Durham Workforce Development Board

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Comprehensive Four-Year Title I Plan

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028

North Carolina Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

Introduction and Instructions

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Local Area Workforce Development Board (WDB) to develop and submit, in partnership with the chief local elected official (CLEO), a comprehensive four-year plan.

The WIOA Comprehensive Four-Year Title I Plan is to provide current information and be effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028 and will include required current local policies. The Local Area Plan will support the alignment strategy described in the 2024-2025 NC Unified State Plan in accordance with WIOA Section 102(b)(1)(E), and otherwise be consistent with the NC Unified State Plan. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's mission is to ensure North Carolinians are better educated, healthier, and have more money in their pockets so that they can live more abundant, purposeful lives. The cornerstone to achieving this goal is to help people get good-paying jobs to support themselves and their families. Through NC Job Ready, Governor Cooper's workforce development initiative, North Carolina is working to build a stronger and better workforce. NC Job Ready is built on three core principles: education and skills attainment are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an employer-led workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and local innovation is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system. In addition, Local Area WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 108 in the preparation and submission of the plan.

The NCWorks Commission developed the strategic vision and mission for North Carolina's Workforce System based on Governor Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative. This vision is to build a job-ready workforce to strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure our state can adapt to a changing economy. The mission of the state's workforce development system is to ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity, and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

Plans are reviewed by the Division of Workforce Solutions and NCWorks Commission staff. Upon completion of Plan reviews and the resolution of any concerns, as applicable, fully compliant Plans will be given Final Approval. Approval letters are distributed through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE). Local WDBs must have a compliant workforce board in place to receive Final Plan Approval and distribution of formula WIOA program year funding. [WIOA Section 108(e)]

Federal and State Requirements for Local Administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Area WDBs should reference the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128, enacted July 22, 2014. Additional information is available at the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration website: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta.

North Carolina policy information is available at: https://www.commerce.nc.gov/jobs-training/workforce-professionals-tools-resources/workforce-policies. Local Area WDBs should reference the North Carolina WIOA Unified State Plan to be posted March 2024.

Local Area Plan Submission and Due Date

The Local Area Plan must be submitted through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE), the Division's web-based financial system.

The Program Year 2024 - 2028 Plan is Due:
May 1, 2024

Each attachment must be clearly labeled in either Word or PDF format. Forms requiring original signatures may use DocuSign® (or similar) and may be uploaded in WISE.

If original signatures are obtained, forms may be mailed (and must be uploaded in WISE) to the Local Area WDB's assigned Planner at:

Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

I. Local Area Workforce Development Board (WDB) Overview

The Local Area WDB Overview provides important contact information that is used throughout the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). It is important that this section remain current during the Program Year. Updates should be submitted to the Local Area WDB's assigned DWS Planner when changes occur.

In the first section and anywhere else in the Local Area Plan, please include the appropriate salutation along with Titles such as Dr., The Honorable, Chairperson, and Judge.

1. Provide the **Local Area WDB**'s official (legal) name as it appears on the local Consortium Agreement established to administer the WIOA or, if not a Consortium, in the formal request for Local Area designation.
The Durham Workforce Development Board

- If the Local Area is a Consortium, attach a copy of the current Consortium Agreement.
  - Name document: *Local Area WDB Name Consortium Agreement*.

- If the Local Area is not a Consortium, attach a copy of the formal request for Local Area designation.
  - Name document: ***The Durham Workforce Development Board Inter-Local Area Agreement***

- If the Local Area WDB officially changed its name, please attach a copy of the Status of Incorporation, attorney's letter, or other document.

2. List the counties served by the Local Area WDB.
County of Durham

3. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number, and email address of the **Local Area WDB Director**.	
Name: Adria Graham Scott	Title & Salutation: Director (she, her)
Organization Name: Durham Workforce Development Board	Address: 804 E. Main Street, Building 5, Durham, NC 27701
Phone Number: (919) 560-4965	Email Address: Adria.GrahamScott@Durhamnc.gov

4. Provide the name, elected title, local government affiliation, address, phone number, and email address of the **Chief Local Elected Official** (CLEO).	
Name: Leonardo Williams	Elected Title & Salutation: Mayor (He, Him)
Government Affiliation: City of Durham	Address: 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701
Phone Number: (919) 560-4333	Email Address: Leonardo.Williams@Durhamnc.gov

5. Provide the name, title, business name, address, phone number, and email address of the **individual authorized to receive official mail for the Chief Local Elected Official** (CLEO), if different than question 4.	
Name: Derrick Stanfield	Title & Salutation: Special Assistant to the Mayor
Business Name: City of Durham	Address: 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701
Phone Number: (984) 352-7251	Email Address: Derrick.Stanfield@Durhamnc.gov

6. Provide the name, address, phone number and email address of the **Administrative/Fiscal Agent responsible for disbursing Local Area WIOA grant funds**. This is the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds. [WIOA Sections 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) and 108(b)(15)].	
Name: Tim Flora	Title & Salutation: Director of Finance (He, Him)
Organization Name: City of Durham	Address: 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701
Phone Number: (919) 560-4455	Email Address: Tim.Flora@Durhamnc.gov

7. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number and email address of the **Administrative/Fiscal Agent's signatory official**.	
Name: Wanda S. Page	Title & Salutation: City Manager (She, Her)
Organization Name: City of Durham	Address: 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701
Phone Number: (919) 560-4222	Email Address: Wanda.Page@Durhamnc.gov

8. Attach a copy of the **Administrative Entity/Fiscal Agent's organizational chart** with an 'effective as of date'.
• Name document: ***City of Durham Organizational Chart***

9. Provide the **Administrative Entity's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)** number and assurance that the 'System for Award Management' (SAM) status is current. Administrative Entities must register at least annually on the SAM website https://sam.gov/content/home to receive Federal funding [required by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Section 4.11 and Section 52.204-7].

SAM UEI: SRPMEFTB1B54
CAGE/NCAGE: 3YRE9

10. Provide the name of the **Local Area WDB's Equal Opportunity Officer** who shall be responsible for assuring that discrimination does not occur in its programs or projects. (CPS 10-2021, Change 1)

Russell Ingram, Equal Opportunity Officer
Durham Workforce Development Board
City of Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development
807 East Main Street, Suite 5, Durham, NC 27701
(919) 560-4965
Russell.Ingram@durhamnc.gov

- Composition of the Local Area WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 107. Local Area WDB Membership Requirements have been provided as a reference at Appendix D.

11. Provide each **Local Area WDB members'** name, business title, business name and address, phone number and email address on the provided form. The first block is reserved to identify the Local Area WDB chairperson (*form provided*). Indicate all required representation and indicate if vacant. [WIOA Section 107(b)(2)].

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Member List***

- If a Local Area WDB list is not in compliance, please provide the current list and state the expected date that a compliant list will be provided (detailing vacant positions). Do not change required category names except to clarify those representing multiple categories. When determining the total number of members, representatives serving in more than one category must be counted and listed only once on the form. Identify any names representing a dual category with an asterisk (*).

Notes:

- *Please complete the entire form. Check the block on the last page of the form certifying compliance with required WIOA Local Area WDB business nomination process.*
- *Representatives with expired terms will not be included in the counted list of Board members. Board member terms must stated in a month/date/year format.*
- *Plans that do not have a compliant workforce Board will not receive Final Approval. Formula funds will not be awarded until the Local Area WDB has a compliant workforce Board. Exceptions are allowed only when realignment is occurring in the upcoming program year.*

12. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB works with local elected officials to ensure viable local business representatives are appointed to the Local Area WDB in compliance with WIOA Section 107.

The Durham Workforce Development Board maintains a close and well integrated relationship with local elected officials through the representation of a member from the City of Durham Council and two members of the Durham County Commissioners Board as officially designated, non-voting members of the Durham Workforce Development Board. Through this formal arrangement, the elected officials of our local area maintain up to date awareness and engage in the current and pressing needs of the local area workforce ensuring that viable and productive business representatives are appointed to the Board.

The Chief Local Elected Official must establish by-laws consistent with applicable local procedures, state, and federal laws to include WIOA Final Rules and Regulations 679.310(g). The Local Area WDB shall submit by-laws that clearly demonstrate all WIOA and North Carolina required elements described in Appendix A. Additional by-laws guidance/template and electronic meeting formats have been provided in Appendix B and Appendix C.

13. Attach the Local Area WDB By-Laws including date adopted/amended. By-Laws must include the required elements found in Appendix A.

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board By-Laws***

14. To demonstrate that the attached Local Area WDB By-Laws comply, complete By-Laws Required Elements – Crosswalk chart (form provided).

Sunshine Provision – The Local Area WDB shall make available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information regarding the activities of the Local Area WDB, including information regarding the Local Area Plan prior to submission of the Local Area Plan, and regarding membership, the designation and certification of one-stop operators, and the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, and on request, minutes of formal meetings of the Local Area WDB. [WIOA Section 107(e)]

15. Describe how the Local Area WDB will make copies of the proposed Local Area Plan available to the public. If stating the Local Area Plan will be on the Local Area WDB website, provide link, as well as individual's contact information for distribution of Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d) and 108(b)(20)]

The proposed Local Plan Update will be available for public access on the Durham Workforce Development Board, City of Durham webpage, and a paper copy will be available at the Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development, as well as through the City of Durham website, Office of Economic and Workforce Development page (https:/durhamnc.gov/446/Office-of-Economic-Workforce-Development). Draft and final plans, and events information are also on the website and are available by telephone contact at (919) 560-4965, mail request and/or in-person at the Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development, 807 E. Main Street, Suite 5-100, Durham, NC 27701. The public may make comments for a 30-day period beginning on May 3, 2024, the date the proposed plan is made available, and ending on June 3, 2024. Any comments in disagreement will be submitted to the NC Division of Workforce Solutions. If such comments are received after Plan Update submission, Durham will submit those comments to NC Division of Workforce Solutions and update Plan and resubmit with corrective comments.

Public Comment – The Local Area WDB shall make copies of the proposed Local Area Plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media; allow for public comment not later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the proposed Local Area Plan is made available; and, include with submission of the Local Area Plan any comments that represent disagreement with the Local Area Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d) and 108(b)(20)]

16. Attach a copy of the Local Area WDB's organizational chart with an 'effective as of date.' Include position titles, names, and contact information.

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Organizational Chart***

17. Complete the following chart for the PY2024 Local Area WDB's planned meeting schedule to include, date, time, location, and virtual link (if applicable). (Expand form as needed)

Date	Time	Location (include address, room # and virtual link)
July 25, 2024	**8:30 – 10:30 AM**	**NCWorks Career Center 1105 S. Briggs Avenue Durham, NC 27703 (Virtual Alternative: Zoom Meeting)**
September 26, 2024	**8:30 – 10:30 AM**	**NCWorks Career Center 1105 S. Briggs Avenue Durham, NC 27703 (Virtual Alternative: Zoom Meeting)**

November 21, 2024* ***reflects holiday schedule***	**8:30 – 10:30 AM**	**NCWorks Career Center** **1105 S. Briggs Avenue** **Durham, NC 27703** **(Virtual Alternative: Zoom Meeting)**
January 23, 2025	**8:30 – 10:30 AM**	**NCWorks Career Center** **1105 S. Briggs Avenue** **Durham, NC 27703** **(Virtual Alternative: Zoom Meeting)**
March 27, 2025	**8:30 – 10:30 AM**	**NCWorks Career Center** **1105 S. Briggs Avenue** **Durham, NC 27703** **(Virtual Alternative: Zoom Meeting)**
May 22, 2025	**8:30 – 10:30 AM**	**NCWorks Career Center** **1105 S. Briggs Avenue** **Durham, NC 27703** **(Virtual Alternative: Zoom Meeting)**

Note: *All Local Area WDB meetings shall be held in accessible facilities. All materials and discussions should be available in an accessible format upon request as indicated under North Carolina specific requirements detailed in Appendix A.*

The Comprehensive Four-Year Plan is developed in partnership with the chief local elected official and approved by the Local Area WDB. This approval should be reflected in the Local Area WDB meeting minutes as an Action item.

18. Provide the Month and Date of the Local Area WDB meeting that the Comprehensive Four-Year Plan was approved. Attach a copy of the Local Area WDB minutes that reflect this action item.

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Plan Approval Minutes.***

19. Attach a copy of the signed 'Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters – Primary Covered Transactions' Form (*form provided)*. [Required by the Regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR 180, participants' responsibilities.]

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Certification Form***.

Document must have the original signature or DocuSign® (or similar) of the Administrative Entity signatory official. If using original signatures, mail the signed Certification form to the assigned DWS Planner at:

N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

20. Submit the original Local Area WDB and Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Signatory Page (*form provided*), bearing the original signatures of the CLEO(s) and the Local Area WDB Chairperson, and attach a copy of the signed document if not using DocuSign® (or similar).
• Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Signatory Page.***

If using original signatures, mail the Signatory Page to the assigned DWS Planner at:

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II. Local Area WDB Strategic Planning

The Local Area WDB is required to the keep the Local Area Plan up to date and adaptable as events and funding changes occur, which may require local area responses. Local Area Plans will require an annual modification. North Carolina has implemented integrated services delivery with an enhanced emphasis on regional planning and services. This approach is consistent with federal, state, and regional initiatives and opportunities. North Carolina's workforce development system includes businesses, organizations, agencies, employed and unemployed persons, training and educational institutions, adults, and youth. To enhance services to all constituents, aligning workforce development planning and services with regional labor markets is both effective and productive. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative is built on three core principles: ***skills and education attainment*** *are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an* ***employer-led*** *workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and* ***local innovation*** *is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system.*

At the local level, the Local Area WDBs are creatively working to address the new challenges of job growth and expansions. Employers in Local Area WDB areas continue to have a shortage of lower-wage, entry-level and middle-skilled level workers. As a Local Area WDB and workforce system, Local Area WDBs are leveraging resources and engaging in new partnerships that include the business community, economic developers, chambers of commerce, NCWorks Career Centers, community colleges, public schools, and community partners. Working together, Local Area WDBs are paving the way for an even stronger economy through sector partnerships and career pathways initiatives.

1. Provide a description of the Local Area WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an in-demand industry-driven, educated, and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment. Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance and how it aligns with regional economic growth, industry sectors, and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(E)]

The DWDB will continue to focus on the alignment of the skills and cacpacity of the talent pipeline with the talent demands of business and industry sector employment needs. Through regularly planned business roundtables, DWDB maintains constant connectivity and strategic engagment to ensure employers have access to the resources they need to meet their needs. Additionally, DWDB continues to focus on strategic priorities to build sustainable employment skills and capacity in those talent pipelines facing the most significant barriers to employment, including: 1) youth talent development and increased paid internships; 2) developing opportunities for justice-involved residents and increasing support of their successful transitions, and 3) ensuring resource and program alignment with Durham's four certified career pathways, as well as additionally identified pathways offering demonstrated high demand, strong career and wage progression opportunities. The DWDB strategic priorities complement and support both the City of Durham's strategic goal to achieve shared economic prosperity by creating an inclusive development environment and

building a talented, competitive workforce; and the County of Durham's goal to attain community empowerment and enrichment by strenghtening the workforce through supporting the provision of effective education, training, and workforce supports, particularly for hard-to-employ groups.

DWDB program performance is accountable for meeting City, County, and State metrics, reflecting the responsiveness of the Board to meet the needs of the communities we serve. DWDB maintains strong engagement and connectivity with leaders in K-12 and post secondary educators, business and industry leaders, economic development professionals, and community service providers through The Work-based Learning Collaborative, an innovative task force developed to promote strategic program implementation that complements and supports development trends and sector growth.

Additionally, Board staff work to build collaboration with regional partners through Board Association committees and other initiatives. Through major econonmic development initiatives, the Durham Workforce Development Board exercises cross-collabortion with EDPNC, and regional boards specifically in realtion to workforce and economic incentive extended in the recruitment and expansion of our biotech industry sector. Educators and leading industry trainers are employed at critical junctions throughout the career building pathway, using customized training and industry specfic credential attainment to lead to a highly capable workforce, with youths and adults that are knowledgeable and adequately prepared for unsubsidized employment. Many in the talent pipeline begin as early as 14 years old in the annually sponsored Durham YouthWorks Summer Program, where youth receive pre-employment training in workplace readiness skill development and entry-level credential attainment (such as OSHA-10 and Safe Food Service Certification). Through partnership with public and non-profit sector partners, youth gain important transferable skills to facilitae their placement in paid, summer opportunities. These and other trainings and placements take place through partnerships with employers in the private, non-profit, and public sectors. The appropriateness of an internship for a participant is documented in the participant's ISS or case notes, and demonstrates a distinct linkage between the internship and potential improvement in the participant's employability in a local high-demand occupation and/or industry. It is the goal of DWDB to work in tandem with industry partners, as well as our education partners to ensure Durham Youth are aware of the myriad of pathways to success, as well as a tangible connection to industry employers through communication and engagement such as mentorship, site experience, and internships.

Pre-apprenticeship programs are learning opportunities designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in registered apprenticeship programs that will lead to permanent, unsubsidized employment. Job shadowing is another work experience option to provide youth with direct experience about the work environment, employability and occupational skills in practice, the value of professional training, and potential career options. Providing these range of access to employment opportunities and career progression helps to open options to individuals facing barriers to become aware of viable pathways to success.

2. Provide a description of how the Local Area WDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the Local Area WDB will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable. Include how these strategies will be a result of regional economic and employer-driven priorities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(3)]

The DWDB will continue working with its core partners and stakeholders to develop defined career pathways that provide access to high demand career opportunities. The DWDB engages in regional industry clusters, focusing on the sectors that are both growing and providing career opportunities. Health and Life Science continues to be a targeted sector. The DWDB maintains a stable and constructive partnership with the NC Biotech Center through which we continue to develop program strategies that will create employment opportunities in biotech and advanced manufacturing. The DWDB also develops partnerships for work-based learning opportunities in certified Career Pathways in the areas of IT as well as Construction and Skill Trades. We have created more than 2,600 Career Pathway positions – 1,500 of which are in biopharma. Approximately half of these positions are entry level. In addition to these opportunities, the Business Services Team and Subcommittee continues to target both large employers and small microenterprises that support our Hospitality and Food Service industries.

The DWDB continues to bring together businesses from across sectors to discuss the best way to support each industry. Sector leaders along with educational agencies such as Durham Public Schools, Durham Technical Community College, North Carolina Central University, Duke University, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and other educational organizations, workforce and economic development, and community-based organizations are working together to develop strategies to best apply the value that Certified Pathways bring to building a sustained talent pipeline. The fruit of this initiative includes a wide range of entrances for individuals from community workshops to university majors. Each educational entrance is planned to correspond with a work-based learning opportunity ranging from an internship opportunity for a youth to an incumbent worker training for a cohort of employees. The collaborative works to provide career opportunities at each level along with appropriate credentialing. By working closely with employers to meet identified needs, we will develop clear exits that provide individuals with sustained employment. By creating several levels of competency and certification, it is easier for individuals to stop when needed (as became necessary during the Covid pandemic) and return to the career path and the workforce when possible.

Business engagement strategies such as these are a core part of the DWDB's efforts to support industries while preparing job seekers for entering or returning to the workforce. Businesses are key partners in developing certifications and work-based learning opportunities. They lead the

effort in developing pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, internships, and other ways to create employment and learning opportunities for individuals. Because of the critical role of businesses in this effort, the credentials earned will be meaningful both within and outside of the industry. We are also encouraging paths leading to stackable credentials, making it easier for individuals to work their way up the career ladder of their pathway.

Because of the strong working relationships between industry, education, and workforce development partners, more individuals have access to meaningful career opportunities. Industries have partnerships in place to provide work-based learning opportunities to individuals participating in local education and workforce development programs. Through the stair-step nature of the career path, individuals with barriers are able to enter the career pathway of their choice at basic, entry levels and continue training and achieving higher credentials that provide the pathway for moving up. The stronger connection with industry, the incorporation of local education organizations, and the steppingstone approach all provides those who experience employment barriers greater access to improved job skills and additional support through the process.

The Durham NCWorks Career Center continues to offer specialized programs that provide individuals with barriers to employment additional career assistance. These specialized programs receive referrals from Center partners to expand access to employment, training, education and supportive service opportunities. By providing coordinated and individualized assistance with career counseling, opportunities are increased for positive employment search outcomes and increased retention rates. Originally launched as part of the DOL Training to Work grant, counselors begin connecting with individuals 6-8 weeks prior to release. Upon release, Career Center partners provide a Welcome Home package with essentials such as a cell phone and transportation vouchers to assist in the transition. Workshops are conducted to provide assistance with searching for employment including resume writing, completing an application, interviewing skills, and utilizing community resources. Effective partnerships with public and private sector employers have provided second-chance employment opportunities. Supportive services are provided on an as-needed basis. Other specialized programs include Vocational Rehabilitation, Healing for CAARE, Inc, Durham Economic Resource Center (DERC), StepUp Ministry and the Durham County Criminal Justice Resource Center that provide similar services to eligible participants.

3. Considering the analyses described in the Regional Strategic Planning Section III, describe strategies to work with the entities that carry out the core programs that align resources available to the Local Area to achieve the strategic vision and goals. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(F)]

The success of our Local Area depends on the ability of the DWDB to align industry sector partner talent needs with a skilled and competitive talent workforce. The DWDB balances resources and programming to support and achieve that alignment. As stated, the DWDB brings together businesses from across sectors to assess optimal strategies that support each industry. In

consideration of the lingering impacts from the pandemic and the subsequent Great Resignation, many business partners are facing staffing shortages and do not have the human infrastructure to engage in training partnerships. In response, the DWDB convene sector leaders along with educational agencies such as Durham Public Schools, Durham Technical Community College, North Carolina Central University, Duke University, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and other educational organizations, workforce and economic development, and community-based organizations are working together to develop strategies to provide access to identified training needs and support to attain necessary credentials and certifications to individuals seeking employment in high demand sectors.

4. Provide a description of strategies concerning maximizing coordination of services provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the Local Area through the NCWorks Career Center system. Include how this coordination of services improves service delivery and avoids duplication of services. [WIOA Section 108(b)(12)]

Service providers offering career training, mentoring and skill development serve on the DWDB. These members provide input into the strategic direction of the DWDB and its policies and procedures related to all Career Center Wagner-Peyser services. These service partners work closely with both DWDB Business Services, as well as Career Center Counselors to assist the DWDB by offering their expertise that ensures continuous improvement in program areas. As program providers connected to the foundational programming of our clients, each of these providers are represented as members of the DWDB's Subcommittees. As members of the subcommittees, there is regular and substantive information exchange with sector trends, employer needs and high demand industry requirements. This regular communication and shared strategic approach ensure that there is no duplication of services.

5. Describe how the Local Area WDB implements **each** of the following initiatives: incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, layoff aversion, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other employer services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the regional strategy to meet the needs of businesses. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(B)]

The WDB utilizes work-based learning incentives such as On-the-Job Training, Work Experience, Incumbent Worker Training, in addition to registered apprenticeship programs to ensure that the needs of employers are met. The DWD Business Services Team partners with employers to deliver high quality talent and workforce solutions. This includes but is not limited to: Recruitment and Screening; Training and Education; Retention and Up-Skilling; Transitional Services; and access to Workforce Information and Data.

The Business Services Team is actively involved in the communities they serve by regularly attending local and regional networking events, serving as exhibitors and community sponsors for job fairs and career awareness events, and conducting speaking engagements for workforce related events and conferences. Being active and engaged in our region helps staff stay well-informed about critical business intelligence on current challenges and opportunities, workforce needs, gaps in resources, growth trends and more. We develop relationships and interactions with employers of all sizes and across multiple industry sectors. Using the same strategic approach employed when career pathway certification was a formal process, DWDB engages industry and sector leaders, along with Durham Tech Community College and are educational institutions, including NCCU and Duke, to identify high-growth, high-demand areas. These cross-collaborative partnerships were the basis for the development of the BULLS biopharma training and skill-building program, creating a skilled pipeline for advanced manufacturing in biopharma.

These employer relationships are major influencers in our various sector partnership initiatives, employer roundtables, career awareness events and professional development for our staff. Having access to employer insights and expertise helps to ensure that our full team stays on top of growing sectors and reliably addresses our regional workforce needs.

Priorities of the Business Services Team are to provide services to employers that are actively hiring (including targeted job development based on industry, job matching and customized recruitment efforts); and participate in community events, regular Chamber meetings and other opportunities that may generate job orders. Vigorous outreach is a priority whenever an employer is identified as having a workforce need. The Business Services Team works in close alignment with Economic Development to identify employment opportunities stemming from expanding and new businesses.

While conducitng business outreach, and the business indicates they are in financial trouble that may lead to a plant closure or moving away from the Local Area, the Business Services Team initiates conversation on services provided and introduce the business leaders to the Business Edge Team. The DWDB's various partnerships and collaboratives include key players such as the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC), Chambers of Commerce, entities within the NC Community College System, NCWorks, ApprenticeshipNC, as well as industry sector partners NC Biotech Center and Discover Durham (Hospitality). Speaking regularly with our partners in workforce development and economic development across the region allows our team to strategize with other entities to ensure our regional efforts are aligned and holistic. In the event a business must downsize or close, the team is prepared to offer resources and support options to displaced employees, including information on related industries or sectors where skills can be easily transferred.

6. Provide a description of how the Local Area WDB coordinates workforce investment activities – including strategies enhancing services, promoting participation in training programs, and avoiding

duplication of services – is carried out in the Local Area with the provision of Adult Education and Literacy activities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(13)]

Representatives from higher education and adult education and literacy serve on the DWDB. These members provide input into the strategic direction of the DWDB and its policies and procedures related to Adult Education and Literacy activities. They assist the DWDB with establishing and maintaining relationships with Adult Education and Family Literacy providers and offer their expertise that ensures continuous improvement in program areas. As program providers connected to the foundational programming of our clients, each of these providers are represented as members of the DWDB's NCWorks Subcommittee. As members of the subcommittee, there is regular and substantive information exchange. This regular communication and shared strategic approach ensure that there is no duplication of services.

The DWDB utilizes the Training Provider Application as a tool to screen and approve training providers. Screening is based upon the provider's alignment with the Local Area Plan as well as careers that are in demand, training costs, accreditation, and performance.

To determine a client's need for services, the DWDB utilizes skill assessments including the Career Readiness Certificate, WorkKeys, and O*NET to assess whether adult education and literacy services are needed. Based upon the interests of the client and funding availability, the Durham NCWorks staff provide a list of approved providers along with performance data. Clients are encouraged to select and visit the training providers of their choice and decide where they would like to receive services. Once a provider is selected, the DWDB establishes an Individual Training Account or a voucher payment system with the provider. In addition, all Career Center stakeholders engage in bi-weekly meetings for information exchange and to keep all stakeholders aware of any initiatives and program objectives – ranging from specialized hiring events to strategies to target recruitment.

7. Describe the Local Area's workforce development system. Identify the following: the programs that are included in the system, how the Workforce Development Board will work with the entities administering core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment and provision of services, and the programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.). [WIOA Section 108(b)(2)]

Highlighting the CTE focus of Perkins V, DWDB works in close collaboration with Durham Public Schools to provide career and work-readiness skills to DPS students. In response to the unique aspects of the Durham economy, it is critical that the DWDB create inclusive and equitable strategies to help youth and young adults successfully pursue careers and attain self-sufficiency. Unofficial reports indicate a 40% reduction in DPS enrollment following the pandemic School Year 2020-2021. DWDB has been working in close concert with DPS to identify those youth that are now out-of-school and seeking alternative credentials and subsequent training. While DPS has worked diligently to recover students that left the school system, many schools in the district's most

economically challenged census tracts are still struggling to achieve – unfortunately the most challenging areas are the STEM-related curriculum courses. While the career pathways process of collaborative problem solving has proven very effective in building the type of collaborative approaches necessary to address these complex issues, DWDB is seeking to develop more holistic partnerships that can provide the type of wrap-around support this new wave of opportunity youth. Working closely with our business and industry partners, DWDB has been able to identify essential needs and skills gaps, and map out successful multi-pronged approaches to address those identified challenges. Cross collaborative initiatives such as the BULLS (Building Up Local Life Science) provide the open forum necessary to keep communication and information lines freely flowing. Collaboratives such as One Durham bring together economic development partners, including EDPNC, Community Colleges, the Chamber and Industry Leaders, along with K-12 and training partners to develop strategies to support the biotech workforce pipeline.

8. Provide a description of (a) cooperative agreements, as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11), between the Local Area WDB and other local entities described in Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of service to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts to include cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Section 108(b)(14)]

The DWDB has an MOU that includes the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit for the purpose of providing collaborative services, sharing facilities, and cross training staff to provide services within the NCWorks Center for clients with disabilities. The MOU eliminates the duplication of services, reduces administrative costs, and enhances participation and performance of customers served through the NCWorks system. The MOU establishes guidelines for creating and maintaining cooperative working relationships to facilitate joint planning and evaluation of services and to develop more efficient management of limited financial and human resources. This agreement builds a workforce development system that will dramatically upgrade individuals' workplace skills economically benefiting the workforce, employers, and the State. Additionally, it builds relationships with employers and assists employers with meeting their workforce needs.

9. Provide a brief description of the actions the Local Area WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Local Area WDB, consistent with the factors developed by the NCWorks Commission. [WIOA Section 108(b)(18)]

The Board continuously seeks to elevate its impact by expanding the scope of its programming through the development and maintenance of close partnerships engaged in integrated, collaborative efforts that leverage partnership resources and work towards the establishment of a capable workforce. Moreover, DWD Board and staff will continuously pursue current and relevant professional development and stay up-to-date on best practices through active industry-related engagement, peer support, as well as participation in regional and national platforms, including conferences and webinars.

The DWDB tracks performance utilizing NCWorks.gov, which allows program managers to generate reports for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance. The DWDB requires its providers to submit monthly reports that can be used as a base for monthly meetings where the program managers 1) discuss program design; 2) address issues related to service delivery, performance, and regulatory compliance; and 3) conduct gap analyses for resolving identified problems. The DWDB staff also conducts weekly check-in meetings with program managers in addition to monthly and/or quarterly check-in meetings/trainings that occur with career advisors regarding local area policies and procedures. These meetings are also forums to address issues observed during monitoring visits.

Whenever needed, technical assistance is provided to the WIOA providers and may consist of

regulatory compliance, program design, quality of service, and the facilitation of collaborative relationships between one-stop system and non-system service providers.

The DWDB, through the program managers, implement a series of meetings that assist/advise the training providers and NCWorks Center staff regarding changes being implemented under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Also, as a part of continuous improvement, the DWDB will continue to do the following:

- **Continue to train and professionally develop staff, employers, and jobseekers in the new Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) process as well as the NCWorks Online system;**
- **Ensure that our staff remains engaged with and understands the needs of the business community;**
- **Invite employer input to help identify market needs and drive client services through surveys and by working with partners such as the Durham Chamber of Commerce to conduct business focus groups;**
- **Continue partnering with the Durham NCWorks Career Center entities as part of the Business Service Team;**
- **Encourage staff to attend conferences, webinars, networking groups in order to make connections with businesses, HR representatives, and other business professionals;**
- **Encourage staff (local area and contractor) to attend all performance-related trainings supported by the NC Department of Commerce; and**
- **Conduct biannual focus groups of jobseekers facilitated by third parties.**

10. Discuss the increase and expansion of service delivery and awareness efforts to reengage individuals with barriers to include dislocated workers, opportunity youth/high school dropouts, women, people of color in hard-to-reach communities, individuals with disabilities, and justice involved individuals to help reconnect the disconnected workforce. More importantly, clarify how success is measured.

A priority for the DWDB is to remain agile and responsive to meet the ongoing workforce development needs of individuals facing barriers to employment. DWDB is actively involved with planning and incorporating additional programmatic activities and services that will engage individuals with barriers in an effort to help reconnect the disconnected workforce. The expansion of our service delivery to dislocated workers, disconnected youth/high school dropouts, women, people of color, and individuals with disabilities is dependent on our presence in the business and economic development community and the customer services offered at our physical location. Physically, the Durham NCWorks Career Center is uniquely located in the former Unemployment Office. However, the DWDB does not depend solely on the NCWorks Career Center as a destination to serve the Durham community. DWDB has launched an innovative partnership with the City of Durham and the Durham Housing Authority to set up "stations" throughout the City in or near housing authority communities to recruit participants in an employment training pilot leading to construction and skill trades careers. Additionally, DWDB is initiating a partnership with the Durham County Public Library to provide remote counseling and programming outside the walls of the Career Center. With respect to working with Justice Involved customers, Durham

WDB provides programming that addresses the myriad challenges that derail success. Successful reintegration is paramount for those returning to the community and the workforce. Effective counseling reinforcing overall rehabilitation, reintegration, and skill development for those incarcerated and formerly incarcerated is critical to reducing recidivism and strengthening households and the economy. Durham WDB partners with the City of Durham to provide a continuum of care starting approximately 3-6 months before release and extending 3 months after release. Counselors provide support in helping customers redocument and building life stability in preparation for training and attaining workforce credentials (such as GED, HSD, and CDLs).

DWDB continually expands its active participation in task force groups, business associations, and other business and business-related organizations to establish and maintain an understanding and awareness of social dynamics, economic development trends and workforce demands. Furthermore, DWDB staff stay abreast of anticipated workforce trends and are intentional about reaching out to appropriate partners to try to stay ahead of these trends so our local workforce system can support any new trend or growth.

All of these efforts and strategies help DWDB to serve the workforce needs of individuals with barriers (i.e. dislocated workers, disconnected youth/high school dropouts, women, people of color in hard to reach communities, individuals with disabilities) and prepare them to reconnect to the workforce. Success will be measured by meeting and exceeding our performance goals in every measured category.

11. Provide a description of how the Workforce Development Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with:
    a. statewide rapid response activities as described in WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A).
    b. specifically describe the coordination and delivery of services to businesses to include systems that are used to determine economic trends and partners within your Early Warning Network to help identify those businesses that are expanding and/or struggling. [WIOA Section 108(b)(8)]

a. Upon receipt of the WARN Notice, the Rapid Response Team with the Division of Workforce Solutions/NC Commerce contacts the Local Area to assist with the coordination of the initial contact with the employer. The State Rapid Response Team then involves the Local Area Director and Business Services Representative. The Business Services Representative coordinates a meeting with the State Rapid Response Team and the employer. The State Rapid Response Team sends out an Employee Survey to the employer to distribute and collect. That information is sent to the Business Services Representative to determine the partners to invite to the employee orientation. Partners such as Department of Employment Security, NCWorks, and/or the Community College are invited to the orientation(s).

b. If the company closure or layoff occurs due to moving out of the United States and a petition is filed and granted, the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) is enacted from the State Department of

Workforce Solutions/NCCommerce. NCWorks will designate staff to work with the TAA affected individuals to provide services. If needed or requested from the employer, sometimes a job fair can be organized.

While visiting or speaking with a business and the business indicates they are in financial trouble that may lead to a plant closure or moving away from the Local Area, it is best to talk with them and introduce the business to the Business Edge Team. The DWDB's various partnerships and collaboratives include key players such as the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC), Chambers of Commerce, entities within the NC Community College System, NCWorks, ApprenticeshipNC, as well as industry sector partners NC Biotech Center and Discover Durham (Hospitality). Speaking regularly with our partners in workforce development and economic development across the region allows our team to strategize with other entities to ensure our regional efforts are aligned and holistic.

12. Provide an overview of how the region partners with NC Community Colleges, UNC institutions, and independent colleges in the local areas to prepare workers to succeed by using skills and education attainment with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

DWDB continues to develop career pathways for our clients through training and education programs with community colleges, UNC institutions and other educational organizations in addition to developing personal connections with local businesses to establish on-site employment and training opportunities. The role of community colleges is shifting as they are becoming more focal points for job training and career development. Because community colleges and other educational institutions often enroll students from low-income and underrepresented backgrounds, DWDB's relationships with local educational institutions help companies diversify their workforce and take advantage of the opportunity to get workers with skill sets they need without the cost of training them. Utilizing training and educational programs at the community colleges and institutions also works well for both DWD clients and business partners because they equip students with skills and credentials that are portable and transferrable. These relationships allow the DWDB to serve a much wider group of employers with trained, certified and skilled workers. Through strategic training, DWDB is working to build the capacity of talent pipeline to ensure equitable access to entry level positions in high demand areas that require a higher entry threshold, such as the biotech and biopharma production. Remaining in close contact with industry employers provides DWDB with the data necessary to fashion appropriate access to include individuals facing barriers, such as the lack of educational credentials necessary to access entry level positions in these high demand STEM career pathways. A notable example of this partnership is the BULLS program. Building up Local Life Sciences is the result of an innovative collaborative between Durham Tech Community College, NCBiotech Center, Durham County and City, the DWDB, Durham Public Schools, and others to recruit and train individuals in preparation for entry level positions with biotech businesses. Utilizing a comprehensive, holistic approach, this program addresses the needs of individuals facing barriers by partnering program participants with a spectrum of supportive resources including mentors and success coaches.

13. Based on the history of economic development projects in the Local Area, how many projects does the Local Area WDB expect to engage in during the upcoming program year? Please indicate the type of services the Local Area WDB expects to provide.

While the DWDB participated in the recruitment and expansion of three economic development projects over the course of PY20-PY21, it has not participated in any projects in PY23. Presently, as in previous projects, the DWDB continues to work closely with our Economic Development partners as they negotiate directly with the firms. The DWDB is has provided workforce-based incentive plans that build the local talent pipeline and provide access to employment for those facing significant barriers, such as justice-involved, and long-term unemployed individuals. Additionally, the DWDB participates with economic development partners in providing recruitment pitches to encourage relocation and expansion by marketing employer incentives such as Incumbent Worker Grants, OJT, both adult and youth Work Experience, and pathways to apprenticeships where applicable. While economic development trends are moving towards contraction regarding the scope of expansion and new builds, the DWDB remains ready to work with our economic development partners to continue the successes demonstrated by winning approval for the previous incentive proposals brought before the Durham City Council.

14. Provide a description of how the WDB is employing sector strategies by creating industry-led sector partnerships to facilitate engagement of employers and better coordinate workforce development services, training, and economic development activities. Include a brief example(s) of existing industry sector initiatives / partnerships or describe the strategy to implement them for evidence-based in-demand industry sectors for the region [WIOA Section 106 (c)(1)(C), Section107 (d)(4)(D)

Through strategic training, DWDB is working to build the capacity of talent pipeline to ensure equitable access to entry level positions in high demand areas that require a higher entry threshold, such as biotech and biopharma production. Remaining in close contact with industry employers provides DWDB with the data necessary to fashion appropriate access to include individuals facing barriers, such as the lack of educational credentials necessary to access entry level positions in these high demand STEM career pathways. A notable example of this partnership is the BULLS program. Building up Local Life Sciences is the result of an innovative collaborative between Durham Tech Community College, NCBiotech Center, Durham County and City, the DWDB, Durham Public Schools, and others to recruit and train individuals in preparation for entry level positions with biotech businesses.

15. Identify the Career Pathways developed by the Local Area. Complete the chart below.

Pathway Name	Partner WDBs	Year the pathway was developed	Number of trainees (to date) who have utilized the pathway
Advanced Manufacturing	**Durham WDB**	**2018**	**While training and up-skill strategies still focus on these designated career pathways, since the discontinuation of the formal designation and certification process, DWDB has not maintained participation records.**
Health Sciences	**Durham WDB**	**2018**	
Information Technology	**Durham WDB**	**2018**	
Construction and Skill Trades	**Durham WDB**	**2019**	

16. In addition to facilitating the development of career pathways, also describe the review process for in-demand career pathways to determine if new pathways are needed, or if current pathways should be updated or removed based on the needs of the industry.
    a. Include plans for new career pathways.
    b. Explain how career pathways in the local area are in alignment with other partners/stakeholders' (Department of Public Instruction (DPI), community colleges, MyFutureNC, universities, etc.) existing pathways or if they are duplicates.
    c. Describe the strategy to avoid duplication efforts.
    d. Describe the strategy to promote pathways and recruit participants.

a. Although no longer pursuing formal career pathway certifications, the DWDB engages in an iterative process very similar to that used during the pathway certification program process. This was evident at the onset of the pandemic, where DWDB immediately joined an integrated collaboration of sector leaders, economic development professionals, higher education institutions (such as Duke, NCCU and Durham Tech), as well as financial sector representatives and intermediaries to map strategies to sustain business and help them to survive the traumatic impacts of the pandemic. Through that collaborative, innovative concepts such as using drive-by service for restaurants and having local area restaurants create their own delivery system to avoid the fees from corporate delivery companies such as Uber-Eats, helped many small and micro businesses to function, even though they were operating at a minimal level. Artists worked in collaborative to start providing virtual showings; local intermediaries such as local CDFIs, worked with small businesses to attain business-saving grants and loans DWDB worked with the City and County of Durham to provide grants and loans as well as technical assistance to help small and legacy businesses sustain the economic bludgeoning from the pandemic. Strategies such as raising pay rates, providing workplace flexibility and providing benefits at an earlier stage were implemented through a guided and informed approach. In this manner, DWEB has initiated the process to establish a new career pathway in the Hospitality Sector.

b. **DWDB works in close collaboration with Durham Public Schools to provide career and work-readiness skills to DPS students. In response to the unique aspects of the Durham economy, it is critical that the DWDB create inclusive and equitable strategies to help youth and adults successfully pursue careers and attain self-sufficiency. Unofficial reports indicate a 40% reduction in DPS enrollment following the pandemic School Year 2020-2021. DWDB has been working in close concert with DPS to identify those youth that are now out-of-school and seeking alternative credentials and subsequent training. While the career pathways process of collaborative problem solving has proven very effective in building the type of collaborative approaches necessary to address these complex issues, DWDB is seeking to develop more holistic partnerships that can provide the type of wrap-around support this new wave of opportunity youth. Working closely with our business and industry partners, DWDB has been able to identify essential needs and skills gaps, and map out successful multi-pronged approaches to address those identified challenges. Cross collaborative initiatives such as the BULLS (Building Up Local Life Science) provide the open forum necessary to keep communication and information lines freely flowing. Collaboratives such as One Durham bring together economic development partners, including EDPNC, Community Colleges, the Chamber and Industry Leaders, along with K-12 and training partners to develop strategies to support the biotech workforce pipeline.**

c.-d. Aggressive and frequent collaboration and outreach has provided DWDB with the necessary connection to design informed strategies that leverage resources in concert as opposed to competition. Additionally, maintaining constant and regular communication provides the platform for collaboration and resource leveraging. This regular communication and information exchange avoids duplication and in fact, promotes resource leveraging. To avoid duplicative efforts and repetitive contacts, DWDB maintains close relationship with DPS leadership with respect to employer partnership outreach, especially in the implementation of their career readiness initiatives such as Rising Stars and their Summer Internship program.

17. Provide a description of the Local Area WDB's capacity to provide workforce investment activities to address (a) education attainment and skill needs of high-demand fields (b) strategies for awareness and cultivation efforts to increase access to education and postsecondary credentials and certificates, availability of learn-and-earn opportunities (internships, apprenticeships, summer employment) and (c) supportive services for hard-to-reach communities. (d) Explain strategies that include NextGen, NCCareers.org and any awareness models for success. (e) Explain strategies to align work across the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and (DPI) to increase youth apprenticeships or assist businesses in hiring youth apprentices.

a. **The DWDB continues to bring together businesses from across sectors to discuss the best way to support each industry. Sector leaders along with educational agencies (Durham Public Schools, Durham Technical Community College, North Carolina Central University, Duke University, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and other educational organizations), workforce and economic development, and community-based organizations will work to develop strategies to best apply the value that Certified Pathways bring to building a sustained talent pipeline. This design will include a wide range of entrances for individuals from**

community workshops to university majors. Each educational entrance will correspond with a work-based learning opportunity.
b. Through the use of dedicated business services staff, the NextGen program is able to develop more in-depth relationships with industry leaders. A significant philosophical shift is supporting a transformative strategy with respect to training – funders, as well as business and industry leaders are beginning to embrace the necessity of providing stipends for individuals as they train. In the past it has been almost taboo to pay participants in training. Economic and workforce indicators have contributed to the shift with funders easing restrictions and becoming more willing and flexible to accept that there is a cost individuals incur to engage in training. DWDB has had access to supportive services such as transportation (gas cards, etc.) and childcare vouchers (as funders of last resort) to offset expenses, but the offset has always been inadequate, and attrition demonstrated that participants often wanted to continue training but could not "afford" the cost. It was widely believed that covering the cost of tuition was sufficient. However, under this new dynamic, those support services resources can now be leveraged with direct stipend payment, providing a more flexible and realistic environment for individuals to engage, and be successful in training and credential attainment. Leveraging these resources with DWDB's strong working relationships between industry, education, and workforce development partners, more individuals will have access to meaningful career opportunities. Industry will have partnerships in place to provide work-based learning opportunities to individuals participating in local education and workforce development programs.
c. Moreover, Durham has a well-established summer internship program for youth 14-24 years olds. Over the course of the pandemic, the summer internship program evolved into a virtual, paid work-based learning experience where participants are receiving very robust instruction and guidance on work-readiness skills delivered by Durham Tech Community College Human Resource Development (HRD) department. Experienced Durham Tech instructors deliver curriculum on essential skills such as effective communication, workplace etiquette, creative problem solving, critical thinking, and working in teams. These transferable skills were identified by our employer partners as the top skills desired from new hires. Many employers were very comfortable conducting their industry specific training, if they felt they could depend on candidates to show up work ready and committed to perform. Additionally, DWDB and its sub-recipient partners work closely with the Career and Technical Education division of the Durham Public Schools, where the NCCareers.org site was launched augmenting the DPS 3-2-1 initiative, which seeks by high school graduation to provide DPS students with 3 Career Awarenesses; 2 Career Exposures; and 1 Career Experience.
d. Durham WDB works in close collaboration with several youth focused programs, including the Durham Public Schools Career and Technical Education program (as mentioned above) and the City of Durham YouthWorks program. All Youth related program advisors and counselors consistently promote the NextGen program and its benefits for both in-school and out-of-school youth. NCcareers.org comprehensive strategies for youth development, career exploration, and awareness models are designed to create a well-rounded approach to workforce development. By focusing on skill-building, experiential learning, career guidance,

	and success celebration, we aim to foster a robust workforce equipped to meet the demands of today's job market. Durham WDB is a part of a local collaborative
e.	**To align work across the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Durham WDB continues to employ their coordinated strategy focusing on the intersection between education, training and employer engagement in our local and regional area. Through Board Member engagement, and other Business Services initiatives, we have fostered close working relationships with Durham Tech Community College, Durham Public Schools, Duke University, and North Carolina Central University to identify work-based learning opportunities with local businesses, representing a range of high-demand industry sectors. By fostering strong partnerships and providing comprehensive support, we continue to meet our goal to strengthen the youth talent pipeline in Durham. For example, the Durham WDB was a founding program partner along with Durham Technical Community College, community partner, Made in Durham, and others for the BULLS (Building Up Local Life Sciences) initiative, which successfully developed a pipeline of participants in the biopharma industry, through partnerships such as the ApprenticeshipNC registered program at KBI Biopharma.**

III. Regional Strategic Planning:

North Carolina is defined by an expansive geography that covers over 53,000 square miles and spans from the mountains in the west, to the piedmont region in the state's center to the coastal plain region in the east. This expansive geography contributes to the state's diverse mix of rural communities, small towns, cities, metropolitan areas, and regional economic centers, each with its own unique industrial composition. Part of North Carolina's economic development strategy includes organization of the state's 100 counties into eight multi-county regions called Prosperity Zones, which are intended to help ensure economic growth across all areas of the state, by leveraging regional economic, workforce, and educational resources. Overlaying the eight prosperity zones are North Carolina's 20 Local Area WDBs that facilitate the delivery of workforce services to the state's citizens and employers.

Local Area WDBs are to continue, or begin, formal interaction based on these regional geographies. The following regional configurations will be used for submission of this Regional Plan:

- *Western Region: Southwestern, Region C (Foothills), and Mountain Area WDBs;*
- *Northwest Region: High Country, Western Piedmont, and Region C (Foothills)WDBs;*
- *Piedmont Triad Region: Piedmont Triad Regional and GuilfordWorks WDBs;*
- *Southwest Region: Centralina, Charlotte Works, Region C (Foothills), and Gaston County WDBs;*
- *North Central Region: Kerr-Tar, Durham County, Turning Point, Mid-Carolina, and Capital Area WDBs;*
- *Sandhills Region: Cape Fear, Lumber River and Mid-Carolina WDBs;*
- *Northeast Region: Rivers East, Northeastern, and Turning Point WDBs; and*
- *Southeast Region: Eastern Carolina and Cape Fear WDBs.*

1. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions to include: a) existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; as well as conditions that contribute to potential layoffs and closures and, b) knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of employers in those industry

sectors and occupations. Include sources used and business involvement in determining needs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].

Source: Lightcast, Economy Overview

As of 2023, the region's population increased by 7.4% since 2018, growing by 183,795. Population is expected to increase by 6.5% between 2023 and 2028, adding 172,712. From 2018 to 2023, jobs increased by 10.4% in the North Central Prosperity Zone from 1,226,021 to 1,353,664.

This change outpaced the national growth rate of 3.6% by 6.8%. As the number of jobs increased, the labor force participation rate increased from 62.0% to 64.1% between 2018 and 2023.

Source: Lightcast, Industry Diversification

In 2017, a Regional Skills Analysis was conducted by RTI in partnership with Capital Area Workforce Development, Durham Workforce Development Board, Kerr-Tar Workforce Development Board, Wake County Economic Development, and the City of Raleigh. This study surveyed over 500 businesses across 15 counties and 10 industry sectors to uncover projected growth, skills and education requirements, and workforce challenges. One significant finding this study revealed was that 73% of companies surveyed expected to grow in the next 3 years, resulting in between 22,000-36,700 new jobs – not considering new economic development growth that was likely to also be entering our market.

Companies revealed their greatest source of talent is through friends and networks, highlighting the challenges many in our region's workforce face with barriers to access these industries and occupations. The research also demonstrated the need for degrees and technical education. Companies value employees with a 4-year college degree, but there is variation in education expectations across industries. Some industries place a higher value on education, while

others focus on technical training. Respondents across all industries have a pressing need for employees who can take initiative and think critically.

The results of the 2017 study have provided much-needed guidance to workforce and education partners. This critical data has helped to drive decisions on programs, initiatives, and funding and has been cited regularly in grant applications, sector partnership discussions, and broader workforce development programs and initiatives. Private and public partnerships have been created and strengthened as a result of this data gathering and alignment of services.

In 2023, the Regional Skills Analysis survey was updated for the 15-county area with almost 1,000 responses and 11 industry sectors. 77.5% of the companies surveyed expect to grow their workforce in the next three years. There are four key themes from the survey:

1. **Company hiring expectations are the highest we have seen in our survey, with few industries planning to downsize.**
2. **Healthcare and the public sector have consistently high demand, driven by growth in both sectors.**
3. **Four-year degrees remain top of mind for employers, but they are considering more options and looking for additional, specialized credentials.**
4. **Small and medium-sized businesses are underutilizing many resources available for sourcing talent.**

Our region's economic developers have continued to receive interest inquiries from prospective employers looking to relocate to our region, demonstrating the strength and value of our market – including our workforce and educational system.

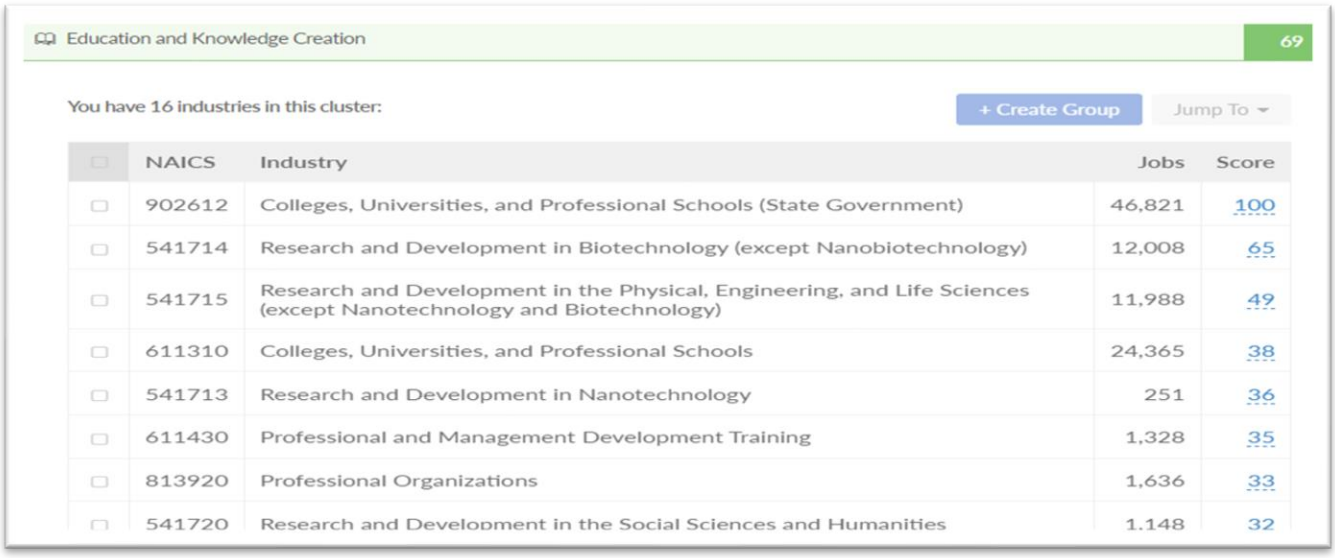
An analysis of the regional economic conditions by the numbers is listed below for an existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

<u>EXISTING INDUSTRY</u>

Instead of looking at specific industries, cluster analysis catches the potential spillovers of technology, skills, and information that cut across industries, workers, and resources.

Industry clusters most important to the region are Education and Knowledge Creation, Information Technology & Analytical Instruments, Biopharmaceuticals, Local Financial Services, Financial Services, and Local Health Services. "Importance" considers earnings, growth, regional competitiveness (regional job growth exceeds the national average job growth), location quotient (workforce specialty), and GRP and assigns a *Score. The top industries within each cluster are shown.

(*This data is not a benchmark against other regions; it only compares the relative performance of clusters to each other*.)



Education and Knowledge Creation 69

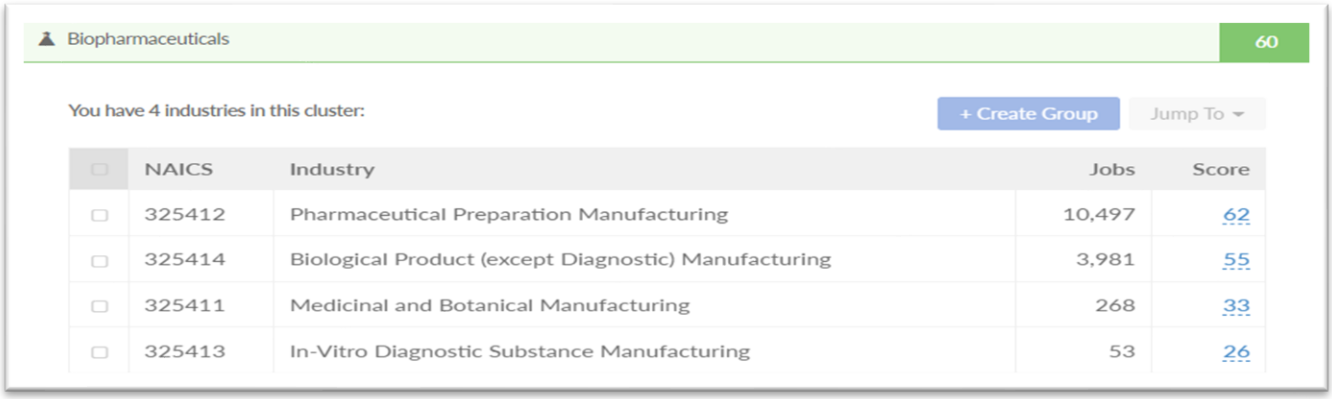
You have 16 industries in this cluster: + Create Group Jump To

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
902612	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government)	46,821	100
541714	Research and Development in Biotechnology (except Nanobiotechnology)	12,008	65
541715	Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)	11,988	49
611310	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	24,365	38
541713	Research and Development in Nanotechnology	251	36
611430	Professional and Management Development Training	1,328	35
813920	Professional Organizations	1,636	33
541720	Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities	1,148	32

Information Technology and Analytical Instruments 64

You have 18 industries in this cluster: + Create Group Jump To

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
334118	Computer Terminal and Other Computer Peripheral Equipment Manufacturing	8,082	81
513210	Software Publishers	16,622	73
334111	Electronic Computer Manufacturing	940	48
334610	Manufacturing and Reproducing Magnetic and Optical Media	107	48
334413	Semiconductor and Related Device Manufacturing	4,020	42
334515	Instrument Manufacturing for Measuring and Testing Electricity and Electrical Signals	1,239	41
334510	Electromedical and Electrotherapeutic Apparatus Manufacturing	404	40



Biopharmaceuticals 60

You have 4 industries in this cluster: + Create Group Jump To

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
325412	Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing	10,497	62
325414	Biological Product (except Diagnostic) Manufacturing	3,981	55
325411	Medicinal and Botanical Manufacturing	268	33
325413	In-Vitro Diagnostic Substance Manufacturing	53	26

Local Financial Services 51

You have 6 industries in this cluster:

+ Create Group | Jump To

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
522110	Commercial Banking	11,637	65
524210	Insurance Agencies and Brokerages	10,142	47
522130	Credit Unions	5,387	40
541213	Tax Preparation Services	1,523	33
524292	Pharmacy Benefit Management and Other Third Party Administration of Insurance and Pension Funds	847	30
561440	Collection Agencies	337	25

Financial Services 48

You have 17 industries in this cluster:

+ Create Group | Jump To

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
523150	Investment Banking and Securities Intermediation	7,902	56
523940	Portfolio Management and Investment Advice	3,812	49
522292	Real Estate Credit	1,249	38
523160	Commodity Contracts Intermediation	80	37
523910	Miscellaneous Intermediation	174	37
525990	Other Financial Vehicles	61	34
522390	Other Activities Related to Credit Intermediation	209	33
522320	Financial Transactions Processing, Reserve, and Clearinghouse Activities	220	32

Local Health Services 47

You have 37 industries in this cluster:

+ Create Group | Jump To

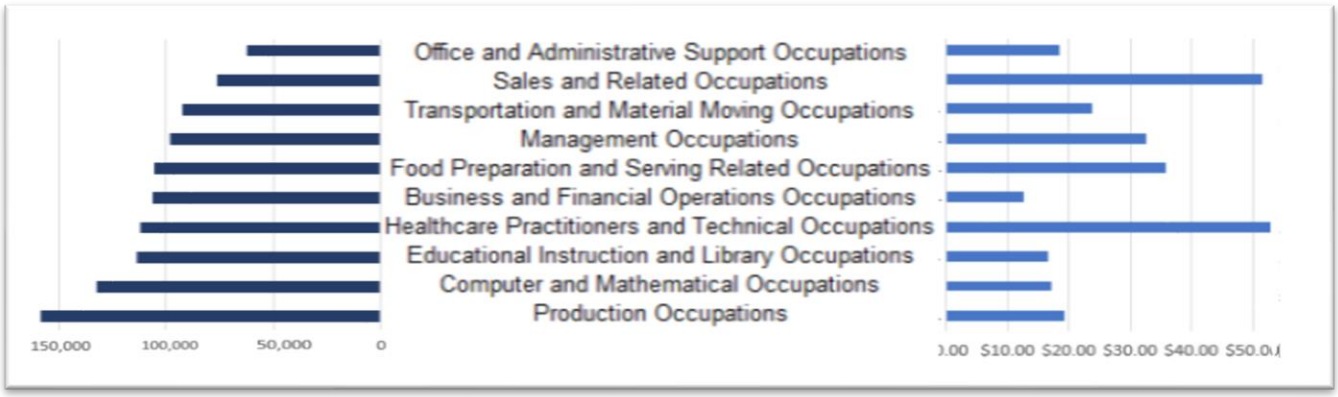
NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
622110	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	46,372	79
621111	Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	19,188	53
621511	Medical Laboratories	4,926	42
621210	Offices of Dentists	8,848	35
902622	Hospitals (State Government)	12,628	33
621512	Diagnostic Imaging Centers	643	31
623990	Other Residential Care Facilities	1,802	31

Source: Lightcast Industry Cluster Identification

*Our average cluster score is 32 (out of 100) points. Clusters ranked higher than 32 are above average. Top clusters must have a score of at least 40, while bottom clusters must have a score of 17 or less. These thresholds are determined by applying the average deviation (plus or minus 7) to the average cluster score 32.

OCCUPATIONS

Below are the largest occupations in the region; the types of work people are performing. They are ranked by 5-year job growth and do not consider the industry where work is being performed.



Below are the largest occupations in the North Central Prosperity Zone: the types of work people are performing.

They are ranked by 5-year job growth and do not consider the industry where work is being performed.

Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Median Hourly Earnings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	151,997	158,609	6,612	4%	$19.26
Sales and Related Occupations	126,557	131,970	5,413	4%	$17.19
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	104,891	113,382	8,491	8%	$16.59
Management Occupations	101,506	111,612	10,106	10%	$52.90
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	100,433	106,051	5,618	6%	$12.56
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	94,894	105,219	10,325	11%	$35.74
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	89,950	97,584	7,634	8%	$32.69
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	85,500	92,055	6,555	8%	$23.77
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	67,327	76,001	8,675	13%	$51.64
Production Occupations	59,600	61,788	2,187	4%	$18.38
Construction and Extraction Occupations	57,689	61,235	3,546	6%	$21.54
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	48,731	52,296	3,565	7%	$23.78
Healthcare Support Occupations	47,237	51,501	4,264	9%	$15.66
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	43,195	45,897	2,702	6%	$14.90
Personal Care and Service Occupations	33,736	36,387	2,651	8%	$13.94
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	26,437	29,206	2,769	10%	$39.54
Protective Service Occupations	26,621	27,447	826	3%	$18.93
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	24,234	26,620	2,386	10%	$25.85
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	22,248	24,423	2,175	10%	$32.85
Community and Social Service Occupations	21,482	23,412	1,929	9%	$23.99
Legal Occupations	10,134	10,984	850	8%	$39.68
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	6,225	6,353	129	2%	$14.46
Military-only occupations	3,041	3,052	11	0%	$16.10

FASTEST GROWING OCCUPATIONS

Ranked by 'Change in Jobs' from 2023 to 2028

SOC	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Median Hourly Earnings
15-1252	Software Developers	25,625	29,729	4,105	16%	$62.16
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	23,353	27,175	3,822	16%	$38.40
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	26,573	29,097	2,525	10%	$51.88
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	27,084	29,223	2,138	8%	$15.90
29-1141	Registered Nurses	31,583	33,564	1,981	6%	$32.87
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	17,065	18,901	1,836	11%	$12.63
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	11,814	13,481	1,668	14%	$15.06
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	13,956	15,487	1,531	11%	$37.34
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	21,650	23,151	1,501	7%	$14.97
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	15,474	16,955	1,481	10%	$22.60
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	16,599	18,035	1,436	9%	$11.51
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	9,016	10,367	1,351	15%	$34.29
13-1111	Management Analysts	7,559	8,677	1,119	15%	$44.83
11-3031	Financial Managers	5,581	6,597	1,016	18%	$68.16
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	12,160	13,175	1,015	8%	$32.65
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	12,312	13,320	1,007	8%	$21.17
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	27,036	28,038	1,003	4%	$14.00
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	8,077	9,079	1,002	12%	$76.46
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping	16,687	17,676	989	6%	$14.15
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	8,833	9,795	962	11%	$46.28

OCCUPATIONS SHEDDING JOBS

Below are the occupations decreasing in number. Many of these occupations are related to the industries projected to lose jobs in Table 3 so they are vulnerable to layoffs and closing as companies make workforce decisions.

SOC	Description	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	2028 Employment Concentration	2023 Hires	2023 Separations
41-2011	Cashiers	$12.51	30,324	29,559	(764)	(3%)	1.10	51,350	51,905
35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food	$11.53	21,636	21,273	(362)	(2%)	3.48	42,559	45,597
33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	$19.43	3,370	3,187	(184)	(5%)	1.09	1,209	1,338
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	$25.47	2,899	2,801	(97)	(3%)	0.62	2,110	2,093
43-9021	Data Entry Keyers	$17.82	1,534	1,452	(82)	(5%)	1.19	1,713	1,998
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	$28.80	4,294	4,230	(64)	(1%)	1.10	3,131	3,563
43-9022	Word Processors and Typists	$21.56	333	283	(50)	(15%)	0.80	190	247
43-6012	Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	$23.66	1,006	969	(36)	(4%)	0.81	653	680
51-6021	Pressers, Textile, Garment, and Related Materials	$12.86	228	195	(33)	(15%)	0.86	406	432
25-3011	Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English as a Seco	$28.98	1,016	987	(30)	(3%)	2.69	655	760
51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	$16.12	641	614	(27)	(4%)	0.52	956	932
43-4151	Order Clerks	$16.35	1,048	1,025	(23)	(2%)	1.12	953	1,060
51-8013	Power Plant Operators	$38.69	254	232	(22)	(9%)	0.83	65	66
43-5053	Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operator	$25.59	839	822	(17)	(2%)	0.92	291	317
51-9011	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	$27.58	1,807	1,791	(17)	(1%)	1.85	589	607
51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers	$15.51	610	594	(17)	(3%)	0.86	669	670
43-2011	Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service	$16.40	240	225	(15)	(6%)	0.64	185	248
27-1023	Floral Designers	$18.20	279	265	(14)	(5%)	0.64	227	210
45-4022	Logging Equipment Operators	$20.26	372	359	(13)	(3%)	1.20	514	520
51-6052	Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	$15.15	228	218	(10)	(4%)	0.82	151	147
41-9041	Telemarketers	$15.55	1,174	1,165	(9)	(1%)	1.65	1,907	2,124
27-3011	Broadcast Announcers and Radio Disc Jockeys	$38.82	241	232	(9)	(4%)	0.97	124	129
25-2032	Career/Technical Education Teachers, Secondary School	$26.00	972	964	(8)	(1%)	1.34	243	255
47-3011	Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble S	$16.40	235	226	(8)	(3%)	1.58	1,200	1,356
33-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	$29.01	389	381	(8)	(2%)	0.83	126	130

2. Describe how the regional strategic vision aligns with the NCWorks Commission's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

The five Boards identified as a regional area have not traditionally needed to work regionally to address employer needs or job seeker needs. Traditionally, CAWD, Kerr-Tar, and Durham have partnered to work together because of the proximity and shared businesses in Research Triangle Park. However, as a Workforce Board System, Workforce Boards across NC meet every month virtually and face-to-face quarterly to address common needs, share best practices, and more. DWDB will continue to use this forum to determine when it is necessary to partner with Turning Point and Mid-Carolina to meet the needs of employers and job seekers in the region.

The three Durham WDB, CAWD, and Kerr-Tar Boards' Business Engagement staff meet regularly to better understand what is happening from an employer perspective. This provides an opportunity for them to identify common challenges and work on solutions as well as share best practices. The Boards will continue regular joint meetings and regional employment engagement when appropriate and plan to include Turning Point and Mid-Carolina. Three Boards (CAWD, Kerr-Tar, and Durham) utilize the same Incumbent Worker Brand (Catalyst 2020), and application, with the only variance being the amount each Board allocates per application and lifetime maximum. The rationale is that if labeled the same when an employer has operations in more than one of the contiguous workforce Boards, there is uniformity causing less confusion (except for the number of reimbursements for the employer). This template will be shared with Turning Point and Mid-Carolina if they wish to use it; however, because they are also part of other regions, this may not be possible.

Durham WDB and the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce were instrumental in disseminating the findings of the 2023 Skills Survey, sponsored by CAWD and Wake County Economic Development. The Skills Survey included Economic Development, which has served as a source to ensure that Boards understand the skills needs of the employers in our region. The Skills Survey included a 15-county region which includes all the Workforce Boards identified in the North Central region. Despite challenges related to the pandemic, the survey revealed that a high percentage of businesses plan to continue to grow, and many expect to hire for new jobs. The high percentage reflects the strong local economy and suggests that while economic growth will remain slow, a recovery will occur in the Research Triangle region.

3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(C)].

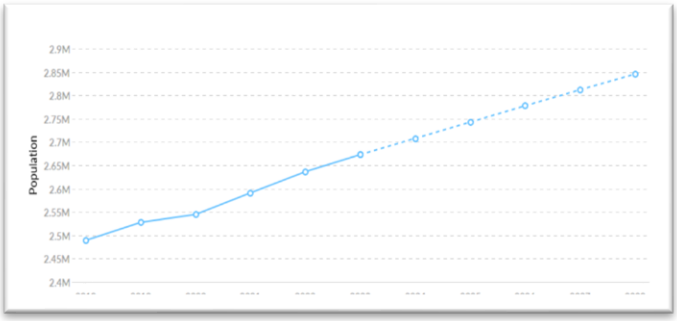
LABOR FORCE

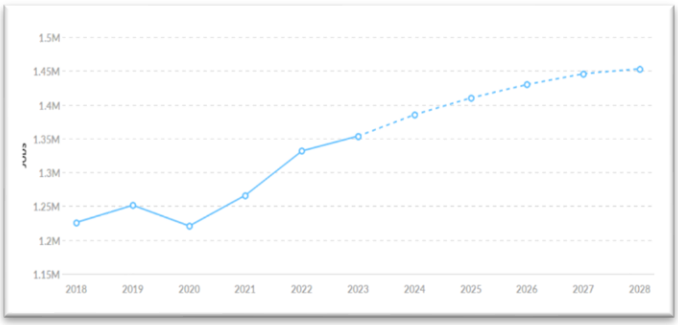
2,672,975	1,353,664	$81.4K
Population (2023)	Total Regional Employment	Avg. Earnings Per Job (2023)
Population grew by 183,795 over the last 5 years and is projected to grow by 172,712 over the next 5 years.	Jobs grew by 127,643 over the last 5 years and are projected to grow by 99,418 over the next 5 years.	Regional average earnings per job are $1.2K below the national average earnings of $82.5K per job.

Source: Lightcast.io

Completions by Institution

Institution	Completions (2022)	Growth % YOY (2022)	Market Share (2022)
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	10,279	-3.4%	24.5%
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	9,997	0.5%	23.8%
Duke University	6,863	3.1%	16.3%
Wake Technical Community College	6,278	-25.3%	14.9%
North Carolina Central University	1,734	7.3%	4.1%
Johnston Community College	1,184	-14.3%	2.8%
Central Carolina Community College	1,151	17.3%	2.7%
Durham Technical Community College	987	-45.9%	2.3%
Nash Community College	758	2.0%	1.8%
Vance-Granville Community College	594	-1.2%	1.4%
Meredith College	567	0.9%	1.3%
Wilson Community College	450	-3.8%	1.1%





As of 2023 the population of the North Central Prosperity Zone (NCPZ) increased by 7.4% since 2018, growing by 183.795. The population is expected to increase by 6.5% between 2023 and 2028, adding 183,795 people.

Over the same period, jobs increased by 10.4%, from 1,226,021 to 1,353,664. This change outpaced the national growth rate of 3.6% by 6.8%. The labor force participation rate increased as the number of jobs increased, growing from 62% to 64.1% between 2018 and 2023.

At the end of 2023, the region's unemployment rate was 3.0%, less than the state (3.2%) and nation (4.1%). Only the Western Region Prosperity Zone was lower at 2.7%.

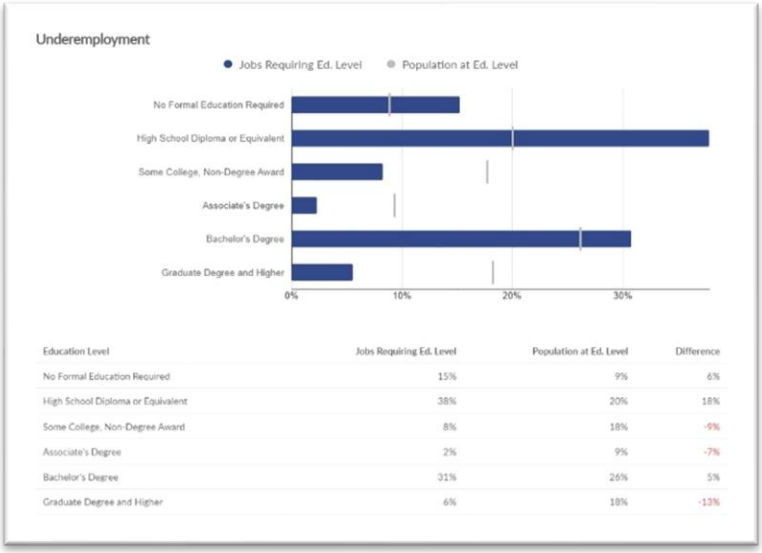
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	LABOR FORCE
3.0%	1,319,544	41,356	1,360,900
December 2023	December 2023	December 2023	December 2023

Concerning educational attainment, 26% of the region's residents possess a bachelor's degree (5% above the national average), and 9.3% hold an associate degree (0.3% above the national average).

High school diplomas are held by 20% and 18% have some college education. Just over 5% have a 9th-12th grade education and 3.7% have less than a 9th grade education.

Data provided by the Department of Public Instruction to MyFutureNC, a statewide nonprofit focused on educational attainment, indicates that 77.3% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by education institutions in the North Central Prosperity Zone are aligned with labor market needs. They are earned in the region's top industries: Health Care and Social Assistance, Professional Scientific and Technical Services, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Manufacturing. They also reported that 5,644 individuals participated in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020 and that 60% of adults (ages 25-44) in North Central earned a family sustaining wage in 2022.

The region has several outstanding educational institutions that contribute to its reputation of having a highly skilled, educated, and motivated workforce and helps to create a strong talent pipeline. The population exceeds minimum education requirements for jobs requiring some college, an associate degree, or graduate degree. The percentage of population with bachelor's degrees is only 5% under the percentage of jobs that require it.



Education Level	Jobs Requiring Ed. Level	Population at Ed. Level	Difference
No Formal Education Required	15%	9%	6%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	38%	20%	18%
Some College, Non-Degree Award	8%	18%	-9%
Associate's Degree	2%	9%	-7%
Bachelor's Degree	31%	26%	5%
Graduate Degree and Higher	6%	18%	-13%

Below is data reflecting the skills on individual job profiles of individuals that have updated their work histories since 2021. The information is ranked by how frequently the skill shows up in the top 10 Specialized Skills group, and the 10 Common Skills group.

Associate Degree

Top Specialized Skills

Skill	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2024)
Project Management	7%	328 / 4,395
Marketing	7%	303 / 4,395
Data Entry	7%	302 / 4,395
Inventory Management	5%	227 / 4,395
Merchandising	5%	222 / 4,395
Accounting	4%	172 / 4,395
Warehousing	4%	172 / 4,395
Technical Support	4%	169 / 4,395
Event Planning	4%	160 / 4,395

Top Common Skills

Skill	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2024)
Customer Service	36%	1,577 / 4,395
Sales	24%	1,049 / 4,395
Microsoft Office	17%	758 / 4,395
Management	17%	733 / 4,395
Leadership	16%	710 / 4,395
Microsoft Excel	14%	627 / 4,395
Communication	13%	591 / 4,395
Microsoft Word	13%	579 / 4,395
Operations	12%	562 / 4,395

Bachelor's Degree

Top Specialized Skills

Skill	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2024)
Marketing	15%	5,025 / 33,204
Project Management	10%	3,384 / 33,204
Data Analysis	8%	2,625 / 33,204
Social Media	7%	2,360 / 33,204
Event Planning	6%	1,945 / 33,204
Python (Programming Language)	6%	1,872 / 33,204
Undergraduate Research	5%	1,540 / 33,204
Data Entry	5%	1,506 / 33,204
Social Media Marketing	4%	1,469 / 33,204
Accounting	4%	1,397 / 33,204

Top Common Skills

Skill	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2024)
Customer Service	9,881 / 33,204
Research	8,830 / 33,204
Sales	7,817 / 33,204
Leadership	7,581 / 33,204
Communication	7,010 / 33,204
Microsoft Office	6,052 / 33,204
Management	5,700 / 33,204
Microsoft Excel	5,565 / 33,204
Operations	4,722 / 33,204
Microsoft Word	4,420 / 33,204

Master's Degree

Top Specialized Skills

Skill	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2024)
Project Management	19%	4,828 / 25,008
Marketing	17%	4,187 / 25,008
Data Analysis	16%	4,107 / 25,008
Event Planning	11%	2,810 / 25,008
Python (Programming La	9%	2,337 / 25,008
Social Media	8%	1,975 / 25,008
SQL (Programming Lang	8%	1,919 / 25,008
Community Outreach	7%	1,815 / 25,008
Auditing	7%	1,740 / 25,008
Finance	6%	1,608 / 25,008

Top Common Skills

Skill	Frequency in Profiles	Profiles with Skill / Total Profiles (2021 - 2024)
Research	40%	10,030 / 25,008
Leadership	33%	8,283 / 25,008
Customer Service	31%	7,635 / 25,008
Microsoft Office	30%	7,425 / 25,008
Management	28%	7,064 / 25,008
Microsoft Excel	26%	6,591 / 25,008
Communication	25%	6,155 / 25,008
Public Speaking	21%	5,348 / 25,008
Microsoft PowerPoint	21%	5,331 / 25,008
Sales	21%	5,268 / 25,008

BARRIERS

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) focuses on serving "individuals with barriers to employment" and aims to provide quality services for these populations. Barriers include:

LACK OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Despite the education positives in region, the pandemic had a profound effect on overall educational attainment that is ongoing, especially in the more rural counties of the region. A new report analyzing the performance of North Carolina K12 students found that learning progress slowed across all grades

and subjects. Students made less progress on average than students in the same grades and courses in previous years. Youth represent the next generation that will drive the workforce and inform innovative developments. They influence societal developments in many ways and have grand contributions to make. Nevertheless improvements in educational attainment still have to be made, especially in the region's rural areas.

MyFutureNC reported the following for the NCPZ workforce areas:

Turning Point

- **37% of students are chronically absent from school compared to 32% statewide.**
- **10,105 less are needed to meet state goal of 11%**
- **In 2022, 3% of students dropped out of high school (374 total students), compared to 2% statewide.**

Kerr-Tar

- **44% of students are chronically absent from school compared to 32% statewide.**
- **8,946 less is needed to meet state goal of 11%**
- **In 2022, 3% of students dropped out of high school (271 total students), compared to 2% statewide.**

Durham

- **41% of students are chronically absent from school compared to 32% statewide.**
- **10,045 less is needed to meet state goal of 11%**
- **In 2022, 4% of students dropped out of high school (492 total students) compared to 2% statewide.**

CAWD

- **24% of students are chronically absent from school compared to 32% statewide.**
- **31,528 less are needed to meet state goal of 11%**
- **In 2022, 2% of students dropped out of high school (1,193 total students) in line with 2% statewide.**

The disruption to postsecondary education caused by the pandemic caused young people to have to rapidly adjust to unexpected circumstances. According to Strada Education, the number of students attending college continues to drop resulting in a 6.5 percent decline in undergraduate enrollment and a 12.3 percent decline in first-year enrollment since 2019. Communities of color have been disproportionately affected, with Native American and Black students experiencing the steepest enrollment drops.

Reconnecting students using a range of modalities, from virtual communication to in-person events, can help provide students with the guidance they need to navigate education and decisions. According to Strada's research, short-term and career-focused training options can offer an entry point into postsecondary education for students who are focused on starting their careers. Integrating resources and support from community-based services, designating aid programs for specific student

populations, are also effective practices. The workforce and education systems must continue to partner with education and community organizations to develop and deliver practices that engage disconnected youth, and continually reassess and refine what works.

	NCPZ County	Total Population	Foreign-Born Population	% Foreign-Born Population	Population of People Living in Non-English-Speaking Households
CAWD	Wake County, NC	1,112,883	150,006	13.5%	182,985
	Johnston County, NC	211,320	15,753	7.5%	26,972
	Chatham County, NC	75,070	7,623	10.2%	10,370
	Lee County, NC	62,676	5,420	8.6%	10,585
	Orange County, NC	147,376	18,565	12.6%	22,499
	Durham County, NC	320,146	45,816	14.3%	55,121
KERR-TAR	Franklin County, NC	67,598	3,573	5.3%	4,532
	Granville County, NC	60,854	2,818	4.6%	4,618
	Vance County, NC	42,650	2,098	4.9%	2,874
	Person County, NC	38,999	1,067	2.7%	1,633
	Warren County, NC	18,889	498	2.6%	764
TURNING POINT	Nash County, NC	94,628	4,056	4.3%	6,278
	Wilson County, NC	78,844	4,844	6.1%	8,386
	Halifax County, NC	49,291	1,055	2.1%	1,605
	Edgecombe County, NC	49,609	1,395	2.8%	2,529
	Northampton County, NC	17,917	337	1.9%	421
	Harnett County, NC	[illegible]	7,765	5.8%	14,305

Source: Lightcast.io Community Indicators/2020 U.S. Census

I. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Over a quarter million people make up the region's foreign-born population. Every effort is being made to eliminate, to the maximum extent possible, limited English proficiency as a barrier to full and meaningful participation in the workforce. The NC Department of Commerce posits that immigration will play an ever-increasing role in alleviating worker shortages.

The number of people living in non-English speaking households exceeds 342,000. Being able to overcome language barriers is important to ensure accessibility to services for all residents. The workforce system must prioritize having forms and other documents in multiple languages and invest in technologies that ease communication between staff and non-English speakers. Hiring bilingual staff is also critical.

II. PREVIOUS INCARCERATION

	PRISON EXITS BY COUNTY	
CAWD	Wake	1064
	Johnston	299
	Chatham	59
	Lee	112
	Orange	109
		1643
KERR-TAR	Vance	116
	Granville	82
	Person	109
	Franklin	102
	Warren	28
		437
T.POINT	Edgecombe	185
	Nash	233
	Wilson	227
		645
	Durham	**461**
	Harnett	**216**
REGION TOTAL:		**3402**

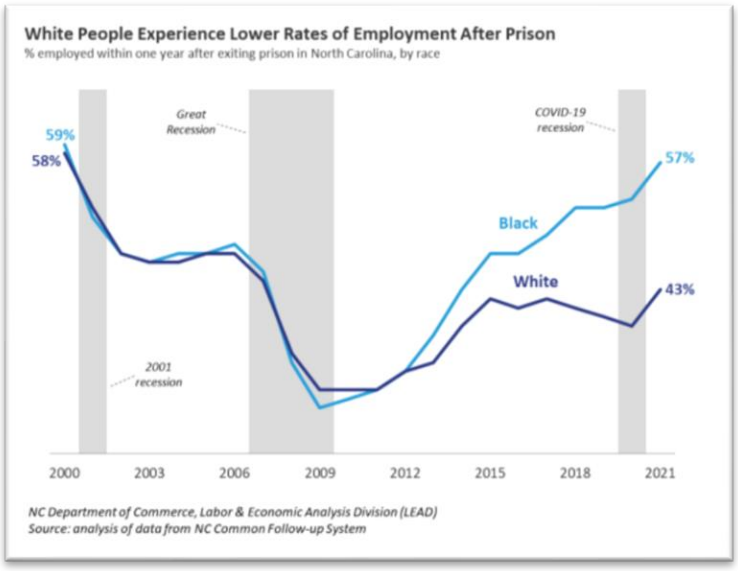
The North Carolina Department of Adult Corrections (DAC) reports that 19,559 individuals were released from North Carolina prisons between February 1, 2023, and January 31, 2024. For the NCPZ, exits totaled 3,420, about the same as the previous year's total of total of 3,424.

Successful reintegration is paramount for those returning from prison and it is also a matter of public safety and economic necessity. A criminal justice system that emphasizes incarceration but does not support the journey home does a disservice to everyone.

Effective rehabilitation and skill development for those incarcerated and formerly incarcerated is critical to reducing recidivism and strengthening households and the economy. However, returning citizens face tremendous barriers when it comes to gainful employment.

According to LEAD at NC Department of Commerce, even amid North Carolina's hot labor market of 2021, when job opportunities were plentiful and businesses were desperate to hire workers, fewer than half of people exiting state prisons in North Carolina were employed within a year after release, and those lucky enough to land a job earned a median of only around $7,500 per year.)

LEAD offers several explanations for why the employment outcomes of people exiting prison have gotten worse over the years, including: (a) the changing composition of the prison population, (b) the increased prevalence of pre-employment criminal background checks, (c) the loss of employment opportunities for blue-collar workers and (d) racial disparities.



Though Black people are disproportionately represented in our prison system, making up 51% of those incarcerated in state prisons, double their 20% share of the overall statewide population, black people getting out of prison were more likely to find work than their white counterparts. Declining employment rates has been almost entirely accounted for by the deteriorating outcomes of white people leaving prison.

III. VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Vulnerable communities are groups of individuals or geographic locations that are disadvantaged and susceptible to negative outcomes in a variety of areas. Three areas known to be barriers to employment are disabilities, low income, and poverty.

Several counties within the North Central Prosperity Zone have concentrations of disabled individuals and poverty rates that are higher than the regional average and have below-average income per capita.

INDICATORS FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

	County	Population	Disabled Population	% Disabled Population	% Children Under 18 Poverty Level	Per Capita Income	% Poverty Level
CAWD	Wake County, NC	1,105,378	94,776	8.6%	10.6%	$45,425	8.5%
	Johnston County, NC	209,927	28,217	13.4%	18.4%	$31,585	12.5%
	Orange County, NC	146,803	11,888	8.1%	10.2%	$45,681	12.6%
	Chatham County, NC	74,534	10,056	13.5%	15.4%	$48,143	10.5%
	Lee County, NC	61,642	10,629	17.2%	20.3%	$27,488	15.1%
KERR-TAR	Vance County, NC	42,279	7,701	18.2%	27.0%	$25,248	19.4%
	Franklin County, NC	66,809	10,967	16.4%	17.7%	$29,580	11.3%
	Granville County, NC	58,143	9,036	15.5%	20.5%	$29,340	14.4%
	Person County, NC	38,670	7,761	20.1%	34.0%	$31,026	18.3%
	Warren County, NC	18,156	3,790	20.9%	32.3%	$27,823	19.4%
T-POINT	Nash County, NC	93,565	14,567	15.6%	20.5%	$29,082	14.7%
	Wilson County, NC	77,985	12,022	15.4%	27.9%	$26,186	18.9%
	Edgecombe County, NC	49,106	7,980	16.3%	37.0%	$23,048	22.8%
	Durham County, NC	315,267	30,733	9.7%	19.1%	$39,602	13.2%
	Harnett County, NC	127,148	19,084	15.0%	20.8%	$26,962	14.9%
	REGIONAL AVERAGES:			**14.9%**	**22.1%**	**$32,415**	**15.1%**

Source: Lightcast.io / American Communities Survey Data

People with disabilities, seen or unseen, are less likely to be able to access resources and are more vulnerable to long-term unemployment and pay disparities.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for people with a disability (7.2 percent) was little changed in 2023. They further state that for all age groups, employment was much lower for people with a disability than for those with no disability. Unemployment rates were much higher for people with a disability than for those with no disability across all educational attainment groups. Workers with a disability

were nearly twice as likely to work part-time as workers with no disability, and workers with a disability were more likely to be self-employed than those with no disability.

***Advancing Economic Mobility for Low-Income Families: Policy Options for Governors states that* low-income individuals experience significant barriers to achieving upward economic mobility because participation in work or education may not be logistically or financially feasible, or because an individual has not been able to establish a solid financial foundation to build upon. Though the link between poverty and education is complex, children who live in poverty perform at a lower level in school, have lower high school and college graduation rates, and lower college enrollment rates than children who are not living in poverty.**

For low-income families, many of whom historically have been marginalized, post-pandemic economic recovery outcomes have been uneven, increasing the need for people-focused and sustainable practices to advance economic security, mobility, and resilience. It is within this context that WIOA is designed to help adults and youth access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market.

RESOURCES:

https://lightcast.io/

https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources

https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/03/do-people-with-disabilities-earn-equal-pay.html

https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/disabl.pdf

https://www.commerce.nc.gov/news/the-lead-feed/nc-post-prison-employment-outcomes

https://webapps.doc.state.nc.us/apps/asqExt/ASQ

https://www.nga.org/publications/advancing-economic-mobility-for-low-income-families-policy-options-for-governors/

4. Describe strategies, used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(i)(ii)].

Workforce Boards and our NCWorks Career Center Business Services staff utilize a highly collaborative and consultative approach to engage and serve our region's businesses and industries. By leveraging technology and data, partner relationships, outreach and awareness events, and other traditional methods, we create and foster an innovative and effective workforce system that strives to fully meet employer needs. Technology plays a vital role in our ability to identify and

connect with employers, including but not limited to our use of the NCWorks Online System and our social media platforms.

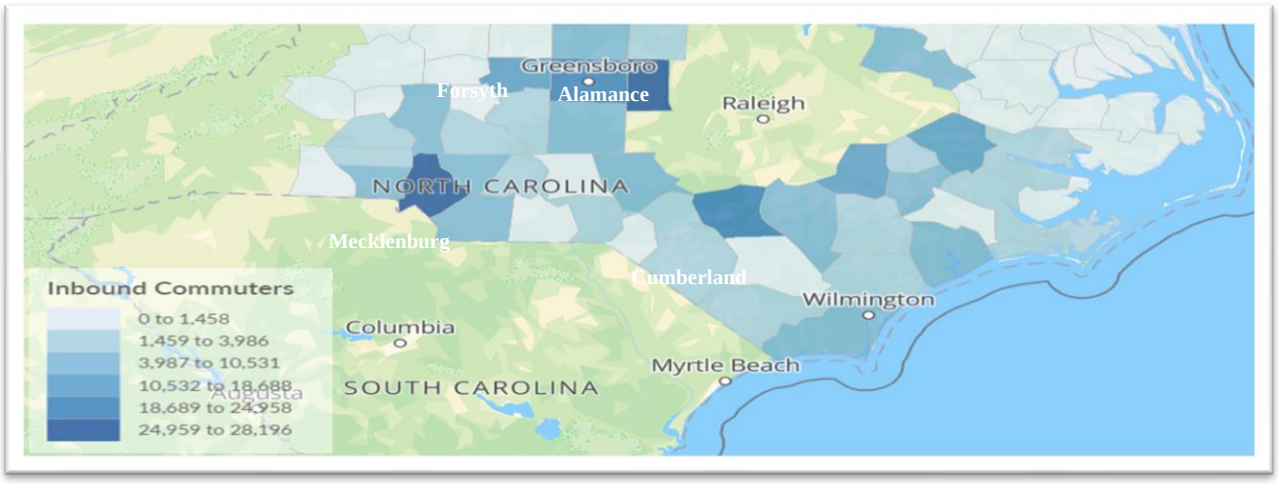
5. Describe strategies and services used to coordinate workforce development programs and economic development. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

Regionally, The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) continues to leverage our local and regional economic development partners for recruitment retention and expansion opportunities. The local and regional economic development teams pull local Boards to the table, with targeted partners, to present information on the labor pool that we must support their company should they choose to (re)locate or expand their business in our area.

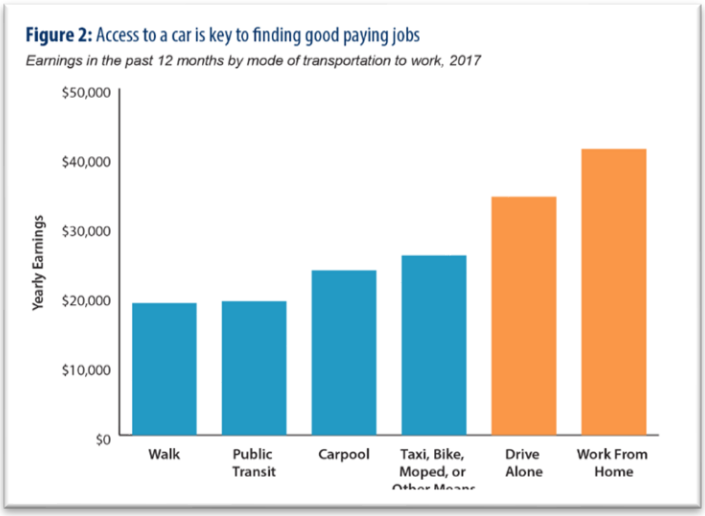
With the geographic inclusion of over two-thirds of Research Triangle Park (RTP), the Durham region remains a leader in economic development by continuing to attract new employers and expansion of existing businesses. This success is due in large part to the collaboration efforts that exist between our private and public sectors. This collaboration is thriving and evident throughout our partner ecosystem - comprised of economic and workforce development, education, government, chambers of commerce, and community partners. This partner network is led and shaped by business and industry and shares a common goal of driving growth and prosperity for our community and citizens. In recognition that Durham is a part of an integrated and interactive labor shed, the Durham WDB Business Services team conducts regular meetings with regional economic development partners through several outreach initiatives, including OneDurham, a virtual roundtable launched by DWDB Business Services to provide a platform for economic and workforce development partners a viable means of information exchange and communication on a monthly basis.

Durham WDB continues to engage with Boards in the North Central region as well as other regions based on employer needs and demand. For example, because of the large presence of advanced manufacturing in the Triangle, Durham WDB is partnering with CAWD, Kerr-Tar WDB, Mid-Carolina WDB, Greensboro WDB, and Piedmont Triad WDB the Governor's initiative, AdvanceNC to address the growing demand of training and employment related to advanced manufacturing through Advance NC. While the DWDB continues to balance our local area economic and workforce talent demands with the development of our workforce talent skills and abilities, we also work collaboratively to meet the needs of employers in this complex regional labor shed to ensure optimal service through a fully integrated and seamless delivery, regardless of local area geography.

6. Outline regional transportation issues related to workforce development and ways the region is/will address needs identified. Include a description *and* map of the regional commuting patterns. [WIOA Section 108(b)(11)].



The 15 counties of the North Central Prosperity Zone, shown above anchored by the city of Raleigh, had a total of 34,227 net commuters for 2023 according to Lightcast.io. Inbound commuters totaled 244.248 and outbound commuters 210,211. Mecklenburg and Alamance, shown in dark blue, have the most inbound commuters of 28,196 and 24,959 respectively. Cumberland, Guilford (anchored by Greensboro), and Forsyth round out the top five with 18,896, 18,689, and 12,170 respectively.



According to a 2019 report by the NC Department of Justice, access to a car is key to finding good paying jobs. Jobs are increasingly concentrated in metropolitan areas where housing is higher.

Many working North Carolinians often can't afford to live anywhere near where jobs can be found and those that do bridge the live-work divide face long commutes and onerous transportation costs.

More than 7 percent of residents in rural counties face at least an hour-long commute, a nearly 50 percent larger share of commuters than in urban counties. Counties with majority non-white populations also face long commutes at higher rates than majority white counties. In both cases, these long commutes affect communities that already contend with a range of other economic barriers.

Public transit is key to employment opportunities. The share of low-income North Carolinians who rely on public transit is much higher than the national and regional average, a clear sign that access to public transportation is important. Of the three Boards serving the majority of the NCPZ, Kerr-Tar had the most outbound commuters, net -31,839 followed by Turning Point at -8,844. They also have counties with household incomes lower than the region's average and

poverty levels higher than the regional average.

The Kerr-Tar area doesn't have public bus service, though the Kerr Area Transport Authority (KARTS), a public, rural transportation system providing scheduled/reserved rides, does service residents in Franklin, Granville, Vance, and Warren Counties. Fares vary by the mile and can run $8.00 roundtrip for a rider within 10 miles to $14 for 30-40 miles. Fares to destinations out of the KARTS service area to job centers such as Chapel Hill, Durham, or Raleigh, are $20-$25 round trip. This can really add up and be cost-prohibitive for some families.

The region's urban centers are not without transportation issues. With unprecedented population growth and traffic congestion, improving public transportation is at the heart of infrastructure discussions. Chief among the discussion is commuter rail that passes through employment centers such as downtown Durham, downtown Raleigh, downtown Cary, Research Triangle Park, Duke University and Medical Center, North Carolina State University and Clayton's expanding pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Resources

https://www.ncjustice.org/publications/the-budget-story-transportation-infrastructure-connects-people-business-and-communities/

https://www.readyforrailnc.com/feasibility/

7. Briefly provide a description of how the Local Area WDB will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Section 108(b)(10)].

The region coordinates with secondary education, community colleges, and universities to align strategies, enhance strategies, and avoid duplication of services through coordinating regional applications for career pathways certification through NCWorks Commission, and by regional coordination between Board Business Services staff for employer engagement activities currently for Durham, Kerr-Tar, and CAWD. The Region has collaborated with Incumbent Workers application to ensure seamless strategies, as well as in past years Job Driven Initiative Strategies coordinating with regional Boards. Community colleges, and WDB Board staff have made this a seamless process. Additionally, there may be the prospect of including Turning Point and Mid-Carolina as relevant opportunities impact their region. AdvanceNC serves as another good example of Workforce Boards working regionally to coordinate education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. The AdvanceNC includes community colleges as well as 2 land grant universities. While secondary education is not part of the partnership today, there has been a conversation about adding them in

the future.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Centers serve military veterans.

The Durham WDB NCWorks Career Center provides Priority of Service to veterans and eligible spouses and immediately work to assess their needs and provide services. Career Center staff provide in-person services. As part of Priority of Service, veterans are also allowed to view and apply for newly posted positions within NCWorks before the posting is made available to all other job seekers. The Center hosts job fairs targeting veterans and, typically, veterans are also given priority during recruitment events, job fairs, and training opportunities. The Center also presents to community agencies, chambers of commerce, and employers to attract veterans to our local Career Centers as well as enhance services in the community. The Durham WDB Tier 1 NCWorks Career Center has a Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and staff to ensure veterans receive access to optimum resources tailored to overcome significant barriers to employment.

9. Explain the strategic plan for how the region will respond to national emergencies or weather-related disasters to serve victims (such as lay-off aversion activities) and utilize special grants efficiently throughout the recovery period.

As a region, we stand ready to respond to national emergencies or weather-related disasters to serve victims and businesses. How each Board services its region varies based on the need and the funding available. Durham WDB enjoys an integrated relationship with both the City and County of Durham. For example, during the pandemic, DWDB was able to leverage resources to provide safe access to facilitate drive through service delivery, as well as securing PPE for staff as well as enhancing safety protocols in the facility, enabling the expedited ability of staff to provide customers with in-person support and service.

IV. NCWorks Commission

The NCWorks Commission recommends policies and strategies which value diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility while enabling the state's workforce to compete in the current and future global economy. The commission leads, builds partnerships, forms alliances, and is accountable for strengthening North Carolina's innovative, inclusive, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system.

The Commission is designated as the state's WDB under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Led by a private sector chair, the 37-member Commission includes representatives from the business community, heads of state workforce agencies, educators, and community leaders. All members are appointed by the Governor.

Mission of the NCWorks Commission: To ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity; and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

After extensive stakeholder work and programmatic reviews, the following systemwide goals and objectives were created for the workforce development system:

- *Prepare workers to succeed in the North Carolina economy by increasing skills and education attainment.*
- *Create a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of the economy by fostering employer leadership.*
- *Promote replication of creative solutions to challenging workforce problems by supporting local innovation.*
- *Promote system access, alignment, integration, and modernization.*

1. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB engages with local employers and informs them of the wide array of business services offered. Include how the Local Area WDB (a) ensures collaboration with other employer-facing workforce program representatives, such as (b) Vocational Rehabilitation, (c) Agriculture Services, (d) Foreign Labor, (e) Re-Entry, and (f) Veterans Services, through processes and procedures for information sharing and efficient employer customer service delivery.

(a) The Business Services Team works together to build and execute a coordinated outreach process. The Team continues to employ the Durham Business 360 Strategy implemented in the fall of 2020. The goal of this strategy is to ensure the team is aware of each other's outreach and that there is a unified approach to servicing a business and closing the loop with all services offered. A shared team spreadsheet has been implemented so that team members can see activity in real time. As team members update their activities in NCWorks, they are also expected to update the team spreadsheet with those activities so team members can easily see what has been communicated to an employer and what services have been provided. The Business 360 Strategy encourages a cohesive outreach approach with all initial outreach to employers guided by a template that all team members are encouraged to customize prior to connecting with an employer. The Business Services Team has developed a unified approach to employer outreach to ensure there is consistency with the information that is initially presented to employers. This includes using the promotional materials that were developed at the state level, such as the "NCWorks for Business" brochure. The goal of the initial outreach is to make employers aware of the wide array of business services offered and the diverse populations we work with through WIOA. After the initial outreach, team members work to build a relationship with the employer and customize their service plan based on their specific needs. Once the needs of the employer are understood, team members know to loop in other team members/partners as necessary. This approach decreases the chance of duplicate communication and increases trust with employers.

Furthermore, the DWDB website: www.durhamworks.org provides a platform for information exchange, marketing, and program promotion. Additionally, The DWDB Business Services Team partners with employers to promote and deliver high quality talent and workforce solutions. Based on the specific needs of employers, the team recommends solutions that include, but are not limited to recruitment and screening; training and education, retention and up-skilling, transitional services, and access to workforce information and data. Additionally, work-based learning incentives such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Incumbent Worker Training, and Registered Apprenticeship Programs are also promoted to ensure that the vast needs of employers are met.

The Durham Business 360 Strategy is a core part of this effort. It goes well beyond asking employers about their needs. Businesses are key partners in developing certifications and work-based learning opportunities. Businesses lead the effort in developing pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, internships, co- ops, and other strategies to create employment and learning opportunities for individuals. Because of the critical role of businesses to this effort, the certifications will be more meaningful both within and outside of the industry. Certifications will also be stackable making it easier for individuals to work their way up the career ladder of their pathway.

Additionally, the Business Services Team is actively involved in the communities they serve. The Team regularly attends local and regional networking events, serves as exhibitors and community sponsors for job fairs and career awareness events, and conducts speaking engagements for workforce related events and conferences. Being active and engaged in our region allows staff to gain critical business intelligence on current challenges and opportunities, workforce needs, gaps in resources, growth trends and more. We develop relationships and interactions with employers of all sizes and across multiple industry sectors.

In addition to working with the Durham Business 360 Strategy and community outreach, the business team meets bi-weekly to ensure cross-collaboration and information exchange for all partners. The Career Center has established a Partners list serve to ensure when information and notifications are made, they are shared among all partners. Through these means of consistent and regular communication, each area business service professionals can work together in a coordinated fashion. Contacts are managed in a common database to reduce the possibility of redundancy.

2. Please provide a brief overview of the business services team within the local area. Please identify the individual staff roles the Local Area WDB utilizes to conduct business services (that is Business Services Representative (Local Area WDB staff), contractor staff, Business Engagement Coordinator, NCWorks Career Center Manager, DWS staff, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, identify who makes regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services and/or Foreign Labor staff, etc.).

The Business Services team is comprised of DWDB staff Business Services Manager who leads and conducts the Durham Business 360 initiative through bi-monthly meetings; the Career Center Manager, DWS Staff members, Justice Involved Staff; NextGen; Veterans Outreach; and WIOA Contractor business services staff; National Caucus and Center on Black Aging; and Durham Health and Human Services. While Agricultural Services and Foreign Labor are not active NCWorks Career Center partners, the DWDB regularly makes regional and local employer referrals to the above-mentioned partners. This internal team convenes every other week under the leadership of the Business Services Manager to conduct information exchange and develop cross-collaborations regarding service delivery and events such as hiring events and employer outreach.

Furthermore, in March 2021 DWDB staff partnered with Durham Technical Community College to establish the "One Durham Business Engagement Team." For reference, a table of the members is provided below. This team is scheduled to meet the third Tuesday of every month to ensure that as partners we keep each other abreast of employer engagement in our region. During these meetings we will also gain more familiarity with each entity's services, which will allow us to guarantee we communicate these various opportunities to employers, so they understand the services that are available to them in Durham from a holistic standpoint.

3. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB plans to increase NCWorks brand awareness at the local level (consult NCWorks Commission 2023-2025 Strategic Plan).

DWDB staff establishes formal relationships and partnerships with community and business organizations, including K-12 education and higher education institutions; industry, sector and business professional organizations; and Chambers of Commerce. Through our connections and civic engagement, the Board staff, individual Board members, and partners can anticipate new trends and stay attuned to business needs. Together with these partnerships, we focus on vision-setting and other activities that keep with the NCWorks top priorities of preparing workers to succeed in the North Carolina economy by increasing skills and education attainment, advocating for increased educational attainment, and promoting access to job training for high-demand and high-growth fields that pay a living wage. We engage in every phase of talent development to ensure the promotion of NCWorks priorities and the DWDB strategies that align with the development of a qualified, trained, appropriately credentialed workforce.

With the involvement and commitment of our Business Services Team, our region has built an incredibly robust partner network that is an excellent source of referrals for business customers and job seekers. Our relationships with economic development, local chambers of commerce, industry associations, educational institutions and other community partners have been invaluable to helping our team establish high quality connections with business leaders and elevate our service delivery and impact.

Communities across North Carolina are developing strong local models of workforce development. North Carolina should build on those successes and replicate them in more places to continue building and expanding innovative solutions.

4. Describe how the Local Area WDB and the partners identify, address, and provide new and innovative solutions to support the job growth and business expansions of the local workforce system while including Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.

DWDB staff establishes formal relationships and partnerships with community and business organizations, including K-12 education and higher education institutions; industry, sector and business professional organizations; and Chambers of Commerce. Through our connections and civic engagement, the Board staff, individual Board members, and partners are able to anticipate new trends and stay attuned to business needs. Together with these partnerships, we focus on vision-setting and other activities that allow us to address local challenges and respond to business needs for expansion, relocation, and employment creating growth. We engage in every phase of talent development to ensure the promotion of strategies that align with the development of a qualified, trained, appropriately credentialed workforce.

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As previously mentioned, starting in March 2021, DWDB staff partnered with Durham Technical Community College to establish the "One Durham Business Engagement Team". Participating partners include: EDPNC, Discover Durham, Durham County Economic Development, RTP Foundation, and NCBiotech Center This team is scheduled to meet the third Tuesday of every month to ensure that as partners we keep each other abreast of employer engagement in our region. These meetings serve as information exchange as well as cross collaboration potential regarding opportunities to partner with industry sectors and employers to gain a more comprehensive perspective on the Durham workforce talent needs.

Moreover, the City of Durham has established an Equity and Inclusion Department targeting recruitment, hiring and overall employment practices with respect to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility. As part of the City of Durham organizational structure, the DWDB closely collaborates with the Equity and Inclusion Department with an analytical perspective towards better understanding the issues and challenges our high demand sectors face. Taking an industry sector approach provides DWDB with a comprehensive overview, as well as a strategic lens to develop the approaches that will support industry sectors as well as diversity and inclusion.

The U.S. Departments of Commerce and Labor have jointly identified Recruitment and Hiring; Benefits; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility; Empowerment and Representation; Job Security and Working Conditions; Organizational Culture; Pay; and Skills and Career Advancement as the eight key principles of a good job. Refer to Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 07-22 for details.

5. Describe the Local Area WDB's strategy for:
    a. incorporating job quality principles into ongoing workforce development activities, to assist with identifying and creating long-term partnerships with employers offering good jobs;
    b. creating strategic, flexible career pathways to good jobs that respond to local labor market needs.

a. The growth of our workforce system is dependent on our presence in the business and economic development community and the customer services offered at our physical location. Physically, the Durham NCWorks Career Center is uniquely located in the former Unemployment Office. In fact, Google maps still identify the location as the "Unemployment Office". The Center has been completely transformed inside and out including new signage on the front of the building.

Through close engagement with area economic development partners, the Durham WDB receives information on position requirements and talent skills needed as employers are recruited or immediately after their establishment. Using the information provided about the talent needs, Durham WDB works closely with Career Counselors to approach these opportunities utilizing the same strategy as in-demand career pathways.

b. DWDB does not depend solely on the NCWorks Career Center as a destination to serve the Durham community. DWDB has launched an innovative partnership with the City of Durham and the Durham Housing Authority to set up "stations" throughout the City in or near housing authority communities to recruit participants in an employment training pilot leading to construction and skill trades careers. Additionally, DWDB is working on the development of a partnership with the Durham County Library to provide remote counseling and service – programming outside the walls of the Career Center.

DWDB also has expanded its active participation in task force groups, business associations, and other business and business-related organizations to establish and maintain an understanding and awareness of social dynamics, economic development trends and workforce demands. Furthermore, DWDB staff stay abreast of anticipated workforce trends and are intentional about reaching out to appropriate partners to try to stay ahead of these trends so our local workforce system can support any new trend or growth. This approach and these partnerships are key to ensuring our area is ready to provide innovative solutions that align with current and future workforce needs.

6. Describe how the Local Area WDB ensures that individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities have equitable access to the services of the workforce system and the jobs created in the economic growth spurred by federal investments.

The DWDB Business Services team works to promote and provide viable incentives to industry partners, helping to ensure appropriate work-based learning opportunities are highlighted as high value-add propositions that help employers meet their talent needs. The Business Services staff maintain a high level of familiarity with the local labor market to ensure that all services are aligned with both employee and labor market needs. Center staff coordinate and collaborate with local businesses, apprenticeship programs, and other schools and universities to offer information about NCWorks Career Center services. This facilitates staff efforts to identify the needs and requirements of employers and training institutions and then adequately prepare our customers for appropriate referral designed for their success.

The DWDB continues to work in partnership with a work-based collaborative that brings together businesses from across the sector to discuss the best ways to support each industry. Sector leaders along with educational agencies such as Durham Public Schools, Durham Technical, local and regional universities and colleges, and training institutions are working with economic and workforce development leaders, and community partners to create opportunities ranging from a job shadowing opportunity for a youth, to a co-op for a graduate student. The collaborative works to provide career opportunities at each level and certifications whenever possible. In addition to providing an entry level platform to viable career opportunities, DWDB works to ensure that individuals leave with increased skills and marketable credentials.

Because of the strong working relationships between industry, education, and workforce development partners, more individuals will have access to meaningful career opportunities. Industry will have partnerships in place to provide work-based learning opportunities to individuals participating in local education and workforce development programs. Through the stair-step nature of the career path, individuals with barriers will be able to enter the career pathway at more basic levels.

7. Describe how the Local Area WDB is engaged in work-based learning projects with local employers.

To ensure appropriate work-based learning opportunities are promoted to employers, the Business Services staff continue to maintain a high level of familiarity with the local labor market to ensure that all services are aligned with both employee and labor market needs. Center staff coordinate and collaborate with local businesses, apprenticeship programs, and other schools and universities to offer information about NCWorks Career Center services. This facilitates staff efforts to identify the needs and requirements of employers and training institutions and then adequately prepare our customers for appropriate referral designed for their success.

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The Durham WDB actively promotes the value-add benefits of work-based learning as a means for employers to develop and train a specialized workforce. As stated above, using OJT, Adult and Youth WEX, and Incumbent Worker Grants, the Business Services Team works closely with businesses to employ these incentives in a manner that is mutually beneficial. Given the current environment of staff shortages, many small business owners were too overwhelmed to balance training new and inexperienced talent while still trying to successfully recover from the negative impacts of the pandemic. Using work-based learning incentives creates a valuable partnership that provides a gateway for employers to onboard the talent they need with the comfort of knowing they are working in partnership with the DWDB.

8. Briefly describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(A)]

The Durham Local Area adheres to the criteria and information requirements established by the State. However, the Board staff also continuously monitor training providers through NCWorks reports to reconcile enrollment numbers, exit numbers, training numbers, etc., with the contractor Program Manager. In addition, participant data is reviewed as part of the DWDB annual internal monitoring process. The Adult Program Manager runs reports in NCWorks Online on a quarterly basis to analyze performance. These quarterly reports are shared with the DWDB staff and contractor staff and reviewed to ensure trainers are satisfactorily meeting local area needs. Counselors determine training requirements based upon individual training plans, once the type and scope of training is identified, clients are provided access to the Eligible Training Provider list and in consultation with Counselor make their provider selection. Board and Program staff remain

current on shifting employer demands to ensure eligible training providers are providing substantive training in high demand industry, ensuring that training provides an entry level foundation for a sustainable career pathway.

V. NCWorks Career Centers

North Carolina's workforce system includes multiple agencies, programs, and funders. Collaboration, policy alignment, systemic communication, integration, and modernization of the workforce system will ensure a strong and healthy workforce system that can adapt to a changing economy.

For any documents that are missing or are unnecessary based on the response provided, please state, "No document is loaded and/or it will be loaded by a specific date".

1. Identify PY 2024 NCWorks Career Center location(s) including Comprehensive and Affiliate Sites; On-site partners; how NCWorks Career Center operator(s) are designated; provider(s) of WIOA career services and method of selection; whether youth service provider is on-site and, if so, youth services offered. Use the PY 2024 NCWorks Career Center Chart. [WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A) and (b)(1)(B)]

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board PY 2024 NCWorks Career Centers***.

2. Provide the name(s) of the current One-Stop provider(s), date, and process for when the competitive procurement of the One-Stop Operator(s) occurred. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to four years and the current year the contract is (e.g., two of three years). [WIOA Section 108(b)(16)]

The Durham One-Stop Operator, Eckerd Connects, was selected by competitive procurement as outlined below and in the attached: Durham Career Center Manager/Operator RFP Timeline.

The procurement process was initiated in February 2022 through the release of an RFP, proposals were due on April 21, 2022, and contract selections were made by unanimous approval of the Durham Workforce Development Board on May 19, 2022. The expected length of the contract is one year, with an option to renew for up to three years. The original procurement process included the following steps:

a. Request for Proposal for Career Center Manager/Operator released on March 4, 2022. An announcement was posted on behalf of the Durham Workforce Development Board by the City of Durham's website, Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development through website, local newspaper, and via outreach to a list of appropriately eligible potential proposers including nonprofit, private, educational, and local and state government agencies, and professional organizations.

b. A timeline covering the entire procurement process was developed.

c. A Bidders Conference was held virtually on April 6, 2022.

d. Technical reviews of proposals received were completed by DWDB staff.

e. Proposals were read and scored by members of a selected DWDB Review Committee and proposal selections were presented to and approved by the DWDB Executive Committee.
f. Final contractor selections were presented and accepted by the entire DWDB at the May 19, 2022, Durham Workforce Development Board meeting.
g. Contracts were presented to City Council and approved on June 6, 2022, for a July 1, 2022, start date.
h. A contract renewal was presented to City Council and approved on June 5, 2023, for a July 1, 2023 start date.
i. A contract renewal was presented to City Council and approved on June 17, 2024, for a July 1, 2024 start date.

3. Provide a brief description of how Career and Training Services are provided. [WIOA Section 121(e), 134(c)]
    a. Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to adults.
    b. Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to dislocated workers.
    c. Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to youth.

a.– b. -Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to adults and dislocated workers. WIOA training is supported through opportunities that have positive capabilities of securing successful opportunities for participants to include classroom training, work-based learning, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and customized training.

The Center has four major functions including customer welcome, skill development, employment services, and employer services. Center customers (when eligibility permits) are required to be enrolled in the WIOA Title I Adult and Wagner-Peyser programs; and all Trade Adjustment Act customers are enrolled in the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program whenever they are referred or request assistance. The NCWorks Career Center offers services that fall in each of four categories: (1) Job placement assistance and job readiness activities; (2) Skill development/improvement services – short-term, basic training; (3) Occupational training that leads to a credential; and (4) Work-based learning, such as on-the-job training or internships. A resource area is available that includes various local, regional, and state resources on job seeking, career development, and employability skills for customers. We provide intensive as well as non-intensive services. We also ensure that follow up services are provided as well.

b. See above.

c. Housed in the equivalent of a Youth "One-Stop" center, Re-City, the DWDB provides access to career services through counseling and needs assessment. Youth clients are engaged to determine what resources should be allocated to support attaining their goals. This can range from attaining a GED to attaining some other industry-specific credential. Counselors develop a relationship with youth clients to help establish a trusting engagement. Once trust is established, it is easier to counsel and to determine pressing needs. Re-City provides a network of support and services to encourage a holistic approach to helping youth seek pathways to success. At intake, clients are assessed to make an objective assessment regarding next steps, which may include remediation and other academic support or the use of work-based learning opportunities to help young clients

receive experiential learning and skills. Counseling is delivered in strategic alignment with customer and employer focused data.

4. Describe how Local Area WDBs determine the need for enrollment in Training Services.

Customers entering Durham's NCWorks Career Centers complete an initial assessment for their individual needs. Those in need of training services under WIOA are determined eligible and develop an Individual Employment Plan detailing their needs. Training is available to those who are unlikely to obtain or retain employment that leads to sustainability or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment. The assessments used will determine if the customer has skills and/or the qualifications to successfully participate in training services. The training is directly linked to targeted occupations in the Durham Area or in an area where the customer is willing to commute or relocate to for employment.

Customers in need of training that are Pell eligible are required to apply for Pell Grant prior to the availability of providing WIOA services. Funds are then coordinated with the financial aid office of the training provider to determine a shortage/surplus of the resources that are available to the customer.

5. Describe how follow-up services are provided through the NCWorks Career Centers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

Follow-up services are provided as appropriate for Adults and Dislocated Workers, and Youth who have entered unsubsidized employment. These services are available for 12 months after the first day of employment and include counseling regarding the workplace or assistance with obtaining new employment through job search, resume assistance, etc.

The goal of follow-up services is to ensure job retention, wage gains and career progress. Follow-up services should provide personalized encouragement, resolution of any on-the-job issues that may arise, and, when appropriate, referral to services necessary to help prevent job loss or to enter employment. Follow up can be provided by phone, email, and/or face-to-face.

6. Describe how:
    a. New NCWorks Career Center staff (DWS, service providers, and partner staff) are trained in the integrated service delivery system model (include a training timeline).
    b. How long after the initial start date does staff have full access to NCWorks.gov?
    c. The staff development activities reinforce and improve the initial training efforts.
    d. Describe the specific training that staff receive around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

a. **The NCWorks Career Center in Durham provides a continuous learning environment for our staff by utilizing numerous online training websites such as http://www.ncworkforcetraining.com/ and http://nccommerce.com/wf/workforce-professionals/ncworks-training-center along with webinars, live-group training events and seminars, classroom training, and real-world on the job training to ensure the highest quality of preparedness for our staff. The Center also invites community partners to host learning sessions for the Center staff as a means to understand the local resources at their disposal and to help stay current on recent trends in the labor market.**

Also, the Center utilizes an Integrated Service Delivery model (ISD) where functional teams are formed, (Talent Engagement, Talent Development, and Business Services) whereby Center staff are trained and cross-trained on all functional roles within the Center to ensure a seamless directive to better serve the clients. In addition, over 98% of the partners and Center staff have obtained their Career Readiness Facilitator certification to further enhance the Center's collective skill set.

b. **Within the first two weeks of training, new staff attend NCWorks 101 Training provided by the NCWorks training center. New staff are required to complete all new employee training along with training with management, and attaining their full designated level of access, they maintain access to NCWorks.gov system.**

c. **New hires go through a comprehensive orientation and training program within their first days and weeks of hire to ensure a consistent message and to provide a solid base of knowledge. Online training models are assigned along with in-person training sessions. Also, new hires are assigned a mentor to provide guidance, training, and serve as a go-to person for questions and encouragement. Center management follow-up with the new hire's training and learning schedule on a regular basis and adjusts learning strategies as needed. It's the Center's goal to create well rounded and expertly trained staff to best assist the local community. Training is tracked by Center management for all staff to ensure an optimum learning environment along with creating a consistent message throughout the Center. Tracking is conducted via online training logs in addition to manual spreadsheets for live seminars and classroom sessions. Sign-in sheets are required for all in-person training and conferences as well.**

d. **A foundational element of the City of Durham's Strategic Plan is based upon principles of diversity, equity and inclusion. As City of Durham employees, all Board staff have received formal training in how to braid together strategies that are informed through a DEI lens. Board staff use their training and materials to act as coaches to ensure programs are developed in concert with DEI principles. The City of Durham's DEI program is designed to "train the trainer", which provides latitude and flexibility for Board staff to deliver DEI principles to Career Center staff. Center staff have been trained using Human Centered Design strategies to help all public facing personnel to respect the journey others may have taken on their pathway to success. More in-depth DEI specific training will continue as Board staff engages both virtually and in-person with Career Center staff.**

7. Briefly explain coordination with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services. Please include specific details on how case managers for WIOA and TAA programs coordinate to provide seamless services to eligible participants.

Regarding the format, affected employees are provided information including an overview of services and contact information for the regional career centers, veteran contacts, connections for starting a business, unemployment insurance, social services and information regarding any grant-funded training available through the workforce system. Contact information for affected employees is obtained by career center staff for the purpose of assisting them with career searches. Affected employees that are approved to receive unemployment insurance are required to visit the career center to learn more about assistance with career searches. Efforts are made to connect regional employers with the affected employees. Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) assistance is also provided within the NCWorks Career if relevant.

Additionally, DWDB utilizes a virtual Rapid Response platform that provides information and strategies to affected employees. The virtual option is available in both English and Spanish.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Center serves persons with disabilities.

The DWDB has an MOU that includes the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit for the purpose of providing collaborative services, sharing facilities, and cross training staff to provide services within the NCWorks Center for clients with disabilities. The MOU eliminates the duplication of services, reduces administrative costs, and enhances participation and performance of customers served through the NCWorks system. The agreement establishes guidelines for creating and maintaining cooperative working relationships to facilitate joint planning and evaluation of services and to develop more efficient management of limited financial and human resources. This agreement builds a workforce development system that will dramatically upgrade individuals' workplace skills economically benefiting the workforce, employers, and the State. It also builds relationships with employers and assists them with meeting their workforce needs.

Additionally, the DWDB abides by all applicable federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the philosophy of the DWDB that all people should have access to services, programs and activities in which they have interest. Consistent with that philosophy, the Board has compiled and updated elements of an Accessibility Plan to specifically address barriers that people with disabilities may face in accessing the Career Center and community resources. All DWDB staff and contractors notify the public, participants, partners, etc. during presentations, workshops, appointments and meetings that program participants requiring reasonable accommodations can be serviced.

9. Briefly describe the integrated service delivery strategy for serving employers and how the Local Area WDB staff and staff within the NCWorks Career Center coordinate outreach strategies and services to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services.

The Center utilizes an Integrated Service Delivery model (ISD) where functional teams are formed that includes Business Services (along with Talent Engagement and Talent Development). Center staff are trained and cross-trained on all functional roles within the Center to ensure a seamless directive to better serve both employers and clients. Over 98% of the partners and Center staff have obtained Career Readiness Facilitator certification to further enhance the Center's collective skill set for serving employers and job seekers.

New hires go through a comprehensive orientation and training program within their first days and weeks of hire to ensure a consistent message and to provide a solid base of knowledge. Online training models are assigned along with in-person training sessions. Also, new hires are assigned a mentor to provide guidance, training, and serve as a go-to person for questions and encouragement. Center management follow-up with the new hire's training and learning schedule on a regular basis and adjusts learning strategies as needed. It's the Center's goal to create well rounded and expertly trained staff to best assist the local community including outreach services and strategies connected to employer development. New Staff must also attend the NCWorks 101 Training that is provided by the NCWorks training center. They are required to complete this training along with training with management to gain their full specific access to the NCWorks system. This training is required within the first two weeks of employment or as soon thereafter as a training space is available.

Training is tracked by Center management for all staff to ensure an optimum learning environment along with creating a consistent message throughout the Center. The tracking is conducted by online training logs in addition to manual spreadsheets for live seminars and classroom sessions. Sign-in sheets are required for all in-person trainings and conferences. By employing the strategies articulated above, employer partners receive transparent service delivery and based upon comprehensive NCWorks notation, employers can seamlessly move between service providers without interruptions in service.

The One Stop Operator hosts regular meetings with all center partners and WDB staff to coordinate outreach activities with community partners and employers. The meetings provide an opportunity for everyone to understand current outreach activities so there is no overlap and to prevent having multiple people reach out to the same partner/employer. All partners are educated about center programs and services so there is one consistent message delivered to everyone. During these meetings, information is also shared from customers and employers regarding their needs. Plans are generated to address their needs, strategize on how to close the gap and spread the word deeper into the community regarding services that can be received at the NCWorks Career Center. Regular training sessions are also provided to staff to provide cross-training opportunities and learn about employment opportunities, training programs/providers and community resources.

10. Describe Local Area WDB strategies and services that will be used to strengthen linkages between Local Area WDBs and the NCWorks Career Center system and unemployment insurance programs. [WIOA Section 108(b)(4)(A)(iv)]

The NCWorks Career Centers are a partnership of local workforce development professionals providing an array of services geared to assisting jobseekers in the following ways:

Employment Search – Job listings are available for viewing at no cost and contain local, state, and national listings. Once a jobseeker has identified a position that matches their experience and qualifications, an employment consultant will speak with them about the opportunity.

Work Readiness – In partnership with Durham Technical Community College workshops are provided to assist customers in developing resumes, interview preparation, and workplace insight in both individual and group settings.

Career Development and Counseling – These services assist jobseekers in discovering their interests and abilities.

Educational Information and Financial Assistance – The NCWorks Career Center provides options to those considering furthering their education or pursuing training.

Support Services – The NCWorks Career Center assists local workforce area residents with retaining their current jobs by providing community resources available to them.

Specialized Services – The NCWorks Career Center staff provide individual assistance to veterans, persons with disabilities, and older workers that are economically disadvantaged.

In addition to services provided, the Durham WDB conducts bi-weekly Career Center Partnership Roundtables that includes all partners that operate programs or provide services in the Career Center. These Partnership Roundtables ensure robust information exchange and notification regarding ways to leverage resources and support, this includes notification on hiring events and new or expanded training partnerships. Presently staff utilizes a list-serve to disseminate information and reminders to all Center partners, with discussion on upgrading to a more formal e-newsletter to highlight additional shared resources and information, further enhancing the relationship between unemployment insurance programs and workforce development.

11. Attach a flowchart for services – flowchart must include:
    a. initial one-on-one interviews with customers,
    b. skills assessments, and
    c. determination of the need for further services.

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Services Flowchart 2024***.

12. Attach the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Area WDB and partners concerning operation of the NCWorks Career Center system. [WIOA Section 121(c)(1)(2)(A)]

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board NCWorks Career Center MOU.***

13. Describe the Local Area WDB's method for providing oversight to include:
    a. the review process and the frequency of review for the NCWorks Career Center system in the Local Area, including processes for ensuring quality customer service; and
    b. the roles and any resource contributions of the NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 121(a)(3)] [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(D)]

The Durham Workforce Development Board staff continuously reviews all data in an effort to ensure performance is met and to provide technical assistance that addresses any deficiencies staff may identify. On a monthly basis, case notes, activities, applications, etc., are selected randomly and reviewed for compliance and accuracy. The DWDB staff also reviews data in NCWorks Online prior to submitting invoices that contain participant costs for reimbursement. If there are any issues with the data in NCWorks Online, the DWDB staff addresses them either via email or during trainings with contractor staff. Training on Data Validation is provided during the contractor meetings and during desk reviews that occur when reports are run in NCWorks Online. Each month, the DWDB Program Manager runs reports and reconciles enrollment numbers, exit numbers, training numbers, etc., with the contractor Program Manager. In addition, participant data is reviewed as part of the DWDB annual internal monitoring process. The Adult Program Manager runs reports in NCWorks Online on a quarterly basis to analyze performance. These quarterly reports are shared with the DWDB staff and contractor staff and reviewed to address any deficiencies.

b. The roles and resource contributions of the NCWorks Career Center partners are as follows:

Program: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker Program Provider. Contracted Staff are front line staff, providing assessment, counseling and WIOA enrollment. The contracted WIOA provider assists with, and contributes to the Integrated Service Delivery of the NCWorks Career Center.

Program: Wagner-Peyser Organization: Department of Commerce Staff provide client intake and counseling. Additionally, Wagner-Peyser staff provide support for returning citizens, employer recruitment, job fair – career opportunities and NCWorks posting, career readiness training and skill building including support in resume writing and interviewing. Staff also assists with, and contributes to the Integrated Service Delivery of the NCWorks Career Center.

Program: Adult Education and Literacy Organization: Durham Technical Community College

(DTCC). DTCC provides all students an opportunity to acquire meaningful credentials and secure living-wage employment through education and training. Offerings include postsecondary technical and occupational programs leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate; the first two years of a four-year degree; general education for personal growth; a wide variety of corporate and continuing education courses for workforce preparation and development; and college and career readiness instruction that includes an adult high school diploma program, high school equivalency preparation programs, and English language development courses. Specifically, DTCC supports NCWorks Career Center programs with Human Resource Development (HRD) training focusing on career readiness and building employability through in-depth, small classes, as well as one-on-one counseling and support.

Program: Persons with Disabilities: North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Services-Durham Unit. The Vocational Rehabilitation Unit (Voc Rehab) helps individuals with disabilities return to work and/or keep a job. All services provided by this program are aimed toward employment. Represented on the DWDB NCWorks Career Center Sub-committee, Voc Rehab staff work in concert with Career Center staff to provide more in-depth counseling and support when indicated. Using NCCARE360 as part of an important referral system, allows Career Center and Voc Rehab staff to provide seamless support and assistance through transfer of care.

Program: Older Worker Organization: National Caucus on Black Aged (NCBA) NCBA staff provides employment training through its Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and job placement for qualified seniors through the Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) Program.

Program: Durham WIOA Youth Services Organization. The Durham WIOA Youth Program staff works to help youth overcome challenging life situations by emphasizing education and training by connecting customers to age appropriate care and support networks.

Program: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Organization: Durham County Social Services. The Durham County Department of Social Services provides customers short-term financial assistance for families as they actively pursue plans to achieve economic independence.

Program: Veteran Services Organization: North Carolina Department of Commerce Veteran Services. Veteran Services assists eligible veterans, their dependents, and/or surviving spouses, etc. in employment search and linkage to community resources. In addition, Veteran Services staff work closely with NCWorks Career Center Business Services staff to provide comprehensive support for veterans seeking upskilling and employment opportunities using transferable skill sets.

14. Describe how the Local Area WDB facilitates access to services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(B)]

The Durham Workforce Development Board facilitates access to services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system. The local area systematically customizes strategies and services for participant/customer engagement and expands access to services via satellite sites and the NC Division of Workforce Solutions Mobile Unit Access (when accessible). Social media and the Durham Workforce Board's website are used to facilitate access to programs and services. Additionally, integrated technology is used for intake and case management among all Center staff. They consist of the use of phone calls and document uploading by phone, as well as documentation being loaded within the NCWorks system by a participant, when creating a general account. Moreover, DWDB utilizes Premiere Virtual Job Fair platform to provide employers and participants with the flexibility of engaging in a virtual hiring process. Employers have expressed a great appreciation for this tool which gives them access to candidates in a time efficient and convenient platform, allowing for interviewing to take place even when the hiring partner is outside of the state.
population ("the digital gap").

15. Describe how NCWorks Career Centers are using virtual technology to provide integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information systems for programs carried out under WIOA including youth programs, and programs carried out by NCWorks Career Center partners. What software are NCWorks Career Centers using? [WIOA Section 108 (b)(21)]

The Durham Workforce Development Board facilitates access to services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system. The local area systematically customizes strategies and services for participant/customer engagement and expands access to services via satellite sites and the NC Division of Workforce Solutions Mobile Unit Access (when accessible). Social media and the Durham Workforce Board's website are used to facilitate access to programs and services. Additionally, integrated technology is used for intake and case management among all Center staff. They consist of the use of phone calls and document uploading by phone, as well as documentation being loaded within the NCWorks system by a participant, when creating a general account. Moreover, DWDB utilizes Premiere Virtual Job Fair platform to provide employers and participants with the flexibility of engaging in a virtual hiring process. Employers have expressed a great appreciation for this tool which gives them access to candidates in a time efficient and convenient platform, allowing for interviewing to take place even when the hiring partner is outside of the state.

16. Describe how entities within the NCWorks Career Center system, including Career Center operators and partners, will comply with Section 188, if applicable, and 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. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(C)]

The DWDB has an MOU that includes the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit for the purpose of providing collaborative services, sharing facilities, and cross training staff to provide services within the NCWorks Center for clients with disabilities. The MOU eliminates the duplication of services, reduces administrative costs, and enhances participation and performance of customers served through the NCWorks system. The agreement establishes guidelines for creating and maintaining cooperative working relationships to facilitate joint planning and evaluation of services and to develop more efficient management of limited financial and human resources. This agreement builds a workforce development system that will dramatically upgrade individuals' workplace skills economically benefiting the workforce, employers, and the State. It also builds relationships with employers and assists them with meeting their workforce needs.

Additionally, the DWDB abides by all applicable federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the philosophy of the DWDB that all people should have access to services, programs and activities in which they have interest. Consistent with that philosophy, the Board has compiled and updated elements of an Accessibility Plan to specifically address barriers that people with disabilities may face in accessing the Career Center and community resources. All DWDB staff and contractors notify the public, participants, partners, etc. during presentations, workshops, appointments and meetings that program participants requiring reasonable accommodations can be serviced.

VI. Employer Services

1. Please describe the efforts of the Local Area WDB staff, Employer services staff and Career Center staff have made to deliver business services on a regional basis in the following areas:

    a. Utilizing regional and local economic data to inform priorities [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].
    b. Collaborating with employer-facing partners such as Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services to meet employer needs and jobseeker recruitment efforts.
    c. Providing local and regional Rapid Response services, including identifying struggling and at-risk businesses and providing services to help avert layoffs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(8)]
    d. Coordinating with DWS TAA and Business Services staff to provide Rapid Response assistance and appropriate career and training services to workers for whom a petition has been filed. (20 CFR 618.816)
    e. Including Historically Underutilized Businesses (OG 20-2021)

a. **Utilizing regional and local employer data to inform priorities.**

As previously stated, the Business Services Team values informed decision making. Engaging employers and garnering an understanding of their reality increases the effectiveness of the team. Given this, in 2017, a Regional Skills Analysis was conducted by RTI in partnership with the Durham Workforce Development Board, Durham Chamber of Commerce, Capital Area Workforce Development, Kerr Tar Workforce Development Board, Wake County Economic Development and the City of Raleigh. This study surveyed over 500 businesses across 15 counties and 10 industry sectors to uncover projected growth, skills and education requirements and workforce challenges. Several significant findings were revealed from this study that helped to shape the strategic priorities in the region, and has helped to drive decisions on programs and initiatives.

In 2020, these same partners reconvened to update this study with the goal of collecting input from over 1,000 employers across 15 counties and 10 industry sectors. A representative from all of the partner entities make up a working group that meets every other week to discuss the findings and any new data that can help inform priorities throughout the region. The Business Services Manager for the DWDB sits on this working group.

Additionally, on a monthly basis, the Business Services Manager runs an employer services report that is distributed to the Business Services Team. This report shows the eight employer measures that the state has established and allows the team to reflect on the activities taking place on a monthly basis. The regular conversation around measures allows the team to continuously reflect on and improve our services. Additionally, data from JobsEQ has played an integral part in informing priorities. On a monthly basis job posting reports, industry snapshot, and skill gap reports are run and then compared against the employer services the team has been provided. These reports allow us to see who is hiring and guides employer outreach. For instance, after seeing that an employer had many opportunities that were being pulled from JobsEQ, a member of the Business Services Team reached out to the employer to offer our services through NCWorks. A few weeks later our team hosted a virtual hiring event for the employer. The skills gaps report has been important as we have discussions with our partners, such as Durham Tech, to make sure there is alignment with current and future needs.

b. Making regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services.

While Agricultural Services and Foreign Labor are not active NCWorks Career Center partners, the DWDB regularly makes regional and local employer referrals to our Local Veterans Employment Representative. The NCWorks Business Services team works in concert with our Veteran Representatives to create hiring opportunities, such as hiring events that highlight employment skills possessed by many veterans. Within the Durham Local Area, military veterans and families are served by either a Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER), or a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) representative to

help veterans with significant barriers overcome their barriers to employment.

The Durham Local Area NCWorks Career Centers offer Priority of Service to veterans and eligible spouses and immediately work to assess their needs and provide services. Career Center staff provide in-person services during scheduled hours at each location. As part of Priority of Service, veterans also are given the opportunity to view and apply for newly posted positions within NCWorks prior to the posting being made available to all other job seekers. The Center hosts job fairs targeting veterans and, typically, veterans are also given priority during recruitment events, job fairs and training opportunities. The Center also presents to community agencies, chambers of commerce, and employers to attract veterans to our local Career Centers as well as enhance services in the community.

c. Providing local and regional Rapid Response services, including identifying struggling and at-risk businesses and providing services to help avert layoffs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(8)]

Upon receipt of the WARN Notice, the Rapid Response Team with the Division of Workforce Solutions/NC Commerce contact the Local Area to assist with the coordination of the initial contact with the employer. The State Rapid Response Team then involves the Local Area Director and Business Services Representative. The Business Services Representative coordinates a meeting with the State Rapid Response Team and the employer. The State Rapid Response Team sends out an Employee Survey to the employer to distribute and collect. That information is sent to the Business Services Representative to determine the partners to invite to the employee orientation. Partners such as Department of Employment Security, NCWorks, and/or the Community College are invited to the orientation(s).

d. Coordinating with DWS TAA and Business Services staff to provide Rapid Response assistance and appropriate career and training services to workers for whom a petition has been filed. (20 CFR 618.816)

If the company closure or layoff occurs due to moving out of the United States and a petition is filed and granted, the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) is enacted from the State Department of Workforce Solutions/NCCommerce. NCWorks will designate staff to work with the TAA affected individuals to provide services. If needed or requested from the employer, sometimes a job fair can be organized.

While visiting or speaking with a business and the business indicates they are in financial trouble that may lead to a plant closure or moving away from the Local Area, it is best to talk with them and introduce the business to the Business Edge Team. The DWDB's various partnerships and collaboratives include key players such as the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC), Chambers of Commerce, entities within the NC Community College System, NCWorks, ApprenticeshipNC, as well as industry sector partners NC Biotech Center and Discover Durham (Hospitality). Speaking regularly with our partners

in workforce development and economic development across the region allows our team to strategize with other entities to ensure our regional efforts are aligned and holistic.

e. Including Historically Underutilized Businesses (OG 20-2021)

The Durham WDB enjoys the benefit of co-location with the City of Durham's Office of Economic and Workforce Development. As part of a city agency, the DWDB has access to the industry experts and the HUB database. The DWDB proactively employs the use of the HUB database with all procurement and contracting activities. In addition, the City of Durham aggressively applies a HUB analysis with respect to the contract and procurement process to ensure partnerships and purchases are reviewed with objective scrutiny with respect to HUB participation. Additionally, in conjunction with the Small Business Development division of OEWD, Business Services includes qualifying HUB entities in all recruitment and employer resource events and programming.

2. Please describe employer-focused partnership efforts in the areas of education and training and economic development in the following areas:

    a. Enhancing the use of On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities to support the regional economy and individuals' career advancement.
    b. Coordinating and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(5)]
    c. Participating in regional economic strategic planning and economic development recruitment, retention and expansions with employers, education partners and economic developers. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

a. **When we partner with employers with programs such as On-the-Job-Training, it is critical that the employer is invested in the outcomes of these programs as well. Given this, we spend a significant amount of time forming and strengthening relationships with employers and ensuring that it is a true partnership. To expand upon what has been previously described, the Business Services Team continuously collaborates with education partners, economic development entities, and employers. With regards to education, the local public school system, colleges, and universities are included in many of our initiatives, including the formal partnership groups that have been described. It was important that the educators' perspectives were included as they are the ones who understand the students' needs the best. The same Triangle partnership was employed when working along with our respective community college partners, the group submitted a joint application to US EDA Good Jobs Challenge grant to fund career pathways specific to each local area. In addition, DWDB Business Services uses employer information sessions such as Employer Breakfasts to facilitate information exchange and sector support and networking.**

Durham Technical Community College (DTCC) is included in almost every initiative and continues to be an incredibly strong and valued training partner. For example, the DWDB and DTCC have partnered together to host a virtual community resource fair for the Durham community. Additionally, DTCC plays a critical role in both our NCWorks Community Partner group and the One Durham Business Engagement Team. DWDB maintains a consistent relationship with industry partners to provide incumbent worker support and other work-based learning strategies, such as apprenticeship when those resources are applicable.

b. **Every member of the Business Services Team continues to build and strengthen relationships with employers on a regular basis. These relationships allow us to understand the specific needs and barriers that an employer has and faces. With these details, the team then thoughtfully works with the employer on a customized plan to help achieve their goals and needs. For example, if the Business Services Manager became aware that small manufacturing businesses have been having a difficult time filling their workforce needs. As a result, a group including the Business Services Manager and a number of these small businesses have started conversations about how to move forward. Plans are underway to have a hiring event specifically for these types of employers (very small manufacturing businesses) where we can educate the local workforce on the benefits of starting a career in Durham with one of these businesses. The Business Services Team recognizes that to successfully provide our services, we need buy in from the employers themselves.**

c. **With regards to economic development partners, the DWDB and the Business Services Team regularly engage with the City of Durham's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, Durham County, the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, and EDPNC. Combining the tools and resources of these various entities allows our team to deliver comprehensive services to employers in Durham, including providing valuable labor market information that can help employers be strategic. The Business Services Team makes it a priority to develop partnerships with entities like EDPNC to assist with the workforce needs of existing, expanding, and emerging businesses. Also, when appropriate, the local and regional economic development teams bring the Durham and Capital Area Workforce Development Boards to the table, along with targeted partners, to provide information that foster an understanding of the type of support that would be needed by the employer if the company should choose to (re)locate or expand their business in our area.**

VII. Performance

U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has the following WIOA Performance Indicators:

- Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment Rate
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers (system-wide measure, not program specific)

1. **Examine the Local Area WDB's current Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance on the Federal Primary Indicators of Performance for PY 2022-2023 and prior Program Years. (Reports available via FutureWorks BI.) What are some factors that have impacted performance levels both positively and negatively in the current program year?**

   a. **Provide at least two examples of positive factors and two examples of negative factors with an explanation of each. Some examples to consider include:**
      - **unemployment rate**
      - **factory closures/openings**
      - **economic development recruitment**
      - **retention and expansion efforts**
      - **regional industry growth priorities**
      - **weather events and natural disasters that may have impacted the area**
      - **internal operational factors**

   b. **Are there any factors that you anticipate will impact your performance during the upcoming program year(s) either positively or negatively?**

a. Economic indicators for Durham tell an incomplete narrative. While unemployment numbers are lower than national, and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Durham has the highest average weekly wages earned for all industries within the four county BLS Economic Summary Area, Durham also has a 13.2% poverty rate, with 16.2% children living in poverty. Both the demand and supply side of our workforce pipeline are impacted by several factors. On the demand side – in general, our employers are clustered at the extremes of skill sets requirements. With Duke Health as our major employer and RTP businesses relocating to or expanding into the area – many of our employment opportunities are in STEM and STEM-related fields. Conversely, as a regional hub for major entertainment and sports venues, we have high employment demands in entertainment, hospitality, food service and retail. Additionally, Durham is experiencing high growth along with the passage of a $95 Million Bond for Affordable Housing development, the largest of its kind in the state's history. Due to this large-scale expansion, there have been an explosion of construction employment opportunities in both residential and commercial new construction as well as rehabilitation of older structures. These employment demands present a challenge in building a responsive workforce pipeline. While Durham Public Schools is one of our key workforce partners, the district faces many complex challenges often leading to placement

challenges with a need to provide often high-cost skill building and training. These high cost training needs strain our budget. Moreover, we average approximately 500 re-entry residents returning to the Durham area annually. The conflation of these various factors, among others, creates a need for intensive counseling. While Durham has been fortunate to avoid extensive destruction due to natural disasters, we have had residual impact from hurricanes and other storms intermittently leading to a disruption in service. Lastly, the statistics demonstrate that one of the hardest, negatively impacted industry sectors as a result of the pandemic, was the Hospitality Sector. In addition to the abrupt and prolonged loss of revenue, restaurants, entertainment venues, and hotels have historically hired large quantities of lower-skilled, lower-paid employees. With the push for increased wages, exacerbated by the "great resignation", hospitality industry employers have been experiencing extreme difficulty in attracting and retaining personnel. In response to this industry crisis, DWDB partnered with Discover Durham, our tourism and hospitality bureau, to host targeted career fairs and to develop a technical assistance guide for employers to help outline successful strategies for attracting, hiring and retaining personnel.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, the Durham area faced a K-curve economy which was only exacerbated by the economic impacts of the pandemic. The average Durham WDB participant has historically been long-term unemployed with limited transferable skills and often without high school credentials. Those working poor who were employed generally worked in lower wage earning positions that did not require higher skill levels and had low career mobility. The most negatively impacted in our program delivery is our Youth program. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, disconnected youth could attain their HS credential and obtain placement through work experience, apprenticeships, or internship positions, ultimately leading to employment. As a result of the pandemic, the employee supply has increased significantly with individuals possessing low skills and willing to work at many of the positions formally available to younger, less experienced workers. As a result, work-based learning opportunities have decreased significantly for younger, less experienced employees. Historically, the Durham WDB has served individuals seeking to up-skill or change careers, this is consistent with the population we are currently serving, however it continues to be challenging to fulfill their career seeking goals.

b. Many businesses are still in recovery from the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. In particular, the service industry, such as two of the DWD's largest employment sectors, Health Care and Hospitality are still experiencing revenue and staffing challenges. Most Durham based restaurants, particularly those located in Downtown Durham, are independently owned small businesses. Without the backing or support of large corporate chains, many of these businesses have either permanently closed or cut back on hiring to reserve enough revenue to meet outstanding financial commitments for rent, inventory and payroll. Compounding these negative economic impacts is the fact that employees working in these fields tend to be at the low end of the pay range. Home health care providers are often the least skilled and are paid the lowest wages with scant benefits. Those employed in hospitality, entertainment and restaurants often have limited transferable skills. The Durham WDB has conducted targeted outreach to individuals seeking to change careers or up-skill within their career pathway. Durham WDB has partnered

with growth sector leaders particularly in the Biotech and Information Technology sectors to conduct specific outreach including hosting information sessions with incentive stipends, webinar events, and targeted employment events through our virtual job recruitment software, Premier Virtual, and most recently through in-person, targeted Career Center events. Additionally, there is a high demand for RESEA servicing, which compromises the ability to implement integrated service delivery. Contractor staff is consistently and frequently called to deliver Wagner-Peyser services such as resume writing, which encroaches on WIOA service delivery and case management

2. What strategies and methods are in place to meet or exceed performance goals? Include information about tracking performance, ensuring accountability of positive performance outcomes, and training.

   Consider including the following information:

   - Who is responsible for tracking performance?
   - Which reporting resources are used?
   - Is FutureWorks BI employed? If so, how, and how often?
   - How often is training provided to staff?

The Accountability Specialist conducts regular performance reviews with a focus on trend analysis. When outcomes indicate the possibility of an issue, Board staff immediately works with program staff to target and address deficiencies. As stated, DWDB staff maintain a close and engaged relationship with the program contactors, as well as with other community and economic development stakeholders. Because of this partnership, strategies can be quickly adapted and adjusted. Contractor and Board staff also develop strategies and training derived through shared industry knowledge, best practices and, in the case of significant performance challenges, recommendations from our planner and other DWS support network. This responsive strategy can be implemented immediately and is geared to identify challenges proactively. Program Contractors that serve the Durham WDB are required to have access to the Future Works system. Contractor management is required to review this information at a minimum on a monthly basis, however the current contractor reviews this information on a weekly basis prior to established weekly meetings with the Durham WDB staff. If the appropriate performance measures have not been recorded, corrective actions are documented and reviewed for updates. Managers are required to review issues with program staff and staff is required to make corrections in NCWorks within 14 business days. Additionally, written processes are shared with staff to ensure mistakes are not repeated. Board staff maintains constant communication and conducts regular series of monitoring exercises. These measures are in place to ensure the ability of the Board and program staff to make data-driven decisions to change direction and emphasis based upon effectiveness. Program Accountability Analysts for the Adult/Dislocated Worker program monitors and tracks performance regularly. Trends are identified and analyzed to address any need for improvement in weekly meetings held with the Board staff and the program Contractor management to develop processes and implementation plans for spending funds. Plans are

developed for training cohorts, developing OJTs, and improving post exit strategies. Reports from NCWorks and NCPerforms are reviewed by both Contractor management and Board staff to inform observations and recommendations at these weekly meetings. Information is tracked in the FutureWorks system and staff reports program progress to the Board Director in regularly scheduled bi-weekly meetings. Contractor staff are required to submit performance accountability reports outlining indicators such as: # of individuals enrolled in training and OJT; percentage for successful completions; and recording Measurable Skills Gains and Credential attainment. Career Coach training is provided on an annual basis by Board staff regarding performance updates, calculating performance, and how performance measures are determined. Additionally, updates, process changes, challenges, and best practices are provided to staff in monthly training sessions.

3. Discuss what corrective action steps are in place if, at any point during the program year, the Local Area WDB is not on track to meet or exceed yearly performance indicator goals.

   This question is intended to be hypothetical and is seeking what plan the Local Area WDB has in place to address failing performance, if it were to occur. Answers should address how the Local Area WDB:

   - monitors performance,
   - communicates with staff,
   - makes changes to Local Area WDB performance and training strategies based on reporting data,
   - and utilizes follow-up accountability measures.

If specific issues are identified immediately, Board staff will immediately work with program staff to target and address deficiencies. As stated, DWDB staff maintains a close and engaged relationship with the program contactors, as well as with other community and economic development stakeholders, because of this partnership, strategies can be quickly adapted and adjusted. Contractor and Board staff would develop strategies and training derived through shared industry knowledge, best practices and, in the case of significant performance challenges, recommendations from our planner and other DWS support network. This type of corrective and responsive strategy can be implemented with immediacy. Contractors that serve the Durham WDB are required to have access to the Future Works system. Contractor management is required to review this information at a minimum on a monthly basis, however the current contractor reviews this information on a weekly basis prior to established weekly meetings with the Durham WDB staff. If the appropriate performance measures have not been recorded, corrective actions are documented and reviewed for updates. Managers are required to review issues with program staff and staff are required to make corrections in NCWorks within 14 business days. Additionally, written processes are shared with staff to ensure mistakes are not repeated.

4. How is performance information shared throughout the hierarchy of staff? Please detail how the Local Area WDB addresses performance data in its relationship with its service provider(s) and how case managers are using performance data to drive Local Area WDB performance.

   Consider including the following information:

   a. How is performance tracked in your organization?
   b. How is performance information communicated with staff?
   c. How are staff/contractors held accountable?
   d. How is training provided in your organization?

Board staff meets with the program contractor staff on a weekly basis. As a result of this intensive and on-going communication, performance issues can be identified immediately, and strategies can be developed to determine the best means to address the issue. DWDB staff maintains a close and engaged relationship with the program contactors, as well as with other community and economic development stakeholders. Contractors that serve the Durham WDB are required to have access to the Future Works system. Contractor management is required to review this information at a minimum on a monthly basis with all Contractor staff managers and staff. Current contractor manager reviews this information on a weekly basis prior to established weekly meetings with the Durham WDB staff. Career Coach training is provided on an annual basis by Board staff regarding performance updates, calculating performance, and how performance measures are determined. Program teams meet weekly. These weekly meetings ensure that rapidly changing workforce and economic information is disseminated at every customer-facing level to ensure case managers and counselors are providing services that appropriately respond to the local area needs. Additionally, updates, process changes, challenges, and best practices are provided to staff in quarterly training sessions.

5. Discuss the factors that contribute to the Local Area WDB's credential attainment indicator.
   a. What are the challenges that the Local Area WDB faces in achieving its credential attainment goal?
   b. What are some of the strategies that contribute to the Local Area WDB's success in achieving its credential attainment goal?
   c. How do case managers make use of NCcareers.org and the NC Workforce Credentials list?

Recognizing the challenge that individuals facing barriers may have with persevering through the training requirements to attain a credential or certification, the goal is to balance the resources to provide service to build the sustainability and success of the pipeline, while supporting the business community to ensure we are connecting employers with a robust talent pipeline. This balanced approach includes focusing on providing wrap around services that emphasize mentorship and other supportive services that help individuals successfully complete the coursework or get through the materials and training necessary to attain a credential. DWDB partners with Voc Rehab to increase connectivity and better leverage our services and resources. In addition, DWDB

continues to explore ways to capitalize on using virtual service delivery to increase our ability to successfully deliver services, such as remote enrollment, that will provide us with the opportunity to increase our reach to Dislocated Workers. NCCareers.org has provided a compelling tool to help individuals realistically envision what success looks like. By providing average earnings, industry demand, and providing an accurate depiction of the training or educational investment needed, provides individuals with the tools to fashion attainable career goals.

Using Measurable Skill Gains, DWDB assesses the effectiveness of training and the success rate of credential attainment. Subrecipients are responsible for recording a new period of participation each time a participant enrolls in a training or educational program. While most training programs are short-term and end within one program year, if the training continues into multiple program years, career counselors are responsible to calculate a new MSG for each program year. This performance indicator provides useful guideposts for both the customers and the counselor to identify problems or issues early, enabling help counselors to redirect or adjust the individual training plans accordingly. Using documentation relevant to the type of training, participants may fall into more than one category of measures. Counselors have the flexibility to determine which measure to report, however for Youth participants, the MSG must be based on the Youth's individual service strategy. Counselors also use this indicator strategically, recording progress and employing counseling and referral support when necessary to encourage success and completion. Board program staff review MSG measures during routine internal monitoring processes to ensure oversight and accountability for entering measures appropriately.

6. When selecting an eligible training provider from the State Eligible Training Provider List to certify for local use, what is the review process the Local Area WDB uses to make this decision? How does the Local Area WDB ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training providers? In other words, how are customers advised that they have options in choosing their provider? [WIOA Section 108(b)(19)]

The Durham Local Area adheres to the criteria and information requirements established by the State. Board staff also continuously monitor training providers through NCWorks reports to reconcile enrollment numbers, exit numbers, training numbers, etc., with the contractor Program Manager. In addition, participant data is reviewed as part of the DWDB annual internal monitoring process. The Adult Program Manager runs reports in NCWorks Online on a quarterly basis to analyze performance. These quarterly reports are shared with the DWDB staff and contractor staff and reviewed to ensure trainers are satisfactorily meeting local area needs. Counselors determine training requirements based upon individual training plans, once the type and scope of training is identified, clients are provided access to the Eligible Training Provider list and in consultation with Counselor make their provider selection. To ensure customer choice, Career Coaches complete an O*Net career assessment with participants to identify their strengths. Career Coaches then review the results in detail with the participant. Based on how much education/training time the participant is willing to invest, a plan is formulated to assist the

participant with meeting their career and employment goals. This plan considers any disclosed barriers. Career Coaches also utilize nccareers.org, recruitment material, Durham Tech and information from other training providers to help the participant develop their individualized career path.

7. Indicate whether the Local Area WDB has additional requirements for training providers above and beyond those requirements stated in the State ETPL policy. Does the Local Area WDB make use of USDOL's trainingproviderresults.gov website in its evaluation of which training providers to certify for local area use? If so, how?

The DWDB defines "significant number of competent providers" in the local area as training providers located in Durham and surrounding areas that have met the requirements established to be included on the Eligible Training Provider List. While Durham WDB does not regularly use trainingproviderresults.gov, all Eligible Training Providers are required to have an up to date Provider account within NCWorks. Training providers are required to:

- **Maintain accurate information in regard to programs offered and credentials received from programs**
- **Annually update program costs in accordance with local area requirements**
- **Annually update performance related to successful and unsuccessful customer completions within NCWorks.**
- **Eligible Training Providers are required to sign the application statement in NCWorks in order to be approved.**

The Durham NCWorks Career Center, through guidance from the Durham Workforce Development Board, will continue to support WIOA customer training through Individual Training Accounts in accordance with the law and applicable local policies. Eligible program participants who seek training services may, in consultation with Career Center staff, select a training vendor from the list of providers approved through the aforementioned process. Upon selection, in accordance with local policies and available funding, staff will refer the participant to the eligible provider and arrange for payment through an individual training account.

- Name Document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board ETPL Policy*.**

VIII. Equal Opportunity

1. Describe processes to ensure individuals are not discriminated against based on age, disability, sex, race, color, or national origin. [WIOA Section 188]

The Durham Local Area has established an Equal Opportunity policy that outlines the WIOA policy requirements with respect to our commitment to ensure individuals are not discriminated against based on age, disability, sex, race, color, or national origin.

WIOA Service provider contracts are monitored internally and by the state to ensure compliance

with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Durham Local Area contract requirements.

2. Attach the Local Area WDB's current Equal Opportunity (EO) Complaint Grievance Procedure to address EO requirements [29 CFR 38.35].

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board EO Complaint Grievance Procedure*.**

3. Describe the methods used to ensure local Equal Opportunity procedures are updated.

The Equal Opportunity Officer maintains regular oversight over the NCWorks Career Center and the Re-City Youth Program facility to ensure consistent compliance. The State compliance officer conducts an annual review of the sites to ensure the sites are in compliance and are employing best industry practices. The annual state compliance review uses a checklist to ensure consistent compliance.

IX. Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

1. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of existing Adult and Dislocated Worker education and training services.
    a. Include how services are provided and the capacity to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers.
    b. Describe plans to address any weaknesses identified. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(D)]

As a one county local area, Durham is able to foster a highly effective working relationship between the City and the County. As the Administrative Entity, the City of Durham allows our office to work across agencies to address the populations we serve and to effectively leverage resources. Durham includes a high poverty, chronically unemployed, and homeless population. These are challenging populations to recruit and support, yet these are populations we must serve more effectively.
The specific needs of those residing in Durham are education and training in demand-driven occupations. This training is needed to compete in a rapidly evolving global economy. In addition, jobs in the region today require more and more workers to be equipped with the latest technology skills. The speed at which technology is evolving provides a key skill deficiency among many the unemployed and the underemployed population ("the digital gap").

The Durham local area continually evaluates the most current workforce services to ensure they are meeting the needs of participants who are working towards their goal of obtaining and matching employment and employers who are in need of qualified applicants. It is imperative that we develop a workforce with competitive and relevant skills. Therefore, we must facilitate communications between employers and jobseekers by coordinating across post-secondary institutions, focusing on the needs of the employers, conducting outreach to current and future workers about the emerging job opportunities, and helping individuals design their own career pathways.

Durham is constantly growing, and we are determined to continue to improve our workforce services in order to meet the demands of the jobseekers and businesses we serve.

2. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Section 108(b)(7)]

Prior to the pandemic, Durham's unemployment rates were so low that those having difficulty obtaining employment were primarily those impacted by multiple barriers to employment. Moreover, the Great Resignation has resulted in an increased demand in entry level positions for individuals with mid-range skills who can "hit the ground running" and provide immediate relief to the negative productivity caused by staff shortages. These factors combine to heighten the challenge of working with those individuals experiencing long-term unemployment and are in need of training, up-skilling and credential attainment to compete for entry level employment opportunities. This population is often faced with multiple barriers, including the justice involved, those with substance abuse challenges, young parents, and older generation individuals reentering the workforce. Often these individuals will not seek services at the NCWorks Career Center. Therefore, DWDB has partnered with the Durham Housing Authority and the Durham Library to make a presence directly in the community. The goal is to balance the resources to provide service to build the sustainability and success of the pipeline, while supporting the business community to ensure we are connecting employers with a robust talent pipeline. This balanced approach includes focusing on providing wrap around services that emphasize mentorship and other supportive services. DWDB has reached out to Board members in Department of Health and Human Services to consider posting a counselor at the office on a regular schedule. We have also launched a pilot with Voc Rehab to increase connectivity and better leverage our services and resources. In addition, DWDB continues to explore ways to capitalize on using virtual service delivery to increase our ability to successfully deliver services, such as remote enrollment, that will provide us with the opportunity to increase our reach to Dislocated Workers. In our Local Area, the healthcare industry is one of our largest employers. The negative perception of the healthcare industry during the pandemic left a lasting impression and a shift in the workforce. Many dislocated workers seek to upskill or re-skill from their experience in healthcare or hospitality. Most of these individuals are work-ready (existing and transferable skills) and are seeking paths to becoming career ready. Career Counselors work with these individuals to help them realize their full potential. They are often perfect candidates for continuing education courses at Durham Tech, as well as with interviewing, resume writing and other Wagner Pesyer support, they can successfully promote themselves into mid and entry-level positions in other industry sectors.

3. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs that ensures an arm's-length relationship between the Local Area WDB and service delivery. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to three years and the current year status of the contract (e.g., two of three years). Identify any service provider contract extensions. [WIOA Section 108(b)(16), CPS 04-2022]

In February 2022, the DWDB initiated a competitive procurement process to select an Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Provider. The RFP was released on March 4, 2022, with proposals due on April 21, 2022. The announcement was posted on the City of Durham's website, an email was sent to interested parties on the WDB bidder's list, and an ad was run in local newspapers. A timeline was established for the rest of RFP process that outlines the dates and times for the staff to review the timeline, for the review committee to review the RFP, for the WDB to vote, and for the contracts to be negotiated for the successful bidder. Historically, once the WDB has selected a provider, the contract is initiated for one year, and the WDB may extend the contract annually for two years based on the provider's performance. Services are delivered at the NCWorks Career Center by the selected contractor.

The most recent procurement process included the following steps and timeline:

Action Item	**Date**	**Location**
RFP Developed and Reviewed by DWDB Staff	February 2022 - March 2022	Durham WDB 807 East Main Street, Suite 5-100 Durham, NC 27701/Virtual
RFP Release Date	Friday, March 4, 2022	
RFP Advertisement	Friday, March 4, 2022 – Monday, April 4, 2022	DWDB Website, Herald Sun/News and Observer, Carolina Times
Mandatory Bidders Conference/Pre-Award Technical Assistance	Wednesday, April 6, 2022 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Durham WDB 807 East Main Street, Suite 5-100 Durham, NC 27701/Virtual
Due Date for Proposals	**Thursday, April 21, 2022 by 5:00 p.m.**	**Durham WDB 807 East Main Street Building 5, Suite 5-100 Durham, NC 27701**
Staff Review of Proposals – for compliance	Friday, April 22, 2022	Durham WDB 807 East Main Street Building 5, Suite 5-100 Durham, NC 27701 /Virtual
Review of Proposals by Proposal Review Panel	Friday, April 22, 2022 – Wednesday, April 27, 2022 (time based on number of received proposals)	Durham WDB 807 East Main Street Building 5, Suite 5-100 Durham, NC 27701 / Virtual
Panel Review Discussions Finalize Recommendations	Thursday, April 28, 2022	TBA
DWDB Executive Committee Considers Panel Recommendations	Thursday, May 12, 2022	Durham WDB 807 East Main Street Building 5, Suite 5-100 Durham, NC 27701/ Virtual

Contract Negotiations Completed with Selected Vendors	May 2022	TBA
DWDB Approves to Proceed with Contract Recommendations to City Council	Thursday, May 19, 2022 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Durham Tech Comm College Building 10, Lawson Street Durham, NC 27703
Contracts Considered by Durham City Council	June 6, 2022 7:00 p.m.	City Council Chambers 101 City Hall Plaza Durham, NC 27701
Start Date of Programs	July 1, 2022	
Contract renewal considered by Durham City Council	June 5, 2023	City Council Chambers 101 City Hall Plaza Durham, NC 27701
Start Date of Programs	July 1, 2023	
Contract renewal considered by Durham City Council	June 17, 2024	City Council Chambers 101 City Hall Plaza Durham, NC 27701
Start Date of Programs	July 1, 2024	

Note: *While Final Regulations Section 679.410 (b) and (c) provide exceptions to the competitive procurement process, Local Area WDBs must have an arm's-length relationship to the delivery of services.*

4. Attach the Local Area WDB's Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider list effective July 1, 2024 using the PY 2024 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List provided.

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board PY 2024 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List.***

5. Describe the Local Area WDB's vision for serving the WIOA eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers to include (a) high level goals, (b) outreach strategies, (c) services delivery, and (d) expected outcomes.

In prior years, due to the pandemic, Durham's unemployment rates were so low that those having difficulty obtaining employment were primarily those impacted by multiple barriers to employment. Moreover, the Great Resignation has resulted in an increased demand in entry level positions for individuals with mid-range skills who can "hit the ground running" and provide immediate relief to the negative productivity caused by staff shortages. These factors combine to heighten the challenge of working with those individuals experiencing long-term unemployment and need training, up-skilling and credential attainment to compete for entry level employment opportunities. This population is often faced with multiple barriers, including the justice involved, those with substance abuse challenges, young parents, and older generation individuals reentering the workforce. Often these individuals will not seek services at the NCWorks Career Center. Therefore, DWDB has partnered with the Durham Housing Authority and the Durham Library to make a presence directly in the

community. The goal is to balance the resources to provide service to build the sustainability and success of the pipeline; while supporting the business community to ensure we are connecting employers with a robust talent pipeline. This balanced approach includes focusing on providing wrap around services that emphasize mentorship and other supportive services. DWDB has reached out to Board members in Department of Health and Human Services to consider posting a counselor at the office on a regular schedule. We have also launched a pilot with Voc Rehab to increase connectivity and better leverage our services and resources. In addition, DWDB continues to explore ways to capitalize on using virtual service delivery to increase our ability to successfully deliver services, such as remote enrollment, that will provide us with the opportunity to increase our reach to Dislocated Workers.

6. Describe the Local Area WDB's method for ensuring that a sufficient number of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the Local Area are from one of the following priority of services categories: public assistance, low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. [134(c)(3)(E), 3(24)]

Durham has the unique characteristic of having a barbell economy, therefore the development of strategic partnerships is key to ensuring that our Local Area individuals receive appropriate services. While enjoying one of the highest median incomes in the state, Durham also suffers from poverty rates that are historically in the double digits, according to the most recent Census Data, 14.2% of persons are living in poverty in the City of Durham and 11.7% are living in poverty in the County. The majority of the individuals in target communities where Durham WDB recruits' participants have been historically long-term unemployed with low transferable skills, and often without high school credentials. Those working poor who are employed, are generally working in lower wage-earning positions that do not require higher skill and have low career mobility. These positions, commonly held in public service and hospitality industries, were the most significantly impacted during the height of the pandemic. Although lower skilled, many elected to leave their positions due to health and safety concerns. The DWDB used creative approaches to conduct outreach specifically to those individuals, connecting them to training and paths to upskilling, through creative outreach such as drive through job fairs held in the Career Center parking lot. While navigating through the unpredictable talent dynamics, DWDB partnered with organizations and associations to develop industry-wide strategies to help employers meet talent needs. This included partnerships such as those established with Discover Durham, Durham's hospitality and tourism association. Working in conjunction with industry employers, and workforce specialists, we helped to develop a Hospitality Industry Employer's Guide to provide tips and strategies for recruitment and more importantly retention. In addition DWDB solidified partnerships with City and County leaders, community and industry organizations to ensure strategies were developed with workforce development and stabilization as a core component. As training and funding opportunities became available, DWDB provided guidance on employing effective strategies to build talent capacity to match employer needs. In addition to industry outreach, DWDB has been working in close partnership with specific industry employers, such as the biotechnology industry through associations like Made in Durham, to create viable programming options that will not only attract talent, but also train and retain. DWDB also

leverage resources by creating targeted partnerships with organizations like Hope Renovations, Rebuilding Together of the Triangle, and Habitat for Humanity. Using these partnerships in conjunction with Durham Tech, DWDB is braiding resources with the City of Durham to provide enhanced supportive services, such as stipends, childcare vouchers and success coaches to recruit and support Durham Housing Authority residents (especially woman) to launch a career in construction and skill trades. Similarly, we work closely with our justice network to provide supportive services to our justice involved community. Through City and County support, our Welcome Home counselors provide an important re-entry support network to returning individuals, creating relationships and building trust, leading returning individuals to pathways to employment and self-sustainability. With the new program year budget, DWDB will be reconstituting the Transitional Jobs program, a unique partnership with public and private employers to employ individuals with background. Prior to the pandemic, the Transitional Jobs program launched a successful pilot, resulting in the placement of 19 of 20 program participants receiving full-time employment with the City of Durham. Partnering with Durham Tech, this City of Durham funded program used work-readiness training, ongoing mentoring and success coaches, as well as stipend payment to provide wrap-around support to returning individuals over 6 months of employment and training. The DWDB expects to utilize its program and resources to expand the participation and impact of the Transitional Jobs program in the coming program year.

7. Describe follow-up services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker staff provide follow-up services to participants on a quarterly basis. Staff complete a Follow Up Strategy form with customers 1 month prior to exit and receive updates on goals post exit. In the event that staff are unable to connect with participants via email, phone, or face-to-face, employment records are obtained to confirm whether the customer is employed and contact is made with the local Training Provider to confirm if the customer has successfully completed training or continued in post-secondary education.

One month prior to exit, the following steps are taken:

- **Participant is notified that they are being prepared for exit due to completion of IEP goals and objectives or due to loss of contact via email, phone, or mailed letter.**
- **Participant signs final IEP and is provided tips for job retention if contact is maintained.**
- **Participant is notified that career coach will contact them quarterly to provide basic career services or receive job/ training updates after exit.**
- **If participant is unemployed, job referrals and invitations to career fairs will continue to be provided.**

Per Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 and Section 134(C)(2)(A), funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include - (xiii) follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

8. Please describe the process for monitoring the service provider(s) in the Local Area WDB. Include details such as how it is conducted, who is involved, and how often.

The Durham Local Area has established a monitoring policy that outlines the requirements of the WIOA monitoring process to provide regular oversight and monitoring of its WIOA activities and those of its sub recipients and contractors. WIOA Service provider contracts are monitored internally and by the state to ensure compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Durham Local Area contract requirements.

The Durham Workforce Development Board staff work with our internal Finance Department staff to continuously reviews all data in an effort to ensure performance & monitoring is met and to provide technical assistance that addresses any identified deficiencies. On a monthly basis, case notes, activities, applications, etc., are randomly selected and reviewed for accuracy and compliance. If there are any issues with the data in NCWorks Online, the DWDB staff addresses them either via email or during training with contractor staff. Training on Data Validation is provided during the contractor meetings and during desk reviews that occur when reports are run in NCWorks Online. Each month, the DWDB Program Manager runs reports and reconciles enrollment numbers, exit numbers, training numbers, etc., with the contractor Program Manager. In addition, participant data is reviewed as part of the DWDB annual internal monitoring process. The Adult Program Manager runs reports in NCWorks Online on a quarterly basis to analyze performance. These quarterly reports are shared with the DWDB staff and contractor staff and reviewed to address any deficiencies. The DWDB staff works with internal Finance Department staff to review data and monitor program expenditures in WISE. Additionally monthly fiscal reviews are conducted to ensure accurate invoice submission and cost allocation. In addition to the accountability monitoring to ensure program integrity, staff works in partnership with the City of Durham's OEWD Finance Division, which conducts an independent financial monitoring based on sampling and appropriate documentation for invoices entered into WISE. Finance Department staff worked with DWS to receive technical assistance to ensure the correct evaluation. In addition, our WIOA host, the City of Durham, receives an external audit annually which reviews programs across the city structure. DWDB provides DWS with a copy of the annual report (regardless of whether the WIOA pass-through funds were directly audited).

X. Youth Services

USDOL provides funds to states who in turn provide local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting out-of-school youth and in-school youth with one or more barriers to employment, prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. USDOL and North Carolina's priorities are:

- *Out-of-School Youth (OSY) – A minimum of 75% of the Youth funds allocated to Local Area WDBs, except for the Local Area WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide services to OSY;*
- *Work Experience – Not less than 20% of Youth funds allocated to the Local Area WDB, except for the Local Area WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide paid and unpaid work experiences; and a*
- *Focus on Partnering – Co-enrollment encouraged where appropriate with Title II and IV.*

1. Provide a general overview of the local current total population (within five years) of the Title I WIOA eligible youth by Local Workforce Development Board area. Include the following general information:

   In-School Youth Analysis
   a. Approximately, what number of the Youth are ages 14-21?
   b. Approximately, what percentage of these youth are low-income (eligible for WIOA In-school program)?
   c. Approximately, what number of these Youth are in the current school dropout statistics?

   Out-of-School Analysis
   a. Approximately what number of Youth ages 16-24 of the current total population (within five years) make up the population?
   b. Youth ages 16-24 represent what % of the population?
   c. What are the general educational levels of this age group?
   d. What is the general employment status of this age group?

In-School Analysis
a. The approximately population of Durham youth 15 to 19 is 18,788 (neilsberg.com)
b. 12.6% of the total population is below the poverty level. (neighborhoodscot.com)
c. In 2023 the dropout rate was 3.14 (DPI)

Out-of-School Analysis
a. Approximately population of 15-24 year olds is 40,000. (neilsberg.com)
b. The population of 15 to 24 is 14.2%
c. Durham Public School graduation rate of 87% increased from 82% over five years, (public schools review)

d. The employment rate for 16 to19 year olds is 30% and for 20 to 24 year olds is 64% (world populationreview.com)

**NC Division of Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD) is a data resource.*

2. Based on the analysis in question 1, does the local Workforce Development Board plan to serve In-School Youth?

NextGen counselors work closely with Durham Public School (DPS) faculty to capture young people who may drop out of the system and soon-to-be graduates who are undecided about their post-secondary plans. This strategy with DPS also helps us to serve ISY.

3. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities in the Local Area WDB, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Include identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities being used and/or planned. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(9)]

Youth Workforce Activity	Activities For Persons with Disabilities?	Brief Assessment/Model Used	Success Rating
Career Coaching Sessions	Yes	Upon enrollment, Career Coaches conduct an Objective Assessment interview to determine participant barriers to success and develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP serves as the roadmap for services provided as they pertain to educational, employment, and training goals, as well as any additional needed support services. Career Coaches also provide additional coaching sessions, as needed, to assist participants with successfully completing IEP goals throughout their program enrollment.	Almost always exceeds expectation

Career Pathway Training	Yes	Is offered monthly as a 5-day series of virtual plus classroom instruction led by Career Coaches. This course covers Independent Living, Job Applications, Effective Employee skills. The Independent Living curriculum includes budgeting, goal setting, and work-life balance. Job Applications curriculum includes job search, resume writing, interviewing skills and career exploration in NCWorks were participants research and review labor market information. Effective employee skills curriculum includes soft skills development of individual career pathways.	Often exceeds expectations
Work Experience	Yes	Work experience opportunities are provided for participants to learn technical skills leading to permanent employment. Work experiences take place for up to 240 hours with the opportunity to receive two work experiences for each youth.	Often exceeds expectations
Educational Training	Yes	Occupational Skills Training (OST) programs are offered as a cohort model of education in collaboration with NCWorks approved	Often exceeds expectations

		training providers. Upon completion of or at times concurrently with OST programs, participants are placed into work experiences directly related to the technical skills learned.	
Professional Development Workshops	Yes	Professional Development Workshops are provided monthly for youth as a forum to learn both life and work skills. Workshops are two hours in duration, providing the opportunity for interactive learning and engagement of youth. Workshops are also facilitated by community partners and institutions with specific expertise. On a quarterly basis, workshops cover: Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Leadership Development, Post-Secondary Educational Exposure and Retention Strategies.	Consistently meets expectations
Mentorship Program		This mentorship program is designed for youth to be matched with an adult mentorship program to enhance professionalism and develop basic skills for an exceptional quality of life. Mentor to mentee relationships is focused on activities specifically related to educational and employment goals outlined in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Short term goals set in collaboration with mentors, mentees, and career coaches are	Needs development

		updated on a quarterly basis. Mentors and Mentees complete an application process, are approved for participation, and participate in monthly one-on-one mentor meetups.	
GED Tutoring	Yes	GED tutoring sessions are provided concurrently and in tandem with educational partners to provide additional practice and instructor led discussion on each subject pertaining to the attainment of a GED.	Consistently meets expectations
Follow Up	Yes	Participants receive an Individual Follow Up Strategy pre-exit to set quarterly goals and objectives and agree to remain in contact with career coaches on a monthly-quarterly basis. On a quarterly basis, career coaches complete follow up forms and track contact/contact attempts in NCWorks and as needed, are provided invitations to career center and community events to support their goals.	Often exceeds expectations

4. Describe how the Local Area WDB's Young Adult (NextGen) Program design is unique to include:
    a. providing objective assessments;
    b. supportive services needed; and
    c. developmental needs of each participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(A)]

a. The Durham Local Area NextGen program is designed to utilize assessment tools in the case planning process to identify academic interests, skill sets and barriers. Objective assessments measure strengths, needs, and resources to create a roadmap for each participant to ensure they achieve their goals. By implementing evidence-based practices such as Motivational Interviewing

and cognitive restructuring, we create the foundation for how we serve participants.

b. Supportive service needs will be assessed during the objective assessment to address needs including transportation, childcare, and other services. Upon identifying a supportive service need, Career Coaches will work with participants to provide services directly or refer participant to partners that can assist.

c. In identifying appropriate services for youth, participants are categorized as youth needing career exploration, youth with minimal work experience, some work experience, or youth with a defined career path. Each youth receives three career and educational awareness activities, two career or educational training activities, and one work-based learning activity. Optional additional activities are provided based on a series of assessments completed during the initial visit.

5. How does the Local Area WDB ensure the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) identifies appropriate services based on the objective assessment and is linked to youth performance indicators, career pathways, and program elements? [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(B)] How does the provider ensure the ISS is unique to the individual?

Upon enrollment in the NextGen program, Career Coaches develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) / Individual Service Strategy (ISS) to create a roadmap of services that will be received during program participation. Each IEP contains at least one educational goal and one employment goal with at least 2 objectives for each goal. Based on the objective assessment, the IEP goals outline steps to enter high growth sectors for educational training, work-based learning, and unsubsidized employment. Customized to meet the needs and strengths of NextGen participant, the ISS is used to ensure Youth have access and availability to identified resources and services to support the successful completion of their IEP training, education and employment goals. Career Coaches use the ISS as a means of tracking and meeting needs in physical, mental, and intellectual health, as well as civic and social involvement and overall employability. Career Coaches use the ISS as a guiding document that also helps identify potential work-based learning opportunities and influential mentors.

More specifically, Career Coaches complete an O*Net career assessment with participants to identify their strengths. Career Coaches then review the results in detail with the participant. Based on how much education/training time the participant is willing to invest, a plan is formulated to assist the participant with meeting their career and employment goals. This plan takes into account any disclosed barriers. Career Coaches also utilize nccareers.org, recruitment material, Durham Tech and information from other training providers to help the participant develop their individualized career path.

6. Describe the Local Area WDB's strategy to ensure Youth (NextGen) Program activities lead to a high school diploma or its equivalent or a recognized post-secondary credential and post-secondary education and training opportunities. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)]

The NextGen program provides individualized GED tutoring sessions on a weekly basis to encourage students to work towards GED attainment. The NextGen staff also coordinate with community-based adult basic education and adult high school programs to provide added assistance as needed and to align reengagement activities. Working with Reengagement Specialists in these programs allows youth to be exposed to multiple opportunities to partake in educational tutoring in their best learning environment. Young adults are also provided exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities through professional development workshops, school tours, and guided enrollment workshops to explain curriculum. Participation in these sessions guides changes to a participant's Individual Employment Plan to include changes in educational goals. While DWDB seeks to utilize its funding and resources to support out of school youth, particularly those facing additional barriers to attaining foundational credentials, the program also works in close concert with Durham Public Schools – specifically through the DPS 3-2-1 initiative which helps DPS in-school youth to outline career goals at an early stage in their K-12 experience. The 3-2-1 initiative seeks to achieve the goal that at the time of high school graduation, each DPS student has 3 career awareness; 2 career exposures; and at least 1 career experience. DWDB works with its industry employers and business leaders to partner through site tours, career panels, mentorships and internships.

7. Describe how follow-up services will be provided for (NextGen) youth. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

WIOA NextGen staff provide follow up services to participants monthly to address concerns related to continuing school, employment, and any comprehensive guidance and counselling needed. Staff completes a Follow Up Strategy and Agreement form with young adult participants prior to exit and receives updates on goals post exit. Each contact or contact attempt is case noted in NCWorks online. If staff are unable to connect with participants via email, phone, or face-to-face, or through social media, employment records are obtained to confirm whether the participant is employed, and contact is made with the local Training Provider to confirm if the customer has successfully completed training or continued in post-secondary education. Follow-up services are provided for one year (12 months).

Note: *All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up for a minimum duration of 12 months.*

8. Where does the Local Area WDB plan to serve the young adults (NextGen): NCWorks Career Centers Specialized Centers, Services Provider Offices, or Hybrid situations? Explain if it is both NCWorks Career Centers and Provider Offices or some other option.

The NextGen program will primarily provide services through the NCWorks Career Center. Services will be provided at partner and community agencies, such as the ReCity Network and the Durham Public Library, as needed to meet the needs of our participants.

At the NCWorks Career Center, participants can access additional workshops, job search tools and job fairs for employment opportunities.

Currently, NextGen services are provided primarily through the downtown office space within the ReCity Network. This coworking space provides access to other community-based organizations that aid with housing, mental health, mentoring, and additional services not directly provided by the NextGen staff.

Young adult participants also can be provided services through the NCWorks Career Center. Here participants can access additional workshops, job search, and job fairs for employment opportunities

9. Attach the Local Area WDB Youth Service Provider's chart, effective July 1, 2024, using the PY 2024 Youth Service Provider List provided. Complete each column to include specifying where Youth Services are provided.

- Name the document: ***PY 2024 <u>Durham Workforce Development Board</u> Youth Service Provider List***.

10. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Youth Programs that ensures an arm's-length relationship between the Local Area WDB and service delivery. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to three years and the current year status of the contract (e.g., two of three years). Identify any service provider contract extensions. [WIOA Section 108(b)(16), CPS 04-2022]

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was released for the WIOA Durham NextGen Youth Program on February 6, 2023. The announcement was posted on the City of Durham's website, an email was sent to interested parties on the DWDB bidders list, and an ad was run in local newspapers. A timeline was established for the entire RFP process that outlined the dates and times for the staff to review the timeline; for the review committee to review the RFP; for the WDB to vote to approve the selection and approve entering contract negotiations; for the contract to be negotiated; and for City Council to approve the contract for a start date of July 1, 2023. The contract end date is June 30, 2024. The Durham WDB will renew the contract for an additional year of PY2024 and again for PY2025, based on performance.

USDOL granted North Carolina a waiver for Program Years 2022 and 2023, which reduced the minimum Title I Youth expenditure rate requirement for OSY from 75% to 50% and allowed the maximum expenditure rate for in-school youth (ISY) to be increased from 25% to up to 50%. NC is requesting the same waiver for Program Year 2024.

11. Provide the Local Area WDB's approach to meeting the required 75% minimum (NextGen) youth expenditures on out-of-school youth and include special outreach efforts and highlight planned program design.

    a) State how the WDB will achieve the 75% OSY expenditure rate and describe the steps that will be taken to comply with the WDB's programmatic goals and outcomes.
    b) Describe why there is a need to serve additional ISY in the local area region and state how the WDB will achieve the 25% ISY expenditure rate.
    c) Describe how the local area region will be able to meet the demand for youth services by using the waiver.

[WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A)] (CPS 09-2021, Change 1) (OG 07-2022, Change 1)

An important tool to meet the 75% minimum is to engage in authentic outreach that builds trust in the recruitment process. Many of the youth clients are coping with compound challenges and it is critical for our Career Coaches to work in partnership with other program partners. While referrals comprise the primary means of identifying clients, NextGen counselors also work closely with Durham Public School (DPS) faculty to capture young people who drop out of the system and soon-to-be or recent graduates who are undecided about their post-secondary plans. This strategy with DPS also helps us to achieve the 25% ISY expenditure rate. Providing services, especially work based learning opportunities to ISY, allows us to better prepare youth to fill local area employment needs.

In addition to working with DPS, the DWDB's Youth program also works closely with Durham Technical Community College to assist Opportunity Youth who are facing financial challenges or who lack work experience to meet their career goals. Additional referrals are received through close partnerships with Durham community-based organizations that specialize in working with young adults facing barriers to success. Partnering with these community groups allows counselors to better structure a Youth's ISS and build a collaborative approach to a support network. Because the Youth's ISS identifies the participants' goals, skills and abilities, services are specifically tailored to meet the unique needs of each participant. The specialization of each ISS provides an important roadmap to determine the most effective service and training for each participant. Board staff meets weekly with program managers to review ongoing recruitment strategies, participant ISS, and overall program outcomes. In addition, staff utilizes monthly reviews of all expenses to maintain consistent performance oversight. Durham is a part of a much larger regional labor shed. High-growth industry sectors are largely based on technology and other STEM related skills. It is

essential that DWDB and DPS maintain close connectivity for both ISY and OSY to ensure that we are able to continue to attract these high-growth industries, and that our youth are positioned to compete and succeed in a regional talent pipeline.

12. How does the Local Area WDB ensure that the minimum of 20% of funds is spent on work experience and is the Local Area WDB expending the 20% minimum on work experience, to include an estimate of expenditures that will be paid wages to youth? If the Local Area WDB has not been meeting the minimum of 20% of funds, please explain additional measures to be taken this year. [WIOA Section 129(c)(4)] (CPS 09-2021, Change 1)

The Durham Local Area plans to provide year-round work experience for any participant who meets or is on target to meet, program goals set in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). We provide on-the-job training, apprenticeship training, and job-shadowing opportunities for program participants. These opportunities provide the means to allow the Local Area to spend the required 20% of funds on work-based learning. We estimate to expend at least $71,435.60 on work-based learning expenditures this program year. To address previous reporting practices, both DWDB Board staff, as well as Financial staff responsible for entering data into WISE, received technical assistance training from Division of Workforce Solution partners. Utilizing the appropriate reporting criteria, DWDB is firmly on track to meet their 20% minimum for this program year.

13. Does the Local Area WDB have a dedicated full-time Youth Business Services Representative (or similar title) at the Local Area WDB level or at the Provider level. If so, state at which level, how many representatives, and how this impacts the Youth Program Design?

All Youth Career Coaches, along with the Youth Program Manager, have been cross-trained to perform case management and business services duties. All NextGen staff will share the responsibility of creating work-based learning opportunities for you. Allowing the Career Coaches, who are most knowledgeable about their assigned participants, gives them an advantage in advocating with employers regarding work-based learning opportunities.

14. Does the Local Area WDB have special programs for young adults that are Justice-Involved or have a substance use disorder? If yes, please briefly describe them.

While the DWDB does not have a specific re-entry program for youth, we provide service and support to justice-involved individuals from 18 years and older. More specifically, Career Coaches complete an O*Net career assessment with participants to identify their strengths and review the results in detail with the participant. Based on how much education the participant is willing to invest, a plan is formulated to assist the participant with meeting their career and employment goals. This plan takes into account any barriers disclosed. Career Coaches also utilize nccareers.org, recruitment information, Durham Tech and information from other training

providers to help the participant develop their individualized career path.

Those justice involved customers under 18 are provided additional career readiness training from Career Coaches on strategies to positively address their record with employers. In addition, participants are connected to social services and community partners who provide additional wrap around services and support. Community partners include: the Durham Social Services, Durham Local Re-entry Council (LRC), StepUp Ministries, Durham Expunction & Reinstatement Program (DEAR), Training2Work, Vocational Rehabilitation, Alliance Behavioral Health and Hayti Reborn Justice Movement.

15. Describe how the Local Area WDB partners, aligns, and leverages, as appropriate with:
    a. **Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program resources and policies.**
    b. **Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program resources and policies.**
    c. **Integrates adult education with occupational education and training and workforce preparation, as Local Area WDB's and the creation of career pathways for youth. [USDOL TEGL 8-15]**

The Durham Local Area partners with community adult education, family literacy, and vocational rehabilitation through referrals and co-enrollment of youth participants. Representatives from these organizations also serve on the Youth Council and the Durham Workforce Development Board (DWDB). Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II have a presence on the Board, as do representatives of all the Vocational Rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV. These Youth Program partners all participate in policy and program discussion. Title II partners regularly help collaborate and align resources and have been instrumental in facilitating the development of Durham youth programs. Title II partners have also been key contributors in the discussion and implementation of our career pathways. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation staff provide guidance regarding the most efficient and effective strategies and equipment suitable to best meet the needs of individuals needing those services. As stated, DWDB works closely with DPS to ensure that trends and information garnered from working with adult education programs and occupational education training are shared and incorporated into career exploration exercises to incentivize youth to take the coursework and engage in the preparation to allow them to pursue high-demand career pathways.

16. Specify if the Local Area WDB plans to offer incentives for (NextGen) youth. If yes, attach the Youth Incentive Policy, which should include:
    a. criteria to be used to award incentives;
    b. type(s) of incentive awards to be made available;
    c. whether WIOA funds will be used; and
    d. the Local Area WDB's internal controls to safeguard cash/gift cards.

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Youth Incentive Policy.***

Note: *Federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs. Youth Incentive Policies should include: compliance with the Cost Principles in 2 CFR part 200; identify types of items that may be awarded (gift cards, plaques, certificates, checks); identify types of achievements/completion of activities (an inclusive list is required); practices for internal controls for safeguarding incentives and provide a sample list of required documentation for reimbursement (diploma, evaluations).*

17. If the Local Area WDB does not offer incentives for (NextGen) youth, please explain why.

N/A

18. Describe the local strategy to prepare the youth (NextGen) for unsubsidized employment, including with small employers, specifically those that include in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and/or regional labor markets. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)(v)]

The DWDB employs every path that leads to ensuring a young adult is adequately knowledgeable and prepared for unsubsidized employment through the completion of pre-employment training (Career Pathways Training), paid work experiences and continuing education programs. The work experiences take place in the private, for-profit sector; the non-profit sector; and the public sector. The appropriateness of these work experiences and/or continuing education programs is documented in the participant's ISS or case notes and demonstrates a distinct linkage between the training and potential improvement in the participant's employability in a local high-demand occupation and/or industry.

Pre-apprenticeship programs are another learning opportunity designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program that will lead to permanent, unsubsidized employment. Job shadowing is a work experience option where young adults learn firsthand about the work environment, employability and occupational skills in practice, the value of professional training, and potential career options.

The DWDB employs every path that leads to ensuring a young adult is adequately knowledgeable and prepared for unsubsidized employment through the completion of pre-employment training (Career Pathways Training), paid work experiences and continuing education programs. The work experiences take place in the private, for-profit sector; the non-profit sector; and the public sector. The appropriateness of these work experiences and/or continuing education programs is documented in the participant's ISS or case notes and demonstrates a distinct linkage between the training and potential improvement in the participant's employability in a local high-demand occupation and/or industry.
Pre-apprenticeship programs are another learning opportunity designed to prepare individuals to

enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program that will lead to permanent, unsubsidized employment. Job shadowing is a work experience option where young adults learn firsthand about the work environment, employability and occupational skills in practice, the value of professional training, and potential career options.

In addition, NextGen counselors partner with targeted in-demand training programs such as the BULLS Initiative to further meet local workforce needs. Career Coaches also partner with a range of providers that provide a variety of supportive services that give the type of wrap around support necessary to help ensure youth are able to overcome barriers, especially compound barriers, such as childcare, transportation, housing and food-insecurity. The Board ensures that every opportunity is leveraged to support NextGen youth as they seek self-sustainability. This includes incorporating efforts to build work-readiness and to socialize work-readiness skills such as effective communication, workplace etiquette and critical thinking. Combined with the participant's ISS, counselors are provided with the necessary data to develop individualized strategic approaches enhancing personal strengths, and increasing opportunities for success. When appropriate, counselors work closely with the Durham Tech HRD team to further support and develop work-readiness skills to make NextGen youth stronger candidates for entry level positions. Counselors utilize ISS plans to identify compatible career direction and attain the necessary credentials. To enhance success, counselors use follow-up protocols to create supportive relationships that provide support from self-esteem to more substantive supports.

19. Please complete the Youth Program Elements chart provided to demonstrate how the Local Area WDB ensures each of the 14 youth program elements is made available to youth participants. Be certain to complete both columns of the chart to demonstrate partnerships and potential use of shared funding. Please specify partners. [WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(A)]

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Youth Program Elements Chart.***

20. Does the Local Area WDB have a standing committee to provide information to assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth? [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]

a. If no, describe how oversight to planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth will be provided.

The Durham Workforce Development Board has a standing Youth Council.

b. If yes, please provide a response to the following

a) Provide the committee's purpose/vision.

The Youth Council's purpose is to ensure that youth have the necessary tools, skills, and support to reach their full potential.

b) Provide the youth committee's top three goals or objectives for PY 2024.

1) Increase work-based learning opportunities, including pre- and apprenticeship program offerings.

2) Develop stronger connectivity between WEX and actual employment opportunities.

3) Support youth education, training, and employment initiatives.

c) Provide a list of youth committee members to include members' agency/organization, one of which must be a community-based organization with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth. Provide the Committee's Chair information in the first block (*who must be a Local Area WDB member*).

- Name document: ***Durham Workforce Development Board Youth Committee Members*** **[WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]**

c. Complete the following chart for the PY 2024 Youth Committee's planned meeting schedule to include dates, time, and location. (Expand form as needed or mark Not Applicable.)

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)
August 20, 2024	**9:00 am**	**Virtual**
October 15, 2024	**9:00 am**	**Virtual**
December 17, 2024	**9:00 am**	**Virtual**
February 18, 2025	**9:00 am**	**Virtual**
April 15, 2025	**9:00 am**	**Virtual**
June 17, 2025	**9:00 am**	**Virtual**

XI. Local Area WDB Innovations

1. List all additional funding received by the Local Area WDB (for example, to include but not limited to, special grants, NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants, Business Services funds, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) (disaster), YouthBuild, Foundations, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD), NCWorks Commission Local Innovation Fund Grant, and/or outside funding to include a brief description of the source and the amount received).

Grant Name/Kind	Brief Description	Beginning and End date	Source and Amount	Partner Organization (if applicable)
Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD)	**To provide job training and reentry support for Federal Prisoners starting up to 1 yr. prior to release.**	**March 2023**	**DOL – DOJ Collaborative.** **$9.9 Mil total** **1.7 Mil DWDB**	**Kerr-Tar WDB, Capital Area WDB**
Advance NC	**To build a strong talent pipeline in advance manufacturing through a consortium of WDB, NC Community Colleges, Universities, Industry sector leaders**	**Fall 2023**	**Governor's Office. No funds extended to DWDB**	**11 Community Colleges** **3 Colleges & Universities** **7 Workforce Development Boards**
Sector Partnership Planning Grant.	**To assist DWDB in developing a sector driven strategy in collaboration with industry partners, educators, trainers, and community college.**	**March 2024**	**NC Commerce $35,000**	

2. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's best or promising **Adult/Dislocated Worker** program practice that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

In prior years, the recruitment and other employer related events and engagements (such as economic development recruitment panel participation) held in the Durham local area did not adequately capture performance data in NCWorks Online. The DWDB, along with Economic Development practitioners, trainers, and NCWorks Career Center staff met to define the

information and activity process flow through the entire pipeline from economic development recruitment and retention strategies to identifying and filling employment talent needs. Strengthening this process was critical to ensuring that participants, in WIOA and other programs, had a better chance of being recruited and placed into employment and that employers were meeting their talent needs.

This coordinated response lead to the formation of One Durham, a collaborative of a full spectrum of workforce and economic development engagement (including EDPNC, RTP Foundation, Durham Chamber, County Economic Development, industry association Discover Durham, Downtown Durham Inc., and training partners – specifically from the customized training division from Durham Tech). Since the onset of the COVID pandemic, the meeting has been held virtually every month creating a flow of information and program exchange, which in turn has provided an important access to new employer talent needs, helping NCWorks Career Counselors to better leverage NCWorks and targeted training opportunities for our Adult/Dislocated Worker program. While results are more qualitative, with staff reductions and reduced customer volume into the Center, staff has been better positioned to strategize with employers and to counsel participants on high demand career pathways.

3. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's best or promising **Youth** program practice that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

Out of school youth are experiencing countless and compounded economic, social, and cultural issues that impede their ability to either complete their education or obtain their GED, often a minimum credential for entry level employment paying a living wage. Therefore, the DWDB has focused its attention on providing counseling and connection to our youth in a separate facility designed and staffed with young clientele in mind. Through our WIOA Youth Contractor, we have been able to successfully assist young people in obtaining their GED and entering high-demand industry positions, including construction and advanced manufacturing.

Our most promising youth program is our Work Experience (WEX) program where we match participants with their chosen career path. We have exposed our participants to in-demand careers, which has resulted in our participants entering new careers such as Biomanufacturing Technician, Phlebotomist and Central Sterile Processing Technician. Most recently, one of our participants became one of the first four apprentices at KBI Biomanufacturing.

In addition to our traditional WEX program, we also have a special work-based learning program for our GED participants. Here, participants attend GED tutoring two days a week and work with a local employer the remainder of the week. Upon completion of the WEX, the employer can hire the participant if both parties agree, and their GED is complete. The opportunity for full-time permanent employment has been a great motivator to help participants stay on track and complete

their GED. Evidence of our effectiveness is collected through employer and participant evaluations plus our hiring rate.

4. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's best or promising **regional strategy** that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

DWDB has continued to work in regional partnership with Capital Area with justice-involved individuals. When our Training to Work Re-entry Grant program concluded, the City of Durham contributed funds to continue the services. The advent of COVID significantly restricted access to all correctional facilities for approximately 2 years, however authorization to re-enter facilities on a limited basis has been given, and DWDB has reconstituted its partnership with the Capital Area contractor, Eckerd Connects to refer clients to the Durham Training to Work program. Following the successful template of the pilot, Counselors are working to establish relationships with individuals just prior to release. In conjunction with our Welcome Home program, individuals are provided with a resource bridge as they transition back into the community. The program provides intensive case management and referrals as well as a welcome kit that includes a welcome letter from the Mayor, a cell phone, transit pass and other essentials. Participant work with case managers and career counselors to provide a supportive bridge to self-sufficiency. Additionally, DWDB is currently assessing strategies to help increase participation in WIOA programming for this difficult to serve population. Through City of Durham funding, DWDB is also restarting the Transitional Jobs program that uses work-based learning principles to help returning individuals to establish skills and positive workplace performance. The Transitional Jobs program pilot worked with a select cohort of justice involved individuals who received work readiness training and were placed with four City of Durham departments, were they worked as apprentice/trainees, ultimately transitioning to full employment. Using lessons learned, DWDB is preparing to scale that program up to include private sector and county government partners.

5. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's best or promising **virtual services strategy** that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

One virtual strategy yielding positive results has been the use of the virtual job fair platform, Premiere Virtual. The virtual job fair has provided both employers and employee candidates with more flexibility and greater access. Individuals can interview for positions outside of their immediate geographic area or within short windows of time. Employers have consistently provided positive feedback regarding the user-friendly process and they also appreciate the ability to store resumes and conduct outreach more effectively.

6. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's innovative **business services strategies** and engagement practices that demonstrated employers taking charge and driving the agenda that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.
The Durham regional area has benefited from the relocation and expansion of several firms in the biotechnology industry sector. In partnership with NC BioTech Center (which acts as an information association representing the interests of biotech firms located in Research Triangle Park, DWDB has been a lead partner in establishing a program to help build the capacity of the workforce talent pipeline in this industry. In collaboration with Durham Technical Community College, Made in Durham, Durham County, Greater Durham Chamber, Durham Public Schools, and others, we have developed a paid training program designed to support individuals as they train in a Durham Tech certification program to prepare for entry level positions in the biotech industry. Working with their member firms, NCBioTech helped frame the issue as well as create an innovative approach to building their own industry talent pipeline.

XII. Program Year 2024 Local Area WDB Plan Required Policy Attachments

1. The following policies are *required* to be attached as separate documents in WISE as part of the PY 2024 Local Area Plan. The Local Area Plan is not complete without these documents.
• Name Each Document: *Local Area WDB Name, Policy Name.*

- In the first column, state if the policy is attached or why it is missing and when it can be expected. If two of the policies have been combined, please make a notation.
- In the second column mark "Yes" ***only*** if the policy has been changed/revised for the PY 2024 Plan and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- Revised policies should be submitted with a highlight or summary of the changes made to the local policy.
- Do not add an empty document in WISE as a "placeholder".

Required Local Area WDB Policies	Attached (Yes/No). If no, why?	Revised for PY 2024 (Yes/No) and needs review
1. Adult/Dislocated Worker Experience Policy	**Yes**	**No**
2. Competitive Procurement Policy	**Yes**	**No**
3. Conflict of Interest Policy	**Yes**	**No**
4. Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures	**Yes**	**No**

Required Local Area WDB Policies	Attached (Yes/No). If no, why?	Revised for PY 2024 (Yes/No) and needs review
5. Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I	**Yes**	**No**
6. Individualized Training Account Policy	**Yes**	**No**
7. On-the-Job Training Policy	**Yes**	**No**
8. Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool and Schedule	**Yes**	**No**
9. Priority of Service Policy	**Yes**	**No**
10. Youth Work Experience Policy	**Yes**	**No**
11. Supportive Services Policy	**Yes**	**No**
12. Local Area WDB WIOA and TAA Co-enrollment Policy	**Yes**	**No**
13. Eligible Training Provider Policy	**Yes**	**No**
14. Non-Criminal Complaint Procedures	**Yes**	**No**

2. Designate whether the following local *Optional Policy* is included and used at the Local Area WDB and is included in the Local Area Plan or write "N/A" implying "Not Applicable", if the Local Area WDB does not have this policy and therefore, does not use these services.

In the second column mark "Yes" ***only*** if the policy has been changed for PY 2024 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.

- Do not add a blank document in WISE as a "placeholder".
- These policies are required to operate/offer these services
- If "Yes", load the policy as a separate document.
- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name, Policy Name*. (Example: IWT Policy – Yes. Attached as *Board Name IWT Policy*.)

Optional Local Area WDB Policies	Yes- the Local Area WDB has a policy or N/A (Not Applicable)	Revised for PY 2024 (Add Yes or N/A for this column)
1. Local Area WDB Guidance for Local Incumbent Worker Grants	**Yes**	**No**

Optional Local Area WDB Policies	Yes- the Local Area WDB has a policy or N/A (Not Applicable)	Revised for PY 2024 (Add Yes or N/A for this column)
2. Local Area WDB Needs-Related Policy	**N/A**	**N/A**
3. Local Area WDB Transitional Jobs Policy	**Yes**	**No**
4. Local Area WDB Youth Incentive Policy	**Yes**	**No**

3. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are required [Regulations Section 680.300] to pay the cost of training provided with Adult and Dislocated Worker funds and limitations on duration and amount may be included [Regulations Section 680.320]. Please provide the following ITA elements in summary:

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Dollar Amounts	**The maximum allowance for any twelve-month (12) period will be $4,500 per customer with a maximum per course of $9,000.**
Time Limits	**ITA can be used to fund two years of curriculum, or less, in in-demand occupations.**
Degree or Certificates allowed (Associate, Bachelor's, other)	**Bachelor's, Associate, Certificate, License**
Procedures for determining case-by-case exceptions for training that may be allowed	**The WIOA regulations allow state or local Workforce Development Boards to impose limits on ITAs, such as limitations on the dollar amounts and/or duration. The Durham Workforce Development Board may establish ITA limitations in different ways, including:** **• A limit for an individual participant that is based on the needs identified in the individual employment plan (IEP); or** **• A policy decision by the State Board or the Durham Workforce Development Board to establish a range of amounts and/or a maximum amount applicable to all ITAs.** **The Durham Workforce Development Board has not established, nor implements limitations in a manner that undermines WIOA requirements stating that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an eligible training provider. Individuals, in consultation with their case manager, may identify exceptions to ITA limitations on a case-by-case basis.**

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
	Individuals may select training that costs more than the maximum amount available for ITAs under a State or local area policy when other sources of funds are available to supplement the ITA. Case managers can assist individuals in identifying other resources, including: **• Pell Grants;** **• Scholarships** **• Severance pay; and** **• Other sources** **Exceptions to the Durham Workforce Development Board policy limitations and restrictions must be made in writing and approved by the Durham Local Area and include justification for the cost overrun.** **While forms are in revision, written justifications and approvals for exceptions to limitations and restrictions, along with a written WIOA Training Cost Analysis, will be maintained for each WIOA participant in training. All expenditures related to training will be documented in correspondence by the WIOA service provider and be located in the participant file.**
Period for which ITAs are issued (semester, school year, short-term, etc.)	**Short term, Semester, and School Year within 12-month period**
Supportive Services covered by ITA (provide examples such as uniforms, tools, physical exams, etc.)	**Required equipment, license fees, tools, uniforms, Industry required clothing/shoes**
Other	

4. Provide a description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), including if contracts for the 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. [WIOA Section 108(b)(19)]

The DWDB utilizes the Training Provider Application as a tool to screen and approve training providers. Screening is based upon the provider's alignment with the Local Area Plan as well as careers that are in demand, training costs, accreditation, and performance. To determine a client's need for services, the DWDB utilizes skill assessments including the Career Readiness Certificate, WorkKeys, and O*NET to assess whether adult education and literacy services are needed. Based upon the interests of the client and funding availability, the Durham NCWorks staff provide a list of approved providers along with performance data. Clients are encouraged to select and visit the training providers of their choice and decide where they would like to receive services. Once a provider is selected, the DWDB establishes an Individual Training Account or a voucher payment system with the provider. In addition, all Career Center stakeholders engage in bi-weekly meetings for information exchange and to keep all stakeholders aware of any initiatives and program objectives – ranging from specialized hiring events to strategies to target recruitment.

5. Please specify the supportive services provided by the Local Area WDB Supportive Services Policy. List specific items under Supplies, Emergency, and Other, as identified in the Local Area WDB policy. (Expand form as needed.)

Transportation	**Childcare**	**Supplies** *(include examples)*	**Emergency** *(include examples)*	**Other** *(include examples)*
Reimbursement to WIOA participants actively engaged in authorized WIOA activities, including: Gas cards, bus passes	**Reimbursement to WIOA participants actively engaged in authorized WIOA activities.**	**Work supplies (books, tools, etc.); uniforms (work or training related)**	**If not extending assistance would prohibit participation or completion of WIOA activities or employment: Housing or rental assistance; one-time utility payments**	**Assistance in obtaining a driver's license**

Note: *The Local Area WDB must adequately safeguard all forms of supportive services payments (i.e., gas cards, cash, gift cards, etc.) and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes. The Supportive Services Policy must include the Local Area WDB's internal controls to safeguard supportive services. The internal controls must address issuance, storage, and reconciliation of supportive services throughout the area and be clearly stated within the policy.*

Attachment Checklist from Local Area Plan Instructions

☐ Local Area WDB Signed copy of Consortium Agreement (if applicable)
☐ Local Area WDB Administrative Entity Organizational Chart
☐ Local Area WDB Board Members (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB By-Laws
☐ Local Area WDB By-Laws Required Elements Crosswalk (*form provided)*
☐ Local Area WDB Organizational Chart
☐ Local Area WDB Administrative Entity Certification Regarding Debarment* (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB Workforce Development Area Signatory Form* (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB NCWorks Career Centers (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Provider (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB Eligible Training Provider Policy
☐ Local Area WDB 14 Youth Program Elements Chart (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB Youth Committee Meeting Schedule (*optional*)
☐ Local Area WDB Youth Committee Members (*optional*)
☐ Local Area WDB Youth Service Provider (*form provided*)
☐ Local Area WDB Youth Incentive Policy *(optional)*
☐ Local Area WDB WIOA and TAA Co-enrollment Policy (*required*)
☐ Local Area Adult/Dislocated Worker Work Experience Policy
☐ Competitive Procurement Policy
☐ Conflict of Interest Policy
☐ Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures
☐ Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I
☐ Local Area WDB Individualized Training Account Policy
☐ On-the-Job Training Policy
☐ Local Area WDB Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool, and Schedule
☐ Priority of Service Policy
☐ Youth Work Experience Policy
☐ Local Area WDB Supportive Services Policy
☐ Local Area WDB Incumbent Worker Training Policy *(optional)*
☐ Local Area WDB Needs-Related Policy *(optional)*
☐ Non-Criminal Complaint Procedures
☐ Local Area WDB Transitional Jobs Policy *(optional)*
☐ Memorandum of Understanding
☐ Customer Flow Chart

*Mail signed and unfolded originals to assigned DWS Planner at:

N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

DocuSign® (or similar) signature pages may be uploaded in WISE.

Appendices

NC Local Area WDB By-Laws Required Elements	Appendix A
By-Laws Guidance	Appendix B
Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means	Appendix C
Local Area WDB Membership Requirements	Appendix D

NC Local Area WDB By-Laws Required Elements

At a minimum the Local Area WDB by-laws must include the following items for DWS approval. When submitting the Local Area WDB by-laws, please specify the section (provide a clear crosswalk) where the following required elements are located within the submitted by-laws.

Elements 1-7 are the *required* elements designated at WIOA Final Rule 679.310(g).

1. The nomination process used by the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) to elect the Local Area Board Chair and members.
2. The term limitations and how the term appointments will be staggered to ensure only a portion of membership expire in a given year.
3. The process to notify the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) of a Board member vacancy to ensure a prompt nominee within ninety (90) days of the vacancy.
4. The proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when a Board member is unable to attend a meeting and assigns a designee as per the requirements of 20 CFR 679.110(d)(4).
5. The use of technology such as phone and web-based meetings, that will be used to promote Board member participation (20 CFR 679.110(d)(5)).
6. The process to ensure Board members actively participate in convening the workforce development system's stakeholders, brokering relationship with a diverse range of employers, and leveraging support for workforce development activities.
7. A description of any other conditions governing appointment or membership on the Board as deemed appropriate by the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs); (20 CFR 679.310(g)(1-7)).

North Carolina specific requirements that must be specified within the by-laws:

1. The adopted generally accepted parliamentary procedure, such as Robert's Rules of Order, chosen by the Board.
2. Whether an appointee filling a vacancy will serve the remainder of the unexpired term or be appointed for a new full term.
3. The Board's policy ensures attendance and participation of its members.
4. Quorum requirements to be not less than 51% constituting 51% of the total filled Board positions.
5. Any standing committees the Board has established shall be included in the by-laws.
6. The Board's conflict of interest policy, which may not be any less stringent than the requirements of the DWS's Policy, shall be referenced in the by-laws.
7. The process the Board will take when expedient action is warranted between Board meetings, such as calling a special meeting or allowing the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Board.
8. Board meetings will be held in accessible facilities with accessible materials available upon prior request.
9. The Board will meet no less than four times per program year.

By-Laws Guidance

This template is provided for guidance purposes only. It contains sample language that may be used in by-laws development. It is not required that Boards utilize this template or language within. This template reflects multiple counties within a Consortium. Single-county Boards and non-Consortia will need to adjust their by-laws accordingly.

Article 1
Name and Purpose

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the **Click Here to Enter WDB Name. Board** (hereinafter referred to as the "Board").

Section 2. Purpose and Responsibilities

The purpose for which the Board is organized is to perform all functions of a WDB and Local Workforce Development Area as set forth in the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 ("WIOA"), or the corresponding provision of any applicable federal or state laws of related purpose and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, and Section 143B-438.11 of the North Carolina General Statutes and to perform such functions with the **Click Here to Enter WDB Name. WDB**.

The Board services area shall encompass the counties of **Click Here to Enter WDB Name.**.

The Board responsibilities shall include:

1. Develop and submit Local Area Plan annually to the Governor, a comprehensive 4-year Local Area Plan, in partnership with the Chief Local Elected Official.

2. Perform workforce research and regional market analysis.

3. Convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the Local Area Plan and identify non-federal expertise and resources to leverage support for workforce development activities.

4. Lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers and with entities in the region involved.

5. Lead efforts with representatives of secondary and postsecondary education programs in the Local Area to develop and implement career pathways within the Local Area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers.

6. Lead efforts in the Local Area to identify proven and promising strategies and initiatives for meeting the needs of employers, and workers and jobseekers in the local workforce system, and to identify and disseminate information on promising practices carried out in other local areas.
7. Develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, workers, and jobseekers.

8. Conduct program oversight.

9. Negotiate and reach agreement on local performance accountability measures.

10. Designate or certify one-stop operators, contractors, and service providers and, in appropriate circumstances, terminate for cause the eligibility of such operators.

11. Coordinate activities with education and training providers in the local area.

12. Develop a budget for the activities of the Local Area WDB consistent with the Local Area Plan and the duties of the Local Area Board and subject to the approval of the Chief Local Elected Official.

13. Annually review the physical and programmatic accessibility provisions of all one-stop centers, as well as locations for contractors and service providers, in the local area, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Article 2
Board Members

Section 1. Appointment

There shall be a Board of no more than **Click Here to Enter Number.** Board members. Members of this organization shall be appointed by the following procedure: The Chief Local Elected Official (of the **Click Here to Enter Name.** County Board of Commissioners, hereinafter referred to as the CLEO) shall appoint members based on nominations from the following: local business organizations; local education agencies; vocational education institutions, community-based organizations, and higher educational institutions; and private and proprietary schools; state or local labor organizations and other interested organizations.

The number of business sector nominees shall be at least 51% of the number of individuals to be appointed and are appointed from amongst individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations. The nominated candidate or company must be a member of the nominating organization. A majority of the Members shall be representatives of businesses in the local area (including small businesses or organizations representing businesses that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area) and are owners, chief executives or

operating officers, or other business executives or employers with optimum policy making or hiring authority. The members of the local Board shall represent diverse geographic areas within the local area.

Section 2. Composition

Organized Labor and Community Based Organizations: Not less than 20% of the Members shall be representatives of the workforce within the local area, who:

i. shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by local labor federations, or other representatives of employees;
ii. shall include a representative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or if no such program exists in the area, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the area, if such a program exists.
iii. may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and
iv. may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth;

Education and training activities: The Board shall include representatives of entities administering education and training activities in the local area, who:

i. shall include a representative of eligible providers administering adult education and literacy activities under Title II of the WIOA;
ii. shall include a representative of institutions of higher education providing workforce investment activities (including community colleges);
iii. may include representatives of local educational agencies, and of community-based organizations with demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the education or training needs of individuals with barriers to training;

The Board shall include representatives of governmental and economic and community development entities serving the local area, who:

i. shall include a representative of economic and community development entities;
ii. shall include an appropriate representative from the State Employment Service Office under the Wagner-Peyser Act serving the local area;
iii. shall include an appropriate representative of the programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, serving the local area;

iv. may include representatives of agencies or entities administering programs serving the local area relating to transportation, housing, and public assistance, and
v. may include representatives of philanthropic organizations serving the local area; and

This Board may include such other individuals or representatives of entities as the Chief Local Elected Official determines appropriate.

Section 3. Tenure

All appointments will be for a two-year term to expire on June 30 of each respective term. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms (6 years) or a total of five terms (10 years) in any one appointed position. An individual whose initial appointment is to fill an unexpired term or an initial staggered term of less than two years, shall be eligible to serve the number of full-length terms other members are eligible to serve, unless, prior to the time for reappointment that individual has already served six consecutive years. Members may be re-appointed at the discretion of the Chief Local Elected Official subject to the term limitations outlined in this section.

Terms shall be staggered to ensure that at any given time a percentage of the members are experienced in WDB functions.

The Board shall advise the Consortium Counties of potential Board member vacancies prior to the end of the term. In the case of a midterm vacancy, an immediate replacement shall be requested of the Consortium County represented by the departing Board member. The appointed Board member shall fill the remaining term of office.

The Board shall not compensate Board Members for their services, but by resolution of the Board, a fixed sum and expenses, if any, may be allowed for attendance at each regular or special meeting of the Board.

Section 4. Termination for Cause

By two-thirds majority vote of the membership or by action of the Chief Local Elected Official, a member may be removed for cause from the Board. Cause would be for such actions as malfeasance, misconduct, or any action which would be deemed not in the best interest of the Board; or three unexcused absences from regular scheduled meetings within the preceding twelve calendar months. Notice that a removal vote that may be taken for cause must be included on the agenda of said meeting. The Chair shall send a precautionary letter to the said Board member upon two unexcused absences within the preceding twelve calendar months prior to the next meeting.

Section 5. Resignation

Letters of resignation must be submitted to the **Click Here to Enter WDB Name.** Chair. Three consecutive absences without justification and no response to the above referenced letter from the chair will be considered acceptable terms for resignation. Justification must be submitted in writing. The Board Chair has the authority to accept or deny justification.

By-Laws Guidance

Section 6. Vacancies

Upon vacancy of any position on this Board, the procedure in Article II, Section 1, will be followed to provide replacement representation to complete the remainder of that term of appointment.

Article 3
Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Board shall meet at a public location at such time and place as determined by the Chairperson. All meetings must be held in an accessible facility, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. All materials must be in an accessible format (i.e., large print, Braille, interpreter, etc.), as needed or indicated.

The Board will meet no less than four times per program year. Regular Board meetings are face to face; however, Board members may attend meetings via conference call, video communications and other alternative methods.

Five working days' notice shall be delivered to each member stating a reasonable time, date and place of the meeting and the meeting's purpose unless deemed an emergency by the Chair or Executive Committee calling for said special meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings

The Chair of the Board and Committee Chair may, when deemed necessary, call a special meeting of the Board via conference call, video communications, or alternative media sources for transacting any business designated in the call.

Section 3. Quorum

At all meetings (regular or special) of the Board, a majority of the Board members present constitutes a quorum for transacting business. A quorum shall require the participation of Board members constituting 51% of the total filled Board positions. Proxy representatives who are unable to cast votes shall not count toward meeting the quorum requirement. Votes may be cast via electronic medium for remote attendees. The act of the majority of the Board members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board. However, a two-thirds vote of those present shall be required to amend any provision of these by-laws.

Section 4. Conduct of Meetings

All meetings of this Board shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

By-Laws Guidance

Section 5. Open Meetings

Local Area Board Conducts Business Openly: The Local Area Board must conduct its business in an open manner as required by WIOA sec. 107(e), by making available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information about the activities of the local Board. (20 CFR 679.390) This includes:

a. Information about the Local Area Plan, or modification to the Local Area Plan, before submission of the Local Area Plan;
b. List and affiliation of Local Area WDB members;
c. Selection of one-stop operators;
d. Award of grants or contracts to eligible training providers of workforce investment activities including providers of youth workforce investment activities;
e. Minutes of formal meetings of the Local Area Board; and
f. Local Area Board by-laws, consistent with § 679.310(g).

Section 6. Proxy Representation and Voting

A member may designate a representative to attend a meeting of the Board in his/her absence. The proxy must meet the membership criteria for the member's affiliation type. The proxy will count toward the appointed member's attendance. The representative may participate in discussions and may vote so long as the member provides written voting instructions to the Chair allowing his/her proxy representative to cast votes in accordance with the written voting instructions.

Each Board member present shall be entitled to one vote on each matter for which a vote is taken. Votes may be cast telephonically or via electronic medium.

Section 7. Conflict of Interest and Voting

No WDB member (whether compensated or not) shall engage in any activity, including participation in the selection, award or administration of a sub-grant or contract supported by WIOA funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when:

i. The individual,
ii. any member of the individual 's immediate family,
iii. the individual's partner, or
iv. an organization which employs, or is about to employ any of the above, has a financial interest in the firm or organization selected for the award.

No WDB member, member of his/her immediate family, officers, employees, or agents of the WDB member's agency or business, shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to sub agreements.

By-Laws Guidance

A WDB member shall not cast a vote on, or participate in, any decision-making capacity on the provision of services by such member (or any organization which that member directly represents), nor on any matter which would provide any direct financial benefit to that member.

No WDB members shall participate in a governmental decision including voting on a matter (including recommendations, appointments, obligating or committing the WDB to a course of action) when such action influences a decision or exercises judgement in making a decision. Any member with a potential or actual conflict of interest shall comply with requirements for public disclosure and recusal.

Article 4
Organization

Section 1. Officers

The officers of this Board shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary.

Section 2. Election of Officers

Officers of this Board shall be elected in June for two-year terms. The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected from among the members who are representatives of the business sector. The secretary will be elected from among all members.

The Chair shall appoint a nominating committee to recommend officers who shall be elected from the Board's business sector membership and shall begin their term at the beginning of the new program year effective July 1. These officers shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified or until they are no longer Board members. If an officer is unable to complete his/her term the Board shall elect a successor to complete the remaining portion of the original term. The Vice-Chair shall not be required to succeed the Chair at the end of the Chair’s term of office.

Section 3. Chair

The Chair shall preside at Board meetings, designate standing and ad hoc committees deemed appropriate and appoint their Chair and members. The Chair shall not vote except in the case of a tie, in which event he/she shall cast the deciding vote.

Section 4. Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chair in his/her absence from meetings. In the event that the office of Chair is vacated before the end of the term, the Vice- Chair shall assume the office in an acting capacity until such time as the Board elects a new Chair.

Section 5. Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for proper notification of meetings, review, and submission of the minutes to the Board, and shall carry out any other duties deemed appropriate by the Chair. Local Area staff will serve as support personnel in performing these duties.

Section 6. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (from a sector other than business), and the previous Chair or Vice-Chair. As determined by the Chair of the Board, chairs of Board committees will attend Executive Committee meetings. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee are as follows: make standing committee assignments and coordination among committees, prepare recommendations to Board on state and national issues, act as needed between regularly scheduled Board meetings, and develop immediate and long-range goals for Board concurrence.

Section 7. Vacancy

If an office becomes vacant, the Board shall elect a successor at its next meeting.

Article 5
Committees

Section 1.

The Chair of the Board shall have the power, except as otherwise provided in this Article, to appoint the members of any Committee for a term of two (2) years. No Committee, except as elsewhere provided in this Article, shall take any action or position on behalf of the Board, bind the Board, or exercise the authority of the Board in the management of the Corporation. The Chair of all the Committees shall be members of the Board. The Executive Committee of the Board shall meet at the call of the Chair of the Board or the written request of any two (2) members of the committee. The Board's other Committees shall meet at the call of their respective Chair or the Chair of the Board.

Section 2.

Electronic meetings shall be permissible in lieu of face-to-face committee meetings at the discretion of the Committee Chair. An electronic meeting of the Committee occurs when Board members are in different locations, connected by electronic means, through audio, video, or both. All votes taken during an electronic meeting shall be by roll call. All scheduled electronic meetings shall be held in such a way that all members participating can hear each other at the same time. When speaking, each member will be asked to clearly identify himself, so that proper recognition is given and recorded. All Board policies, administrative practices, and by-laws shall apply equally to electronic meetings.

By-Laws Guidance

Section 3.

The Local Area WDB may establish standing committees to provide information and assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities (20 CFR 679.360).

Article 6
Amendments

Section 1. Amendment Procedure

Board by-laws can be amended at any regular Board meeting provided the proposed amendment(s) has been submitted in writing to the Board members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Vote Needed

The by-laws shall be amended upon affirmative vote by a two-thirds majority of the Board.

Article 7
Severability

In the event that any of the rules, regulations, restrictions, covenants, or conditions of these by-laws are held to be partially or wholly invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such holding shall not affect, alter, modify, or impair in any manner any of the other terms, provisions, rules, regulations, restrictions, covenants, or conditions contained herein.

_____

Adopted This NUMBER DATE Day of MONTH, YEAR.

Board Director, Printed Name and Signature	*Date*
Chief Local Elected Official Printed Name and Signature	*Date*
Board Chair, Printed Name and Signature	*Date*

Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

All public WDB meetings and Committee meetings will be held at specified times and places which are convenient and open to the public.

The Board believes it is in the best interest of its members, systems, and customers that the fullest participation and attendance in all meetings be achieved whenever possible. Furthermore, it recognizes that the use of electronic, audio or video conferencing for meeting attendance and voting requirements is permissible so long as the meeting is conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Provision.

The Board in all of its regular and special, standing committee, and ad hoc committee meetings complies with and intends to comply with the provisions of the Sunshine Provision. Therefore, the Board hereby adopts this policy, to be used when needed, to make use of the capabilities for conferencing by electronic means or any other type of audio or video conferencing for its meetings *or* any of the standing committee and ad hoc committee meetings as set forth and adopted according to the following rules as applicable:

A. All pertinent provisions of the Sunshine Provision must be complied with, including specifically the proper notice of any regular or special meeting, the proper record keeping or minutes of each meeting, the appropriate agenda preparation for each meeting, which in addition shall be posted along with the notice of the meeting; and, in particular, any use of closed sessions shall be in compliance with the provisions of WIOA.

B. All Board and Committee members attending meetings by electronic conferencing shall be entitled to vote as if they were personally and physically present at the meeting site so long as a quorum is, in total, present and accounted for, and their votes shall be recorded by the Board Director.

C. A Board or Committee member who attends a meeting by electronic, video, or audio conference must provide notice to the Board Director at least 24 hours prior to the meeting unless such advance notice is impracticable.

D. The location of the meeting included on the notice shall be equipped with a suitable transmission system (e.g., a speakerphone) in order that the public audience, the members in attendance and any staff in attendance will be able to hear any input, vote, or discussion of the conference and that the member attending by electronic means shall have a similar capability of hearing and participating in such input, vote, or discussion.

E. As the Board or its committees begin each new matter of business, the Chair will check with all remote locations(s) where members are to ensure that each such connection is active.

Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

F. When a motion is made, and seconded, and discussion regarding the motion begins, the Chair will check that the connection with remote location(s) where members are present is active. Prior to closing discussion and taking any vote, the Chair will ask all remote location(s) where member(s) is(are) present whether there are any additional comments, questions, or information to be added to the discussion.

G. All decisions will be made using majority rule except when a higher vote is required. There will be no muting of any connections with remote location(s) where members are present at any time. There will be no sidebar discussions.

H. The procedures outlined above shall also apply to each Board and its Committee members.

Local Area WDB Membership Requirements

Representative of Business (WIOA Section 107(b) (2)(A))

Who May Satisfy the Requirements:

The majority of the members of the Local Area WDB must be representatives of private sector business in the local area. At a minimum, two members must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Business representatives serving on Local Area WDBs may also serve on the State Board. Each business representative must meet the following criteria:

- be an owner, chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or other individual with optimum policy making and hiring authority;
- provide employment opportunities in **in-demand** industry sectors or occupations, as those terms are defined in WIOA section 3(23); and provide high-quality, work-relevant training and development opportunities to its workforce or the workforce of others (in the case of organizations representing business as per WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2)(A)(ii); and
- are appointed from among individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations.

In North Carolina, examples of allowable business organizations may include chambers of commerce, trade organizations, large non-profit organizations, such as Rex Hospital, and for-profit organizations, such as Duke Hospital, depending on the specific circumstances. Examples of unallowable business organizations include the N.C. Department of Public Safety or other state or municipal agencies.

Representative of Workforce (WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(B))

Who May Satisfy the Requirements:

Not less than 20% of the members of the Local Area WDB **must** be workforce representatives. These representatives:

- **must** include **two or more representatives of labor organizations,** where such organizations exist in the local area. Where labor organizations do not exist, representatives must be selected from other employee representatives;

Employee representatives must come from organizations that advocate, enhance, or protect the rights of a group of employees. In North Carolina, such examples include the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE), the State Employees Association of North Carolina (SEANC), and the National Guard Association). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is an example of an organization that is not allowable as a labor organization.

Local Area WDB Membership Requirements

- **must** include **one or more representatives of a joint labor management, or union affiliated, registered apprenticeship** program within the area who must be a training director or a member of a labor organization. If no union affiliated registered apprenticeship programs exist in the area, a representative of a registered apprenticeship program with no union affiliation must be appointed, if one exists.

In addition to the representatives enumerated above, the Local Area WDB **may** include the following to contribute to the 20% requirement:

- one or more representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and

In North Carolina, examples of allowable community-based organizations include organizations such as Goodwill and community action agencies.

- one or more representatives of organizations that demonstrated experience or expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth.

Community College representatives would not be appropriate for this category.

Representatives of Education and Training (WIOA Section 107(b) (2)(C))

Who May Satisfy the Requirements:

The balance of Local Area WDB membership **must include:**

- **At least one** eligible provider administering **adult education and literacy** activities under WIOA Title II;
- **At least one** representative from an **institution of higher education** providing workforce investments activities, including community colleges; and
- **At least one representative** from each of the following governmental and economic and community development entities:
    - **Economic and community development** entities;
    - The **State Employment Service Office** under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S. C. 49 et seq.) serving the local area; and
    - The programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, other than Sec. 112 or part C of that title.

Local Area WDB Membership Requirements

In addition to the representatives enumerated above, the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) **may** appoint other appropriate entities in the local area, including:

- Entities administering education and training activities who represent local educational agencies or community-based organizations with demonstrated expertise in addressing the education and training needs for individuals with barriers to employment;
- Governmental and economic and community development entities who represent transportation, housing, and public assistance programs;
- Philanthropic organizations serving the local area;
- and Other appropriate individuals as determined by the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO).
- The board chair shall be elected among the business representatives.

The Division of Workforce Solutions may request additional information from Local Area WDBs on representatives and the organizations they represent at any time in order to determine compliance with these requirements. The final determination on whether requirements are met is made by the Division of Workforce Solutions.