

Central Economic Development Region 1

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Workforce Innovation Area 19

Local Plan

~~**March 30, 2020**~~

~~**Update: February 14, 2022**~~

Update: June 14, 2022

Chapter 4 – Operating Systems and Policies – Local Component

This chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs). LWIAs must incorporate key documents into the plan that describe the one stop delivery system and the services that are provided by the workforce partners.

A. Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan and include the following statements in this chapter:

Chapter 4 Section A Statement 1: *The Local Workforce Innovation Area #19 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*

Chapter 4 Section A Statement 2: *The Local Workforce Innovation Area #19 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*

B. Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

Chapter 4 Section B Question 1: **How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).**

The Title 1 program partner has a technology-enabled intake and case management information system, as does the Department of Rehabilitative services and Illinois Department of Employment Security (Illinois Job-Link). These partners are co-located in the one-stop and use the tracking and referral capability within IWDS to share information on customer career service.

Chapter 4 Section B Question 2: **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 other means (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).**

The Board completed value stream mapping in 2017 for all workforce partner programs in the area. This mapping provided a customer focused process of evaluation that delivers key

metrics by reducing waste and inefficiencies. The results of the mapping have not changed, and all partners will continue to provide access to web enabled portals that support workforce development activities such as job search, career exploration and skills training for high demand occupations.

LWIA 19 posts events on our website through the One-Stop system and is updated on a regular basis. The local area maintains a social media presence through Facebook, which they utilize to announce workforce preparation workshops, hiring events, job fairs and job openings.

Chapter 4 Section B Question 3: *As part of the 2022 modification, describe how lessons learned about the remote delivery of services during the COVID-19 National Health Emergency will be adapted into operations over the next two years.*

When the One-Stop Center closed in March of 2020, LWIA 19 implemented virtual services that included, virtual intakes, virtual job fairs with employers, and incorporated virtual workshops (resume development and interview skills). We adapted our website to offer an application online for customers to complete. In the beginning, Workforce offered the customer two options: 1) email the application back to a Workforce staff, or 2) physically drop off the application at our office. Staff followed all safety protocols to retrieve the applications. The staff were encouraged to work on the telephone and to schedule zoom meetings with customers. Eventually protocols were in place for staff to make appointments with individuals and safely complete an intake in person, wearing masks and staying six feet apart. We upgraded office technology; purchasing laptops for staff, which provided them the ability to connect with customers if we were not able to work in the office.

The closing of the One-Stop Center was the area that suffered the most. Customers could no longer access the computers, fax machines or copiers. There was not anyone available to assist with unemployment questions, and the Department of Rehabilitation was working from home. Providing career services to those most in need is vital. We found technology to be a huge barrier to those individuals. We plan to work with partners to increase digital literacy opportunities to the populations most in need, as well as search for programs who offer “free” technology into the homes of the special populations in Macon and DeWitt counties.

LWIB meetings were also held remotely. The members were very patient as we learned to navigate through technology. The Board has always been open to share comments and feedback, however with Zoom, we don’t get as much discussion.

LWIA 19 will continue all of the virtual services made available during the pandemic. This includes, on-line application process as well as the Career Planners meeting customers virtually if the customer can’t meet in-person.

C. Describe how the Local Board will support the strategies identified in the Unified State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

Chapter 4 Section C Question 1: Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));

It is the goal of the local board to help customers, including those with barriers, to access services that lead to employment in demand occupations for our area as outlined in the Economic Development Region 1 regional plan. Workforce Investment Solutions will continue to work with partner programs to identify persons who might benefit from our services. Customers with significant barriers to employment have a range of issues that have to be addressed. These include; basic needs, education barriers, perceptions of work and peer pressure. **Since the pandemic, digital literacy is at the forefront of services to offer. Free classes and/or workshops from Workforce as well as other partners will be a priority over the next two years.** Career services need to include support and counseling services from grass roots people who work with persons facing multiple barriers on an ongoing basis.

The partners will work to expand career services and opportunities while placing emphasis on working with nontraditional employers who are willing to work with persons facing barriers, such as job-seekers with arrest records, past drug usage and possible relapse, or with limited skills, lack of work history, lack of education, or lack of computer literacy skills. It will be important to expose these persons to positive work ethics, in a manner understandable to them.

Through the areas work with local employers, lack of essential skills needed to obtain and retain employment, is still consistently identified as a significant barrier to employment. The local Business Services Team is working to provide Essential Skills Training within the Illinois workNet Center. Partners such as Adult Education, Richland Community College and the Illinois Department of Employment Security will provide Essential Skills Training workshops throughout the community.

LWIA #19 recently received a Disaster Relief Dislocated Worker grant that specifically addresses the Opioid crisis. Essential Skills training will be one of the first of many workshops for this particular group.

Aligning resources and utilizing cross-agency collaboration, the Workforce Investment Board will ensure that training and education will reach all populations, and will enhance economic advancement for all.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 2: Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their GED and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credentials and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;

RCC currently has IET programs in Welding, Nursing Assistant, and Phlebotomy. Our current efforts are scaling up the programs with Essential Skills that includes Trauma

Sensitive training. We also are using a retention specialist for the Health Care sector to help students persist and complete certifications and/or degrees.

The English Language Learners are using Burlington English interactive programs along with classroom exercises to improve Essential Skills.

WIS currently has a contract with Richland Community College Adult Education to offer Bridge programming (Richland/Workforce Consortium). The Consortium plans to emphasize more essential skills training into all Bridge and IET programs. Adult Education will explore a new Bridge or IET that will lead to a Culinary Arts Certificate. This will complement the Hospitality Bridge class already offered. The students earn a Food Safety certificate along the way to program completion.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 3: Using the insights and lessons learned from successful dual credit programs to scale up similar efforts in other sectors and regions;

Our Adult Education partner currently doesn't offer traditional dual credit. However, students are allowed to co-enroll in Welding, Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy, and Education to Careers. Earning college credit as they finish their GED.

Dual credit is offered for the juniors and seniors at the local high schools and at Heartland Technical Academy. Heartland Technical Academy provides career exploration and training in 15 program areas, and serves high school students representing Decatur and the surrounding areas, including DeWitt County.

The 15 program areas offered include instruction in the top three sectors identified in our Regional Plan(s):

- | <u>Central EDR 1</u> | <u>Central EDR 3</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Healthcare and Social Assistance | Healthcare & Social Assistance |
| • Manufacturing | Manufacturing |
| • Professional and Business Services | Transportation & Warehousing |

Other sectors identified in our Regional Plan as *Tier 2* include:

- Construction
- Transportation/Warehousing
- Financial Activities
- Information Technology (not a stand-alone sector)
- Leisure & Hospitality

Data from IDES shows the *Tier 2* industries to have numerous jobs for our region.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 4: Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments;

Richland Community College has just started the process to develop guidelines for Prior

Learning Assessments. For example, if someone has 20 years of welding experience, the person would take an assessment test to determine if they have the knowledge. If they do, they will receive so many credits towards a welding degree/certificate.

Once guidelines have been set, the Local Board will help to market this information to the community via Partner meetings, social media and other media outlets.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 5: Investigating how targeted marketing can identify segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations;

As noted in the Regional plan, the median age is increasing for our area. Marketing to that population is a priority, as well as marketing to the underemployed.

LWIA 19 has a strong marketing program. The local news channel (WAND TV) provides a “once-a-week” spotlight labeled “Workforce Wednesdays”. This spotlight targets various populations with education information, hiring events held in the One-Stop Center, or workshops readily available throughout the community. It airs Wednesday evenings and sends information to the community at high drive times.

Facebook and other social media are used to promote events. Calendars and flyers are produced on each specific event/training opportunity.

The local area also utilizes Decatur Regional Chamber of Commerce to help promote Workforce Investment Solutions services available to the job seekers and/or employers.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 6: Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and

The local area will work with local training and educational resources as well as employers in the targeted industry sectors to help develop pathways that meet the employer’s needs. For example, in November, 2018, the local Business Services Team facilitated a “lean coffee” event for the Healthcare Sector employers. Determinations were made as to where the gaps in services were in order to produce “more” healthcare workers for the community. By identifying the gaps, LWIA 19 was able to write an innovation grant targeting the healthcare sector. The grant will begin March 1, 2020 and will focus on getting nurses interested in becoming a healthcare instructor. The lack of healthcare instructors was targeted as a severe gap in services.

The local Adult Education program has developed Bridge programming, Integrated Education and Training as well as beginning an I-CAPS program. Bridge programs are the first step for job seekers. Currently, Bridge programs are offered in Manufacturing, Healthcare and Hospitality. The local area along with Adult Education will add more Bridge programming to match the identified sectors in the regional plan. The IET and ICAPS programs allow for students to be co-enrolled in the post-secondary system.

Developing career pathways in the specific targeted sectors as identified in the Regional Plan will require stronger partnerships within the local community, such as Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, post-secondary education facilities and local businesses. The Business Services Team will be a core partner in gathering the entities together to help identify additional career pathways for the targeted sectors. The Business Services Team will report out to the Local Workforce Investment Board regarding new career pathways, and LWIA 19 will add to the approved training list once identified and approved by the local Board.

For those enrolled in career pathways training and/or work-based learning, partners will work together to identify opportunities to utilize braided funding and/or wrap around services.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 7: Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

The local board works with core education and workforce partners to develop pathways that use recognized post-secondary and industry credentials that are portable and stackable. We work to identify components of earn and learn models that provide short term credentials that lead to employment in family-sustaining jobs and combine them with work-based learning in our targeted industry sectors. As part of a pathway we will work to identify additional credentialed training that can lead to advancement for the individual.

The local area has rigorous and thorough recruitment, assessment and selection processes that engages the services and expertise of several local organizations, including all partners in the Illinois workNet Center along with other social service agencies, and religious congregations from inner-city churches. This rigorous process enhances the ability to refer customers to appropriate service interventions on their chosen pathway.

Utilizing the referral tracking system developed for the One-Stop Illinois workNet Center directly links customers to our post-secondary partners. Bridge programming is another way for customers to move on to a post-secondary credentialing program. This is the first step for many who have not been in the workforce and need to “brush-up” on their skills before entering a post-secondary program.

Chapter 4 Section C Question 8: In the 2022 modification, use insights and lessons learned from COVID-19 National Health Emergency regarding the identification and services delivery to targeted populations significantly affected by the pandemic.

Individuals without adequate access to computers and the Internet were more isolated than ever before from the services and information they would need to access services and identify employment and/or training opportunities. Those enrolled in a post-secondary institution were left out if they did not have the skills necessary to keep up with their educational studies. Unfortunately, some of our customers had to drop out of school simply because they either 1) couldn't learn on-line, or 2) had children at home and learning on-line was not feasible at that time.

In order to offer equitable services to all, we will coordinate with post-secondary institutions and training facilities and other partners to provide customers the digital skills necessary to successfully complete post-secondary training in order to become competitive in the workplace. Providing FREE digital literacy into the community is a priority for all partners.

D. Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state (including the Unified State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of:

Chapter 4 Section D Question 1: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

Workforce Investment Solutions (WIS) provides career planning and case management services to Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth in the local area. Job readiness workshops have been offered at the center before the pandemic, but are now offered virtually since the pandemic. These workshops help individuals prepare when applying for jobs. For WIOA eligible individuals WIS provides tuition assistance for vocational classroom training. In addition, earn and learn programs such as on-the-job and incumbent worker training are available. Employers are provided assistance with pre-employment screening as well as skills assessment of potential candidates. Cohort training for industry and occupations is available. It is done in partnership with our community colleges to provide accelerated industry focused training that leads to an industry recognized credential and in some instances a post-secondary credential. Supportive services are available for those that qualify so that they can attend training. The local area also provides Rapid Response service to employers and laid off workers when a business downsizes or closes.

Workforce Investment Solutions/Macon County applied for and received funding for the Youth Career Pathways grant to address the high unemployment rate for youth and to specifically target youth for the Trades Apprenticeship programs. LWIA 19 will offer the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) which is a comprehensive pre-apprenticeship training curriculum. It was developed and approved by the Building Trades National Apprenticeship and Training Committee. This pre-apprenticeship program will introduce youth to a career in the construction trades. The program will offer hands-on training, and career exploration of all Trade Apprenticeship programs. The Local Trades Building Council is heavily involved and will provide mentorships and guidance for the youth.

Chapter 4 Section D Question 2: Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Local Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232 (§ 679.560(b)(12)).

The United States Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult education outlines the following goals under WIOA Title II:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families;
- Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful re-reentry into society.

Locally, these goals are incorporated into the delivery of service such as adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy, and family literacy as adult education and literacy activities. In addition, Section 203(2) of WIOA further adds three new activities to the definition of “adult education and literacy activities”: Integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training.

Bridge programs are also funded in the local area that provide contextualized learning along with industry recognized credentials.

Adult Education coordinates with the One-Stop system to increase basic skills of adults and youth who need marketable skills for employment. This will include the continued expansion of Bridge and IET programs. Coordinating services through the One-Stop system ensures the Board that the Adult Education services being provided align with the local and regional plan.

Chapter 4 Section D Question 3: Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services (§ 679.560(b)(11)).

IDES’ Employment Services and outreach is a program designed to sustain economic growth by expanding employment opportunities to qualified job seekers that meet the demands of the employers. The program’s objectives aim to reduce the loss of productivity by filling job openings as quickly as possible and to shorten the duration of individual’s unemployment. For job seekers who are not job ready, Employment Services, in cooperation with other workforce partners, assist clients to access training, employability development services, and other supportive services needed to realize their employment goals. Wagner-Peyser staff will assist with the intake process by assessing the client’s needs, assisting with UI claims, and registering with Illinois Job Link in order for the claimant to immediately begin searching for work. Staff will also provide Labor Market Information to educate clients on the current employment outlook and determine if further training will be necessary to enhance employment opportunities. Clients may be directed to work-readiness workshops or referred to partner agencies and/or supportive services, depending on the needs of the client.

Chapter 4 Section D Question 4: Vocational rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV (§ 679.560(b)(13)).

Department of Human Service's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities.

Locally the Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services provides guidance and counseling to people with disabilities. Services include assisting individuals with career and adjustment counseling, job coaching and in securing competitive employment. Individuals can also receive assistance with job training and placement.

Chapter 4 Section D Question 5: Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (§ 679.560(b)(9)).

Adult Education provides a variety of services, which are free to eligible clients - (Richland Community College and Workforce Investment Solutions Adult Education consortium). Richland Community College is the lead, and receives the funding for Adult Education. The consortium provides GED classes and English as a Second Language classes in the local area. Also offered are workplace skills training, career exploration services and basic skills instruction. Bridge programs in manufacturing, healthcare and hospitality are also offered. Bridge programs provide contextualized learning along with industry recognized credentials and is a pathway to lead into post-secondary and/or entry-level employment.

Due to the pandemic, the number of customers taking advantage of the free educational services offered by Adult Education have dropped. Classes are once again in person, but we found during the pandemic, Adult Education students were “left out” due to their lack of digital skills. We are addressing this by adding more digital literacy in each class.

Chapter 4 Section D Question 6: How the Local Board will support the state strategies identified under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study and career pathway programs under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment and needs identified in regional or local level assessments including the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)).

Richland Community College represents the Perkins program in the local area. They are an active member of the Illinois workNet partner group. They hired a staff person that can help job seekers bridge the gap between adult education and post-secondary education. This staff person focuses on assisting individuals with referral to an array of educational institutions and programs. Some of this staff person's time is spent in the One-Stop providing these services and attends orientations at the One-Stop Center.

Chapter 4 Section D Question 7: Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how the Local Board will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(10)) and include information on the supportive services by each local program as appropriate.

The Local Board will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area by assuring that each partner is aware of available resources and provide customer referral to said services. There is a priority based on core mission as to which funds get used first. For instance, child care assistance is available through many partner programs but The Child Care Resource Services (CCRS) organizations main mission is to assist with childcare. Therefore, if a WIOA eligible customer were in need of childcare assistance they would first be referred to CCRS to access services. If they could not receive funding under CCRS then WIOA may pay for the childcare.

(See Supportive Services Policy - Attachment 2)

E. Provide a description of how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

Chapter 4 Section E Question 1: A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

Individuals interested in pursuing training are tested for basics skills using the TABE. They complete a readiness assessment which include suitability issues such as housing, transportation, education, lifestyle, and criminal background. Interest surveys are completed on Illinois workNet as well as career research on the CIS system. Skills assessments are used for work-based learning if the skills are a requirement in the job description:

- Microsoft Skills and Simulations
- Industry, Job Special Skills
- Leadership, behavior and Personality Match

The local area provides adults and dislocated worker with vocational/educational training through ITA and cohort training. They offer work-based learning which can include OJT and

work experience. Training options are focused around the job driven openings in our local economy. Individual training accounts and cohort training are specifically focused on demand sectors. Within the local area adult education offers bridge programs in the key industry sectors providing a career pathway to post-secondary education or employment. We have one Community College – Richland and one Proprietary University – Millikin. We coordinate on a regional basis with other educational institutions that may meet the needs of job seekers.

Chapter 4 Section E Question 2: A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)). As part of the 2022 modification, describe how adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities will address the impact and recovery from the COVID-19 National Health Emergency.

Staff from Workforce Investment Solutions and Employment Security provide Rapid Response services to companies and workers impacted by business closures and/or layoff. These services include initial meetings with the employer, workshops for impacted workers and provision of job search and training services. Local area staff coordinate these services with staff from the States Rapid Response unit. A team of staff from the state and local area meet with the employer upon notice of the closure or layoff. During this meeting the services available under WIOA are explained to the employer. The employer is also asked to supply specific information on timelines for loss of employment and assistance in coordinating times and locations for workshops for the impacted workers.

This same team of State and Local staff provide workshops for individuals who are losing their job. The impacted workers are provided information on topics such as; unemployment insurance benefits, job search assistance, availability of training funds and other community services to help them manage during their time of unemployment. The individuals that attend the workshop are encouraged to access services on-line and to come to the One-Stop for a more in-depth assessment of their employment and training needs.

Rapid Responses are not the same when we started to utilize Zoom. It was used as an introduction to the employer and it provided the employer with services and information.

During the pandemic staff continued to put packets of information together and delivered them for distribution to the work site. Live presentations with several agencies available to answer questions was key before the pandemic. In order to keep it equitable for all, providing both options is recognized as a priority in moving forward. The connection with the laid-off workers is not as effective as in person. However, we are continually looking at processes in order to create a more effective virtual Rapid Response for those who can adapt to technology.

Since the pandemic, it continues to be difficult in recruiting dislocated workers into the program. Currently, Macon County has over 1,500 jobs available. More training opportunities need to be offered, however the lack of instructors is challenging for the colleges and other training facilities. In order to increase awareness of the opportunities

Workforce Investment Solutions has to offer the adult and dislocated workers, LWIA 19 is looking to increase marketing to target those specific populations and will partner with IDES in this endeavor.

We will continue to develop collaborative methods to provide integrated services to Adults and Dislocated Workers. LWIA 19 will continue to offer a hybrid of services, both virtual and in-person.

F. Provide a description of how the local area will provide youth activities including:

Chapter 4 Section F Question 1: A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (§ 679.560(b)(8)).

The local area currently has three youth contracts, two for in-school and one for out-of-school services. The in-school program is at Clinton High School and is a combination of academic and work experience. Through the academic component providers make sure that the student is learning at their grade level and on track for graduation. The work experience component is available in the summer. The majority of youth participating in the program have learning disabilities. The local area also actively works with our Rehabilitative Services partner to identify potential youth applicants.

The other in-school youth program is at Boys and Girls Club of Decatur. This program is also a combination of academic and work experience. PY2019 is the first year for this program. The academic component provides tutoring, as well as financial literacy and career assessments. As youth enter the program and the proper assessments are completed, a work experience will be provided at various businesses throughout the area.

The Regional Office of Education is the out-of-school youth contract. The Alternative High School program recruit's youth who have just graduated. Career exploration and essential skills are given to the youth after graduation and then placed in a work-based learning experience.

Chapter 4 Section F Question 2: A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth

The local area recruits out-of-school youth through marketing materials such as brochures and flyers distributed to partner organizations. Partner organizations include human service agencies, educational partners, businesses and community-based organizations. The local area currently runs one out-of-school youth program and spends 50% of its budget on out-of-school youth. It is a challenge to recruit and retain the OSY. Getting them excited about going to work and/or school is difficult and is a major barrier,

as well as essential skills training before going out to a work experience. These goals must be addressed first in order to have a successful work experience outcome.

The local area will re-align funding to assure that 50% of funds are available for out-of-school youth. We are going to expand recruitment efforts to include faith-based organizations in the local area. In addition, we have recently partnered with Richland Community College to run a Certified Nursing Assistant Class for out-of-school youth. A six-week work experience is offered to those who successfully complete the course. This provides youth with the opportunity to learn and apply the skills they have learned in a real-world setting. At the end of the work-experience, jobs are readily available for those who completed the training and receive a certification.

We work with the local Youth Build program to assist with on-the-job training opportunities in their apprenticeship program.

During the pandemic it was difficult to meet the minimum expenditure rate as well as credential rate. Some of the out-of-school youth who were in community college programs did not have the technological ability to continue with classes on-line. LWIA 19 is addressing the digital literacy and working with partners to help bridge the gap in this area.

Chapter 4 Section F Question 3: As part of the 2022 modification, describe how youth activities will address the impact and recovery from the COVID-19 National Health Emergency.

WIS applied for and received funding for the Youth Career Pathways grant to address the high unemployment rate for youth and to specifically target youth for the Trades Apprenticeship programs. LWIA 19 will offer the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) which is a comprehensive pre-apprenticeship training curriculum. It was developed and approved by the Building Trades National Apprenticeship and Training Committee. This pre-apprenticeship program will introduce youth to a career in the construction trades. The program will offer hands-on training, and career exploration of all Trade Apprenticeship programs. The Local Trades Building Council is heavily involved and will provide mentorships and guidance for the youth.

More healthcare, transportation and warehousing pathways will be developed to increase workers in order to meet the demand in each sector. Encouraging youth to enter Adult Education Bridge programs is the key.

G. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment⁸ as outlined in the Unified State Plan:

Chapter 4 Section G Question 1: Provide information on how priority will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E)

(§ 679.560(b)(21)).

Priority of service for receipt of career and training services is given to veterans, public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. The local area targets marketing of the program to individuals from these groups. Information on the individual's status with regards to these categories is collected during the intake process. Our local area has maintained the historical focus of the adult program on individuals who can most benefit from the use of funds. Individuals from these groups typically have less educational attainment and can most benefit from obtaining credentials in occupations associated with our targeted industry sectors.

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2: Describe how the local workforce areas will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2a: Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.

LWIA 19 reviews reports received from the Illinois Department of Employment Security Labor Market Economists as well as the SIU-C data given to each Area Planning Council in Adult Education, and the Target Populations reports in IWDS. Based on the data released by IDES in the *Women and Minorities in the Illinois Labor Force – 2022 Progress Report*, women and minorities tend to be highly concentrated in the lower paying service and laborers jobs. Therefore, LWIA 19 recognizes this and has partnered with Richland Community College as a consortium for Adult Education. Providing Bridge programs is the first step for individuals to enter into a lifelong career pathway, gaining the skills needed to enter employment earning a self-sustaining wage.

The local area will review data on a quarterly basis to ensure all populations are being served. If there is a discrepancy then this information will be taken to the LWIB as well as the One-Stop Partner meetings so a plan of action can be discussed and implemented.

Currently, the LWIB receives a “Year-In-Review” report from the Executive Director at the September Board meeting. Data is compiled at the end of every year, giving the LWIB a snapshot of those who were served in the past year. For example, PY '18 Adults enrolled,

- 18% were male, and 82% were female
- 70% received SNAP benefits
- 76% were low income

By receiving this information, it allows the Executive Board to review policies to make certain that gaps in services are addressed.

When information and recruitment sessions are held, every effort is made to assure access is available to all who are interested.

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2b: Developing equity goals in conjunction with the education system and prepare action plans to achieve them.

LWIA 19 will work in conjunction with our post-secondary CTE partner at Richland Community College and Heartland Technical Academy establishing equity goals and an action plan. The first step is to foster a meeting with Richland Community College, and Heartland Technical Academy, mapping out a proper alignment of goals following Perkins V. The ICCB and ISBE State vision of Perkins V is: *“Illinois will empower and support all our students to achieve their life and career goals through an aligned equitable, and high-quality career pathway system”*.

Local One-Stop Partner meetings will be utilized to help facilitate goal planning beginning in July, 2020.

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2c: Exposing more high school students, particularly young women and minorities, to careers in science, technology, engineering and math fields.

Currently, the local area is working with two in-school youth programs, Clinton Youth Initiative and the Boys and Girls Club of Decatur. Both programs offer education of STEM learning in the high schools of their area. This will be expanded upon. LWIA 19 co-hosts career fairs with Decatur Public Schools for students interested in Manufacturing and Healthcare. Employer partners are an integral part to the success of a career fair. Employers bring an awareness to the occupations by offering activities to engage the students. We will continue to work with the public schools to further expand career fairs targeting STEM careers.

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2d: Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.

The local area will explore opportunities and mimic successful mentoring programs from our local post-secondary programs. Currently Richland Community College’s Industrial Skills program has an effective “Essential Skills” component that helps those who are facing multiple barriers.

The local area in conjunction with Richland Community College’s Adult Education program works with adults in transitioning the students to post-secondary. Also, Bridge programming effectively helps adults who lack work experience or education to re-enter into the world of work.

In addition, our Employment Specialist is somewhat of a job coach to those adults who are placed in work-based learning activities. They help customers navigate any barriers they face. The Employment Specialist is in constant contact with the Career Planner who can assist with supportive services, if needed.

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2e: Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to address equity gaps.

Training will be given to staff during staff meetings to understand the data received from the Illinois Department of Employment Security Labor Market Economists. Actions to be taken will be implemented through our recruitment and information sessions and hiring events, as well as in the One-Stop Center. Assuring that the needs of the targeted population is being addressed. The local policy for Priority of Service is followed, and includes,

1. Veterans and eligible spouses,
2. Those receiving Public Assistance (SNAP & TANF),
3. Other low-income individuals as described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
4. Individuals who are basic skills deficient

Chapter 4 Section G Question 2f: Ensuring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need

One-Stop Partners will review data from the Illinois Department of Employment Security Labor Market Economists and will develop an action plan to meet the needs of the at-risk populations. This plan will include utilizing the steps already identified in the Service Integration Plan. For instance; to include more front-line staff training to better assist special populations.

LWIA 19 will also work closely with the Perkins V partners to ensure a more inclusive approach for the targeted population, as well as identifying where services can be offered.

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including the following and any significant implications of the COVID-19 National Health Emergency, as applicable:

Chapter 4 Section H Question 1: How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 49);

To meet the minimum training expenditure requirement, the local area budgets for compliance and tracks it on a quarterly basis. During the COVID-19 National Health Emergency, this was challenging, however all goals were met. PY21 will be just as challenging since the pandemic has not yet ended. With the lack of workers in the area, an increase in incumbent worker training will be our focus.

Chapter 4 Section H Question 2: How local areas will encourage the use of work-based learning strategies, including the local area goals for specific work-based learning activities and proposed outcomes related to these activities;

Local Area 19 has a strong foundation for work-based learning. Through our local efforts we have developed work-based learning opportunities for over 60 customers in the past 2 years. Much of our success is based on the relationships that WIOA Title 1 staff have developed with local businesses. We plan to build upon these relationships under WIOA. In accordance with our Regional Plan, the local area will target work-based learning opportunities in our key industry sectors.

Chapter 4 Section H Question 3: Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and 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 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 (§ 679.560(b)(18)); and

Training services as described in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided in the local area as follows:

1. Individuals interested in training must be determined eligible under Title 1 of WIOA.
2. Before a participant is enrolled into a particular training program staff will review their work history, education, skills, interest, and aptitudes as part of their assessment.
3. Staff will provide the participant with career information on the specific occupations within our targeted industry sectors using available labor market information.
4. Based on the assessment and career information provided, the individual will select a career pathway to pursue. This will be the basis when developing the participant's Individuals Employability Development Plan.
5. Staff will assist the customer in determining what training providers are available in the local area that offer the needed training.
6. Once the participant has been accepted into the selected training program staff will issue the Individual Training Account.

Customer choice will be facilitated in the local area by providing access to on-line information concerning the Eligible Training Provider List. This list is maintained through state systems such as workNet and IWDS. The local area does not plan on using contracts for training at this time.

(See ITA Policy - [Attachment 3](#))

Chapter 4 Section H Question 4: Provide a copy of the local training provider approval policy and procedures. Describe how the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

The Local Board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of service through the system by reviewing outcome information for participants by CIP code.

Those curricula that do not lead to employment in jobs that meet WIOA performance requirements will not be funded in the future. Enrollment into provider’s curriculum will be focused on pathways in our targeted growth sectors of the local economy and as noted in the regional plan. We will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers by actively engaging employers in career pathway development and enrolling individuals in training that leads to careers in those pathways.

(See Training Provider Approval Policy & Procedures - Attachment 3)

I. Describe if the local workforce board will authorize the transfer of WIOA Title 1B workforce funds, including the maximum dollar amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis:

Chapter 4 Section I Question 1: To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.

Regardless of the title, local strategies that will be funded will center around training opportunities in demand sectors of the economy. These transfers will be based on need.

Recently LWIA 19 has seen more low-income Adults than Dislocated Workers; however, that can change when a company announces a mass layoff or closure. The local WIB will make decisions to transfer Dislocated Worker and Adult funds based on local needs. We will strive to meet the needs of both for Job Seekers and Employers. The flexibility of WIOA to transfer funds is beneficial and allows us to meet the needs of the community.

Chapter 4 Section I Question 2: To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).

When a company is identified that meets the layoff aversion criteria for incumbent worker training then local funds will be used for such training. For example, the Business Services Team may meet with an employer and learn that they have current employees who would benefit from the use of Incumbent Worker funds. Currently the Board has reserved less than 1% of the combined total of the adult and dislocated worker funding for incumbent worker training. If the local need arises, the Board would request a modification to move additional funding to be utilized for incumbent worker training.

Chapter 4 Section I Question 3: To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).

Transitional jobs are to demonstrate work habits and attitudes. The local area is waiting on clarifying information before committing to funding transitional jobs training. Potential targets for opportunity would be job seekers who have significant barriers and limited to no work experience. For example, if Federal changes occurred in the TANF program, clients might lose benefits and seek out employment or training assistance. These are examples of how this local flexibility enhances our ability to serve based on the local climate. At that time, the Board

would make a decision to utilize up to 10% of the combined total of adult and dislocated worker allotments for transitional jobs and request a modification.

Chapter 4 Section I Question 4: To use funds for pay for performance contracts as outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b) (2-3).

The local area has no plans to use pay for performance contracts.

Chapter 4 Section J Question 1: As part of the 2022 modification, if needed, describe the impact of the pandemic the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce innovation Areas (LWIAs) otherwise not already described above. Include what steps, to the extent known, that will be taken over the next two years to adapt to the impact of the pandemic regarding the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce innovation Areas (LWIAs).

Steps known in order to adapt to the impact of the pandemic include, continual update of data from IDES, as well as other partners in our area. This data can include local employer needs, labor market information, and unemployment numbers. Getting updates on a more regular basis will help to identify areas of need in the operations of the Workforce and One-Stop system.

(There will be several steps taken regarding the impact of the pandemic within the Local Workforce Area. Having a better understanding of the use of technology within the staff, as well as customers and partners. LWIA's cannot serve customers technically if the customers do not have access. A more diverse streamline of technology training is critical. Making the training more accessible to ALL levels of learners. Strengthening the local plan with diverse and accessible training will be a huge step in developing an operational system to develop a technical workforce.)

Chapter 4 Section K Question 1: Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in the operating systems and policies as part of the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIA's).

LWIA 19 will strive to offer and develop more equitable services to all. The Board will develop an equity statement. It is critical to offer more equity training to the staff of LWIA 19. Information will be shared with all staff and partners in order to ensure equity is followed. The EO officer of LWIA 19 will help to ensure staff receive the proper training.

Chapter 5 – Performance Goals and Evaluation – Local Component

The plan must include information on the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6)) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)). **LWIAs are required to provide updated information and analysis noting any significant impacts of the COVID-19 National Health Emergency and what steps will be taken to address the challenges and opportunities that are associated with performance goals and evaluation.**

A. Provide information regarding 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 Board 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 (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).

Chapter 5 Section A Question 1: WIOA Performance Measures

LWIA 19 negotiated Performance goals through Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity according to WIOA Sec. 116(c). The goals will be used to measure the performance of eligible providers under Title 1B and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. Negotiated goals for PY 2020 and PY2021:

<u>LWIA 19 Performance Goals for</u>	<u>PY 2020 & PY 2021:</u>
Adult Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	86.0%
Adult Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	83.0%
Adult Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$10,000
Adult Credential Attainment Rate	80.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	46.0%
DW Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	89.0%
DW Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	87.0%
DW Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$10,700
DW Credential Attainment Rate	81.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	46.0%
Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	74.0%
Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	73.0%
Youth Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$4,100
Youth Credential Attainment Rate	72.5%
Measurable Skills Gains	46.0%

Chapter 5 Section A Question 2: Additional State Performance Measures

If there are any additional state measures, LWIA 19 will comply in meeting them.

B. Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to the local board and program administrators as appropriate.

Chapter 5 Section B Question 1: What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?

LWIA 19 will continue to assist Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth with training programs in the high demand occupation sectors for our area as well as work-based learning activities (work-experience and on-the-job training).

Each month two information sessions are held for prospective customers to receive core partner services. The information sessions are well attended, and all One-Stop Partners are invited to take part in promoting their agency's services.

Hiring events with employers remains high on the list of service delivery as well as work-based learning strategies.

Reports on activities within the One-Stop Center are reported out at each Workforce Board Meeting. For example, at the January 2020 meeting the following was reported out on:

- Hiring Events – 40 hiring events held in 2019 which brought in 772 people – follow-up with employers and individuals is difficult and we are still looking for a way to better track those who came into the Center
- Workshops – the Illinois workNet Center hosted 104 workshops in 2019. 105 people attended the various State workshops and 171 people attended the Job Readiness Workshops
- In January of 2020, a hiring event was held and we had over 375 people attend. Follow-up with those who attended is currently underway

Chapter 5 Section B Question 2: What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?

Service delivery strategies are reviewed on a monthly basis at the One-Stop Partner meetings. Partners agree to discontinue or revamp anything that is not working in order to address the needs of the customers entering the One-Stop Center.

The One-Stop operators report out to the Board at each LWIB meeting. The LWIB meets in September, November, January, March and May of each year. Currently we do not have any service delivery strategies to be eliminated.

Chapter 5 Section B Question 3: What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?

Implementation of an Essential Skills class in the One-Stop Center will be a new service strategy. This was discussed in a previous section. This will help the job seeker as well as employers in the community. Many employers say they can train an employee on skills needed to do the job, but they need an employee who will show up on time and every day. The Essential Skills class will address those issues.

We will continue to explore pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs as a new avenue for our customers.

Chapter 5 Section B Question 3a: What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollment?

As discussed earlier, a “Year-In-Review” report is given at each September LWIB meeting. This report includes details on the return on investment per each category; Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. This information is tracked through the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) after a customer exits the program. The information shows whether programs are successful or not (cost per participant, credentials obtained, median wage & employment).

Chapter 5 Section B Question 3b: What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?

LWIA #19 will align new service strategies to address educational and training needs in the region by addressing barriers individuals face in order for them to be successful in obtaining their educational goals. We will:

1. Address transportation and child care issues
2. Address basic skills deficiencies by obtaining additional tutoring services
3. Help the customer with finding the proper agency to identify the barriers they are facing such as who to go to for food, shelter, healthcare and other basic needs

The referral tracking system in the Illinois workNet Center helps all who come through the door. A better alignment and integration of partner programs and services will help with cost-sharing; a more braided funding approach.

LWIA 19 has always helped customers with barriers, but a newer approach as identified in the One-Stop Service Integration plan will help to develop a more intense referral system. Also, a universal consent form is being developed which will help to expedite services the customer needs.

Chapter 5 Section C: Question 1: Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to the local board and program administrators as appropriate.

The Executive Director of LWIA 19 provides regular updates to the Local Board regarding customers served, fiscal information as well as monitoring from DCEO and current approved eligible training providers. Annual reports are prepared and shared at each September Board meeting.

Chapter 5 Section D Question 1: As part of the 2022 modification, if needed, describe the impact of the pandemic on the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers, not covered in the above sections. Include what steps, to the extent known, that will be taken over the next two years to adapt to the impact of the pandemic in regard to the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers.

As stated in the EDR 1 Regional Plan, “The greatest impact on systems operations and service provision was the closing of the physical One-Stop Centers. The nature of the pandemic forced individuals to shelter in place for months at a time. Schools closed, many businesses closed and those that remained open were forced to rethink how to operate safely. In addition, as businesses began to reopen, they encountered an unprecedented drop in the numbers of available workers, making employee recruitment and retention a significant challenge. Many older workers retired. Other workers remained on the sidelines due to concern about the pandemic. Some workers were still caring for children who were not yet in school or were not able to reestablish disrupted childcare arrangements. Those workers without adequate access to computers and the Internet found themselves more isolated than ever from the services and information they would need to access services and identify employment opportunities. Enrollment in postsecondary instruction declined, especially in community colleges, as students were forced to delay their education. All of these challenges have required us to rethink how we can most effectively reach these workers, engage them in services and facilitate their transition to new and better jobs.”

At the beginning of the pandemic LWIA 19 immediately put into place an on-line application for customers to use. Staff continued to work throughout the pandemic. Laptops were purchased for all staff to allow them to work from home. Learning to adapt with receiving information from customers via email/on-line was a challenge, especially for customers without internet access. For 1A, 1D and 1Y, customers who were exited and employed, their hours were cut or they were laid off, even those in the healthcare sector. This had an impact on PY20/21 performance. The pandemic was especially hard for the Youth customers. Those on a work experience had to immediately stop working. The Youth were hard to contact, and those who

were attending training were thrust into the world of “on-line” classes. This was not a good fit for the Youth (or Adults). Taking an on-line course requires discipline in order to complete. Several customers did not complete training during this time. Youth customers are more difficult to recruit since the pandemic. LWIA 19 has connected with local CBO’s and social service agencies to help with this process.

Over the next two years, the region will work together to offer sector-based job fairs to help alleviate the over-whelming number of job openings our employers are facing. Regional partners will develop collaborative methods to provide integrated services to both job seekers and employers. Putting together technology-based methods in order to connect remotely to deliver coordinated services is at the forefront. Each LWIA in EDR 1 will continue to implement current integration plans as listed on pages 44 - 46 of the Regional Plan.

Partners are looking into ways to mitigate the challenges of childcare brought on by the pandemic. LWIA 19 has utilized funding from other sources to help individuals who are already working in childcare facilities to obtain their childcare certifications. A Childcare Bridge program through the Richland/Workforce Adult Ed Consortium is also being developed.

Part of the response by EDR 1 partners through the pandemic has been through the use of technology to recruit, enroll and train job seekers. All three areas have implemented virtual intakes, accepted electronic signatures and implemented on-line learning, however more digital literacy opportunities need to be offered to all customers in order for them to be successful.

Chapter 5 Section E Question 1: As part of the 2022 modification, describe how a *workforce equity lens* is or will be incorporated in the analysis of performance goals and implementation of evaluation activities.

The Workforce equity lens will be incorporated in the analysis of performance goals by reviewing the activities, evaluating and developing a policy of the program. The lens will assist in the discussion with staff and partners as we reflect on equity. Collaboration and shared feedback are important to develop the process. The implementation and evaluation of services will follow after the discussions. LWIA 19 will incorporate the EO officer into discussions of equity. Staff will receive more training. Regionally, minutes of the meetings will be documented and shared.

Chapter 6 – Technical Requirements and Assurances – Local Component

This chapter includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(iv)). **LWIAs are required to provide updated information and analysis noting any significant impacts of the COVID-19 National Health Emergency and what steps will be taken to address the challenges and opportunities that are associated with meeting the administrative requirement of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs.**

LWIA 19 met all administrative requirements of WIOA and did not have the need to request a waiver in PY20 and do not expect to request any for PY21.

The challenge with meeting the performance goals is understanding the complications that the pandemic brought to the Workforce Area. Unfortunately, locking the doors to the One-Stop shut off services and made it difficult to develop relationships with customers. This impacted the hardest to serve, especially the youth. Currently the doors are open, and Career Planners are meeting with their customers, and career services are being offered in-person.

In PY19 all performance measures were met or exceeded. For PY20, LWIA 19 met or exceeded targets in five of six Title 1 measures in the Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM). The one category that was not met was the youth median earnings. Earnings from the SAM for youth median earnings increased by \$100.00. The median earnings category includes those exited from 7/1/2019 through 6/30/2020. The pandemic during this timeframe would have had a significant impact as employees were being laid off, and work hours were drastically cut. More information is being sought in order to address this measure for PY20.

A. Fiscal Management

Chapter 6 Section A Question 1: Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds 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) (§ 679.560(b)(14)).

Macon County is the grant recipient and fiscal agent for the WIOA program that serves Macon and Dewitt counties. The County was approved and designated by the Governor for a period of two years. Workforce Investment Solutions is a department of Macon County government.

Chapter 6 Section A Question 2: Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (§ 679.560(b)(15)).

LWIA 19 awards youth contracts for in-school and out-of-school. An RFP is developed and approved by the LWIB. A legal ad is placed in the local newspaper, Decatur Herald and Review, with instructions on where to obtain the RFP, and who to submit to.

After the deadline of submitting an application/grant for youth funds has passed, a committee involving members from the LWIB, and other community members who do not have an interest in receiving funds is gathered and each submission is read and scored. A recommendation is then made to the LWIB, and voted on by the LWIB members.

(See Procurement Policy - [Attachment 5](#))

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

Chapter 6 Section B Question 1: Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) 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 (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).

Physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities is coordinated through our Rehabilitation Services Partners. They hold the lease on the One-Stop and certify that it is ADA compliant. In addition, each partner program affirms through the MOU that they will comply with all accessibility requirements. Most programs have their own methods of administration which also govern program accessibility.

Staff work with our Rehabilitation services partner to convert other partners' materials to brail. This information can be updated as needed. In addition, the Community College partner can administer one-on-one assessments and testing to individuals with cognitive disabilities.

Staff are sent to training to learn about new technology and techniques in assisting individuals with disabilities. In 2018, the One-Stop Center updated the Assisted Technology System which includes, computer, printer, scanner and magnification system.

Chapter 6 Section B Question 2: Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) 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 system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff,

technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

The Local Workforce Innovation Area #19 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

The Local Workforce Innovation Area #19 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

Chapter 6 Section C Question 1: Describe the process used by the Local Board, 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 (§ 679.560(b)(19)).

In accordance with Section 108 (d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the local plan will be posted for public comment and will adhere to the 30-day requirement. The plan is made available through a Legal Notice with the Decatur Herald & Review. The plan is also distributed to members of the Local Workforce Innovation Board of Area 19. This membership includes representatives of business, labor and education.

Chapter 6 Section C Question 2: Provide a summary of the public comments received and how this information was addressed by the CEO, partners and the Local Board in the final plan.

LWIA #19 will add comments from the public if made.

Chapter 6 Section C Question 3: Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.

The regional and local plan modification process follows the same steps as that of an original grant submission. The need for a modification may be dependent on actions by the Dept. of Commerce or by local circumstances. If the regional plan needs modified, the EDR 1 partners will convene to modify the plan.

Chapter 6 Section D Question 1: Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in with meeting the administrative requirement of the Workforce innovation and Opportunity Act programs.

LWIA 19 will provide more equity training to staff, incorporate partners when disseminating data of our own program and will strive to lessen the gap of services to the underrepresented populations in our area/region. We will comply with all Federal and State accessibility requirements and our EO officer will continue to evaluate programs as required.

An equity policy will be developed and implemented with Board approval.

Attachment 2 – LWIA #19 Supportive Services Policy – LWIB Approved March 2022

PURPOSE: This policy serves to provide Workforce Investment Solutions Career Planners guidance on Supportive Services requirements under Title 1B of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.

REFERENCES: TEGL 19-16, Operating Guidance for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (March 1, 2017). WIOA Final Rule - Final Rule at 20 CFR 680.900-970.

Supportive services provide customers of WIOA activities with assistance beyond career and training services necessary to achieve success. Supportive services are services that are necessary to enable an individual to successfully participate in activities authorized under WIOA sec. 134(c)(2) and (3) (adults and dislocated workers) and sec. 129(c)(2) (youth), and defined in WIOA sec. 3(59).

Definition

The definition for supportive services according to the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act is defined as follows: *“the term “supportive services” means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act.”*

Procedures to refer customers for supportive services to local One-Stop partners:

LWIA #19 Supportive Services Policy will ensure that resources and services are coordinated within the local one-stop area. Career Planners will utilize One-Stop partners and other community services providers first, before services will be funded through Title 1B.

Supportive Services may be used in conjunction with a participant’s training, or may be provided as an intensive service depending on the needs of the participant. Individuals requesting supportive services should explore and exhaust all available options before requesting supportive services.

Services may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-related payments;
- Assistant with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Legal aid services;
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses, protective eye gear and other essential safety equipment;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes;
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests and certifications.

The most common supportive services are dependent care and transportation.

Dependent Care

- Customers must apply for Child Care Resource Services prior to receiving WIS assistance for childcare costs; if determination from CCRS is, pending WIS will assist until a determination is made. A copy of the approval/denial must be maintained for the customer file and a copy of the approval from CCRS must be submitted to the Fiscal Assistant.

- Dependent care, if determined necessary, will be reimbursed at a rate of 100% per child for licensed childcare providers and at the rate of \$2.00 per hour per child for non-licensed providers (excluding reimbursement to a parent or step parent of children). If CCRS pay for a non-licensed provider, WIS will pay the childcare provider the out of pocket expense.
- Childcare may be provided for individuals who are in training or who require daycare for WIS required job search activities. Attendance sheets must be submitted with the appropriate signatures.
- WIS customers must submit their childcare provider's Contract/ Policy letter stating that the participants must pay for days, and/or weeks the child is not in attendance. The Career Planner maintains this documentation in the customer file. Any vacation time must be used prior to WIS reimbursement during these times.
- WIS customers must submit a letter from licensed day care provider stating weekly out of pocket amount charged to customer. This letter must be on letterhead from daycare provider, be dated and be signed by provider.
- If provider requires payment while child is not attending, WIS will continue to provide dependent care assistance during semester breaks, holidays and sick days. Reimbursement would not be paid unless customer is enrolled in educational activities.
- Dependent care may be reimbursed for customers who require tutoring or computer lab time. These activities must be away from home and documented by staff within the facility.
- Dependent care support services are mainly provided for customers in training, but WIS could assist customers while studying for State Board exams, for their first 30 days on the job, or in unpaid internships.

Transportation

- Mileage reimbursement may be considered for over 15 miles one way to training provider and/or WIS required job search activities.
- Any exception to 15 miles and below must be based on customer need and must be approved by the Program Manager.
- ~~The rate per day for round trip will be as follows:~~
 - ~~30-50 miles (round trip) \$14.00/day~~
 - ~~51-70 miles (round trip) \$17.00/day~~
 - ~~71 and over (round trip) \$20.00/day~~
 - ~~A MapQuest, Google Maps, or similar printout must be provided as evidence of mileage from home to the training site.~~
 - **SEE AMENDMENT OUTLINING TRANSPORTATION COSTS**
- Customer Attendance Sheet is required as payment support to document attendance. The Attendance Sheet should coincide with the class schedule. Customers must submit an Attendance Sheet signed by their instructor or appropriate administrator and submitted to their Career Planner within two weeks of the documented period.
- A rider's fee reimbursement may be given at \$5.00 per person, per day.

Other Supportive Services

- Another type of supportive service would be tutoring for a customer that is having difficulty with their coursework. Tutoring contract must be completed and approved by the Executive Director. Fees range from \$14.00/hour - \$30.00/hour depending on provider.
- Since the needs of each customer vary greatly, supportive services will be administered by the Career Planner on a case-by-case basis.
- Any individual item shall not cost more than \$500 without the approval of the Executive Director.

Supportive Services for WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Workers

According to TEGL 19-16, adults or dislocated workers identified as needing ongoing supportive services *must still be participating in career services (other than follow-up), training activities or both* to continue to receive supportive services. Supportive services are not allowed once an adult or dislocated worker customer is in follow-up services.

Supportive Services for WIOA Title I Youth

Supportive services can be provided to WIOA title I Youth during *program participation and during follow-up services*. Supportive services may be provided based on the needs of the customer as identified in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

If supportive services are provided as a follow-up service for a Youth customer, the supportive service does NOT extend the date of exit.

Relocation

- Relocation allowances such as payment of move, mileage, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses may be funded through WIOA for eligible customers who cannot reasonably be expected to secure suitable employment within the commuting area.
- Commuting area is defined as a 50-mile one-way radius from residence.
- Customers must obtain a bona fide offer of work outside the commuting area and desire to move possessions.
- An application for relocation assistance must be made in advance and approved by the Executive Director.

Reasons for denial of supportive services are as follows:

- Any of the above requirements outlined in this policy are not met.
- LWIA #19 funds are limited or exhausted
- The participant refuses to comply with reasonable LWIA #19 and/or WIB requirements and conditions
- The participant has falsified supportive services documents and/or attendance sheets.
- Any exceptions to this policy will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis by the Program Manager.
- The participant must turn in all documentation in a timely manner. Any documentation older than 8 weeks may be denied.

Career Planners must submit the proper forms to the Fiscal Assistant. Type of services requested will dictate the forms to be used. List of forms: supportive services form, childcare attendance form (Adult/DW/Youth), material authorization voucher, google maps as needed for transportation, student attendance form.

Amendment to Workforce Investment Solutions Supportive Services Policy

Subject: Revised Transportation Guidelines

Effective Date: April 25, 2022 – Board Approved

Expiration Date: September 4, 2022

Workforce Investment Solutions is amending the transportation guidelines of the Supportive Services Policy. Effective April 25, 2022, ending September 4, 2022.

- Mileage reimbursement may be considered for over 15 miles one way to training provider and/or WIS required job search activities.
- Any exception to 15 miles and below must be based on customer need and must be approved by the Director.
 - Workforce Investment Solutions will reimburse at the current federal rate per mile with a limit of \$55.00 per day. The current federal reimbursement rate is .585 cents per mile. Workforce Investment Solutions will follow the federal rate if it rises or decreases. **A MapQuest, Google Maps, or similar printout must be provided as evidence of mileage from home to the training site.**
- Customer Attendance Sheet is required as payment support to document attendance. The Attendance Sheet should coincide with the class schedule. Customers must submit an Attendance Sheet signed by their instructor or appropriate administrator and submitted to their Career Planner within two weeks of the documented period.
- A rider's fee reimbursement may be given at \$5.00 per person, per day.

Workforce Investment Solutions will review upon expiration date to determine continuance of this amendment.

Attachment 3 – LWIA #19 Individual Training Account Policy

Purpose: To provide LWIA #19 staff information and guidance needed on Individual Training Accounts (ITA's) for Adults, Dislocated Workers, Out-of-School Youth and In-School Youth.

References: WIOA Section 129, WIOA Final Rules, Part 680, Subpart B – training services, WIOA Section 134 – Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, use of funds, WIOA Notice No. 18-NOT-05, ITA's for In-School Youth.

Training services are provided for adults, dislocated workers, out-of-school youth, and in-school youth through Individual Training Accounts (ITA) as part of the One-Stop delivery system. The State of Illinois received a waiver from 20 CFR 681.550 to allow in-school youth aged 16-24 the opportunity to utilize individual training accounts. The waiver has been approved for Program years 2018 and 2019 (July 1, 2018 thru June 30, 2020).

All training services must be directly linked to employment opportunities in the local area based on current and projected labor market information. If the participant is willing to relocate, these services must be linked to that area. The occupation must not show a negative growth rate. The exception to this would be if the local area shows sufficient employment opportunities to outweigh the negative growth rate. Supportive documentation must be maintained in the participant's file.

Training should lead to attainment of a sufficient employment wage removing the need for public assistance.

Participants must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) prior to enrollment and provide staff the appropriate documentation. The following would be excluded from submitting FAFSA:

- Training programs not covered by FAFSA
- Individuals who possess a Bachelor's Degree

In order to be referred for training services through an individual training account, the customer must first receive career services (WIOA Title 1B) from the One-Stop operator designated by the LWIB to provide these services. Career services are defined in the final rules and part of the MOU with One-Stop partners. Participants may be considered for Individual Training Accounts if they are determined eligible under WIOA and:

- Have received Career Services, including the development of an Individual Employment Plan
- After a personal assessment with a Career Planner, it is determined the participant is in need of training to obtain employment; or, if employed, the individual requires training to increase their earnings to become self-sufficient
- Possess the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected training program
- Unable to obtain sufficient grant assistance and/or financial aid from other sources

Priority will be given to those who live within LWIA #19. If the participant resides within another LWIA, they will need to first seek assistance from that LWIA (and be denied) before LWIA #19 can serve them. All training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the local workforce area. Training programs that are not within commuting distance of the local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Individual Training Accounts will be issued per term according to the training that is requested. The amount of each ITA will be based on the maximum charge for full-time student tuition and the fees per

term for the designated curriculum at the training provider. LWIA #19 will pay in-district tuition rates only.

Career Planners will review cost obligations on a quarterly or semester basis. Individual Training Account's will not be used for payment of late fees caused by participant error or delay. The participant will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties.

Training materials may also be provided for, but not limited to, the following: books and supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, required physicals, etc. A list will be provided for Career Planners for the above items and information on how accounts are handled. Not more than \$300 shall be spent on any one individual item without the approval of the Program Manager.

If a participant has health insurance, they must submit the charges for their physicals/shots to their insurance company before WIS will assist with those costs.

Participants must select training providers from the Statewide Provider list. All training services under Individual Training Accounts shall be provided in such a manner that allows the participant to make the most informed choice.

Participants will continue to receive services until their designated training program is completed, regardless of the length of time, and as long as funding is available.

The issuance of an ITA or a subsequent ITA may be denied if any of the above requirements are not met. Additional reasons for denial are as follows:

- Training funds are limited or exhausted
- The participant cannot demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to complete training
- The Training Provider does not accept the participant
- The participant attempts to alter the ITA without the knowledge of an LWIA 19 vocational counselor
- The Training Provider and/or the participant refuses to comply with requirements and conditions of LWIA 19
- The participant is in an activity deemed to be fraudulent or has falsified documents resulting in the payment or reimbursement for WIA funded activity
- The participant fails to maintain a good academic standard, as defined by the Training Provider

Career Services and Training services will be documented on the Illinois Workforce Development System.

Attachment 4 LWIA #19 - Training Provider and Program Eligibility Policy

Background Information – Provider and Program Certification

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) established a “customer choice” approach to services through a system of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) while assuring program quality through a provider certification system. All programs for which an ITA are issued must meet the requirements of initial eligibility as well as a condition of re-certification as outlined in the State of Illinois’ WIOA E-Policy Chapter 7.3 and TEGL 8-19. In addition to these minimum requirements, Workforce Investment Solutions may develop initial and subsequent eligibility beyond the standards established by the State policy. No ITA will be issued for enrollment into a particular program until the program has official approval or renewal through this process.

The provider certification process will be administered locally by the Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director. The Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive director will be responsible to make recommendation to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB), including but not limited to; initial certifications, annual re-certifications and conditional restrictions. All actions related to provider/program certifications must be approved by the LWDB and certified by the LWDB Chair. Records of such action will be maintained by Workforce Investment Solutions administration office and will be recorded in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS).

Provider Review

The Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director will meet annually to review all programs and to prepare recommendations for the LWDB for recertification. New applications will be reviewed throughout the year by the Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director.

Timelines

Workforce Investment Solutions and LWDB will follow all certification/recertification /revocation timelines as directed by DCEO.

Initial Training Provider Certification

All new applications for certification will be reviewed by the Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director utilizing the guidelines for initial certification as outlined in TEGL 8-19. Details of the initial certification procedure are set forth in the WIOA Title I Training Provider Certification Policy Guide written and maintained by DCEO’s Office of Employment and Training. Workforce Investment Solutions will adhere to the standards set forth in these documents and will utilize the resources in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) to maintain this information. Certified Training Programs will lead to placement in occupations identified as being in demand and defined in the Demand Occupation Training List (Region 1) developed by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Additionally, to be eligible to receive funds for the provision of training services, the provider shall be:

- a. an institution of higher education that provides a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
1) This may include programs receiving approval or accreditation by the U.S. Department of Education, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board or Illinois State Board of Education;
- b. an entity that carries out programs registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) as recognized in Illinois by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Office of Apprenticeship; or
- c. another public or private provider of a program of training services, which may include joint labor-management organizations; eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational

skills training; or programs that have been recognized by the industry as meeting the standards necessary for approval or accreditation, when such standards exist.

Within 30 days of the application to the LWIB, the Board provides authority to the LLWA to allow a committee of no less than two individuals to conditionally approve programs in lieu of waiting for LWIB certification. The program is deemed certified until such time as the LWIB can review and approve the certification at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Annual Recertification

The Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director will conduct timely annual reviews of all providers/programs. Additional guidelines for annual recertification are set forth in DCEO E-Policy 7.3 written and maintained by DCEO's Office of Employment & Training. Workforce Investment Solutions will adhere to the standards set forth in these documents and will utilize the resources in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) to maintain this information.

The LWDB should grant recertification to a training program based on the following:

- a. State and local eligibility criteria
- b. State and local performance criteria have been met
- c. One or more O*Net codes associated with the training program remain on the most current Demand Occupation Training List (Region 1)
- d. The Training Provider has maintained timely updates in the IWDS system of information on the training program; and
- e. Other conditions for which the LWDB considers necessary for recertification.

Upon completion of the annual review, the Fiscal Assistant and /or the Executive Director will make recommendations to the LWDB at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Upon action of the LWDB, updated program lists will be made available through the IWDS website.

Denials, Reconsiderations, and Reinstatements

Training programs may be denied approval for certification or recertification. Workforce Investment Solutions will follow State of Illinois Policy as it applies to revocation of certification, removal, notification and appeals procedures, reinstatement on the statewide list and re-application. Workforce Investment Solutions will cease to enroll customers in a training program that has had its certification revoked. Programs failing to meet the criteria will be identified by the Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director and a Training Provider's eligibility will be rescinded by the LWDB as appropriate.

Monitoring and Oversight

All programs given full certification status will be subject to routine monitoring by Workforce Investment Solutions. At a minimum, the LWDB should:

- a) Ensure all eligible training providers have maintained all criteria for which they were determined eligible;
- b) Re-affirm that a training program is still accredited or the accreditation has been renewed;
- c) Ensure all certified training program basic information in IWDS has been updated to reflect current information;
- d) Conduct routine visits at each location for which certified training programs are conducted to ensure all assurances outlined in WIOA Policy continue to be met. Out of state and e-learning programs may be monitored collaboratively with state or local WIOA governing bodies in their states. In addition, regional WIOA bodies may collaboratively conduct monitoring for certification and recertification of training programs/providers;
- e) Ensure that all certified training programs have met the required performance measures.

Pre-hire Requirements and other Special Considerations (Conditional)

Pre-hire requirements may be placed on certain training programs when economic conditions exist that indicate limited employment in the career clusters associated with the particular training program. A pre-hire authorization will consist of a consideration of employment upon completion of a particular training program. All pre-hire authorizations must be provided to the Career Planner in writing from a reputable employer and be contained in the customer file prior to enrollment.

While all programs will be reviewed on an annual basis, Workforce Investment Solutions reserves the right to rescind program approval or implement pre-hire requirements prior to the program renewal date if conditions warrant such action.

Notification

Throughout the anniversary year, providers will be kept abreast of any changes to their program approval status. No program approval will be rescinded without first notifying the provider in writing. All providers have the opportunity to meet with the Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director upon request and to submit supporting documentation for reconsideration of the current approval action.

The Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director will be responsible for processing changes from providers, including cost changes, address changes and changes in prerequisite requirements. It is the responsibility of the individual providers to keep this information current and to notify the Fiscal Assistant and/or the Executive Director when changes occur.

Access to Provider/Program Information

All provider and program information is recorded and available on IWDS. Staff may access this information directly through the IWDS system. Consumers and providers may access this information through a link on the www.illinoisworknet.com website or directly at <http://iwds.state.il.us/iwdshome.html>, access to these sites will be administered by either the Fiscal Assistant or the Executive Director.

Record Keeping

All applications for certification will be recorded on IWDS in accordance with the WIOA Training Provider and Program Eligibility Policy. All supporting documents submitted for use in the approval process will be maintained by the Workforce Investment Solutions office.

In addition to the electronic information available on IWDS, all documentation used for renewal consideration will be maintained, by anniversary year, by the Administrative Office. This documentation shall include current Demand Occupation Training List (Region 1) information, annual performance outcomes and any other documentation used in the renewal process.

All program information will be presented to the LWDB for annual certification. The annual approval list will be updated as new programs are approved. The majority of programs have an annual renewal date. All new programs added during the prior year will be updated to reflect the renewal month at the next renewal.

Attachment 5 - LWIA #19 - Procurement Policy

INTRODUCTION

Workforce Investment Solutions has an obligation to grant opportunities for all interested parties to provide goods and services. It also has a responsibility to secure goods and services with the most quality at the lowest price. Competition is, therefore, the cornerstone of procuring goods and services in the public sector.

Adequate competition:

- 1) Assures that goods and services are obtained at reasonable prices
- 2) Allows open access to transactions and promotes equity
- 3) Encourages innovation among competitors and increases overall quality
- 4) Safeguards the integrity and independence of transactions

All aspects of the procurement system will adhere to the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act, implementing regulations and the Illinois Administrative Code. This written procedure explains internal policies and procedures of Workforce Investment Solutions which implement the aforementioned legal citations.

All costs for items or services purchases must meet the test of being “reasonable, necessary, and allocable” to Workforce Investment Solutions. The item or service must be one that benefits the purpose of the program and not be prohibited by state or federal rules.

The use of the word “Director” refers to the Executive Director of Workforce Investment Solutions and indicates that responsibility is vested with the Director or the Administration office either individually or jointly.

Conflict of Interest

All Macon-DeWitt Workforce Investment Board Members shall abide by the Code of Conduct as stated by their Bylaws. Staff members are also be required to abide by Conflict of Interest Statement as reflected in the Macon County Employee Handbook.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Both the Director and Fiscal Assistant are responsible for various parts of the administration/supervision of the procurement system. They will assure that proper procedures are implemented and followed as outlined herein. This policy applies to the purchase of any item or service regardless of purpose, amount, or for whom. Anything which requires expenditure to acquire an item or service is covered by this policy.

All procurement will be authorized by the use of a Contract, Purchase Order, Payment Authorization, or Client Services Authorization except for conference/workshop fees and organizational dues. Items which are rented or leased are exempt from this policy.

A cost or price analysis will be performed for every procurement, including contract modifications, except for Very Small Purchases and Tuition Based Payments to Educational Institutions.

No in-state or local geographical preference will be given in soliciting bids or when evaluating bids or proposals except when Federal Statutes authorized or encourage geographical preferences.

Workforce Investment Solutions may utilize the State Contract Pricing of Central Management Services to procure goods and services.

TYPES OF PROCUREMENT

The following methods are available for the acquisition of goods, services, and training programs:

1. Very Small Purchases
2. Small Purchases
3. Sealed Bids
4. Competitive Proposal
5. Noncompetitive Proposals
 - A. Sole Source Awards
 - B. Emergencies
 - C. Authorized by Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
 - D. Inadequate Competition
6. Purchases By/For Participants
7. Tuition Based Payment to Educational Institutions

If it is not clear which method of procurement is to be used, an inquiry should be directed to the Director who will decide as to the proper method. The following are procedures for each type of procurement.

Very Small Purchases: Very small purchases are those which total under \$5,000 per purchase with one vendor. Use of this method does not require obtaining competitive bids. Continued use of this method for a particular item will be examined by the Director to determine if the purchase of this item should be more appropriately and cost effectively done by a different method.

The Director and Fiscal Assistant are authorized to make purchases using this method. These individuals are responsible and will be held accountable for authorizing appropriate expenditures. For other than standard supplies, it may be advisable to seek the prior approval of the Director.

Any questions regarding this method of procurement shall be addressed to the Workforce Investment Solutions Director.

Small Purchases: Small purchases are those which total \$5,001 or more but not more than \$50,000 per purchase with one vendor. Use of this method requires written price or rate quotations from at least three qualified sources.

The only exception to obtaining price or rate quotations for every purchase over \$1,001 is to obtain prices or rates from at least three qualified sources with the intention of using the lowest vendor for the course of a whole year. However, it is imperative that new prices or rate quotations be obtained at the end of annual period.

Small Purchases method of procurement is best suited for goods and services which are similar and made principally on price. It is not well suited for procuring training programs. The use of this method is limited to circumstances where the total purchases with a vendor does not exceed \$25,000 during the fiscal year. Because of this dollar limitation, buyers should try to anticipate all purchases with a particular vendor during the fiscal year. If, despite this precaution, a future purchase will exceed the dollar limitation, an alternative method must be used.

The Fiscal Assistant will prepare a spread sheet for the Workforce Investment Solutions Director. The Director will approve and present to the Macon County Board Operations, Personnel & Legislative Committee for approval. Any questions regarding this method of procurement shall be addressed to the Workforce Investment Solutions Director.

Sealed Bids: Sealed bids are invitations for bids that are publicly advertised and solicited. In order for sealed bids to be feasible, the following conditions should be present: a complete, adequate, and realistic specifications or purchase description is available; two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively for business; and the procurement leads itself to a firm-fixed-price contract. The contract is to be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder whose bid conforms to all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids.

Sealed bids are appropriate for any dollar amount and for when the goods or services being procured are similar. It is not well suited for procuring training programs.

At the request of the Workforce Investment Solutions Director, the Fiscal Assistant will implement a sealed bid procurement. The Fiscal Assistant will publicize the invitation for bids through media and vendors list. Bids will be reviewed and approved by the Workforce Investment Solutions Director and the Macon County Board Operations, Personnel and Legislative Committee.

Additional documentation that is needed in this procurement process includes:

- 1) Evidence of public advertisements of the invitation for bid
- 2) A description of steps taken to attempt to obtain three bids
- 3) Documentation supporting that bids were publicly opened at the time and place stated in the invitation for bids
- 4) The name of each bidder and the amount of the bid
- 5) Documentation supporting the selection of the winning bid and rejection of any of the bids.

Any questions regarding this method of procurement shall be addressed to the Workforce Investment Solutions Director.

Competitive Proposals: Competitive proposals are request for proposals that are publicly advertised and solicited when the conditions of using sealed bids are met. It is often most appropriate to use procurement by competitive proposals when the procurement decision will be based on more than price and the cost of the good or service is expected to exceed \$50,000. Procurement by competitive proposals is also appropriate when you anticipate that a good or service expected to cost less than \$25,000 will need to be procured again from the same vendor during the same fiscal year and the aggregate amount or procurement is expected to exceed \$25,000. This method of procurement lends itself to a firm-fixed-price or cost-reimbursement contract to the bidder who submits the proposal most advantageous for Workforce Investment Solutions.

This method would generally be used to procure training programs. Items to be procured through a competitive proposal process would generally be developed by the Administrative Staff.

Upon the direction of the Director, staff will prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) packet. The packet will include, but not be limited to, a description of the item to be procured, a description of the quality standards, a description of all evaluation factors (rating sheet) and the relative importance of each factor, a complete description of the requirements that vendors must fulfill, and an indication of the date on which the decision will be made.

The Director will publicize the RFP through the media and the providers/contractors list. Proposals should be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources. On receipt of bids, members of the administrative staff will review and rate the proposals and conduct a cost/price analysis. The successful bid will be presented to the Workforce Investment Board and/or the Macon County Board Operations, Personnel & Legislative Committee stating reasons for the award. The Workforce Investment Board or the OPL Committee may affirm or reject the award. If they choose to reject the award, the Committee will conduct its own review and rating and conduct a cost/price analysis or will request the staff to re-rate the proposals. Their decision will be reported to the full Workforce Investment Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. They may also reject all proposals. The award decision cannot be changed without re-rating the proposals using the published criteria.

Additional documentation that is needed in this procurement process includes:

- 1) Documentation showing that an RFP was publicized
- 2) The results of evaluations for all proposals received
- 3) Documentation showing the basis on which the award decision was made

Any questions regarding this method of procurement shall be addressed to the Director.

Noncompetitive Proposals: Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when it is not feasible to use any other procurement method. This method of procurement should not be used unless absolutely necessary because it reduces competition among potential vendors to provide goods and services. Under certain procurement situations, however, there is no alternative. One of the following situations must exist:

- 1) The good or service is available from only one source. Sole source awards may be used when there is clearly no alternative process for the goods or services.
- 2) The public urgency or emergency for the good or service will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation. This situation would require that the time needed to use competitive procurement methods would result in foreseeable harm to physical facilities or persons. Another emergency purchase may occur when there is a sudden plant closing or mass layoff and Workforce Investment Solutions must respond rapidly allowing insufficient time to use competitive procurement methods.
- 3) The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity grants an exemption from standard procurement guidelines.
- 4) Competition is determined inadequate after a number of sources have been solicited.

In the event one of these situations exists, the Director may authorize the purchase. A cost/price analysis is required for this type of purchase. If the purchase is for procuring training programs a contract will be prepared by the Director.

Any questions regarding this type of procurement shall be addressed the Director.

Purchases By/For Participants: Instances arise when the purchase of miscellaneous goods or services for participants are necessary. Sometimes the purchase is made directly by the participant, while other times Workforce Investment Solutions will pay the vendor directly. Each of these instances requires a separate process.

If a participant purchases an item(s) for an authorized use and is to be reimbursed by Workforce Investment Solutions, the procurement does not fall under these guidelines. The receipt from the vendor shall be submitted to the Fiscal Department. The Fiscal Department will reimburse the client upon receipt of a signed Payment Authorization or Fixed Payment Authorization.

If participant selects an item(s) for an authorized use and payment is to be made directly to the vendor, the procurement is subject to guidelines as outlined in this policy. Should the items total more than the Very Small Purchase procurement threshold, staff shall follow the appropriate procedures as outlined in another procurement method. Once a vendor has been selected, a staff person will prepare a Payment Authorization Form and give it to the Fiscal Department, the case manager should keep a copy for participant file. The vendor will submit bill to Fiscal Department for payment.

Any questions, regarding this method of procurement shall be addressed to the Fiscal Department.

Tuition-Based Payments to Educational Institutions: Tuition-based payments are limited to providers that are private, business, or vocational schools under the Vocational Schools Act or private or public education agencies. Furthermore, the class cannot be for special or class-size programs and the price must be that which is published in the general school catalog. Requests to initiate such will be made by the case management staff. The case management staff will enroll participants at the institution and forward tuition authorization to the Fiscal Department for payments.

Any questions, regarding this method of procurement shall be addressed to the Fiscal Department.

PROVIDERS/CONTRACTORS LIST

A list shall be maintained of potential providers/contractors for training programs who have expressed an interest, in writing, in being considered for awards. The providers/contractors list will be maintained by the Director. The list shall include names, address and type of services. All potential providers/contractors who have expressed interest in being considered for awards for training programs shall be sent Request for Proposals for the area of service for which they wish to be considered.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

When possible, attempts will be made to procure from minority firms, women's business enterprises and labor surplus area firms.

PROCUREMENT DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

Check method for procurement used for this purchase:

- Very Small Purchase (under \$5,000)
- Small Purchase (\$5,001 or more)
- Sealed bid
- Competitive Proposal
- Noncompetitive Proposals
 - Sole Source Awards
 - Emergencies
 - Authorized by Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
 - Inadequate Competition

Submit Documentation Checklist and Bids (where applicable).

If the acquisition is Sole Source, Emergency, or Authorized by DCEO, provide an explanation of the circumstances that authorize the use of this method:

Yes/No:

- The purchase is reasonable, necessary, and allocable to Workforce Investment Solutions.
 - A cost/price analysis was completed on this acquisition costs and/or the final price is appropriate for this geographical area for the same or similar goods or services.
 - The purchase has been reviewed and it is hereby certified that the purchase is not a duplication.
 - The procurement is from a minority firm, women’s business, or labor surplus firm.
-

Basis for award decision:

Prepared By: _____

Date: _____