

Region 6

2020-2024

Workforce Development Plan Update

August 1, 2022

Macon-Bibb



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Middle Georgia



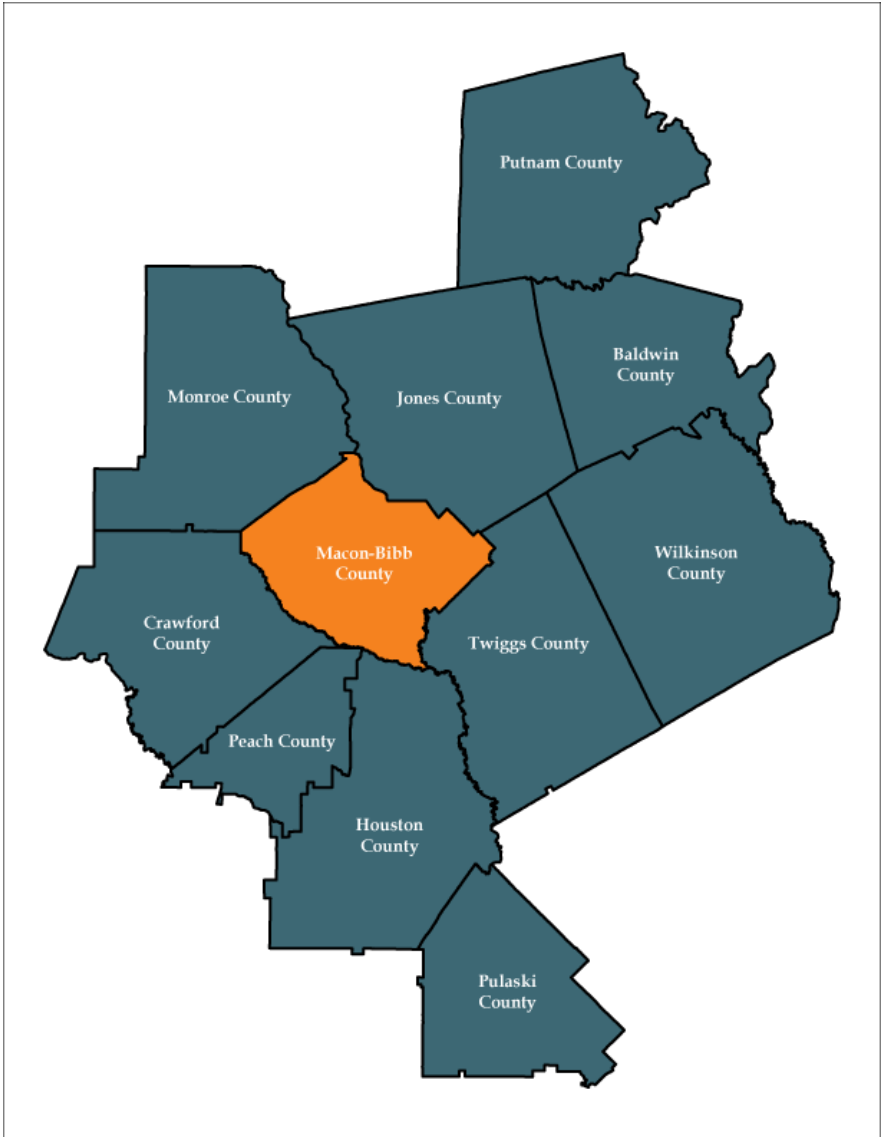
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INTRODUCTION OF REGION 6

Service Delivery Region 6 consists of 11 counties in the heart of Georgia: Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Macon-Bibb, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson. Region 6 is served by two workforce development boards: Macon-Bibb and Middle Georgia Consortium. This Workforce Development Plan has been developed to be consistent with the Unified Plan of the State of Georgia and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.



STRATEGIC ELEMENTS, GOVERNANCE, AND STRUCTURE

1. Identification of the Fiscal Agent

Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official.

Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) 10 is a single county workforce area consisting of Macon-Bibb County. There are no other local government jurisdictions in Macon-Bibb County. The Middle Georgia Regional Commission has been designated by Mayor Robert Reichert, Macon-Bibb County, as the fiscal agent responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

Middle Georgia Regional Commission
175 Emery Highway
Suite C
Macon, GA 31217
(478) 751-6160
(478) 751-6517 (fax)

Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) 11 consists of 10 counties surrounding Macon-Bibb County: Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson. Jones County Commissioner Chris Weidner is the Chief Local Elected Official and has designated Baldwin County Board of Commissioners as the fiscal agent responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

Baldwin County Board of Commissioners
121 North Wilkinson Street
Suite 314
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061
(478) 445-4791
(478) 445-6320 (fax)

For the purposes of this plan, when referencing the 11-county economic development region of Middle Georgia, the term “Region 6” will be utilized. If the information is specific to one area, the workforce development area number will be utilized.

2. Description of Strategic Planning Elements

COVID note: All historic numbers and trends up until 2019 remain true. However, special note should be made about the impact of COVID on the region. The recession induced by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in unprecedented job losses and caused many people to leave the labor force.

The U.S. and Region 6's labor market continued to recover in 2021 from the recession caused by the 2019 coronavirus pandemic. Both the number of people who were unemployed and the unemployment rate decreased over the year and both measures are still above their prepandemic levels while the labor force participation rate showed more modest improvement. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of unemployed on temporary layoff and those long term unemployed (27 weeks or longer) decreased over the year, but both measures are still above their prepandemic levels. The number of people working part time for economic reasons returned to its prepandemic level, and the number of self-employed increased. The challenge remains with engaging those that left the labor market during the pandemic and getting them reengaged.

Data shows that the labor force participation rate has not returned to its prepandemic level despite the quick recovery in certain parts of the economy. An analysis of the different demographic groups lends to a possible reasoning for a lack of full recovery. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), women faced a larger drop-in labor participation rate than men during the 2020 recession. Many women left the labor force to become caregivers to children and other family members. This was supported by an acceleration in the participant rate in September of 2021 when most likely women returned as their children returned to in-person learning. The BLS also notes that the male participation rate is still a full point lower than prepandemic levels and attributes this to the Federal Pandemic Relief Funds which they are estimating is attributing to almost 20% of the shortfall in the participation rate between February 2020 and August 2021. Lastly, it is noted that another reason individuals have not returned to the labor force is a change in attitudes toward work. Remote working options introduced improved labor flexibility and influenced how people view the workplace.

LWDA 10 and 11 will work to identify discouraged workers (people who are not in the labor force, want and are available for work, and had looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months) and involuntary part-time workers (those working less than 35 hours per week who want to work full time, are available to do so, and give an economic reason for working part time) to shrink the gap between available jobs and the unemployed.

- a. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.**

Overview by NAICS Code

The 11 counties of the Middle Georgia region, Workforce Development Areas 10 and 11, are part of a relatively well-defined economic region within the central part of the state. Macon-Bibb County serves as a major employment hub for the region, as nearly 50,000 individuals regularly commute into Macon-Bibb County to reach their primary jobs.

Houston County and Baldwin County, home to the second and third largest cities of the region (Warner Robins and Milledgeville, respectively), also see a slight increase in their daytime population, although they both see a greater daily outflow of employees as opposed to inflow.

Table 1 -- Commuting Patterns

County	Commute within County	Commute out of County	Commute into County
Baldwin	6,140	9,907	8,819
Crawford	543	4,577	737
Houston	23,657	31,711	23,161
Jones	1,825	9,634	2,641
Macon-Bibb	33,818	26,399	50,323
Monroe	1,885	9,218	6,647
Peach	2,186	8,165	8,071
Pulaski	883	2,258	1,897
Putnam	2,315	5,709	3,449
Twiggs	350	2,731	1,855
Wilkinson	776	2,877	1,913

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2019

Across the region, total employment has shown a moderate increase since 2008. However, the impacts of COVID were experienced resulting in a decline in all sectors in 2020. Today, employment is closing back on its pre-recession peak. With this in mind, the region has experienced a number of changes related to employment. This has occurred both within the various employment types, as well as within the major industries of the region. While overall employment has continued to increase, certain sectors were hit harder during COVID than others. This means that each sector of the economy will require a different response to their workforce challenges. Data obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis tracks these changes and can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 -- Regional Employment by Type and Industry Sector (2008 - 2020)					
Description	2008	2013	2018	2019	2020
Total employment	267,213	263,828	278,412	283,773	272,031
By Type					
Wage and salary employment	213,590	203,000	215,237	219,006	210,798
Proprietors' employment	53,623	60,828	63,175	64,767	61,233
Farm proprietors' employment	1,729	1,640	1,451	1,446	1,444
Nonfarm proprietors' employment	51,894	59,188	61,724	63,321	59,789
By Industry					
Farm employment	2,569	2,368	2,663	2,827	2,998
Nonfarm employment	264,644	261,460	275,749	280,946	269,033
Private nonfarm employment	206,780	207,295	221,335	225,661	214,944
Forestry, fishing, and related activities	657	114	459	641	631
Mining	1,385	1,185	962	1,178	1,160
Utilities	224	(D)	11	21	92
Construction	14,285	9,880	10,499	10,853	10,820
Manufacturing	18,229	15,096	14,885	14,830	14,226
Wholesale trade	5,705	3,979	3,564	1,122	1,177
Retail trade	28,709	30,008	29,042	28,585	28,001
Transportation and warehousing	2,901	3,555	4,443	8,250	7,642
Information	2,795	2,268	1,996	1,577	1,307
Finance and insurance	13,264	14,677	16,191	15,763	15,984
Real estate and rental and leasing	8,678	8,734	7,800	7,576	7,377
Professional, scientific, & technical services	11,464	10,884	11,508	12,654	12,733
Management of companies and enterprises	2,096	2,516	2,330	2,106	1,658
Administrative & waste management services	15,945	16,467	17,675	19,413	18,807
Educational services	4,426	4,774	4,830	4,976	4,772
Health care and social assistance	25,927	27,816	29,846	31,260	30,255
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	2,826	3,195	3,525	3,579	2,931
Accommodation and food services	18,030	18,861	21,826	22,404	19,719
Other services, except public administration	15,325	18,359	18,597	19,023	17,580
Government and government enterprises	57,864	54,165	54,414	55,285	54,089
Federal, civilian	15,983	16,998	16,753	17,355	17,266
Military	5,809	5,168	4,670	4,733	4,859
State and local	36,072	31,983	32,991	33,197	31,964
State government	12,622	9,750	10,925	11,181	10,665
Local government	23,450	22,233	22,066	22,016	21,299

(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals. (D) is only shown where there was no data for ANY county.

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2021

One of the first notable and significant trends visible from this data is the change in types of employment seen within the 21st Century. While the economy as a whole has added jobs since 2013, traditional wage and salary employment have held relatively steady at the regional level. Nearly all new growth in employment has come from an increase in the number of proprietors. This represents a tremendous opportunity for small businesses to play an increasingly significant role in the marketplace. To effectively harness these opportunities, local and regional infrastructure to support investments in entrepreneurship will be required. This includes educational opportunities that focus on business development (within both the universities and technical colleges), as well as small business incubators and makerspaces where individuals can experiment with new technologies and ideas.

Turning the focus back to employment by industry, another sharp distinction can be seen between private-sector and public-sector employment. Among those who are employed within Middle Georgia, private-sector employment makes up approximately 80 percent of jobs in the region, while public-sector employment comprises the other 20 percent. As a whole, this makes the government one of the more significant employers within the region. Federal government employment makes up over 30 percent of public sector employment, due in large part to Robins Air Force Base (RAFB)—the region’s largest employer and the largest single-site industrial complex in the state. Since 2003, public-sector employment has held mostly steady throughout the region, although the growth rate has varied by sector in recent years. State government employment had been falling steadily since 2001 but began to increase in 2018. Within the past six years, local government and federal civilian employment have also begun to decline (4.2 percent since 2012), following steady growth in the years prior. However, since 2015 there has been a slight uptick in federal government employment. This trend will require continued monitoring in the years ahead and may require additional investment in growing the private sector to offset job losses in the public sector.

Among private-sector employment, the construction and manufacturing sectors have shed the greatest number of jobs since 2003. The manufacturing sector has seen employment decline by 30 percent since 2003. While this trend was perpetuated during the recession, manufacturing job losses throughout the region preceded the recession by many years. Economic recovery has not reversed this trend, although job losses in manufacturing have at least slowed in recent years. Construction jobs were more stable through the early 2000s but still have not recovered following the recession. These two sectors make up the majority of job losses since 2003. The information sector, which includes media and publishing, has also seen a decline, particularly in urban areas. In contrast, the farming and mining sectors have been hard hit in the rural areas. These job losses present a need for reinvestment, as well as economic diversification in many communities throughout the region.

Much of this work that relates to assisting areas dependent on a single industry, or only on a few businesses, can be discussed under the concept of economic adjustment.

Economic adjustment can be undertaken in any variety of areas, or for any type of industry. The goals of this process are long-term diversification of the local or regional economy and short-term response to stabilize local and regional economies that have been heavily impacted by job losses within a major economic sector. In Middle Georgia, one of these significant areas of employment is the aerospace and defense sector. Nowhere is this more significant than Houston County, where one in four employed persons works directly at RAFB. When considering indirect jobs, over half the jobs in Houston County are tied to Robins Air Force Base. Regionally, this trend continues, with approximately 20 percent of all employed persons in Middle Georgia owing their employment to Robins Air Force Base, either directly or indirectly. The result is that as defense-sector employment in Middle Georgia goes, so goes the remainder of the region. Middle Georgia has responded to this challenge by working with the Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment to identify and develop new opportunities for workers who have been displaced from defense-related industries due to federal spending reductions. This type of economic adjustment work remains vital within the region, especially in some of the rural communities that continue to struggle economically.

Indeed, many of the jobs lost within the region have been offset somewhere in some other sector of the economy. The healthcare and social assistance sector has added the greatest number of jobs since 2003, with over 6,500 new employees, which is likely in response to national trends of an aging populace. With three major hospitals, Atrium Health (formerly Navicent Health), Houston County Medical Center, and Piedmont Macon Medical Center (formerly Coliseum Medical Center), as well as several smaller hospitals around the region, Middle Georgia can even serve as a hub for those outside of the region's 11 counties. As trends of an aging population are expected to continue in the years ahead, this sector and related industries present more opportunities for sustained employment growth.

The region has also seen significant growth in a variety of professional business, finance, and management sectors. When combined, these sectors now form nearly 17 percent of private nonfarm employment for the region. This presents challenges for traditional workforce development efforts, as many of these jobs require higher levels of skill, sometimes in very technical or mathematical aspects. To adequately meet the needs of employers in these businesses, the primary and secondary education systems must also be engaged to prepare students for advanced education and training so they can obtain jobs in these fields of employment.

Employment within Middle Georgia has held steady in the various retail and service sectors of the economy since 2003. Retail trade accounts for 13 percent of private nonfarm employment, which is the largest share of any single sector by NAICS code. The accommodations sector accounts for 10 percent of the same. Meanwhile, the administrative and waste services sector grew by 46 percent from 2003 through 2018, and the other services sector grew by 25 percent over the same timeframe. In terms of

workforce development, these positions typically require fewer skills outside of the soft skills many employers require. However, these positions also come with lower levels of pay than some of the jobs that have been lost in manufacturing or construction. This presents a multifaceted challenge for both workforce and economic development within the 11 counties of the region.

All industry sectors are facing one of the tightest labor markets in recent decades—tighter than even before the pandemic when the unemployment rate hit a 50-year low. Employers must widen the funnel of potential job candidates and identify those individuals who want a job but haven't been searching. In turn, LWDA 10 and 11 will work with these employers to ensure the pool of candidates are trained and job skill ready. The challenge will be working with employers on resetting their expectations of the ideal new hire, by thinking in terms of the best “trainable match” rather than the “perfect match.”

Overview of Economic Clusters

The US Cluster Mapping project, developed in coordination between Harvard Business School and the US Economic Development Administration gives additional information on employment, job creation, specialization, and wages by clusters and sub-clusters of the economy. This gives a greater degree of specificity than the Industry Sectors listed above. Clusters are organized into two main groups—traded clusters and local clusters. Local clusters are found everywhere and serve the needs of the local community. Traded clusters primarily serve other markets throughout the country, and regions may have many or few traded clusters. Areas will often develop specialties surrounding particular industries. These can sometimes become influential industries that are likely to attract additional industries in the form of either suppliers, competitors, or downstream users of a manufactured product or raw material. Most employment across the country is in local clusters, but traded clusters account for an equally large share of income and nearly all of the patents issued to businesses.

Analysis of Traded Clusters

Table 3 identifies clusters by a number of different factors, most notably employment, and the changes that the county has seen in employment over the past 15 years. Some clusters are noted as a specialized industry within the region, meaning that they attract a large number of employees relative to other locations within the United States and that a relatively high potential exists to coordinate production efforts between significant members of a particular industry sector or cluster. Because of this relativity, specialized industries are not solely those with the greatest number of employees, though that is a frequent occurrence. Note, given space considerations within this document, only clusters with high specialization or at least 300 employees within Macon-Bibb County are listed in Table 4.

Table 3 -- Middle Georgia County Traded Clusters

Cluster	2015 Employment	Actual Change in Employment (1998-2015)	Expected Change in Employment (1998-2015)	Over/Under Performance in Job Growth
Insurance Services	7,153	2,817	(128)	2,945
Business Services	6,414	505	3,622	(3,117)
Distribution and Electronic Commerce	6,235	2,245	916	1,329
Food Processing and Manufacturing	2,660	310	159	151
Education and Knowledge Creation	2,445	49	1,527	(1,478)
Hospitality / Tourism	2,148	(404)	418	(822)
Automotive	1,820	(465)	(699)	234
Livestock Processing	1,770	1,345	(2)	1,347
Construction Products & Services	1,608	113	17	96
Paper and Packaging	1,545	(310)	(708)	398
Transportation and Logistics	1,534	482	108	374
Financial Services	1,204	(1,225)	(977)	(248)
Vulcanized and Fired Materials	1,090	(1,380)	(1,000)	(380)
Wood Products	1,020	(784)	(551)	(233)
Power Generation & Transmission	900	770	(5)	775
Production Tech. & Heavy Machinery	840	(1,425)	(480)	(945)
Nonmetal Mining	825	(470)	(225)	(245)
Aerospace Vehicles and Defense	820	(1,780)	(657)	(1,123)
Recreational and Small Electric Goods	790	(1,225)	(977)	(248)
Textile Manufacturing	547	(2,515)	(2,176)	(339)
Marketing, Design, and Publishing	534	(448)	214	(662)
Communications Equip. & Services	490	320	(29)	349
Forestry	460	(50)	(51)	1
Plastics	409	(145)	(132)	(13)
Downstream Chemical Products	400	95	(85)	180
Information Tech & Analytic Instruments	294	264	(10)	274
Performing Arts	275	113	17	96
Upstream Chemical Products	255	105	(33)	138
Printing Services	251	(235)	(225)	(10)
Furniture	223	(1,812)	(987)	(825)
Downstream Metal Products	210	(150)	(95)	(55)

Source: US Cluster Mapping Project, Harvard Business School and US Economic Development Administration

Each of the traded clusters within the region is an industry that is currently important to the county’s economic vitality or has held such importance in recent years. Among these clusters, the business services sector stands out as the largest employer within the region.

Although it has somewhat underperformed the nation as a whole, job creation has remained strong on the regional level. Within the sub-clusters of business services, some areas like consulting, payroll services, and telemarketing have struggled; however, business services related to the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) career fields have shown growth. Computer services, such as computer programming and data hosting and processing have far outpaced national averages, adding nearly 2,500 jobs since 1998. Most of these new jobs are located in Houston, Baldwin, and Macon-Bibb counties. Engineering services are also considered a subset of business services and have shown modest gains, near the national rate of job growth, adding just over 400 jobs in the same timeframe.

Overall, the sub-clusters containing to STEM career fields, especially within the business services cluster, exhibit regional growth potential, as evidenced by existing trends that generally surpass national averages; however, the region still risks falling behind in this regard, particularly outside of business services. For example, while the education and knowledge creation sector were exhibiting large growth nationally, Middle Georgia lagged behind and saw a loss of jobs in biotech, physical and life sciences research organizations. Meanwhile, information technology and analytical instruments remain a relatively small sector of the economy despite some growth. As a result, the region may need to consider ways to invest more in the success of STEM fields, particularly as related to primary and secondary educational opportunities that can prepare a future workforce for these high-skill positions.

The insurance services cluster has seen the largest job growth in recent years and has well overperformed compared to recent national trends in job growth. Much of this is attributable to the GEICO regional office. As a significant employer in the region and a specialized cluster within the region, jobs in the insurance services sector may be likely to remain in demand for the near future. The financial services cluster (which is often grouped with insurance by NAICS code), has experienced the opposite trend with significant job losses. While financial services have turned back positive following the recent recession nationally, the banking sector in Middle Georgia continues to struggle, particularly with credit intermediation firms. Potentially, areas exist where the skills required overlap between the growing insurance and contracting financial sectors. If so, displaced employees could be well positioned to benefit without requiring as much assistance in retraining.

The distribution and electronic commerce and transportation and logistics clusters also represent a major component of the local employment pool. While neither of these is specialized industries within the region, they both represent meaningful employment, in sectors that have outperformed the rest of the nation. Currently, these two clusters employ over 7,500 workers in the 11 counties of Middle Georgia, of which more than one-third of these positions have been added within the last 15 years. Although the logistics sector was expected to perform well nationwide, job growth in Middle Georgia has outperformed the nation by a rate of more than triple other parts of the country. This is

also particularly good for the region, as wages in these clusters are higher than average wages within the region. All these factors indicate room for significant growth within these industries—especially when local and state programs are considered, such as the Network Georgia initiative of the Georgia Ports Authority. This will likely create a demand for more workers with the skills necessary to fulfill various shipments and transport them to their appropriate destinations in a timely manner.

While the traditional agricultural activities of Middle Georgia have continued their gradual decline in recent years, the finished product side of food production has only continued to grow throughout the region. Today, nearly 3,500 people are employed in either food processing and manufacturing or livestock processing within Middle Georgia. These numbers have been on the rise regionally, despite remaining relatively constant at the national level. Two of the largest employers within this sector, both of which have contributed to regional growth in employment, are Frito Lay and Perdue Farms, both located in Houston County. Given the proximity of the region to both major agricultural areas, as well as distribution networks, it should not be surprising that these clusters continue to do well. While not paying as well as some other sectors, food and meat processing still provide a number of quality jobs within the region and will require additional workers with the skillsets to meet industry needs.

Forestry and the related clusters of paper and packaging, wood products, and furniture also contribute significantly to the county's labor force, and all do so with a high degree of specialization within Middle Georgia. The region is home to some incredibly rich forested areas, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of the region. This geographic blessing allowed related industries to traditionally do very well around the region. In recent years, Middle Georgia has generally been able to outperform the rest of the nation in these industries; however, this still represented a decline in employment from previous years, which pales in comparison to the projected declines for the industry, given national trends. While Middle Georgia may have strategic advantages that help sustain this industry in the long run, it does not appear to be a hotbed for new job growth within the region.

Related to forestry is the other main extractive industry of mining, specifically nonmetal mining. These two clusters are the two most specialized industries within the region. That is to say, Middle Georgia contributes a greater share of the national workforce for these two sectors than in any other sector; however, in raw numbers, this only equals a little under 1,400 workers across the 11 counties, and this number continues to shrink regionally. The heart of Kaolin mining country has been particularly hard hit. In 1998, nearly 1,000 individuals were employed in Kaolin mining in just the rural counties of Twiggs and Wilkinson alone. Today, that number has been nearly cut in half, to only 550 people. While it is important to recognize the long-term importance of these industries to the region, it is also necessary for these rural communities to identify new ways to adapt and survive economically. Localized strategic planning for economic diversification

can go a long way to benefit these communities; and special attention will be needed to assist these displaced workers in identifying new opportunities for work.

The aerospace industry has long been one of the few industries most commonly associated with the Middle Georgia region. This is undoubtedly due in part to the presence of Robins Air Force Base. This represents a significant overrepresentation of this industry compared to other parts of the nation; however, this is also a cluster that has also lost nearly 1,800 jobs in Middle Georgia over the past 16 years. Nationally, the aerospace sector has also declined, but it has been an even more precipitous fall in Middle Georgia than elsewhere. This underscores the need for diversification within the region in response to some of these job losses. While commercial aerospace service can potentially alleviate job losses on the defense side, unless the volume of commercial business increases drastically, this will not be enough to compensate for job losses without new industries elsewhere.

A final interesting sector within the region is the vulcanized and fired materials cluster. Within this cluster are three unique sub-clusters: clay products, rubber products, and glass products. While glass product manufacturing is not a significant part of the regional economy, Middle Georgia is quite specialized for clay products. As mentioned as part of the nonmetal mining discussion earlier, this is possibly due to the region's geographic location and abundant presence of Kaolin; however, regional employment in this sector has plummeted in recent years. The potential opportunity for workforce investment regionally is on the other side of this cluster with rubber products. While available data do not yet indicate growth, the recent opening of a Kumho Tires manufacturing facility in Macon-Bibb County is poised to translate to large job growth in this sub-cluster. As clay products continue to trend downward, this presents a possible transition opportunity for those workers who previously engaged with fired materials in a different way. This also underscores the need in general for skills training to support work in the advanced manufacturing of tires. Potentially, if Kumho and neighboring West Georgia's Kia continue to succeed, the opportunity also opens up for more automotive manufacturing in Middle Georgia to build upon the success that Blue Bird has already had in Fort Valley.

Analysis of Local Clusters

Table 5 highlights various information pertaining to the local clusters within the Middle Georgia region. Unlike the traded clusters, however, there is little specialization that exists in these clusters, as all local economic areas require these services in some form or fashion.

Table 4 -- Middle Georgia Local Clusters				
Cluster	2015 Employment	Actual Change in Employment (1998-2015)	Expected Change in Employment (1998-2015)	Over/Under Performance in Job Growth
Local Health Services	29,517	626	9,208	(8,582)
Local Hospitality Establishments	18,136	4,821	5,745	(924)
Local Commercial Services	9,252	(334)	1,640	(1,974)
Local Real Estate, Construction, and Development	9,072	(2,041)	991	(3,032)
Local Retailing of Clothing and General Merchandise	7,825	1,484	1,522	(38)
Local Motor Vehicle Products and Services	7,631	(347)	429	(776)
Local Food and Beverage Processing and Distribution	5,585	(1,065)	214	(1,279)
Local Community and Civic Organizations	5,558	952	1,789	(837)
Local Personal Service (Non-Medical)	3,735	250	1,276	(1,026)
Local Financial Services	3,179	(394)	535	(929)
Local Logistical Services	3,010	1,078	360	718
Local Household Goods and Services	2,824	179	45	134
Local Entertainment and Media	2,539	(280)	(512)	232
Local Education and Training	2,001	161	802	(641)
Local Utilities	1,937	(1,157)	(670)	(487)
Local Industrial Products and Services	708	(179)	(72)	(107)

Source: US Cluster Mapping Project, Harvard Business School and US Economic Development Administration

As wage and salary employment in the traded clusters of Middle Georgia has generally declined since 1998, many of the local clusters have experienced job gains; however, this still represents underperformance compared to the rest of the nation in job growth. The health services cluster is the largest employer, by far, employing nearly 30,000 people across the region. Again, this is likely due to the region’s multiple hospitals and the need to service an aging population; however, the sector’s growth over the past 16 years is paltry compared to national trends. The cluster, as a whole, added just over 900 net jobs since 1998, whereas the expected job creation given national growth would have been over 8,500 jobs. This could be interpreted as a part of the trend of overall sluggishness in the local economy, but it might also indicate possibilities for new employment in those fields to meet local demand from residents. It is also worth noting that a decent amount of the regional sluggishness may be due to the closure of Central State Hospital in

Milledgeville; however, this would not account for the full difference, and may indicate an unmet need within the community.

The local logistical services cluster was the greatest over-performer in the region compared to the remainder of the country. This was especially pronounced within the local transportation services and local passenger transportation sub-clusters. While many of these do not compare to the scope of the traded logistics and transportation cluster in terms of long-distance and large-scale transit, it still does emphasize the potential that Middle Georgia holds as a statewide, and even national hub for transportation. As was stated earlier for the traded transportation and logistics cluster, this is another area with job training needs that the region can choose to pursue.

As indicated earlier in the context of NAICS codes, the service industry also performed well in terms of local cluster job growth. Local hospitality establishments recorded the largest increase in employment, adding nearly 5,000 employees since 1998. This was especially pronounced among restaurants. Local merchandise retailing also fared well over that same timeframe, particularly among discount retailers and warehouse clubs. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the effects of the recession, the local real estate, construction, and development clusters have seen the biggest decrease in job creation, particularly among general and specialty contractors. This market may be yet to recover fully within the Middle Georgia region.

Occupational Projections

Table 5 -- Middle Georgia Occupation Projections

Occupation	2016 Estimated Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Total 2016-2026 Employment Change
Total All	198,620	224,020	17,120
Architecture and Engineering	3,980	4,390	410
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1,660	1,760	100
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	6,760	7,700	940
Business and Financial Operations	13,180	14,050	870
Community and Social Services	3,050	3,350	300
Computer and Mathematical	3,370	3,670	300
Construction and Extraction	8,200	8,960	760
Education, Training, and Library	13,510	14,890	1,380
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	3,520	3,840	320
Food Preparation and Serving Related	17,990	18,510	520
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	12,690	14,210	1,520
Healthcare Support	6,080	3,030	960
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	11,170	12,200	1,030
Legal	930	1,010	80
Life, Physical, and Social Science	680	730	50
Management	12,450	13,570	1,120
Office and Administrative Support	27,760	28,360	600
Personal Care and Service	5,820	6,840	1,020
Production	13,310	14,230	920
Protective Service	5,240	5,410	170
Sales and Related	23,330	25,710	2,380
Transportation and Material Moving	12,140	13,590	1,450

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projection Unit

Table 5 supports many of the general conclusions of the sector analysis in an occupational analysis. Through 2026, major occupations expected to see growth (both by percentage and total number) include the healthcare practitioners and technical; healthcare support; sales and related; personal care and service; transportation and material moving; and the education, training, and library occupations. These occupations refocus on Macon-Bibb County as a hub within the state for healthcare, education, and other similar services that can often not be found elsewhere. In addition, the county’s strategic location for transportation affords the potential for additional job growth in those related occupations as well. A number of lower-skill, service-sector positions, such as office and administrative support, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, and food

preparation and serving are also expected to continue seeing job growth in the next few years.

A major challenge for the region is that much of this job growth is in relatively lower-skilled jobs. As a result, Middle Georgia may see a degree of stagnation within wages. Among the skilled jobs where new growth is expected, it becomes vital to train potential employees in the necessary workplace skills. These occupations particularly include the medical, education, and logistics occupations listed above. The region also is expected to see very little growth in some of the advanced STEM careers like architecture and engineering or life, physical, and social science. This may be due in large part to the lack of a workforce that possesses these skills. Additional educational investment at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels may be necessary to help reverse this projected trend of sluggish growth.

Summary of Industry Trends

Taken as a whole, Local Workforce Development Areas 10 and 11 are expected to continue seeing growth trends that shift employment away from the production sectors of the economy and further into the service sectors of the economy. This is not to say that opportunities are non-existent within manufacturing. In fact, certain industries like the food processing or the automotive industry may continue to see growth in future years in light of successful relocations to the region. In addition, the transportation and logistics sector is a prime area for growth due to the region's strategic geographic position within the transportation system of the state. Finally, with additional investment in STEM education activities, these industries can have definite room for growth, provided that a well-educated workforce can be recruited to, as well as trained and retained within, Middle Georgia.

It is worth noting that this new job growth may not take the expected form of years past. Wage and salary employment has been stagnant for a significant length of time—even declining in some parts of the region. There is a continued need for job training activities that respond to new occupational opportunities in the context of small business and the entrepreneurial spirit.

Finally, given continued trends in population toward an aging America that is ever more concentrated in the urban and suburban areas of the country, continued investment in job training opportunities for the health and medical services sector may also be necessary.

Table 6 provides the median age over the next 10 years, showing that the median age in Middle Georgia, the state, and the nation as a whole is on the rise. This has the potential to be a strategic advantage for Middle Georgia compared to other more rural parts of the state. The growth of a highly trained workforce for medical endeavors, as well as in

support of the higher education sector that remains a significant contributor to the workforce will only pay long-term dividends for the people of the region.

Table 6 -- Median Age (2010 - 2050)

County	2010	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Baldwin	33.03	35.80	35.16	34.65	37.47	37.73
Crawford	41.10	44.60	44.99	44.99	45.60	44.48
Houston	33.98	35.60	36.57	37.71	39.13	40.42
Jones	38.35	40.40	41.85	42.01	43.02	44.60
Macon-Bibb	35.06	36.30	36.30	37.43	39.29	39.21
Monroe	41.01	42.90	43.51	43.83	44.82	46.27
Peach	32.89	38.00	39.22	40.37	41.63	41.00
Pulaski	40.84	41.00	44.85	45.18	46.56	47.16
Putnam	43.12	47.80	47.60	47.60	48.00	46.98
Twiggs	44.74	47.20	47.50	47.38	46.57	44.14
Wilkinson	40.56	43.00	41.84	41.37	39.72	39.55
Region	38.61	41.15	41.76	42.05	42.89	42.87
Georgia	34.90	36.90	37.15	37.76	38.60	39.41
United States	36.70	38.20	38.82	39.60	40.66	41.00

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, 2022

b. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Among the targeted industry sectors for Middle Georgia are the advanced manufacturing, shared services, logistics, healthcare, IT, and education sectors. All of these sectors present opportunities for new growth in employment. With a specific increased emphasis within the region to reach out to the advanced manufacturing sector, partnerships are being formed to align the local school systems with these companies to promote better communication and to grow the pipeline for these future jobs. An analysis of occupations within these in-demand sectors highlights several occupations that can be expected to grow over the next 10 years. A breakdown of this information can be found in Table 6.

The largest share of growth in occupations is expected to occur in the medical sector—both among healthcare practitioners, as well as in healthcare support operations. Closely following this growth is the sales sector and the transportation/moving sector. As previously indicated, the presence of a strong medical sector throughout the region presents many opportunities. Given that job growth within the medical field in Middle Georgia has sometimes lagged behind other parts of the nation, a possible conclusion is that a skills gap exists between the needs of the community and the available labor pool.

The need for healthcare workers, especially nurses, represents a potential training priority for job seekers within the region.

Similar to nurses, the region is expected to need more teachers over the next 10 years; however, this presents a significant job training challenge considering the typical requirements for schoolteachers across the state. In this case, potential gaps must be addressed earlier, including within the K-12 education system to prepare students for future careers in education. This is a cycle, which if properly refocused, could produce long-term benefits for the region. This is also the method by which future demands for management positions, computer and mathematical occupations, and financial operations specialists will be met.

Within the advanced manufacturing sectors, employment has gradually begun to show positive movement again in the past couple of years. Projections show that there will be some occupational needs going forward in the production sectors of the economy. Some of these needs include engineers, industrial maintenance and repair workers, assemblers, machine operators, packaging and filling machine operators, welders, cutters, solderers, and braziers. To effectively get manufactured products to market, there is also projected to be significant demand within the logistics sector, owing in large part to the region’s strategic location. Laborers, truck drivers, packagers, and industrial tractor operators can all present opportunities for additional job growth.

In partnership with the HDCI project manager, Local Workforce Development Areas 10 and 11 will prepare a Middle Georgia demand-occupations listing, which will serve as the framework for training services for WIOA program participants.

Table 7 -- Occupation Growth Projections (by SOC Code) in Targeted Industries

SOC	Description	2020 Jobs	Hourly Earnings	Projected Growth 2020-2030
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	3,366	\$43.90	59
11-3031	Financial Managers	805	\$57.62	68
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	670	\$53.00	70
13-1111	Management Analysts	1,281	\$40.05	158
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	600	\$26.09	87
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	1,579	\$33.43	20
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	632	\$35.49	15
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	729	\$45.66	131
21-1011	Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	196	\$23.19	33
21-1014	Mental Health Counselors	288	\$23.08	50
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	479	\$15.56	44
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	2,366	\$24.78	-56
25-3098	Substitute Teachers	603	\$10.60	-12
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	1,960	\$9.57	-28
29-1069	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	927	\$130.39	22

SOC	Description	2020 Jobs	Hourly Earnings	Projected Growth 2020-2030
29-1071	Physician Assistants	223	\$49.39	53
29-1123	Physical Therapists	373	\$42.37	55
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	227	\$26.52	31
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	220	\$36.68	43
29-1141	Registered Nurses	5,000	\$30.84	241
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	354	\$49.63	73
29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	422	\$15.37	7
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	599	\$12.88	10
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,759	\$19.92	46
31-1011	Home Health Aides	935	\$10.34	-20
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	2,661	\$11.63	58
31-9092	Medical Assistants	1,341	\$14.03	215
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	1,549	\$9.10	53
39-9011	Childcare Workers	1,408	\$10.39	9
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	1,733	\$10.18	512
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Admin. Support Workers	2,005	\$26.05	-106
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	628	\$16.66	27
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	3,605	\$16.23	-318
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,324	\$12.47	23
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	2,802	\$12.03	-52
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	1,057	\$16.09	97
43-6014	Secretaries & Admin. Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, Exec.	2,962	\$15.39	-408
47-1011	First-line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction	633	\$60,400	36
47-2061	Construction Laborers	1,549	\$13.85	94
47-2073	Operating Engineers/Other Construction Equip Operators	594	\$35,600	29
47-2111	Electricians	738	\$22.16	30
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	571	\$20.49	52
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,993	\$17.06	7
51-2092	Team Assemblers	1,497	\$17.78	-236
51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	631	\$12.20	18
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Braziers	623	\$16.98	5
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	567	\$19.19	7
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	775	\$9.96	8
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,548	\$17.17	7
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	1,658	\$17.48	33
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,980	\$14.38	127
53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand	999	\$11.15	-65

In addition, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission engaged with Central Georgia Technical College in 2017, to complete a series of job profiles of positions throughout the 11 counties of Middle Georgia using their WorkKeys profiling system. For the 139 positions that have been scored during this process, a numerical value was assigned for the skill level required to do the job both at entry-level and effectively in terms of applied mathematics, locating information, and reading for information. These positions were evaluated on a number scale going up to seven, with higher numbers indicating greater

levels of skill required. The summary of skill rankings averaged among industry sectors, can be seen in Table 8, below.

Table 8 -- Middle Georgia Skill Gap Analysis

Sector	Applied Mathematical		Graphic Literacy		Workplace Documents	
	Entry Level	Effective Performance	Entry Level	Effective Performance	Entry Level	Effective Performance
Advanced Manuf.	2.70	3.00	3.33	3.67	3.26	3.58
Aerospace	3.00	3.08	3.44	3.96	3.16	3.20
Logistics	1.50	1.50	3.00	3.50	3.00	3.00
Healthcare	3.25	3.75	4.00	4.50	3.25	3.50
Civil Engineering	6.25	6.25	4.75	5.63	5.13	5.38

Source: Middle Georgia Regional Commission; Central Georgia Technical College

The applied mathematical skills category has the greatest variation among the required skills. The logistics sector rates very low, as several jobs that were profiled required no substantive mathematical skills. However, the math skills required for engineering positions were exceptionally great. Among the logistics, advanced manufacturing, and healthcare jobs that require low-level skills, employees will typically need to solve simple math problems with single operations and change the forms of numbers, especially in terms of measurement units. The aerospace and defense industry requires somewhat greater mathematical skills, with more jobs requiring the ability to solve problems with multiple operations, calculate averages and ratios, and perform operations with fractions, decimals, and mixed numbers. Some jobs within the engineering field require the highest levels of mathematical skills graded, which include statistical concepts and measures of central tendency, cost comparisons, conversions between systems of measurement, solving nonlinear functions, and identifying mistakes from within other problems.

The graphic literacy skillset contains a narrower range of possible values, as the highest possible score is only six, instead of seven. Within the sectors, logistics and manufacturing jobs score lower, while healthcare and engineering jobs score higher. At the lower levels, employees are required to either locate or fill in a few pieces of information from a chart or graph. These are generally relatively elementary forms. Employees at higher levels of skill in graphic literacy can sort through irrelevant information on advanced graphics and can compare information and trends within one graph, or between several graphs. The most highly skilled workers will be required to use this information in decision-making processes.

Workplace documents test the textual comprehension of an employee. Most sectors across the region require a similar, basic level of reading comprehension. This includes identifying main ideas from a text, understanding the correct meaning of common words, can follow basic directions, and choose the appropriate steps for such direction. In engineering fields, workers will need to interpret the meanings of words, understand

technical terms, imply details, and follow more complex instructions, including the application of those to directions to new situations or scenarios.

The basic skills described above will be required for many of the employees seeking jobs in skilled professions within the region. The difficulty that many businesses face in filling these positions can be partially alleviated by focusing on training individuals, particularly those who may not have completed their secondary education, to perform these skills successfully. Beyond this, there remains a need to build soft skills within the regional labor force. This is more difficult to quantify in a statistical method but has been a major theme among regional employers. An emphasis on professionalism through both the K-12 education system, as well as in the technical colleges would be beneficial to many potential job seekers and employers. Table 10 below depicts the average scores among those with a high school diploma or its equivalent, those with more than a high school diploma and the region. Our analysis of over 500 WorkKeys Assessments from 2017-2018 found that those with more than a high school diploma or its equivalent were significantly more likely to score higher on the assessment.

Table 9 -- Middle Georgia WorkKeys Analysis

Sector	Applied Mathematical	Graphic Literacy	Workplace Documents
High School Diploma or Equivalent	4.45	4.91	4.93
More than High School	4.78	5.05	5.15
Regional	4.57	4.94	5.02

Source: Middle Georgia Regional Commission; Central Georgia Technical College

- c. **Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.**

General Population Trends

As of 2018, the 11 counties of Middle Georgia, had a population of just under 500,000 individuals. This represents an ongoing trend of modest growth that is expected to continue through the first half of the 21st Century, adding a little less than 80,000 people by 2050. Table 10 provides additional projections of county and regional populations.

Table 10 -- Projected Population Change (2010 - 2050)

County	2010	2025	2030	2040	2050	Avg Annual Prct Change
Baldwin	45,690	44,080	44,320	44,280	43,880	-0.10%
Crawford	12,620	12,220	12,320	12,500	12,680	0.02%
Houston	140,760	174,430	183,840	201,880	219,850	1.41%
Jones	28,650	29,300	30,380	32,280	34,010	0.47%
Macon-Bibb	155,820	157,370	157,650	156,380	153,840	-0.03%
Monroe	26,170	29,810	31,130	33,580	35,910	0.93%
Peach	27,750	29,060	29,790	30,940	31,870	0.36%
Pulaski	11,970	10,070	10,270	10,670	11,090	-0.18%
Putnam	21,200	23,150	23,870	25,390	27,000	0.69%
Twiggs	8,970	7,850	7,830	7,810	7,790	-0.33%
Wilkinson	9,520	8,800	8,760	8,670	8,590	-0.25%
Region	489,120	526,140	540,160	564,380	586,510	0.50%
Georgia	9,712,700	11,234,710	11,780,940	12,860,570	13,980,820	1.10%
Nation	309,338,360	340,970,910	352,070,270	372,916,420	393,774,710	0.68%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, 2022

Note: 2010-2020 data are historical (with 2020 being pulled from 2020 DEC Redistricting Data, PL 94-171), 2025-2050 are projections

The region is also likely to find itself challenged by an increasingly aging workforce in every corner of Middle Georgia. Table 6 illustrates these trends. As the rapid aging of the regional workforce continues, more and more employees will begin to near the age of retirement, which will further drain the supply of qualified and skilled workers. In fact, the post-WWII generation of Baby Boomers, which had been the largest generation of Americans in number until 2015, is already at this point, with the youngest of the generation already over age 50. As these workers begin to retire, companies in Middle Georgia can expect the gap in skilled workers to only grow at an accelerating pace. This underscores the need for significant investment to continue in ensuring that the newer generation of workers can fill these positions that are opening with increasing frequency.

Although impending retirements are expected to cause additional job openings to be created, the younger generation of workers is not yet ready to fill these positions. Youth unemployment is particularly high throughout Middle Georgia, as individuals in the labor force under the age of 24 are considerably less likely to be employed than their older counterparts. For example, in Crawford and Peach counties, unemployment for the 20-24 age bracket is approximately 40 and 22 percent, respectively. This is likely due to a skills gap, not only among these individuals but also among older workers who also lack the skills to advance beyond their own entry-level positions. If youth unemployment is left unaddressed, then the impending retirement boom will lead to positions that have to be filled with individuals who lack even entry-level work experience. The natural challenge

that will follow this is keeping young adults from becoming increasingly disconnected from society. The longer their challenges persist, the greater difficulty they will face in obtaining employment and job skills later, which can lead to increased rates of crime, worse health, and greater need for welfare and social support.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 11 -- Youth Unemployment by County		
County	Age Range	Unemployment Rate
Baldwin	16 - 19 years	38.7%
	20 - 24 years	9.8%
Crawford	16 - 19 years	21.4%
	20 - 24 years	32.6%
Houston	16 - 19 years	24.3%
	20 - 24 years	12.1%
Jones	16 - 19 years	12.8%
	20 - 24 years	10.4%
Macon-Bibb	16 - 19 years	23.5%
	20 - 24 years	12.6%
Monroe	16 - 19 years	38.5%
	20 - 24 years	.4%
Peach	16 - 19 years	25.8%
	20 - 24 years	10.5%
Pulaski	16 - 19 years	13.1%
	20 - 24 years	7.2%
Putnam	16 - 19 years	20.6%
	20 - 24 years	15.4%
Twiggs	16 - 19 years	84.6%
	20 - 24 years	10.1%
Wilkinson	16 - 19 years	66.1%
	20 - 24 years	14.8%
Georgia	16 - 19 years	19.4%
	20 - 24 years	10.7%
United States	16 - 19 years	16.9%
	20 - 24 years	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Wages and Poverty

Table 12 -- Wages (non-adjusted) and Wage and Salary Employment by County (1980 - 2020)

County	Description	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Baldwin	Wage & salary employment	15,696	19,455	19,976	16,835	16,697
	Avg. wages and salaries	10,942	17,750	24,130	31,064	37,336
Crawford	Wage & salary employment	1,144	1,240	1,644	1,435	1,520
	Avg. wages and salaries	7,592	12,603	20,409	29,664	33,953
Houston	Wage & salary employment	37,018	44,838	52,181	64,686	68,469
	Avg. wages and salaries	14,195	21,374	31,405	44,300	52,604
Jones	Wage & salary employment	2,140	2,872	3,602	3,977	4,535
	Avg. wages and salaries	9,171	15,713	23,262	30,972	41,219
Macon-Bibb	Wage & salary employment	67,868	84,055	96,641	85,675	86,334
	Avg. wages and salaries	11,907	21,035	29,721	38,149	49,341
Monroe	Wage & salary employment	6,750	6,031	5,539	6,735	8,117
	Avg. wages and salaries	11,948	16,562	25,078	36,468	45,547
Peach	Wage & salary employment	6,728	7,848	9,075	8,405	10,277
	Avg. wages and salaries	10,709	19,148	26,811	33,053	42,214
Pulaski	Wage & salary employment	2,521	2,801	3,499	3,126	3,250
	Avg. wages and salaries	8,141	14,067	24,046	31,037	36,020
Putnam	Wage & salary employment	4,172	4,932	6,926	6,655	5,994
	Avg. wages and salaries	11,243	17,531	25,465	30,026	38,692
Twiggs	Wage & salary employment	2,224	2,163	1,913	1,234	1,973
	Avg. wages and salaries	14,315	26,633	35,278	33,293	40,229
Wilkinson	Wage & salary employment	3,346	3,672	3,568	3,120	3,632
	Avg. wages and salaries	13,342	24,350	32,658	43,290	44,622
Regional	Wage & salary employment	149,607	179,907	204,564	201,883	210,798
	Avg. wage per job	12,233	20,319	29,023	38,762	47,996
Georgia	Wage & salary employment	2,377,591	3,182,256	4,132,965	4,032,763	4,609,427
	Avg. wage per job	12,497	21,900	34,316	44,924	59,735
Nation	Wage & salary employment	97,646,000	116,544,000	137,610,000	135,526,000	147,236,000
	Avg. wage per job	13,999	23,423	35,054	46,994	64,018

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2020

Over the past 40 years, wages throughout Middle Georgia have continued to grow at a similar rate to wages across the nation and the rest of the state; however, Middle Georgia started behind these other locations in terms of average wages and has never actually caught up. Table 12 indicates this rate of growth. Today, average wages throughout the region are \$18,000 less than the national average. The urban counties of Houston and Macon-Bibb typically fare somewhat better in terms of average wages. The more rural counties like Crawford and Twiggs often see lower wage rates.

Not unrelated from the lower wage rates in the region, median household incomes are also considerably lower throughout Middle Georgia compared to the State of Georgia or the nation as a whole. Only two counties have income and poverty rates comparable to the national average, and one in five Middle Georgians are living below the federal

poverty level. In Baldwin County, this number is as high as 26.2 percent. These data support the assertion that a strong focus on growing economic prosperity throughout the region is an important goal with the potential to benefit many Middle Georgians, and that a continued focus is necessary for the goal of alleviating poverty. This focus must include an understanding of the challenges faced by poverty, and a focus on obtaining employment for residents within sectors that require skilled labor and pay higher wages. Table 13 highlights these statistics.

<i>Table 13 -- Poverty (last 12 months)</i>			
County	Individuals Below Poverty Level	Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	Median Household Income
Baldwin	23.7%	12.0%	\$46,250
Crawford	16.6%	13.8%	\$47,917
Houston	11.6%	10.0%	\$65,870
Jones	11.6%	13.0%	\$63,046
Macon-Bibb	25.0%	20.1%	\$41,317
Monroe	15.5%	6.6%	\$60,491
Peach	20.9%	18.6%	\$50,267
Pulaski	20.4%	19.5%	\$42,213
Putnam	18.7%	13.4%	\$52,910
Twiggs	15.2%	17.3%	\$43,477
Wilkinson	24.7%	15.8%	\$36,896
Georgia	14.3%	12.2%	\$61,224
Nation	12.8%	11.4%	\$64,994

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

As of the preliminary numbers from the Georgia Department of Labor for March 2020, there were a total of 220,864 individuals in the workforce who live in the 11 counties of Middle Georgia with a non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 7.53 percent. The five-year averages from the American Community Survey can be found in Table 14.

Table 14 -- Labor Force Participation (Age 16 & Over) (5 Year Average)

County	Percent in Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Baldwin	53.6%	8.2%
Crawford	51.4%	8.5%
Houston	66.6%	6.3%
Jones	57.5%	5.4%
Macon-Bibb	57.1%	7.2%
Monroe	54.6%	7.0%
Peach	53.8%	9.7%
Pulaski	40.7%	5.7%
Putnam	55.0%	4.6%
Twiggs	45.3%	6.1%
Wilkinson	49.8%	8.0%
Georgia	63.3%	5.6%
Nation	63.4%	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

The labor force participation and unemployment rate both signal that the local economy of the Middle Georgia region is somewhat less favorable for potential employees locally than nationally, where a greater share of workers participate at a lower rate of unemployment. While some measures of labor force participation do not take retirements into account, the increasing pace of retirements is a national challenge and would be reflected in the same national averages for workforce participation. As such, this data would seem to indicate that within the region either a lack of jobs and/or a lack of skills among the workforce to fill these jobs exists. While these factors represent both challenges in economic development and workforce development, the two are very closely linked. In many cases, the jobs may go unfilled because of a lack of skills. Certainly, the current availability of people and job growth in the service sectors indicate that a skills challenge does exist that inhibits employment.

Education and Skills

Participation in the labor force and unemployment rate also has a strong correlation with educational attainment, suggesting that those with a higher level of education are more likely to participate in the labor force and be actively employed, rather than just seeking employment. Many studies have also shown that these individuals will be likely to earn higher incomes throughout their careers as well. With this in mind, an analysis of workforce skills and relative educational attainment is pertinent to understanding the workforce needs of the Middle Georgia region. Table 16 highlights the educational attainment of individuals in Middle Georgia over the age of 25.

Table 15 -- Educational Attainment (Age 25 & Over)

County	Less than 9th Grade	Some HS, No Diploma	HS Grad (or equivalent)	Some College - No Degree	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate/ Prof. Degree
Baldwin	3.9%	9.7%	32.6%	20.1%	9.4%	15.0%	9.4%
Crawford	3.7%	13.2%	41.2%	25.2%	6.0%	5.2%	5.4%
Houston	2.6%	4.8%	26.8%	24.0%	10.7%	17.7%	13.2%
Jones	2.6%	5.7%	38.6%	21.6%	10.7%	12.4%	8.4%
Macon-Bibb	4.0%	9.6%	31.0%	22.7%	7.3%	13.5%	11.8%
Monroe	3.5%	9.7%	33.9%	19.9%	6.4%	13.2%	13.4%
Peach	6.0%	9.6%	31.7%	19.8%	10.9%	10.5%	11.5%
Pulaski	9.7%	10.8%	35.6%	24.7%	6.1%	7.6%	5.5%
Putnam	4.5%	7.8%	36.8%	20.3%	7.0%	14.4%	9.1%
Twiggs	4.3%	16.1%	41.9%	20.0%	7.4%	5.3%	5.0%
Wilkinson	4.1%	9.8%	50.1%	18.5%	6.3%	6.9%	4.3%
Region	3.7%	8.1%	31.7%	22.4%	8.8%	14.1%	11.2%
Georgia	4.5%	7.7%	27.5%	20.2%	8.0%	19.7%	12.5%
Nation	4.9%	6.6%	26.7%	20.3%	8.6%	20.2%	12.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

As the data indicates, the region remains far behind the remainder of the state and nation in terms of educational attainment. For example, only 22.1 percent of Middle Georgia residents over the age of 25 have either a 2-year or 4-year degree; however, over 28.6 percent of Americans at large hold the same. Likewise, 13.4 percent of regional residents over the age of 25 lack a high school diploma, or equivalent, compared to only 11.7 percent of all Americans. Implications of this lagging educational attainment are, and will continue to be, a grave indicator for the regional workforce. As of the 2017 Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), five out of the eleven counties in Middle Georgia performed below both the nation and the state in literacy scores. This has negative impacts on the workforce and increases the difficulty of breaking the cycle of persistent intergenerational poverty.

In terms of current educational achievement of students, graduation rates of students across the region vary widely, but also frequently underperform the statewide average. As of the 2019 College and Career Ready Performance Index issued by the Georgia Department of Education, only three school systems graduated more students within four years than the statewide on-time graduation rate of 82.6 percent. Westside High School had the lowest graduation rate of any traditional high school within the region at only 70.4 percent, even though this rate is a 15.4 percent increase from previous years. Table 17 provides more detailed information.

As alluded to earlier, the low graduation rates within the region not only lessen the educational attainment of the whole populace but also leads to the challenge of large numbers of disconnected youth, that is, individuals aged 18-24 who are neither enrolled

in school nor participating in the labor force. This presents greater challenges for the years ahead.

Table 16 -- 4-Year Graduation Rate by School and District

System Name	School Name	Graduation Rate
Baldwin County	Baldwin High School	84.8%
Crawford County	Crawford County High School	70.7%
Houston County	Veterans High School	95.2%
	Houston County High School	95.7%
	Perry High School	90.4%
	Northside High School	80.9%
	Warner Robins High School	88.6%
	<i>All Houston County Schools</i>	<i>88.8%</i>
Jones County	Jones County High School	87.0%
Macon-Bibb County	Howard High School	85.4%
	Central High School	85.5%
	Westside High School	75.0%
	Rutland High School	81.4%
	Northeast High School	81.7%
	Southwest High School	74.3%
	<i>All Macon-Bibb County Schools</i>	<i>80.7%</i>
Monroe County	Mary Persons High School	91.0%
Peach County	Peach County High School	84.1%
Pulaski County	Hawkinsville High School	94.4%
Putnam County	Putnam County High School	90.6%
Twiggs County	Twiggs County High School	76.2%
Wilkinson County	Wilkinson County High School	93.9%
Statewide	All Public Schools	83.7%

Source: Georgia Dept. of Education, 2021 College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)

Analysis of Employment Barriers

These challenges work together in ways that build significant barriers to employment and increase the probability of young children and adults remaining trapped in poverty like their parents before them. A major barrier to employment for these residents is obtaining education and job skills. Increasingly, the high school diploma is required for almost any job, and the bachelor’s degree has become the standard for high-paying jobs. In many impoverished communities of the region, educational attainment is very low, leaving the individuals living there with few employment options. Targeted responses to help residents acquire a GED or equivalent certification can play a significant role in beginning the transition of residents from poverty into self-sustainment. With that said, this is often

only the first step, and additional training programs and certificates that allow individuals to earn credit toward technical college certifications or an associate degree are invaluable to many job seekers. The presence of Central Georgia Technical College and Oconee Fall Line Technical College is a significant asset for adult education students throughout the region.

However, beyond the skills and education gap, many of the residents who are out of work may also have barriers like finding reliable childcare or transportation. For these individuals to benefit from the resources of the job training programs offered throughout the region, they may also need to find or be provided connections to other social services that can help them overcome other obstacles between them and gainful employment. Taken together, many challenges remain for the development of the region's human capital in the workforce. Most significantly, this includes addressing lagging educational attainment and a skills gap within the workforce while simultaneously identifying and overcoming obstacles that may prevent an individual from reaching his or her fullest potential.

- d. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**

Several different organizations undertake Workforce Development activities to address the needs of both job seekers and employers. This section includes an analysis of the activities.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Jobseekers and employers in Region 6 are served by two Workforce Development Areas for WIOA-funded services:

- Macon-Bibb County job seekers and employers are served by the Middle Georgia Regional Commission in Workforce Development Area 10.
- Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson County job seekers and employers are served by the Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. in Workforce Development Area 11.

Services made available include all services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which focuses on (1) comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, (2) individual employment plans to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participants to achieve employment goals, (3) group counseling, individual counseling, and career planning, (4) case management for participants seeking training services, (5) short-term prevocational services that include,

development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training for those who lack occupational credential/certification and require short-term continuing education in order to acquire certification/credentialing required for success in growing industries.

Employment Services

The Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) provides essential employment services to job seekers through the three career centers located in Region 6. Individuals receive career services through Unemployment Insurance and Wagner-Peyser funded activities, including skills assessment, job search, and placement assistance. If an individual needs training services to gain employment, they are referred to the appropriate core partner.

The VECTR Center (Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center) is a resource available to Veterans in Georgia and is a partnership between the Technical College System of Georgia and Central Georgia Technical College. The Center opened in August 2016 and focuses on the unique employment needs of military personnel, Veterans and their family members.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Education, employment, and training services provided by Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) include a variety of individual services to persons with disabilities in preparation for employment in the competitive labor market and to employers seeking to retain valuable employees with disabilities or hire qualified individuals. Services provided to jobseekers include counseling, assistive technology, job placement, vocational assessment, medical evaluations, work adjustments, and physical restoration services. Services focused on employer activities include candidate identification, jobsite coaching, helping employers identify the right solutions/accommodations for employees to be effective on the job through onsite job assessments, and providing technical support and training on those accommodations to ensure long-term success.

Adult Education

Adult education services in Region 6 are provided by Central Georgia Technical College (CGTC) in all counties except Wilkinson. Oconee Fall Line Technical College (OFLTC) serves Wilkinson County. Services include basic skills remediation, GED preparation classes, GED Testing, TABE Testing, Volunteer tutoring, and English as a Second Language; Civics and Citizenship; Online; Hybrid; Fast Track; Family Literacy; Life Skills; Financial Literacy; Job Skills; and Work Ethics classes. CGTC and OFLTC also partner with various organizations including, Certified Literate Community Programs, DFCS (TANF and SNAP), Head Start, Housing Authorities, Family Connections, and Georgia Departments of Corrections and Labor.

Community Workforce Partners

Legacy Link Area Agency on Aging (AAA) offers Senior Community Service Employment Program job placement opportunities to older Americans looking for employment in all 11 counties in Workforce Region 6. While, Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (EOC) provides employment and training services to TANF applicants and recipients. Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia & the CSRA, a community-based, non-profit, provides education, training and employment to job seekers and staffing and training options to employers.

Assessment of Services

Strengths of Services

- The utilization of common regional boundaries between the Department of Labor, WIOA, and Vocational Rehabilitation, which also align with Georgia's Economic Development regions has enhanced the ability to coordinate services and to share information across complementary program areas.
- The VECTR Center in Region 6 places appropriate resources and emphasis on the large veteran population living in the region.
- The workforce development partnerships with Legacy Link AAA, Macon-Bibb EOC, and Goodwill contribute to the capacity building of training and employment opportunities in Middle Georgia.

Weakness / Challenges of Services

- Separate data systems are operated by the core partners in Region 6. This condition makes coordination and information sharing unnecessarily challenging.
- The full implementation of WIOA will provide an expanded approach to workforce development with a shared understanding of customer service and performance.

Capacity of Services

The Workforce Development system of Region 6 not only has the capacity to achieve the vision outlined in this plan, but it also has the desire to thrive. While some items are out of the region's control e.g., separate data systems, the core partners are committed to collaborating and developing solutions for information sharing.

- e. **Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.**

Vision

A thriving Middle Georgia where workforce development programs are aligned with economic development priorities, industry workforce needs and education, and training programs to support economic growth and self-sufficiency.

Goals

- i. Create and maintain a unified workforce system that connects services available through core partners to individuals and industry.
 - ii. Utilize regional labor market and education data and technology to inform and guide workforce development decisions.
 - iii. Increase the value of the working system as a tool for employers by providing relevant business services.
 - iv. Increase jobseekers’ access to literacy, basic education, and basic workplace skills necessary for educational, and career advancement and services to reduce or eliminate barriers.
 - v. Serve as the convener of economic development stakeholders to connect individuals, educational systems, and employers.
 - vi. Develop and/or refine performance accountability measures to ensure the attainment of workforce development program goals.
- f. **Taking into account the analyses described in the previous sections, provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.**

To achieve the vision and goals outlined above, Region 6 will coordinate programs and align resources through the following strategies:

- Establishment of regular meetings of core partners to share information, address concerns, and discuss best practices.

- Coordination of Workforce Development Board meetings to facilitate information sharing and to avoid scheduling conflicts that would limit the ability of partners to participate.
- Participation in the Middle Georgia Economic Alliance (MGEA) to share information with the region’s economic development organizations in a collaborative manner.

3. Description of Strategies and Services

Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.

a. How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?

Employers are the foundation of the workforce development programs in Region 6 – without employers, there is no need for employees. However, without a qualified workforce, the region cannot attract employers. Therefore, employers must be fully engaged in the workforce development system and the avenues for their engagement must be accessible and relevant.

To accomplish this engagement, Region 6 will:

- Participate in business associations such as chambers of commerce and human resource groups.
- Establish partnerships with industry groups to identify effective programs that will address workforce challenges.
- Conduct workshops and information sessions to explain services available to employers in the region. These workshops may be in collaboration with the UGA Small Business Development Center and other resources.
- Continue to work with the Middle Georgia HDCI Sector Partnership program that utilizes the resources available to expand work-based learning programs, including incumbent worker training and on-the-job training.

In addition, the LWDAs’ in the region work with the Middle Georgia Economic Alliance which consist of an Economic Development representative from each of the 11 counties in the region, as well as the Georgia Departments of Labor in Baldwin, Houston, and Macon-Bibb counties receiving input regarding occupations in demand in the areas and training needs in preparation to become job-ready.

- b. How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area’s workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.**

COVID note: Per JobEQ, two ways businesses historically have controlled cost and mitigated uncertainty during recessions are by adopting automation and redesigning work processes, which reduce the share of jobs involving mainly routine tasks. At the onset of COVID-19 many warehouses, grocery stores, call centers, and manufacturing plants deployed Automation and AI to reduce workplace density and cope with surges in demand. LWDA 10 and 11 will work with businesses to ensure their current and future workforce can keep up with the demands in Automation and AI.

It is expected that the largest negative impact of the pandemic to be experienced in the food service and customer sales and service roles, as well as less-skilled office support roles. The McKinsey Global Institute Analysis Report expects that jobs in warehousing and transportation may increase as a result of the growth in e-commerce and the delivery economy, but those increases are unlikely to offset the disruption of many low-wage jobs. Demand for workers in the healthcare and STEM occupations may grow more than before the pandemic, reflecting increased attention to health as populations age.

Employer services are currently provided through the workforce areas’ designated OneStop and affiliate sites and will continue to be provided as such in the future. In recognition that employers in Region 6 regularly communicate that there is a high degree of daytime migration in the region, Workforce Development Area 10 and 11 have a coordinated suite of services available to businesses. Some services are provided directly with the workforce development staff; others are provided through partnerships (such as Industry Fundamentals). Available services include:

- General information for businesses includes: orientation to the OneStop system for businesses, labor market information, performance information, regulatory information, ADA compliance and accommodation information, unemployment information, labor law information and referral, federal bonding, and tax credit information.
- Employee recruitment services including: job fairs, interview space, application processing, screening, and testing.
- Downsizing/lay-off services: rapid response; out-placement assistance, UI filing assistance.
- Work-based learning programs including on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, customized training, work-experience, and Industry Fundamentals.

Businesses and organized labor representatives serve on both Workforce Development Boards and contribute to the development of workforce services strategies by regularly

attending workforce board meetings, actively participating in the discussions and voting on how these services are made available to the business community.

- c. How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies.**

In Region 6, economic development partners are as follows: Development Authority of the City of Milledgeville and Baldwin County, Crawford County Development Authority, Houston County Development Authority, Development Authority of Jones County, Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority, Development Authority of Monroe County, Development Authority of Peach County, Hawkinsville-Pulaski Economic Development, Putnam Development Authority, Development Authority of the City of Jeffersonville and Twiggs County, and Development Authority of Wilkinson County.

As the economy grows and presents opportunities for business expansion and increases the need for additional skilled workers, economic development and WIOA partners are in constant communication discussing new businesses moving into the area, staffing needs, and the general economic conditions of the region.

Workforce Development staff regularly attend Development Authority meetings and interact with the professional economic development staff. In addition, since 2012, the 11 counties of Region 6 have cooperated through the Middle Georgia Economic Alliance (MGEA). This group is focused on the marketing of the entire region as the location of choice for industrial prospects. During the regular MGEA meetings, workforce development issues are discussed and opportunities for engagement are explored. The economic development professionals from the region who compose MGEA are actively engaged in the current sector strategies that Middle Georgia is focused on.

Currently, the 2017 Region 6's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), is being updated as required by the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. This planning effort is being led by the Middle Georgia Regional Commission and incorporated workforce development strategies.

Workforce Development staff will continue to coordinate and collaborate with economic development by attending meetings where new and existing employer needs are identified, discussed, and formulate actions to support the workforce mission.

- d. How will the area strengthen linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?**

Workforce Development and GDOL staff together work closely, on a daily basis, to re-employ individuals as quickly as possible as it fits their career plan. Workforce

Development staff regularly participate in One-Stop partner information sessions at the Career Centers. As implementation of WIOA continues, Region 6 conducts regular meetings of core partners to share information and develop strategies that maximize the resources of all programs. Region 6 is in full compliance with the state and federal mandates and established a fully integrated One-Stop system; with comprehensive, affiliate, and specialized centers. The Comprehensive One-Stops are located within the GDOL Career Centers, which provide customers access to a fully integrated system with a direct linkage to core partners and programs.

4. Regional Service Delivery

- a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements.**

LWDA 10 and 11 have a Career and Case Management Contract that allows all students attending Central Georgia Technical College to receive career/individualized/supportive/training/ and follow-up services at all campuses in Region 6. Both LWDA's have adopted the same WIOA eligibility application process to reduce redundancy and confusion for participants and standardized the intake process for participants requesting assistance through WorkSource Georgia.

The two workforce areas have adopted a common OJT policy and contract and are currently in the process of developing a joint IWT and ETPL policy. Furthermore, the two areas will continue to coordinate daily on activities and services to adopt regional policies to support both employers and job seekers.

- b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs.**

LWDA 10 and 11 are sharing administrative cost for a position at Central Georgia Technical College. This person will be responsible for managing WIOA participants at the college coming from all over the region.

- c. Describe plans for coordination of eligibility documentation and participant outreach.**

LWDA 10 and 11 - Career and Case Management contract allows all students attending Central Georgia Technical College to receive career/individualized/supportive/training/ and follow-up services at all campuses in Region 6. Both LWDA's have adopted the same WIOA eligibility application process to reduce redundancy and confusion for participants and standardized the intake process for participants requesting assistance through WorkSource Georgia.

d. Describe plans for coordination of work-based learning contracts such as OJT, IWT, CT, and Registered Apprenticeships

LWDA 10 and 11 consistently work seamlessly to place jobseekers with employers on work-based learning contracts. LWDA 10 and 11 have regional OJT contracts to allow all jobseekers in Region 6 to take advantage of all work-based learning opportunities. Additionally, Incumbent Worker Training and Customized Training participants are employed by companies within Region 6 thus, all participants are qualified through LWDA 10 or 11 with the same eligibility application and guidelines. If a participant resides outside of Region 6, coordination is made with the participant's LWDA to allow the participant an opportunity to participate in work-based learning in Region 6. Registered Apprenticeship programs are funded through Individual Training Accounts according to each LWDA's Memorandum of Understandings with the training provider.

5. Sector Strategy Development

Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.

a. Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

Based on the results released in 2018 from the Sector Partnership-National Emergency Grant (SP-NEG), the Middle Georgia region is focused on the Advanced Manufacturing sector for the current HDCI grant. The current grant began in September of 2019 and will conclude June of 2023. MGEA Works, which is a new entity based on the original MGEA group, is leading the effort for the region to focus on this sector.

Partners for the Needs Assessment included, but were not limited to:

- Middle Georgia Regional Commission
- Middle Georgia Consortium
- Georgia Department of Labor
- Georgia Department of Economic Development Workforce Division
- Georgia Department of Economic Development Global Commerce Division
- Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG)
- Industry Representatives
- Local Economic Development Professionals
- Central Georgia Technical College
- Middle Georgia State University
- K-12 Education
- CTAE Directors
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.

The first meeting for the current HDCI grant for MGEA Works was held on September 4, 2019. Since that first meeting, regular meetings have been held monthly either in person or through virtual measures. Engagement from the region has been extremely positive as each meeting has had at least nine member communities in attendance if not all members as well as statewide partners. The focus of MGEA Works has been focused on three main components that in its simplest form is working to build a bridge between industry partners and local K-12 education institutions. The main focus has been the following:

- i. **Workforce Surveys:** In the first five months, MGEA Works conducted 44 workforce surveys with Advanced Manufacturing firms in 10 of the 11 communities in the region. These in-person surveys have provided valuable insight into what is needed for the companies to be successful and what our educators need to focus on to provide the right pipeline of employees.
- ii. **Externships:** An additional goal was to establish a two-day externship program where local educators would be able to shadow industry partners during the summer of 2020. MGEA Works' initial goal was to have 15 opportunities available for this program. After meetings with industry partners, MGEA Works was able to secure 24 externship opportunities and multiple companies agreed to additional partnerships which would bring the total to 45 for the summer of 2020.
- iii. **Work-Based Learning:** As more meetings with industry partners occurred, the desire and willingness to have students working in their facility in a work-based learning setting began to grow. Through much discussion, MGEA Works set up opportunities with 27 companies to participate with their local Career Academies to engage students.

The stakeholders for MGEA Works are engaged with monthly meetings and are providing positive feedback and direction concerning where the focus needs to be placed.

c. Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sector's strategies training.

Research information and data used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors' strategies training was from Burning Glass (Labor Insight Job) and GDOL (Growth

Occupations, High LQ Occupations, Largest Occupations, Growth Industries, High LQ Industries, and Largest Industries).

d. Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:

- i. **Participating employers:** Academy Sports, Aspen Products, BASF – Edgar Plant, Blue Bird, C&T Industrial Machine Shop, Chem-Tex, Clean Control, Cosmo Cabinets, Elliot Machine Shop, Encore, Five Points Services, Inc., Frito-Lay, Green Machine, Head Heating & Air, HSM Manufacturing, Ka-Min, M&J Saws, Martin-Marietta, Mid-State RV Center, Nichiha, Parrish Construction, Sandler, Sellers Construction, Triumph Aerostructures, UFP Eatonton, Inc., Zschimmer & Schwarz
- ii. **Target occupations:** Advanced Manufacturing
- iii. **Training programs:** Work-Based Learning
- iv. **Target Populations:** Youth

e. Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

Building on the success and lessons learned during the launch of the Advanced Manufacturing Sector Strategy, Region 6 will continue to focus on this sector for the near term. The future focus of the Sector Strategy may shift to IT- software development, applications, and cybersecurity work. Through the HDCl program, Region 6 has engaged with Chmura Economics & Analytics for the development of a job seeker/employer portal based on the manufacturing sector.

Additional areas that Region 6 will continue to focus on include:

- i. Work with Monroe County to provide Work-Based Training for Emergency Medical Services.
- ii. Engage with the Health Science Departments at the Middle Georgia State University and Central Georgia Technical College to provide students with ITA support for in-demand fields such as Registered Nursing, Practical Nursing, Respiratory Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Medical Assistance and other high demand Healthcare occupations. Services are provided in multiple counties in the region.
- iii. Provide training for Commercial Driver License (CDL) through the Technical Colleges and local private business, Truck Driver Institute, to help with the growing demand for professional drivers.
- iv. Develop pre-apprenticeship and teacher externship experiences for the advanced manufacturing sector strategy with partnering businesses.
- v. Create a Houston County Business and Industry Interest Group (BIG) partnership between Houston County Development Authority and advanced manufacturing

and logistics industry leaders to address key employment needs. This collaboration includes an apprenticeship sub-committee with programs that include millwrights, industrial maintenance, and internships with Robins Air Force Base and ANCHOR Glass.

- vi. Host another collaboration between Houston County and Houston Healthcare to sponsor a Youth Summit for 124 tenth grade students interested in the healthcare industry.
- vii. Houston County collaboration with Robins Air Force Base's Air Logistics Complex to sponsor an Aerospace Career Summit for 150 area tenth grade students with interest in this career path.
- viii. Houston County partnership with the College and Career Academy to launch HVAC and Audio-Visual labs to provide first-hand training in these high demand careers.
- ix. Houston County collaborative partnership between the Development Authority, Board of Commissioners, Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex, and school system to open the Synergy Innovation Center for new software engineering.
- x. Collaborative partnership between Twiggs County and Mercer University School of Medicine for future planning for expanded medical facilities.
- xi. Collaborative partnership between Peach County and Central Georgia Technical College for workforce development and training opportunities with area businesses (Blue Bird).

6. Description of the One-Stop Delivery System

Provide a description of the One-Stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

- a. Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.**

The One-Stop Partners Committee has been established to engage partners, along with community-based and faith-based organizations, in providing a streamlined approach to the delivery of services to assist job seekers with overcoming barriers to employment. Monthly meetings are held for partners to share updated information on training and employment-related services, planned events/activities, and best practices or strategies to accomplish meeting customer's needs.

Region 6 will be implementing a quarterly meeting of both Comprehensive One-Stops in Middle Georgia. This will involve both the One-Stop managers and directors (or designated staff) to form lines of communication to address any issues or best practices for the local area and region.

- b. Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.**

All customers will have access to a core set of services at each One-Stop Center designed to provide information to aid in career and employment decisions. Basic, individualized training and support services will be made available on-site and through off-site locations.

All customers may explore work preparation and career development services and have access to information on a wide range of employment, training, and educational opportunities. Services will be made available through a One-Stop Center(s) within the local area and an electronic system convenient to the customer.

The workforce boards in the two local areas plan to provide access to services through the One-Stop delivery system in urban, as well as rural communities using various mediums, such as the internet, telephone access, local media, referrals, and word of mouth. Social media may also be used to provide access to services, as needed. Services at the One-Stop are available to all populations.

The Middle Georgia Consortium partnered with Central Georgia Technical College and Riverbend Correctional Facility in Milledgeville, Georgia to provide Welding Training to inmates who were within six months of being released from prison. A Welding Trailer, provided by the Technical College System of Georgia, was set-up adjacent to the prison to allow participants easy access to training. The program included Introduction to Welding, Basic and Advanced Shielded Metal Arc Welding, and Gas Metal Arc Welding which consisted of 150 hours of training. The training was designed to provide valuable welding skills that will assist participants in gaining meaningful employment post-release, as well as provide a new pipeline of highly skilled professionals for Middle Georgia's welding industry. Students completing the program were eligible for the AWS Weld Test Certification in Shielded Metal Arc and Flux-Cored Metal Arc Welding.

- c. Provide a description of how entities within the One-Stop delivery system, including One-Stop operators and the One-Stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 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. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.**

Through the use of the One-Stop Self-Assessment (which is approved annually by each LWDA board), Region 6 ensures physical and programmatic accessibility in compliance

with WIOA § 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In addition, the staff is trained on the resource(s) available to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

LWDA 10 and 11 One-Stop facilities are designed and constructed to be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities. Some of those accommodations are as follows:

1. Handicap accessible entrances (i.e., ramps, rails, automated passageways, accessible doorways and walkways to accommodate mobility devices. etc.)
2. Handicap accessible routes through the One-Stop that makes maneuvering the sites accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities
3. At least one accessible restroom for each sex or a single unisex restroom in each facility
4. Handicap accessible telephones
5. Handicap accessible parking, storage, and alarms
6. Handicap accessible seating
7. Handicap accessible workstations
8. Policies and procedures that allow the use of service animals and mobility devices in all facilities

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency conducts semi-annual training on WIOA § 188 and applicable provisions of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with all One-Stop partners and the One-Stop operator. The Comprehensive One-Stop has jaws assistive technology for the blind, MAGic screen magnification software and scanner readers which can magnify a computer screen for visual impaired, UbiDuo and Text Telephone or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf, Georgia Relay Services, Trackball for those who have physical disabilities with their hands and Google Translate a real-time computer-aided transcription service. During semi-annual training, GVRA staff also inspect the facility with the One-stop partners and the One-Stop Operator to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility.

d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners.

Workforce Development Area 10

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission contributes to the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: Career Development Facilitators talk with and educate the customer on the different types of services located at the GDOL Career Center. Make use of the Internet, flyers, brochures, and other labor market information to assist the customer in making an informed decision in their job search. The Middle Georgia

Regional Commission is required to ensure Customer Flow includes Veterans' Priority of Service. Customer Flow should include a protocol that ensures staff provides priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses.

The youth services provider works with the High School Counselors, Work-based Learning Instructors, and CTAE Directors to ensure the students are knowledgeable about the services WIOA has to offer. Toward the end of the program, the provider also works through these mediums to market the available summer opportunities.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: Collection of information and review of documents completed by customers to identify marketable, transferable skills, personal barriers, education, employment goals, needs, and desires may include a series of aptitude and interest tests to aid in establishing a Customer Service Plan.

Orientation/Informational Services: Conduct individual and group orientations to provide an overview of materials and discuss available services and programs with potential clients through WIOA and other agencies.

Job Search/Job Placement: Refer all customers who have completed training and/or are looking for employment to GDOL, Job Connection, and other agencies.

Follow-Up Services for WIOA: Provide follow-up services for one year on all customers who have completed training that will aid in employee retention and attaining self-sufficiency.

Comprehensive Assessments: Administer the TABE, O*net Interest Profiler, the O*net Work Importance Locator, and YouScience to customers eligible for WIOA services.

Career Counseling/Planning: Make use of the Georgia Workforce System (GWS), GCIS system and other web-based sites to assist with career planning. Work history is assessed, and a service plan developed to accomplish short/long-term goals.

Career Development Facilitator Assistance/Placement/Service Coordination: Conduct on-going monitoring, assessing, and documentation of educational, financial, and other needs of the customer. This may involve referrals to other agencies. Continual assessment of employment needs and barriers in an effort to remove obstacles that prevent customers from becoming self-sufficient and gainfully employed. All services provided will be documented in the customer's file and GWS.

Prevocational Services: Participants in need of life and employability skills training are referred to Mercer University Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) and the Macon Housing Authority's W.I.N.G.S. Program for assistance.

The Georgia Department of Labor contributes to the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: An agency website (www.dol.state.ga.us) will be used for outreach and recruitment to customers via the internet. The website will inform the public about available services and the location of the One-Stop Career Center. JobTV, a scrolling list of local job openings, is broadcast on Cox Cable Public Access channel to inform job seekers about bonafide job opportunities in the area. GDOL will make a full array of self-help services available to customers in the career center resource area, which includes, internet access for job search, training availability research, financial assistance programs, and other employment and training programs. Also available through GDOL are software programs, such as the Job Information System (JIS), Self-Entry Unemployment Insurance Claims, WinWay Resume Maker Program, the Georgia Career Information System (GCIS), and the Mavis Beacon Typing Program. Brochures are available to inform customers of services available from all One-Stop partners, as well as for guidance on various topics, such as helpful job search tips. The brochures are made available to the public in the career center resource area and at staff desks. GDOL will sponsor or participate in career fairs to inform the public about available services. Additional outreach will be accomplished by GDOL marketing staff who visit or contact businesses, local communities, and veterans' organizations. Special outreach and recruitment will be performed by veterans' program staff to inform military veterans, especially disabled veterans, about services available through the One-Stop Center.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: Customers complete a basic assessment of their skills during the initial intake process. Staff provides basic assessment using the O-net Interest Inventory and assessment tools when appropriate or requested by the customer. Individual assessments are conducted to identify customer needs and a customized plan of action is developed. Customers that are not job-ready are referred to job training programs or other supportive services when appropriate.

Orientation/Informational Services: GDOL provides individual and group orientation services to customers to inform them about available services. Customers will receive an overview of all services available through the One-Stop Center. GDOL will maintain information in the One-Stop Center resource area to inform customers about available services, as well as to inform customers about job vacancies, job fairs, community events, and training information. A list of partner services will also be maintained in the resource area to ensure that customers are informed about them. A link at the GDOL website will provide customers with direct access to job and labor market information, economic data, training opportunities, eligible training provider's lists, and other employment and training information.

Job Search/Job Placement: Customers may access the Job Information System (JIS) to perform a self-directed job search using computers and other technology in the resource area of the One-Stop Career Center. GDOL will maintain JIS access on its website to enable customers to select jobs through the Internet on a 24-hour basis from any location. Customers may also complete the employment service registration online to receive referrals to jobs selected. GDOL will provide employment services and job referrals in the One-Stop Center for customers who prefer personal assistance.

Career Counseling/Planning: GDOL staff will provide career guidance to help clients with job choices and career planning. Staff will work with clients to help them identify job choices and whether training is needed to secure them. Interest and aptitude assessment tools will be used when appropriate to help clients identify suitable career goals. When appropriate, a customer service plan will be created to identify steps needed to secure employment in chosen fields of interest. The plan will be completed and maintained in a secured site online using the Georgia Workforce System (GWS), which will enable partner agencies to share access and benefit from the shared information.

Case Management/Service Coordination: Veterans employment program representatives will perform service coordination for veterans of the armed forces, including disabled and Vietnam-era veterans, when it is appropriate. The veterans' program representatives will monitor, assess, and document employment needs and employment barriers in an effort to identify and remove obstacles that prevent veterans from becoming self-sufficient and gainfully employed. All services and coordination of services provided will be documented in the GWS by the veterans' program representative and will be shared electronically with all partners who are providing appropriate services to address the specific needs of the customer.

The Central Georgia Technical College, WIOA Satellite Office contributes to the following Shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: Provide information to local communities and high schools. Be visible for career days. Work with school counselors.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: Provide applications at all available locations; interview potential students

Orientation/Informational Services: Conduct a briefing for applicants on available services, requirements, and procedures.

Job Search/Job Placement: Assist students with web-based search, resumes, and setting appointments based on employer needs and student qualifications.

Follow-Up Services for WIOA: Maintain contact with the employer, inquiring about employment status; contact with the individual about job satisfaction.

Comprehensive Assessments: Testing, assisting with Financial Aid Application, and processing.

Career Counseling/Planning: Plan based on the results of testing; consult with the individual on job market and best course of action per program of study.

Case Management/Service Coordination: Provide consultation, assist with student needs, and monitor academic standing and attendance.

Prevocational Services: See Career Counseling/Planning above.

Adult Education/Literacy Services: Assist clients who need to remediate their academic skills or obtain a GED credential. Provide assessments, monitor academic progress, and advise Adult/Dislocated Worker and Older Youth clients desiring to transition into post-secondary education. Serve as a resource for academic and occupational learning opportunities for youth customers (16 and older).

The Georgia Department of Labor/Vocational Rehab Program agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: Vocational Rehab is available as a resource for other GDOL and partner employees who need Vocational Rehab information or for clients they are seeing who have questions about Vocational Rehab. The Vocational Rehab brochure is provided at the One-Stop front counter.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: Whenever a client is sent to Vocational Rehab by telephone or in-person (after their initial contact with GDOL), the Vocational Rehab Counselor answers their questions, and makes a brief assessment of their needs and then helps them get with the appropriate counselor (if they do not qualify for one of the One-Stop Vocational Rehab caseloads). The Vocational Rehab Counselor gives the information to the Vocational Rehab Supervisor, and he/she makes the actual assignment. If the client is assigned to the visual impairment or mental health caseload, then the Vocational Rehab Counselor sets up an appointment to meet with them and complete the initial application and start the Vocational Rehab process.

Orientation/Information Services: Based on the brief screening the Vocational Rehab Counselor does when the initial contact is made, the Vocational Rehab Counselor can let them know that it would be appropriate to meet with them to discuss Vocational Rehab services or they can be referred to other community resources which might better serve their needs.

Job Search/Job Placement: The Vocational Rehab Counselors, as well as the Rehabilitation Employment Specialist, fully utilize the services of GDOL to help in this area. The Vocational Rehab Counselors access the job listings, talk with GDOL representatives regarding specific jobs and use the resources in the OneStop lobby to help meet the needs of referred clients. The Vocational Rehab Counselors set up appointments with the One-Stop staff for typing and computer tests, and ask clients to come in to complete the registration process in person and assist them with this, as necessary.

Follow-Up Services for WIOA: Vocational Rehab provides 90 days (180 days in the supported employment cases) of follow-up whenever anyone is placed on a job. If the job is not secure at the end of that time, follow-up time is extended. Supported employment continues for the duration of a job.

Comprehensive Assessments: Vocational Rehab utilizes testing available at the OneStop (typing speed, computer proficiency). The Vocational Rehab Counselors also set up a variety of assessments geared to client needs. Some are set up at the OneStop in reserved meeting rooms and some are off-site. These include, but are not limited to, low vision evaluations, Assistive Technology evaluations, psychological evaluations, vocational evaluations, Work Evaluations, etc.

Career Counseling/Planning: This is incorporated into every meeting or phone call with a client. All Vocational Rehab services are geared toward helping someone obtain a job. Having access to the GDOL listings is a tremendous help in this area. There are also other employment and career resources at the One-Stop that have been helping in appropriate planning for the Work Plan document that the Vocational Rehab Counselor must complete.

Case management/Service Coordination: This is done each day. The Vocational Rehab Counselor accomplishes this by using computers for the GROW system to document casework, by internet to research (such as exploring job search sites), by telephone to talk with clients and community resources, by referring clients for services such as Goodwill Industries, etc.

Prevocational Services: Vocational Rehab does this in conjunction with the Rehabilitation Job Readiness Specialist. Together, Vocational Rehab utilizes resources available at the One-Stop (and occasionally reserves meeting rooms to carry this out) to help a client prepare for completing applications and interviews or helping them to prepare a resume (if appropriate, given their job history). In supported employment cases, the Vocational Rehab Counselor is often with them at the time they interview or complete the application to provide additional assistance. This also includes instances where they may need to interview with a GDOL representative for screening purposes.

The Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council (EOC), Inc. agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local OneStop Center (Provide a brief description of service for each):

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: Assess the client's eligibility for programs, take the necessary information, and refer, if necessary.

Orientation/Informational Services: Provide overview materials and discuss services and programs available with potential clients.

Follow-Up Services for WIOA: Provide follow-up from staff to assisted clients.

Case Management/Service Coordination: Case manage a portion of the assisted clients and coordinate other services to assist the families toward self-sufficiency.

The Macon Housing Authority agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in its two (2) local One-Stop Centers, Family Investment Center and Buck Melton Community Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) employment program is only available to adults residing in public housing. Case managers work intensely to conduct outreach and recruitment for residents desiring to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Outreach and recruitment consist of referrals from Resident Service Coordinators in each public housing neighborhood, mass mailings of flyers and fact sheets, printing and distribution of flyers, brochures from various "pick up points," promotional meetings and orientations for new residents, newsletter articles, special events and incentives for current members, and more.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: A Family Self-Sufficiency application and individual assessment make up the initial entry into the program. The individual assessment helps to develop the Individual Training and Service Plan (ITSP) that will help broker the necessary supportive resources for a family member to work toward economic independence. The ITSP includes personal and family goals for education, employment, and welfare-free certification.

Orientation/Informational Services: Family Self-Sufficiency Case Managers provide regular orientations and informational services to aid in the recruitment and outreach to eligible families. These services are the same as outlined in the outreach and recruitment description above.

Job Search/Job Placement: Family Self-Sufficiency Case Managers find it imperative to call directly upon employers, as well as various employment-related services to assist in this area. Macon Housing Authority utilizes the expertise and resources of the

Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Mercer Education Opportunity Center, Goodwill Job Connection, and area employers to help connect residents with job search and placement services.

Case Management/Service Coordination: Macon Housing Authority strives to provide a joint case management approach to servicing all families, regardless of specific programs. It also strives to utilize interdepartmental functions and personnel to start the process internally as it relates to housing stability status and provide and coordinate essential services throughout its housing developments, the Family Investment Center, and the Buck Melton Community Center, for the ease, convenience, and accessibility of families to case management services. Families participating in special programs are required to make regular contact with case managers who in turn maintain data in a comprehensive electronic tracking system that generates thorough progress and service needs reports to continue to broker resources to help the family moving forward.

The Dynamic Educational Systems (Job Corps) contributes to the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: Hang posters, arrange appointments, and receive phone calls in response to Job Corps.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral: Discuss with potential participants their criminal background, need for GED or skills training, initiate the Job Corps application process, or refer to another agency based on assessment results. Assist applicants in selecting a Job Corps center.

Orientation/Informational Services: Inform interested parties of the services provided by the Job Corps and explain the occupational areas and conduct seminars on Job Corps Services.

The Division of Family and Children Services - The goal of the Bibb County Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) Projects is to promote self-sufficiency by providing neighborhood-based empowerment to families who are economically oppressed and/or in need of support services. The Bibb County DFCS's motto is to bring services to people and not isolate services within the walls of the Bibb County DFCS building. Bibb DFCS contributes the following shared services in the local OneStop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment: Bibb County DFCS provides outreach to the community-at-large. Color-coded applications (for tracking purposes) are placed at various public locations within the community. Applications are distributed while customers pick up commodities from EOC. Applications are also received by case managers located at the Medical Center of Central Georgia, Atrium Health Navicent , and River Edge

Behavioral Center. DFCS Staff also volunteer their time to provide outreach at various local venues outside of work hours.

Job Search/Job Placement: Services are provided to customers that apply for or receive TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) benefits. Supportive services are also given to assist with job-related expenses. TANF recipients who acquire a job and are no longer eligible are provided with Job Coaching services for one year after their case is closed.

Comprehensive Assessments: TANF applicants are assessed and evaluated in the areas of literacy level, parenting skills, and mental health. The K-Fast assessment scores the level of reading and math and determines their literacy level. It is also useful in identifying any learning disabilities and the customers' abilities to count money, pay bills, read for understanding and reason. The Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI) is the instrument used to profile five basic constructs of parenting which include inappropriate/appropriate expectations, level of empathy, and belief in corporal punishment, appropriate family roles, values, power, and independence. The mental health diagnosis is achieved through the scores from the Butcher Treatment Planning Inventory. The test scores in five areas, which include depression, anger-out, anger-in, anxiety, and psychosis with a focus on personality, behavior, and learning readiness.

Case Management/Service Coordination: Case Managers are assigned to customers based on their needs and the needs of their families. Bibb County DFCS provides case management/service coordination for benefits programs, i.e. TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid, Childcare, and Snap Programs, i.e. Foster Care, Child Protective Services, Adoptions, etc.

Workforce Development Area 11

The Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment - Recruitment for the Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. will provide these services five days a week by the MGCI Career Facilitators. All partner services will be advertised at this One-Stop office. Recruitment may also be accomplished through newspaper advertisements in all counties targeting individuals who are most in need and who may benefit from training through the Workforce Development System. Public Service Announcements for Television and Radio Stations will also be utilized. Flyers and brochures will be printed and will be placed in conspicuous areas in agencies where the flow of the public is heavily generated, such as the Department of Family and Children Services, Georgia Department of Labor, and other Social Service Agencies, Community-Based Organizations. *Recruitment for the*

Year-Round Youth Program may be accomplished by the same methods. However, High School Counselors, Work-based Learning Instructors, and CTAE Directors are contacted before school closes and made aware of programs and activities being planned for summer activities.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - Initial assessment is done to examine the needs of the customer by collecting information to determine appropriate services. If services are not appropriate for interested customers, proper referrals may be made to agencies who can better serve the customer.

Workshop/Informational Services - Interested WIOA customers are invited to an appropriate workshop briefing explaining how the Workforce Investment System operates and will include information on all partner services and referrals to any service requested. The One-Stop center customers are also allowed to take advantage of the self-service track in the career shop areas. Customers who desire to take the self-service track have an opportunity to conduct a job search on the Internet – preparing a resume - or use the computer equipment available in the career shop. Individuals who want to secure information on training opportunities will be supervised through an assessment process that may include a series of achievement, aptitude, and interest tests by which the Career Facilitator determines whether the customer has marketable or transferable skills. A review of this information allows the Career Facilitator to assess if the customer needs further training to enhance skills or if a new occupation should be sought because of job opportunities in marketable or transferable skills. MGCI's goal is to accurately identify goals, which may be educational, employment, or personal.

Job Search/Job Placement - Customers who participate in the Workforce Investment System are encouraged to apply to the Department of Labor for any type of job search assistance that may be needed. This includes customers who are no longer participating in the Workforce Investment System.

Follow-up Services for WIOA - Customers who are registered as a part of the Workforce Investment System and enter employment will receive follow-up services after they are no longer participating. Contractors/Providers of adult, dislocated worker, and youth services will be responsible for follow-up on their participants for 12 months following the completion of services. Follow-up services for youth may include, but are not limited to, leadership development and supportive service activities; work-related peer support groups; adult mentoring; progress tracking of youth in their educational setting after completion of the work experience component.

Comprehensive Assessments - Customers who are currently enrolled in the General Equivalency Degree Program (GED), vocational school, or college will only be administered an Interest Inventory. Individuals who are not currently attending either

vocational school or college are administered the entire testing process which includes, the Test of Adult Basic Education, Career Scope Aptitude, and Interest Inventory.

Career Counseling/Planning - Career Counseling and planning is a continuous process. MGCI has several computer-generated software programs to assist customers with career planning, such as the Georgia Career Information System. Several other Interest Inventories are available via the Internet. Interest Inventories are completed to identify top interest areas and to assist customers with identifying possible jobs or training occupations. In addition, as a customer of the workforce investment system, a customer service plan is completed along with a Career Facilitator to outline the plans/steps necessary to accomplishing short-term/long-term goals (educational/employment).

Case Management/Service Coordination - Career Facilitators will provide on-going monitoring, assessing, and documenting the educational and financial needs of customers to identify unmet needs. Community resources will also be identified, and referrals made to other agencies when needed. These types of services might avert the unsuccessful completion of training and subsequent job placement.

Prevocational Services - Pre-vocational services will be provided by referring customers to job workshops to improve their employability skills. MGCI staff may facilitate this or referrals may be made to GDOL for job search assistance.

The Georgia Department of Labor agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment - Outreach will be accomplished by the Houston Career Center DOL Services Specialist out-stationed weekly at the Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. One-Stop Center. Recruitment will be the responsibility of the Employment Marketing Representative, who will market One-Stop services through employer contacts, community groups, and government agencies.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - A basic needs assessment will be conducted to determine the appropriate level of services. Customers that move beyond self-help may be asked to complete a Services Request form to collect additional data on services needed and/or preferred. Completion of additional Workforce Development System forms may be required to qualify customers for job referrals, training, and other available services. This information is entered into the state's GWS system.

Orientation/Informational Services - One-on-one and group workshops will be conducted so that the customer can receive an overview of all services available through the One-Stop Center.

Job Search/Job Placement - Customers will have access to the G-I, Georgia's One-Stop Career Center Network, to do a self-directed job search. One-on-one assistance will be provided to ensure that the customers' qualifications match the employers' requirements before a referral is made. Customers choosing not to use the G-I network will be provided job search assistance by DOL staff.

Follow-up Services for WIOA -N/A

Comprehensive Assessments - N/A

Career Counseling/Planning - N/A

Case Management/Service Coordination - N/A

Prevocational Services - N/A

Central Georgia Technical College agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment - Provide informational material such as catalogs, brochures, and financial aid applications and guidelines. Career Facilitators are cross-trained so that each is capable of delivering information regarding the Technical College. Career Facilitators will meet periodically, at least every six months, to ensure that all aspects of case management are up to date.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - Provide applications at all available locations and interview potential students at the recommended site when needed.

Job Search/Job Placement - Assist students with internet-based searches, resumes, and setting appointments based on employer needs and student qualifications.

Follow-up Services for WIOA - Maintain contact with the employer(s) inquiring about employment status and contact with individuals about job satisfaction.

Comprehensive Assessments - All interested WIOA customers must take the placement test administered by the Central Georgia Technical College and or provide SAT or ACT exam scores previously achieved. Individuals may report to any CGTC campus (Macon, Warner Robins, or Milledgeville) testing center for servicing.

Career Counseling/Planning - Based on the result of placement testing, a Career Facilitator will be available to provide guidance and program employment outlook data to assist the customer in selecting the appropriate program of study.

Case Management/Service Coordination - Because of the cross-training provided by the WIOA coordinator and CGTC support services, Career Facilitators are able to provide consultation, assist with student needs, and monitor academic standing and attendance.

Prevocational Services - Refer to Career Counseling/Planning above.

The Meals-On-Wheels agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment - The Meals on Wheels will provide the Middle Georgia Consortium, with available brochures and other information regarding their services.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - N/A
Orientation/Informational Services - N/A
Follow-up Services for WIOA - N/A
Comprehensive Assessments - N/A
Career Counseling/Planning - N/A
Case Management/Service Coordination - N/A
Prevocational Services - N/A

The Telamon Corporation agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment – Cross-training of MGCI staff and placing information about available services into the hands of potential customers by the Telamon Corporation. So that Career Facilitators are providing information from this agency, meetings will take place every six months to make sure all information is up to date.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - As a core service, this will involve the measuring of skill levels, aptitude, and abilities. Supportive service needs are determined during the initial assessment process. The intake process involves the enrollment procedure and determining eligibility for services. Assistance is provided in establishing eligibility for other assistance by way of providing information on eligibility and then referring them to the appropriate agency for the determination of relevant services.

Orientation/Informational Services - Brief explanation of One-Stop services available through Telamon and other partners, as well as how to access the services in accordance with partner requirements and eligibility procedures. Provide customers with an explanation of the follow-up process to include why this process is so important.

Job Search/Job Placement – The ultimate goal of Telamon Corporation is to provide customers with the tools to reach their ultimate goal of employment that provides long-term stability with earnings that enable them to be self-sufficient. Customers will be assisted to enter employment at every stage: Core, Intensive, and Training. The search for employment will involve surfing the Internet and using the G-I system along with traditional media canvassing and cold calls to employers with a ready resume.

Follow-up Services for WIOA - N/A

Comprehensive Assessments - A thorough review of the skill assessment, the development of an objective assessment, and the review of the aptitude and personal interest are performed as part of the comprehensive assessment. The customer's needs, barriers, and attributes are determined at this stage. The development of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) begins and the information acquired from the aforementioned is used as part of its development.

Career Counseling/Planning - The Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is further developed and is an on-going document that maps the way to the customer's employment goal. Along with this process, customers will participate in job readiness exercises and group orientation sessions to strengthen job search success efforts. One-on-one counseling is effective and is scheduled as frequently as needed.

Case Management/Service Coordination - This is the process of confirming the relationship between the customer and the Career Facilitator. The interaction between the two increases and documentation regarding their meetings and communications are kept and maintained confidentially. Case notes are an important part of the case management process and will serve as a chronological log of each activity experienced by, and on behalf of, the customers in an effort to reach his/her employment goal. The case management process is flexible and customer-centered.

Prevocational Services - Includes the provision of English as a Second Language (ESL), acquisition of high school diploma, and Job Search Assistance.

The Job Corps agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment - Brochures and/or posters will be provided regarding the services of The Job Corps. Referrals will be made to the Job Corps center in Macon.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - N/A
Orientation/Informational Services - N/A
Job Search/Job Placement - N/A
Follow-up Services for WIA - N/A
Comprehensive Assessments - N/A
Career Counseling/Planning - N/A
Prevocational Services - N/A

The Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

Outreach/Recruitment - Outreach and recruitment of target population for intensive services will be achieved by the inclusion of partner agency staff in DFCS customer case staffing. DFCS offices will make One-Stop brochures available to customers in lobby areas. Internet access to One-Stop services is available at several DFCS offices. DFCS staff will meet quarterly with One-Stop staff to review DFCS services available.

Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral - DFCS staff will develop a PowerPoint presentation and cross-train One-Stop staff quarterly. Training will familiarize staff with general eligibility requirements for support services such as childcare, transportation, Medicaid, food stamps, and financial assistance available to people who are looking for work. Applications for services will be made available on-site.

Orientation/Informational Services - Brochures and fliers summarizing DFCS support services available to people who are looking for work, the application process for DFCS services, general eligibility criteria, and contact information will be made available in the self-service area and through OneStop staff.

Job Search/Job Placement - N/A
Follow-up Services for WIOA - N/A
Comprehensive Assessments - N/A
Career Counseling/Planning - N/A
Case Management/Service Coordination - N/A
Prevocational Services - N/A

Benefits Received: The parties agree that the benefits to be derived from the above services will be:

- i. increased customer access to programs;
- ii. cost-effective and efficient program delivery;
- iii. improved program retention due to a wider array of support for customers;
- iv. greater customer satisfaction;
- v. non-duplication of services; and
- vi. Strengthened relationships among partner agencies.

- e. **Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.**

Workforce Development Area 10

The Georgia Department of Labor Macon Career Center located at 3090 Mercer University Drive is the Comprehensive One-Stop Career Center for Area 10. After a rigorous selection process, the Workforce Board awarded the Georgia Department of Labor the contract to serve as the One-Stop Operator in July 2021.

In March 2021, the Quality Assurance Committee of the Workforce Board recommended that the location for the One-Stop not be changed. Based on the availability of facilities, generation of foot traffic, and cost, it was deemed the present location meets the current and upcoming needs of the participants. LWDA 10 is working closely with the Georgia Department of Labor Career Center Manager to implement more technology into the intake process which will ultimately improve upon the participant flow.

Workforce Development Area 11

The current One-Stop Operator for WorkSource Middle Georgia Area 11 is In-The-Door LLC. In accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in WIG GA-16-001R, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act WIOA; Final Rule –Subpart D, 2 CFR 200.317-32620, CFR 678.605 WorkSource Middle Georgia Area 11 prepared for the competitive process, selection, and procurement of the One-Stop Operator.

The Middle Georgia Consortium conducted market research by gathering information on eligible entities who may be able to provide One-Stop Operator services nationwide. The bidder's list is constantly updated to ensure a comprehensive bidder's list is maintained. The bidder's list is also reviewed to ensure it is up to date and extensive and that it includes both local and non-local eligible entities, including non-profit as well as for-profit agencies.

The Middle Georgia Consortium conducted a request for information in accordance with the requirement in WIG GA-16-001R. Information was required from the bidders in the following areas:

The Middle Georgia Consortium conducted a request for information in accordance with the requirement in WIG GA-16-001R. Information was required from the bidders in the following areas:

- i. How they will work to incorporate all partners into the comprehensive One-Stop. This discussion must include partners who are electronically present in the comprehensive OneStop.
- ii. How the proposed One-Stop operations will fit into their organizational chart and whether current or newly hired staff would be providing the services. They were also directed to provide resumes of current staff or titles and jobs. descriptions/posting for any new positions.
- iii. How they would describe their customer service experience and discuss any experience with handling complaints and/or concerns from customers. Other required experience includes oversight of staff teams and experience in developing and delivering technical assistance.
- iv. How they would be able to propose outcome measures that effectively capture and evaluate their efficacy and system effectiveness: including a proposed data collection and validation methodology, as well as a proposed reporting method.
- v. How would they ensure all partner agencies are collaborating and cooperating in the implementation of the partner programs; including discussions on both training for the One-Stop operator staff and cross-training for the partner-program staff. Capacity-building experience would also be relevant to this discussion.
- vi. How they would discuss and bring together the partner programs to ensure adequate outreach of the One-Stop center and demonstrate a thorough understanding of target populations for partner programs. This includes how they will take ownership/leadership in ensuring all partners are contributing to the center, both financially, as well as through resources and staff time.
- vii. How they would comply with all federal/state/local regulations, as well as provide oversight to ensure that all partner agencies are also in compliance.

The Middle Georgia Consortium also conducted a cost and price analysis as part of that preparation. This process is outlined in the local procurement policy.

7. *Awarding Sub-Grants and Contracts*

Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.

Workforce Development Area 10

From time-to-time, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC), on behalf of the Macon-Bibb Workforce Development Board, may issue a request for proposals to solicit competitive proposals for the delivery of services under WIOA. WIOA does not set forth any specific procurement requirements outside of the procurement standards set forth in the OMB's Part 200- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards ("Super Circular"). Those standards are incorporated into the MGRC Procurement Policy adopted on November 10, 2016.

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission:

- Utilizes a Request for Proposals (RFP) approach for the procurement of adult, dislocated workers, and youth services. Assuming successful performance in each year of the contract, solicitation of proposals occurs every three years.
- Utilizes a Request for Proposals (RFP) approach for the procurement of a One-Stop operator in accordance with state guidelines.

The Macon-Bibb Workforce Development Board (LWDB) participates in the procurement process with MGRC. Members of the LWDB Quality Assurance Committee lead the following activities related to sub-grant and competitive procurement process:

- Provide/Review RFP document content.
- Assess proposals submitted in response to RFPs and make recommendations to the full board to approve/select a winning bid.
- Provide/Review content for contracts and related scope of work details.

Workforce Development Area 11

The Middle Georgia Consortium:

All procurement transactions must be conducted in a manner that promotes full and open competition. To ensure objective contractor performance and to eliminate an unfair competitive advantage, persons who draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing

for such procurements. There are five methods specified in 2 CFR §200.320 in which goods and services may be procured:

- **Micro-purchase:** Procurement by micro-purchase is the acquisition of supplies or services, the aggregate dollar amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold (§200.67 Defined at §200.67 // Set by FAR 48 CFR Subpart 2.1 Threshold is currently \$3,000). To the extent practicable, the Consortium will distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations as long as the Consortium considers the price to be reasonable.

- **Small Purchase:** This is an informal method for the purchase of services, supplies, or other property. This procedure can only be used if the price of the deliverable is the overriding factor and can easily be compared to analogous goods/services. Price or rate quotations must be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources prior to award; however, competitive bidding is not required for small purchases if under the simplified acquisition threshold (defined at §200.88 // Set by FAR 48 CFR Subpart 2.1 and ICW 41 U.S.C. 1908. the Federal threshold for small purchases is \$150,000).

- **Sealed Bids (above the Simplified Acquisition Threshold):** This is a method in which bids are publicly solicited and procurements are awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. Sealed Bid procurements will be firm-fixed-price contracts; either as a lump sum or by unit price. Before selecting sealed bids as a preferred method of procurement, the Consortium will ensure the three following conditions are present: a complete, adequate, and realistic purchase description is available, two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete, and the procurement selection can be determined based principally on price. If conditions are present, the following requirements apply if sealed bids are to be used:
 - i. The invitation for bids will be publicly advertised with sufficient response time, at least 30 days, and bids shall be solicited from an adequate number of suppliers.
 - ii. The invitation for bids, which will include specifications and relevant attachments, shall define the goods or services for the bidder to properly respond;
 - iii. All bids will be publicly opened at the time and place prescribed in the invitation for bids;
 - iv. A firm-fixed-price contract award will be made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; and

- v. Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason;
 - vi. A Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Profit Analysis will be performed.
- **Competitive Proposals (above the Simplified Acquisition Threshold):** The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. If this method is used, the following requirements apply:
 - i. RFPs must be publicized for at least 30 days and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance.
 - ii. Proposals must be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources;
 - iii. Methods must be in place for conducting technical evaluations such as (pre-award risk assessment, profit analysis, etc.) of the proposals received before selecting awardees;
 - iv. Contracts must be awarded to the responsible proposal which is most advantageous to the program, with the price and other factors being considered.
 - **Noncompetitive Proposals (Sole Source any dollar amount, but usually above the micro-purchase threshold):** This procurement method is the solicitation of goods/services from a single source, or after the solicitation of more than one sources, competition is deemed inadequate. Sole source procurement may be awarded only if one of the following criteria is met:
 - i. The good/service is only available from one source;
 - ii. After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate, typically due to insufficient bids;
 - iii. Through a formal request from the state, the Consortium may authorize a noncompetitive proposal.

A public emergency will not allow or delay the competitive solicitation process. Noncompetitive proposals are considered a “last resort” option and caution should be exercised before implementing this procurement method. If planning to use this method, the Consortium must notify the state in advance.

8. *EEO and Grievance Procedures*

Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

The name, title, and telephone number of the Equal Opportunity Officer for Title I-funded activities for Region 6, Area 10 is:

Laura Mathis, Executive Director
Middle Georgia Regional Commission
175 Emery Highway, Suite C
Macon, GA 31217
(478) 751-6160

The name, title, and telephone number of the Equal Opportunity Officer for Title I-funded activities for Region 6, Area 11 is:

MGCI EEO Officer: -Kerry Scarboro
Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc.
124 Osigian Blvd., Suite A
Warner Robins, GA 31088
(478) 953-4771

Both workforce development areas have adopted EEO and Grievance Policies. The policies are designed to ensure that all contractors, employees, as well as individuals applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, are treated fairly.

For a General Complaint, if any individual, group, or organization has a complaint, the problem should first be discussed informally between those involved before a grievance is filed. Grievances should be filed in accordance with the written procedures established by MGRC or MGCI and respective Local Workforce Development Boards.

For an EO Complaint; both workforce development areas adhere to the following United States law: "No individual shall be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any such program because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation, belief or citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States." References include the following: USDOL Regulations Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

If any organization, employee, participant, or individual lodges a complaint, and an informal discussion of the issue has taken place, a formal complaint may be filed. If a formal complaint is filed, a hearing is conducted within 30 days of its filing and a written decision is rendered no later than 60 days after the filing. If a written decision is not rendered in 60 days of the filing or the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, then the grievance is forwarded to the next level.

LOCAL BOARDS AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

1. Local Boards

Provide a description of the board that includes the components listed below.

- a. Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g))

Workforce Development Area 10 Nomination Process

The Bylaws of the Macon-Bibb Workforce Development Board outline a process by which board members are identified, nominated, and appointed. A Nominating Committee is in place as a standing committee to make nominee recommendations to the Chair, who in turn makes recommendations to the CLEO. Once the Nominating Committee identifies nominations, they are submitted to the Workforce Development Board Chair. The Chair, in consultation with the Nominating Committee, reviews nominations and confirms the eligibility of the nominee(s). After confirming eligibility of all acceptable candidates, the Chair shall present the name(s) of a recommended nominee(s) for a position to the CLEO for review and appointment.

Workforce Development Area 11 Nomination Process

The Formal Agreement Among Chief Elected Executive Officials describes the process used to appoint the Middle Georgia Workforce Development Board. The Chief Elected Executive Officials receive a compiled list of nominations from the Workforce Development Board Chairman, in consultation with local area businesses and chambers of commerce from the local area, to appoint members to the Workforce Development Board. The Executive Director presents the nominations to the CLEO for review and appointment.

Region 6 Workforce Development Board Categories

The Workforce Development Boards for both areas consist of representatives from the following categories as outlined in WIOA:

Business Representatives

Representatives of business and industry are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, and other business executives or employers. They represent businesses, or organizations representing businesses, that provide employment opportunities, which include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

Workforce Representatives

Representatives of labor organizations are nominated by local labor federations and may be members of a labor organization, or a training director from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or representatives of an apprenticeship program. Representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans, or that provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; or they represent organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth.

Education and Training Representatives

Representatives may be eligible providers administering adult education and literacy activities under Title II, or institutions of higher education providing workforce activities (including technical colleges); or local educational agencies, and of community-based organizations with demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the education or training needs of individuals with barriers to employment.

Government and Economic Development Representatives

Representatives are from economic and community development entities; or a Georgia employment service office under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); or programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than Section 112 or Part C of that Title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741), or agencies or entities administering programs serving the local area relating to transportation, housing, and public assistance; or philanthropic organizations serving the region.

b. Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.

Workforce Development Area 10 Orientation Process

Workforce Development staff has developed a new board member handbook that includes the budget, summary of programs, a copy of the current workforce plan, and other reference material. Orientation is conducted in one-on-one sessions with the Workforce Development Director and the Chair of the Workforce Development Board. The board meetings are also used to help board members understand programs and initiatives.

Workforce Development Area 11 Orientation Process

Workforce Development staff has developed an Orientation Manual that includes Government Issues, Workforce Services to Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth, Liabilities/Ethics, Board Resources, and By-laws. Orientation is conducted by the Executive Director.

- c. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).**

Both Workforce Boards include representatives from the economic development organizations which provide an opportunity for coordination. In addition, Workforce Development staff will regularly engage with economic development partners to develop new programs or initiatives that will meet the changing needs of employers.

- d. Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.**

In Workforce Development Area 10, the Board meets every other month on Tuesday. The meeting agenda includes reports on WIOA activities and performance. In the “off months” between Board meetings, Committee meetings are held.

In Workforce Development Area 11, there are six regularly scheduled meetings per year. The Board meets every other month on Tuesdays, with the first meeting beginning in August of the new program year. Reports on WIOA activities and performance are provided at each Board meeting.

2. Local Board Committees

Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

Workforce Development Area 10 Committees

The Bylaws adopted December 12, 2017, establish committees necessary and appropriate to ensure maximum policy and oversight of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services and activities.

- **Executive Committee** consists of the chairpersons designated for each standing committee and the officers of the Board. The function of the Executive Committee is to ensure that the leadership of the Workforce Board is well-informed on WIOA operations.
- **Budget and Finance Committee** develops the proposed annual budget and monitors financial activity to ensure adequate funding to cover all expenditures.

- **Employer Partnerships Committee** facilitates relationships with employers in order to ensure that workforce development services align with current business needs.
- **Quality Assurance Committee** focuses on the OneStop delivery system, rapid response, and operating policies.
- **Public Relations Committee** develops and publishes success stories and marketing of workforce development services.
- **Youth Committee** ensures that Macon-Bibb County youth have access to resources which enable them to develop the academic and technical skills necessary for obtaining a high school diploma, career-oriented employment, and/or post-secondary education, and provide oversight of the policies and procedures for diversifying funding, support resources, and unmet needs of program participants. The Youth Committee recommends eligible providers of youth activities to be awarded grants or contracts on a competitive basis by the Board to carry out the youth activities.
- **Nominating Committee** recommends officers for the Board and makes recommendations to the CLEO on possible appointments to the Board.

Workforce Development Area 11 Committees

Workforce Area 11 established two standing committees; however, the Board reserves the right to establish ad hoc committees as necessary to support its mission. The following local board committees were established and certified by the Workforce Board effective June 28, 2022.

- **Youth Committee.** The function of the Youth Committee is to provide information and to assist in the planning, operations, and addressing issues relating to the provisions of youth. The Committee identifies eligible providers of youth services and makes recommendations to the local board to grant awards. The Committee also ensures procurement to secure youth services, and ensures that WIOA youth service providers meet the referral requirements for all youth participants, each of the required 14 youth elements is available to youth participants, 75 percent of state and local youth funding is for out-of-school youth and at least 20 percent of youth funds are used for work experiences, such as summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, OJT, or internship, and job shadowing.
- **One-Stop and Individuals with Disabilities Committee.** The function of the One-Stop and Individuals with Disabilities Committee is to provide information, assist in the planning, operational, and addressing issues relating to the provisions of the One-Stop centers. Additionally, the committee assists with issues relating to the provisions of services to individuals with disabilities and compliance with Section 188 of the American with Disabilities Act. The current One-Stop Committee will serve as the One-Stop Implementation Team, which will ensure the continuing implementation of One-Stop system activities. The Committee will oversee the process of developing Memorandums of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreements with the

required One-Stop partners, be the source of regular information about the local One-Stop System and its operations to the Board and other committees. The Committee will further ensure that the system provides comprehensive services in a seamless, integrated, effective, and efficient manner; ensure that knowledgeable, skilled One-Stop staff delivers high-quality services resulting in high levels of customer satisfaction; and ensure that the system meets or exceeds performance standards for placement, retention, earnings and job seeker and employer satisfaction.

3. Plan Development

Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30-day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representative of education and input into the development of the local plan.

For the development of the Region 6 Workforce Development Plan, several different approaches will be utilized:

- Communication with Core Partners during development and implementation.
- Distribution of the Region 6 Plan and direct solicitation of comments from the Workforce Development Board, Core Partners, and other stakeholders.
- Publication of the Region 6 Plan on websites with an email to receive all feedback; www.middlegeorgiarc.org, www.worksourcemaconbibb.org and www.mgwib.com
- Promotion of the availability of the Region 6 Plan on Twitter and Facebook.
- Development of a presentation of the plan highlights to be used for speaking engagements.
- Conduct informational/listening sessions regularly with board members, core partners, other stakeholders, and the general public.

SERVICE DELIVERY AND TRAINING

1. *Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals*

Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry recognized.

- Both Workforce Development Boards in Region 6 include representation from the core programs, which ensures that all partners are aware of programs and initiatives.
- Region 6 Core Partners Group meets regularly to explore mechanisms to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services and develop recommendations to the Workforce Development Boards.
- Specifically, the Core Partners group will seek opportunities to address barriers to employment in a manner that maximizes resources and eliminates duplication.
- Both Workforce Development Boards in Region 6 are committed to only providing services and programs that provide access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry recognized, and employment.

2. *Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers*

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Region 6 Services

Career services for adults and dislocated workers in Workforce Development Area 10 and 11 includes three levels of services: Basic career services, Individualized career services, and Follow-up services.

Basic Career Services

Basic career services are available and, at a minimum, include the following services:

- Determination of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the One-Stop system
- Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs

- Labor exchange services, including:
 - job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including the provision of information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
 - appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the One-Stop system;
- Provision of referrals to, and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the One-Stop system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
 - job vacancy listings in labor market areas
 - information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
 - information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skills requirements, and opportunities for advancement in those jobs;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and provider type
- Provision of information on how the Workforce Development Area is performing on local performance measures;
- Provision of information on the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including:
 - child care
 - child support
 - medical or child health assistance available through the state’s Medicaid program and the Children’s Health Insurance Program
 - benefits under SNAP
 - assistance through the earned income tax credit
 - housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through US HUD; and
 - assistance under a state program for TANF, and other support services and transportation provided through that program
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA, including HOPE and PELL.

Individualized Career Services

Individualized career services are available if determined to be appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment. In accordance with TEG 3-15, individuals must be declared eligible to receive these services. These include the following services:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and

- in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information regarding the ETPL
- Group counseling
- Individual counseling and mentoring
- Career planning
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training
- Internships and work experience that are linked to careers
- Workforce preparation activities
- Financial literacy services
- Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Follow-Up Services

Follow-up services are available, as appropriate, and include counseling regarding the workplace for adult and dislocated worker participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment. These services must be provided for a minimum of 12 months after closure/exit.

Training Services

Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Examples of training services include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment
- On-the-job training
- Incumbent worker training
- Workplace training and cooperative education programs
- Private sector training programs
- Skills upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training
- Apprenticeship
- Transitional jobs
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training
- Customized training.

Workforce Development Area 10 Strategy for Delivery of Adult/ Dislocated Worker Services

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission provides Adult/Dislocated Worker Services through Career Development Specialists at the Georgia Department of Labor and the Middle Georgia Regional Commission. Staff will also periodically go to other locations within the county as needed to meet participant needs.

- Career Development Specialist(s) located at the Georgia Department of Labor Career Center;
- Career Development Specialist(s) based at the offices of the Middle Georgia Regional Commission.

Outreach and Information Sessions are regularly conducted in Macon-Bibb County at the following locations:

- WIOA Information Sessions:
Location: Macon-Bibb OneStop Center/Department of Labor Macon Career Center
3090 Mercer University Drive, Macon, GA 31204
When: Every Friday
Time: 10:30 a.m.
- E3|Industry Fundamentals Information Sessions are hosted before each class. Outreach is determined at the onset of the program.

In addition to the Outreach and Information Sessions, referrals are received from Core Partners.

Workforce Development Area 11 Strategy for Delivery of Adult/Dislocated Worker Services

The Middle Georgia Consortium provides Adult/Dislocated Worker Services through Career Facilitators and the Business Services Specialist.

A Career Facilitator is located at each of the following career centers in the region throughout the week.

- Georgia Department of Labor Career Center in Houston County
- Georgia Department of Labor Career Center in Baldwin County

The Business Services Specialist and Career Facilitators attend regularly scheduled Outreach and Information Sessions such as SWAT events, job fairs, and academic recruitment events.

In addition to Outreach and Recruitment provided above in Area 11's larger counties, additional Outreach and Recruitment is provided periodically and on an as-needed basis. Referrals are also received from core and other partner agencies.

The Middle Georgia Consortium provides recruitment, eligibility verification, orientation, objective assessments, individualized service strategies, individualized education plans, career assessment, GED preparation, job search, and follow-up services to youth, adults, and dislocated workers through various subrecipients (contractors) and from the local offices and satellite sites through the 10-county service area. The Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. and Central Georgia Technical College provide in-school youth services.

Central Georgia Technical College provides case management and occupational skills training for WIOA eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers. The VECTR Center also provides a variety of training programs through Central Georgia Technical College to service transitioning service members and their families. The Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. also provides case management services for participants who are enrolled under Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) in a variety of occupational skills training which is provided by service providers and educational institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Additional employment and training opportunities such as On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training are developed by the agency's Business Services Specialist in collaboration with GDOL Career Center staff, economic development agencies and chambers of commerce throughout the 10-county service area.

3. Description of Rapid Response Services

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

In Region 6, rapid response activities are always coordinated with the state Rapid Response Team through the Georgia Department of Labor (DOL). At the direction of DOL, activities could include but are not limited to:

1. Immediate and on-site contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers, and the local community, which may include an assessment of the:
 - Layoff plans and schedule of the employer;
 - Potential for averting the layoff(s) in consultation with state or local economic development agencies, including private sector economic development entities;
 - Background and probable assistance needs of the affected workers;
 - Reemployment prospects for workers in the local community; and
 - Available resources to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of the affected workers.
2. The provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits, comprehensive OneStop system services, and employment and training

- activities, including information on the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and the NAFTA-TAA program (19 U.S.C. § 2271 et seq.);
3. The provision of emergency assistance adapted to the particular closing, layoff, or disaster.
 4. The provision of assistance to the local board and chief elected official(s) to develop a coordinated response to the dislocation event and, as needed, obtain access to state economic development assistance. Such coordinated response may include the development of an application for the National Emergency Grant under 20 CFR part 671. (WIOA secs. 101(38) and 134(a)(2)(A).)
 5. The delivery of other necessary services and resources including workshops and classes, use of worker transition centers, and job fairs, to support reemployment efforts for affected workers.
 6. As appropriate, developing systems and processes for:
 - Identifying and gathering information for early warning of potential layoffs or opportunities for layoff aversion;
 - Analyzing, and acting upon, data and information on dislocations and other economic activity in the State, region, or local area; and
 - Tracking outcome and performance data and information related to the activities of the rapid response program.
 7. Developing and maintaining partnerships with other appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, employer associations, technical councils, other industry business councils, labor organizations, and other public and private organizations, as applicable, in order to:
 - Conduct strategic planning activities to develop strategies for addressing dislocation events and ensuring timely access to a broad range of necessary assistance; and
 - Develop mechanisms for gathering and exchanging information and data relating to potential dislocations, resources available, and the customization of layoff aversion or rapid response activities, to ensure the ability to provide rapid response services as early as possible.
 8. Delivery of services to worker groups for which a petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance has been filed.
 9. The provision of additional assistance, as described in § 682.350, to local areas that experience disasters, mass layoffs, or other dislocation events when such events exceed the capacity of the local area to respond with existing resources as provided under WIOA sec. 134(a)(2)(A)(i)(II).

4. *Description of Youth Services*

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

Workforce Development Area 10

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission on behalf of the Macon-Bibb Workforce Development Board continues to contract with Eckerd Connects Paxen to provide youth services. A request for proposals was released in 2021 and Eckerd Connects Paxen was chosen to continue with services.

Eckerd provides WIOA-compliant youth services that encompass a case management service strategy in Macon-Bibb County (LWDA 10). Eckerd provides recruitment and orientation to applicants, conducts intake and eligibility determination, provides assessments and determination of appropriate services for each individual, and develops an individual service strategy (ISS) for each participant. Eckerd collaborates with the Macon-Bibb County Workforce Development Board and implements the policies adopted by the Board.

Youth services include a year-round program designed to meet the participant's individual needs. Program design will include the continuation of services and follow-up services for youth customers currently enrolled in the area WIOA youth programs and new enrollees. Training will utilize a traditional classroom format mixed with group activities and individual tutoring.

Eckerd is committed to increasing skills, productivity, and earnings for disadvantaged youth, including those with disabilities. They follow the Americans with Disabilities Act definition for participants with a disability to include an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such an impairment; or regarded as having an impairment. Additionally, Eckerd follows Section 188 of WIOA ensuring that all services are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, and that people with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations and modifications that allow them to fully participate in WIOA funded programs. Specific efforts to ensure accessibility include being located in a building that is handicap accessible, having assisted technology readily available, and following TEGl 17-05 regarding testing of youth with disabilities. Each participant's disability is unique and handled based on their needs.

In-School Youth (ISY) Services: The program model provides targeted junior and senior grade level youth with additional academic development to include options for post-secondary or advanced training, workforce readiness skills training and paid/unpaid work experience, and job shadowing related to the Demand Occupations that will increase their likelihood toward self-sufficiency. This integrated mix of year-round services targets short-

term interventions that promote enhanced academic achievement, enhances successful graduation, creates awareness of and readiness for postsecondary education, focuses on career preparation, and provides work readiness (to include life/soft skills development) and connections to employment.

In 2020, the Workforce Board entered a contract with the Bibb County Board of Education for Career Coach Services. This program exposes high school students to career pathways planning, occupational skills training, stackable credentials and equip students with the three career-ready tools: Academic Skills, Employability Skills and Technical Skills. The Career Coach program is located at the six (6) high schools, and one career coach will be shared by Soar Academy and Williams S. Hutchings College and Career Academy in Bibb County.

The purpose of the career coach program is to empower high school students to make informed decisions about their career and educational plans and to prepare students for success in postsecondary education and training. The program is delivered by high school career coaches who help students:

- Define their career aspirations;
- Prepare students for courses in postsecondary education and to become life-long learning; and
- Help students define postsecondary education programs that may include certificate programs, degree programs, apprenticeship, internship. And workforce training that can help students achieve their educational and financial goals.

The career coach program targets students in most need of career planning services referred to as the emerging workforce. Students who fall into category are defines as youth who do not have a career and/or post-secondary educational plans or goals. The benefits of the Career Coach Program are:

- Increased High School Graduation
- Attainment of Academic, Technical and Employability Skills
- Stackable Credentials
 - High School Diploma
 - Industry Credentials of Value
 - Post-secondary Credits
 - Work-Based Learning Experience

In addition to the delivery of programmatic service, the Career Coaches also perform outreach and recruitment services.

Out of School Youth Services (OSY): The program is comprised of GED training and testing, in partnership with the Title I Adult Education program, job readiness training, and job placement. Work readiness training is provided utilizing scheduled workshops until performance outcomes are achieved. An accelerated GED program is offered by Eckerd, six hours per day for 30 hours per week, Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, over five weeks for a total of 150 contact hours with a student to instructor ratio of 15 to 1. Participants receive work readiness training directly connected to job placement activities, Monday – Friday at various scheduled times. Upon completion of the GED training, participants take the GED exam. Currently, GED testing occurs in multiple locations, with various testing times and dates per month.

Workforce Development Area 11

Currently, Workforce Development Area 11 provides in-house youth services such as internships, work-experience, and Occupational Skills Training. Workforce Development Area 11 is committed to providing services to eligible youth participants through a network of youth service providers and has expanded its reach to include open competition to procure youth services to include the following required elements: (1) Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence-based Drop-out Prevention and Recovery Strategies; (2) Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services; (3) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences; (4) Occupational Skills Training; (5) Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation; (6) Leadership Development; (7) Supportive Services; (8) Adult Mentoring; (9) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling; (10) Financial Literacy Education; (11) Entrepreneurial Skills Training; (12) Labor Market and Employment Information Services; (13) Activities that Prepare for Transition to Post-secondary Education and Training; and (14) Follow-up Services.

The Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. has a Career and Case Management Contract with Central Georgia Technical College which allows for Youth Services. Central Georgia Technical College provides the fourteen program elements to youth participants. In-School Youth recruitment focuses on graduating high school seniors and Out-Of-School Youth recruitment focuses on GED students or youth interested in attending training.

Youth Services include a year-round program designed to meet the participant’s individual needs whether education or employment or both. The program design includes the continuation of career and follow-up services for youth customers enrolled in youth programs. Central Georgia Technical College’s “Youth Success Academy” has implemented the GO! 50:50 Workshop Seminar Series. These seminars focus on leadership and financial stability. The GO! 50:50 Seminar Series is designed to support the growth of young adults, with little or no work experience, into highly desirable candidates for employment. Participants will explore personal finance, leadership, employability, and entrepreneurial skills.

Central Georgia Technical College “Youth Success Academy”: provides services on all WIOA Fourteen Program Elements which includes:

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to the completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or a recognized postsecondary credential;
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
- Paid and unpaid work experience that has as a component academic and occupational education, which may include:
 - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available through the school year;
 - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - Internships and job shadowing;
 - On-the-job training (OJT) opportunities;
 - Occupational Skills Training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in section 123;
 - Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
 - Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behavior, as appropriate;
 - Supportive services;
 - Adult mentoring for at least 12 months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
 - Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as provided in 681.580;
 - Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referral to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;
 - Financial Literacy Education; create a budget to include setting up checking and saving accounts, effectively managing spending, analyzing credit reports, comparing and evaluating financial products, and safeguarding against identity theft;
 - Entrepreneurial Skills Training; that provides the basics of starting and operating a small business;
 - Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
 - Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education training.

Transportation has always been a barrier for youth participants in LWDA 11. Due to a lack of public transportation, LWDA 11 has made all high schools and Central Georgia Technical College campuses and sites approved worksite for youth Work Experiences.

LWDA 11 and Central Georgia Technical College has also implemented the Career Plus High School Equivalency (HSE) pilot program. CPH aims to provide an alternative means to receive a high school diploma. Workforce participants must be between the ages of 21 and 24, be a Georgia resident, must attend an adult education program, and have a minimum TABE score of 501 Reading and 496 Math.

Recognizing that apprenticeship is a proven approach for preparing workers for jobs while meeting the needs of business; Region 6 continues explore opportunities to partner with the school board(s) and respective CTAE department(s) on Apprenticeship programs.

5. Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives

Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.

Region 6 is currently building a robust on-the-job training (OJT) program to continue the efforts initiated under the Sector Partnership HDCl grant. Through the development of industry sector strategies to determine specific business needs, Region 6 is currently in the process of collaborating and coordinating with training institutions, Economic Development, Boards of Education, Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, DFCS and the business community to develop relevant work-based learning activities such as incumbent worker training, career pathways and customized training activities to meet the needs of the business community.

Work-based learning/OJT will focus on in-demand sectors of the area economy, to include but not limited to, Advanced Manufacturing and Industry, Medical/Healthcare, and Information Technology. OJT opportunities will be developed utilizing contracts with employers, either private for-profit or non-profit. OJT programs engage the employer up-front and require that an individual be an employee of the company. The duration of training is based upon the core competency skill levels required by the occupation chosen, then adjusted to account for any existing core competencies the participant may already possess, after being assessed. OJT provides reimbursements to employers to help compensate for the costs associated with skills upgrade training and loss of production for newly hired employees.

In determining an employer's viability for OJT contracts, the LWDA 10 and LWDA 11 staff may consider the employer's history with OJT or customized contracts, financial stability, history of layoffs, collective bargaining agreements, adequate payroll and record-keeping, accessibility, relocation and labor disputes, as well as the occupational and industry outlook. A review of the employer's job descriptions and wages will be reviewed to assess whether OJT would be a good match. A site visit will be conducted to see the potential trainees' work environment. The viability of the employer will also be assessed pre-contract to ensure the employer is registered with the Secretary of State, is current on payment of taxes, and holds a valid business license. All requirements of OJT employers will be detailed in a Pre-Award Checklist, an Employer Agreement, and an OJT contract.

All OJT employers are expected to retain the employed trainees permanently after the completion of the training, and at this point, unsubsidized employment begins. Non-compliant employers will not be utilized for future OJT projects.

Participants will be provided continued career advisement and monitoring during OJT until the end of the training period. If at any time during that training period, the employee experiences issues that need to be addressed, the local area staff will work with the participant and the employer to rectify the situation. If an employee is terminated before the end of the OJT training period, additional assistance will be made available.

Intensive case management is a central tenant of this project design. Job retention and follow-up services are merely an extension of intensive case management activities that will be completed by the staff. The long term unemployed may have barriers that occur beyond the participant obtaining beginning OJT or employment. Job retention services will be provided to all project participants for up to a year following the end of the training period. Follow-up retention activities will include the same array of intervention services as those available before employment. Such offerings will also include renewed job search assistance should a participant become unemployed. Renewed assessment and case management assistance will explore the reason for the employment loss and will adjust the Individual Employment Plan accordingly.

Region 6 will continue to identify additional industry sectors and coordinate with WIOA partners and industry sector leaders to develop additional sector strategies to support the business community. Future strategy development includes industrial maintenance, logistics, and certain occupations in the medical field.

Region 6 Local Workforce Development Boards have developed work-based learning policies and procedures to include Work Experience, Incumbent Worker Training, and Customized Training.

6. Provision of ITAs

Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs 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.

Both Workforce Development Boards in Region 6 have adopted the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). The policies are not in conflict with each other and will be updated to include provisions in the ITA Policy adopted by the State Workforce Development Board.

Workforce Development Area 10 Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

Education and training for qualified WIOA customers will be administered using Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to provide formal schooling or training designed to assist these individuals in obtaining or retaining self-sufficiency. Customers must demonstrate; a) a need for formal training and b) the customer has failed to obtain and retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.

Workforce Development Area 11 Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

Training services provided by academic training institutions or institutions providing occupation-specific training or activities must be on the eligible provider list and require a contract or memorandum of understanding to provide services. Individuals attending these institutions must be assigned an ITA account and must comply with the Workforce Development Area 11 ITA policies.

All training must be linked to employment. During the initial assessment, customer choice is identified, and training linked to employment and self-sufficiency is addressed. Any training not linked to employment will not be approved. Individuals already possessing marketable skills who merely desire training for the purposes of changing careers will not be approved. ITA approval to enhance current marketable skills may be approved on a case-by-case basis. ITA policies for LWDA 11 further address coordination of funds, termination of financial assistance, training cost limitations, training length, and allowable ITA costs.

7. Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services

Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Region 6 will partner with small business resources such as the UGA Small Business Development Center to host informational sessions on services available to support entrepreneurial development. The Mercer Innovation Center, FireStarter, and SparkMacon

are also resources that participant will be referred to capitalize on innovation and entrepreneurship.

8. *Coordination with Education Programs*

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

As mentioned in other sections, Region 6 is actively engaged in developing work-based learning programs where training will be provided by secondary and post-secondary education programs. Work-based learning programs include customized training with post-secondary institutions to help with the talent pipeline i.e., degrees, licensing, (ITAs).

Workforce Development Area 10 Education Programs

The Workforce Development Board will continue coordinating education and workforce development activities in Macon-Bibb County to enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

Workforce Development Area 11 Education Programs

Workforce Development Area 11 has venter agreements with secondary and postsecondary institutions that provide educational programs and training activities. The Board and staff will continue to collaborate, coordinate strategies, and cooperate with these and any relevant institution providing training services or activities. LWDA will further coordinate to enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

9. *Description of Supportive Services*

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

Transportation

Region 6 does not have a regional public transportation system, but there is a Mobility Manager program in place at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission to coordinate transit planning activities throughout the region. The Middle Georgia Regional Commission does contract with Macon-Bibb EOC to provide human services transportation in all 11 counties of Region 6 for a limited clientele.

Workforce Development Area 10 is served by the Macon Transit Authority on fixed routes of service for general public transportation. Workforce Development Area 11 has a network of transit resources that serves nine of the ten counties located in Workforce Development Area 11. Warner Robins Transit operates a fixed-route system that covers parts of northern Houston County. Baldwin, Crawford, Jones, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson counties each operate a demand-response transit service. A Regional Transit Directory is available with information on how to access these resources. Both Workforce Development Areas plan to coordinate transportation resources when and where resources are available.

Supportive Services Policy

The board adopted policies are used to (1) establish and determine the need for supportive services, (2) establishes a process by which participants are determined eligible and in need of supportive services, (3) complies with federal law that supportive services costs should be necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA and (4) indicates who should conduct eligibility and determination and that eligibility and determination should be conducted on a case-by-case basis.

Workforce Development Area 10

Workforce Development Area 10 has a Supportive Services Policy. The range of Supportive Services available to workforce development customers includes childcare, transportation, workplace/training accessibility tools, work clothes, minor work tools, and other discretionary items determined by the workforce development staff. Supportive Services are available to customers while they are participating in and completing intensive or training activities.

Workforce Development Area 11

Workforce Development Area 11 has a Supportive Services Policy. The range of Supportive Services available to workforce development customers includes childcare, transportation, workplace/training accessibility tools, work clothes, minor work tools, and other discretionary items determined by the workforce development staff. Supportive Services are available to customers while they are participating in and completing intensive or training activities.

COORDINATION WITH CORE PARTNERS

1. *Description of the Workforce System*

Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

As outlined in previous sections, the Workforce System in Region 6 consists of career services for youth, adults, and dislocated workers. Services may be provided by the local Workforce Development Area, by a sub-recipient, or by a Core Partner. To ensure that the workforce system operates in the most effective manner, core partners are represented on the Workforce Development Boards and regular core partner meetings are conducted.

Region 6 is actively engaged with Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education programs in Houston, Macon-Bibb, and Baldwin and Jones counties. The CTAE program has been identified as a strategic partner in the High Demand Career Initiative Sector Partnership program. The goal is to grow existing and establish new relationships as new CTAE programs are developed in the other counties not currently represented.

Below are the Career Pathway Programs of Study resulting from ongoing work between the Technical College System of Georgia and the Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) area of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE):

- Agricultural, Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, AV, Technology, and Communications
- Business Management and Administration
- Education and Training
- Energy
- Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics

2. Coordination with Wagner-Peyser

Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the OneStop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Wagner-Peyser services are primarily provided by the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) with the first point of contact being the GDOL Career Centers. In Region 6, there are three Career Centers – one in Workforce Development Area 10 and two in Workforce Development Area 11. Services available in Region 6 include:

- Filing for Unemployment Compensation.
- Providing re-employment assistance to UI Claimants and other unemployed individuals.
- Coordination and provision of labor exchange services for UI Claimants.
- Business Services including customized recruitment, job expos, SWAT events.

Georgia Department of Labor is represented on both workforce development boards. This level of engagement, in addition to core partner meetings, ensures that Wagner-Peyser activities are coordinated and avoids duplication of services.

3. Coordination with Adult Education

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

Adult Education services in Region 6 are provided by Central Georgia Technical College and Oconee Fall Line Technical College. A representative of CGTC's adult education program serves on both workforce development boards. Additionally, an adult education representative from OFTC is also present at LWDA 11's workforce development board meetings. This level of engagement, in addition to core partner meetings, ensures that adult education and workforce development activities are coordinated.

The adult education division of CGTC serves individuals 16 years old and older, who are out-of-school and lacking a high school diploma or deficient in basic skills. CGTC offers GED preparation classes, basic skills remediation, English as a Second Language, civics and citizenship classes, family literacy, life skills, financial literacy, job skills, work ethics, GED testing, TABE testing, and volunteer tutoring. The Division partners with various organizations including Certified Literate Community Programs, Head Start, Housing

Authorities, Family Connections, and Department of Corrections. CGTC partners with the Department of Labor to provide students with the Georgia BEST life skills certification and job placement. Vocational Rehabilitation is serving our students who have special needs. The CGTC Economic Development Division provides workplace fundamentals and other variations of job skills training.

4. *Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation*

Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency/Vocational Rehabilitation (GVRA/VR) and its staff members look forward to a close collaboration with WIOA partners to provide together a wide variety of workforce development services for individuals with disabilities, including students and youth with disabilities to offer them multiple opportunities to be empowered to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion. GVRA/VR will continue to work collaboratively with all the core programs, as well as other state agencies, to both integrate and embed vocational rehabilitation services as efficiently and effectively as possible.

To facilitate expanding programmatic accessibility at the local OneStop, GVRA/VR provides assistive work technology-related services for eligible individuals with disabilities. Additional supports delivered, as requested, to the One-Stop locations may include the following: assistive technology assessments and training for staff that focus on disability awareness, providing services using the universal design model, and basic information on how to use assistive technology equipment. These supports are intended to remove programmatic barriers, increase accessibility, and maximize resources.

Georgia's One-Stop system engages youth in customized career pathways through collaborative partnerships. GVRA/VR provides transition services to out of school youth with the timely development and approval of an Individualized Plan for Employment to increase the number of students who achieve competitive integrated employment.

GVRA/VR employment services team collaborates with the core program in support of individuals with disabilities securing competitive integrated employment. VR Employment Specialists interact with businesses to identify specific employer workforce needs and to provide employers with qualified candidates to meet those needs. They also interface with employers to create opportunities for individuals with disabilities, such as on-the-job training

and work-based learning. Additionally, educational opportunities are available to businesses, such as the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities, job accommodations, disability awareness, and federal contractor requirements. The goal is to increase employer interest and for more businesses to hire individuals with disabilities.

To complement the utilization of the technical college system, Georgia will further leverage relationships with educational institutions by enhancing GVR/VR services in post-secondary schools. GVR/VR provides support to eligible students in their pursuit of achieving their post-secondary academic and vocational training (including those thriving in an inclusive post-secondary education program).

5. *Coordination with Social Service Providers*

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate with social service providers, including SNAP and TANF. The description should include the utilizations of both programs as a referral source.

LWDA 11 is partnering with the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network Recovery to Work Project to provide a Forensic Peer Mentor in Warner Robins, GA. LWDA 11 believes the investment in this work will ultimately have long term savings in reduced behavioral health hospitalization/treatment due to recidivisms, reduced medical health care costs, and increased employment of the individuals who receive these integrated forensic peer mentor services. The Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network is integrating recovery services for returning citizens who are living with behavioral health concerns and who are trying to reenter the workforce.

Department of Human Service's Parental Accountability Court Coordinator participates in weekly orientations and workshops at the Comprehensive One-Stops. The program provides assistance with substance abuse, short-term training, coaching and mentoring, educational services, and employment services. Attendees at the workshop can also be referred or reverse referred to SNAP, TANF, WIOA (adult, dislocated worker & youth), Job Corps, Native American programs, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs, Senior Community Service Employment programs, Carl D. Perkins programs, Adult Education and Literacy programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Jobs for Veterans programs Community Services Block Grant employment and training programs, Department of Housing and Urban Development employment and training activities, Wagner Peyser programs, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

LWDA 10 and 11 have also partnered with the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) Fatherhood Program. The purpose of the partnership is to help increase awareness and potentially provide WIOA career and training services for noncustodial parents.

Additionally, the Fatherhood Program assesses and refers applicants who may demonstrate an aptitude and interest in a short-term training program such as Commercial Truck Driving but may need assistance with getting their driver's license reinstated. In addition to offering assistance with driver's license reinstatement, the DCSS also offers the following services: child support services, GED enrollment, job training, job search/placement, volunteer work opportunities, and support order modification. The partnership between WIOA and DCSS is ideal since both agencies share a mutual objective: services/resources geared toward helping individuals attain self-sufficiency.

PERFORMANCE, ETPL, AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

1. *Description of Performance Measures*

Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 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 subtitle B and the OneStop delivery system, in the local area.

Workforce Development Areas 10 and 11 negotiated Performance Measures for PY22 and PY23.

In establishing performance measurement levels, the following variables were taken into consideration:

- Expected economic conditions of the local area; AND
- Expected characteristics of participants to be served by the local area; AND
- Program implementation- What programs or policies does the area have in place to guide services? Do these policies impact outcomes in any way?

Adults and Dislocated Workers WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance

- Percentage of Participants in Unsubsidized Employment During the 2nd Quarter After Exit and Percentage of Participants in Unsubsidized Employment During the 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings of Program Participants in Unsubsidized Employment During the 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Percentage of Participants Obtaining a Credential during participation or Within 4 Quarters After Exit
- Percentage of Participants who, during a program year, are in an Education or Training Program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving Measurable Skills Gains, which are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment

Youth WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance

- Percentage of Participants in Education or Training Activities, or in Unsubsidized Employment During the 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Percentage of Participants in Education or Training Activities, or in Unsubsidized Employment During the 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings of Program Participants in Unsubsidized Employment During the 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Percentage of Participants Obtaining a Postsecondary Credential or Secondary School Diploma During Participation or Within 4 Quarters After Exit
- Percentage of Participants who, during a program year, are in an Education or Training Program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or

employment and who are achieving Measurable Skills Gains, which are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment.

The following measure will be tracked and reported but will not be included in performance negotiations for PY22 or PY23.

- The effectiveness in serving employers.

2. One-Stop System Performance and Assessment

Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed One-Stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the One-Stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

In Region 6, both Workforce Development Boards developed One-Stop performance standards. The performance standards support the negotiated performance measures of each local area.

The following are examples of criteria used to assess One-Stop Operator performance and system services delivery:

Customer Service Representative

- Ensure access for disabled customers is operable
- Ensure internal and external signage and flyers/advertisements are neat and appropriate
- Ensure that all One-Stop customers are registered; capture customers' personal information as well as their reason for visiting the One-Stop and the services he/she wishes to receive (in some cases, create a database to eliminate paper sign-in sheets)
- Receive, address, and forward all customer's complaints to the appropriate One-Stop partner agency
- Assist customers as needed with employment services or access to other partner agencies
- Work closely with reception/greeter staff to direct customers to workforce development or other partner staff (or to direct linkage portal)
- Monitor and evaluate customer satisfaction via the use of the Workforce Development Board approved customer surveys

Coordinator of OneStop Partner Services

- Read, study, and become familiar with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Host One-Stop Partner’s monthly or bi-monthly meetings
- Create and publish a Resource Guide to illustrate all services offered by One-Stop partners and a special events calendar to share with One-Stop partners and One-Stop customers
- Coordinate with site management to provide office space for partner staff housed in the OneStop and prepare quarterly reconciliation per WIOA law
- Facilitate One-Stop partner service orientations for One-Stop customers

Develop and Maintain the “Direct Linkage” portal

- WIOA and MOU require that all partners that are not housed within the One-Stop be available to customers via electronic access; also, the customer must be able to reach an actual person, by name, in a “reasonable period of time”, it is also recommended that a back-up partner representative be listed in case the primary is unavailable. The One-Stop Operator works closely with the partners to identify the direct linkage portal representatives for each partner agency (Career Resource Guide)
- Develop a OneStop Partner’s Schedule – a document that displays the names of each partner, a brief summary of the services they offer, and the name and contact info of a staff person (who will actually pick up the phone) and a back-up (Career Resource Guide)
- Coordinate with partner agencies, listed in the MOU, to identify who should be listed as the contact person(s) in the One-Stop Partners schedule
- Work with workforce management and partners to make video conferencing or adequate communication available for customers in the direct linkage portal
- Coordinate with Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to ensure that assistive technology is up-to-date and in working order; also ensure that at least a few staff are trained on how to use assistive technology

Data Collection and Reporting

- Create monthly and quarterly reports that track One-Stop customers
- Provide One-Stop customer tracking reports to partners and workforce development board members at regular meetings
- As needed, provide analysis of report (example: provide an explanation if there is a significant change in the customer data month-to-month or compared with historical data)

- Prepare and submit quarterly reconciliation of cost associated with the local area's One-Stop System to the WIOA and Workforce Services Director, Georgia Department of Labor.

Miscellaneous

Serve as consultant/project manager at the direction of the Workforce Development Board.

3. ETPL System

Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

a. Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

In Region 6, both Workforce Development Areas will utilize their websites as a mechanism for notifying prospective providers.

b. Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

Pre-Award Review – This review is intended to collect further information on the provider and its programs. The information collected will be used in the evaluation of the training provider's application and in making recommendations to workforce development boards on whether or not to approve training programs. For evaluation purposes, it should be considered a part of the training provider's application. The review includes additional questions to be answered by the training provider, an on-site review of the training provider's facilities, and required documents, and reference checks of the provider's former students, accrediting institutions and business customers. The on-site review will also include interviews with the provider's instructors, placement and counseling staff, and current students. If available, Pre-Award Review information collected by other local workforce boards will be used to avoid duplication.

Application Evaluation – Using the application and pre-award information available, Workforce Development staff will numerically evaluate each provider's application for use in recommending training programs and providers for inclusion. Evaluation factors will be divided into Training Provider "organization" factors and "program" factors; program factors are used to evaluate each training program submitted, while organization factors are used to evaluate the provider's organization. The resulting ratings will be a composite of the two types of factors – an organization score, which

will be the same for all programs submitted by a provider, and a program score, which may be different for each training program.

Competitiveness Determination – The application for each training program must receive a minimum score to be considered competitive. Applications not receiving this minimum score will be considered non-competitive and will receive no further consideration for approval. Providers who have submitted a non-competitive application will be notified of this determination and the rating score their application received.

Middle Georgia WDB and Executive Committee Approval – The total score derived, along with any application and pre-award information deemed useful will form the basis for an approval recommendation to the Middle Georgia WDB and Executive Committee by the Consortium staff. Approval must be granted by both bodies prior to being submitted to the State for inclusion on the ETPL.

- c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.**

Workforce Development Area 10

Within three working days following receipt of the determination made regarding its application, the applicant must advise the designated persons of intent to appeal. This notification may be oral. Within five working days following receipt of the determination made regarding its application, the applicant must provide Workforce Development Area with a written appeal. Within one working day following receipt of the written appeal, the staff will submit the appeal to the Workforce Development Board Chair. The Workforce Development Board Chair will render a decision regarding the appealed application. Within five working days following receipt of the appeal by the Board Chair, the staff will notify the applicant, in writing, of the results of the appeal. If the applicant is still aggrieved following the Board's action on the appeal, the applicant may appeal utilizing the local Workforce Development Area's grievance procedure.

Workforce Development Area 11

Local Appeal Process – Within three working days following receipt of the unapproved determination, ITA customers and providers must advise the Consortium's Executive Director, or other designated person(s), of intent to appeal. This notification may be oral. Within five working days following receipt of the decision made regarding its application, ITA customers and providers must provide the Consortium with a written appeal. Within one working day following receipt of the written appeal, the Consortium staff will submit the appeal to the WDB chairperson. Within five working days following receipt of the appeal by the WDB chairperson, the WDB chairperson will make a determination

regarding the appealed application. The Consortium staff will notify ITA customers and providers in writing of the results of the appeal within one working day of the WDB chairperson's decision. If ITA customers and providers are still aggrieved following the WDB's action on the appeal, the ITA customers and providers may appeal utilizing the Consortium grievance procedure

If the local appeal process does not resolve the dispute, aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs are notified of their right to file a Second Level Appeal with the state.

d. Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).

Providers are expected to notify the Workforce Development Area of any substantial changes in programs. Substantial changes may include, program objectives, geographic locations, curriculum or mode of delivery, program duration, cost, entry requisites, contact information, etc. After WDB consideration and approval, the information will be electronically transmitted to the state for approval consideration and ETPL updating. Also, any new programs offered by eligible providers will be reviewed by staff and submitted to the state for approval.

e. Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.

The Middle Georgia Consortium's policy for training providers that do not maintain a training facility in the Middle Georgia WorkSource training area is that the provider must first submit an application to the Workforce Development Board in the area in which their training facility is located.

f. Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.

Workforce Development Area 10

Middle Georgia Regional Commission uses the WorkSource Georgia Participant Portal to monitor all ITA activity. Additionally, the staff utilizes an Excel spreadsheet to monitor each ITA. Reports generated using the portal are used to assist in this process and include information on participant budgets, actual/scheduled exit dates, funding source, and training institution.

Workforce Development Area 11

The Middle Georgia Consortium uses the WorkSource Georgia Participant Portal to track ITA activity. In addition, MGCI uses its own ITA financial tracking system. The system features tracking by individual ITA, training institution, funding year, and funding source.

Amounts in the system are obligations set aside for ITAs by funding source and are adjusted for trainees who leave training before their scheduled ending date, or who require an extension to their training period. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

- g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).**

Workforce Development Area 10

Macon-Bibb ITA Policies are as follows:

Demand Occupation Requirement for Training

The Macon-Bibb County Workforce Development Board (LWDB 10) is committed to increasing income levels and creating employment opportunities for customers in Macon-Bibb County and the Middle Georgia region. The LWDB has established priorities for High Demand, High Growth, and High Wage employment opportunities in Macon-Bibb County.

It is the policy of the LWDB to work with the Georgia Department of Labor's LMI section and local labor market information systems to identify targeted industries and occupations prioritized for LWDB funding. Occupations must be identified through local labor market information as having the potential for high entry wages and projected growth and/or significant job openings in the area. To be considered for funding through WIOA, a training program must lead to a recognized credential as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor in its Training and Employment Guidance Letter 17-05.

Macon-Bibb County has identified priority industries for training: Advanced Manufacturing, Business, Information Technology, Education, Healthcare, and Transportation. A list of priority occupations and corresponding training programs targeted in the area and currently approved on the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division, Eligible Training Provider List.

Selection of ITA Programs

It will be the policy of the LWDB 10 to deliver occupational skills training to adults, regardless of funding source, to the maximum extent possible, an Individual Training Account (ITA). ITAs are the mechanism, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), for providing eligible customers with the resources to access training in-demand occupations through approved training providers.

To be eligible for an ITA, an eligible customer must, at a minimum:

- have a high school diploma or GED; ITAs for customers concurrently enrolled in high school completion or GED programs may be approved on a case-by-case basis
- be unable to find suitable employment with existing skills and/or academic credentials as evidenced through unsuccessful job search efforts while actively participating in both core and intensive services offered through Macon-Bibb Workforce Development Board, and/or through assessment be determined to be appropriate for and able to complete the chosen employment training program, and
- select a training program as defined by the parameters of this policy and linked to a demand occupation within the WIBs targeted industries in the local area and make a commitment to seek employment in the field once trained.

When there are limited funds for intensive and training services under WIOA, it will also be the policy of LWDB 10 to establish eligibility for intensive and training services to the following populations in Macon-Bibb County:

- United States Veterans who meet one or more of the listed priorities will always have priority over non-veterans for service;
- Unemployed or under-employed Adults (18 years +) who are residents of Macon-Bibb County and are low income as defined as having an income in the preceding 12 months that is at or below 150 percent of the Federal poverty guidelines;
- Unemployed or under-employed Out of School Youth (age 16 – 24) who are residents of Macon-Bibb County and are low income as defined as having a family income in the preceding six months that is at or below the 70 percent LLSIL;
- TANF clients able to benefit from WIOA services;
- Dislocated workers where intensive services or training will enhance the likelihood of at least 85 percent wage replacement of their pre- lay-off wage.

Incumbent workers “at risk” of job or wage loss, and in need of skills upgrades in order to maintain or achieve wages of \$15.00 per hour or more for two quarters following exit.

It will further be the policy of LWDB 10 that when funds are severely limited to use a scale to prioritize training services to intensive service customers, who have already met one

of the eligibility criteria above, to determine who is most in need, and best able to benefit from training. The scale will determine high, moderate, or low priority based upon each customer's level of transferable skills, work experience, and education credentials; customers determined to have a high priority for training will have fewer transferable skills, fewer or lower education credentials and less work experience. In the event that funding is extremely limited or nearing exhaustion, TANF customers will have the highest priority for training, followed by WIOA Low-Income Adults. In all cases, veterans' priority still applies.

The following guidelines apply in managing WIOA ITA awards:

WIOA ITA Requirements

- a. ITA will only be approved for training courses that are on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) for the State of Georgia. By securing this approval the Training Provider has committed to meeting the performance standards as outlined in the WIOA Rules and Regulations.
- b. A program of training services is one or more courses or classes, or structured curriculum that upon successful completion, leads to:
 - i. A certificate, an associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or
 - ii. The skills or competencies needed for a specific job or jobs, an occupation, occupational group, or generally, for many types of jobs or occupations, as recognized by employers and determined prior to training.
- c. ITA funding will not pay for such things as a master's or doctorate degree. All training programs on the state eligible list will be considered eligible in the local area unless removed by the local Workforce Investment Board as a training provider.
- d. WIOA ITA funds are only authorized to pay for tuition and books, required equipment, and other associated fees for the training program, less the PELL, OIG, and other grants, financial aid, or Work-Study contributions. Other Supportive Services programs may address other needs. (See Supportive Services Policy that is currently in effect when the customer needs services and not necessarily the date of this policy.)
- e. ITA funds in Macon-Bibb County are limited to:
 - i. \$5,500 maximum per fiscal year
 - ii. \$10,000 maximum lifetime funding except for those in Healthcare and their maximum level was increased to \$15,000.

- iii. The maximum period for funding will be two training years depending on the availability of funding, where a training year begins on the first day of training and runs for 12 consecutive months.
 - iv. The ITA will not cover a bachelor's degree unless the recipient has successfully completed at least four full-time semesters, or six full-time quarters AND the recipient can complete the degree within the two-year maximum training period. The customer must provide a transcript and a plan of study from the institution documenting they can complete the degree requirements in the two-year time limit.
 - v. The ITA will cover training up to one year for a customer holding a bachelor's degree for upgrade purposes only if the current diploma will not lead to direct employment.
- f. To receive ITA reimbursement, the participating service provider must first complete the ITA Authorization Form and return it to the WIB Director to give final approval for the ITA. Failure to secure this approval may result in a refusal for funding.
 - g. Macon-Bibb County ITA funds will pay for education and training expenses at any educational institution that appears on the state Eligible Training Provider list at the maximums as stated above.
 - h. In case of limited funds, it becomes necessary to assign a priority system for ITA funding, service will first be given to recipients of Public Assistance, then to low-income individuals, as determined by LWDB 10 (See Priority for Services above).
 - i. The training occupation should have career advancement potential and must be in accordance with the recipients' Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

WIOA Eligible Participant Requirements

- a. Participants must have applied for WIOA services and have been determined by a Case Manager to be eligible for training services, having completed at least one Core and one Intensive Service.
- b. Participants must complete an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that details the participant's skills, interests, and abilities, documents the Core and Intensive Services provided to the participant and sets specific goals for the participant to meet in order to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.

- c. Participants must choose a training program that is consistent with their skills, interests, and abilities, with the assistance of the WIOA Case Manager.
- d. Participants in qualifying programs must apply for PELL, OIG, and other appropriate grants before utilizing WIOA funds.
- e. Individuals whose services are provided under the adult funding stream must be determined eligible under the priority system when those funds are limited.
- f. All eligible participants may receive the first ITA without restrictions. After the first quarter or semester, the student must be in good academic standing and/or have maintained a “C” average in the program of study, unless a higher grade-point average is required by the IEP. If the student does not reach this standard, interventions, including intensive case management services, will be offered to the student. A student may not change majors after the ITA is signed; if the student does change majors, ITA funds will not be obligated for payment nor continuation of the ITA.

If the student fails to maintain good academic standing and/or a “C” average for the second consecutive quarter or semester, that student will be ineligible to receive additional WIOA funding until the student makes a “good faith” effort to modify his/her circumstances. This “good faith” effort can include life skills classes, counseling, a reevaluation of skills, interests, and abilities, a request for additional supportive services, etc., and will be coordinated by the student’s WIA Case Manager.

If the student continues to fail to maintain good academic standing and/or a “C” average for three consecutive quarters or semesters, that student will be ineligible for WIOA funding for one (1) calendar year.

If a student quits a training program, he/she may be required to pay back (reimburse) the amount of funding received.

If the student has no contact with their WIOA Case Manager for ninety (90) days, the ITA will be deemed inactive and the contract may be canceled. The student is obligated to pay back any costs incurred after the 90-day period.

Workforce Development Area 11

Middle Georgia ITA policies are as follows:

1. Training for Eligible Individuals - Only as determined by the Consortium.

2. Previous WIOA Trainees - Individuals who have previously received financial assistance under WIOA are not eligible for further training assistance, unless,
 - They completed their program of study and are unable to perform the work associated with the skills previously obtained as described below, or
 - They did not complete their program of study and they had a justifiable reason accepted by the Career Facilitator before dropping out of training, and they cooperated with the Career Facilitator in pursuing job search or other prescribed activities.
 - In no case will drop-outs be accepted for re-entry into WIOA financed training if contact was not made with the Career Facilitator before dropping out, regardless of their ability to use the skills acquired through training, or financial assistance was terminated as described below. Individuals who complete training and are unable to secure employment must also contact their Career Facilitator in order to qualify for re-entry into training.
3. Trainees Must Seek Training-Related Employment – Applicants for training assistance must plan to seek training-related employment after training is completed. Those who do not have this objective will not be accepted for training assistance and will be ineligible for further WIOA assistance; this includes trainees who, instead of seeking employment, pursue further training not approved by the Career Facilitator.
4. Applicants for Training with a Self-Employment Objective - The training will not be approved unless the applicant also has a wage and salary employment objective as well; the training to be provided must stand on its own as adequate preparation for the wage and salary employment objective, though it may assist the trainee with the self-employment objective. No funds will be provided to assist in the financing of a self-employment business in any way, e.g., tools, uniforms, etc. This policy is intended to assure that the trainee has an alternative path to employment in the event the self-employment venture fails, which is likely, given the generally low success rate of new business ventures.
5. Middle Georgia may serve individuals who do not reside in the Middle Georgia area as long as funds are available, and priority is given to Middle Georgia residents. Individuals who resided in the Middle Georgia area when training services were initially provided and who subsequently moved to another service area will continue to be served.
6. Coordination of Funds - WIOA funds will only be applied to a participant's training expenses if other funding is not available in accordance with the coordination provisions of 20 CFR 680.230. HOPE grants or scholarships, PELL, and other federal

grants will be applied first to the participant's training expenses to the extent they are available and WIOA ITA funds will supplement the cost of training. Each applicant seeking training assistance must apply for the PELL, HOPE, and other federal grant programs. WIOA monies will be applied after these federal grant monies are exhausted.

7. Training Linked to Employment – Occupation training services and assistance may only be provided for training that is directly linked to employment opportunities in the Middle Georgia area, or to areas in which the trainee is willing to relocate (20 CFR 680.210(b)). The Middle Georgia Consortium will establish this linkage for each prospective trainee by reference to the following sources of information:
 - Georgia Department of Labor's occupation and industry employment projections using such factors as total growth, percentage growth, and annual openings.
 - Georgia Career Information System, O*net, or other appropriate and available career data.
 - News articles and analyses reflecting rapidly changing labor force conditions favorable or unfavorable to specific occupational or industrial areas.
 - Consortium or training applicant surveys or interviews with knowledgeable representatives of training institutes, employers, or employees in the industry or occupation in question.

Information on job quality (wages, benefits, advancement potential, etc.), to the extent available, will also be used to select employment opportunities. Priority for training occupations will be given to training for teachers and the healthcare industry due to skill shortages in these areas in the Middle Georgia area.

8. Training Resulting in a Self-Sufficient Wage - Training must provide the long-term prospect of an employment wage resulting in self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance; self-sufficiency is defined as 150 percent of the U.S. Department of Labor's Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) as determined by the Career Facilitator. In addition, the expected entry-level wage for the training occupation must be at least \$8.00 per hour as determined by the Career Facilitator.

Alternately, for dislocated workers, self-sufficiency may be defined as work of substantially equal or higher skill level than the individual's past adversely affected employment, or work for which the individual is currently qualified to do, and wages for such work at not less than 80 percent of the individual's average weekly wage. The training should also improve the trainees' chances of obtaining employment with wages and benefits superior to those they could obtain without training.

Applicants who already have a self-sufficient job or job offer are not eligible for training assistance under these policies.

9. Training Within the Commuting Area - In general, the location of training must be within a reasonable commute of the Middle Georgia area. Training sites outside of the Middle Georgia service area will be approved on a case-by-case basis, depending upon the commuting distance for the trainee, and the availability of the training in the commuting area.
10. Length of Training - Programs of study are limited to those that the prospective trainee can reasonably be expected to complete within 104 weeks or 2 years. Extensions of the planned completion date beyond two years may be made on a case-by-case basis, appropriately documented by the Career Facilitator.
11. Full-Time Training - Training must be full-time as determined by the training institution's policy; exceptions may be approved on a case-by-case basis, appropriately documented by the Career Facilitator.
12. Training to Improve Marketability – The training must result in the acquisition of skills which the individual can apply to the related occupational objective, resulting in an improvement in their employment prospects in terms of job acquisition and/or job quality. Marketable skills qualify a person for a self-sufficient job. Training that appears not to improve employment prospects or qualify an individual for a self-sufficient job will not be approved.
13. Individuals Already Possessing Marketable Skills - Individuals with marketable skills who want training merely for the purpose of changing careers will not be approved for training. Individuals with marketable skills or credentials may qualify for training if they are unable to perform the work associated with the skills previously obtained, in cases such as disability, lack of demand for the skill, or a personal history disqualifying them from employment in the occupation related to the skills they possess (e.g., a Nurse with an illegal drug use conviction).
14. Skill Enhancement Occupations - On a limited basis, the Consortium approves training in certain occupations for individuals to enhance their marketable skills. These are limited to the education and healthcare fields (see item #15, below). To qualify under this provision, an applicant must be seeking training that is directly related to previous training and/or experience and represents a progression in occupational competence.

15. Baccalaureate and Post-Baccalaureate Training - WIOA funding will be provided for this training only if;
 - a. The trainee is accepted into a degree or diploma program, and the course of study is occupation-specific (e.g., radiologic technician, accounting, teacher certification). No funds will be provided for general academic programs (e.g., General Studies, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Art, etc.).
 - b. The total course of study is no longer than the period specified in item #10., above,
 - c. The trainee demonstrates that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training, and

Funding for Post Baccalaureate training may only be provided if;

1. the trainee's Baccalaureate degree is not occupation-specific; some degrees are considered occupation-specific at the master's level, but not at the bachelor's level, as determined by the Career Facilitator's conclusions regarding the minimum requirements in the labor market for specific degrees for specific occupations (e.g., psychology);
 2. the trainee is unable to perform the work associated with the skills previously obtained, or
 3. the training is in the educational or healthcare field and would improve the trainee's employability and/or quality of employment.
16. Continuing Education and Certificate Training
Training of this nature will only be approved if;
 - a. The trainee has a work history or educational background that relates to the occupational goal, and
 - b. The trainee presents evidence establishing that the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability, through applicant job market research or other appropriate means, or
 - c. Training will be in an occupation where no previous experience or training is required for employability (e.g., truck driving).
17. Provisional Training Admissions - WIOA assistance will be provided on a case-by-case basis, related to the trainee's prospects for successful completion (20 CFR 680.210(a)(3)).

18. Approved Training

- a. State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) – ITAs can only be used to pay for training expenses incurred with approved training providers and training programs. Approved training providers and programs are listed on a statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). To be listed on the ETPL, a training provider’s program must be evaluated and approved by a local WIB. When applying for an ITA, an applicant is shown the Georgia ETPL, (<https://www.workreadyga.org>), can select training from any provider and program on the list, and can receive an ITA from any program meeting the Consortium’s requirements. Applicants may also select programs from other states under certain circumstances.
- b. Consortium Training Provider Reviews and Training Applicant Labor Market Research – For programs on a State EPL selected by an applicant for which the Consortium has no experience, the Consortium may require that it conduct a review of the prospective provider before approving training to assure that there is a good likelihood of trainees obtaining training-related employment and that the training is directly linked to the employment opportunities either in the Middle Georgia area or in another area to which the individual is willing to relocate (20 CFR 680.210(b)). Training applicants may also be required to perform labor market research that supports the decision to approve training. Training will not be approved for programs or providers with which the Consortium has an unacceptable experience.
- c. Training Provider Agreement – Approved providers must also sign a basic agreement with the Consortium. The agreement will include provisions for student referrals and invoicing, program pricing, customer accessibility including all Americans with Disabilities Act reasonable accommodation requisites, student data collection, recordkeeping, and monitoring by local, state, and federal officials. The signed agreement does not guarantee that the Consortium will make any referrals to the training provider.
- d. Enrollment Limits for New Providers – New providers satisfying all other requirements may be limited initially to five trainees or less by the Consortium. Additional trainees will be approved once these trainees have completed training and demonstrate adequate employment results as determined by the Consortium.

19. Termination of Financial Assistance – Assistance may be terminated in whole or in part by the Career Facilitator for the following reasons:

- a. Funds are not available to continue assistance.

- b. The student is not making satisfactory academic progress.
- c. The student has failed to maintain contact with his or her Career Facilitator.
- d. The student has not provided information on his or her academic progress, contact information, program of study, employment, or other needed information.
- e. The student has changed to a program of study not meeting Consortium requirements or resulting in an extension of the student's completion date significantly beyond the 104-week guideline.
- f. The student has decided not to seek full-time, training-related employment after completion of approved training.
- g. The student has an unsatisfactory attendance record as determined by the Career Facilitator, causing a delay in planned training program completion.
- h. The student has abused his or her privileges regarding training-related books and supplies.

20. Training Cost Limitations - ITA training costs for all training are limited to;

- a. Up to \$11,000 in training costs for all training except associate, baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate training in healthcare and education occupations, excluding support, may be expended for each participant for the first year of training (four quarters or three semesters).
- b. For training that extends beyond one year, for all training except associate, baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate training in healthcare and education occupations, total training costs may not exceed \$14,300, excluding support.
- c. Cost Limits for Associate, Baccalaureate and Post Baccalaureate Training in Health Care and Education Occupations - Up to \$9,100 in training costs, excluding support, may be expended for each participant for the first three semesters (or four quarters) of training, and no more than \$16,900 for training that extends beyond three semesters (or four quarters).
- d. These limitations apply regardless of any training length extensions that may be approved as described in item #10, above.

All training costs must be reasonable and comparable to other local agencies providing the same type of training. If the cost of training exceeds fund limitation guidelines, the Career Facilitator should assist in developing a financial plan to cover

the total costs of training. The participant will not be required to apply for or access student loans or incur personal debt as a condition of participation.

21. Allowable ITA Costs

- a. Tuition and fee charges will be made in accordance with the Contractor's catalog or price list, including any HOPE, PELL, or other funds available. Fees may include any necessary licensing or certification fees, physical exams, or drug tests related to the trainee's course of study. Out-of-state tuition is not an allowable charge.
- b. Book charges will include materials required for the related course work; reference materials, such as dictionaries and thesauruses will be considered support expenses. Materials such as magazines, newspapers, and the like are not allowable unless supported by a signed instructor's statement that they are required for the course. Any HOPE book allowance available should be deducted from the charges. The maximum amount for books a semester is \$700; prior approval, in writing, must be granted by the Career Facilitator if it surpasses this amount. The participant will be responsible for the excess if approval is not granted.
- c. Course-related supplies include all supplies other than books required of all students taking a course. This may include nursing uniforms, lab smocks, tools, physical education clothing, and the like. These items are limited but are fully reimbursable under the MGCI's Supportive Service Policy. Any supply items which do not appear to be course-related must be supported by a signed statement from the instructor that the supplies are required for the course.
- d. Unallowable supply items are not reimbursable under this agreement and include, but are not limited to the following non-course-related items:
 - Umbrellas
 - Jewelry
 - Books Bags/Back Packs
 - Food and Beverages
 - Eating Utensils
 - Watches/Clocks
 - Clothing
 - Toilet articles
 - Leisure reading materials
- e. Late fees, fines, and penalties are not allowable or reimbursable if they are due to trainee error or delay.
- f. Other costs that are reasonable and necessary for training purposes will be reimbursed. The training provider will be notified in the event an item is questioned by the Consortium due to its nature or quantity. If the cost of an item is disallowed, the training provider should require payment from the

student. The Consortium will also notify the student of his or her responsibility for payment. Upon entry into the program, each participant will sign a statement agreeing to be responsible for the payment of all disallowed supply items.

h. Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.

Registered apprenticeships are added to the ETPL in accordance with the state policy.

4. Implementation of Technology

Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

Workforce Development Area 10

The WorkSource Macon-Bibb website (www.worksourcemaconbibb.org) provides important workforce development information to job seekers and employers. Updates will include the addition of data to enhance planning and performance. Twitter and Facebook are also utilized to share the success of workforce development programs.

Participants can utilize the computer lab at both the Middle Georgia Regional Commission as well as the Department of Labor Macon office to access the internet for job search, resume development, and access to Georgia Labor Market Information.

Workforce Development Area 11

Our computer lab provides computers with internet access that is available to all of our customers and job seekers during normal business hours. Also, a limited number of laptops are available to be checked out by our actively enrolled customers. (if available, students may check-out mobile hotspots to be used temporarily for specific purposes.)

The Middle Georgia Consortium website (www.mgwib.com) provides important workforce development information to job seekers and employers. The website has been updated and provides better customer experiences.

Region 6 has engaged with Chmura Economics & Analytics for the development of a job seeker/employer portal based on the advanced manufacturing sector. Chmura Jobs EQ is being utilized to provide employment and job data reports for employers and partners in the region. YouScience will be utilized as an assessment tool given to participants in order to assess their interests and aptitudes for careers. This in turn will connect the participant's talents with in-demand careers to help them make informed decisions about their future. This assessment will

be utilized by OneStop Operators as well as through school systems in the region. Updates will include the addition of data to enhance planning and performance. Facebook has been added to the website and utilized to share the success of the workforce development programs. Additionally, success stories have been added to show program success.

STATE INITIATIVES AND VISION

1. *State Branding*

Provide a description for how the area has adopted and utilized the state brand.

The brands for WorkSource Macon-Bibb and WorkSource Middle Georgia have been implemented in accordance with WIG PS-16-002. Implementation included but was not limited to the development of:

- Letterhead and envelopes
- Business cards
- Signage, pull-up banners and tablecloths
- Website
- PowerPoint templates
- Brochures and pamphlets
- Video testimonials
- Social media

2. *Priority of Service*

Describe how the region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to one's specified by state and federal policy.

The Workforce Development Areas of Region 6 have adopted Priority of Service policies in accordance with the State of Georgia. The intake and screening process is designed to quickly identify the participants who may qualify for priority service.

Priority for adult services is given to recipients of public assistance or other low-income individuals, with added priority for individuals who are basic skills deficient. Individualized career services and training services are given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, to:

- Public assistance recipients and other low-income adults; and
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Veterans under WIOA § 3 (63)(A) receive priority of service as described in the Jobs for Veterans Act (38 U.S.C. 4215 (2)). Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for adult programs must receive the highest priority for services.

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who also are included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who also are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
- Second, to non-covered persons (individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
- Fourth, to any other populations identified by the Governor or Local Board for priority
- Lastly, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

While veterans receive priority through WIOA services, a referral process is in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program to ensure the most effective provision of services.

If the need arises for additional priorities of service, additional target populations will be added to the priority of services criteria after approval by the Workforce Development Boards.

3. Alignment with State Goals

Describe how the area will align with each of the goals listed in the State Unified Plan.

- a. Utilize sector partnership to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.**

Region 6 will seek every opportunity to coordinate TCSG Office of Workforce Development initiatives to provide workforce solutions to employers and leverage resources where necessary.

Through the sector partnership initiatives, economic development partnerships have enabled workforce developers to hear directly from employers and strategize to meet their current and future needs.

b. Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.

Region 6 is meeting as the MGEA Works team monthly as part of the High Demand Career Initiative and is collaborating and developing strategic workforce development plans with the focus being on the advanced manufacturing sector. The goal of this process is to operate seamlessly for the benefit of both the participant and employer

c. Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities

Region 6 is a diverse region consisting of both rural and urban areas. Resources and ideas are being shared and utilized in both rural and urban communities from collaborations made through the High Demand Career Initiative sector partnership. An emphasis on business services allows the region and state to increase statewide prosperity.

d. Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels

Region 6 works in collaboration with the Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center, or VECTR, which is a veteran's educational training and workforce services center. VECTR staff work with higher education institutions and military installations across the state, as well as Region 6 Workforce Development Area staff.

Collaboration between region businesses, local K-12 school systems, and Central Georgia Technical College (CGTC) to develop opportunities for youth to get work experience in the advanced manufacturing sector has taken place. Perkins V Needs Assessment meetings have been facilitated with both educators and industry partners on three separate occasions to talk in-depth about the challenges industries face and what they need from the future pipeline of workers in this high-demand sector.

Region 6 regularly meets with the CTAE Directors in the region to ensure that the pathways being offered within the school align with each local workforce area. Additionally, the HDCI project manager, works closely with the CTAE Directors on their CNLA plans.

By leveraging partnerships with CTAE Directors, Economic Development Directors, HDCI Project Manager and local employers, the Be Pro Be Proud tour was able to visit middle Georgia for three weeks. This gave high school students from all eleven high schools an opportunity to explore various career paths through hands on simulators in the fields of healthcare, plumbing, commercial truck driving, robotics, and welding. Over 800 students were exposed to the various careers over the three weeks.

In addition to being exposed to the career paths employers and educational institutions were available to discuss how a student could learn more about getting the necessary training needed to obtain employment in the various career fields and to learn about specific jobs that are currently available. The event was so successful that each County has requested the Be Pro Be Proud Tour to come back again for the 22-23 School Year.

e. Alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system.

LWDA 11 has a OneStop and Individuals with Disabilities Committee in place and will expand this committee to include a more concentrated focus on strategic populations. Now that the Board has approved special populations, work will begin with businesses in the region to determine what businesses need these special populations and determine the training needed to prepare these individuals for employment with these businesses.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing

Workforce Development Area 10

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Jonathan Alderman	Attorney	Anderson, Walker, and Reichert	Business
Janeen Andrews	Team Leader	GA Power	Business, Board Treasurer
Mike Austin	Executive Director	Macon Housing Authority	Public Housing Representative
Marlon Baldwin	Budget & Strategic Planning	Macon-Bibb County	Business
Brenda Brown	VP of Adult Education	Central Georgia Technical College	Education and Training Representative
Bob Burnham	Professor	Middle Georgia State University	Education and Training Representative
Crystal Buzza	HR Manager	Irving Tissue	Business
Tyler Carter	Owner	Georgia Premier Electrical Services	Business, Board Vice-Chair
Tyler Garrison	Client Development Manager	Geotechnical & Environmental Consultants, Inc.	Business
Shannon Gordon	CEO	River Edge Behavioral Health	Business, Board Chair
Andrea Griner	Vice President of Economic Development	Central Georgia Technical College	Government/Economic Development Representative
Myrtle Habersham	Owner	M.S. Habersham Consulting Services	Business
Sarita Hill	Executive Director	Macon-Bibb EOC	Labor/Apprenticeship/CBO
George McCanless	President & CEO	United Way of Central Georgia	Business
Stacey Mixson	Business Manager	International Brotherhood of Electrical Works (IBEW)	Labor/Apprenticeship/CBO
Jimmy Pitts	Owner	Pitts Electrical Company	Business
Lauren Roan-Parks	Assistant Vice President	GEICO	Business

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Theresa Robinson	Manager	GDOL Macon Career Center	Government/Economic Development Representative
Georgia Rutland	Manager	Georgia Department of Labor	Business
PENDING (VACANT)		Goodwill	Labor/Apprenticeship/CBO
			Business
Ron Shipman	Interim President & CEO	Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce	Business
Shawanda Solomon	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	Georgia Vocational Rehab Office	Government/Economic Development Representative
Angie Walker	Executive Director	Piedmont Health	Business
Todd Wright	Business Manager	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) – Apprenticeship	Labor/Apprenticeship/CBO

Workforce Development Area 11

Member Name	Entity	Title	Board Category
Barbara Mosley	Telamon Corporation	State Director	Migrant Seasonal Workers
Steve Williams	Reliable Global Systems	President/CEO	Business, Chair
Shawanda Solomon	Ga. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Service Area Manager	Rehabilitation Act
Jay Flesher	Flint Energies	Director of Ec. Dev.	Business
Joseph Howard	J&J Heating and Air	Owner	Business
Halley Duncan	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #1316	President	Labor/Apprenticeship Program
Jason Garcia	Jason Garcia Concrete, LLC	Owner	Business
Stacey Mixson	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #1316	Business Manager	Labor/Apprenticeship Program
Angie Gheesling	Dev. Auth. Of Houston Co.	Director	Economic Development
Brian Utley	Morris Bank	Banking Officer	Business
Carolyn Watson	Watson Cable Company	Owner	Business
Jeff Scruggs	Central Georgia Technical College	Executive VP	Adult Ed/Literacy & Post-Secondary
Aundrea Simmons	Georgia Department of Labor	Regional Coordinator Region 6	Wagner-Peyser
Ivan Allen	Central Georgia Technical College	President	Adult Ed/Literacy & Post-Secondary
Wade Yoder	Wade Yoder Storage Buildings	Owner	Business
Nicole Gardner	Legacy-Link, Inc	SCSEP Regional Coordinator	Community-Based Organization
Willie Billingslea	Budget Services & Supplies	Owner	Business

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Daniel Brandon	Job Corp/CHP International, Inc.	Admission Counselor	Title I/Job Corp
Tyrone Evans	Tyrone Evans, CPA	Owner	Business
John Howard	Howard Agency	President – Owner	Business
Valerie Fields	Cosmo Cabinets	HR Admin	Business
Barcado Styles	Fort Valley State University	Asst. Director of Center for Student Engagement	Post-Secondary Education
Tishua Green	Georgia Department of Labor	Manager	Wagner-Peyser
Richard Hinson	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers #1316 Joint Apprenticeship Training	Training Director	Labor/Apprenticeship Program
Clifford Holmes	CJ Holmes & Associates	Owner	Business
Joy Carr	Jones County Family Connection	President/CEO	Community-Based Organization
Lee Tompkins	Hollingsworth & Vose	Owner	Business
Kendrick Butts	Butts Electrical Services	Owner	Business
Keith King	King Management & Consulting	Owner	Business
Patrick Manuel	A Better Way Today, Inc.	Owner	Business

**Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance
Workforce Development Area 10**

Adult Program	Agreed Goals PY22	Agreed Goals PY23
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	77%	78%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	76%	77%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,100	\$8,100
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	73%	75.6%
Measurable Skills Gains	41%	41%
Dislocated Worker	Agreed Goals PY20	Agreed Goals PY21
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	89%	90%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	76%	77%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,300	\$8,300
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	75%	76%
Measurable Skills Gains	42%	42%
Youth	Agreed Goals PY20	Agreed Goals PY21
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	80%	81%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	79%	79%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$2,700	\$2,800
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	61%	61%
Measurable Skills Gains	38%	38%

Workforce Development Area 11

Adult Program	Agreed Goals PY22	Agreed Goals PY23
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	81%	81.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	81.0%	82.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,735	\$8,735
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	79.0%	80.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	56.0%	56.0%
Dislocated Worker	Agreed Goals PY22	PY23
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	83.0%	83.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	82.0%	82.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$10,250	\$10,250
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	76.0%	76.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	56.0%	56.0%
Youth	Agreed Goals PY22	Agreed Goals y23
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	60.0%	60.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	70.0%	70.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$2,900	\$2,900
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	55%	55%
Measurable Skills Gains	38.0%	38.0%

Attachment 3: Comments that Express Disagreement