

DWD Memo 2023-16
Attachment A- Planning Template

PY2024 – PY2027
Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act
(WIOA) Plan

Region 4 Workforce Board

Local Plan

September 18, 2024

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Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Approval

LWDB/Local Area Information

LWDB/Local Area Name	Region 4 Workforce Board
LWDB Chair	Matt Lewellen
LWDB Executive Director	Gregg Notestine
One-Stop Operator	JobWorks, Inc
Regional Chief Elected Official	Mayor Tony Roswarski

By signing below, the LWDB Chair signifies approval of this Plan and authorizes its submission to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

Matt Lewellen

Board Chair Printed Name

Signed by:

Matt Lewellen

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Board Chair Signature

9/18/2024

Date

Executive Summary

Each local area must submit an executive summary of their plan.

Economic and Workforce Analysis

The 12 counties that comprise Region 4 are a labor market characterized by growth in various sectors. As of 2023, total employment in the region stood at 231,906, reflecting a 0.6% increase from 2018. The average earnings per job are \$62,800. Key industries include manufacturing, healthcare, and construction, with emerging sectors in battery manufacturing for electric vehicles, advanced treatments in the healthcare industry, cybersecurity, and semiconductors. High-demand occupations consist of material moving workers, assemblers and fabricators, construction trades workers, motor vehicle operators, healthcare practitioners, and various management and engineering operations specialists.

Strategic Vision and Goals

The Vision for Region 4 Workforce Board is to be known as innovative, a national model for workforce development, and full of funding and development opportunities to catalyze and help transform the region's economy.

Region 4 Workforce Board Goals:

- We will realign the current workforce, with a particular focus on underutilized and incumbent workers, to meet employer work skill and work behavior demands.
- We will realign/refocus the emerging, future workforce to meet the employer work skill and work behavior demands.
- We will collaborate with and convene strategic stakeholders, local partners, businesses, groups, and agencies to leverage resources and opportunities to meet employer work skill and work behavior demands.
- We will obtain adequate funds to carry out the organization's initiatives through leveraging and procuring new funds.
- We will have a regional identity.
- We will address board members and staff transition and succession planning.

Specific strategies/actions to align with the WIOA Unified State Plan Include:

Harnessing grant opportunities available through the BIL and other funding sources. Region 4 has been awarded \$2 million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to support training in the renewable energy sector, specifically the Electric Vehicle Industry. We will continue to pursue these types of grants and collaborate with our America's Job Centers, One-Stop System partners and education partners to ensure this opportunity is available to our marginalized populations.

- We will utilize WIOA and other grant funding available for qualified workers for childcare assistance and other supportive services.
- We will work with our partners on the establishment of childcare centers in the Region. Two childcare centers, one in Crawfordsville and another in Flora, have been approved and are being built with more in the planning phase.
- Through our America's Job Centers, we will continue to provide in-person and virtual workshops to develop basic computer literacy skills.

- *We focus on assisting youth, adults, and older individuals to learn the skills for emerging industries. We are already participating in discussions with our partners in education and economic development for, among other things, securing grants to train the workforce for the new semiconductor facility in our Region that is planned to begin hiring in 2028.*
- *We implement a client centric approach through our WorkOne offices that involves individualized assessments, one-on-one career counseling, and the development of training plans that are customized to the individual's current skill level and career goals.*
- *We use labor market information to identify in-demand jobs, and then work with individuals to ensure they have access to training programs that result in the necessary certifications and degrees to fill the in-demand jobs.*
- *We actively engage and collaborate with employers via advisory groups, surveys, and individual employer visits to understand employer needs and then pursue funding and partners to develop customized training programs. We have Business Service staff dedicated to providing support and workforce solutions directly to our employer partners.*
- *Our Business Service Staff currently offers employers grant funds through the Next Level Jobs Employer Training, On-the-Job and Apprenticeship Building America Grants. We will continue to aggressively pursue those specific and similar grants, including grants for work-based learning and youth apprenticeships at high schools and community colleges.*
- *We will continue to provide career coaching to help underserved job seekers identify and articulate their skills, strengths, and career goals.*
- *We will continue to advocate for OJT and Apprenticeships that enable employers to train new hires with specific skills, as opposed to post-secondary degrees that may or may not relate to employer needs.*

Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Collaboration with core program entities, including Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation, is crucial for aligning resources and achieving strategic goals. Our strategy involves joint planning, resource allocation, and service provision to enhance workforce readiness. Emphasis is placed on integrating services through cooperative agreements and leveraging resources to support in-demand industries.

Key partnerships also extend to local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, labor unions, educational institutions, and local governments. These collaborations aim to create a cohesive workforce development system that addresses both immediate and long-term employment needs.

Program Design and Evaluation

The program design under WIOA is structured to deliver comprehensive workforce services through the One-Stop service delivery system. Key components include:

- *Job training and placement services.*
- *Career counseling and support.*
- *Skills development and credentialing programs.*
- *Youth services and targeted initiatives for disconnected youth.*

Continuous evaluation of program effectiveness is ensured through performance metrics, customer satisfaction surveys, and regular oversight by the One-Stop Operator Oversight Committee. As staff for the Board, we aggressively track performance goals, with quarterly reviews to ensure targets are met and service delivery is optimized.

Compliance and Performance Metrics

The Region 4 Workforce Board is committed to maintaining high standards of compliance with WIOA regulations. This includes:

- Regular fiscal monitoring by the Chief Financial Officer.
- Adherence to performance metrics negotiated with the Governor and Chief Elected Officials.
- Transparent public comment processes for plan development and modifications.

Performance metrics include employment rates in the second and fourth quarters post-exit, credential attainment rates, median earnings, and measurable skill gains. Our proactive approach to compliance and performance monitoring ensures accountability and continuous improvement.

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please answer the following questions. The Department of Workforce Development has assigned regional labor market analysts to assist the Regions. These experts can help develop responses to questions 1.1 through 1.3 below. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

1.1* A regional analysis of the economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. As appropriate, a local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet these requirements. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)]

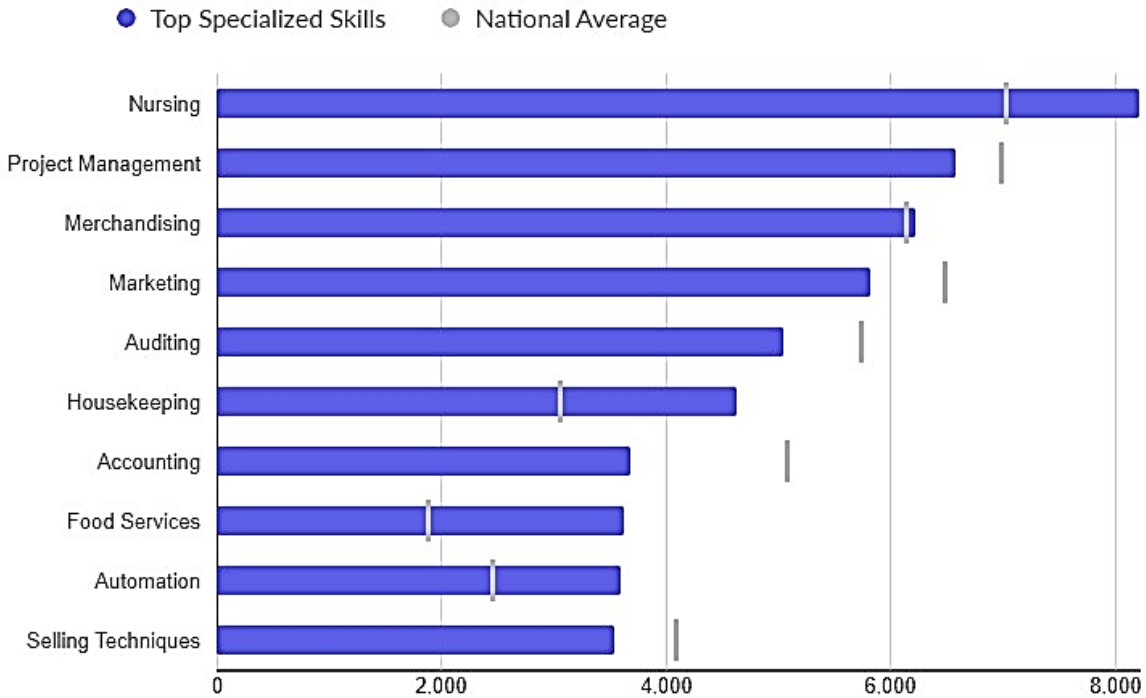
The total employment of the region stands at 231,906 and jobs increased by .6% from 2018 to 2023. The average earnings per job is \$62,800. Taking out Hospitals, Education and Hospitality, the top industries include Manufacturing, Healthcare and Construction. In looking at the emerging industries, the region is seeing an increase in AV battery manufacturing, healthcare and cybersecurity. Occupations in demand and growing are shown below:

SOC	Description	2018 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2028 Change	2018 - 2028 % Change
53-7000	Material Moving Workers	10,932	13,579	2,647	24%
51-2000	Assemblers and Fabricators	12,163	13,229	1,066	9%
47-2000	Construction Trades Workers	7,660	8,462	802	10%
53-3000	Motor Vehicle Operators	6,482	7,516	1,034	16%
29-1000	Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners	6,893	7,480	587	9%
11-9000	Other Management Occupations	6,181	6,764	583	9%
31-1100	Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides	5,207	6,684	1,477	28%
49-9000	Other Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	5,894	6,349	455	8%
13-1000	Business Operations Specialists	4,450	6,201	1,751	39%
25-2000	Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers	5,501	6,039	538	10%

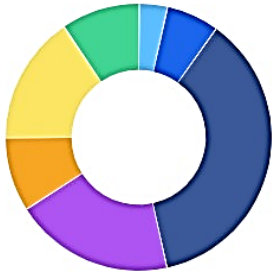
Source: Lightcast

1.2 An analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(2)]

In-Demand Skills: Information pulled from regional job postings are shown below.



Concerning education attainment, 15.6% of the region’s residents possess a Bachelor’s Degree (5.5% below the national average), and 9% hold an Associate’s Degree (.01% above the national average).



	% of Population	Population
Less Than 9th Grade	3.4%	11,296
9th Grade to 12th Grade	6.4%	20,975
High School Diploma	36.7%	120,604
Some College	19.4%	63,651
Associate's Degree	9.0%	29,454
Bachelor's Degree	15.6%	51,308
Graduate Degree and Higher	9.5%	31,373

Source: Lightcast

1.3 An analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment and youth. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3)]

Labor Force, 2023	Number	Rank of 12	Percent of State	Indiana
Total Resident Labor Force	250,743	6	7.4%	3,401,387
Employed	242,521	6	7.4%	3,288,017
Unemployed	8,222	6	7.3%	113,370
Annual Unemployment Rate	3.3	5	100.0%	3.3
April 2024 Unemployment Rate	3.5	5	102.9%	3.4

Source: [STATS Indiana](#), using data from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Employment and Earnings by Industry,	Employment	Pct Dist.	Earnings	Pct Dist.	Avg.
Total by place of work	279,144	100.0%	\$16,156,475	100.0%	\$57,879
Wage and Salary	222,512	79.7%	\$11,796,592	73.0%	\$53,016
Farm Proprietors	5,192	1.9%	\$533,413	3.3%	\$102,737
Nonfarm Proprietors	51,440	18.4%	\$1,112,411	6.9%	\$21,625
Farm	6,763	2.4%	\$611,796	3.8%	\$90,462
Nonfarm	272,381	97.6%	\$15,544,679	96.2%	\$57,070
Private	228,824	82.0%	\$12,598,494	78.0%	\$55,058
Accommodation, Food Serv.	19,892*	7.1%*	\$489,750*	3.0%*	\$24,620*
Arts, Ent., Recreation	3,366*	1.2%*	\$51,530*	0.3%*	\$15,309*
Construction	13,974	5.0%	\$893,194	5.5%	\$63,918
Health Care, Social Serv.	23,175*	8.3%*	\$1,530,219*	9.5%*	\$66,029*
Information	2,066*	0.7%*	\$106,284*	0.7%*	\$51,444*
Manufacturing	49,741*	17.8%*	\$4,382,691*	27.1%*	\$88,110*
Professional, Tech. Serv.	9,073*	3.3%*	\$564,275*	3.5%*	\$62,193*
Retail Trade	26,160*	9.4%*	\$895,187*	5.5%*	\$34,220*
Trans., Warehousing	10,075*	3.6%*	\$498,472*	3.1%*	\$49,476*
Wholesale Trade	5,583*	2.0%*	\$454,467*	2.8%*	\$81,402*
Other Private (not above)	52,271*	18.7%*	\$1,971,087*	12.2%*	\$37,709*
Government	43,557	15.6%	\$2,946,185	18.2%	\$67,640

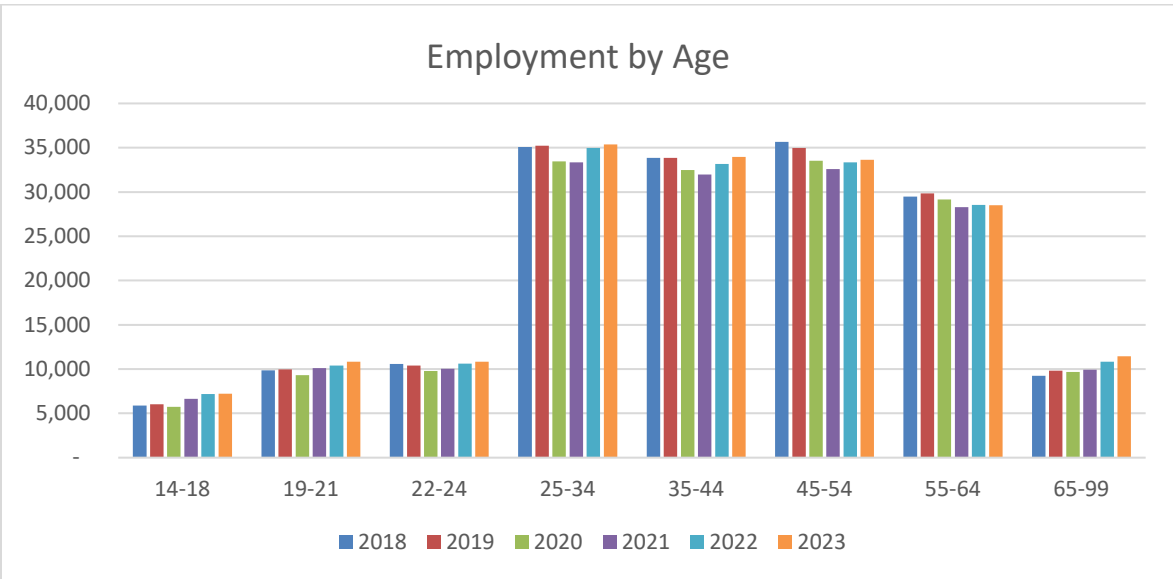
Source: [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)

Education Level	2022 Population	2023 Population	2022 % of Population	2022 State % Population	2022 National % Population
Less Than 9th Grade	11,393	11,296	3%	4%	5%
9th Grade to 12th Grade	21,718	20,975	7%	7%	6%
High School Diploma	119,891	120,604	37%	33%	26%
Some College	64,507	63,651	20%	20%	20%
Associate's Degree	28,810	29,454	9%	9%	9%
Bachelor's Degree	50,418	51,308	15%	18%	21%
Graduate Degree and Higher	31,137	31,373	9%	10%	13%
	327,874	328,661	100%	100%	100%

Source: Hoosiers by the Numbers

Employment by Age

	14-18	19-21	22-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-99
2018	5,868	9,852	10,581	35,081	33,838	35,646	29,466	9,237
2019	6,031	9,962	10,410	35,227	33,860	34,979	29,831	9,808
2020	5,724	9,318	9,775	33,456	32,493	33,527	29,169	9,667
2021	6,624	10,123	10,047	33,348	31,978	32,603	28,293	9,946
2022	7,173	10,406	10,613	34,956	33,180	33,333	28,539	10,817
2023	7,213	10,816	10,825	35,354	33,955	33,636	28,519	11,453



Source: US Census Bureau

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Please answer the following questions. Section 2 responses should reflect input from members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders. **Questions that require**

collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.

2.1 Provide a description of the board’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include the board’s vision and goals for its local workforce system in preparing an educated and skilled workforce in the local area, including goals for in-school and out-of-school youth and individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)]

Vision Statement: The Region 4 Workforce Board is more than just a board. We are unrelenting builders of options to develop skills and knowledge of diverse peoples, firms, and future entrepreneurs. We envision a region where skills and knowledge are highly valued as pathways to personal wealth, as well as to unite regional economic growth. We envision a region where family values and quality of life are key parts of the fabric of our community. Our region will be known for its innovation, will be a national model for workforce development, and will be bursting with opportunities that will catalyze and transform our region’s economy.

Goals:

- *We will realign/refocus the current workforce to meet employer work skill and work behavior demands.*
 - *We will continue to develop at least one (1) sub-sector partnership.*
 - *We will ensure workers are prepared with foundational skills.*
 - *We will know employer/employee needs (salaries and benefits, scheduling, transportation and childcare) to assist employers with retention.*
 - *We will frequently monitor and understand employer work skill and work behavior demands (including those of new employers).*
- *We will realign/refocus the emerging, future workforce to meet the employer work skill and work behavior demands.*
 - *We will ensure that youth have information about careers and methods to determine how they fit within them.*
 - *We will ensure workers are prepared with foundational skills. This will include supporting technical skills training that incorporates behavioral skills development and work and learn opportunities, especially for out-of-school youth.*
 - *In collaboration with regional community stakeholders, CTE Districts, AE Providers, LEDOs, and postsecondary institutions we will develop and promote (to parents, educators and in-school and out-of-school youth) career pathways with multiple on- and off-ramps for in-school and out-of-school youth to pursue.*
- *We will support initiatives that provide career opportunities for underutilized and incumbent workers that will meet employer work skill demands.*
 - *We will provide incumbent worker skills training.*
 - *We will provide return-to-school/college completion services to college stop-outs.*
 - *We will provide re-entry services to recently returned veterans.*
 - *We will provide re-entry service to ex-offenders.*
 - *We will provide job entry services to individuals with disabilities.*
- *We will collaborate with and convene strategic stakeholders, local partners, businesses, groups, and agencies to leverage resources and opportunities to meet employer work skill and work behavior demands.*
 - *We will identify and address the key workforce development issues within the region.*

- *We will establish and maintain a region-wide service listing and analyze/address gaps/duplications.*
- *We will understand and utilize the resources to meet employer and job seeker needs.*
- *We will obtain adequate funds to carry out the initiatives of the organization through leveraging and procuring new funds.*
 - *We will explore public funding sources.*
 - *We will explore private funding sources.*
 - *We will leverage funds whenever possible.*
- *We will have a regional identity.*
 - *We will market and publicize the region as a whole and each county within it.*
- *We will address board member transition and succession planning.*
 - *We will align board development with the strategic vision.*
 - *On an ongoing basis, we will develop a pool of potential board officers.*
 - *On an ongoing basis, we will develop a pool of potential board member successors.*
 - *We will build board ownership.*

2.2 Describe how the board’s vision and goals align with and/or support the State’s strategic vision as set out in the [WIOA Unified State Plan](#). Specifically address how the local area will align with the pillars and goals outlined below as well as the action steps included in the WIOA State Plan, where applicable.

Pillar I: Removing barriers for workers to meet Hoosiers where they are and help remove obstacles to work and learning.

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

Pillar II: Preparing future skilled workers to ensure Indiana can deliver the training and skills needed for a modern workforce.

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

Pillar III: Helping employers find and/or develop skilled workers to ensure employers have the talent needed for the economy of today and tomorrow.

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

Pillar I-Goal 1: *Region 4 Board is already harnessing the opportunities of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. We have successfully been awarded \$2M to support training in the Renewable Energy sector, specifically the Electric Vehicle Industry. We collaborate with our America's Job Centers, One-Stop System partners and education partners to ensure this opportunity is available to our marginalized populations.*

Pillar I-Goal 2: *Removing barriers for workers to be successful for training and employment opportunities is crucial to ensure they can participate fully in the workforce. Addressing the challenge of affordable and accessible childcare is one of the key strategies to support workers. Utilizing WIOA funding or other grant funding we can provide childcare support for workers who qualify. This support and other supportive services, such as transportation assistance, work clothing, tools, etc. can help reduce the financial burden of childcare, making training and employment opportunities more accessible for low-income families. Access to virtual training and/or flexible training schedules will also assist to accommodate childcare needs.*

Pillar I-Goal 3: *The Region 4 Board helps to bridge the digital divide for our customers to have the digital skills needed to succeed in today's technology-driven economy. We provide workshops to develop basic computer literacy skills. This training is available in person and virtually. The America's Job Center provides access to technology ensuring that participants have access to necessary computers and software.*

Pillar II-Goal 1: *While keeping in mind that the manufacturing sector is the greatest opportunity generator and wealth driver In Region 4, we focus on assisting youth, adults, and older individuals to develop the skills needed for career advancement and longevity in this and other emerging industry sectors in our region. We search for and apply for grants to support and enhance our traditional funding to support and prepare individuals with the skills needed in a modern workforce.*

Pillar II-Goal 2: *Meeting individuals where they are for career pathway planning involves a personalized, client centric approach that considers their unique education background, work experiences, and personal circumstances. This involves, individualized assessments, one-on-one career counseling, developing training plans that are customized to the individual's current skill level and career goals, and developing a career pathway map with entry points and advancement opportunities.*

Pillar II-Goal 3: *Developing additional workers with skills-based technical training and high-quality credentials, certifications, or degrees to fill in-demand jobs involves a multi-faceted approach. We use labor market information to identify in-demand jobs and the specific skills required for these positions and collaborate with local employers to understand their workforce needs and forecast future demands. We seek to ensure that training programs lead to industry-recognized certifications that are valued by employers. Based upon this information, we collaborate with education and training vendors to align curriculum with industry needs and create pathways from education to employment. We will advise individuals of training opportunities that offer stackable credentials and certifications allowing individuals to build their qualifications progressively. Where feasible, offer online and hybrid learning options to provide flexibility for individuals who may be working or have other commitments.*

Pillar III-Goal 1: *Helping employers find and/or develop skilled workers, while delivering bespoke customer service and solutions, involves a proactive and collaborative approach. We actively engage and collaborate with employers via advisory groups, surveys, and employer specific meetings. The information gleaned allows us to pursue additional funding opportunities to develop customized training programs to meet their workforce needs. We have Business Service staff dedicated to providing support and workforce solutions specific to employer partners.*

Pillar III-Goal 2: *Region 4 Boards is committed to providing work-based learning opportunities through On-the-Job training, apprenticeships and youth internships. Our business service staff promote work-based learning and assist employers to create registered apprenticeship programs that provide structured on-the-job training combined with classroom instruction. We partner with employers to implement OJT programs that allow new hires to learn while they earn, receiving practical training directly from their employers.*

Through education partnerships, we collaborate with high schools and community colleges for opportunities to integrate work-based learning into their curricula and promote dual enrollment programs that allow students to earn college credits while gaining work experience and get exposure to quality job opportunities.

Pillar III-Goal 3: *Region 4 Board will continue to champion and promote skills-based hiring practices by encouraging employers to create job descriptions that focus on the skills and competencies required for the role rather than just formal education or previous job titles. We will continue to advocate for OJT and Apprenticeships that enable employers to train new hires with specific skills.*

We will continue to provide career coaching to help underserved jobseekers identify and articulate their skills, strengths, and career goals. We will use assessments to identify transferable skills and competencies that jobseekers possess, which may not be immediately apparent from their work history or education.

2.3* Describe how the board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. See 20 CFR 677.155 for more information on the federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)]

The Region 4 Board's goals of delivering a demand driven system based upon a 'client-centric' approach focuses on both the current and emerging workforce, with special attention to individuals with barriers to employment, fully align with the federal performance accountability measures.

- *To align and focus services to the current workforce to meet employer work skill and work behavior demands, we have developed a sector strategy and utilize WIOA funds and other grant funds to build skills and prepare individuals in demand occupations to increase entered employment, retention and wages.*
- *To align career development/education with current and future employer work skill and work behavior demands, we have partnerships with regional employers and economic developers to know and understand current and future skill needs and with CTE Districts, secondary and postsecondary institutions to communicate skill needs to training offerings. The improved alignment will positively impact skill gains, credential attainment, and employment.*
- *We will realign/refocus the emerging, future workforce to meet the employer work skill and work behavior demands by funding technical skills training that incorporates behavioral skills*

development and work and learn opportunities, especially for out-of-school youth, thereby increasing skill gains, credential attainment and employment.

- *We will support initiatives that provide career opportunities for underutilized workers that will meet employer work skill demands, such as our USDOL America's Promise Grant which focuses on the unemployed and underemployed who receive training designated by the employers to meet their skills needs. This aligns with achieving employment, retention, credential attainment, increased wages and employer satisfaction goals.*
- *We will collaborate with local partners, businesses, groups, and agencies to leverage resources and opportunities to meet employer work skill and work behavior demands. The USDOL America's Promise grant described above, and future grants are/will be business-led initiatives that meet employer work skill needs, thereby increasing employer satisfaction, employment and credential attainment.*
- *We will continue to pursue additional funds to increase our work and learn projects and initiatives, such as our advanced manufacturing sector-based strategy imbedded in the use of WIOA funds, USDOL America's Promise grant, and other local grants develop a skills-rich talent pool for employers which positively increases employment, retention, credential attainment, skill gains and increased wages and employer satisfaction.*

2.4* Describe any additional indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)]

Several indicators are used by the board to measure the performance and effectiveness of the one-stop system and contracted service providers. These indicators include:

- *Customer satisfaction survey of the visits to the Work One office and the level of service provided,*
- *Completion, credential, and placement rates for customers who receive training (by Region and Service Provider),*
- *Youth performance, including enrollments, credentials, placements into postsecondary education, employment, and the military, as well as the Common Measures,*
- *JAG program performance data tracking; customers receiving case management,*
- *Customers receiving training and type of training provided; and*
- *Customer placements into unsubsidized employment by Region and Service Provider.*

The Board aggressively tracks performance goals. On a quarterly basis, the One Stop Operator Oversight Committee reviews performance reports, which include a year-to-date comparison of actual performance vs. goals. The Committee reviews performance data each quarter to ensure performance metrics are being achieved, looking not only at performance percentages, but the number of customers served, customers served in each office, the level of service provided and efficiency of funds. Service providers also analyze their performance data and submit reports to the One-Stop Operator Committee, including issues/new ideas to meet performance targets. A Service Provider meeting is conducted on a quarterly basis to discuss performance, policy, strategies and fiscal reviews. The Region 4 Board functions as its own fiscal agent. Its Finance Committee acts as the fiscal oversight entity and, along with the Executive Committee, communicates directly with the certified public accountant firm regarding TAP's annual audit.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Please answer the following questions. Many of the responses below, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

3.1 Taking into account the analysis in Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out core programs (*Core programs include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*) and required partners to align resources in the local area, in support of the vision and goals described in Question 2.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(6)]

The Board's strategy regarding our core partner organizations will be to continue our joint planning, service provision, and resource allocation to increase the number of workers who have the postsecondary credentials that match key industries' demand occupation skill requirements.

Current and projected employment opportunities by educational requirement do not match the current educational attainment levels found in the Region 4 workforce. The greatest opportunity for the workforce development system to offset the education requirement--attainment imbalance, while also addressing employers' work skills requirements, is to increase the number of workers who have postsecondary credentials that match the key industries' demand occupation skill requirements. In the domain of partnerships, the Board sees Core Program organizations as "one of us" rather than "other than us". They are part of the Board and the Region 4 WorkOne System and, as such, we share the same information; we share some of the same facilities and operational resources through formal or informal agreements; we cross-refer program participants; and we meet regularly at the Board level. To ensure all Core Partners have opportunity to plan together on a regular basis to operationalize the alignment of resources, the One-Stop Operator will host quarterly meetings of all partners. All core partners stand to benefit from quarterly meetings that reinforce the Board's commitment to serve individuals with barriers to employment in a holistic approach.

3.2* Identify the programs/partners that are included in the local workforce development system. Include, at a minimum, organizations that provide services for relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs, provision of transportation, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Senior Community Service and Employment Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, and programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. Describe how the local board will coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2), (10), (11), (12) & (13), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(9), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(10), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(11), and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(i)]

Those partners included in the local workforce system include the following: WIOA Title I Adult program, WIOA Dislocated Worker program, and WIOA Youth Program services are delivered by subrecipient, Job Works, Inc. Adult Basic Education is delivered by AE partners, Lafayette Adult Resource Academy, Miami County Adult Education, Crawfordsville Adult Resource Academy, Warren County Learning Center, Clinton County Learning Network, and Logansport Community School Corporation Adult Learning Center, and Hinds Career Center. Our Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Adjustment Assistance and Veterans program partner is the Indiana Dept. of Workforce Development. Our Post-Secondary

Career and Technical Education (Perkins) partner is Ivy Tech Community College. Our Vocational Rehabilitation partners are Rehabilitation Service Areas 6 and 9. Our National Farmworker Jobs Program partner is Proteus. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program partners are DFR/Maximus. Senior Community Service partners include Goodwill, AARP Foundation, Vantage, and National Able.

3.3* Describe how the board will support the strategy identified in the WIOA Unified State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to support service alignment. Describe efforts to work with each partner identified in 3.2 to develop plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of the Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2), (10), (11), (12) & (13), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(ii), (b)(9) and (b)(11)]

Region 4 Workforce Board's strategic goals are in alignment with those of the State. Removing barriers for workers is the first step in assisting current, new, and emerging workers. Although Region 4 is unable to have the same broad systemic change as the State, we are able to assist our local customers with removing barriers such as: low basic and occupational skills, childcare and transportation challenges, lack of knowledge on career availability, and how to prepare and search for employment. In addition, Region 4 has received a DOL Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant which will assist in skilling up the current workforce for careers in the electric vehicle and battery making sector.

In an effort to fulfill the demands of our employers we must continue to work on preparing a future skilled workforce. Through the JAG program we have the ability to impact hundreds of young people in our region. The intensity of JAG allows for greater impact on young people understanding the labor market and the skills needed for high quality, high paying career opportunities. Through our partnership with the career and technical education partners we are able to work together on creating a plan and implementing the required training needed for the youth and the employers throughout the region.

3.4 Identify how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan and state provided criteria. See the [Multi-Year Adult Education Competitive Grant Application \(Request for Application\)](#). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(12)].

The Board's business services staff work directly with area employers to develop work experiences and internships in the region's demand occupations for out-of-school youth, including adult education students, under several initiatives in our region. Our #iWork out-of-school model engages youth in short-term skill training and certifications, National Career Readiness Certificates, employability skills, community service, internships, on-the-job training, and employment. The region has developed a strong program with our Adult Ed partners to provide training and internship opportunities for out-of-school youth. These work and learn opportunities provide benefits for both the employer and the youth. Youth are engaged in productive work experiences and employers have individuals trained in their specific work environment while receiving reimbursement for part of the training costs. Adult Education providers receive weekly updates on job availability/job fairs throughout the region from the business services team. Region 4 WorkOne magazines are distributed to the Adult Education locations. The

region utilizes social media – Facebook and Twitter – to notify youth of opportunities throughout the region.

The Region 4 Workforce Development Board (WDB) will follow a six-step process when reviewing WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) applications:

- 1.) Eligible Adult Education (AE) providers who seek to provide AE services in the Region 4 Workforce Service Area submit their AEFLA applications to DWD’s AE Grants Manager for consideration.
- 2.) The AE Manager sends each application to the WDB Chair.
- 3.) The Chair or its designee appoints a committee of three to five board members and/or board staff who each acknowledge having no real, apparent, or organizational conflicts of interest.
- 4.) The Chair or its designee completes and submits its recommendation for promoting alignment with the Local Plan by the established date.
- 5.) Each application reviewer will have signed and submitted a confidentiality statement along with the recommendation.
- 6.) DWD will consider the results of the review by the local WDB in making the awards.

3.5* Describe how the local boards will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(4)]

Region 4 works closely with our economic development partners. Region 4 CEO, Gregg Notestine is a member of the Kokomo team that was selected to participate in the National Leagues of Cities “Good Jobs, Great City” initiative. This initiative is to promote economic development and cultivate job opportunities locally. The Board has as its economic development representative a city economic development director with wide-ranging experience promoting entrepreneurship and microenterprise initiatives. Currently there are two large economic activities occurring in the region. Both activities will require new skill sets. One is StarPlus Energy, an EV battery maker and the other is SKHynix, a semiconductor manufacturer. Region 4 has received a DOL Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant which will assist in skilling up the current workforce for careers in the electric vehicle and battery making sector which will directly impact the new electric vehicle battery plant being built in Kokomo.

The Region 4 Board realizes that aspiring entrepreneurs who enter the WorkOne System are not likely to have access to the capital needed to start a business. They often do not have the full set of specific practical skills and/or general business skills needed to be successful in running a start-up operation or microenterprise. Region 4 Business Consultants and Operations Team Members will ensure that aspiring entrepreneurs have access to the technical/practical skill development training opportunities they will require and connect them with the many networking and mentoring opportunities available through local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Organizations. Examples of the latter are the local offices of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Wabash Valley Lean Network, Business & Professional Exchange, and other career and business-to-business networking groups. These organizations and groups will help aspiring entrepreneurs develop a business plan, access start-up capital, and identify in what areas the local WorkOne System may most appropriately support the skill development and business management training needs of these individuals.

3.6 Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, describe how the one-stop operator will ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Include any locally identified priority of service populations. [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(21)]

Region 4 will focus efforts on serving individuals that meet at least one of the priority of service populations, including: receiving public assistance, low-income, high school dropouts, basic skills deficient, and individuals with disabilities.

Additional Priority of Service Groups

Region 4 Board has approved the following additional priority groups.

- *Individuals 55 years of age and older*

Ten percent of the workforce in Region 4 in 2022 did not have a high school diploma. Region 4 will continue to work closely with the Excel Centers (high school dropouts) and Adult Education providers (basic skills deficient) to increase the opportunities for those individuals with incomplete secondary education and academic skills deficiencies. Food Stamp recipients in 2022 were 44,685 or approximately 7.3% of the region's population. The priority of service population levels served for PY23 is 65% of those enrolled.

The Board will focus on these individuals by strengthening relationships with regional partners who serve many individuals in priority of service populations. The improved relationships provide for staff to co-serve individuals to gain the skills and training needed for occupations in demand. This network of partners provides the wrap-around resources to support successful transition to employment. Additional resources have been brought to the region through the Board's support of partner grants and grants directly received by the Board. Our USDOL Building Pathways grant brings in \$2 million to up-skill unemployed and underemployed individuals. Management of this effort will be accomplished through the tracking of eligibility documentation and the reporting of individuals served. Region 4 assures that the majority of individuals served by the WorkOne system are individuals in priority of service categories.

3.7* Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, identify industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Describe how you will be partnering to achieve defined goals.

The electric vehicle sector is Region 4's newest partnership. The partnership includes representatives from StarPlus Energy (new electric vehicle battery manufacturer in Kokomo), Ivy Tech Community College, Sun Charge EV (new partnership to create charging stations that are solar powered), economic development, UAW, and Region 4. The partnership is working to define the skill sets required for the new electric vehicle careers as well as recruitment efforts to fill the needed positions.

3.8 A-D

Responses to the following questions should include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in 3.1 and meet the needs of regional employers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) & (B) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)]

Identify and describe the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

A. Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs and targeted sector strategies, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The Board gives special attention to our wealth driver, the advanced manufacturing industry and its subsectors. From among these the Board focuses on three subsectors that are currently experiencing the strongest growth: Electric Vehicle and Battery Manufacturing, Automotive/Heavy Vehicle Equipment, Metal Production & Related Manufacturing, and Semiconductor Packaging.

The Board currently convenes an Electric Vehicle and Battery sector partnership. Region 4 also is a member of the newly created semiconductor sector partnership.

Small employers are often not able to participate in convened events due to management staffing constraints. Business Consultants and Employer Services staff members are responsible for keeping small employers informed about and involved in new initiatives and opportunities. The Board's website provides helpful information, and the Board also publishes annually the West Central Indiana Region 4 Employer Services booklet to inform all employers of the services available and tailored to their needs. The Region 4 Board staff also provides labor market analysis services for all Region 4 employers. The Board subscribes to the Lightcast database to enhance LMI services beyond that which is readily available through DWD. Providing this service in a timely, tailored way has greatly contributed to the Board's engagement with employers of all types. Partnerships with employers through the Advanced Manufacturing Initiative and the America's Promise grant, and other grant projects have sparked the establishment of an incumbent worker program, greatly increased paid internship and on-the-job training opportunities, led to the development of customized training programs, and brought more in-demand occupational training programs to the region.

B. Support a local workforce development system as described in 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses.

To meet the needs of business, our business service team will collect business intelligence from employers in the region and develop personal relationships with the major contributors to the regional economy. Our business service team will evaluate the workforce development and hiring/recruitment needs of businesses and develop solutions-based strategies to meet those needs, by improving alignment of future employer demand and current and future workforce supply and align our education and training programs to support market need. We will compile business profiles and advise the Board of Business Intelligence for strategic planning. We will deliver presentations to business and trade organizations regarding workforce related topics, services and talent strategies. We will engage with employers to ensure their needs are being met and raise awareness about WorkOne services including but not limited to; Indiana Career Connect, WorkKeys, on-the-job training programs, specialized recruitment and placement, screening services, etc.

Region 4's workforce development system partnerships allow for the most diverse funds and services to assist in connecting employers and job seekers. Partner program participants are being sought for training opportunities to meet employer's skill needs and partner organizations resources/programs are included in employer outreach efforts. These programs and groups are represented in Business Consultant and Employer Services staff members' contacts with employers and featured in the Region 4 Employer Services publication and websites. In addition, business services send weekly job listings to all partners so that they may share with their participants.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs.

The Region 4 Board follows the maxim: "Economic Development leads; Workforce Development follows." Nothing happens in the planning or funding of training initiatives without the input and support of local and regional economic development organizations (LEDO) for a couple of reasons: 1) LEDOs are closer to their employers than are workforce development representatives and 2) LEDOs are closer to their local elected officials than are workforce development representatives. Consequently, the Board pays close attention to what LEDOs are saying and doing. Board representatives are members of LEDO boards and committees and vice versa; the Board co-convenes and co-hosts employer meetings with LEDOs; LEDOs provide funding for Board activities; the Board supports LEDOs in business attraction and expansion efforts; and Region 4 Business Consultants call on local employers either with LEDO representatives or with their knowledge.

D. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

The Region 4 Board understands that, under WIOA, the UI program is a vital program within the workforce development system and continues to be a mandatory WorkOne partner. Given the recent opportunity for WIOA staff to become more involved in delivering services through the UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Grant program, the linkages between the Region 4 Workforce Development System and Unemployment Insurance programs are strengthened. WIOA career services staff support the RESEA program by conducting eligibility assessments and referring UI recipients to adjudication, as appropriate; providing labor market and career information that addresses claimants' specific needs; ensuring claimants are registered in Indiana Career Connect; orienting claimants to WorkOne services; and developing Individual Reemployment Plans that include work search activities, accessing services provided at WorkOne Centers and Affiliate Sites or using self-service tools, referral to approved training that meets the claimants goals, and referral to at least one reemployment service and/or training that is appropriate to the individual's needs.

3.9 Describe the strategy the local board implements when using WIOA dollars to support training opportunities including but not limited to OJT, work experience, apprenticeship, and pre-apprenticeship.

- What portion of WIOA funds in the past two years were used to support training costs for participants in each of these programs? Please list a total as well as the portion used for each program.
- What percentage of WIOA funds would you project over the next two years will be used to support training costs for participants in each of these programs? Please list a total as well as the portion used for each program.
- If the local board is supporting training costs for participants using non-WIOA funding, how is this tracked?

WIOA dollars are used as the funds of last resort for training and support services. Fortunately for Region 4 we have had multiple funding sources that were able to wholly fund the cost of training or funding that is braided with multiple sources to accomplish training goals. WIOA funds cover the cost of the majority of case management services provided to all participants. The WIOA funds are the glue that keeps all of the programs seamlessly working together so that a customer is able to receive holistic services from career guidance to training to employment in the most efficient way possible.

Below are the WIOA amounts spent for direct training. And directly under those figures are the amount of funds from other sources that have paid for training.

PY 22

Adult	\$134,549	13.5%
DW	\$24,280	7.4%
Youth	\$158,116	14.8%
Trng funds	\$1,268,000	
other sources		

PY 23

Adult	\$60,881	6.8%
DW	\$8,309	4.3%
Youth	\$72,803	12.2%
Trng funds	\$963,000	
other sources		

PY24 Est.

Adult	\$65,000
DW	\$20,000
Youth	\$100,000
Trng Funds	\$2,049,000
Other Sources	

PY25 Est.

Adult	\$65,000
DW	\$20,000
Youth	\$100,000
Trng Funds	\$1,000,000
other Sources	

The majority of our training program funds are tracked through Indiana Career Connect and CRM.

3.10 If the local board is currently leveraging funding outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds to support the local workforce development system, briefly describe the funding and how it will impact the local system. Organize the description by population(s) served. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any plans to pursue it.

The Board has received a USDOL H-1B Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant for \$2 M. The grant is to assist with training for adults that are unemployed, underemployed and incumbent workers to gain the skills needed for the Electric Vehicle and Battery manufacturing sector.

The Board received a USDOL H-1B Rural Healthcare grant for 2.5 M. The Board is partnering with eight (8) other regions across the state. The funds are to increase the number of individuals training in healthcare occupations that directly impact patient care.

3.11 Describe any collaboration with organizations or groups outside of your local area, interstate or intrastate, and what outcomes you plan to achieve as a result of the collaboration.

The Board received a USDOL H-1B Rural Healthcare grant for 2.5 M. The Board is partnering with eight (8) other regions across the state. The funds are to increase the number of individuals training in healthcare occupations that directly impact patient care.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Please answer the following questions. Many of the responses below, such as those regarding career pathways and individual training accounts, should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and partners. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

4.1 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs (*Core programs include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*), will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment and out of school youth. Include information regarding the referral processes with one stop partners such as the technology used for making/tracking referrals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i)]

The Region 4 Board operates an integrated service delivery system of Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Unemployment Insurance, and WIOA programs which has increased access to services to individuals served through the one-stop system. Our collaboration with Adult Education partners has significantly increased access and service delivery to individuals with barriers to employment, especially to out-of-school youth. To expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services, the Board works with these and other partners to enhance cross-agency training to ensure customers are served in a client-centric approach that maximizes the access to and coordination of existing resources. The cross-agency training courses take place twice a year. Agency staff have found these events to be helpful in learning about programs and how they may assist their customers. They have time during these events to ask specific questions about each program. Most services can be accessed via technology and on-line systems and the region will continue to search to add access to additional services using technology. Joint referral and tracking processes have been developed with regional partners to expand access to individuals with barriers to employment and out-of-school youth. Shared referral processes, including shared referral formats have been developed with Adult Education, TANF, Vocational Rehabilitation, Senior Services and Veteran staff. Potential customers are identified during the intake process and referred according to regionally developed procedures. The Hoosier Heartland Partner Referral program (internet based) bolsters the strength of the partnership by allowing partners to directly schedule appointments or refer customers to each partner. The program shares information regarding each partner so that staff can make appropriate referrals. Such referrals are notated in the case management system. Building on these existing partner relationships, the Board will convene partners to update resource mapping, improve service delivery for increased access, and continually improve the referral process. These sessions will focus on serving individuals with barriers to employment, including out-of-school youth. We have also added an online scheduling tool that will allow customers and/or partners to

directly schedule an appointment from our website. Strategies will be developed for increasing co-enrollment of customers so that multiple resources are accessed for effectively and efficiently serving the customer.

4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate and develop career pathways and utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs as well as improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(iii), and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii)]

Region 4 is committed to facilitating career pathways that meet the evolving needs of our workforce and local industries. By leveraging short-term stackable credentials, industry-recognized certificates, and work-based learning opportunities, we aim to equip individuals with the skills necessary for successful careers. Our strategic use of co-enrollment across programs further supports training completion and employment outcomes.

Our career pathways focus primarily on two critical sectors: advanced manufacturing and healthcare. These sectors have been identified based on local labor market demands and the potential for sustainable employment and career growth.

A key component of our strategy in the healthcare sector is our co-enrollment with the USDOL Rural Healthcare Grant award. This grant enabled us to assist numerous individuals in obtaining their training and certifications in healthcare. Participants earn certificates that provide a competitive edge in the job market. This grant allows for entry into the healthcare arena as well as assisting existing healthcare workers to increase their skills and move up the healthcare pathway.

The region has also been awarded the USDOL Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant. Through this grant, the region trains jobseekers in the renewable energy sector, specifically the Electric Vehicle industry with a focus on EV battery production, Solar Charging stations for EVs and Electric Vehicle production. Our goal is to build equitable pathways to good infrastructure jobs.

Additional programs that are utilized include the Workforce Ready Grant, Employer Training grant funding and apprenticeships through the Apprenticeship Building America grant. We continue to develop and re-align the pathways through discussion with our employers and educators. Region 4 is working with employers on developing registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for new and incumbent workers. Through the Career and Technical Education providers in our region and our Jobs for Americas graduates, there are several career pathways available for high school age students. Students earn college credits, stackable certifications and some may graduate very close to earning an associate degree.

By strategically deploying these resources, Region 4 aims to create robust career pathways that not only meet immediate workforce needs but also support long-term career development and economic growth in our community.

4.3 A-G Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area as required by WIOA Sec. 121(e). Please note that question F is only for local areas participating in a Planning Region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A-D) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)].

Our one-stop delivery system is designed to bring together and collaborate with workforce development, educational, and other human resources/services in a customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. We are a network of one-stop partners, through which each partner provides programs, services, and activities, physically or technologically. We envision a system of partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs that collaborate to create a seamless customer-focused one-stop delivery system that integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to the programs' services. Services are made accessible through a variety of physical and technological means, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of location or circumstance, can benefit from our programs.

We provide programs and services that prepare individuals for employment, including job search assistance, career counseling, and labor market information.

Access to educational opportunities ranging from basic skills training to advanced degrees are tailored for each customer to meet the demands of the current job market.

Support services that address barriers to employment, such as transportation, childcare, and housing assistance are available to increase training completion and employment success.

A. Describe the local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(i)]

The local board is dedicated to ensuring the continuous improvement of eligible service providers to meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers. Regular meetings are held with providers to discuss service delivery design, address challenges, and identify opportunities for enhanced effectiveness. These meetings are a platform for discussing strengths and successes, which are then improved upon and replicated to strengthen the region's workforce development efforts. Any deficiencies identified are fully disclosed, and remedies are jointly developed, fostering an open, solution-driven dialogue. This collaborative approach has enabled the region to consistently meet, exceed, and often lead state performance metrics in entered employment, employment retention, and wages.

To ensure that the services provided align with the needs of local employers, the Board maintains ongoing communication with employers through meetings and surveys. This continuous engagement helps the Board understand employer workforce needs and challenges, allowing for the development of targeted solutions.

By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and maintaining strong partnerships with both service providers and employers, the local board ensures that the services provided are effective, responsive, and aligned with the needs of the community.

B. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(ii)]

The local board is committed to ensuring that services provided through the one-stop delivery system are accessible to all individuals, including those in remote areas, by leveraging technology and other means. Many core services, such as unemployment benefits filing, job matching, resume building, skill assessments, and skill building, are currently available online and can be accessed from anywhere with an internet connection. Enrollment into the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs can also be completed virtually through Indiana Career Connect.

Our local WorkOne West Central website serves as a hub for regional access to these services. The website provides links to various services, information on regional events such as job fairs and recruitment events, workshops, in-demand occupation information, local grants, internship opportunities, and partner services.

To increase awareness and accessibility of these services, the Board utilizes social media and publishes a bi-monthly WorkOne West Central magazine, which is distributed to our one-stop partners across the region. This magazine highlights available services, upcoming events, and success stories to keep the community informed and engaged. These services are accessible at all partner locations and other community entities such as local libraries and community-based organizations. To further enhance accessibility, the Board has implemented online workshops, referral systems, appointment scheduling, and e-training options. Virtual assistance is also provided through platforms like Zoom, ensuring that customers receive the support they need regardless of their location.

In implementing these virtual services, the Board takes into consideration the technology literacy levels of the customers we serve, providing balanced and user-friendly approaches to service delivery. This comprehensive strategy ensures that all individuals, regardless of their geographic location, have access to the essential services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

C. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188 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. [See WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C), 29 CFR 38, 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iii), and DWD Policy 2016-09]

The Board is dedicated to ensuring that individuals with disabilities have full access to the one-stop delivery system and its services, in compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the ADA.

Offices, facilities, equipment, and systems are formally monitored no less than once a year for compliance, accessibility, and capacity to serve anyone with special needs. Notification is provided to individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) of their right to free language assistance. The language most spoken in addition to English in our region is Spanish. We connect customers to the Spanish version of ICC and other tools when available. We have bi-lingual staff in our main WorkOne centers to assist, but if they are not available, individuals with LEP or any other individual in need of interpretive services are provided such services at no cost. We maintain strict adherence to ADA standards and provide accommodation as needed to customers. Assistive Technology and TTY service are in our full-service offices. Assistive technological devices include: 21-inch monitors, sound wizard, Intellikeys keyboards, CCTV, Dragon voice recognition software, ergonomic keyboards, Franklin speaking dictionary, height-adjustable tables, JAWS screen reader, Magic screen enhancer, motorized workstation, Zoom Text screen enhancer, articulating arm supports and typing aide. The Region's website is ADA complaint.

Training is provided for one-stop staff to better understand how to serve individuals with disabilities, the different types of disabilities, how to handle issues of disclosure and disability identification with sensitivity at program intake, and how to determine the most effective mix of services and referrals to make when a disability is identified. These trainings are presented by subject matter experts and include such topics as: federal, state, and local disability policies; identifying barriers/hidden disabilities; disability awareness and etiquette; website accessibility; providing reasonable accommodations; assistive technology accommodations and resources.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Mental Health Providers are invited to these training events to present on relevant topics. All new staff receive this training, and refresher training is provided annually.

D. Provide the name, organization, and contact information of the designated local WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer.

*The designated Equal Opportunity Officer for the Region 4 Workforce Service Area is:
Mellisa Leaming
Director of Operations
Region 4 Workforce Board
976 Mezzanine Drive, Suite C
Lafayette, IN 47905
765.807.0888*

E. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners agreed to per DWD Policy 2018-04 Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure/Additional Costs Funding Guidance and any future iteration of this guidance. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iv)]

Bi-annually the Board staff bring all the required partners together to discuss the One Stop System Agreement for Region 4. The partners at the table include at a minimum, representatives of WIOA Title I Adult program, WIOA Dislocated Worker program, and WIOA Youth Program, Adult Basic Education, Indiana Department of Workforce Development (Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Adjustment Assistance and Veterans programs), Ivy Tech Community College (Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Vocational Rehabilitation, Proteus (National Farmworker Jobs Program), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, and DFR/Maximus (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) and Goodwill, AARP Foundation, and National Able (Senior Community Service partners).

The partners determine their MOU services to be included in the centers, and options for access. Based on the services to be included in the One Stop System by partners, the costs to provide those services are agreed upon as well as methods to determine fair share by each partner. The infrastructure allocation methodology is based upon Full Time Equivalents and Square Footage. The MOU and IFA are reviewed annually for updates and changes

See Exhibit 3 – Region 4 Partnership Agreement – IFA Partner Contributions

F.* If you participate in a Planning Region, please describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. [20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(v)]

Not applicable to Region 4

G. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(20)]

The one-stop centers are actively transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system to streamline core programs and those carried out under WIOA, as well as by one-stop partners. Many services, particularly the core services provided through the one-stop system, such as unemployment benefits filing, job matching, resume building, skill assessments, and skill building, are currently available online and accessible from anywhere with internet access. This accessibility ensures that customers can utilize these essential services without needing to visit physical locations.

The enrollment process for WIOA programs can now be completed virtually through Indiana Career Connect, enhancing accessibility and convenience for job seekers. Career coaches provide assistance virtually, ensuring continuous support throughout the enrollment process and beyond.

The WorkOne West Central website serves as a regional hub, providing access to various services and information. This includes job fairs, recruitment events, workshops, in-demand occupation information, local grants, internships, and partner services. This centralized resource ensures that all relevant information and services are readily available to the public.

The Board leverages social media for outreach and information sharing, keeping the community informed about available services and upcoming events. Additionally, online appointment scheduling, workshops, referrals, and e-training have been implemented to facilitate easy access to services. Region 4 utilizes Engage by Cell, a texting service that connects with customers by sending appointment reminders, contacting individuals who have difficulty attending face-to-face meetings, and providing follow-up information. This service enhances communication and ensures that customers stay engaged with the one-stop system.

The Hoosier Heartland Partner Referral program has been introduced to strengthen partnerships and improve service delivery. This program allows partners to directly schedule appointments or refer customers to each other, facilitating seamless integration of services. It also shares information about each partner, enabling staff to make appropriate and informed referrals.

By integrating these technology-enabled systems and services, the one-stop centers are enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. This transition supports a more streamlined and user-friendly experience for customers, ensuring they receive the assistance they need promptly and efficiently.

4.4 Provide an assessment and description of adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training, and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services as well as the capacity to provide such services in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. Specifically assess the local area's WIOA performance levels from the prior two years. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D) & 108(b)(7), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(6), and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(4)]

The adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities provided in the region are designed and delivered in alignment with the needs and occupations in-demand of regional employers and the skill

needed. In our demand-driven system, career counseling, skills assessment and skills gap analysis are conducted to determine the academic and career plan. The appropriate employment and training activities for everyone will be offered through the one-stop system. Employment and training activities include workshops, skill assessments, career awareness, pre-vocational services, training, supportive services, and work and learn opportunities. Services are provided in-person or virtually when needed and /or feasible. The following paragraphs will highlight these activities.

There are several workshops available for individuals. There are basic workshops such as: Resume, Job Search, Interviewing, Career Interest, Digital Literacy and Work Ready. Workshop settings are the best tools for general information on these topics. Facilitated workshops provide Individuals the opportunity to be in group settings to practice teamwork, communication and problem solving. These employability skills are at the top of the skills most requested by employers. Individuals who need additional assistance can receive individualized support.

Individuals seeking greater assistance in finding employment receive services that will guide them towards a career pathway. These services include career counseling to develop a career plan which identifies and outlines how to overcome barriers to employment, skill assessments to help them identify occupations that match with their skills, and pre-vocational services that can assist with preparing them to enter occupational training or a work activity.

And the final area of activities includes training. The adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities provided in the region are developed and delivered in alignment with the needs and occupations in-demand of regional employers. Training includes post-secondary, on-the-job training, and work and learn activities that lead to an occupation in demand. These activities contribute to the greatest success for the individuals and the employers, but only after the individual has been assessed for their ability to benefit from the training. Additionally, individuals who participate in these services will have completed many of the above activities prior to starting the training, which will allow for the best prepared individuals to succeed in training and employment. Supportive services are also available for individuals as needed. The region seeks additional grant funding to support skill development for occupations in demand for unemployed and underemployed individuals.

Supportive services include such things as: transportation, childcare, books, and tools. WIOA funds are the funds of last resort; therefore, case managers will work with other community agencies to collaborate on funding. The strength we have found is the demonstrated success of delivering a cohort model of aligning services to a sector partnership, providing employer supported, occupation-specific training, and incorporating work and learn models of internships/OJTs. The weakness lies in improving career awareness of growth occupations and in marketing and recruiting for the training and employment opportunities available. Through the additional non-WIOA grant funding received from USDOL and DWD in combination with WIOA funding, we have the capacity and are dedicating resources to deliver these activities, such as recruitment marketing, not as easily delivered under WIOA.

The local area's WIOA performance levels have been strong, with the region consistently meeting or exceeding goals in key metrics including the past 2 years for employment rates, employment retention, and median wages for both adult and dislocated worker programs. This success underscores the effectiveness of the region's integrated approach to workforce development, which combines rigorous assessment, customized training, and supportive services to meet the needs of both job seekers and employers.

4.5 Identify successful models of the activities above, especially any best practices for dislocated worker activities relevant to the local area.

Region 4 has successfully implemented various models and best practices for adult and dislocated worker activities, resulting in life-changing successes. These achievements are often the result of WIOA-funded services and co-enrollment with partners and additional grants. Here are a couple of success stories that illustrate the effectiveness of our approach:

Anthony M. *was incarcerated at the Miami Correctional Facility and struggled with technology due to his time in incarceration. This made job searches and completing applications difficult for him. During an outreach event at the Tippecanoe County Work Release, staff worked intensively with Anthony. He received support in developing interview skills, was connected with a company that provided him with a free phone and he received assistance in recovering his email access. After several weeks of job searching with continued staff assistance, Anthony was offered a job. This new employment opportunity enabled him to leave the work release center and secure his own place to live.*

Travis, *single and living with his mother, was receiving SNAP benefits and working odd jobs for his family to help support himself and mother. He had no means to pay for training, but really wanted to become a CDL driver. When he called to find out about training options, he had no idea what we could offer him as far as help to obtain his CDL license. Then, Nikki reviewed the Workforce Ready Grant eligibility with him letting him know that he qualified for WRG funding that would pay for all of CDL classes! Travis now has a full-time job using his CDL making \$21.80 an hour with a \$2 an hour bonus for being on time. Also, his new job has benefits.*

4.6 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in section 134(a)(2)(A). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(7)].

The local staff and DWD work together to assist with rapid response activities. The local staff connect directly with the employer and the workers so that they can begin looking at their options while still employed. Staff will share information regarding upskilling and reskilling opportunities. Staff provide information on next steps including training opportunities, job openings and how to connect with the local offices so that they can begin creating their plan. The local Rapid Response (RR) team consisting of the RR coordinator, Veteran staff, Trade Adjustment Assistance staff (if applicable) and WIOA staff, coordinate its efforts to deliver information and services at rapid response events. After notification of a potential RR event, either a lay off or plant closure, the Local RR coordinator contacts the organization and schedules an initial meeting with company and union representatives, as appropriate, to discover the implication of the event and to determine whether the layoff can be averted. If it appears that Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is reauthorized, then resources are provided to help apply for TAA. If the TAA petition is certified by DOL then the State and local TAA Coordinators are brought to the table to provide a separate TAA session for affected employees. Resources are identified and dates are determined for a full-blown Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Orientation to Services meeting with the affected workers. During the RR session, services are outlined, including potential workshops that can lead to reemployment, such as Job Clubs, Skill Identification, Getting the Most from Indiana Career Connect, Resume Preparation, Interview Skill Development and Non-Traditional Job Search Activities. At the event individuals are scheduled for the workshops provided at a WorkOne location. If job retraining is indicated the applicant relates to a WIOA case manager who determines WIOA eligibility and enrolls the individual into the program. All veterans relate to local WorkOne staff and Veterans with significant

barriers to employment are connected to the Disabled Veteran Outreach Person (DVOP). The region will strive for 100% co-enrollment with TAA, if reauthorized. Throughout the process, ongoing support is provided to help affected workers navigate their options, access training opportunities, and connect with local resources for reemployment. This coordinated approach ensures that affected workers receive timely support, relevant information, and access to necessary services to facilitate their transition during workforce disruptions.

4.7 Provide an analysis and description of the type and availability of youth workforce activities for in school youth, including youth with disabilities. If the same services are offered to out-of-school youth, describe how the programs are modified to fit the unique needs of in-school youth. For each program, include the following: length of program and availability/schedule (i.e. two weeks in July); percent of youth budget allocation; WIOA program elements addressed by the program; desired outputs and outcomes; and details on how the program is evaluated. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services and the capacity to provide such services in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)]

The 14 youth program elements for ISY and OSY are:

- *Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies*
- *Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services as appropriate*
- *Paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, on-the- job training opportunities*
- *Occupational skills training*
- *Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors*
- *Supportive services*
- *Adult mentoring*
- *Comprehensive guidance and counseling*
- *Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation*
- *Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities is incorporated for in-school youth through short-term work experience, employability skills training, or internships.*
- *Financial literacy education is delivered to in-school youth by financial specialists from local banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions during JAG class time.*
- *Entrepreneurial skills training provided via guest speakers by the Small Business Development Center staff and through entrepreneurial training curriculum.*
- *Services that provide labor market and employment information is provided through INReality, an online tool that allows users to select a lifestyle that matches their career interest and salary information, the region's Top 60 Critical Occupations in West Central Indiana career guide and other regional resources*
- *Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training*
The JAG program model integrates curriculum and activities such as scholarship application and financial aid assistance, entrance exam preparation, and other independent living skills that would ensure success in the youth's post-secondary experience.

The same set of services are available for customers with disabilities in ISY and OSY. In PY23 over 46% of the students in ISY identified as having a disability and over 42% for OSY.

The Board's vision for in-school youth (ISY) is to successfully complete secondary school and transition to post-secondary and/or employment. This will be accomplished by assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs and goals, creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant, and expanding the participant's connection to the local labor market, educational opportunities and community services. This process is accomplished through the region's Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program which is a year-round program and coordinated around 14 Youth Program Elements, which must be made available to every participant. Many of the students included in JAG classes have a disability and Individual Education Plan designed for their educational needs. The in-school youth budget will not be more than 50% of the youth allocation.

The region will be increasing the JAG program by adding 8 new programs for the 2024-2025 school year. JAG staff continue to pursue additional schools for the 2025-26 school year. To complement the JAG program, the region has developed Youth Summits, Manufacturing Month, and Youth Career Awareness Publications. We work in collaboration with the CTE Districts, AE Providers, LEDOs, and postsecondary institutions. We will develop and promote career pathways with multiple on- and off- ramps for in-school.

The outputs and outcomes of the JAG program are: 90% graduation rate; 60% job placement rate; 60% of those with jobs are in full time jobs; further Education Rate of 35%. and 75% positive outcomes (job, military or post-secondary); and 93% connection rate. The strength of the JAG program goes beyond the graduation success rate. The larger success is the positive impact on the lives of students in the program and the communities where they reside. JAG is a year-round program therefore it allows for the students to have continuous engagement with the JAG Specialist and have the opportunity for internships, job shadowing or improving their academic status after the school year ends. Weaknesses include burnout of JAG Specialists, finding long-term mentors, insufficient internships to align to student interest, and ability for small schools to have enough students who qualify for the program. In- and out-of-school youth have the same set of services available, but the methods of delivery vary.

In-school youth (ISY) receive many of their services through the JAG classroom and specialist and services that are provided through the school system. In-school is structured to how services/learning is provided. There is a curriculum, class time and competencies that is required for all. Capacity currently has not been an issue. We still have availability in our classes. The strength of this model is having a cohort of students who can benefit from continuous instruction, and leadership opportunities throughout the school year and a connection to classmates they may not have elsewhere. The limitation for providing the JAG program for ISY is that it is not available to all students. Many students would benefit from the JAG components but are not able to participate in JAG due to lacking the required number of barriers or scheduling conflicts.

Out-of-school youth (OSY) can receive services directly through the WorkOne System and through many of our partners. Case management is provided in an individualized setting. The services offered for OSY are tailored to the needs of the customer. The iWork workshop is the foundation for most of the out of school youth. iWork assists youth in choosing career paths, increasing job getting and keeping skills, and obtaining occupational skills through work-based learning or classroom training. Once they have completed the workshop then they begin moving along various pathways/career opportunities. The strength of this model for OSY is that it allows for open entry/exit. A new class starts every Monday and

youth move through at their own pace after they complete the initial workshop. Currently there are no capacity issues. The weakness for out-of-school youth is trying to find the best outreach tools to assist in engaging them in the programs.

The output of the OSY program is young adults who are productive members of their community with advanced skills that assist in beginning a career and earning higher wages. Performance measures for the youth program include Employment in 2nd quarter after exit; Employment in 4th quarter after exit; Median earnings; Credential attainment; and Measurable skills gain. Negotiated measures can be found in Section 5.5.

4.8 Identify successful models of the activities above and any other best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)]

The JAG program is highly successful for in-school youth and has improved the graduation rate of those youth who were at-risk of not graduating on time. The work and learn activities have increased employment opportunities for both in-school and out-of-school youth. Through work and learn experiences the youth have a chance to prove their skills to potential employers. Youth are often offered employment by the work and learn employers. In addition to the programs described above, the region has implemented the following initiatives to build a talent pipeline focused on connecting youth to advanced manufacturing occupations

Manufacturing Month

The month is devoted to students' and teachers' learning manufacturing that happens in the communities where they live. Schools and employers in Region 4 are invited to participate in designing and delivering the activities. Students learn about career opportunities and career paths. They discover the length and type of education and training required for a variety of manufacturing occupations. The four-week modified curriculum includes: Week 1 - Design It, Week 2 - Produce It, Week 3 - Move It, and Week 4 - Support It. Manufacturing Month is a partnership that involves CTE Directors, Economic Developers, Secondary School teachers and administrators, WorkOne Business Consultants, and our regional employers.

Youth Summits

The goal of the event is to educate more youth in the region about careers available in their community with a special focus on careers in advanced manufacturing. Participants needed to attend pre-event sessions on topics of networking, resume writing, and learning how to make a good first impression. Business cards were made for all students listing their top three skills to present to employers during the 'Get a Job' networking session at the Summit.

The Summit also offered youth the opportunity to learn about the skills employers' value, summer jobs, internships, and the critical need for skilled workers in the manufacturing industry. Students attended additional workshops, such as 'Show Me the Trades', in which local trade organizations acquaint youth with local career opportunities, and 'You're Fired', where they learn that the lack of soft skills and misuse of social media can lead to being fired from a job. The Summit had the support of local businesses, Ivy Tech, WorkOne, WDB Youth Committee, local economic development organizations, and local government.

#iWork Program

This is a program specific to out-of-school young adults. The program is designed so that you may enter the program quickly and begin developing a career pathway and honing job-getting and -keeping skills. The program moves the young adult from the beginning of trying to figure out what they want to do, to moving into work and learn opportunities, and finally to kicking off a career. This is a rapid-paced program that allows for positive reinforcement throughout.

Tippecanoe Building Trades Camp

A summer building trades camp provides opportunities for students and young adults to explore career opportunities in the trades. Ten trades are highlighted over several weeks. Participants are encouraged to try hands-on activities as well as learning first-hand from active journey workers and apprentices.

4.9 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. Describe how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services as described in 20 CFR 680.320 will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(18)]

*The local board employs a comprehensive process to ensure that the training provided is aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations within the local area or for areas where participants are willing to relocate. The Region 4 Board develops an annual regional Occupations in Demand list based on data gathered and analyzed from multiple sources, including local employers, EMSI, the Occupational Outlook Handbook, O*NET, and the Department of Workforce Development. The Board also publishes the “Top 60 Critical Occupations in West Central Indiana” on the WorkOne West Central webpage (<http://www.workonewestcentral.org>). The Board Engages with educational institutions, training providers, and community organizations to align training programs with industry requirements and establishes advisory committees comprising representatives from key industries to provide guidance on curriculum development and training program relevance.*

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are developed for individuals needing training to become self-sufficient or for those who have lost a job and require training to return to a comparable or higher wage in demand occupations. Before establishing an ITA and enrolling a customer in Occupational Skills Training, Case Managers discuss and review the desired career pathway, relevant labor market information about the chosen occupation, and review training providers for the occupation being sought, ensuring it is an occupation in demand. An Academic and Career Plan is developed jointly with the customer.

Assessments are conducted to determine if the customer has the skills, qualifications, and ability to successfully complete the selected training program. If an individual lacks the necessary academic foundation to succeed in the training, they are referred to Adult Education for remediation as the first step along their chosen career pathway. Individuals determined to have the ability to benefit from training select a program from the Eligible Training Provider List that is directly linked to employment opportunities and listed on the Occupations in Demand list in our region or another area to which they are willing to commute or relocate.

We ensure customer choice by providing participants with comprehensive information about available training programs, including performance outcomes, costs, and relevance to in-demand occupations.

4.10 Describe how Reemployment Service and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) activities are implemented in the local area and how they will be incorporated into WIOA programming.

The RESEA program assists unemployed individuals to connect with One-stop Career Center services to help build job search skills and employment skills for rapid reemployment. This goal aligns with the WIOA goals and activities in the Center that are coordinated with WIOA staff and WIOA resources.

Region 4 provides RESEA Orientation services at our 2 full-service offices, WorkOne Lafayette and WorkOne Kokomo on Tuesday and Wednesday of each week. Sub RESEA services are provided on Monday, Thursday, and Friday of each week. We will provide RESEA services to individuals unable to travel to Kokomo or Lafayette at our affiliate site, WorkOne Logansport, as needed.

Region 4 conducts the group RESEA Orientations. Claimants meet with Wagner Peyser staff to complete WP applications. WIOA staff attend the RESEA orientation sessions to provide information on workshops, resume assistance, demand occupations, and training/internship opportunities under WIOA funding and other grants the region may have.

One-on-one meetings with WIOA Case Managers are held to review documentation completed prior to the orientation, discuss labor market information (LMI), and explore services available through the WorkOne system. The claimant's initial Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) is developed jointly, and the claimant is assigned at least one RESEA workshop, provided with four weeks of additional job search logs, and scheduled for a follow-up one-on-one meeting with RESEA/WIOA Case Managers. All activities and case notes are entered to reflect the services provided.

RESEA workshops cover various topics, including Job Search, Resume Writing, Interviewing, Career Interest, and Work Readiness. These workshops are offered once a week at WorkOne Lafayette, WorkOne Kokomo, and WorkOne Logansport offices, both in-person and virtually.

Region 4 actively markets On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunities and other training programs available under the Workforce Ready Grant, Rural Healthcare Grant, Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs, Apprenticeship Grant, and Adult, Dislocated Worker (DW), and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) programs. This marketing encourages co-enrollment, lifelong learning, and skill upgrading. The Region 4 Business Service Team shares new job order reports, job fair flyers, and OJT opportunities with partners weekly to educate and inform WorkOne and One-Stop partner staff about available employment opportunities for clients, including those in the RESEA program.

By integrating RESEA activities with WIOA programming, Region 4 ensures a comprehensive approach to reemployment services, supporting unemployed individuals to secure sustainable employment

4.11 Describe the local area's grant application and project design strategy, including staffing, when applying for additional funding (e.g., non-formula grants). How does the local area braid funding and/or prioritize use of certain funding streams?

The region's grant application strategy begins with an ongoing analysis of the workforce needs identified through discussions with partners and employers. By understanding the current talent pipeline, future

expansions, and employer growth, we seek grant funding to support workforce development and skill enhancement needed to meet these workforce challenges.

Board staff are responsible for preparing and submitting grant applications. The grant budget is developed taking into consideration if the grant implementation can be successful using existing WIOA staff, or by adding staff as needed to deliver the proposed project. This approach has enabled the region to secure several USDOL grants.

Staff are trained to co-enroll participants in eligible programs and to braid funding for access to available resources, ensuring successful completion of training and success in employment. Staff are encouraged to maximize the use of resources.

Participants must be determined eligible for each grant based on the statute and the grant's Statement of Work (SOW) when applicable. Participants are enrolled in allowable, non-duplicated grant activities, as the program's activities pertain to each program.

4.12 Describe how the local area plans to implement program evaluation. What aspects of program delivery and performance will be evaluated, and how will these evaluations take place?

Region 4 Workforce Board (R4WB) will monitor each subrecipient in order to provide reasonable assurance that subrecipients are complying, in all material respects, with laws, regulations, and award provisions applicable to the program.

Region 4 conducts two kinds of monitoring reviews annually, which includes a fiscal review and a programmatic review of our contracted subrecipients. The purpose of these reviews is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of implementation of the WIOA. The main mechanisms by which monitors will collect information include data sampling and validation; case file reviews; formal requests for information and documentation; and invoice testing.

Ongoing monitoring of subrecipients will vary from subrecipient to subrecipient based on the nature of work assigned. However, ongoing monitoring activities may involve any or all the following:

- *Regular contact with subrecipients and appropriate inquiries regarding the program.*
- *Reviewing programmatic and financial reports prepared and submitted by the subrecipient and follow up on areas of concern.*
- *Monitoring subrecipient budgets.*
- *Performing site visits to the subrecipient to review financial and programmatic records and assess compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the subaward.*
- *Evaluating subrecipient performance to ensure that the use, management, and investment of funds for workforce development activities maximize performance outcomes under WIOA*
- *Reviewing subrecipient's internal monitoring.*
- *Offering subrecipients technical assistance where needed.*
- *Maintaining a system to track and follow up on deficiencies noted at the subrecipient to ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken.*
- *Establishing and maintaining a tracking system to ensure timely submission of all reports required of the subrecipient.*

Subrecipient Monitoring and oversight activities are not limited to those on-site and desk top data review. Monitoring is a multi-faceted management activity that is directed toward achievement of program outcomes while acting in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. In addition to fiscal

and programmatic monitoring, R4WB reviews and evaluates WIOA and other grant performance outcomes, as well as EEO compliance and ADA requirements.

Performance metric review is done at least quarterly to ensure the region is meeting negotiated metrics, and several performance data reports are reviewed weekly to ensure we are tracking to meet those outcomes.

We also request our Subrecipients to provide a quarterly 'desk top monitoring' on each program and/or unique grants (Adult, DW, Youth, etc.) with a minimum of 8 file reviews per report. Quarterly monitoring report will be sent to Board staff for review.

4.13 Describe the local area's professional development plan for all staff, including the frequency, type (in-person, self-guided, web-based, etc.), and topics addressed.

WorkOne staff complete a variety of virtual and online training throughout the year. A sample list of these trainings includes Workplace Harassment, ID.me, Mental Health Awareness, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, American Disabilities Act, PII Protection, Active Shooter, Effective Case Management, Entering Precise Case Notes, MS Teams, the Acuity Scheduler Disability Etiquette, etc.

Throughout the year we have customized case management training for staff. These topics have included: On the Job Training, Out of School Youth Enrollment, OSY WEX and #iWork, QUEST, Rural Healthcare Grant, Occupational Skills Training, Recording Effective Case notes, Timely Case Management, Document Scanning and Titling, Preventing System Closures, Work-Life Balance, Adult/Dislocated Worker enrollments, ISY/JAG enrollments, ISY/JAG incentives, Recording Credentials and Measurable Skill Gains, etc. Center Managers, Team Leaders, or Regional Managers can request training topics as needed.

Regional Staff Meetings are held monthly. The One Stop Coordinator and Regional Manager provide updates on grants and operational information to all staff through a morning and afternoon virtual meeting. The regional staff meetings usually include a training topic or a guest speaker from a partner agency. Topics or training have included: EO Policy, JVSG Program, MSFW/Proteus, WorkOne Accessibility Station, Hoosier Heartland Partnership Referral System, Rapid Response, Ivy Tech Admissions and Ivy + Career Link, etc. Updates on special grants the region has received are included on the monthly agenda as well as updates from the Business Services Team.

WorkOne Staff participate in One Stop Partner Staff Training Fairs held every 6 months. The training alternates between in person and on-line. This training includes presentations from each One Stop Partner and guest speakers, on occasion. The One Stop Partners also have Partner Youth Staff Networking events every 6 months. The youth meetings are informal and include open conversations regarding the services each partner provides and how to work together to best serve our clients.

Lafayette and Kokomo WorkOne Offices hold weekly in person office meetings to keep staff updated on any new information, programs, policies or happenings throughout the local offices and/or region. Staff from affiliate offices join virtually if not available to attend in person. Topics have included Propio Interpretation Services, Indiana Career Explorer, ID.me, Veteran's Priority, Rapid Response, Voter Registration, 3 Day Rule in ICC, Customer Satisfaction Surveys, Quest, Voucher Approvals, etc.

JAG staff attend the JAG All Staff Summer Training in Indianapolis each year. Recently hired JAG staff attend JAG New Specialist Training when offered after their hire. We also send JAG Staff to JAG Refresher training as needed. Region 4 regularly sends JAG staff and students to JAG NSLA and JAG National CDC if recommended to participate. We also provide staff with the opportunity to attend the JAG National Training Seminar each summer, pending funding availability.

Section 5: Compliance

Please answer the following questions. Most of the responses should be staff-driven, as the questions focus on the organization’s compliance with federal or state requirements. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

5.1 Describe the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for WIOA Title I activities. Identify agreement type (sub-award or contract), name of sub-recipient or contractor, and length of agreement. Attach copies of current agreements as Exhibit 1 for, as applicable: One Stop Operator, Service Provider(s), Fiscal Agent, and Staff to the Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(15)]

The Region 4 Board reviewed options allowable within WIOA Title I and DWD Policy. During Program Year 2020, the Board competitively procured an entity for the combined role of One-Stop Operator, Provider of Career Services, and Provider of Youth Services. This procurement was completed and subgrants awarded with an effective date of no later than July 1, 2021. The following steps were taken in the procurement process that began in approximately March 2021:

- 1.) *Review and update potential bidders listing to ensure a broad range of potential service provider(s) and/or One Stop Operator(s).*
- 2.) *Develop Request for Proposal within guidelines established by DWD Policy and Region 4 Workforce Board vision.*
- 3.) *RFP via email and postings on the Board’s website and DWD’s website.*
- 4.) *Convene a potential bidders’ conference required for potential service providers.*
- 5.) *Review and respond to questions received regarding RFP.*
- 6.) *Rate and Review proposals received.*
- 7.) *Hold interviews with top bidders, if needed.*
- 8.) *Obtain final Board approval.*
- 9.) *Negotiate terms with service provider(s)/One Stop Operator(s). The procurement process occurred as described above. Job Works, Inc. was selected as Service Provider and One-Stop Operator for Region 4 for PY 21 and following. JobWorks, Inc.’s subaward begin date is July 1, 2021, and has been extended to end on June 30, 2025. See Exhibit 1 Subaward JW-WIOA-44-21-04 and Exhibit B Subaward JW-WIOA-44-23-04*

5.2 Provide an organization chart as Exhibit 2 that depicts a clear separation of duties between Title I roles (e.g., between the board and service provision). [20 CFR 679.400 – 430]

See Exhibit 2 PY24 WDB Organization Chart

5.3 Describe any standing committees or taskforces of the Local Board, including the role and scope of work of the youth committee (or youth representatives on the WDB if there is not a youth committee).

The following are the standing committees of the Region 4 Workforce Development Board:

Executive Committee: Committee members include the Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Committee acts on behalf of the Board between regularly scheduled Board meetings, reviews and approves Board meeting minutes, agendas, and reports prior to and for presentation to the Board.

Finance Committee: Committee members include, at a minimum, the Board Treasurer, Board Chair, and one other Board member. The Finance Committee's role includes overseeing all financial aspects of the corporation, such as reviewing and approving the most recent Financial Report, reviewing, and making recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the Annual Budget, and reviewing the Annual Audit Report.

One-Stop Operator Oversight Committee: The role of the Committee is to oversee the one-stop service delivery system for the attainment of short-term and long-term goals that achieve WIOA objectives and performance outcomes, and compliance with all pertinent legislation and regulations. This includes ensuring the development and implementation of an integrated service delivery system in accordance with federal, state, and regional policies and processes. The Committee monitors program performance to ensure the service delivery system incorporates products, protocols, and quality standards to meet the Region 4 Board's strategic and operational goals and requires action plans for improvement when necessary. The Committee ensures the effectiveness of service delivery and implements continuous improvement processes.

Youth Committee: The Youth Council that was established under WIA serves as the Youth Committee for the Board under WIOA. The roles and responsibilities adopted by the Youth Committee are:

- Recommend the design, development, and implementation of programs that benefit all youth.
- Recommend the design of a community workforce development system to ensure a full range of services and opportunities for all youth, including disconnected youth.
- Recommend ways to leverage resources and coordinate services among schools, public programs, and community-based organizations serving youth.
- Recommend ways to coordinate youth services and recommend eligible youth service providers.
- Provide on-going leadership and support for continuous quality improvement for local youth programs; and
- Assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth.

5.4 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(14)]

Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc. d/b/a Region 4 Workforce Board has been designated as the fiscal agent by its Regional Chief Elected Official and County Chief Elected Officials Executive Council.

5.5 Indicate the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local WDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)]

REG 04	Local Negotiated Levels of Performance PY24 and PY25		
	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment 2Q	80.2%	76.4%	PY 24-78.6%, PY 25-80%
Employment 4Q	79.5%	76.0%	PY 24-79.2%, PY 25-82.1%
Credential	72.8%	74.6%	68.0%
Median Earnings	\$7,700	\$8,219	\$4,300
MSG	66.2%	67.0%	69.0%

5.6 Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing local workforce development board, consistent with the factors developed by the State WDB. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(17)]

Our path for continuing to be an effective and high-performing workforce development board begins with our Vision and Mission statements:

Vision: *The Region 4 Workforce Board is more than just a board. We are unrelenting builders of options to develop skills and knowledge of diverse peoples, firms, and future entrepreneurs. We envision a region where skills and knowledge are highly valued as pathways to personal wealth, as well as to unite regional economic growth. We envision a region where family values and quality of life are key parts of the fabric of our community. Our region will be known for its innovation, will be a national model for workforce development, and will be bursting with opportunity that will catalyze and transform our region’s economy.”*

Mission: *The Region 4 Workforce Board is an innovative and collaborative problem solver that promotes and supports skills development and life-long learning as a means of achieving economic success and improving the quality of life of our citizenry.”*

Our strategic plan guides us to realize this vision and mission as we build partnerships for a local system of developing solutions and community advancement to benefit not only our region but the state. We look at the key workforce issues in the community and pull the right players together to find solutions. As System Builder, the Board focuses on strategic partnerships, collaborative funding and design, alignment of services across partners, and a greater systems approach. As the grant steward, the Board focuses on effective structure, grant management, and data driven outcomes.

5.7 Provide as Exhibit 3 copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA sec. 107(d)(11)) between the Local WDB or other local entities described in WIOA sec. 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 the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than sec. 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to sec. 121(f)) in accordance with sec. 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation 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. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(13)]

See Exhibit 3 - Partnership Agreement.

5.8 Describe the process used by the Local WDB, consistent with WIOA sec. 108(d), to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations. If any comments that represent disagreement with the plan were received, they must be included as Exhibit 4 attached to this Local Plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(20), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(19), and 20 CFR 679.560(e)]

The Board's draft of the WIOA Local Plan Modification was published on the Board's website, www.region4workforceboard.org on August 16, 2024, for public comment. Notice of its publication was sent to local chambers of commerce, local economic development organizations, labor organizations, postsecondary education institutions, and local elected officials for their review and comment by September 16, 2024.

See Exhibit 4 (comments- if disagreement)
No comments were received.

5.9 Describe the board's process for oversight and monitoring of sub-recipients and contractors. Include staff titles for who conducts monitoring and how staff are trained to conduct monitoring. Provide a list of all upcoming planned or scheduled monitoring activities as well as copies of or links to all monitoring procedures and tools utilized during the review process. Submit this information as Exhibit 5.

Region 4 Workforce Board's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and/or designee performs onsite fiscal monitoring of its contracted service providers at least once annually. After performing a risk assessment on each service provider to determine areas of increased emphasis, a letter is sent to the provider outlining the scope of the monitoring. The letter contains time frame to be monitored, documents to be sent to the CFO prior to the onsite or virtual monitoring, and dates of monitoring. Documents that must be submitted prior to arrival include detailed General Ledgers for all sub awards and check registers for all sub awards. Items that must be made available include payroll registers for selected payrolls, cost allocation documents, bank reconciliations, etc.

Monitors then make selections of disbursements and payroll checks to be reviewed. The goal is to have a

sample that adequately covers all funding sources. Disbursements and payroll entries are reviewed for accuracy in terms of sub award charged, allowability, adequately documented, etc. Internal controls are reviewed throughout the process including during the interviews with staff about accounting policies and procedures. Any errors or areas of concern are discussed on site with appropriate staff. If not resolved the issues will be included in the report either as observations or findings. Reports are issued outlining observations and/or findings and the service provider then begins the resolution process, if necessary. Final reports are issued after resolution of all findings. Corrective action will be reviewed in subsequent monitoring visits which may include interim visits or increased documentation submitted monthly. Fiscal staff keep up to date on changes to OMB Circulars/Uniform Guidance, applicable Laws and Regulations (WIOA), and US Department of Labor Policies by attending training offered as changes occur or by attending webinars. Region 4's WIOA Service Providers' fiscal systems and records are monitored each spring during the months of March and April.

The Board's Chief Operations Officer (COO) and/or Director of Operations (DO) performs monitoring for operational compliance annually, usually in the months of February and March in accordance with the provisions of the federal, state, and local policies and regulations. Monitoring is conducted on all programs with files randomly selected. The monitoring process includes:

- Notification of scheduled monitoring provided to each provider*
- Monitoring completed using attached monitoring forms and guides*
- Monitoring is conducted via case management system and onsite*
- Monitoring reports issued to providers*
- Resolution response from service providers due back within 30 days*
- Negotiation on final resolution as necessary*

In addition to annual reviews, random desktop monitoring is conducted monthly, and data edit checks are reviewed weekly. WIOA Service Providers provide quarterly desktop operational monitoring on each WIOA program and/or other sub-contracted grants to the COO or (DO). Staff are trained on recommended improvement processes determined during the review as well as on best practices to implement.

Monitoring training has been conducted through review of local, state, and federal policies/guidelines and webinars.

See Exhibit 5 – Monitoring Forms and Guides.

5.10 Describe local operating systems, including data systems, and local policies that will support the implementation of the local board's strategy.

In addition to the state's data management system, the region uses two additional systems. Engage by Cell is an automated text messaging system to connect with customers and the Hoosier Heartland Referral system (HHR). The HHR is an online partner referral system to connect one-stop partner organizations and WorkOne center customers to each other's services and resources. Through technology, direct linkages to organizations provide a seamless mechanism for purposeful referrals to staff and the services offered by those organizations.

Below is a link to local policies that support the board's strategy.

https://www.in.gov/dwd/workonewestcentral/files/Region_4_PY23_Adult_DW_Manual.pdf

https://www.in.gov/dwd/workonewestcentral/files/Region_4_PY23_Youth_Manual.pdf

Section 6: Participant Information, Costs, and Supplemental Funding

In the “Program Participants” column, each program should reflect all participants enrolled or projected to be enrolled regardless of whether they are co-enrolled in another program. Please provide an explanation of the projections if they are at or below participant levels from the prior year. In the “Co-enrolled Participants” column, please list how many participants are co-enrolled in any core or other programs. In the text box below, include the programs in which the participants are co-enrolled.

Program		Program Participants	Co-enrolled Participants	Referrals estimated			Average Cost Per Participant
				ABE	VR	Other	
WIOA Adult	Actual PY22	339	155	12	24	9	\$2,949
	Actual PY23	372	278	17	16	13	\$2,405
	Projected PY24	375	275	15	25	10	\$2,349
	Projected PY25	375	275	20	20	15	\$2,349
WIOA Dislocated Worker	Actual PY22	151	115	5	11	10	\$2,163
	Actual PY23	119	114	4	10	15	\$1,612
	Projected PY24	120	115	5	15	10	\$2,379
	Projected PY25	120	115	5	10	15	\$2,379
Youth (In School)	Actual PY22	99	99	3	3	5	\$3,154
	Actual PY23	90	90	2	3	4	\$822
	Projected PY24	95	95	3	3	5	\$2,065
	Projected PY25	95	95	3	3	5	\$2,065
Youth (Out of School)	Actual PY22	140	27	5	10	5	\$5,400
	Actual PY23	65	32	3	6	5	\$8,061
	Projected PY24	100	35	8	12	7	\$5,920
	Projected PY25	100	35	8	12	7	\$5,920

Explanation
<p><i>Adults were co-enrolled into: Dislocated Worker, H1-B Rural Healthcare, TAA, Youth, and State JAG.</i></p> <p><i>Dislocated Workers were co-enrolled into: Adult, TAA, and Youth</i></p> <p><i>ISY were co-enrolled into: State JAG</i></p> <p><i>OSY were co-enrolled into: H1-B Rural Healthcare, Dislocated Worker, and Adult</i></p>

Supplemental Funding

Please list additional funding sources that will supplement the funding that the local area receives through WIOA.

Funding		Program Participants	Total Budget	Budget per Participant	Explanation
Additional State	PY24	600	\$5,000,000		<i>Quest, WRG, ETG, Apprenticeship Building America, State JAG, TANF JAG, RESEA</i>
	PY25				Unsure at this time
Additional Federal	PY24	400	\$1,900,000		<i>Rural Healthcare, Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs</i>
	PY25	300	\$500,000		<i>Est. Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs</i>
Additional Other	PY24				
	PY25				