describes the state's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to Wagner Peyser's targeted population of UI claimants. The strategy (details currently under development with an implementation date of July 2016) will be as follows:

- A Wagner Peyser staff person will attend every Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (REA) session that the UI program offers across the state. The UI program typically offers REA sessions to approximately 40,000 applicants per year to those who are at risk of exhausting their benefits.
- The REA and Wagner Peyser staff will conduct a quick assessment of every participant to determine who will most likely need additional services from the WorkForce Center.
- The Wagner Peyser staff person will conduct an overview of WFC services either 1:1 or in a group setting (depending on the size of the group) that includes information on how to register for the state's labor exchange system MinnesotaWorks, and information about programs such as the Dislocated Worker program that they may be eligible for.
- The Wagner Peyser staff person will assist the REA customer with creating an initial registration and enrolling in the Creative Job Search workshop. Creative Job Search is typically the first job finding/job placement service that is offered to UI applicants. The workshop consists of training on how to find a job that includes career planning, preparing for the job hunt, skills identification, resumes and cover letters, applications and references, social media, interviewing skills, and more.
- Wagner Peyser will follow up with REA participants who are not enrolled in a program to ensure that they have a complete registration and resume in MinnesotaWorks, and that they are taking advantage of job placement services.

The Wagner Peyser program also provides services to businesses with a half-time Business Services Representative (BSR) assigned to the Northwest LWDA. The goal of the BSR(s) is to contact businesses in the key industry sectors identified in state and local plans, help the business solve their workforce issues, and promote job openings to job seeking customers in the WorkForce Centers.

23. 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, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

Our local educational institutions need continued support and involvement of our local businesses/employers in the form of consultation for program development, advisory committees for program maintenance, internship opportunities, and student mentoring. Our local educational institutions also need strong connections with local business and industry to work in partnership on placement of graduates in local employment opportunities that are in-demand within the region.

The Northwest WSA is a rural region with large distances between communities. Our local educational institutions need resources to continuously improve access to adult learners through localized training and distance education opportunities.

Our local educational institutions need to continue to grow and develop relationships with local partners and community based organizations so services provided to adult learners are provided through a comprehensive system of support. Working together to provide a seamless service delivery system will have a positive impact on the outcomes for all parties involved including students, job seekers, and local businesses.

23. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11)) 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.

ABE has been a strong and active partner in the local and regional workforce development system throughout LWDA #1. One of the two ABE consortia in the region has long been co-located on two college campuses, and down the hall from the region's only Workforce Center. ABE administers CASAS and TABE assessments for dislocated workers throughout the region, co-enrolls and cross refers students to employment service programs, and provides basic literacy skills development, digital literacy training, and core literacy skills development through career pathways partnerships across the region. While many of these career pathway programs are in their infancy, ABE is eager to continue this work more closely with the local area board to build upon the foundations that have been laid across the region.

Once every five years, each ABE program in the state of Minnesota must provide a program narrative to the State Department of Education/Adult Basic Education. This narrative outlines their service delivery model and the programming that is offered within

the consortium. In the future, 5 year narratives will include provisions for local ABE programs to provide evidence that their programming aligns to the local and regional WIOA plans. These components may include evidence of a common referral process, alignment of assessments and assessment processes, co-location of services, collaborations of programming, and evidence that ABE is included in the selection and design of key occupational sectors and pathways within the region. All ABE consortia will re-compete for federal funding in 2017, and a new 5-year rotation will begin the following year. Northwest Service Cooperative ABE will submit its next five-year narrative in June, 2018 and Tri-County Community Corrections ABE in June of 2020. Under this provision of WIOA, it is expected that once approved by MDE, the narrative will then be shared with the local WDA board for review and comment, therefore creation of this narrative will occur with local and regional workforce strategies in mind.

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

Pursuant to WIOA, and in order to assist in administration of the grant funds, the chief elected official or the Governor, where the Governor serve as the local grant recipient for a local area, may designate an entity to serve as a local grant subrecipient for such funds or as a local fiscal agent.

The current Memorandum of Understanding between the Local Elected Officials Board and the Northwest Private Industry designate the NWPIC as the as the grant recipient and administrative entity for activities under the Workforce Investment Act. This MOU is renewed every two years and that process is expected to be completed again on or before June 30, 2016.

25. 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 this title.

The local board uses a competitive Request for Proposals process to solicit and award sub-contracts. This process was most recently started in July 2015 for Adult and Dislocated Worker program services. The local board published a notice in each of the official newspapers in each county in the service area. In response, the board received three full proposals for consideration of Adult and Dislocated Worker services. A sub-committee of the local board scored and reviewed the proposals, and made a recommendation to award the contracts to the organization that scored the highest. In September, the local board voted to follow the recommendation of the review committee the awarded the contract to Inter-County Community Council.

In November 2015, the local board announced again announced a request for proposals for Youth services by publishing a notice in each of the official newspapers in each county in the service area. The board received a single letter of intent from its current provider, Inter-County Community Council. Having received no other proposals, the board voted in January to contract with ICCC for youth services.

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 and the One-stop delivery system.

The local board expects that it will review performance on a quarterly basis, as well as a more in-depth performance year at the close of each program year. Staff will provide board members with a dashboard of key performance indicators, allowing board members to identify and manage potential issues early in the program year. In the event that adjustments to local policy or service delivery need to be made, the local board will work with contracted providers and one-stop partners early and often on developing strategies to correct any deficiencies.

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.

The local board looks forward to receiving these factors from the Governor's Workforce Development Board and providing input on the development of these factors. The local board would specifically request comprehensive training and orientation for board members.

28. Describe how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), 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.

Information on high-growth, high-wage regional occupations is available at the local WorkForce Center and DEED offices. Job seekers and program participants interested in pursuing classroom training are made aware of this Labor Market Information and encouraged to pursue these occupations. A review of all participants in training during program year 2013 who were enrolled in WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, and State Dislocated Worker programs revealed that 97 percent of the participants, within the Northwest WSA, are being trained for occupations in high-growth and high-wage industries in Northwest Minnesota as defined by the MnCareers supplement. It is estimated that at least 80 percent of classroom training participants would be engaged in training programs for occupations in high-growth, high-wage industries for program year 2014. The WSA will continue to give priority for training in high-growth and high-wage occupations as long as the area employers continue to support this effort and as long as they hire participants who complete the desired training.

The local WSA will use funds WIA funds for incumbent worker training if there is a local need that meets State and Federal guidelines regarding the use of WIA Funds for Incumbent Worker Training.

The local WSA has identified that there is a need for incumbent worker training. These needs do not always correlate with a potential or eminent layoff but frequently occur as employers grow their businesses, update equipment/technology, or seek to replace workers who are leaving the workforce. The Northwest WDB would certainly utilize funds and support any initiatives that would provide additional resources for businesses looking to update the skills of their current workforce.

The local WSA utilizes On-the-Job Training in the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, State Dislocated Worker, and Out-of-School youth programs. We utilize On-the-Job Training as an alternative training option for individuals who are not interested in a traditional classroom training program. On-the Job Training can assist job seekers in getting back into the workforce more quickly and can also greatly benefit our local employers.

At this point there has been minimal interest expressed in apprenticeship programs from area job seekers. However, the Northwest WDB would certainly support apprenticeship training as a viable means of training for job seekers and program participants.

The WDB recognizes that ABE has been a strong and active partner in the local and regional workforce development system throughout LWDA #1. One of the two ABE consortia in the region has long been co-located on two college campuses, and down the hall from the region's only Workforce Center. ABE administers CASAS and TABE assessments for dislocated workers throughout the region, co-enrolls and cross refers students to employment service programs, and provides basic literacy skills development, digital literacy training, and core literacy skills development through career pathways training partnerships across the region.

29. 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.

Following the requirements of WIOA, our local board will, at a minimum, take the following steps to provide opportunity for public comment on the development of this local plan:

- 1) make available copies of a proposed local plan to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;
- 2) allow members of the public, including representatives of business, representatives of labor organizations, and representatives of education to submit to the local board comments on the proposed local plan, not later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the proposed local plan is made available; and
- 3) include with the local plan submitted to the Governor under this section any such comments that represent disagreement with the plan.

On April 1, 2016, a draft of the local plan was made available to the public via a PDF

accessible file on our website. Comments were accepted until May 2, 2016. We received one written comment from our local ABE provider and those comments were fully incorporated into the final plan now submitted. In addition, on April 6, 2016, we will hold a regional meeting with key stakeholders in Walker, Minnesota, to solicit feedback and comments on the draft local and regional plan.

All comments received were be considered at the regularly scheduled meetings of the Local Elected Officials on May 3, 2016, and the Workforce Development Board on May 5, 2016. The governing bodies considered and approved the final plan for submission and the final plan was submitted to the state on May 13, 2016.

***LEGAL NOTICE: Public Review and Comment Notice***

April 1, 2016 – The initial draft of the Northwest Private Industry Council Program Years 2016 & 2017 Local Plan is now available for a thirty (30) day public review and comment period. The WIOA Local Plan can be viewed in hard copy version at the Thief River Falls Workforce Center, located at 1301 Hwy 1 East in Thief River Falls or electronically at <http://www.nwpic.net>.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law by President Obama on July 22, 2014. WIOA seeks to more fully integrate systems to better serve employers and job seekers. Under WIOA the Northwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board is required to submit a local plan to the State of Minnesota.

Anyone wishing to comment on the local plan must submit written comments by no later than May 2, 2016. The comments and ideas received will be used to develop the final local program plan and submitted to the State.

For more information or for questions on the public review and comment process you may contact: Kristine Goddard-Anderson at [kanderson@nwpic.net](mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net) or 218-683-8074. All comments that represent disagreement with the plan will be shared with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development upon final submission.

30. 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 this Act and programs carried out by one-stop partners.

Due to the small size of our local area and limited resources available for significant investments in technology, our local one-stop looks forward to working with our statewide partners in their continued work on an integrated case management system for all one-stop partners.

## SECTION C: PROGRAM OPERATIONS

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

The Executive Director of the Northwest Private Industry Council is responsible for ensuring that staff, both internal staff and contracted service providers, are familiar with and aware of DEED policies and procedures for Rapid Response events. In the event of a dislocation event the policies will be reviewed with staff to ensure that they are aware of how rapid response activities will proceed.

The Executive Director will maintain close contact with the state Rapid Response team to assist as needed and to communicate directives and decisions with program staff.

- B. 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)?

The Executive Director of the NWPIC notifies the State Rapid Response team by phone or email as soon as possible after the he or she becomes aware of a layoff or potential layoff. This notification either comes from the employer or staff will learn of the layoff through the local media. The Executive Director then provides the State Rapid Response team with as much information as possible about the layoff including the name and location of the business, the number of potential layoffs, and the ability of the local program staff to serve these workers under formula funding. If available, the Executive Director will provide the Rapid Response team with copies of press releases, newspaper articles, or any other pertinent information. The Executive Director will fully cooperate and provide all assistance requested by the State Rapid Response team.

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

The NWPIC Executive Director has been designated as the rapid response liaison within the Northwest WSA. As such, the Executive Director will work directly with the State Rapid Response office to coordinate all activities within the local area to effectively serve those workers affected by a mass layoff.

- D. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

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

The Executive Director of the NWPIC notifies the State Trade Act staff by phone or email as soon as possible when the WSA learns of companies that may be TAA certifiable. The Executive Director will provide the State Trade Act staff with all local information that is currently available and will assist in gathering any additional information needed for the State Trade Act staff to pursue an investigation.

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

The NWPIC Executive Director would be the primary contact for the State Trade Act staff. As such, the Executive Director will work directly with the Trade Act staff to gather local information and to coordinate all activities within the local area to effectively serve those workers who may be TAA eligible.

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

Yes  \_\_\_\_\_

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

Yes  \_\_\_\_\_

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

Pursuant to Local Policy Letter 109, All client support service expenditures must be submitted to the NWPIC for approval and for payment utilizing the NWPIC Payment Invoice and by following these procedures:

- The payment invoice must be completed in full and the appropriate signatures must be completed
- All vendor payments must be supported by a receipt which clearly states what was purchased and other appropriate documentation, as necessary, describing the type of support and documenting that services were received by the client.
- Staff is to verify the actual costs that are being submitted for payment and to review previous authorizations in the client record to avoid duplication of services or double billing of the item
- Payment will be made directly to the participant ONLY in situations where vendor billing is not practical. The client record needs to document the reasons as to why vendor billing was not practical when a payment is made directly to the client.
- The NWPIC contracts with Inter-Community Council for accounting services.
- Inter-County will prepare and forward the check to the vendor once the above procedures are properly completed.

Support Services are typically offered to customer who clearly indicate financial need after completing a Financial Needs Analysis form. If a customer does not complete the form, they are not eligible to receive support services. Additionally, program policy expects that customers are in compliance with their Individual Employment Plan prior to receiving support services. All support is recorded by the Inter-County accounting department in WF1, and justified and tracked internally by the



employment specialist in field files. All new staff received training regarding the support service policy and internal biannual file reviews ensure consistent compliance with this policy.

## SECTION D: SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND ATTACHMENTS

1. The local workforce development area has processes in place to assure non-duplicative services, and avoid duplicate administrative costs.

Yes     X    

2. The local workforce development area is aware of and staff participate in the Reception and Resource Area Certification Program (RRACP) to better serve all customers?

Yes     X    

3. A. 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. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

- C. The local workforce development area is aware and conducts annually a physical and program accessibility review?

Yes     X    

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

Yes     X (per WIA regulations, final WIOA regulations are not yet available)    

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

Yes     X (per WIA regulations, final WIOA regulations are not yet available)    

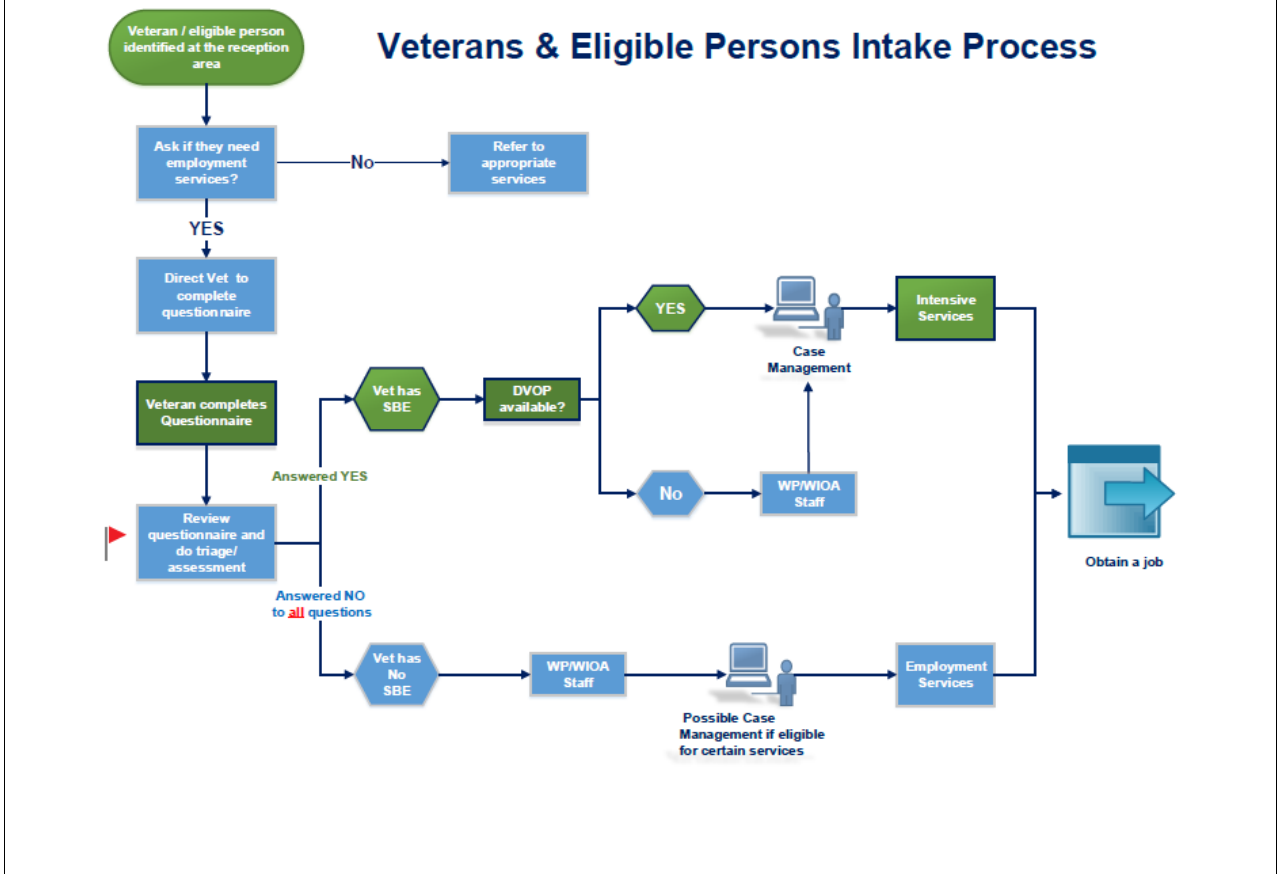
- B. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

6. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members coming into your WorkForce Center?

The Northwest Workforce Investment Board has established local policy in reference to the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288). This policy has established that veterans shall have priority of service for all Department of Labor programs within the local WorkForce Center System.

All job seekers entering the WorkForce Center are initially asked if they are a veteran by the

receptionist or resource area staff. Upon a positive response, the veteran is provided with a questionnaire which provides staff with basic information about the veteran. All WorkForce Center staff and management support and actively work toward providing priority of service to all veterans coming into the WorkForce Centers. All staff are trained to solicit for and to identify veterans using services at the WorkForce Center. All staff work to ensure that veterans are made aware of all services available to them, that veterans are encouraged to use these services, and to ensure that the veterans receive preference or priority access to all appropriate services offered through the WorkForce Center.



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

All job seekers, including veterans, receive an initial assessment of need when they access WorkForce Center Services. The guided interview that takes place between Resource Room staff and the job seeker helps to identify a job seeker’s status as a veteran, assists in the determination of need for more intensive and/or training services, and also identifies potential barriers to employment. Referrals to appropriate programs are made based on the needs and interests of the job seeker.

If the need for intensive services is identified, a more comprehensive assessment is completed which includes but is not limited to an assessment of literacy and basic skills, occupational skills, career interests, and work history. If significant barriers to employment are identified during this process, the job seeker would be referred to the DEED Veterans staff for additional assistance. Any subsequent services received would be coordinated with the DEED Veterans staff.

For those veterans enrolled in WorkForce Center programs, case management services provide for additional ongoing assessment of needs. Program staff provide community based referrals, support services, and assistance in obtaining needed accommodations. If at any point during the course of the program enrollment a significant barrier to employment is identified, the program staff would refer and consult with the DEED veterans staff as appropriate given the needs of the program participant.

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

N/A

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

Workforce Center and ICCC staff work closely with the staff of partner agencies to ensure that job seekers accessing services through the WorkForce Center System have access to all of the programs and services needed to meet their employment goals. All staff are trained regarding the basic programs and services provided by partner agencies so that they are able to make appropriate referrals to other programs based on the needs of the job seeker. Program and partner staff work closely together to provide coordination of services to those participants in one or multiple programs. This assists in the leveraging of funding to support job seekers and also ensures non-duplication of services.

10. 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 WorkForce Centers?

Veterans with significant employment barriers are referred to the DEED Veterans Employment Representative for additional services as appropriate to the needs of the individual.

This service, however, has been limited in recent years due to the staff reductions in DEED staff and their physical presence in the Thief River Falls Workforce Center. At the present time, there is not a DVOP located in our local service area.

The Veterans staff has valuable knowledge regarding veteran's issues, as well as regional and statewide programs and services that are specific to veterans. As such, local program staff uses the DEED Veterans staff as a resource for serving veterans in their own programs.

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

The Northwest Local Development Area does not currently have a local DVOP in our service area. Referrals are made to regional representatives located outside of our seven county service area. Local program staff and local DEED staff have made local contacts and work with the county veteran service officers.

12. Are all WIOA-funded partners complying with the guidance provided in the TEGL regarding Selective Service?

Yes   x  

13. 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 interested in receiving services in WIOA, State Dislocated Worker, MFIP, or Veteran's programs are required to register on Minnesotaworks.net prior to the completion of the enrollment process. All participants are required to create a resume as part of their job search and all job-ready participants create a resume as one of the activities outlined on their Individual Service Strategy. Universal Customers are provided with information regarding Minnesotaworks.net and are encouraged to register and create a viewable resume as one method of connecting with local employers.

All participants and Universal Customers are informed of the benefits of making their resume viewable to employers as an increasing number of local businesses are using this tool to recruit potential applicants for job openings within their organizations.

14. **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 of DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter 35-10 and Minnesota OGM 08-01 and its relevant federal laws and regulations.

Yes   X  

15. The local workforce development area's conflict of interest policies are in compliance with the above two references?

Yes   X  

16. A. The local workforce development area is aware of the referenced statute on Government Records.

Yes   X  

- B. The local workforce development area is aware of the requirement to retain documentation for six years.

Yes   X  

- C. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

17. **Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information:** The local workforce development area is complying with the guidance provided in TEGL 39-11.

Yes   X  

18. **Human Trafficking:** The local workforce development area is aware of TEGL 09-12 and will follow the procedures for working with trafficked persons.

Yes  \_\_\_\_\_

19. **Gender Identification:** The local workforce development area is aware of TEGL 37-14 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  \_\_\_\_\_

20. **Uniform Guidance:** The local workforce development area is aware of TEGL 15-14 regarding Uniform Guidance.

Yes  \_\_\_\_\_

21. A. 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, 2016.

The WDB’s policy is to refill any vacancy as quickly as possible. The filling of WDB vacancies is really a three part process; recruitment, county review, and appointment or reappointment of a candidate by the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Board.

Recruitment is the most difficult part of the process and depends a great deal on the vacancy the board is looking to fill. It is sometimes difficult to find the type of person the board is seeking on short notice. The recruitment process involves utilization of County Boards of Commissions, WDB members, local elected officials, DEED Business Service Specialists, and NWPIC staff to contact potential applicants. The time frame for this process can vary and can last for some time. Once applicants are identified, the candidate’s application is forwarded to the LEO Board for appointment. The LEO has the option of sending the nomination to the county board of residence if additional comments are sought. The Board of Directors of the Northwest Regional Development Commission, which serves as the LEO Board, meets every month.

The terms of several members will expire at the end of June 2016. All of these Board members have been contacted to see if they wish to serve another term and have been asked to apply for reappointment to the WDB. The process for reappointment is the same as the process outlined in the previous paragraph. Their applications will be submitted to the appropriate County Boards for review and to the LEO Board for appointment.

Since the time of the draft plan, the WDB has filled the two vacancies and has a fully compliant WIOA board.

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

Yes  \_\_\_\_\_ No  \_\_\_\_\_

If No, what steps will be taken to bring your local area board into compliance by June 30, 2016?

C. Complete **Attachment C – Local Area Board Membership List**.

- D. Complete **Attachment D – Local Area Board Committee List**.
22. Complete remaining portions of **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.
23. If applicable, complete **Attachment E - Local Workforce Development Area Sub-Grantee List**.
24. If applicable, complete **Attachment F - Local Workforce Development Area Non-WFC Program Service Delivery Location List**.

## ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

### ASSURANCES

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

- **Accessibility** - [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended](#) - Requires that federally funded program providers make their electronic information and technology accessible to people with disabilities;
- **ACORN** – [Funds may not be provided](#) to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or any of its affiliates, subsidiaries, allied organizations or successors;
- **Audits** – [2 CFR 200.501](#) and [Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996](#) - organization-wide or program-specific audits shall be performed;
- **Buy American**- Buy American Act – award may not be expended unless the funds comply with [USC 41, Section 8301-8303](#);
- **Data Sharing** – [MN Access to Government Data](#), [MN Duties of Responsible Authority](#); [MN Access to Information](#); [MN Administrative Rules Data Practices](#); [DEED Policy – Data Practices](#);
- **Disability** - that there will be compliance with the [Architectural Barriers Act of 1968](#), [Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), as amended, and the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#);
- **Drug-Free Workplace** – [Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988](#) – requires all organizations to maintain a drug-free workplace;
- **Equipment** – [2 CFR 200. 313](#), [200.439](#) – must receive prior approval for the purchase of any equipment with a per unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, and a useful life of more than one year;
- **Fire Safety** – [15 USC 2225a](#) – ensure that all space for conferences, meetings, conventions or training seminars funded in whole or in part complies with the protection and control guidelines of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act ([Public Law 101-391](#));
- **Fraud/Abuse** - that the provider has policies on fraud and abuse and will contact DEED for potential fraud and abuse issues; [20 CFR 667.630](#); [DEED Policy – Fraud Prevention and Abuse](#);
- **Health Benefits** – [Public Law 113-235, Division G, Sections 506 and 507](#) – ensure use of funds for health benefits coverage complies with the [Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015](#);
- **Insurance** - that insurance coverage be provided for injuries suffered by participants in work-related activities where Minnesota's workers' compensation law is not applicable as required under Regulations [20 CFR 667.274](#);
- **Insurance** – [Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973](#) – provides that no Federal financial assistance to acquire, modernize or construct property may be provided in identified flood-prone communities in the United States, unless the community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and flood insurance is purchased within 1 year of the identification;
- **Limited English** - [Executive Order 13166](#) - Improving access to services for persons with limited English proficiency;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions in the administration of programs and activities for all eligible individuals, including individuals with disabilities;

- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998](#) (WIA) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions in the administration of programs and activities for all eligible individuals, including individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#) – Prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin under any program receiving federal financial assistance;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in employment;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008](#) - Prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of genetic information;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965](#) - Prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national original, age disability or political affiliation or beliefs in any program funded in part with Senior Community Services Employment Program funds;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended](#) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions, based on sex, in educational programs;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title I \(Employment\) Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) - Prohibits state and local governments, from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title II \(State and Local Governments\) Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) - Prohibits qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in services, programs, and activities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 31](#) Nondiscrimination in federally-assisted programs of the Department of Labor, effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 32](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving or benefiting from federal assistance;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 33](#) Enforcement of nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by the Department of Labor;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 35](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance from the Department of Labor;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 37](#) Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 38](#) Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Executive Order 13160](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, and status as a parent in federally conducted education and training Programs;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Executive Order 13279](#) - Nondiscrimination against grant seeking organizations on the basis of religion in the administration or distribution of federal financial assistance under social service programs, including grants, contracts, and loans;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [The Minnesota Human Rights Act of 1973, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363A](#) - Prohibits discrimination in employment and providing public services on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, natural origin, sex, marital status (employment only), disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status



(employment only), citizenship, or age (employment only), and local human rights commission activity (employment only);

- **Nondiscrimination** - that collection and maintenance of data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIA and [WIOA Section 188](#), as provided in the regulations implementing that section, will be completed;
- **Opportunity** – [Executive Order 12928](#) – encouraged to provide subcontracting/subgranting opportunities to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Institutions and to Small Businesses Owned and Controlled by Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals;
- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** – [Training and Guidance Letter 39-11](#) – must recognize and safeguard PII except where disclosure is allowed by prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order;
- **Procurement** – Uniform Administrative Requirements – [2 CFR 200-317-36](#) – all procurement transactions to be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition;
- **Publicity** – no funds shall be used for publicity or propaganda purposes, preparation or distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before the Congress or any state/local legislature or legislative body, except in presentation to the Congress or any state/local legislature itself, or designed to support or defeat any proposed or pending regulation, administrative action, or order issued by the executive branch of any state or local government. Nor shall grant funds be used to pay the salary or expenses of any recipient or agent acting for such recipient, related to any activity designed to influence the enactment of legislation, appropriations regulation, administrative action, or Executive Order proposed or pending before the Congress, or any state government, state legislature or local legislature body other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships or participation by an agency or officer of a state, local or tribal government in policymaking and administrative processes within the executive branch of that government;
- **Salary/Bonus** – [Public Law 113-235, Division G, Title I, Section 105](#) – none of the funds appropriated under the heading “Employment and Training” shall be used by a recipient or sub-recipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of [Executive Level II](#). Further clarification can be found in [TEGL 5-06](#);
- **Seat Belts** - [Executive Order 13043](#) – Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States;
- **Text Messaging** – [Executive Order 13513](#) – encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging while driving company-owned or –rented vehicles or GOV or while driving POV when on official Government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the Government;
- **Trafficking of Persons** – [2 CFR 180](#) – OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government wide Debarment and Suspension – may not engage in severe forms of trafficking, procure a commercial sex act or use forced labor in the performance;
- **Veteran Priority of Service** - [Public Law 107-288: Jobs for Veterans Act](#) - Priority of service for veterans (including veterans, eligible spouses, widows and widowers of service members) in qualified job training programs;
- **Veterans** - [Public Law 112-56: Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011](#) - Establishes guidelines for service providers who are providing employment, training, academic or rehabilitation services for military veterans;
- **Veterans** - that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in WIA and WIOA Section 134, and the activities authorized in Chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38 US code, and in compliance with the veterans' priority established in the Jobs for Veterans Act. ([38 USC 4215](#)), U.S. Department of Labor, [Training and Employment Guidance Letter 5-03](#) and Minnesota's Executive Order 06-02;

- **Voter Registration** - that the required voter registration procedures described in [Minnesota Statutes 201.162](#) are enacted without the use of federal funds;
- **Voter Registration** – [52 USC 20501 – 20511](#) – National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

## CERTIFICATIONS

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

- A. That this **Regional and Local Workforce Development Area Plan** was prepared and is in accordance with all applicable titles of the WIOA Act of 2014, Title V of the Older Americans Act, applicable Minnesota state statutes and that it is consistent with Minnesota's current and future state plans;
- B. that it has provided at least a thirty day period for public comment and input into the development of plan by members of the local area board and the public (including persons with disabilities) and has provided information regarding the plan and the planning process, including the plan and supporting documentation, in alternative formats when requested and that any comments representing disagreement with the plan are included with the local plan forwarded to DEED (as the Governor's representative) Section 118(c); Section 108 (d)
- C. that the public (including individuals with disabilities) have access to all of the local area board's 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.

**SIGNATURE PAGE**Local Workforce Development  
Area NameNorthwest Workforce Development Area #1

Local Area Board Name

Northwest Private Industry Council, Inc.

Name and Contact Information for the Local Area Board Chair:

<b>Name</b>	<u>Mr. Leo Olson</u>
<b>Title</b>	<u>Chair</u>
<b>Organization</b>	<u></u>
<b>Address 1</b>	<u>PO Box 156</u>
<b>Address 2</b>	<u></u>
<b>City, State, ZIP Code</b>	<u>Oklee, MN 56742</u>
<b>Phone</b>	<u>218-796-5656</u>
<b>E-mail</b>	<u>lLeolson54@gmail.com</u>

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

<b>Name</b>	<u>Dr. Joe Bouvette</u>
<b>Title</b>	<u>Board Chairperson, Northwest Regional Development Commission (CLEO)</u>
<b>Organization</b>	<u>Kittson County Board of Commissioners</u>
<b>Address 1</b>	<u>127 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE</u>
<b>Address 2</b>	<u>Hallock, MN 52277</u>
<b>City, State, ZIP Code</b>	<u>218-843-2277</u>
<b>Phone</b>	<u>drj@rural-access.com</u>
<b>E-mail</b>	<u></u>

We, the undersigned, attest that this submittal is the Program Year 2016-2017 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****Chief Local Elected Official**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title Local Area Board ChairTitle Chair, NWRDC

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**REGIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE****Regional Workforce Development Area**

Northwest Regional Development Area - #1

**Local Workforce Development Area**

Northwest Development Area - #1

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ORGANZIATION</b>
Carol Anderson	Owner – Anderson Farm
Kristine “Kiki” Anderson	Executive Director – NWPIC
Terry Blake	Owner – Ada-Felton Country Store
Sue Boehland	Freshwater Education District
Kirsten Fuglseth	ABE Regional Coordinator
Janet Green	Executive Director, Ecumen-Detroit Lakes
Kathy Guess	Owner – Guess Enterprises
Catherine Johnson	Inter-County Community Council
Sue Johnson	Sanford Health Foundation
Sandy King	West Central Initiative
Vicki Leaderbrand	Operations Director/HR – RMCEP
Michael Moore	Polk County Private Business
Craig Nathan	Director of Field Operations – RMCEP
Julie Sachs	Minnesota DEED
Bonny Stechmann	Minnesota DEED
Dan Wenner	Executive Director – RMCEP

## LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA CONTACTS

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Rapid Response Liaison for Mass Layoffs (see section C.2.D.)	Kristine Anderson, Executive Director NWPIC	218-683-8074	<a href="mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net">kanderson@nwpic.net</a>	Local WDB
Equal Opportunity Officer (see section D.3.B.)	Kristine Anderson, Executive Director NWPIC	218-683-8074	<a href="mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net">kanderson@nwpic.net</a>	Local WDB
Program Complaint Officer (see section D.5.B.)	Kristine Anderson, Executive Director NWPIC	218-683-8074	<a href="mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net">kanderson@nwpic.net</a>	Local WDB
Records Management/Records Retention Coordinator (see section D.16.C.)	Kristine Anderson, Executive Director NWPIC	218-683-8074	<a href="mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net">kanderson@nwpic.net</a>	Local WDB
ADA Coordinator (see section D.22.)	Randa Lundmark, Vocational Rehabilitation Area Manager	218-333-8205	<a href="mailto:Randa.lundmark@state.mn.us">Randa.lundmark@state.mn.us</a>	Rolland Root, Regional Manager
Data Practices Coordinator (see section D.22.)	Kristine Anderson, Executive Director NWPIC	218-683-8074	<a href="mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net">kanderson@nwpic.net</a>	Local WDB
English as Second Language (ESL) Coordinator (see section D.22.)	Kirsten Fuglseth	218-681-0900	<a href="mailto:kfuglseth@nw-service.k12.mn.us">kfuglseth@nw-service.k12.mn.us</a>	Northwest Service Cooperative Executive Director

### Official Name of WorkForce Center: Thief River Falls Workforce Center

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Site Representative	Bonny Stechmann	218-683-8060	<a href="mailto:bonny.stechmann@state.mn.us">bonny.stechmann@state.mn.us</a>	Julie Sachs
Job Service Manager	Bonny Stechmann	218-683-8060	<a href="mailto:bonny.stechmann@state.mn.us">bonny.stechmann@state.mn.us</a>	Julie Sachs
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager	Randa Lundmark, Vocational Rehabilitation Area Manager	218-333-8205	<a href="mailto:Randa.lundmark@state.mn.us">Randa.lundmark@state.mn.us</a>	Rolland Root, Regional Manager
State Services for the Blind Manager	Steve Larson	218-825-2185	<a href="mailto:Stephen.d.larson@state.mn.us">Stephen.d.larson@state.mn.us</a>	Michael Newman
Local Workforce Development Area Director	Kristine Anderson, Executive Director NWPIC	218-683-8074	<a href="mailto:kanderson@nwpic.net">kanderson@nwpic.net</a>	Local WDB
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	Kirsten Fuglseth	218-681-0900	<a href="mailto:kfuglseth@nw-service.k12.mn.us">kfuglseth@nw-service.k12.mn.us</a>	Northwest Service Cooperative Executive Director

## Official Name of WorkForce Center Thief River Falls Workforce Center

ROLE	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Reports to (name only)
Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager	Murray Turner	218.253.4393	<a href="mailto:mturner@gvtel.com">mturner@gvtel.com</a>	Jeralyn Jargo
Adult	Dustin Doyle	218.683.8075	<a href="mailto:ddoyle@intercountycc.org">ddoyle@intercountycc.org</a>	Catherine Johnson
Dislocated Worker	Dustin Doyle	218.683.8075	<a href="mailto:ddoyle@intercountycc.org">ddoyle@intercountycc.org</a>	Catherine Johnson
Youth	Dustin Doyle	218.683.8075	<a href="mailto:ddoyle@intercountycc.org">ddoyle@intercountycc.org</a>	Catherine Johnson

## LOCAL AREA BOARD MEMBERSHIP LIST

**Regional Workforce Development Area**

Northwest Regional Development Area - #1

**Local Workforce Development Area**

Northwest Development Area - #1

<b>REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS IN LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA (must be majority)</b>			
<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>POSITION/Representing</b>	<b>TITLE/ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>TERM ENDS</b>
Leo Olson, Chair	Red Lake County Private Sector	Former Owner, Leo's Upholstery	6/30/2018
Robert Evans, Vice Chair	Roseau County Private Sector	Vice President, Human Resources, Marvin Windows and Doors	6/30/2017
Mike Moore, Secretary	Polk County Private Sector	Publisher, The Thirteen Towns of Fosston, Inc.	6/30/2016
Sue Johnson, Treasurer	Pennington County Private Sector	Executive Director, Sanford Medical Foundation	6/30/2018
Ardell Larson	Kittson County Private Sector	President, Kick'n Up Kountry Music Festival	6/30/2017
Sally Erickson	Marshall County Private Sector	Employee Benefits Administrator, Ericco Manufacturing	6/30/2016
Edie Ramstad	Norman County Private Sector	Owner, We've Got Maille	6/30/2019
Tim Hagl	Private Sector; At-Large	Vice President, Border State Bank	6/30/2016
Randy Rakosnik	Private Sector; At-Large	Director, Human Resources, Digi-Key Corp.	6/30/2019
Kristy McFarlane	Private Sector, At-Large	Director of Human Resources, LifeCare Medical Center, Roseau, MN	6/30/2019

<b>LABOR &amp; COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS</b> (20% Minimum and 2 or more nominated by state labor federations and one joint labor-management apprenticeship program labor organization or training director)				
<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>POSITION/Representing</b>	<b>TITLE/ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>TERM ENDS</b>	
Dave Rock	Organized Labor	Maintenance Director, SummerField Place Apartments	6/30/2017	
Amber Hawkins	Organized Labor	Nurse, Sanford Health, Thief River Falls	6/30/2016	
Erik Shulind	Apprenticeship/Organized Labor	Membership Development Representative, Local Union 1426 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO	5/2/2016	6/30/2017
Catherine Johnson	Community Based Org.	Executive Director, Inter-County Community Council	6/30/2017	
<b>EDUCATION &amp; TRAINING</b> (Required: ABE; Higher Education)				
Kirsten Fuglseth	Educational Agency/ABE	Director, Adult Basic Education	6/30/2017	
Carey Castle	Higher Education	Vice President, Northland Community and Technical College	5/2/2016	6/30/2017
<b>GOVERNMENT</b> (Required: Economic Development; Job Service; Rehabilitation)				
Christine Anderson	Economic Development	Director, Economic Development for City of Thief River Falls; Jobs, Inc.; and Pennington County	6/30/2018	
Bonny Stechmann	Public Employment Agency	Manager, Job Service & Workforce Development, State of MN (DEED)	6/30/2016	
Randa Lundmark	Rehabilitation Agency	Regional Manager, Vocational Rehabilitation, State of MN (DEED)	6/30/2016	



NAME	ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL
<b>CHAIR</b> <b>Leo Olson</b>	PO Box 156 Oklee, MN 56742 Phone: 796-5186 E-mail: Leoolson54@gmail.com
<b>VICE CHAIR</b> <b>Robert Evans</b>	PO Box 100 Warroad, MN 56763 Phone: 386-4298 E-mail: bobevans@marvin.com
<b>SECRETARY</b> <b>Michael Moore</b>	34643 E. Trinity Point Road Mentor, MN 56762 Phone: 681-7387 E-mail: mdmoore@gvtel.com

**LOCAL AREA BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE LIST**

<b>Regional Workforce Development Area</b>	Northwest Regional Development Area - #1
<b>Local Workforce Development Area</b>	Northwest Development Area - #1

<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Objective/Purpose</b>
Executive Committee	As directed by the Northwest Private Industry Council Board of Directors at its regularly scheduled meetings, the business, property and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its Executive Committee. All other standing committees may only make recommendations for adoption by the Board of Directors.
One-Stop Operations	This committee is to provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the one-stop delivery system; it includes as members representatives of the one-stop partners. This committee also provides information and assists with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including issues relating to compliance with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the one-stop delivery system, as well as appropriate training for staff on providing supports for or accommodations to, and finding employment opportunities for, individuals with disabilities.
Youth Committee	This committee provides information and assists with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth.

**LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SUB-GRANTEE LIST**

<b>Regional Workforce Development Area</b>	Northwest Regional Development Area - #1
<b>Local Workforce Development Area</b>	Northwest Development Area - #1

Name of Sub-Grantee	Services Provided	Funding Source	Sub-Grantee located in which WFC?	If not in WFC, provide Address, City, State, ZIP Code
Inter-County Community Council	Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth	WIOA Adult; WIOA DW; State of MN DW; and WIOA Youth	Thief River Falls WFC	

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

**Regional Workforce Development Area**

Northwest Regional Development Area - #1

**Local Workforce Development Area**

Northwest Development Area - #1

Name and Location (City)	Program Service Delivered
MN DEED Job Service (Roseau)	MFIP, SNAP, DWP
MN DEED Job Service (Crookston)	MFIP, SNAP, DWP
MN DEED Job Service (East Grand Forks)	MFIP, SNAP, DWP
Inter-County Community Council (Oklee)	WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Senior Employment
Inter-County Community Council (Thief River Falls)	WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Senior Employment
Inter-County Community Council (Roseau)	WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Senior Employment
Inter-County Community Council (East Grand Forks)	WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Senior Employment
MN DEED Vocational Rehabilitation (Roseau)	
MN DEED Vocational Rehabilitation (Crookston)	

## LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA KEY INDUSTRIES IN REGIONAL ECONOMY

### Key Industries in the Regional Economy for Northwest Minnesota are:

*Healthcare/Social Assistance*

*Manufacturing*

*Agriculture*

*Wholesale Trade*

### Distinguishing Industries in the Regional Economy for Northwest Minnesota are:

*Pipeline Transportation Fishing/Hunting/Trapping Transportation Equipment Manufacturing.*

**NOTE: At a regional stakeholder meeting, it was also noted that education should also be a focus industry in this region.**

With 36,817 jobs at 1,464 establishments, healthcare and social assistance is the largest employing industry in Northwest Minnesota, accounting for 17 percent of total jobs in the region. That is approximately the same concentration of healthcare and social assistance in the state. However, Northwest lost jobs in this sector since 2010, while the state added nearly 35,000 healthcare jobs in that time, an 8.3 percent increase. Due to the region's older population, the largest sector was nursing and residential care facilities, followed by ambulatory health care services, hospitals, and social assistance.

The second largest industry in Northwest is manufacturing, which has 28,544 jobs at 819 establishments, after expanding 12.3 percent since 2010. This rate of growth was nearly twice that for manufacturing at the state level, which grew 6.7 percent. At \$46,488, average annual wages were over \$10,000 higher in manufacturing than the total of all industries in the area. Retail trade is the third largest industry, with 27,670 jobs at 2,404 establishments. Wages are relatively low in retail trade, and the industry has seen very little job growth in Northwest in recent years.

Other important industries in Northwest include educational services, accommodation and food services, public administration, wholesale trade, construction, other services, transportation and warehousing, finance and insurance, and agriculture. Thirteen of the 20 main industries in the region added jobs since 2010, with huge gains in manufacturing, wholesale trade, administrative support – which includes temporary staffing agencies – and waste management services, construction, agriculture, and management of companies. Even more impressive, 16 of the 20 industries gained jobs in the past year, led by ongoing gains in wholesale trade, construction, manufacturing, and accommodation and food services. Only retail trade suffered notable job losses from 2013 to 2014 as the region's economy strengthened. Northwest Minnesota stands out in the state for its higher concentrations of employment in healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, and wholesale trade. Northwest Minnesota has 8 percent of total state employment, but over 40 percent of the state's jobs in pipeline transportation; fishing, hunting and trapping; and transportation equipment manufacturing; leading to location quotients above 5.0

The 26-county Northwest Minnesota Planning Region is projected to grow 5.9 percent from 2012 to 2022, a gain of 14,999 new jobs. The largest and fastest growing industry is expected to be health care and social assistance, which may account for nearly 40 percent of total projected growth in the region. Northwest is also expected to see significant employment growth in retail trade, construction, wholesale trade, and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. In contrast, the region is expected to see declines in finance and insurance, information, utilities, and mining.