

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLAN PY 2024 - 2027

Local Workforce Development Area Name:

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Plan Effective Date: July 1, 2025

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The Combined Plan must include the Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the Region's current economic environment and identifies the Regional/Local's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allows the Regional/Local area to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined Regional/Local Plan core and partner programs, which are included in this plan.

This regional component of the plan must discuss how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information including the local planning requirements. Additionally, the chapter must demonstrate alignment with education and economic development. Regional teams are encouraged to use the labor market information that will provide consistency in the data used for regional analysis throughout the state.

A. Provide an analysis of the:

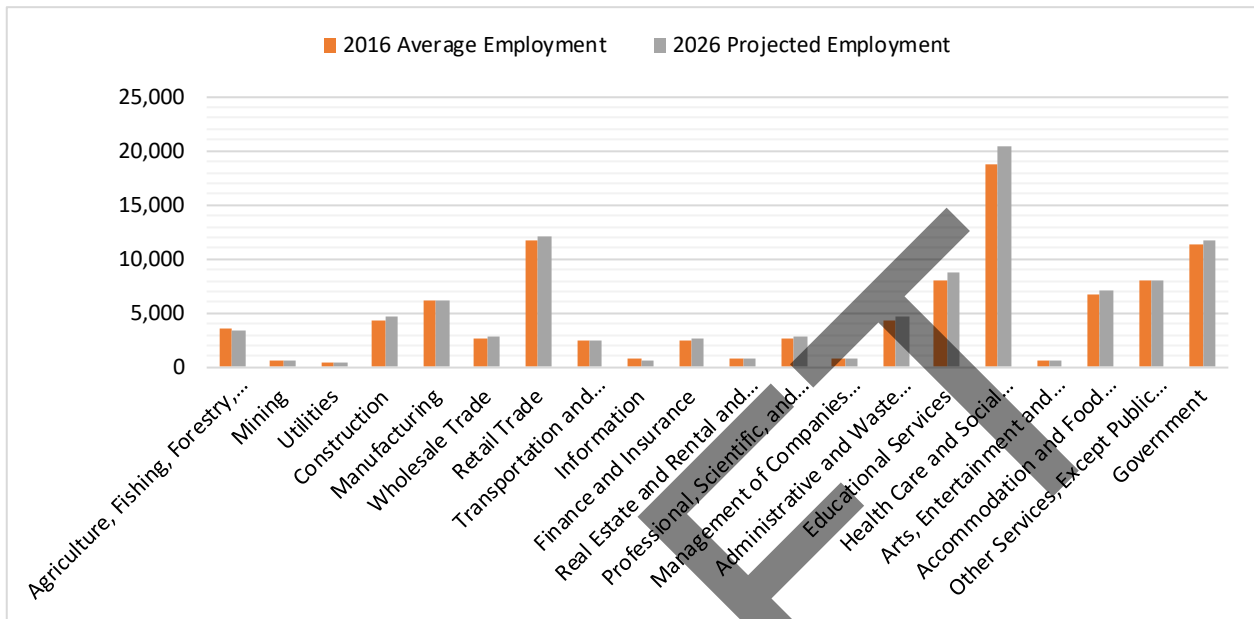
- 1. Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(i));**
 - **What are the targeted industries, high-impact industry clusters, and in-demand occupations in the region?**
 - **What industries and occupations have favorable location quotients?**
 - **What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?**
 - **What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?**
 - **What industries and occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?**
 - **What industries and occupations are considered emerging in the regional economy?**
 - **What sources of supply and demand data were used to determine the targeted industries occupations and skills?**

Table 1 lists the top twelve high-demand occupations by annual openings and star rating, across Healthcare & Social Assistance, Educational Services, Construction, and Finance sectors. Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses remain in high demand in RLMA 6, with continued growth expected due to an aging population, increasing youth populations, and retiring baby boomers.

Table 1: Top 12 High Demand Occupations by Employment through 2026					
Star Rating	Occ. Code	Occupational Title	Annual Total Openings	2019 RLMA 6 Annual Average Wage	2019 State Annual Average Wage
★★★★★	29-1141	Registered Nurses	370	\$63,153	\$63,563
★★★★	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	120	\$42,709	\$48,307
★★★★★	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	110	\$91,931	\$115,059
★★★★★	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	70	\$34,441	\$32,700
★★★★★	29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	40	\$38,923	\$39,481
★★★★	13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	90	\$58,336	\$60,431
★★★★	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	70	\$45,044	\$51,806
★★★★★	29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	30	\$142,953	\$105,336
★★★★★	29-1123	Physical Therapists	30	\$108,980	\$159,889
★★★★★	11-3031	Financial Managers	30	\$106,946	\$129,849
★★★★	47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	30	\$49,852	\$54,935
★★★★★	11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	20	\$99,861	\$100,705
<i>Source: LWC Regional Labor Market Data (RLMA) 6, LWC – Office of Occupational Services</i>					

Figure 1 projects the industries with the highest employment growth by 2026, aligning with the data in **Table 1**. The Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services, and Construction industries are expected to see the most growth, driven by the aging baby boomer population requiring increased care.

Figure 1: 2016-2026 (Long-term) Industry Projections for RMLA 6, Two-Digit NAICS



Long-term projections indicate the industries with the largest absolute employment growth, including Health Care and Social Assistance, Construction, Educational Services, Mining, and other services, as shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2: 2026 Industry Projections for RMLA 6, Highest Forecasted Growth		
Industry Sectors	Employment Growth	Growth Percent
Healthcare and Social Assistance	1,689	9.0%
Mining	122	20.9%
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	61	8.1%
Construction	345	8.1%
Educational Services	593	7.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	504	7.6%
Administrative and Waste Services	316	7.3%

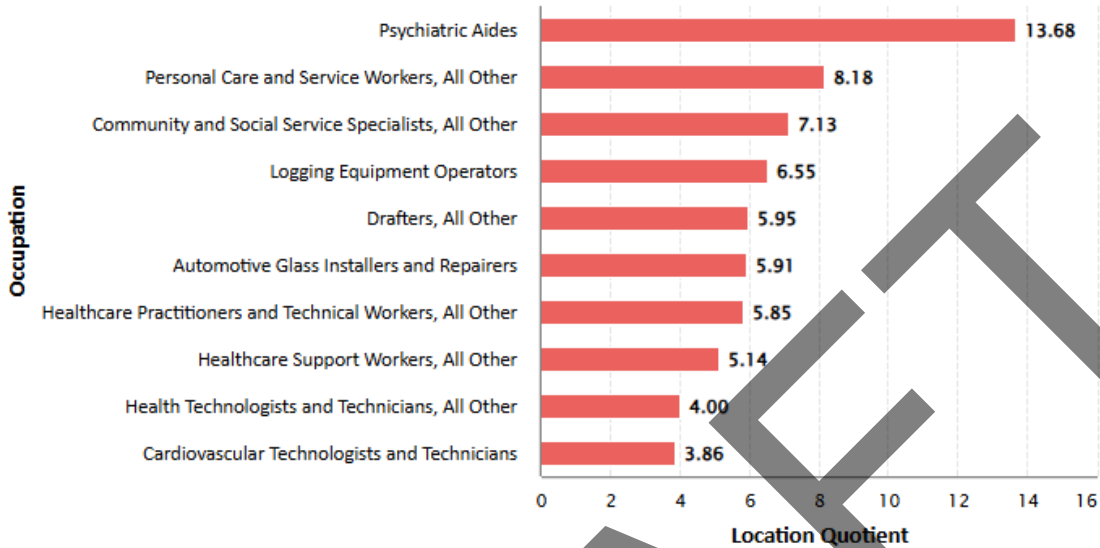
Source: LWC Regional Labor Market Data (RLMA) 6, LWC – Office of Occupational Services

Table 3 highlights occupations projected to have the highest percentage growth. Demand is further reflected by the LWC’s Star Rating System, with three, four, and five stars indicating in-demand occupations.

Table 3: 2026 Occupational Projections for RMLA 6, Highest Forecasted Growth Jobs			
Star Rating	Occ. Code	Occupational Title	10 Year % Job Growth
★★★★	11-2021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	20.00%
★★★★★	11-3031	Financial Managers	13.04%
★★★★	11-3121	Human Resources Managers	16.67%
★★★★★	11-9032	Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	7.41%
★★★★★	11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	7.69%
★★★★	11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	9.09%
★★★★★	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	8.40%
★★★★	13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	30.00%
★★★★★	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	7.50%
★★★★	15-1141	Database Administrators	33.33%
★★★★★	15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	14.29%
★★★★	15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	16.67%
★★★★	21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	20.00%
★★★★★	21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	9.09%
★★★★	21-1094	Community Health Workers	25.00%
★★★★★	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	8.11%
★★★★	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	8.33%
★★★★	25-2051	Special Education Teachers, Preschool	10.00%
★★★★	27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	20.00%
★★★★★	29-1051	Pharmacists	7.41%
★★★★★	29-1123	Physical Therapists	16.67%
★★★★★	29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	9.09%
★★★★★	29-1141	Registered Nurses	11.97%
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★★★★★	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	16.67%

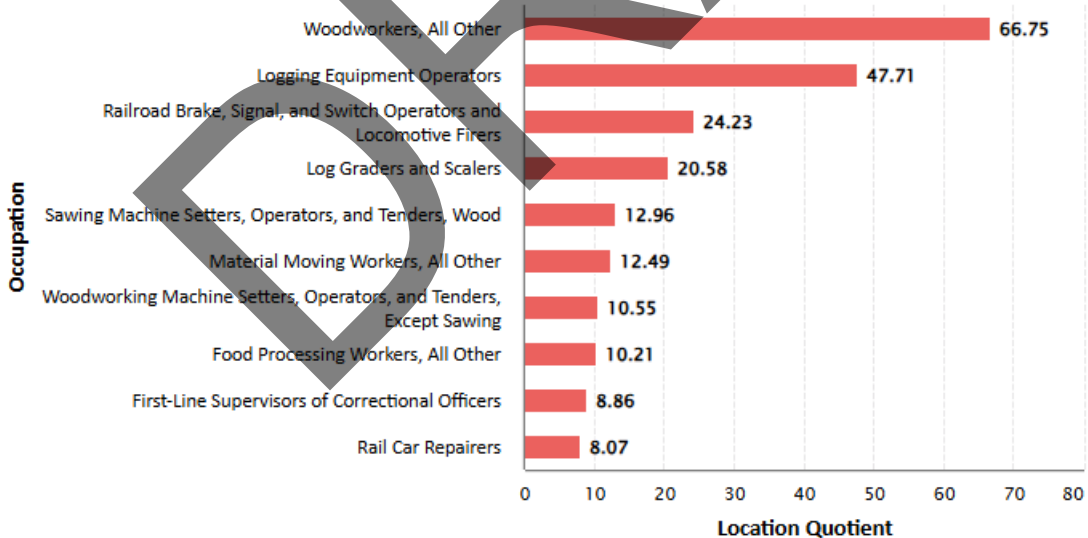
Figure 2, based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data from May 2023, shows the top three occupations with the highest location quotient in Alexandria, LA: Psychiatric Aides, Personal Care and Service Workers, and Community and Social Service Specialists. **Figure 3** reveals the top three occupations for the Central Louisiana nonmetropolitan area during the same period: Woodworkers, Logging Equipment Operators, and Railroad Brake, Signal, and Switch Operators and Locomotive Firers.

Figure 2: May 2023 occupations with the highest location quotient in Alexandria, LA
Occupations with the highest location quotient in Alexandria, LA, May 2023



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 3: May 2023 occupations with the highest location quotient in Central Louisiana nonmetropolitan area
Occupations with the highest location quotient in Central Louisiana nonmetropolitan area, May 2023



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Table 4 compares employment changes in two-digit North American Classification System (NAICS) sectors within Region 6 between 2016 and 2026, offering insights into workforce demand. Over this period, 16 of the 20 sectors saw employment growth, indicating a steady economic foundation for the region. Health Care & Social Assistance is projected to grow by 9%, the second-largest sector increase, adding 1,689 jobs.

In 2020, the Alexandria MSA is unlikely to experience significant negative changes and could see improvements in Mining and other sectors, especially if interest in the Austin Chalk, an oil play increases. (Louisiana Economic Outlook, 2020)

	2016	2026	Change	% of Jobs Lost	% of Jobs Gained
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	96,893	101,795	4,902	-----	5.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	3,495	3,445	-50	-1.4%	
Mining	585	707	122		20.9%
Utilities	444	456	12		2.7%
Construction	4,274	4,619	345		8.1%
Manufacturing	6,246	6,227	-19	-0.3%	
Wholesale Trade	2,701	2,864	163		6%
Retail Trade	11,720	12,134	414		3.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	2,460	2,501	41		1.7%
Information	712	645	-67	-9.4%	
Finance & Insurance	2,558	2,584	26		1.0%
Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	710	771	61		8.6%
Professional & Technical Services	2,616	2,765	149		5.7%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	741	800	59		8%
Administrative & Waste Services	4,308	4,624	316		7.3%
Educational Services	8,071	8,664	593		7.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	18,689	20,378	1,689		9%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	646	692	46		7.1%
Accommodation & Food Services	6,635	7,139	504		7.6%
Other Services	8,023	8,021	-2	0.0%	
Public Administration	11,259	11,759	500		4.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Jobs lost – 138 Jobs gained – 4,902 Net change – 4,764

Table 4 shows employment data for each of the 20 two-digit NAICS sectors, but it's important to note that within any sector, some employers may be hiring while others may not, or even be laying off employees.

The four key industry drivers in the central Louisiana region, based on higher wages and large employment numbers, are Healthcare, Manufacturing, Construction, and Administrative and Waste Services. Although Retail Trade (NAICS 44-45) employs many individuals, its low educational requirements and wage potential excluded it as an industry driver.

Table 5, provided by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, outlines short-term (2-year) employment projections by industry (2-digit NAICS sectors) for Region 6. Short-term projections (2016–2019) in **Table 3** reveal some contradictions when compared to actual employment changes in **Table 4**. According to **Table 5**, the subsectors expected to see the highest growth in the long-term (through 2026) are Mining (20.9%), Transportation and Warehousing (14.1%), and Health Care & Social Assistance (9%).

Table 5: Projected Short-Term & Long -Term Employment Growth – Region 6				
Industry Sector	Employment Change 2016 – 2019	Employment Growth Rate 2016-2019	Employment Change 2016 - 2026	Employment Growth Rate 2016-2026
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	+8	.2%	-50	-1.4%
Mining	+56	9.6%	+122	20.9%
Utilities	-11	-2.5%	12	2.7%
Construction	120	2.8%	345	8.1%
Manufacturing	-560	-9.0%	-19	-2.8%
Wholesale Trade	-16	-.06%	163	6.0%
Retail Trade	-198	-1.7%	414	3.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	62	2.5%	346	14.1%
Information	-12	-1.7%	-67	-9.4%
Finance and Insurance	-3	-.1%	26	1.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	-25	-3.5%	61	8.6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1	0.0%	149	5.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-34	-4.6%	59	8.0%
Administrative and Waste Services	-359	-8.3%	316	7.3%
Educational Services	+219	2.7%	593	7.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	799	4.3%	1,689	9.0%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	12	1.9%	46	7.1%
Accommodation and Food Service	240	3.6%	504	7.6%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	-493	-6.1%	-2	0.0%
Government	260	2.3%	500	4.4%

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission LMI data

2. Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(ii));

Table 6 shows that 6.51% of current job vacancies in Region 6 listed on the LWC's HiRE system require at least a high school diploma or equivalent (HiSET). Most employers (78.18%) do not specify educational requirements. However, given the high demand in the Health Care industry, many of these positions likely require at least an associate degree or a Vocational/Technical diploma/degree.

Rank	Education Level	# Job Openings	% of Job Openings	# of Potential Candidates	% of Potential Candidates
1	No Minimum Education Requirement	287	7.11%	0	N/A
2	Less than High School	0	N/A	394	5.69%
3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	263	6.51%	2,818	40.66%
4	1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	5	0.12%	627	9.05%
5	2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	0	N/A	500	7.21%
6	3 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	0	N/A	233	3.36%
7	Vocational School Certificate	51	1.26%	668	9.64%
8	Associate degree	138	3.42%	616	8.89%
9	Bachelor's Degree	83	2.06%	793	11.44%
10	Master's Degree	20	0.50%	236	3.41%
11	Doctorate Degree	9	0.22%	30	0.43%
12	Specialized Degree (e.g., MD, DDS)	25	0.62%	14	0.20%
13	Not Specified	3,156	78.18%	2	0.03%

Of the advertised job openings on Louisiana Workforce Commission labor exchange service, **Table 7** shows that 88.67% of employers in Region 6 are seeking candidates with 1–5 years of experience, but only 13.67% of potential candidates possess that level of experience. In contrast, 66.42% of candidates have 5–10+ years of experience. This suggests that factors such as an oversupply of experienced workers, recognized credentials, or experience in declining industries/occupations may be barriers preventing these workers from securing employment.

Experience Requirements	# of Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	Percentage of Potential Candidates
Entry Level	411	10.18%	0	N/A
Less than 1 year	100	2.48%	1383	19.95%
1 Year to 2 Years	3,416	84.62%	282	4.07%
2 Years to 5 Years	104	2.58%	662	9.55%
5 Years to 10 Years	6	0.15%	936	13.89%
More than 10 Years	0	NA	3,641	52.53%

3. 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 (§ 679.560(a)(2));

- **What are the targeted career pathway clusters in the region?**
- **What are the skills that are in demand in the region?**
- **How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses?**

As indicated by the 2026 Occupational Projections for RMLA 6, Highest Forecasted Growth Jobs in **Table 3** provided for **Question A. 1.** and supplied below the Targeted Career Pathways within Region 6 are Education and training, Finance, Government and public administration, Health science, Hospitality and tourism, Information technology.

Table 3: 2026 Occupational Projections for RMLA 6, Highest Forecasted Growth Jobs			
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★★★★★	29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	25.00%
★★★★★	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	16.67%

Table 8 lists the top advertised certifications required by employers in Region 6, as indicated in their job openings.

Table 8 – Top Advertised Job Certification, Region 6		
Advertised Certification Group	Advertised Certification Sub-Category	Job Opening Match Count
American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications	Nursing	3045
Nursing Credentials and Certifications	Nursing	2057
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Ground Transportation	267
Social Worker Credentials & Certification	Social and Human Services	210
National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)	Medical Treatment and Therapy	177
American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Designations	Medical Professional	75
American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) Certification	Nursing	75
American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) Certifications	Medical Professional	54
American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) Certifications	Financial Specialists	51
State Licensed Counselors	Counseling	46

Table 9 highlights the educational achievements of Region 6's population, including a younger cohort who may still be in postsecondary education. Educational attainment among 18 to 24-year-olds varies locally, reflecting demographics, the strength of regional economies, and dominant sectors in those economies. Over 70% of this population in Region 6 has at least a high school diploma and/or some college education, etc.

Table 9: Educational Attainment of the Population Aged 18 to 24 years, Region 6	
Population 18 to 24 years	# of Individuals
Less than high school graduate	2,377
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	4,145
Some college or Associate's degree	2,851
Bachelor's degree or high	1,445
<i>Source: 2017-2021 ACS 5-year Survey, S1501</i>	

Table 10 highlights the educational attainment of Region 6's population aged 25 and older, a group less likely to be currently engaged in the educational system. The data shows that over 66,976 individuals in this age group have at least a high school diploma/equivalency or higher educational attainment, and more than 20,000 have earned a bachelor's degree.

Table 10: Educational Attainment of the Population Aged 25 and over, Region 6	
Population 25 years and over	# of Individuals
Less than high school graduate	18,293
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	66,976
Some college or Associate's degree	33,251
Bachelor's degree	20,355
<i>Source: 2017-2021 ACS 5-year Survey, S1501</i>	

4. Regional workforce considering current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iv) and § 679.560(a)(3)).

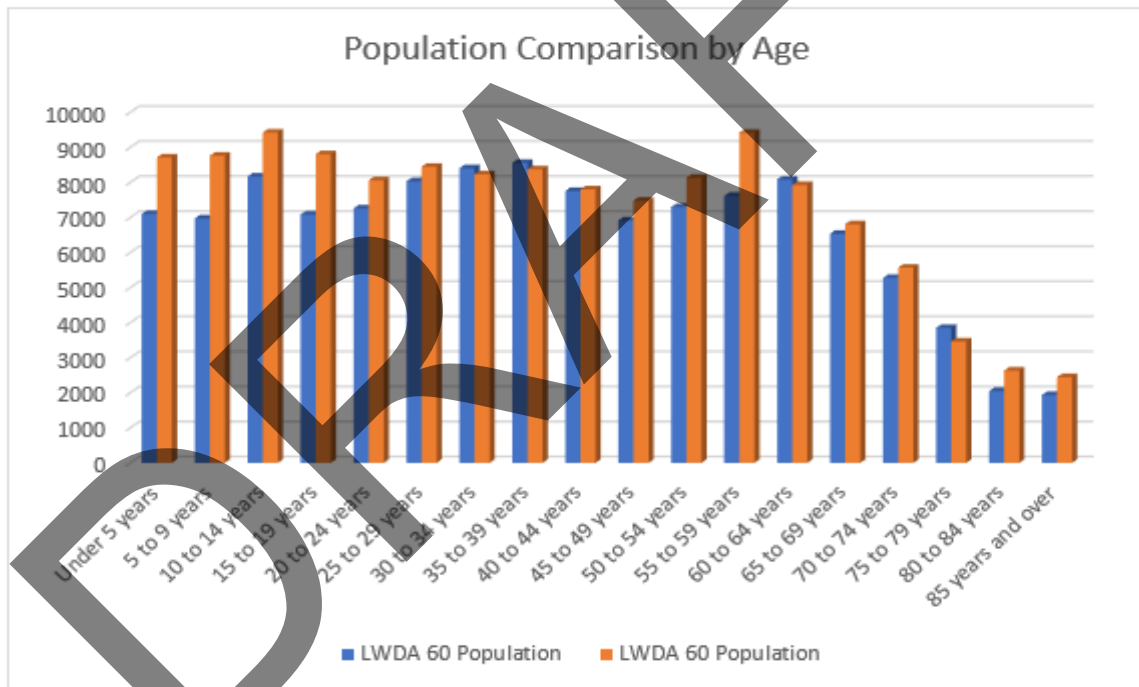
- **How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply and occupational demand?**
- **What special populations exist in the region, what is their magnitude, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?**

The growth of the labor force is limited by population growth, as shown in **Figure 4**. The 55-64 age group constitutes a significant portion of Region 6 and Louisiana’s population. As many in this group approach retirement over the next decade, the Baby Boomer effect will significantly impact the workforce. However, the labor force will remain steady, balanced by the large population of 15-24-year-olds with varying levels of education (i.e., diplomas, certificates, college degrees) entering the workforce full-time.

As shown in **Figure 4**, Region 6 has a higher percentage of the population in the "prime working years" (ages 25-34) compared to the state. LWDA 61 has a higher percentage of youth aged 5-14, individuals aged 25-34, and those aged 45-54 than the rest of the region or state. Meanwhile, LWDA 60 has a higher percentage of young adults aged 15-24, contributing to future labor force stability.

Figure 4 – Population Comparison By Age (Louisiana, Area 60 & 61)

Source: American Community Survey, 2018 Population Estimates



According to the ACS Demographics and Housing Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate, **Table 11** shows that Region 6 is relatively balanced in terms of race, except for the Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, with a slight variation in numbers of two or more races categories. LWDA 61 has nearly six times the Asian population of LWDA 60. With Louisiana's total Asian population at 96,274, Rapides parish represents about 2.7% of that demographic.

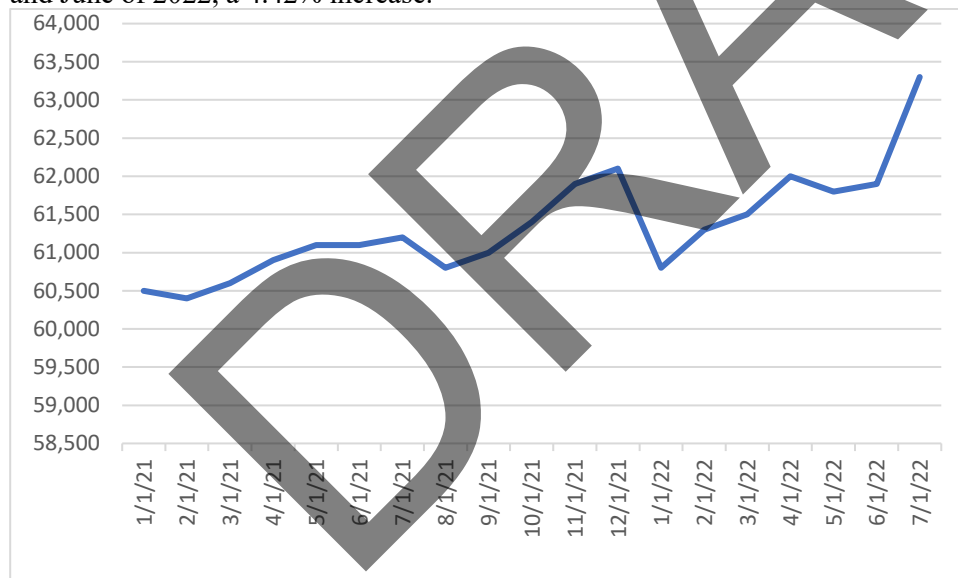
Table 11: Race and Hispanic Origin, 2020 Race	LWDA 60		LWDA 61	
	#	%	#	%
Total:	91,742	100.00%	98,792	100.00%
White alone	60,929	66.41%	60,593	61.33%
Black or African American alone	21,126	23.03%	29,008	29.36%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	617	0.67%	675	0.68%
Asian alone	914	1.00%	1,438	1.46%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	38	0.04%	22	0.02%
Some Other Race alone	141	0.15%	298	0.30%
Population of two or more races:	2,407	2.62%	3,316	3.36%
Hispanic or Latino	5,570	6.07%	3,442	3.48%

Source: ACS Demographics/US Census Bureau

Employment and Unemployment

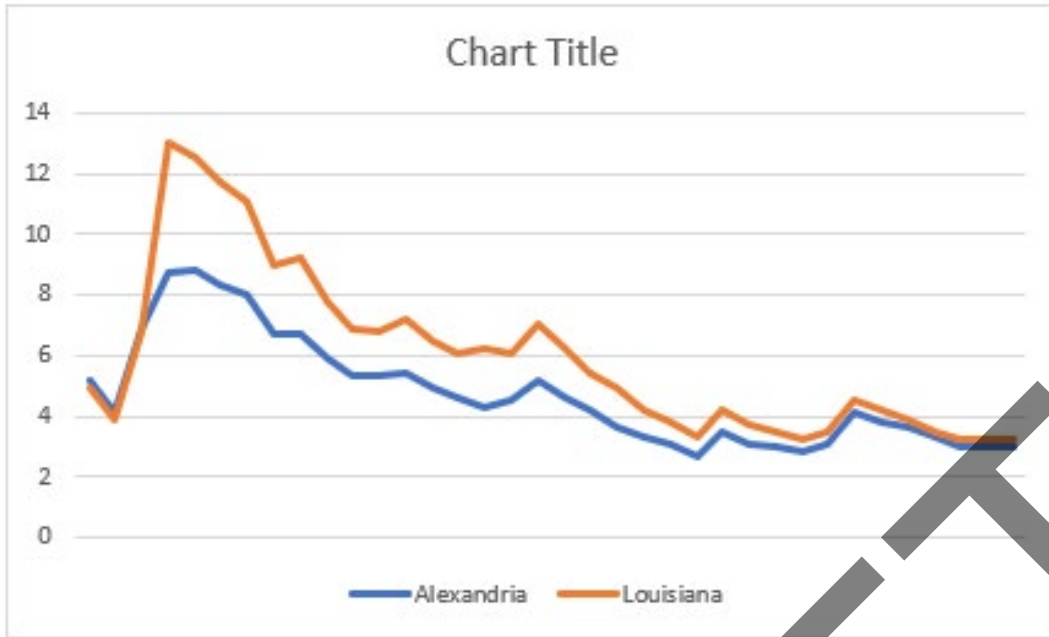
Figure 4: Total Nonfarm Employment, Not-Seasonally Adjusted, Alexandria Region (January 2021-June 2022)

The Alexandria MSA's seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 2,800 jobs between January of 2021 and June of 2022, a 4.42% increase.



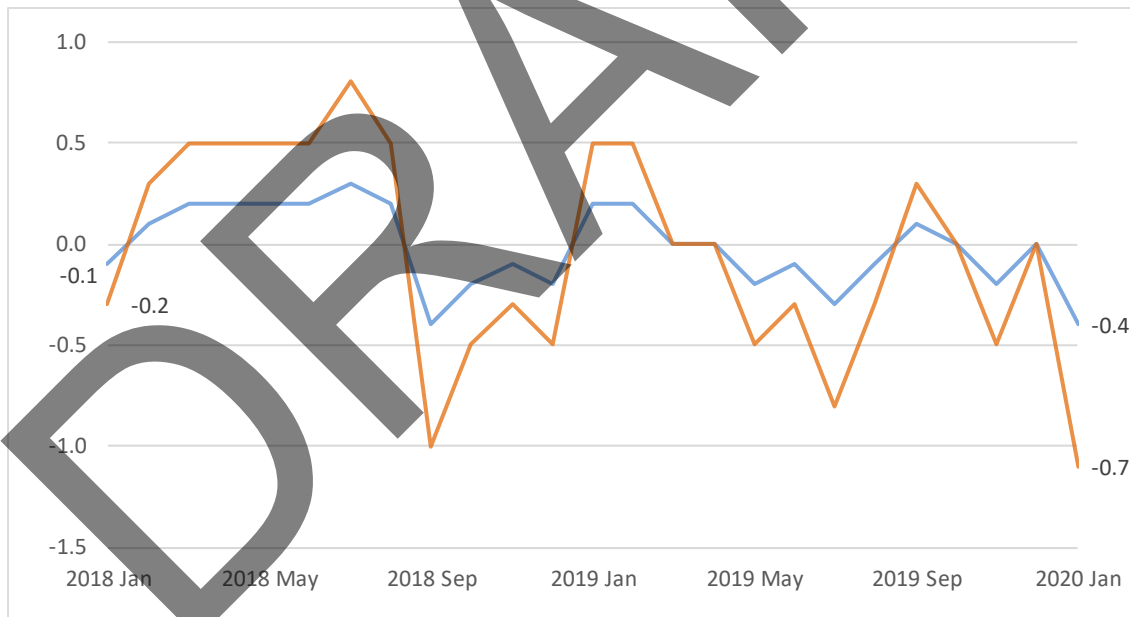
Source: FRED Economic Data-St. Louis FED

Figure 5: Not-Seasonally Adjusted, Unemployment Rate in Louisiana and Alexandria Region (January 2020-December 2022)



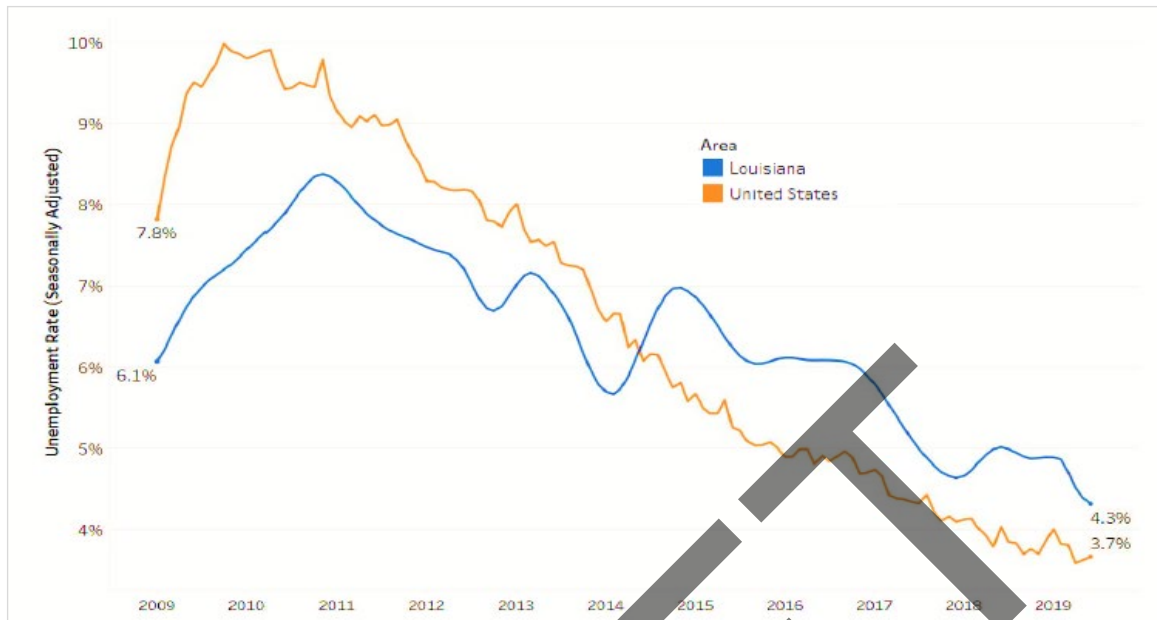
Source: FRED Economic Data-St. Louis FED

Figure 6: Over the Year Change in Total Nonfarm and Private Sector Jobs, Not-Seasonally Adjusted, Alexandria Region (January 2018 – January 2020)



Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program.

Figure 7: United States and Louisiana Employed to Unemployed Ratio, January 2009 to June 2019



Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) and Current Population Survey (CPS) Programs

Between January 2009 and June 2019 Louisiana’s unemployment decreased from 6.1 to 4.3 percent. During this time, the number of unemployed persons decreased from 126,727 to 90,492 and the civilian labor force increased from 2,088,301 to 2,097,545.

Table 12 reveals the youth drop-out rate in Region 6. Several parishes have improved the drop-out rates in grades 9-12 over a 5-year period. Youth who leave the educational system without a high school diploma or equivalent will be unprepared to secure self-sufficient employment without additional secondary or post-secondary training. However, as dropouts, they may qualify for services under WIOA funding as an Out of School Youth. Ongoing youth outreach efforts in Region 6 aim to better prepare these young people for the workforce and their future.

Table 12: Region 6 School Drop-Out Rate, by Parish Grades 9-12						
Parish	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	Difference 2016-2021
Avoyelles	34	54	18	13	7	-27
Catahoula	3	5	3	15	4	1
Concordia	17	18	28	33	15	-2
Grant	26	3	2	3	2	-24
LaSalle	0	2	1	2	1	1
Rapides	371	283	217	188	158	-218
Winn	19	16	11	10	16	-3

Source: Louisiana Dept. of Education, Louisiana Believes

In Region 6, 16% of civilian non-institutionalized residents aged 18 to 64 live with one or more disabilities. Residents with disabilities represent 15% of the unemployed and 8% of the employed population, while 34% of those not in the labor force have at least one disability. **Table 13** highlights the populations with disabilities in the labor force. Note that disability characteristics are not mutually exclusive, meaning one individual may have multiple disabilities.

Table 13: Employment Status by Disability Status, Population Aged 18 to 64 in Region 6						
Disability Characteristic	In Labor Force				Not in Labor Force	
	Employed		Unemployed		Disability	No Disability
	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability		
Avoyelles	1,900	12,813	140	944	2,486	4,270
Catahoula	144	3,279	23	190	499	1,138
Concordia	270	5,926	28	651	785	2,545
Grant	438	6,487	79	543	1,073	2,525
LaSalle	338	4,236	23	288	808	2,188
Rapides	3,364	46,584	640	3,761	8,144	14,532
Winn	321	4,160	62	249	953	1,655

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Yr, Employment Status by Disability C18120

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- B. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iii)). Plans must answer the following questions:**
- **How will the workforce partners convene employers, foundations and regional institutions to help lead sector partnerships and make coordinated investments?**
 - **Identify the established and active industry sector partnerships in the region.**
 - **What other sector-based partnerships exist in the region? If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in planning?**
 - **What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?**
 - **What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?**

Region 6 enhancing industry sector partnership(s) by developing career pathways in manufacturing, healthcare, and IT. Workforce partners will connect employers, foundations, and regional institutions, focusing on high-demand job recruitment while supporting training and work-based learning. Region 6 will collaborate with foundations and institutions to drive workforce development initiatives further. Our established and active industry sector partnerships focus on manufacturing, healthcare, and Information Technology.

Other than the active industry sector partnerships listed above, there are currently no other sector-based partnerships in Region 6.

Region 6 applies LWC's "Pillar Approach," which emphasizes maintaining relationships with sector and business partners and fostering ongoing and progressive training opportunities. These sector partnerships are crucial for the successful implementation of career pathways for jobseekers and employers in central Louisiana. This approach aligns with LWC's vision to leverage WIOA options and create opportunities for upskilling employees. Our workforce staff work to advance these initiatives, bridging jobseekers with in-demand occupations in key industry sectors.

Region 6 has integrated Jump Start, a statewide and regionally coordinated dual enrollment program. The Workforce Development Boards continue to guide, recommend, and approve targeted demand occupations and training programs aimed at addressing regional skill gaps.

A key example of strengthening regional partnerships is the collaboration between Economic Development and Workforce Development Boards through staff sharing and cooperative agreements. This effort has established a neutral convener with enhanced capacity to build sector partnerships. The group's planning initiatives validate data, gather industry feedback, identify sector priorities, and promote economic growth.

This regional component of the plan must describe the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers.

A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (§ 679.560(a)(4)). Plans must respond to the following:

- **Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region.**
- **Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce including individuals with barriers to employment.**
- **Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide activities to address the needs of employers.**
- **How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?**
- **Summarize the commitments of each program partner to implement the selected strategies.**

Strengths and Weaknesses of Region 6 Workforce Development Activities

Strengths	Weaknesses
Both LWDAs have good working relationships with their required and optional partners. Both LWDAs act regionally and collaborate with each other on a frequent basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the public still thinks we are the unemployment office. • Perception is the battle as most in the community do not know what we do or the services we can provide. • The lack of a consistent marketing campaign has diminished our ability to develop and keep relationships with job seekers and employers. • Limited funding for advertising and marketing the services of the American Job Centers.
Title 1 performance goals are the primary focus for our region with staff willing to meet the challenge of serving the people of our area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional training opportunities for staff • LWDAs are not always able to meet the needs of individuals with barriers, often due to employability skills or “soft skills.” For employers, these foundational skills are the key to job-readiness. • Employees/case managers are limited in finding low or no cost resources to teach/improve these essential skills.
Both LWDAs have exceptionally skilled and experienced staff that are trained to assist our customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cross-training within the regions and with our partners is much needed.
Both LWDAs are working to be more creative with program design and implementation to increase productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary realities and restrictions, combined with the refocus and expansion of services under WIOA, have required our area to reassess and reconfigure staffing to ensure that there is a depth of resources and coverage available for all programs.
There are excellent institutions for post-secondary training in the region. I.e., colleges, vocational/technical, and certificate/licensing.	Most of the post-secondary institutions are located in one parish of the region and public transportation is limited to metro areas
There are a lot of experienced workers in ‘career jobs’ in Region 6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obsolete and “mismatched” skills / education of workers vs. the needs of existing open positions and projected industry needs.
This region has a large population of youth to take over jobs as Baby Boomers retire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated levels of unemployment for Region 6 youth. We also have a significant number of dropouts in the region. • Employer engagement and involvement in training a new workforce, work experiences, OJTs, etc. • Employers will be losing tremendous depth of knowledge if younger workers are not hired and do not learn from more experienced workers.

Business Services has made significant inroads into market penetration in the region	Small employers usually employ dated practices and have limited awareness of how to strategically anticipate their future workforce needs. Good temporary staff are lost due to lack of permanent employment opportunities.
Workforce programs and funding are provided by the state and federal government to help employers up skill their current workers.	Many employers continue to be unaware of these programs.

Additional specifics regarding operations and service delivery to all the aforementioned initiatives are further detailed in the regional strategies section, as well as the local area portions of this combined regional plan.

Partner Agencies

Within Region 6 there are MOU's in place with required partners and that list continues to expand as we all seek to ensure the most effective and efficient means of serving the community, in particular, special populations and the hardest to serve. Region 6 works closely with mandated partner agencies in collaboration and coordination of direct and complimentary service delivery.

LWDA 60: 6th Planning District

PARTNERS	ROLE / RESOURCE CONTRIBUTION	FT/PT?
Louisiana Workforce Commission	<p>Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of services including job search assistance, help getting a job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers.</p> <p>Unemployment Insurance services: services to help jobseekers who are experiencing unemployment to access benefits and resolve issues while assisting with job search, etc.</p> <p>Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA): Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program is to help Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants return to work faster through personal case management and job matching.</p> <p>TAA: The Trade Adjustment Assistance program provides services to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced because of international competition. TAA services, which are offered at no cost, may include training awards, job search and relocation allowances, income support and health coverage tax credits.</p> <p>Veteran services provide employment assistance and training opportunities to Veterans and other eligible individuals, mainly job assistance, job and training referral and job placement.</p>	Full-time
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services	Employment and Training Services under the Rehabilitation Act and WIOA LRS provides printed informational materials and staff, as needed, to assist in providing services to eligible customers.	Part-time
LWDA60 Workforce Operations Dept. LCAA, Inc. One Stop Operator	Adult services Dislocated Worker services Youth services	Full-time
LWDA60 Workforce Development Board	Provide oversight of the Workforce Development system and One-Stop Operator	Full-time
CSBG	Provides receptionist staff assistance and provides services through the Community Services Block Grant, including energy and housing assistance	Full-time
Dept. of Children and Family Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Part-time
Area Agency on Aging AYUDA & SCEP	Title V Senior Community Services Employment Program, provides reception staff, who is also cross trained to assist customers in accessing HIRE	Part-time
Central Louisiana Technical College	Title II Adult Education Career and Technical Education	Part-time
National Farmworker Jobs Program	Referral system in place for those customers	Part-time

Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Employment and Training	Referral system in place for those customers	Part-time
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LWDA 61-Rapides

Table 15: LWDA 61 One-Stop Partners, Roles, and Resource Contributions		
PARTNERS	ROLE / RESOURCE CONTRIBUTION	FT/PT
Louisiana Workforce Commission	<p>Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: Employment Service focuses on providing a variety of services including job search assistance, help getting a job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers.</p> <p>Unemployment Insurance services: services to help jobseekers who are experiencing unemployment to access benefits and resolve issues while assisting with job search, etc.</p> <p>Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA): Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program is to help Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants return to work faster through personal case management and job matching.</p> <p>TAA: The Trade Adjustment Assistance program provides services to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced because of international competition. TAA services, which are offered at no cost, may include training awards, job search and relocation allowances, income support and health coverage tax credits</p>	Full-time
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services	<p>Employment and Training Services under the Rehabilitation Act and WIOA Ticket to Work</p> <p>Provides comprehensive rehabilitation services that go far beyond those found in routine job training programs. LRS offers individuals with disabilities a wide range of services designed to provide them with the skills, resources, attitudes, and expectations needed to compete in the interview process, get the job, keep the job, and develop a lifetime career.</p>	Part-time
Central Louisiana Technical Community College	Title II Adult Education Career and Technical Education	Part-time
Rapides Workforce Development Board	Policies and oversight of the One-Stop Operator	Full-time
Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JCSG)	<p>Provides individualized career and training-related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans.</p> <p>Veteran services provide employment assistance and training opportunities to Veterans and other eligible individuals, mainly job assistance, job and training referral and job placement.</p>	Full-time
Rapides Parish – Ofc. of Economic & Workforce Development	Fiscal and programmatic oversight of workforce development programs within the One-Stop Centers	Full-time
Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc.	Community Services Block Grant: provides supportive services to help low-income individuals become or remain self-sufficient. Each agency offers a range of services which can include assistance with transportation, housing, income management, energy costs, nutrition, health care, emergency food and shelter, employment, and training.	Full-time
Dept. of Children and Family Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Full-time
Rapides Parish School Board	<p>Jump Start Initiative: Program prepares students to lead productive adult lives, with the option to continue their education and training after high school in addition to earning certifications that will create a pathway to prosperity upon graduation.</p> <p>PK – 12: teaching prekindergarten to grade 12 students in a school that is accessible to all or most people</p>	Not located in Center. A community partnership.
Area Agency on Aging AYUDA & SCSEP	Title V Senior Community Services Employment Program, provides reception staff, who is also cross trained to assist customers in accessing HiRE	Part-time
Job Corps	Employment and Training Services	Part-time
Motivation Education and Training (M.E.T), Inc.	National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), WIOA Sec. 167	Not located in Center. A community partnership.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Employment and Training	Referral system in place for those customers	Part-time
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Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth

WIOA called for the elimination of “sequence of service” provision in Title I programs in accordance with a more integrated service delivery model across partner programs. The new model connects partners to clients at any entry point where assessment occurs. The process is further driven by co-enrollment across all active partner programs, as appropriate. The process modification allows for a more holistic approach to serving these populations offering more comprehensive, individualized, and seamless services.

Individual Training Accounts continue to be specifically targeted to assist participants maximize their earning potential in a career field of their choosing. This is not an exhaustive list but is a broad sampling.

Business Administration	Human Resources	Radiology Technician
CDL Class A & B	Licensed Practical Nurse	Education
Engineering	Medical Assistant	Welding Technology
Certified Nursing Assistant	Pharmacy Technician	IBEW
Emergency Medical Technician	Information Technician 4	Registered Nurse
Machine Operator	Patient Care Technician	Forest Technology
Industrial Technology		

Employer-Based Training is an area where the region will continue to work toward increasing opportunities. In a statewide study, 92.4% of those that complete On-the-Job Training (OJT) are still retained on the job after 12 months. The region works together to ensure a seamless process for employers by employing MOU’s to serve regional employers whenever necessary.

Registered Apprenticeships are a growing trend for which the region definitively sees value in promoting and supporting. Programs, such as the Electrical Apprenticeship Program, have grown in recent years. LWC has developed pre-screening tools for all existing regional and local apprenticeship initiatives to assist in expediting the review of applicants funding eligibility whenever needed.

Our Adult Education partner, Central Louisiana Technical College, works in close coordination with their respective local areas to conduct the heavy lift of closing the education gap for many of our adult citizens. Interactive kiosks have been installed in all the comprehensive centers.

Veterans and Disability Services are available by appointment to assist the Centers serving their Veteran clients, informing partner staff, and collaborating to better serve the veteran job seekers. Additionally, there are opportunities for targeted workshops and career fairs to better serve these special and unique populations and to bring awareness to businesses of the benefits of hiring special populations.

Ex-offenders are being better served through multiple initiatives, including the Re-entry Courts, Drug Courts, Day Reporting Centers, and others. There has been the rebranding of ex-offenders to Previously Incarcerated and employers as Second Chance Employers. Significant efforts have been made to identify and educate employers about the benefits of hiring this special population. Additional support for this population includes, committed WIOA funding for Transitional Jobs, career services, connection to partners providing wrap-around services. These expanded partnerships have led to WIOA staff co-location in some prisons and parole centers and creating a pathway for the build-out of the State Reentry program under the Second Chance Act. These efforts have resulted in more effective coordination with prison transitional case managers.

B. Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region (§ 679.510(a)(1)(vi)). Plans must respond to the following questions:

- **What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?**
- **What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?**

Regional organizations that currently could provide supportive services are:

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services/DSS
- Louisiana Department of Education
- The Salvation Army
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Office Veteran Affairs

Region 6 has policies and procedures that have been established to promote supportive service delivery. Supportive services are carefully coordinated locally between partners to ensure maximum availability to the community and avoidance of duplication of services. Supportive services that are available from the partners are in accordance with each partner's mandates, regulations, local policies, and funding availability. Examples of supportive services that are available within the region include:

- Transportation assistance
- Housing assistance
- Utilities assistance
- Food security assistance
- Training assistance: books, supplies, fees, tools, uniforms
- Childcare assistance
- Needs-related payments
- Other supportive services defined by the individual need to participate in the workforce or in training.

Local workforce areas incorporate into their local policies the verification of supportive services that are available in the local area at the time of each individual request for such funded services as they are frequently subject to change due to funding availability.

C. Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and WIOA service providers (§ 679.510(a)(1)(vii)). Plans must answer the following questions:

- **What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?**
- **What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses were invited to participate but declined?**

Economic development organizations, WIOA service providers, and businesses who are actively engaged within our region are; The Rapides Foundation, Louisiana Economic Development District, LWDB 60 and 61, Chambers of Commerce, and Community Action Agencies.

Currently, in Region 6, there are no economic development organizations, WIOA service providers, or businesses who were invited to participate and declined.

D. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate (§ 679.510(a)(1)(v)).

Region 6's administrative costs are the necessary and allowable costs incurred for the overall management and administration of the WIOA operations but not related to the services of participants and employers. These funds are prohibited from being more than 10% of the funds available during the contract period and include both personnel and non-personnel costs as well as both direct and indirect costs.

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This section will outline how the Local Board(s) will coordinate the regional workforce, education and economic development activities with regional activities that are carried out in the local areas. The responses must ensure alignment with other plans as well as illustrate that businesses, education, and workforce development stakeholders have provided input and are involved in the development of the strategies.

- A. Describe the local strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth (§ 679.560(a)(5)). Describe how this aligns with the State of Louisiana’s vision and principles.**

Strategic Vision

The only way the LWDBs that make up Region 6 and Louisiana will have a successful workforce development system is to subscribe to the same vision and goals as the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Therefore, our regional vision is:

Region 6 envisions a workforce system that will provide pathways for all people of Louisiana, including individuals receiving public assistance, the unemployed or underemployed, those deficient in basic skills, persons with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and others who have significant barriers to employment. All will have access to education, training, and supportive services needed to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

Industries that once required their entry-level workers to have only a high school diploma are increasingly requiring that their workers also have specialized occupational skills. Sector strategies are integrated into Region 6’s approach that aims to help workers obtain these skills through targeted training programs and other services developed in direct response to employer demand. Research completed by the Federal Department of Labor (dol.gov) has shown that sector strategies can increase earnings and improve job quality for the under-skilled workforce. Further, businesses that have participated in sector strategies have credited the initiatives with increasing their productivity and reducing their operating costs.

Region 6 strategic vision seeks to support job seekers and employers, alike, to create a strong, vibrant, and inclusive economy in all 7 parishes of the region. By strengthening our diverse partnership with employer groups, allied workforce efforts, and education and training providers, we work to create the necessary conditions for moving all job seekers to high quality and sustained employment.

B. Describe the local goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators (§ 677.155(a)(1)).

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment).

Goal 1: *Continue to strengthen existing and establish Career Pathways as a model for skill, credential, and degree attainment for Louisiana citizens to secure jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability. This goal will be accomplished by executing the following objectives:*

- Workforce development system partners are continuing to collaborate to develop a shared vision and strategy for industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults.
- Engage employers and integrate sector strategy principles to ensure multiple employers, business associations and organized labor are partners in creating demand-driven career pathways.
- Increase the identification, prioritization, and leverage of workforce system partner resources.
- Strengthen the alignment of Jump Start, WorkReady U, and other viable initiatives as entry and exit points in the career pathways.
- Expand utilization of registered apprenticeships by industry sector.

Goal 2: *Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways.*

- Using regional, sector-based career pathways, link low-skill job seekers to take advantage of educational opportunities and bridge programs to obtain middle-skill jobs for those with educational barriers.
- Continue to work with local resources (i.e., Reentry Solutions, Department of Corrections) and partners to reduce recidivism in returning citizens.
- Efforts related to this goal include the provision of more work-based learning opportunities, access to in-demand industry certifications, job readiness training, and relevant skill building efforts.

Goal 3: *Increase the participation and utilization of the workforce system by employers and jobseekers.*

- Foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to meet occupational demands as supported by regional labor market information.
- Increase the use of labor market and educational data / technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.
- Develop focused, regional workforce initiatives that blend partner resources (co-. investment) to educate and train workers.
- Educate and resource training for workers for high-demand jobs within the workforce region.
- Increase the alignment and efficacy of formula, discretionary and competitive workforce funding to support regional and local workforce initiatives.
- Promote meaningful portable industry credentials for experienced workers.

(B) Goals for the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators.

The proposed performance goals for the region / local areas are attached in [Chapter 3 Attachment 1](#).

In addition to the common performance measures, Region 6 tracks business-focused metrics as well. This helps to identify standardized indicators for measuring effectiveness in serving employers. The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the MIS system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services to employers are both automatically recorded by HiRE *and* manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff.

See **Attachment 1 CH. 3 (LWDA 61 PY24 PY25 WIOA Local Negotiated Performance Levels Letter)**

C. Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and principles.

This must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local areas:

- 1. To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(b)(3)(i));**

Industries that once required their entry-level workers to have only a high school diploma are increasingly requiring that their workers also have specialized occupational skills. Sector strategies are integrated into Region 6's approach that aims to help workers obtain these skills through targeted training programs and other services developed in direct response to employer demand. Research completed by the Federal Department of Labor (dol.gov) has shown that sector strategies can increase earnings and improve job quality for the under-skilled workforce. Further, businesses that have participated in sector strategies have credited the initiatives with increasing their productivity and reducing their operating costs.

- 2. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(3)(ii));**

Region 6 strategic vision seeks to support job seekers and employers, alike, to create a strong, vibrant, and inclusive economy in all 7 parishes of the region. By strengthening our diverse partnership with employer groups, allied workforce efforts, and education and training providers, we work to create the necessary conditions to meet the region's business needs and to move all job seekers to attain high quality and sustained employment.

- 3. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iii));**

In Region 6, our LWDB's focus is on the identification of opportunities met and those opportunities for improvement. We are fortunate in having a highly qualified staff with demonstrated performance in the provision of multi-level assistance to employers and jobseekers. Quarterly review and assessment of WIOA programs is conducted to ensure consistency of service, fiscal responsibility and participant success. This monitoring is conducted to ensure the One-Stop Career Centers are using program funds responsibly, as well as assuring policies and procedures are adhered to by all customer service office staff. While our region enjoys many strengths, we also recognize the importance of implementing continuous improvement efforts that adjust to changing market conditions, as well as the needs of individual job seekers and employers. Therefore, LWDB Directors actively participate in the evaluation and analysis of opportunities for successes.

- 4. To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iv));**

As part of the region's approach to further integrate a stronger cross-program strategy that meets the needs of the various populations and sub populations, we seek opportunities to enhance services to best serve those individuals. Region-wide comprehensive re-employment efforts for those that are receiving unemployment insurance and have been profiled as likely to exhaust benefits.

- 5. To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§ 679.560(b)(4));**

Region 6 promotes entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services by mapping partners and resources, including higher education, technical training, workforce and economic development. We strive to build partnerships to create referral networks and promote available services and encourage self-employment and business creation to generate jobs.

6. To 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 regional employers (§ 679.560(b)(3)(v)).

Region 6 collaborates with community colleges and training providers to expand access to programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials. The region’s career pathway strategy emphasizes industry-recognized certifications and portable, stackable credentials aligned with high-demand jobs. Additionally, Region 6 actively engages with the education community and approved training providers to develop workforce investment initiatives.

LWC’s “Pillar Approach” enables the region to prioritize maintaining relationships with sector and business partners, fostering an environment for continuous, progressive training. These sector partnerships are crucial for the successful implementation of comprehensive career pathways for jobseekers and employers in central Louisiana. Workforce staff actively support these efforts, creating connections between jobseekers and in-demand industry occupations.

Central Louisiana benefits from strong leadership across economic development, education, workforce development, and industry in establishing regional career pathways. This initiative aligns education with employer needs, enabling secondary students to earn credentials and secure employment upon graduation. The Education Subcommittees of the regional Workforce Development Boards collaborate with education programs to ensure career pathways and educational standards align with current and future workforce demands.

Regional Business Service Team Framework

A regional Business Service Team within Region 6 consists of the following programs and provides a sector-based approach to a partnership between the LWC, LWDBs, core programs and other partners in the region:

- Wagner-Peyser
- Veterans / LVER
- Adult / Dislocated Worker / youth programs
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services
- Incumbent Worker Training Program
- Rapid Response
- Other stakeholders and optional community resources

D. Describe regional strategies that will increase apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities.

The LWDB 60 and 61 intends to continue efforts toward expanded coordination of service delivery with all partner agencies throughout each year. The goal is to modify and improve partner and local agreements regarding support of the one stop delivery system, identify the service strengths of each agency, and develop an improved inter-agency referral process and co-enrollment linkages across systems through on-going meetings leading to the development and implementation of a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOUs with each partner will be updated according to changes and modifications to services.

E. Describe initiatives to shorten the time from credential to employment and address how the area will work with the education system to begin putting training opportunities in place to meet this strategy.

Region 6 workforce teams are working diligently to create a strong integrated network with key agencies and community partners to expand accessibility and wrap-around services for individuals with barriers seeking employment. In developing deeper connections with partnership programs that support these individuals will further promote and simplify efforts to match employment programming more closely to each person in need.

Regions 6 aims to empower and coach our most vulnerable community members and customers through an integrated, cumulative, and agile services continuum, moving from initial engagement through job retention, unique to every person, and resulting in long-term employment that fulfills an individual's passion, meets financial needs, embodies skill development, and supports well-being.

F. Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state's efforts to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development including:

- **Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.**
- **Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.**
- **Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.**
- **Expanding information for employers and job seekers to access services to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.**

Region 6 is committed to fostering and expanding employer-driven regional sector partnerships to address the growing demand for critical occupations in key industries. This effort involves close collaboration with regional economic development organizations to identify and build upon existing partnerships and initiatives. Local employers will play a vital role by offering their expertise and insights to guide sector-specific strategies. Additionally, we will work hand-in-hand with community partners to strengthen current collaborations or establish new, innovative partnerships that drive workforce development and economic growth in the region.

The LWDB 60 and 61 intends to continue efforts toward expanded coordination of service delivery with all partner agencies throughout each year. The goal is to modify and improve partner and local agreements regarding support of the one stop delivery system, identify the service strengths of each agency, and develop an improved inter-agency referral process and co-enrollment linkages across systems through on-going meetings leading to the development and implementation of a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU's with each partner will be updated according to changes and modifications to services.

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Regions 6 aims to empower and coach our most vulnerable community members and customers through an integrated, cumulative, and agile services continuum, moving from initial engagement through job retention, unique to every person, and resulting in long-term employment that fulfills an individual's passion, meets financial needs, embodies

skill development, and supports well-being.

The mission of Region 6, local boards is to support the development of an employer-led, demand-driven workforce development system based on occupational forecasts in which training, education and services for jobseekers prepare the regions residents for high-wage, high-demand career opportunities. LWDBs 60 and 61 will continue to work closely with eligible training providers in central Louisiana to ensure training programs for which WIOA funds are used meet the needs of local job seekers and employers.

Region 6 is committed to leveraging technology to expand access to services for underserved populations and those living in rural areas. Efforts are underway to develop strategies that address potential barriers limiting access. This includes forming partnerships with local government, educators, economic developers, and community organizations to create innovative solutions that ensure equitable service delivery for all residents.

In Region 6, our LWDB's focus is on the identification of opportunities met and those opportunities for improvement. We are fortunate in having a highly qualified staff with demonstrated performance in the provision of multi-level assistance to employers and jobseekers.

While our region enjoys many strengths, we also recognize the importance of implementing continuous improvement efforts that adjust to changing market conditions, as well as the needs of individual job seekers and employers. Therefore, LWDB Directors actively participate in the evaluation and analysis of opportunities for successes.

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

- A. Coordination of Planning Requirements:** The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan and include the following statements in this chapter:
- 1. The Local Workforce Development Area Memorandum of Understanding** provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.
 - 2. The Local Workforce Development Area Service Integration Action Plan** provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.2). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.
- B. Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:**
- 1. How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).**

In LWDA 61, many one-stop delivery system services are accessible online through HiRE at www.laworks.net. This platform offers comprehensive employment tools for Louisiana jobseekers, including job searches, resume creation, education opportunities, training resources, and labor market insights. HiRE guides users through registration, skill identification, resume building, job searching, employer communication, and job applications. It also provides information on occupations and training programs. Additionally, we utilize social media, Facebook, and constant contact to promote job center events and services effectively.

- 2. How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).**

LWDA 61 leverages tools like HiRE to ensure accessibility, especially for individuals in rural or remote areas. HiRE can be accessed via smartphone or public computers, offering many services remotely.

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

- 1. Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));**
 - **Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their GED and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credential and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;**
 - **Using the insights and lessons learned from successful dual credit programs to scale up similar efforts in other sectors and regions;**
 - **Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments;**
 - **Investigating how targeted marketing can identify segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations;**

LWDA 61 utilizes Integrated Education and Training models to help adults earn their HiSET and develop basic skills like English language acquisition while obtaining industry-recognized credentials for in-demand jobs. In partnership with Central Louisiana Technical Community College (CLTCC), adult education and literacy services are provided. LWDA 61 and CLTCC also identify candidates who would benefit from a focused, small-group setting to fast-track their HiSET completion.

LWDA 61 emphasizes developing career pathways aligned with industry needs. These pathways integrate education (such as Adult Basic Education and English Language Learners programs), job training, counseling, and support services to help individuals earn secondary and postsecondary credentials, leading to employment in high-demand fields.

The Dual Credit Program, or Dual Enrollment, allows students to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously by enrolling in courses at technical, community, or four-year colleges. Taught by college instructors or approved high school teachers, this program helps students reduce college costs, accelerate their education, and transition smoothly into college. It also supports certificate and degree attainment for underserved populations.

LWDA 61 encourages participants to consult their training provider about using a "Prior Learning Assessment" to earn credits toward their degree, shortening completion time. Prior learning may include professional certifications or military experience.

Maintaining strong relationships with local postsecondary educators fosters collaboration in developing career pathways. This ensures meaningful access for individuals, particularly those with basic skill gaps or other barriers, to advance their education and secure employment. It also strengthens connections between workforce and education stakeholders.

- 2. Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and**

Effective outreach by our professional workforce staff enables collaboration with regional educational institutions, fostering strong partnerships. This collaboration supports effective referrals, co-enrollment, and a seamless handoff process for participants, enhancing their chances of success.

3. Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

LWDA 61 recognizes the growing demand for portable and stackable credentials, emphasizing equitable access to postsecondary education and increasing credential attainment. To meet employers' skill needs and help workers achieve higher employment levels and earnings, more individuals must earn postsecondary credentials. Region 6 prioritizes work-based learning strategies aligned with business needs, including a focus on Registered Apprenticeships for in-demand middle-skill jobs. Local boards will support this goal by conducting screening and assessments for existing registered apprenticeship programs.

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

1. Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

Adult

LWDA 61's Adult Training Program focuses on equipping workers with the education and skills needed to improve job prospects, reduce unemployment, and enhance earning potential and job stability. It prioritizes post-secondary education and industry-recognized credentials for individuals seeking high-wage, in-demand jobs.

Many participants include those who face employment barriers such as low income, disabilities, single parenthood, homelessness, limited English proficiency, or long-term unemployment. Emphasis is placed on work-based learning strategies, including Registered Apprenticeships, to meet the needs of middle-skill jobs and align with employer demands.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs linked to employment or post-secondary education support low-skilled adults in career advancement and higher earnings. LWDA 61's One-Stop Center assists job seekers with employment, education, training, and supportive services, guided by the LWDA 61 Priority of Service Policy (400-05), which prioritizes individuals with significant barriers to employment. To meet Title I requirements, 51% of training assistance is allocated to:

Veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in basic skills

Non-veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic skills

The remaining 49% of the adults receiving training assistance may fall into these criteria:

Veterans who are not:

- Public assistance recipients, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic Skills

Non-Veterans who are not:

- Public assistance recipients, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic Skills

LWDA 61 reports to the LWC on:

1. The number of individuals with barriers served by core programs, broken down by subpopulation.
2. The demographic breakdown (e.g., race, gender, age) of individuals served by the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program.

Dislocated Worker

Staff at LWDA 61's Rapides American Job Center use the LWC's OWD 2.3 Integrated Service Delivery Model to assess dislocated workers' needs, identify employment barriers, recommend appropriate career services, and provide follow-up support.

Layoffs pose significant challenges for both workers and employers. LWDA 61's Workforce Development Board (LWDB) collaborate with training and support service providers to address skills gaps and assist dislocated workers in overcoming barriers such as transitioning specialized skills, age-related challenges, and securing jobs with comparable earnings.

During large-scale layoffs or plant closures, One-Stop Centers prioritize rapid-response services to help affected workers find suitable employment. These services include pre-layoff resources and ongoing support after the layoff.

The goal is to enhance access to education, training, and workforce services tailored to individual needs. Dislocated workers work with case managers to create Individualized Employment Plans (IEPs) that include career counseling, job search assistance, approved training, and necessary support services.

Youth

LWDA 61's LWDB, alongside core partners and programs, are committed to addressing the unique developmental needs of In- and Out-of-School Youth (ages 16-24) through targeted interventions. While youth could be served within the Adult workforce system, this approach would likely leave some needs unmet. Therefore, LWDA 61 focuses on aggressive outreach to identify at-risk youth and tailor programs specifically for them.

In alignment with LWC's OWD 2-21 Youth Program Operations, LWDA 61 ensures that at least 20% of allocated youth funds are dedicated to work experiences. These include summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities.

LWDA 61's LWDB collaborates with local school boards through Cooperative Endeavor Agreements to engage Out-of-School Youth. These agreements connect dropouts with Youth Services to help them prepare for employment. With parental consent (not required for those over 18), dropouts are enrolled as out-of-school youth and supported in earning their high school equivalency and gaining employment. The youth service delivery model emphasizes Career Pathways, encouraging post-secondary education and career readiness.

The program prioritizes low-income youth facing employment barriers, limited skills, and work experience. LWDA 61 directs eligible youth to resources that promote development, education, and employment success. In alignment with LWC's State Plan (Title 20 CFR Section 681.400), local boards select youth service providers based on state criteria, ensuring recruitment efforts effectively encourage participation in WIOA programs.

The mission is to empower youth with tools for success, including:

- Finding a career path that fits their interests and lifestyle
- Gain work experience (paid and unpaid)
- Learn about employment internship opportunities and on-the-job training
- Develop leadership skills
- Explore community leadership and mentoring opportunities
- Obtain a high school diploma or equivalency
- Enroll in postsecondary education
- Complete vocational training or college
- Earn cash incentives
- Obtain employment with their chosen career path.

LWDA 61 Workforce Operations Department (WOD) does not procure youth services but provides them “in-house” or by referral to the appropriate agency. Decisions to refer are based on personalized case management and upon intake and assessment of individual needs of the participant. The following table illustrates the Fourteen Youth Program Services available to participants enrolled in WIOA and the process by which each service would be provided or referred to eligible participants. Utilizing comprehensive training programs provided through agencies such as Success Training Institute (STI), the WOD staff will provide many of the 14 elements in house through intensive case management.

Fourteen Youth Program Services available through WIOA		
	Program Element	Service Provided
1	Tutoring / Study Skills Training	This element is provided by WOD youth staff by using the either the Workkeys Curriculum and/or the STI curriculum that meets and supports this element through helping individuals build the essential career-relevant skills needed for learning, personal development, and effective job performance. Referral(s) to an outside agency, depending on specific needs of the participant, like Literacy programs.
2	Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery	This element will be provided by the WOD staff utilizing STI curriculum which supports this element through video courses, end of course exams, etc. WOD staff maintain partnerships and referral process to and from organizations such as the Rapides Parish School Board. Coordination with alternative school(s) and credit recovery programs such as The Rapides Alternative Positive Program for Students (RAPPS). Also, co-located in the One-Stop is Central LA Technical College (CLTCC) providing adult education through the WorkReady U program services and opportunities for secondary education include HiSET, Secondary Credential Preparation, Basic Skills Remediation and English as a second language.
3	Work Experiences	This element is provided in-house by the WOD staff providing training and providing help in resume creation, job applications, work ethics, etc. Staff, in collaboration with area partners and employers, develop paid and/or unpaid work experience positions for eligible youth participants throughout each program year that could include but not limited to, summer employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, or On-the-Job training. STI curriculum may be offered in support of this element.
4	Occupational Skills Training	This element is provided by the WOD staff utilizing the ETPL and through referral to an eligible training provider to enroll youth for training for accredited postsecondary and occupational accredited programs for demand occupations. Tuition/fees and supportive services may be provided to eligible participants. Also, STI curriculum may be utilized to support this element to provide virtual training to eligible youth participants.
5	Career Pathways	This element is provided by the WOD staff in partnership with the Rapides Parish School Board’s Jumpstart Initiative, and by participating in regional events such as: youth job fairs, the Orchard Foundation’s events, and projects. Also, staff use STI curriculum to administer and support this element. STI provides training and workforce preparation courses such as: Positive Mindset, Dress for Success, and Time Management and other mandatory and optional classes. WOD staff, through comprehensive case management and assessment, provide an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce through the organization of education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable.
6	Leadership Development	This element is provided by the WOD staff using the STI curriculum that meets and supports this element. STI curriculum contains in-depth training courses that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors that aid in Leadership Development.
7	Supportive Services	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff utilizing WIOA Youth program funds when the youth participant is unable to obtain financial assistance for services. Some of the supportive services provided to eligible participants include Tuition assistance, school supplies, books, work and interview clothes, transportation assistance, rent, food, utilities, etc. WOD staff will administer this element and offer STI courses that support this element that include but not limited to; Proactive Thinking, Establishing Lasting Partnerships, Connecting with Communities, Requesting and Seeking Assistance.
8	Adult Mentoring	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff to include structured activities where the youth case manager offers guidance, support, and encouragement to help develop the competence and character of the youth participant. STI curriculum meets and supports this element via National Online Mentorship Programs where youth are connected to Adult Mentors and courses on topics that include: Mentorship, Cultivating Relationships, Transparency, Establishing Trust, Communication, and more. This element is provided by youth staff until services are no longer needed.

9	Follow-up Services	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff for not less than 12 months after completion of participation and may include the following program elements: vocational guidance, employment services, and supportive services such as assisting with Pell Grants, completing FAFSA application, job searches and matching, etc.
10	Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	This element is provided in-house by WOD youth workforce professionals or by referral to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. STI course curriculum, which supports this element, will be used to enhance the learning experience of the participant. STI offers Workforce Readiness Courses including Interviewing skills, Job Retention and Personal Maintenance. Case management may include referrals to external agencies providing low-fee or no-fee, specialized counseling that could include drug and alcohol abuse treatment.
11	Financial Literacy	Financial Literacy is provided in-house by WOD staff, utilizing STI curriculum courses that include Financial literacy classes, budget, checking and saving accounts, managing spending and debt, etc. Referral(s) could be made to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. In-school youth (ISY) are required to take fiscal management courses in order to graduate. However; ISY may be referred to as JAG through our local school board.
12	Entrepreneurial Skills Training	This element is provided in-house by WOD staff through STI curriculum to deliver and/or support this element. Referrals to employers who will provide job shadowing in demand jobs that align with the participants skills and capabilities. Entrepreneurial skills training could also include workshops and referral to small business services.
13	Provision of Labor Market and Career Awareness Information	Labor Market Information is provided by WOD youth staff on an individual basis, utilizing LMI resources available at www.laworks.net .
14	Post-Secondary Preparation Activities	Activities that aid or help to prepare youth participants for and to transition to postsecondary education and training is provided in-house by WOD staff. The staff assists youth participants with program elements could include postsecondary transition, budgeting assistance, housing search assistance, assistance completing school applications, program area of study, Pell grants, and the FAFSA. In support of this training, WOD staff might also offer coursework through the STI curriculum.

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

LCTCS oversees Louisiana's Comprehensive Adult Education System and WorkReady (WRU), collaborating with the Louisiana Workforce Commission's American Job Centers at nearly 200 adult education sites statewide. In Region 6, Central Louisiana Technical Community College (CLTCC) provides academic instruction and educational services to enhance public capacity:

- Proficient in English and mathematics, essential for obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent;
- Transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- Obtain employment.

There are 16 HISET locations in Region 6 serving the needs of seven parishes. WIOA mandates the integration of workforce, education, and economic development to ensure high-quality, accessible services for everyone, especially those facing significant employment barriers. Adult Education and Literacy (Title II) is one of four core partners in WIOA, aimed at providing quality education for adult learners and access to a comprehensive workforce development system.

3. Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services (§ 679.560(b)(11)).

WIOA integrates Wagner-Peyser Employment Services within One-Stop Centers, ensuring that all clients, including unemployment insurance claimants and priority populations, access the same services: job training, labor exchange, career counseling, and labor market information. UI claimants receive eligibility assessments and referrals to educational resources.

The Employment Service offers various labor exchange services, such as job search assistance, referrals, placement support for job seekers, re-employment services for UI claimants, and recruitment for employers. Services are provided through self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted approaches. Additional offerings may include skill assessments, career guidance, job search workshops, and training referrals.

Veterans receive priority for jobs and training, while specialized services are also available for individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, ex-offenders, youth, minorities, and older workers.

4. Vocational rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV (§ 679.560(b)(13)).

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) helps individuals with disabilities acquire job skills and resources necessary for employment and career development. Services are prioritized under an Order of Selection, with Categories I-V, where Category I is the most severe. Currently, LRS is serving Categories I-IV; those in Category V are referred to the regional One-Stop Center. The LRS Program Coordinator for rehabilitation technology advises comprehensive center staff on assistive technology and accessibility.

5. Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (§ 679.560(b)(9)).

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Louisiana Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS) provides cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting specific financial criteria and provide services necessary to accomplish the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 611).

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

LWC partnered with DCFS in 2014 to assist Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients in developing high-demand job skills and move toward self-sufficiency and end the dependence on governmental benefits.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is available to workers who lose their jobs or experience reduced hours or income because of increased foreign trade activity. The TAA Program offers a variety of benefits and services to eligible workers, including income support, a tax credit to help pay the costs of health insurance, and a wage subsidy to workers 50 years of age and older. Trade services are considered an integral part of the One-Stop Center's service delivery and may involve any and all partners based on the particular needs of individual clients. As such, trade-affected workers may be eligible for:

- Training services.
- Job-search allowances.
- Relocation allowances.
- Re-employment services.
- Funded training.
- On-the-job training.

Like the dislocated worker program, TAA-funded training helps trade-impacted workers obtain the skills necessary to gain suitable employment. TAA will pay tuition, course fees, books and required supplies and equipment, transportation and other items or services deemed necessary for completion of an approved occupational skills training program, including Registered Apprenticeship programs.

LWC staff provides case management services, career guidance and labor market information to assist TAA eligible participants in making appropriate training and career decisions. Trade-affected workers may be eligible for training services, job search allowances, relocation allowances, re-employment services, funded training, and on-the-job training.

While enrolled in training, TAA eligible participants are also co-enrolled with WIOA and eligible for WIOA supportive services.

Louisiana Department of Child & Family Services: DCFS is a key partner with LWDA 61, particularly in ensuring that there is no duplication of supportive and training services and/or funding to recipients who are participants.

Co-enrollment is encouraged and facilitated through the comprehensive intake process. Participants referred to the program, through DCFS, must complete a comprehensive assessment and develop an individualized employment plan with a case manager, at a personalized one-on-one appointment. Subsequently, at the one-on-one appointment, the case manager will complete a WIOA pre-enrollment shall be created in HiRE.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)

LWC's Jobs for Veterans State Grant-funded activities are co-located within the Rapides One-Stop. JVSG staff, the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP), provides employment, training and placement services to veterans and eligible persons according to need, and significant barriers to employment. Through this grant, the advantages of hiring veterans are promoted to employers, employer associations, and business groups.

There are almost 9,000 veterans in Region 6, which is close to 5.6% of the total civilian regional population aged 18 and older. The region also has a Veterans Representative, LVER and / or DVOP, who will function as an advocate for veteran hiring to the employer community. JVSG staff referred to as Local veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. The veterans' program is operating a fully functional re-entry program. The state has requested 1% of its annual allocation for each year's JVSG grant as performance incentive awards for eligible staff. Services are provided to veterans and eligible persons by JVSG staff members according to the needs of the veteran, any significant barrier to employment they may possess and the roles and responsibilities of JVSG personnel. The basic objective of the awards program is to create an awareness and continuous level of interest in the importance of priority of service for veterans and an environment that engenders continuous improvement in serving veterans across the spectrum of service.

Unemployment Insurance Programs (UI)

LWDA 61 has a "hot line" call-in technical assistance service whereby UI claimants can reach the LWC UI Division via a dedicated phone number thereby avoiding most wait times. The Rapides One-Stop staff provides information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation.

When it comes to partnering with unemployment programs, the One-Stop Centers play a vital role. The local and LWC staff assist dislocated workers on programs such as RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment) that target services to those likely to be unemployed for extended periods of time. The State's RESEA program is designed to provide intensive reemployment assistance to individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits and are determined likely to exhaust their benefits before becoming reemployed and transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members. These reemployment services result in shorter claim durations and fewer erroneous payments.

Utilizing the guidance from LWC, Region 6 local workforce development board have worked to develop strategies to strengthen linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and the UI program. Aligning multi-program services and collaborating with workforce partners are critical for this service integration.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

It is the intent of the Boards to continue with the excellent collaboration that currently exists between the Title V program and the other One-Stop system partners. The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based training program for older workers. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides subsidized, service-based training for low-income persons 55 or older who are unemployed and have poor employment prospects. Participants have access to both SCSEP services and other employment assistance through One-Stop Centers. Older workers' value lies in their attention to detail, emphasis on customer service, and the technical skills and experience they bring from various professions including medical, engineering and manufacturing fields. Employers will be encouraged to recognize the value older workers bring to the workplace including responsibility, loyalty, dedication, and their ability to mentor younger employees. Two SCSEP grantees are operating in Region 6, The National Association of Hispanic Elderly and Institute for Indian Development Inc., servicing the older workers in our region.

Job Corps

Job Corps is a **free** education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or HiSET, and find and keep a decent job. For eligible young people at least 16 years of age that qualify as low income, Job Corps provides the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life. Job Corps has a satellite office in Alexandria that is co-located within the LWDB 61's comprehensive center.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

The mission of the Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc. (CenlaCAC), funded through the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG), is to serve, train, advocate, and collaborate for low-income residents to reduce poverty and promote economic stability in Rapides Parish. Programs vary depending on the locally assessed needs and circumstances of each community, but generally include emergency rental/mortgage assistance, emergency shelter, emergency utility assistance, free income tax assistance, job training, food pantries, clothing and hygiene closet, infant diapering and adult incontinence services, medical prescriptions, credit counseling, income management, first-time homebuyer education, high school equivalency testing, parenting education, fatherhood initiatives, re-entering citizens and health services. The programs and services of the CSBG Unit and Community Action Agencies are a major component of the Louisiana Workforce continuum of services. CenlaCAC has four (4) satellite offices; one of which is co-located within the LWDB 61's comprehensive center since August 2019.

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

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), enacted on July 31, 2018, reauthorizes and modifies the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV), affecting Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and administration. The Louisiana Perkins V State Plan was approved by the Secretary of Education on June 12, 2020.

Louisiana Community and Technical College System institutions are collaborating through Perkins V and WIOA to provide workforce skills training and integrated work-based learning that meet regional employers' needs. State partners are engaging local workforce development boards to create suitable pathways for their regions.

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

Supportive service needs will be determined as a function of the enrollment and assessment process for each participant.

LWDA 61's policy is to provide supportive services to eligible participants should the need arise with the provision that participants are unable to obtain financial assistance for those services at any other community partner/agency. If it is determined that lack of transportation or other needs are a barrier to a participant completing a training program / securing licensure, if funds are available, assistance will be provided to the participant with proper documentation placed both in the participant HiRE account through case notes and in the participant files.

LWDA 61's board has developed policies to ensure that there is no duplication of services, and that financial assistance is resourced through other partner and community agencies providing such services prior to expending WIOA funds.

The City of Alexandria, LA (ATRANS) was established to provide the people of the cities of Alexandria and Pineville with a safe, efficient, environmentally sound, comprehensive, and cost-effective public transportation system. ATRANS ensures that the quality and level of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin and that there is not a disparate impact on groups protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations.

See **Attachment 2 CH. 4 LWDA 61 Policy # 400-03 (Supportive Services – Adult and Dislocated Worker)**

See **Attachment 3 CH. 4 LWDA 61 Policy # 500-06(Supportive Services – Youth Services)**

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

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

Adult services aim to support job seekers aged 18 and older in achieving success in the workforce. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), priority is given to Veterans, low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, and those lacking basic job skills. Services for dislocated workers are designed for individuals who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own, helping them secure quality employment in high-demand industries.

LWDA 61 offers the following services for Adults and Dislocated Workers:

Career Services: These services are available at the Rapides American Job Center and include both basic and tailored support based on individual needs. Services may include:

- Make an eligibility determination based on individual barriers and needs.
- Introduce and provide guidance through the intake process while also supplying an overview of workforce system resources and services.
- Utilizing assessments to evaluate individual skills, abilities, and capabilities through detailed diagnostic testing. Some of the offered assessments are: WorkKeys, Platinum, SAGE, E-Skill, TABE, etc.
- Providing labor exchange support by offering job/career search as well as information about nontraditional employment and high-demand industries.
- Yielding referrals to activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the Rapides American Job Center workforce system and including external workforce development programs.
- Providing Labor Market Information and insights on local, regional, and national labor markets, including job vacancies, required skills, target occupations, and opportunities for advancement.
- Render assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs provided under WIOA.
- Sharing details and information concerning eligible training providers.
- Offer individual training services.
- Complete Individual Employment Plans.
- Advise with individual career planning.
- Facilitate connections to internships and work experience.
- Provide workforce preparation readiness activities and financial literacy services.
- Offering follow-up services post-assistance to ensure long-term success.

2. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)).

To ensure the quick reintegration of displaced workers, the Board will support the state's Rapid Response initiatives in collaboration with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and other agencies. This will provide resources for employees affected by layoffs due to closures or downsizing. The Rapid Response Team will include representatives from the LWC Rapid Response Unit, Area 61 Business and Career Solutions Centers, and the LWC Unemployment Insurance Unit.

The Board will deliver services to impacted employees before their separation by:

- Coordinating with employer representatives to plan rapid response actions;
- Providing on-site orientations, job readiness workshops, and job referral services; and
- Ensuring continued access to services at the Area 61 Rapides American Job Center post-layoff.

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

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

Youth Workforce Activities, Eligibility and Assessment

LWDA 61 provides youth workforce activities to youth, aged 16-24, in-school and out-of-school in Rapides Parish. It is the policy of the LWDB to spend at least 75% of youth funds on out-of-school youth and at least 20% of youth funds on work experiences, including summer employment and pre-apprenticeship programs. An excellent example of a successful model is LWDA 61's Youth Summer Work Experience program, engaging dozens of local employers, providing work experience opportunities for our area's youth. Another successful model is Partners in Literacy through Volunteers of America. They provide literacy training for individuals scoring less than 6th grade on the TABE assessment.

The following is an example of program activities provided to or offered to the eligible youth participant/applicant in LWDA 61:

- Provide an assessment of academic levels, skill levels and occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, and aptitudes.
- Develop service strategies for each participant that links to one or more of the established performance indicators.
- Provide:
 - Activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent
 - Preparation for postsecondary educational/training opportunities.
 - Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities.
 - Effective connections to employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
 - Develop Pay-for-Performance contract strategy for which no more than 10% of the local allocation may be used.

To support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the program will provide The Fourteen Elements.

LWC's Combined State Plan (Ref. LA State Plan, Page 126) states "As outlined in OWD Policy 2-21 "Youth Program Operations" LWDBs must establish and review annually a policy addressing their criteria for youth "Requiring Additional Assistance".

LWDA 61 policy supports an integrated vision for servicing the youth in Rapides Parish using a model strategy that leverages community relationships and referrals with other federal, state, local and community resources to support both in-school and out-of-school youth to include those youth who require additional assistance and resources in order to be successful.

LWDA 61's Policy 500-02 Youth Eligibility Criteria addresses eligibility and enrollment of both in-school and out-of-school to include those youth that "Require Additional Assistance" ** to complete an educational component and/or secure and hold employment.

LWDA 61's Policy addresses and defines the criteria for the Ninth (9th) Youth Barrier "Requires Additional Assistance" as one or more of the following:

- Is at risk of dropping out of school (any one of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, school records or self-attestation:
- Is in the 11th or 12th grade and has not yet passed the required standardized testing, if any.
- At least two semester classes behind the rate required to graduate on time with their high school class as documented by a school official.
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0.
- Has repeated at least one secondary grade level.
- Previously dropped out of school, but has since returned to high school or within the previous 12 months has been suspended five or more times or expelled
- Has court/agency referrals mandating school attendance.
- Has aged out of foster care as documented by, but not limited to, court documentation, verification from a social services agency or through self-attestation.
- Has experienced recent traumatic events, is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment, as documented by a school official or professional on official letterhead, by a written statement from a parent or through self-attestation.
- Has a significant disability which creates a significant impediment to employment, as documented by, but not limited to, a school Individual Education Plan (IEP), medical professional, and receipt of Social Security Insurance (SSI) or through self-attestation.
- Has limited English Proficiency as documented by, but not limited to, the TABE test or through self-attestation.
- Poor or no employment history (Older Youth Only) as documented by, but not limited to, wage records, employment records or through self-attestation:
- Has not had the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge, experience, and skills to find and maintain full time stable employment (for more than 13 consecutive weeks) and/or has only been able to access part-time, temporary, or seasonal employment.
- Has been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to application.
- Family Barriers (anyone of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, wage records, letter from government assistance office or through self-attestation:
- Has a family history of long-term unemployment, i.e., parents/guardians have been unemployed for seven of the past twelve months.
- During the past two years, parents/guardians have been unable to find and maintain full time stable employment; these multiple breaks in employment may have required reliance on unemployment, food stamps or other government assistance, or is a food stamp recipient or a member of a family receiving food stamps.
- Resides in a non-traditional family setting (anyone of the following) as documented by, but not limited to, court records or through self-attestation:
 - Member of a single-family household
 - being raised by a guardian, relative or non-parent responsible for the youth's care
 - Parent is currently in jail or in prison or has been in jail or in prison for six months of the past two years.
- Is an emancipated youth as documented by, but not limited to, court records or through self-attestation?
- Is computer illiterate as documented by self-reports, test, or observation.
- Has been referred to or is being treated by an agency for a substance abuse related problem.

LWDA 61's youth workforce professionals take a collaborative approach for recruiting and identifying principal service needs of the individual participant. Recruitment strategies include utilizing and actively communicating with organizations in our area that already work with the targeted youth population, and its WIOA Youth Program eligibility guidelines. Making OSY the larger part of our focus ensures that this population of youths may be offered the best opportunity for success in achieving their high school diploma or equivalency, readiness for Post-Secondary Education, or employment readiness.

2. A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth.

LWDA 61 requires that at least 75% of funds for the Boards be allocated to out-of-school youth (OSY). Quarterly spending targets for both in-school and out-of-school youth ensure compliance with grant specifications. Boards in Region 6 are dedicated to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which mandates competitive procurement of youth services and access to all fourteen service elements for the youth demographic.

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

- 1. Provide information on how priority will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) (§ 679.560(b)(21)).**

The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) in the region collaborate with organizations implementing core programs to prioritize the needs of specific applicant groups. This approach aims to enhance access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those facing barriers to employment.

The Rapides American Job Center works closely with system partners to devise strategies that address the unique requirements of these groups. HiRE collects data on placement and retention outcomes for special applicant groups to inform the development of effective service strategies.

The following populations have been identified as “individuals with barriers to employment”:

- Low-Income individuals (recipients receiving public assistance)
- Basic skills deficient
- Displaced homemakers
- Individuals with disabilities
- Indian, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians
- Older individuals
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless individuals- including homeless children and youth
- Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
- Individuals who are English language learners
- Individuals who have low levels of literacy
- Migrant and seasonal farm workers
- Single parents- including pregnant women

In the event of limitations in WIOA funding, LWDA 61 will prioritize adult employment and training activities for veterans who are receiving public assistance and/or those identified as low-income. Following this, priority will be extended to non-veterans who receive public assistance and to low-income non-veterans.

If funding is available and the adult customer’s income exceeds the defined threshold, the local board will follow guidance from the Department of Labor (TEGL 19-16).

2. Describe how the local workforce area will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

- **Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.**
- **Developing equity goals in conjunction with the education system and prepare action plans to achieve them.**
- **Exposing more high school students, particularly young women and minorities, to careers in science, technology, engineering and math fields.**
- **Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.**
- **Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to address equity gaps.**
- **Enduring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.**

LWDA 61 is committed to non-discrimination and equal opportunity, as mandated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 188. LWDA ensures equity in the provision of program services through the following activities:

LWDA 61 collects data on race, gender, and disability status of all persons registering for services. The review of this data, combined with population and labor force statistics is conducted periodically. Labor force diversity data, provided by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, is analyzed to ensure that there are no underserved populations in the region. The board will use this data to target outreach and recruitment efforts. The goal is for all residents to have access to training resources to acquire the skills needed to obtain employment that provides family supporting wages and decreases economic disparity.

LWDA 61 will continue to work in conjunction with the local educational institutions to ensure that potential eligible youth have access to services in the career pathway of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Staff will continue to explore mentoring program opportunities, while individually mentoring participants as they develop an IEP and throughout the program and follow-up period.

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including:

1. How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement;

LWDA 61 requires that to meet title I requirements at least 75% of Boards' available funds are spent on out-of-school youth (OSY). While also ensuring that 51% of the adult assistance is allocated to:

Veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in basic skills

Non-veterans that are:

- Public assistance recipient, or
- Low-income, or
- Deficient in Basic skills

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

LWDA 61's emphasis is placed on work-based learning strategies that align with business needs in Region 6. With support to LWCs focus on Registered Apprenticeships, those representing "in demand" occupations, as a way to address middle skill jobs, local boards will mirror the goal of engaging in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

3. Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and describe how training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (§ 679.560(b)(18)); and

LWDA 61 will adhere to all regulations for training activities and has tracking systems to ensure state-required training expenditures. Policies for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) have been established as the primary method for accessing training services, except for work-based training, and are tied to in-demand occupations listed on Louisiana's Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL serves as the main resource for skills training for WIOA participants, and the board will notify local providers about applying for ETPL approval.

ITAs will cover training for in-demand skills, including registered apprenticeships, through approved ETPL providers. Participants must apply for Pell/Federal Student Aid and other grants, with Pell funds allocated to tuition and education-related expenses. The board advocates for entry-level training that supports career pathways in high-demand industries.

See Attachment 4 CH. 4 LWDA 61 Policy # 400-01 (WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program)

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

LWDA 61's ITA is the primary route to training services linked to in-demand occupations on Louisiana's Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The Board will inform training providers about approval opportunities on the ETPL and promote entry-level training aligned with local employer needs in high-demand industries.

To enhance training options, LWDB 61 will facilitate contracts for programs offering recognized credentials in in-demand occupations. Jobseekers will be informed about local eligible training providers and available programs.

LWDB 61 will use program evaluation criteria, including the Star Rating System, to ensure high-quality training providers are included on the ETPL. It maintains proactive communication with businesses, industry leaders, and governmental agencies in Rapides Parish to assess needs and ensure efficient service delivery.

See Attachment 5 CH. 4 LWDA 61 Policy # 400-06 (Eligible Training Providers)

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

1. To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.

The local Board consistently oversees the expenditures of WIOA adult and dislocated worker funds, allowing for fund transfers as needed throughout the program year. State policy caps the maximum allowable transfer at 75 percent. The Board is permitted to request a transfer of up to 50 percent of the funds available in the first year and may request an additional transfer of up to 25 percent in the second year.

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

In accordance with WIOA Section 134(d)(4)(A)(i), a local area may allocate up to 20 percent of their total funding for adult and dislocated worker programs toward incumbent worker training. To determine employer eligibility for local incumbent worker training funds, the board must evaluate the following criteria as specified in WIOA Section 134(d)(4)(A)(ii):

- The characteristics of the participants in the training program
- The relevance of the training to enhancing both individual and employer competitiveness
- Additional factors deemed appropriate by the Local WDB, which may include the number of employees trained, wage and benefit increases following training, and the availability of other training opportunities provided by the employer.

3. To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).

The Board is dedicated to providing accessible transitional job services for eligible adult and dislocated workers, in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These time-limited, subsidized positions help individuals overcome employment barriers by building work history and skills necessary for unsubsidized jobs. Transitional jobs are managed by the Operator of the LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center.

The local area utilizes no more than 10% of the combined WIOA adult and dislocated worker allocation for transitional jobs services.

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

WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3) outlines pay-for-performance (PFP) contracts, which LWDA 61 may utilize as beneficial. Local workforce boards can allocate up to 10% of their WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funds for PFP strategies in training and youth activities, with funds remaining available until spent. If outcomes are not met, these funds can be repurposed for other PFP uses. States may also leverage Governor's Reserve funds to support PFP initiatives.

The plan must include information on the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6)) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)).

A. Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).

1. WIOA Performance Measures

LWDA 61's performance levels for PY 24-25 have been negotiated with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). Quarterly performance reports are shared with the local board and One-Stop Operator. To monitor and meet performance measures, LWDA 61 utilizes HiRE and FutureWorks, both of which provide effective tools for tracking and ensuring compliance with performance standards.

In addition to standard performance measures, LWDA 61 also monitors business-focused metrics. This approach facilitates the identification of standardized indicators to assess effectiveness in serving employers. The primary source of information for these metrics is data recorded in the Management Information System (MIS) of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services provided to employers are captured through automatic entries made by HiRE as well as manual entries inputted by staff at the Rapides American Job Center.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs are subject to federal performance requirements specific to each funding source, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. These federal performance requirements are referred to as the WIOA Common Measures. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is tasked with negotiating performance goals with each local area. LWDA 61 negotiated measures are as follows:

**Negotiated Performance Levels for WIOA
Rapides Parish (LWDA 61)**

	PY 2024	PY 2025
WIOA Title I Adult		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	82.0%	82.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	76.8%	76.8%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$9,900	\$9,900
Credential Attainment Rate	89.0%	89.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	79.2%	79.2%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	77.0%	77.0%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	70.0%	70.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$5,360	\$5,360
Credential Attainment Rate	84.0%	84.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	73.8%	73.8%
WIOA Title I Youth		
Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit	75.2%	75.2%
Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit	78.4%	78.4%
Median Earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit	\$3,500	\$3,500
Credential Attainment Rate	57.0%	57.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	50.6%	50.6%

See **Attachment 1 CH. 3 (LWDA 61 PY24 PY25 WIOA Local Negotiated Performance Levels Letter)**

2. Additional State Performance Measures

N/A

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

1. What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?

WIOA establishes Primary Indicators of Performance, which all states are required to meet. In our region, LWDBs conceptualize and develop performance initiatives, which are implemented by dedicated staff through a team-based approach. By placing the customer at the center of service design, we shift the service delivery paradigm to focus on continuous improvement.

Key delivery strategy challenges include:

- Improving the customer experience and outcomes for shared One-Stop customers.
- Centering employers in Sector Strategies and Career Pathway goals.
- Designing engaging programs for out-of-school youth that led to successful outcomes.

LWDA 61 one-stop staff are implementing solutions by:

- Centering employers and job seekers in all processes.
- Collaborating with partner agencies and community resources to enhance service value.
- Transforming program implementation beyond mere compliance.
- Providing creative training for staff to effectively address jobseeker and employer challenges.

2. What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?

The local Board prioritizes continuous improvement and evaluates program outcomes to ensure effective use of resources. The quarterly Rapides American Job Center Report provides insights into WIOA activities, including enrollments, job placements, and training completion rates. This data enables the Board to allocate funding to activities with the highest return on investment. WIOA training programs with low completion or job placement rates will be reduced or discontinued to optimize results.

3. What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?

- What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollments?
- What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?

LWDA 61 uses data and demographics available in HiRE to evaluate potential barriers to enrollment and to ensure that the participants enrolled in programs reflect the population and demographics of the individuals in Region 6. LWDA 61 will continue to work with all partners to determine the barriers that exist for residents in the area and look for cost-effective solutions. Solutions could include streamlining the registration process to limit physical appointments at the job center and providing information and applications online.

This section includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121(c)(2)(iv)).

A. Fiscal Management

- 1. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) (§ 679.560(b)(14)).**

The disbursement of grant funds in LWDA 61 is managed by the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, a department of the Rapides Parish Police Jury and grant recipient. This office oversees all fiscal services for administering federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds in compliance with Section 101.

- 2. Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (§ 679.560(b)(15)).**

Competitive proposals involve multiple sources submitting offers, resulting in either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement contract. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are a type of competitive proposal that must be publicized, clearly outlining all evaluation factors and their relative importance.

The Rapides Parish Police Jury follows its Policies and Procedures Manual to announce Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and manage the competitive selection process for securing a One-Stop Center Operator and Youth Services provider in Rapides Parish. LWDB 61 plans to continue the following processes:

- Define the roles of the One-Stop Operator and Youth Services provider.
- Establish the competitive selection process.
- Develop and issue competitive procurement.

Award and contract the One-Stop Operator and Youth Services provider.

See Attachment 6 CH. 6 LWDA 61 Policy # 800-01 (Fiscal Policy)

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

- 1. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).**

LWDA 61 is committed to complying with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, particularly in employment. Under Title I of the ADA, the rights of both employees and job seekers are protected, and requirements for telecommunications relay services are established.

The LWDA 61 staff ensures programs and activities are readily accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities. Staff and program personnel are trained to uphold nondiscrimination principles and promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

LWDA 61 collaborates closely with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, government agencies, community organizations, and private employers to connect job seekers with disabilities to employment opportunities. The Board is dedicated to ensuring that communication with individuals with disabilities is as effective as with those without disabilities.

The Rapides American Job Center provides assistive technology to enable individuals with disabilities to access the same computer services available to others. The One-Stop staff is trained to operate this technology, and the center meets all basic ADA operational requirements.

- 2. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.**

Currently, LWDA 61 does not have a cooperative agreement with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) but maintains a consortium agreement with them. LRS is also a core partner in our Memorandum of Understanding with other partners. Past staff development meetings have included LRS presentations, and an LRS staff member is available at the Rapides American Job Center upon request. Our center is ADA-compliant and accessible to disabled citizens. As part of our One-Stop system, staff work closely with Rehabilitation Services to help customers secure employment and training aligned with their needs and vocational goals.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

- 1. Describe the process used by the Local Board, consistent with WIOA Sec. 108(d), to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).**

The LWDB in LWDA 61 will ensure a 30-day public comment period by publishing a legal notice in Alexandria Daily Town Talk and posting the draft regional plan on www.rppj.com, with feedback directed to rajc@cenlaworks.org. Courtesy copies will be emailed to stakeholders, including officials, Louisiana Central, and WDB members. These measures allow input from the public, businesses, labor organizations, WIOA partners, educators, and community groups.

- 2. Provide a summary of the public comments received and how this information was addressed by the CEO, partners and the Local Board in the final plan.**

If comments are submitted during the public comment period for the Regional/Local Plan, a summary will be included.

- 3. Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.**

Each WBD will secure approval from its board of directors and, if necessary, obtain signatures from chief elected officials. The plan is then submitted to the Governor for review and approval. Any modifications during the plan's term will be opened for public comment and presented to the local board and partners for approval.

DRAFT

REGIONAL / LOCAL PLAN SIGNATURES

By signing the Regional / Local Plan, all signatories attest that:

1. They submit this plan on behalf of the region and the local areas within that region;
2. The planning was done with leaders throughout the region and represents the collective thinking of those regional representatives;
3. The information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge;
4. The regional plan and accompanying local plans represent the local workforce development boards' efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other State and Local programs in the planning region;
5. They will operate the local system in accordance with the regional plan, their respective local area plan, and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies and rules.

Local Area Name: LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Name of Chief Elected Official for the LWDA: _____

Signature and Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Name of Local Workforce Development Board Chairman: _____

Signature and Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Name of Local Workforce Development Board Director: _____

Signature and Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Regional & Local Plan PY 2024 – 2027

Attachment 1

DRAFT



1001 North 23rd Street
Post Office Box 94094
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094

(O) 225-342-3001
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www.laworks.net

Jeff Landry, Governor
Susana Schowen, Secretary

Office of the Secretary

January 7, 2025

Sharon Neal
Workforce Development Board Director
Rapides Parish
5610-B Coliseum Boulevard
Alexandria, LA 71303

Dear Ms. Neal,

This letter finalizes the agreed-upon negotiated performance levels for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs for Program Years (PYs) 2024 and 2025 in Local Workforce Development Area 61.

The enclosed chart summarizes the negotiated performance levels determined after review of your local area's actual results reported for PYs 2022 and 2023, along with an analysis of the WIOA statistical model's outcomes, and coordination with your staff and Louisiana Workforce Commission's Office of Workforce Development.

If you have any questions, please contact Quanda Charles, Workforce Development Administrator at (225) 342-2936 or email at qcharles@lwc.la.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

1800DFE6779344A...

Susana "Susie" Schowen
Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Osmar Padilla, Assistant Secretary ^{OP}
Sonya Williams, Deputy Assistant Secretary 2 ^{SW}
Quanda Charles, Workforce Development Administrator ^{QC}



**Negotiated Performance Levels for WIOA
Rapides Parish (LWDA 61)**

	PY 2024	PY 2025
WIOA Title I Adult		
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	82.0%	82.0%
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Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$9,900	\$9,900
Credential Attainment Rate	89.0%	89.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	79.2%	79.2%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	77.0%	77.0%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter after exit	70.0%	70.0%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$5,360	\$5,360
Credential Attainment Rate	84.0%	84.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	73.8%	73.8%
WIOA Title I Youth		
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	75.2%	75.2%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter after exit	78.4%	78.4%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$3,500	\$3,500
Credential Attainment Rate	57.0%	57.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	50.6%	50.6%

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Regional & Local Plan PY 2024 – 2027

Attachment 2

DRAFT

Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWDA 61			
Policy Number 400-03	Policy Name Supportive Services		
Category 400	Category Name Adult and Dislocated Worker	Effective Date 05/29/2014	Revision Date 05/16/2024
Executive Director Sharon Neal	Signature	<i>Sharon Neal</i>	
WDB Chairperson Rose Killion	Signature	<i>Rose Killion</i>	

Purpose:

Supportive Services provide participants in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) activities with key assistance beyond career and training services necessary to achieve success. Supportive services allow participants to successfully engage with WIOA career and training activities such as Registered Apprenticeships or classroom training that are vital to entering or re-entering the workforce.

References:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Section 3
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Section 134
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16
- 20 CFR 680.910

Policy:

1. Supportive Services and needs-related services may be provided to eligible WIOA participants who are unable to obtain supportive services through other community resources and are in need of such supportive services in order to participate and be successful in WIOA activities. Center staff must ensure the cost are reasonable, appropriate, and allowable and coordinate with the participant regarding receipt of the approved supportive services and associated reimbursement requirements of the service. Priority of services, for eligible veterans and their spouses, will be given under the Jobs for Veterans Act.
2. All approvals for payments for supportive services will be based on financial need and subject to the availability of WIOA/Grant funds. Supportive services may only be provided when a financial need is present, justification can be provided and when other community resources cannot be obtained. If additional community resources are available, the case manager will refer the participant to such resources.
3. Supportive Services include, but are not limited to:
 - 3.1. Linkages to community services;
 - 3.2. Assistance with transportation;
 - 3.3. Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
 - 3.4. Assistance with housing;
 - 3.4.1. The Rapides American Job Center (RAJC) does not provide assistance with housing.

Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWIA 61			
Policy Number 400-03	Policy Name Supportive Services		
Category 400	Category Name Adult and Dislocated Worker	Effective Date 05/29/2014	Revision Date 05/16/2024

- 3.5. Needs-related payments (as defined by WIOA and available only to individuals enrolled in training services);
- 3.6. Assistance with educational testing;
- 3.7. Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities;
- 3.8. Legal aid services
- 3.9. Referrals to health care;
- 3.10. Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear and other essential safety equipment;
- 3.11. Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, equipment such as computers and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes; and
- 3.12. Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, certificates, and licenses.
 - 3.12.1. Graduation items, such as caps and gowns, pins, graduation fees are not reimbursable.
 - 3.12.2. Licensure/certification fees for another state, such as NCLEX test in Texas are not reimbursable.
4. A supportive service does not trigger participant status and cannot be used to extend participation. A supportive service must always be coupled with a career or training service.
5. Supportive Services are not allowed for Adults and Dislocated Workers during follow-up.
6. Initial assessment must include an assessment of supportive services. Justification must be documented and periodically reviewed to determine continual need for supportive services. Supportive Services may be provided to participants who are employed or unemployed.
7. Entry of a supportive service in HiRE must include a case note identifying how it is needed to support the potential success of a WIOA career or training activity and what was done to verify that such service is not available through other community resources.
8. Payments for supportive services may be made directly to the participant.
9. Supportive Services for travel will be paid on a monthly basis according to the Timesheet & Daily Attendance Record (form # LWDA 61-19B) or paid bi-weekly according to Participant Mileage Expense Form (Form LWDA 61-19C). The forms are completed by the participant and verified by instructor/supervisor and the Workforce Professional.
10. Supportive Service payments will **not** be provided for repeat courses taken during a semester.
 - 10.1. In the event the participant is taking a repeat course with other courses necessary for completion of their degree, supportive services are allowable during the semester.
 - 10.2. If there is an oversight of payments made during a semester for a repeat class or classes, no payments will be made for the following semester.

Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWIA 61			
Policy Number 400-03	Policy Name Supportive Services		
Category 400	Category Name Adult and Dislocated Worker	Effective Date 05/29/2014	Revision Date 05/16/2024

11. The provisions of this policy will not apply to student training projects in Rapides Parish Secondary Schools unless specifically provided for in project agreements.

12. Needs-Related Payments²

- 12.1. Unlike other supportive services, in order to qualify for needs-related payments a participant must be enrolled in training.
- 12.2. Needs-related payments may be provided if the participant has been accepted in a training program that will begin within 30 calendar days.
- 12.3. To receive needs-related payments, adults must:
 - 12.3.1. be unemployed, and
 - 12.3.2. not qualify for (or have ceased qualifying for) unemployment compensation, and
 - 12.3.3. be enrolled in a Training Service offered through the RAJC.
- 12.4. To receive needs-related payments, dislocated workers must:
 - 12.4.1. be unemployed, and
 - 12.4.2. have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment allowance under TAA or NAFTA-TAA, and
 - 12.4.3. be enrolled in a Training Service by the end of the 13th week after the most recent layoff that resulted in a determination of the worker's eligibility as a dislocated worker or if later, by the end of the 8th week after the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed 6 months, or
 - 12.4.4. be unemployed and did not qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment assistance under Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) or North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)-TAA.
- 12.5. The payment level for dislocated workers must not exceed the greater of the following levels:
 - 12.5.1. for a participant who is eligible for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying dislocation, the payment may not exceed the applicable weekly level of the unemployment compensation benefit, or
 - 12.5.2. for a participant who did not qualify for unemployment compensation as a result of the qualifying layoff, the weekly payments not to exceed the poverty level of an equivalent period. The weekly payment level must be adjusted to reflect changes in total family income.

13. Policy Exception Rule



- 13.1. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director in special circumstances or in cases of exceptional need that are appropriately documented.

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Regional & Local Plan PY 2024 – 2027

Attachment 3

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Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWDA 61			
Policy Number 500-06	Policy Name Supportive Services		
Category 500	Category Name Youth Services	Effective Date 05/29/2014	Revision Date 05/16/2024
Executive Director Sharon Neal	Signature		
WDB Chairperson Rose Killion	Signature		

Purpose:

To provide supportive services that enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities. Supportive services may be provided when participants are participating in WIOA Title 1 program activities and are; unable to obtain supportive services through other community resources, and in need of such supportive services in order to participate in program activities.

References:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Section 3 & 129
- LWC OWD 2-29 Title I Supportive Services

Policy:

- All approvals for payments for supportive services will be based on financial need and subject to the availability of WIOA/Grant funds.
 - WIOA identifies Supportive Services as one of the 14 Elements that can trigger participant status and can extend participation in the youth program. Supportive Services can be provided to enrolled youth for up to one (1) year after date of exit from WIOA programs, provided the service is needed to retain employment or continue post-exit training. There must be documented financial need both case noted in HiRE and placed in participant’s file.
 - Not all supportive services require WIOA funds to be expended, such as; linkage to community services, legal aid services (this is a referral by the center) and referrals to health care.
- Supportive services may only be provided:
 - To an eligible youth who is an active participant in the WIOA Youth Program;
 - Supportive service payments do not cover costs or expenses that occur prior to enrollment into the WIOA program.
 - When they are necessary to enable the individual to participate in WIOA youth activities;
 - Supportive Services may only be provided when a financial need is present, justification can be provided and when other non WIOA community resources cannot be obtained.
- Justification of Supportive Services
 - Entry of a supportive service in HiRE must include a case note identifying services needed to support the potential success of a WIOA Youth participants and what steps were taken to verify that such service(s) are not available through other community resources.
- The following supportive services may be provided to WIOA youth:
 - Linkages to community services;
 - Assistance with transportation;

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- 4.2.1. There is no other service of agency in the Rapides Parish area that provides transportation assistance, therefore, WIOA funds can be used to assist participants with transportation needs if the individual meets the requirements to receive transportation supportive services.
- 4.3. Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
- 4.4. Assistance with housing;
 - 4.4.1. The Rapides American Job Center (RAJC) does not provide assistance with housing.
- 4.5. Needs-related payments;
- 4.6. Assistance with educations testing;
- 4.7. Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- 4.8. Legal aid services;
 - 4.8.1. The RAJC does not provide legal aid services in-house but will refer to outside agencies for assistance.
- 4.9. Referrals to health care;
- 4.10. Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye wear;
- 4.11. Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes;
- 4.12. Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.
5. WIOA funds must not be used to pay penalties, fines, or other such related payments.
6. Justification must be documented for any supportive service request related to academic and/or occupational activities.
 - 6.1. When the objective assessment determines the need for supportive services, such services should be included in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) that is developed and linked to other WIOA youth activities.
 - 6.2. Documentation of a supportive service in HiRE shall include a case note identifying how it is needed to support the potential success of a WIOA activity and entry of appropriate HIRE supportive service activity code.
7. The Workforce Professional must submit all requests for supportive service payments to the OWED accounting department. to be reviewed for reasonable and allowable costs prior to processing payment.
8. Policy Exception Rule
 - 8.1. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director in cases of exceptional need that are appropriately documented.

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

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Attachment 4

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Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWDA 61			
Policy Number 400-01	Policy Name WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program		
Category 400	Category Name Adult and Dislocated Worker	Effective Date 05/29/2014	Revision Date 05/16/2024
Executive Director Sharon Neal	Signature		
WDB Chairperson Rose Killion	Signature		

Purpose:

This policy provides guidance regarding the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs.

References:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Section 3, Section 134, Section 181, Section 188, Section 194
- Title 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §663.310
- Title 20 CFR §663.700 / §663.705 / §667.200 / §667.268 / §663.310 / §667.400 / §667.705
- Louisiana Workforce Commission – Policy # OWD 2-17 –Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Waivers for Program Year (PY) 2012

Policy:

1. Adult Eligibility

- 1.1. To be eligible to receive WIOA services as an Adult an individual must:
- 1.1.1. Be a citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the United States.
 - 1.1.2. Meet Military Selective Service registration requirements (males only).
 - 1.1.3. Be 18 years of age or older.
 - 1.1.4. Be unemployed or employed and in need of services in order to obtain or retain employment.
- 1.2. It is policy of the Rapides Workforce Development Board (WDB) that priority of service shall be given to at least 51% of Adults in the following categories:
- 1.2.1. Recipients of public assistance
 - 1.2.2. Low-income individuals
 - 1.2.3. Individuals who are basic skills deficient or English Language Learners
 - 1.2.4. Veterans and eligible spouses (Refer to LWDA Policy 100-07 Priority of Service for Veterans)
 - 1.2.4.1. When past income is an eligibility determinant for Federal employment or training programs, any amounts received as military pay or allowances by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits, must be disregarded for the veteran and for other individuals for whom those amounts would normally be applied in making an eligibility determination. Military earnings are not to be included when calculating income for veterans or transitioning service members for this priority.

2. Dislocated Worker Eligibility

- 2.1. To be eligible to receive WIOA services as an Adult an individual must:
- 2.1.1. Be a citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the United States.
 - 2.1.2. Meet Military Selective Service registration requirements (males only).

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- 2.1.3. Be 18 years of age or older.
- 2.1.4. Meet the definition of a Dislocated Worker defined by WIOA.
- 2.2. Categories of Dislocated Worker are:
 - 2.2.1. Individual has been terminated or laid off, or has received notice of termination or layoff, and is eligible for or has exhausted entitlements to UC and is unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation.
 - 2.2.2. Individual has been terminated or laid off, or has received notice of termination or layoff, and has been employed for sufficient duration (more than 6 months) to demonstrate workforce attachment but is not eligible for UC due to insufficient earnings, or the employer is not covered under the state UC law, and is unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation.
 - 2.2.3. Individual is terminated or laid off, or has received notice of termination or layoff, from employment as a result of the Permanent closure of or substantial layoff at a plant, facility or enterprise.
 - 2.2.4. Individual is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that the facility will close. Enter the date the facility will close (if known) in the Projected Layoff Date below.
 - 2.2.5. Individual was previously self-employed (including farmers, ranchers and fishermen), but is unemployed due to general economic conditions in the community of residence or because of natural disaster. Record the last date of self-employment in the Actual Layoff Date.
 - 2.2.6. Displaced Homemaker: An individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; or is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, or a call or order to active duty, or a permanent change of station, or the service-connected death or disability of the member; and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
 - 2.2.7. Individual is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty, and who has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member.
 - 2.2.8. Individual is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and who is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
 - 2.2.9. Profiled Claimant
- 3. Priority enrollment will be given to residents of Rapides Parish with no more than 50% of participants enrolled within a program year residing outside of Rapides Parish.
- 4. If the participant is employed at time of WIOA application, they must not be self-sufficient (Refer to LWDA 61 Policy 100-02 Definitions). LWDA Policy 100-02 adopts the information provided in the Lower Living Income Standard Income Level (LLSIL). The self-sufficiency rule applies to all employed persons interested in receiving WIOA funds.

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5. Participants who have been deemed eligible for WIOA services under the Adult or Dislocated Worker Categories may be placed into Career or Training Services. Such Career or Training Service may encompass:

5.1. Work-Based Training

- 5.1.1. Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job whether the participant is a new hire, or a current employee being upgraded.
- 5.1.2. Work-Based Training to include On-the-Job Training (OJT), Upgrade Training, Customized Training and Work Experience shall not to exceed 12 months, as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking in to account the content of the training, prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.
- 5.1.3. OJT / Upgrade Training
 - 5.1.3.1. OJT/Upgrade provides reimbursement to the employer up to 50% of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training.
 - 5.1.3.2. No participant will be placed on more than two OJT/Upgrade Training situations within a given WIOA Program Year (PY). The second one is permissible only with prior approval from the Director or designee. The reason for requesting the second OJT/Upgrade Training must be specifically documented in the participant’s Individual Employment Plan (IEP).
 - 5.1.3.3. Changes in the employment status of a participant (i.e. laid off, fired or quit) must be appropriately reported by the Workforce Professional to Workforce Professional Program Coordinator and the accounting department.
 - 5.1.3.4. All employers are required to have a grievance process and will follow such process in matters related to the participant. If the employer does not have a process in place, the process followed by the Rapides Parish Police Jury will be utilized.
 - 5.1.3.5. The training occupation must not involve payment of commission wages as the primary source of wage payments to the participant.
 - 5.1.3.6. The training occupation must not involve, directly or indirectly in any political or religious activity. This includes the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of any facility that is used, or to be used, for religious instruction or as a place for religious worship. Additionally, the participant may not work in any sectarian activity.
 - 5.1.3.7. The training occupation should have career advancement potential and must be in accordance with the participant’s IEP.

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- 5.1.3.8. The training must be conducted at or out of the employer’s place of business and may not be subcontracted.
- 5.1.3.9. Training in occupations requiring a license to perform certain work will not be allowed unless the employer certifies that it is the employer’s intention to continue employment and further occupational training for the participant specified until all license requirements are met.
- 5.1.3.10. No employer may hire a WIOA participant under a training program if a participant of that person’s immediate family is engaged in an administrative capacity for that employer (nepotism).
- 5.1.3.11. The training employer must certify that neither the employing company nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or excluded from participation in the OJT/Upgrade Training program by any Federal Department or Agency.
- 5.1.3.12. The number of training positions allowed per employer are listed below. These numbers are not cumulative and apply only to positions being considered for training at the time the OJT/Upgrade Training Contract (form # LWA 61 – 01) is negotiated and awarded.

Total Number of Employees in Company	Number of Contracts Allowed
1-2	1
3-9	40% of the employer’s total # permanent of employees
10 +	25% of the employer’s total # of permanent employees

- 5.1.3.13. WIOA abides by the state policy, of the State Ethics Committee, which prohibits current Workforce Development Board (WDB) members from participating in OJT/Upgrade Training.
- 5.1.3.14. WIOA staff will locate and negotiate the OJT/Upgrade Training Contract with employers to provide OJT/Upgrade Training. Eligible employers can be in the either the public or private (non-profit or profit) sectors and eligibility will be determined by completing the Employer Training Eligibility Checklist (form# LWDA 61-02). Director or designee will make selections of employers through observation and evaluation of the employer’s ability to perform and provide training to OJT/Upgrade Training eligible participants.

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5.1.3.15. Selection and Referral of Participants

5.1.3.15.1. The focus should emphasize training participants in specific, new, or enhanced occupational skills for which a need exists within the local labor market. The intent of OJT/Upgrade Training is to increase marketable skills of eligible participants either by training new employees or upgrading existing employees.

5.1.3.15.2. On-the-Job Training (OJT) /Upgrade Training Contract (LWDA 61-01) may be written for eligible participants when:

5.1.3.15.2.1. The employee is not earning self-sufficient wages as defined in LWDA-61 policy 100-02 Definitions.

5.1.3.15.2.2. The OJT/Upgrade Training relates to the

5.1.3.15.2.2.1. Introduction of new technologies

5.1.3.15.2.2.2. Introduction to new production or service procedures

5.1.3.15.2.2.3. Upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, workplace literacy or other appropriate purposes.

5.1.3.15.3. The employee has been employed with the company for 90 days or longer.

5.1.3.15.4. OJT/Upgrade Training Contract (form # LWDA 61-01)

5.1.3.15.4.1. Before the selected eligible participant begins work with the selected eligible employer, all paperwork must be completed including the OJT /Upgrade Training Contract that is signed by all applicable parties.

5.1.3.15.4.2. An OJT/Upgrade Training Contract will not be written to exceed the \$10,000.00 per contract with a wage rate of no less than \$10.00 per hour.

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5.1.3.15.4.3. OJT/Upgrade Training Contract's cannot reimburse the employer more than 50% of the hourly wage rate.

5.1.3.15.4.4. Director approval is required for any OJT/Upgrade Training Contract over the maximum funding amount. All funded OJT/Upgrade Training Contracts will be awarded based on the availability of WIOA funds.

5.1.3.15.4.5. WIOA does not authorize training for jobs that pay on a commission, incentive, or piece rate basis. Nor does WIOA authorize reimbursement to employees for hours not spent on the job such as holidays, vacation, jury duty and sick leave.

5.1.3.15.5. Training Contract Payments:

5.1.3.15.5.1. Contracts cannot be modified to change the reimbursement rate unless (a) the minimum wage rate increases or (b) the wage rate is changed for all employees in the same occupation.

5.1.3.15.5.2. Funds provided to employers for training, must not be used to directly or indirectly assist, promote, or deter union organizing.

5.1.3.15.5.3. Funds provided to employers for training must not be used to promote political activities.

5.1.3.15.5.4. Funds provided to an employer for training must not be used to relocate the company in part or whole.

5.1.3.15.6. Monitoring

5.1.3.15.6.1. Monitoring will be performed by WIOA staff other than the Workforce Professional assigned to the OJT/Upgrade Training during the contract to verify that supervision and training is provided by the trainer as stated in the training plan.

5.1.3.15.6.2. In order to establish retention standards for the employer, the Workforce Professional will follow-up with the employer after the

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completion of the contract to determine if the participant has been retained by the employer with wages, benefits, and working conditions at the same level and to the same extent as similarly situated employees.

5.2. Registered Apprenticeship

- 5.2.1. Registered Apprenticeship is an on-the-job learning that combines related technical instruction with job-related instruction in a curriculum tied to the attainment of industry-recognized skills standards.
- 5.2.2. Eligible participants may be placed in Registered Apprenticeships in Rapides Parish (i.e., electrical, plumbing).
 - 5.2.2.1. Eligible participants may receive training related expenses (i.e., tuition, laptops, tools, books). Expenses are awarded on an as-needed basis and according to the availability of WIOA funding.
 - 5.2.2.2. Registered Apprenticeship expenses may not exceed \$10,000 for the duration of the training and according to the availability of WIOA funding.

6. Scholarship Training

- 6.1. Scholarship Training is not to exceed 24 months for an Associate or bachelor's degree program through a college or university or a certificate program through a vocational/technical college.
- 6.2. Eligible participants will be required to enroll in an accredited, Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) approved college, university, or vocational/technical institution to receive financial assistance for education expenses.
 - 6.2.1. Full-time training for a college or university is defined as:
 - 6.2.1.1. 12 or more hours of training for each fall and spring semester
 - 6.2.1.2. 8 or more hours of training each quarter.
 - 6.2.1.3. An exception is granted to Nursing Students who are enrolled in Clinicals. Full time training is considered to be 9 hours of training.
 - 6.2.1.4. 6 or more hours of training for each summer semester.
 - 6.2.1.5. An exception is granted in the event that the courses needed are not offered during the summer semester and the participant is not able to attend 6 or more hours of training. In this case, the participant will be allowed to attend less than 6 hours of training with proper documentation.
 - 6.2.1.6. An exception is granted in the event that the courses needed are not offered during the summer and the participant is only able to attend 3 hours of training during the summer semester. Proper justification is required.

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- 6.2.1.7. Full-time training for a vocational/technical college is defined by the individual vocational/technical institution.
- 6.2.2. If the number of hours is not available for a specific semester, the participant is not required to take out-of-degree courses to make up the required number of hours.
- 6.2.3. A participant needing educational enhancement training to qualify for employment is exempt from the full-time attendance requirements unless required by the training institution.
- 6.2.4. Eligible participants who have successfully completed a WIOA funded post-secondary program will not be eligible for re-training in a post-secondary education program unless approved by the Director.
- 6.2.5. Eligible participants with a non WIOA funded Associate Degree, Bachelor’s Degree or a vocational/technical certificate, may be approved for vocational skill or education enhancement training that is designed to build on existing skills/education and improve employability of the participant (i.e., an LPN or RN in another state wants to complete their certification to practice in Louisiana).
 - 6.2.5.1. Those who possess a degree in what is determined to be a non-marketable skill in the labor market may be approved for academic post-secondary training in a marketable occupation after review that establishes justification for retraining on a case-by-case basis.
 - 6.2.5.2. Before a decision is made to provide enhancement training, the case file must be thoroughly documented with an assessment of the participant’s education, vocational skills, employment barriers, occupational interests, and circumstances pertinent to employment.
 - 6.2.5.3. Retraining must be in accordance with the participant’s IEP, which must clearly state the training objectives. The participant must have a high expectation of employment as a result of this skill enhancement retraining that otherwise would not be likely.
- 6.2.6. The Rapides American Job Center (RAJC) does not assist a participant in obtaining a Master’s degree or higher.
- 6.2.7. Funding of each semester will be contingent upon the participant providing documented proof of grade point average performance in the form of transcript.
- 6.2.8. In the event a participant drops out of training prior to completion of the semester in which any machinery or equipment valued over \$300 was purchased with WIOA funds, the machinery or equipment shall become the property of the Workforce Operation Department (WOD) and will be returned to WOD at the termination of training.
- 6.2.9. Failure of the participant to attend classes or maintain a 2.0 grade point average may cause termination of WIOA funds or transfer the participant to other, more appropriate training.

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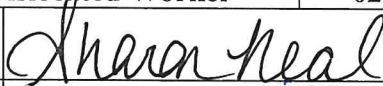

- 6.2.10. The participant must apply for and receive notification of any PELL Grant award prior to the start of his/her scholarship training activity. The WIOA funds will not be used for payment of student loan obtained by the participant.
 - 6.2.11. Workforce Professionals must obtain information regarding funding available for the participant (i.e., Pell Grants, financial assistance) prior to awarding WIOA funds for scholarship training.
 - 6.2.12. All organizations that provide training are required to have a grievance process and will follow such process in matters related to the participant. If the employer does not have a process in place, the process followed by the Rapides Parish Police Jury will be utilized.
 - 6.2.13. WIOA abides by the State Ethics Committee policy which prohibits current Workforce Development Board (WDB) members from participating in Scholarship Training.
 - 6.2.14. Must select a training program in a demand occupation with a star rating of 3, 4 or 5 in the local WIOA area evidenced by LA Star Jobs or Demand Occupations for Rapides Parish in Labor Market Information (LMI).
 - 6.2.15. Workforce Professionals must consider all available funding sources (i.e., Pell Grants, scholarships) to determine the participant’s need for WIOA funds. WIOA funds are to be used as a “last resort” and are determined by the availability of funds.
- 6.3. Before participants can be placed at a college, university or vocational/technical institution, the Training Provider/Vendor and training program must be on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
7. Individual Training Account
- 7.1. An Individual Training Account (ITA) (form # LWDA 61-21) is established to fund training services for eligible participant.
 - 7.2. The amount of the ITA must be based on the direct costs of training (i.e., tuition & fees) and supportive services. Direct costs of training, which does not include supportive services, are not to exceed a maximum amount of \$8000.00 per participant for the total length of training.
8. Policy Exception Rule
- 8.1. Exceptions to additional training time, funds, hourly rate of pay and percentage of enrollment of non-Parish residents may be approved by the Director in special circumstances or in cases of exceptional need that are appropriately documented.

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Regional & Local Plan PY 2024 – 2027

Attachment 5

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Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWDA 61			
Policy Number 400-06	Policy Name Eligible Training Providers		
Category 400	Category Name Adult and Dislocated Worker	Effective Date 02/18/2016	Revision Date 05/16/2024
Executive Director Sharon Neal	Signature		
WDB Chairperson Rose Killion	Signature		

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process and procedure to be utilized to include training programs / providers on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider list (ETPL).

References:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 Section 122
- Louisiana Workforce Commission Policy – OWD 2-23 – Integrated Service Delivery Policy
- Louisiana Workforce Commission – Eligible Training Provider Manual 2015

Policy:

1. Eligible Training Services is a category of offerings, required by WIOA, that the Rapides Workforce Development Board (WDB) is responsible for providing to adults and dislocated workers. The broad array of training services may include, but not be limited to:
 - 1.1. Occupational skills training, on-the-job training, job-readiness training
 - 1.2. Adult education and literacy activities, cooperative education programs, training programs operated by the private sector
 - 1.3. Incumbent Worker Training
 - 1.4. Training programs operated by the private sector
 - 1.5. Combined workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs, and
 - 1.6. Skills upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, and customized training conducted by an employer.
2. Training must be limited to those occupations that have been determined to be in demand in Rapides Parish as evidence by a Star Rating of 3, 4 or 5.
3. Use of training through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) should be incorporated into the cohort strategy under the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) Integrated Service Delivery Policy.
4. Rapides WDB is responsible for notifying providers in their area of the opportunity to apply for status as approved training providers.
5. Rapides WDB is responsible for ensuring that training providers have access to the application for certification and a list of demand occupations for their local workforce development area.
6. Eligible participants with Individual Training Account (ITA) from any local area may attend a program, once certified, and included on the statewide ETPL.
7. Upon certification of the training provider by LWC, LWC will provide recommendations for program approval based on the Star Rating system for demand occupations. It is up to the Rapides WDB to provide approval or rejection of the individual programs.

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8. The Rapides WDB will use the following minimum performance criteria in which to determine approval / rejection of programs:
 - 8.1. Program Completion Rate (state minimum performance level is 30%) – the total number of individuals completing the applicable program divided by the total number of individuals exiting the program (completers and non-completers).
 - 8.2. Employment Rate (state minimum performance level is 50%) – the number of all exiting from the applicable program that obtained unsubsidized employment in the first quarter subsequent to exiting the program, divided by the total number of those exiting in the reporting period.
 - 8.3. Wages at placement (state minimum performance level is \$8.00) – the average wage expressed as an hourly rate of all individuals participating in the applicable program that obtained unsubsidized employment.
9. Results of the ETPL approval/rejection process by Rapides WDB must be communicated to LWC’s Research and Statistics Division within five business days of the board meeting. LWC has 30 days after the electronic notification of the ETPL to send a denial notice to the training provider. The training provider has 30 days from the receipt of the denial notice in which to file an appeal to the Rapides WDB. The Rapides WDB must issue a decision within 60 days after the appeal is filed. The board must provide an opportunity for a hearing and send the training provider by certified mail or hand delivered with a signature verifying receipt. A training provider not satisfied with the Rapides WDB decision, may file an appeal with LWC.

DRAFT

LWDA 61 Rapides American Job Center

Regional & Local Plan PY 2024 – 2027

Attachment 6

DRAFT

Rapides Workforce Development Board – LWDA 61			
Policy Number 800-01	Policy Name Fiscal Policy		
Category 800	Category Name Fiscal	Effective Date 11/13/2014	Revision Date 05/16/2024
Executive Director Sharon Neal	Signature	<i>Sharon Neal</i>	
WDB Chairperson Rose Killion	Signature	<i>Rose Killion</i>	

Purpose:

To establish the accounting standards and guidelines that must be followed by Rapides Parish Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD).

References:

- 29 U.S. Code § 3102
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidance 2 CFR 200.320
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123
- State of Louisiana Executive Order Number JBS 2016-39 Small Purchase Procedures

Definitions:

- **Administrative Costs:** The term “administrative costs” means expenditures incurred by State boards and local boards, direct recipients (including State grant recipients under part B of subchapter I and recipients of awards under parts C and D of subchapter I), local grant recipients, local fiscal agents or local grant sub recipients, and one-stop operators in the performance of administrative functions and in carrying out activities under subchapter I that are not related to the direct provision of workforce investment services (including services to participants and employers). Such costs include both personnel and non-personnel costs and both direct and indirect costs.

Policy:

1. The OEWD is a department of the Rapides Parish Police Jury (RPPJ) and is designated as the Administrative Entity and Fiscal Agent for Workforce Development funds that flow through Rapides Parish, as well as the established entity serving as the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) staff for Rapides Parish. In general, the fiscal agent is responsible for the following functions:
 - 1.1. Receive funds
 - 1.2. Ensure sustained fiscal integrity and accountability for expenditures of funds in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget circulars, WIOA and the corresponding Federal Regulations and State policies
 - 1.3. Respond to audit financial findings
 - 1.4. Maintain proper accounting records and adequate documentation
 - 1.5. Prepare financial reports
 - 1.6. Provide technical assistance to sub-recipients regarding fiscal issues
2. On December 22, 2020, LWDA #61 Rapides Parish Workforce Development Board (WDB) was recommended for certification and approval by the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council in accordance with the criteria established in section 117 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and Act 743 of the 2008 Regular Legislative Session.

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3. The OEWD aspires to the following accounting concepts and principles:
 - 3.1. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
 - 3.2. Federal Cost Principles as set forth in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars.
 - 3.3. Internal Controls
 - 3.4. System of Authorization and Records
 - 3.5. Sufficient Competent Evidential Matter
 - 3.6. Full Disclosure and Materiality
 - 3.7. Consistency
 - 3.8. Custodianship of Assets
4. In addition to the above-mentioned concepts and principles, the OEWD follows all Federal, State and Local laws, regulations and guidance specific to the grants that it manages, including but not limited to:
 - 4.1. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) & Regulations
 - 4.2. OMB Circulars (A-87 Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments; Consolidated Circular Code of Federal Regulations at 2 CFR Part 225; and 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards).
 - 4.3. CFR 29 Part 97 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments
 - 4.4. U.S. Department of Labor Technical Assistance & Guidance Directives
 - 4.5. Louisiana Workforce Commission Policy & Guidance Directives
 - 4.6. RPPJ Policies and Procedures
5. The OEWD uses the above-mentioned concepts, principles and resources when determining the allowability of costs charged to the federal award. For allowable costs to be charged to a federal award, they must meet the following general criteria:
 - 5.1. The cost must be reasonable, necessary and allocable for the performance of the federal award within the scope of the cost principles of sound management and accounting practices, consistent treatment of like items of cost, and adequate documentation to support the cost and its purpose.
 - 5.1.1. A cost is deemed reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost.
 - 5.1.2. A cost is deemed necessary if it is recognized as ordinary and essential for the operation of the organization or for the performance of a federal or non-federal award.
 - 5.1.3. A cost is deemed allocable to a federal or non-federal award if it is chargeable or assignable to the appropriate award in accordance with the relative benefits received by that award and can be distributed in proportions based on an acceptable allocation methodology.
 - 5.2. The cost must conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in the OMB cost principles or in the federal award.

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- 5.3. The cost must be consistent with policies and procedures that apply to both federally funded awards and non-federally funded activities.
6. The OEWD does not conduct lobbying activity. No federal or state funds will be used by this agency, or an agent acting on behalf of this agency, to influence legislation or appropriations pending before Congress or any State legislature. If a contract contains federal or state funding, or if required by contract language, RPPJ will complete a Certification Regarding Lobbying form (Attachment V of the Contract), which will be made a part of the contract, prior to contract execution. Furthermore, no funds are to be used to assist, promote, or deter Union organizing.
7. Accounting Staff
- 7.1. The accounting department is comprised of the following positions:
- 7.1.1. Finance Director
 - 7.1.2. Accountant I
 - 7.1.3. Accountant II
8. Basic of Accounting and Charts of Accounts
- 8.1. The OWED uses the accrual basis of accounting when issuing monthly financial reports to the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), quarterly reports to the WDB and annual reports for audit purposes.
- 8.2. Revenues are recorded when they become available and are measurable. Expenses are recognized in the accounting period in which they occur and are measurable.
- 8.3. OEWD audits are performed annually in accordance with OMB A-133 as part of a consolidated single audit of the RPPJ. The OEWD is audited annually on the Police Jury's fiscal year end date of December 31st.
- 8.4. In order to ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of the various funding available to the agency, OEWD utilizes a fund accounting software system called **MIP Government Series** by Abila Software which is owned by RPPJ. The MIP Fund Accounting System is a Windows based software consisting of the following modules currently being utilized by OEWD:
- 8.4.1. General Ledger
 - 8.4.2. Accounts Payable
 - 8.4.3. Accounts Receivable
 - 8.4.4. Encumbrances
 - 8.4.5. Budget
 - 8.4.6. Fixed Assets
 - 8.4.7. Payroll
 - 8.4.8. System Administration
 - 8.4.9. Purchase Orders
- 8.5. Chart of Accounts
- 8.5.1. The chart of accounts for OWED is designed to track and collect data related to each funding source by both program year and cost category.
 - 8.5.2. The chart of accounts allows for verifiable tracking of all obligations for monitoring, reporting, and audit purposes.
 - 8.5.3. The chart of accounts is a table-driven chart of accounts, which is divided into six segments as follows:
 - 8.5.3.1. Fund Code – tracks the funding source and year of appropriation.

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- 8.5.3.2. Function Code – tracks the regulatory cost category of expenses and revenues (i.e., Administration, Program, etc.).
- 8.5.3.3. General Ledger Code – tracks the specific types of expenses, revenues, assets, liabilities, fund balance (i.e., cash, salaries, benefits, supplies, utilities, etc.).
- 8.5.3.4. Activity Code – tracks various sub-categories of revenue & expense (i.e. operations, WDB board functions, program costs, work experience, etc.).
- 8.5.3.5. Staff/Participant – used in payroll to differentiate between staff and participants; used in accounts payable to distinguish between types of supportive services payment.
- 8.5.3.6. Future 2 – used to identify Workforce Professionals.

8.5.4. The OEWD Finance Director has exclusive rights to add, edit, and delete chart of account codes to the system. In absence of the Finance Director, the Accountant II can perform this function.

8.5.4.1. Once activity has been entered for a specific code, the system will not allow that code to be deleted. Instead, the code can be inactivated from further use, but its detail will always be maintained in the accounting system for audit tracking purposes.

8.5.4.2. The OEWD Finance Director may designate other accounting staff to maintain various functions of the accounting system as he/she deems necessary.

9. Internal Control

9.1. The OEWD recognizes that it is a steward of the public’s money, and the taxpayers hold the organization accountable to use the funds wisely and to protect them from loss while in their custody. As a result, a strong internal control policy exists and is monitored to prevent misuse of funds.

9.2. The objectives of this system are to:

9.2.1. Provide reasonable assurance that all assets, including workforce development funds, are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition.

9.2.2. That transactions are executed in accordance with management’s authorization.

9.2.3. That they are recorded properly to permit the preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

9.3. Segregation of duties reduces the likelihood that one person would be able to completely control a process or function from beginning to end. Although the accounting department is currently comprised of only two members, steps have been taken to ensure adequate segregation of duties for the various transactions that may occur during the course of business. In addition, blank check stock is kept in a locked and secure place with limited access.

9.4. The MIP accounting system fully integrates obligations, budgets, disbursements, and cost allocations in a centralized location, eliminating the risk of error associated with manual spreadsheets and calculations. The chart of accounts and all accounting procedures have been established to provide for identifying receipts and expenditures of program funds separately for each grant. The MIP accounting system also has the feature of consecutively numbered

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“sessions” or “batches” to ensure all data input to the system can be accounted for and tracked.

9.5. Internal controls are monitored periodically by either the Rapides Parish Treasurer or his/her designee.

9.6. A review of the agency’s internal controls is also conducted as part of the annual fiscal audit.

9.7. Improper Payments

9.7.1. An improper payment is a payment that should not have been made or made in the wrong amount. This includes overpayments, underpayments, and could include payments made to the right recipient in the right amount but were not in adherence to policies & procedures.

9.7.2. The Workforce Operations Department (WOD) Workforce Professionals and the Office of Workforce Development (OEWD) Accounting staff are responsible for avoiding improper payments by using established internal procedures for invoicing, timesheets, attendance records, payroll, and accounts payable.

9.7.3. LWDA 61 has an internal control framework to ensure that payments are made in the right amount, to the right entity, and for the right purpose; and if an improper payment occurs, the WOD Workforce Professionals and OEWD Accounting Staff must work together to recapture the funds. However; if improper payments or overpayments are issued;

9.7.3.1. Funds can be recaptured by using various methods including such as check stop payments, requesting that the vendor or participant return the check, or if check has been cashed, return the funds to the OEWD Accounting department, or,

9.7.3.2. Improper payment funds can be recaptured by obtaining a credit from the vendor that was overpaid.

9.7.3.3. Improper or overpayment to participants can be documented and recaptured on future payments from encumbered funds.

9.7.4. All attempts to recapture improper payments must be documented in the appropriate accounting files by the OEWD Accounting Department. If improper payments are made to or on behalf of a participant, proper documentation must be noted and filed in the participants accounting file and must be also filed and documented with case note(s) and scanned documents (if applicable) in the participants’ HiRE account.

10. Cash Management – General

10.1. The following is a list of all current bank accounts used by OEWD:

Bank	Type of Account	Use of Account	Authorized Signers	General Ledger Number
JPMorgan/Chase	Checking Account	General Operating Account	RPPJ Treasurer and Police Jury President	19077
JPMorgan/Chase	Checking Account	Clearing Account for Payroll Checks	RPPJ Treasurer and Police Jury President	19055

10.2. All grant funds are deposited in banks with FDIC insurance.

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- 10.3. Any funds in the bank in excess of FDIC coverage are collaterally secured.
- 10.4. The RPPJ Treasurer’s Office bids every 3 or 4 years for a Fiscal Agent Agreement which includes a collateral security agreement for all Police Jury Funds, including OEWD funds.
- 10.5. The Police Jury additionally carries a security bond covering all employees who handle public and grant funds including OEWD employees.
- 10.6. Information regarding the Fiscal Agent Agreement and employee security bonds can be obtained from the RPPJ Treasurer’s Office.
- 10.7. The RPPJ Treasurer or his/her designee are the only individuals authorized to sign checks.
- 10.8. The OEWD also maintains a petty cash fund.
- 10.9. Cash Receipts
 - 10.9.1. Expenditures are compiled bi-weekly after payroll.
 - 10.9.2. A drawdown request is created and sent to LWC for funds.
 - 10.9.3. A receivable is created in the Accounts Receivable Module in MIP.
 - 10.9.4. When funds are received they are entered in Accounts Receivable.
- 10.10. Cash Disbursements
 - 10.10.1. All cash disbursements are made by pre-numbered check and disbursed out of the general operating account or the payroll clearing account, except for a few small purchases made from “Petty Cash” as outlined in Procedure 800-01-01 Cash Management.
 - 10.10.2. It is prohibited for checks to be made payable to “cash” or signed in advance.
- 10.11. Reconciliation of Cash
 - 10.11.1. Periodic (monthly) reconciliation of bank and other cash depository accounts represents an important point of internal control over both the cash receipts and disbursement activities. Reconciliations will be made by the Finance Director or designee from the OEWD accounting staff. Reconciling bank balances forces a careful review of all transactions involving cash and provides a means of proving the accuracy of the accounting record’s cash balances. Segregation of duties ensures a check and balance system (Refer to 9.3).
 - 10.11.2. The OEWD accounting department has the responsibility for the actual maintenance and reconciliation of the grant funds awarded to it and the bank accounts used for operations.
- 11. Program Operations
 - 11.1. Purchasing
 - 11.1.1. The RPPJ has a centralized purchasing department. The RPPJ adopted “applicable state law, and Police Jury and Administrative Requirements” as its procurement policy at the April 14, 2014 Police Jury meeting. Relevant sections of the Louisiana procurement code for OEWD and Workforce Operations Department (WOD) are found in R.S. Title 38:2212.
 - 11.1.2. The OEWD and WOD follow local, state and federal procurement policy guidelines as appropriate.
 - 11.1.2.1. Any changes and/or updates to local, state and federal procurement policy guidelines supersede this local policy and this local policy needs to be updated to comply with said changes.
 - 11.1.3. One of the following methods must be used for procurement:

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11.1.3.1. Micro-purchase

11.1.3.1.1. Micro-purchases cannot exceed \$3000.00 per single purchase transaction.

11.1.3.2. Small purchase

11.1.3.2.1. Price quotations shall be solicited from 3 qualified vendors for purchases exceeding \$3000.00 but not to exceed \$15,000.00.

11.1.3.2.2. Price quotations shall be solicited from 5 qualified vendors for purchases exceeding \$15,000.00 but not to exceed \$25,000.00.

11.1.3.3. Sealed bids (formal advertisement)

11.1.3.3.1. When a purchase is greater than \$25,000.00, bids are publicly solicited and a firm fixed price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price.

11.1.3.4. Competitive proposals

11.1.3.4.1. Competitive proposals are conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded.

11.1.3.4.2. Request for Proposals (RFP's) are considered competitive proposals and must be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance.

11.1.3.5. Noncompetitive proposals

11.1.3.5.1. Procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source and may be used only when one or more of the following circumstances apply:

11.1.3.5.1.1. The item is available only from a single source.

11.1.3.5.1.2. The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from a competitive solicitation.

11.1.3.5.1.3. The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to a written request from a non-federal entity, or

11.1.3.5.1.4. After solicitation of a number of sources competition is determined inadequate.

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- 11.1.4. No employee, officer, or agent must participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated here-in, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.
- 11.1.5. OEWD and WOD will avoid the acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items and promote cost-effective use of shared services by entering into state and local intergovernmental agreements for procurement or use of common or shared goods and services where appropriate.
- 11.2. Encumbrances
 - 11.2.1. The MIP accounting system used by the OEWD allows for the entry of encumbrances, which are maintained in an encumbrance ledger separate from the general ledger. This allows for the accounting department to track obligated funds and decrease the chance for overspending.
- 11.3. Accounts Payable
 - 11.3.1. The OEWD accounting department utilizes the Accounts Payable System of its MIP fund accounting software package to ensure expenses can be tracked on the accrual basis of accounting.
- 11.4. Employee Travel
 - 11.4.1. The OEWD and WOD follow established Police Jury travel policies and procedures which are found in Section 2-21 of the local municipal ordinances and the Police Jury’s Personnel Policy & Procedures Manual.
- 11.5. Agency Credit Cards
 - 11.5.1. The OEWD has the following credit card accounts:
 - 11.5.1.1. Wal-Mart
 - 11.5.1.2. Fleetcor Technologies (Fuelman)
- 12. Payroll
 - 12.1. The OEWD accounting department prepares and processes payroll through its MIP Payroll System.
 - 12.1.1. Bi-weekly payroll for staff (permanent & temporary) and participants
 - 12.2. New employees are set up in the payroll system when an “Authorization to Hire” form is received in the OEWD accounting department. The accounting department has a list of all required documents for each type of employment situation and will make sure all forms are completed prior to set-up in MIP.
 - 12.2.1. The “Authorization to Hire” form is generated by Civil Service for permanent hires.
 - 12.3. Participants who will receive payments through the payroll system are set up in the payroll system when a “Set-Up Package” is received from the workforce professional.
 - 12.3.1. The documents required in the “Set- Up package” will vary depending on which program the person is being enrolled into. Refer to individual program procedures (i.e., On-the-Job Training, Scholarship Training) for additional information.
 - 12.4. Participant Supportive Services Payments

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12.4.1. Participants who are enrolled in academic training or work experience may be awarded supportive services on an as needed basis in accordance with WOD’s policies regarding supportive services. Supportive Services are paid through the accounts payable system.

13. Property Control and Inventory

13.1. The OEWD recognizes that property control is an important function of the agency and accountability for all property purchased will be consistent with RPPJ’s procurement policies found in Fiscal Procedure 800-01-02 Program Operations.

14. Cost Allocation Plan

14.1. Indirect costs are those:

14.1.1. Costs that are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and

14.1.2. Costs that are not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effect disproportionate to the results achieved.

14.2. The MIP Accounting System can accommodate charging of indirect costs and use of multiple funding streams through its feature of “Distribution Codes”.

15. Records Retention

15.1. Records are maintained in sufficient detail to permit the preparation of all required reports and provide for the tracing of funds to a level of expenditure adequate to ensure that the funds have not been spent unlawfully.

15.2. All financial records, reports, source documents and work papers are retained by the OEWD on-site for a period of five (5) years from the date on which the funds have been audited without any findings or questioned costs.

15.3. Records related to assets are kept indefinitely or until five (5) years after an asset is disposed of.

15.4. If there are any findings or questioned costs, all the above-mentioned records will be retained for five (5) years after resolution of the findings or questioned costs.

15.5. Records that need to be disposed of will either be shredded or burned.

16. Budget Control and Modification

16.1. Budget

16.1.1. The OEWD is responsible for preparing a budget for the use of WIOA funds and other grants received for programs, services, and projects in Rapides Parish in alignment with WDB priorities and with Federal, State and Parish requirements. The Workforce Development Board 61 priorities take into account the responsibilities to meet WIOA performance standards, operate the Rapides American Job Center (RAJC) and expend fund appropriately and in a timely manner to comply with the WIOA contract.

16.1.2. The following steps will be taken in creating the fiscal year budgets:

16.1.2.1. The OEWD Executive Director, Finance Director, and Accountants will create a budget for each fund based on the Budget Information Summary report issued by the Louisiana appropriation and cost category.

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- 16.1.2.2. The OEWD Executive Director, Finance Director, and Accountants uses historical data and Workforce Development Board 61 policies to compute the budget by:
 - 16.1.2.2.1. Fund
 - 16.1.2.2.2. Cost Category
 - 16.1.2.2.3. General Ledger Number
- 16.1.3. The Executive Director provides budget oversight, direction and coordination.
- 16.1.4. The annual budget is approved by the Rapides Parish Police Jury and the Workforce Development Board 61.
- 16.2. Budget Revision
 - 16.2.1. Changes in the contract are incorporated into the budget and submitted to the Rapides Parish Police Jury and the Workforce Development Board 61 for approval.
 - 16.2.2. All Budget revisions will be approved by the Rapides Parish Police Jury and the Workforce Development Board 61.
- 16.3. Budget Transfers
 - 16.3.1. Budget transfers are initiated by a letter from the Workforce Development Board 61 along with a Contract Budget Revision Form detailing the details of the request.
 - 16.3.2. The Contract Budget Revision Request Form must include the following:
 - 16.3.2.1. The date of the request
 - 16.3.2.2. The amount of the request
 - 16.3.2.3. A detailed narrative stating what the request is for, why it is needed and how it will be used.
 - 16.3.3. The Contract Budget Revision Request Form is submitted to the Louisiana Workforce Commission for approval.
 - 16.3.4. Upon approval, the Louisiana Workforce Commission will revise the contract which must be approved the Rapides Parish Police Jury and the Workforce Development Board 61.

