

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

North Carolina Modification for Local Area Workforce Development Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Plans

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

*North Carolina Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Solutions
4316 Mail Service Center
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
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, a comprehensive four-year plan. Four-Year Plans were submitted in May 2020.

In North Carolina, annually, each Local Area WDB, in consultation with the chief local elected official, is to provide updates to the Comprehensive Four-Year Plan. The WIOA Program Year (PY) 2022 Plan is to provide current information and be effective July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023 and will include required current local policies. The Local Area Plan will support the alignment strategy described in the 2020-2024 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.

Through its strategic planning efforts, the NCWorks Commission developed a vision and mission for North Carolina's Workforce System. 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.

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: www.doleta.gov.

North Carolina policy information is available at <https://www.nccommerce.com/jobs-training/workforce-professionals-tools-resources/workforce-policies>. Local Area WDBs should reference the North Carolina [WIOA Unified State Plan](#).

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 due date is **May 6, 2022**. Each attachment must be submitted and labeled separately in either Word, Excel, or PDF format. Attachments not submitted separately will not be accepted. Forms requiring original signatures may use DocuSign® (or similar) and may be uploaded in WISE. If original signatures are obtained, forms must be mailed (and uploaded in WISE) to the Local Area WDB's assigned Planner at: N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions, 4316 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4316.

I. Local Area 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. Thank you.

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.

Rivers East Workforce Investment Consortium

Attached: Rivers East Workforce Investment Consortium Agreement

2. Provide the Local Area WDB's official name.

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

3. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number, and email address of the Local Area WDB Director.

Name: Jennie C. Bowen	Title & Salutation: Workforce Development Director
Organization: Mid-East Commission	Address: 1502 N Market Street, Suite A, Washington, NC 27889
Phone number: 252.974.1815	Email address: jbowen@mideastcom.org

4. Provide the name, elected title, local government affiliation, address, phone number, and email address of the Local Area WDB's Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO).

Name: Frankie Waters	Elected Title & Salutation: Chairman
Government: c/o Beaufort County Commissioners	Address: 121 W 3rd Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone number: 252.946.0079	Email address: brian.alligood@co.beaufort.nc.us

5. Provide the name, title, business name, address, phone number, and email address of the individual authorized to receive official mail for the CLEO, if different than question 3.

Name: Brian Alligood	Title & Salutation: County Manager
Business Name: Beaufort County Government	Address: 121 W 3rd Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone number: 252.946.0079	Email address: brian.alligood@co.beaufort.nc.us

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 disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sections 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) and 108(b)(15)].

Name: N. Bryant Buck	Title & Salutation: Executive Director
Organization: Mid-East Commission	Address: 1502 N Market Street, Suite A, Washington, NC 27889
Phone number: 252.946.8043	Email address: bbuck@mideastcom.org

7. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number and email address of the Administrative/Fiscal Agent's signatory official.

Name: N. Bryant Buck	Title & Salutation: Executive Director
Organization: Mid-East Commission	Address: 1502 N Market Street, Suite A, Washington, NC 27889
Phone number: 252.946.8043	Email address: bbuck@mideastcom.org

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

See attached: Mid-East Commission Organizational Chart

9. Provide the Administrative Entity's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and assurance that the 'System for Award Management' (SAM) status is current. Administrative Entities must register at least annually on the SAM website www.sam.gov to receive Federal funding [required by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Section 4.11 and Section 52.204-7].

DUNS Number: 173851528

UEI Number: FE1SNK136NL4

Assurances are given that the SAM status is current and up to date

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)

Lou Stout serves as the EO Officer for Rivers East.

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 C](#).

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: Rivers East Workforce Development Board Board List.

Note: *Please complete the entire form. Check the block on the form provided certifying compliance with required WIOA Local Area WDB business nomination process.*

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).

Use and identify categories as indicated on the form. Do not change required category names except to clarify those with multiple categories and do not count those names twice. Identify any names representing a dual category with an asterisk (*).

See attached: Rivers East WDB Board List

Note: The board elected Robert Williams to serve as Chair for PY 2021-2022 at their June 2021 meeting. The nominating committee will provide nominations for PY 22 at the special called June 2022 meeting. Each County Clerk will be contacted following the May meeting concerning private sector appointments for expiring seats and attendance records will be provided. For those who have not met the attendance requirement, the commissioners will need to appoint a replacement. An updated list will be provided once all appointments are complete for PY 22, which is anticipated to be July.

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 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](#).

The Board Director notifies the County Manager, who serves as the Consortium appointee, when a vacancy exists. In addition, the county clerk and local economic developer are notified to assist with finding a qualified, interested applicant. Once identified, the candidate goes through the county application, vetting and appointment process as set by the commissioners for all appointments to board/committees on behalf of the county.

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: Rivers East Workforce Development Board By-laws.

See attached: Rivers East WDB By-Laws

14. To demonstrate that the attached Local Area WDB By-laws comply, complete [By-Laws Required Elements – Crosswalk chart](#).

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)]

See attached: Rivers East By-Laws Crosswalk

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. [WIOA Section 108(d)]

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)]

Rivers East will make copies of the proposed Local Plan available to the public for review for comment beginning May 12, 2022 for a period of 30 days, ending June 13, 2022. A link to the proposed Local Plan will be placed on the Rivers East WDB website (www.riverseastwdb.org) and the Mid-East Commission website (www.mideastcom.org). The plan will also be submitted electronically to all Consortium members and each WDB member. At the close of the public comment period, a list of all comments will be compiled and submitted to the Division Planner.

16. Attach a copy of the Local Area WDB’s organizational chart with an ‘effective as of date.’ Include position titles. Name document: Rivers East Workforce Development Board Organizational Chart.

See attached: Rivers East WDB Organizational Chart

17. Complete the following chart for the PY2022 Local Area WDB’s planned meeting schedule to include time, dates, and location. *[Expand form as needed]*

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](#).

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)
September 14, 2022	3:00pm	NC TeleCenter
November 9, 2022		405 E Boulevard, Williamston, NC
January 11, 2023		(Large Training Room)
March 8, 2023		Or via Zoom, with a call-in option

May 10, 2023		
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18. Attach a copy of the signed ‘Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters – Primary Covered Transactions’ ([form provided](#)). [Required by the Regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR 180, participants’ responsibilities.] Name document: Rivers East Workforce Development Board Certification Form.

Note: 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, 4316 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4316.

See attached: Rivers East WDB Debarment Form

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

Note: If using original signatures, mail the [Signatory Page](#) to the assigned DWS Planner at N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions, 4316 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4316.

See attached: Rivers East WDB Signatory page

II. Local Area WDB Strategic Planning

The Local Area WDB is required to keep the Local Area Plan up to date and fluid 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: education and skills development 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.

Locally, 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 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 Rivers East Workforce Development Board strategic vision for preparing an educated and skilled workforce:

- **Focus our resources and training on providers that deliver high-quality employer-focused and job seeker programs.**
- **Continue and expand our networking with Community Colleges to identify "gaps" in program offerings as identified through labor market research and dialogue with business.**
- **Continue our close working relationship with the Customized Industry Training program.**
- **Continue and expand our assessment instruments in the NCWorks Centers to help identify the barriers to employment and provide comprehensive individualized plans to produce the best skilled workers for referral to businesses.**
- **Continue our emphasis on short-term training and work-based learning in the region.**
- **Expand our sector work to identify emerging sectors and to begin offering skills training to meet the projected needs.**
- **Continue our Career Pathways work (NCWorks Career Pathways) to engage businesses, K-12, Community Colleges, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, STEM, and the Universities to develop our workforce from school to life-long learning.**
- **Continue our close working relationship with local, regional, and state economic developers.**

The benefit of having such an established framework is that it can be implemented to prepare an educated and skilled workforce at any level.

Performance Goals under WIOA for the Rivers East Local Area have been deeply impacted by COVID-19, and we expect to continue to see those impacts throughout this program year.

The Program Specialist generates reports for the WIOA enrolled participants receiving training services monthly. These reports are reviewed monthly and corrective action performed as needed. All participants that have completed goals/obtained employment or are not actively receiving services are required to be submitted for exit. Employment and wages are reviewed. After the operator records exit information into NCWorks, the SuperUser reviews the data to ensure it is recorded correctly. The NCWorks reports and FutureWorks data are reviewed monthly and/or quarterly for current program year performance and performance year performance. Programs are monitored to ensure all services provided are properly recorded.

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 service 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 Rivers East WDB, WIOA Service Providers, and NCWorks staff network and partner with educational systems, Community Colleges, Community-Based organizations, business groups, and others to stay abreast of services available in the region. Job referral and placement of customers possessing necessary skills is accomplished through the NCWorks Career Centers. Through dialogue with business, Community Colleges, and labor market information research, “Occupations in Demand” are identified for training to meet the needs of our workforce. Individual Training Accounts, On the Job Training, short-term training, apprenticeship, and other occupational skills training are utilized to assist adults, dislocated workers, and youth in need of additional skill acquisition.

The Board and our NCWorks Career Centers work closely with each of the four community colleges in the region to provide career and training services in a variety of degree, diploma and certificate programs. In addition, East Carolina University and Chowan University are four-year institutions located in our region that also offer skills training. Additional universities provide virtual learning opportunities as well.

Community-Based Organizations such as CADA, Greene Lamp and Telamon also offer services to our adult, dislocated worker, and youth population.

Strong relationships currently exist with the Career and Technical Education system in Rivers East. (See several links to our Career Pathways/NCWorks Career Pathways Partnership throughout the plan).

The Rivers East WDB and NCWorks Committee review and approve short-term offerings that go into the product box in each Center. The Board approves training that will result in a post-secondary credential, or industry recognized credentials that are portable and stackable.

3. Describe the Local Area WDB’s use of **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)]

Incumbent Worker Training Programs: Rivers East WDB has an approved incumbent worker policy to offer this training services to local businesses. The board sets aside funding each PY to make these services available. For PY21, we received two application and approved both.

On-the-Job Training Programs: Rivers East WDB has an approved OJT policy and require all contractors to set aside funds for OJT in their budgets. For PY21, we have sponsored 3 OJTs.

Customized Training Programs: Rivers East WDB has not sponsored any Customized Training programs, however, we work with our local colleges to provide support and services as needed for their projects.

Industry and Sectors Strategies: Rivers East WDB has two US Chamber Foundation Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Academy trained staff and is interested in using this tool, along with sector strategy tools, to offer this in our region.

Career Pathways Initiatives: Rivers East WDB continues to hold a personal services contract position for the Career Pathways Facilitator for the Northeast, in partnership with our neighboring boards of Northeastern and Turning Point. She maintains pathways, schedules meetings and events, and promotes pathways to partner agencies through workshops and conferences.

Layoff Aversion: Rivers East WDB has partnered with DWS staff in the past to provide this service when needed.

Utilization of Effective Business Intermediaries: Rivers East WDB has partnered with DWS staff in the past to provide this service when needed.

Other Employer Services and Strategies: Rivers East WDB remains part of the RAMP East project, and in turn, obtained a Golden Leaf Grant to promote advanced manufacturing in the region. This project was spearheaded by our local and regional economic developers, who serve as the steering committee.

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

The Rivers East Workforce Development Director convenes a meeting of the Adult Education Directors from the Community Colleges and Literacy Volunteers each year to increase collaboration. The discussion focuses on best practice sharing including local career pathways, enhancing career exploration hands on training & college transition instruction along with High school Equivalency preparation that are necessary to skill up the existing workforce, and services provided by referral or on-site at the NCWorks Career Centers.

Strong relationships exist with the colleges and our Career Pathways/NCWorks Career Pathways Partnership.

5. Provide a description of 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)]

Vocational Rehabilitation is a partner in our state and regional MOU to provide services in our NCWorks Career Centers; and are an active partner in our NCWorks Centers in the region. VR staff attends center staff meetings, where training takes place on the use of NCWorks online, updates on hiring opportunities are shared and general discussion of coordination efforts are covered. VR Business Services staff actively promotes the programs and services of the Center along with specific VR services when visiting employers or other community partners. Through our VR partnership and Inclusion Committee, all Center staff have completed the “Tilting at Windmills” training series.

In addition, to make our NCWorks Career Centers more physically and programmatically accessible, utilizing funds from a Center Enhancement Grant, assistive technology has been purchased to place in each Career Center in the region. This includes a variety of equipment as recommended by VR’s Assistive Technology Center specialist.

6. 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 Rivers East Workforce Development Board established a Strategic Vision for 2020 (updated in 2022) which serves as local implementation of the goals set forth by the NCWorks Commission’s Strategic Plan and Governor’s Job Ready Plan.

Through career exploration, assessment and planning, the WDB supports individuals from choosing their career path to attaining their credentials. Through data management, participants are tracked from start to finish in pursuit of their educational goal and supported even after employment is gained. By evaluating the training providers, the board ensures the training is relevant to the local labor market and is identified as a high growth sector to ensure participants are being prepared to succeed in the local, state and global economy.

An employer led workforce system ensures the services provided are relevant and hold value. Employer needs remain a top priority in the region, as the employers are the ultimate end user of our Center’s job seeker product. The Business Services team works closely with local businesses and other employer facing partnering agencies to align services and coordinate available funding to ensure the employers’ needs are met or exceeded.

Our NCWorks Centers operate in an integrated service delivery environment. Training is offered on the 2nd Friday of each month to ensure Center staff are up to date on performance goals, service delivery methods, policy, and technology.

The Rivers East WDB continues to lead or partner in innovative projects such as RAMP East and the Simulation Station, while bringing new technology such as Virtual Career Fair, Text Software, Virtual Job Shadow, e-Skill, and WorkKeys to improve service delivery to job seekers and employers alike. In addition, the board will begin offering Virtual Services in June/July through an integrated platform.

7. Explain the strategic plan for how the region will respond to national emergencies (such as the Covid-19 pandemic) or weather disasters to serve victims (such as aversion activities) and utilize special grants efficiently throughout the recovery period.

Rivers East WDB has a long history of serving our communities after natural disasters such as hurricanes. We have close ties with our local county and city officials as a department of Mid-East Commission, the regional council of government. We have forms, policies and procedures in place to expedite the start up of new programs, and provide guidance and technical assistance during operations. The Director has over 15 years experience running National Emergency Grants, specifically those connected to disasters.

The WDB recently received a NDWG Employment Recovery Grant to serve dislocated workers, including those recently affected by the QVC plant closure in our neighboring region.

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

The WDB's Inclusion committee has evaluated regional demographics and identified customer groups to be targeted for PY22 through increased outreach and community events. In addition, as part of our Center Reorganization plan launched May 2nd, Center staff will begin providing services in our local communities on a consistent basis at locations such as libraries and community centers. Rivers East WDB also applied to be a part of the Carolina Across 100, Our State Our Work, Opportunity Youth program to help better connect with disconnected youth in the region.

9. 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 equity and inclusion.

As of June 1, three of our five Centers in the region will be co-located on local Community College campuses. For the other two counties, staff are assigned to be present on the Community College campus at least weekly. Our staff provide career services to all interested students and offer training services to eligible students. Our Inclusion Committee includes a resource member who serves as the Associate Provost for Equity and Diversity at our local university, East Carolina University.

10. Please describe how the Local Area WDB engages with local and regional Economic Developers.
Rivers East WDB has an established relationship with the Economic Developers from all 5 counties, plus the regional economic development organization and a local public-private partnership. These partnerships have been vital to traditional business services and our local ED's spearheaded our Golden Leaf Grant and are currently the main contact for the local Made In campaign in each county.
11. How many new/expansion economic development projects has the Local Area WDB engaged in during the previous program year? Please indicate the type/number of services provided.

The WDB Director sits on several committees around biopharma expansions occurring in Pitt County, which has been our major job developer over the past year.

12. 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
Healthcare	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning-October 2013 Approved- February 2016 Reviewed- January 2019 & February 2021	99
Business Support Services	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning- July 2017 Approved- August 2018 Reviewed- April 2019 & February 2021	59
Advanced Manufacturing	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning- September 2015 Approved- November 2016 Reviewed- January 2019 & February 2021	8
Agriscience/Biotechnology	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning- May 2014 Approved- May 2020 Reviewed- January 2016, November 2017 & February 2021	0

13. 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.
- Include plans for new career pathways.
 - Explain how career pathways in the local area are in alignment with other partners/stakeholders' (DPI, community colleges, myFutureNC, universities, etc.) existing pathways or if they are duplicates.
 - Describe the strategy to avoid duplication efforts.

No new pathways are planned for the Northeast partnership at this time. To ensure alignment locally, our team created a local implementation option which includes the K-12 schools, community college, economic development entity and NCWorks Career Centers. We have 10 local implementations recognized thus far. To ensure other coordination, our Facilitator currently serves with myFutureNC and she and the WDB Director serve on several committees with the local university and share resources regularly.

14. Provide a description of Local Area WDB's capacity to provide workforce investment activities to address education attainment and skill needs of high-demand fields – 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 supportive services for hard-to-reach communities.
- Explain strategies that include NextGen, NCCareers.org and any awareness models for success.

The Rivers East WDB offers multiple tools to promote career awareness, many targeted specifically at the NEXTGEN population. This includes Virtual Job Shadow, Traitify (which we share with our partner K-12 schools, community colleges and other partner agencies), e-Skill, Career Edge, In addition, a collaborative team has created and expanded the GADJ (Guidance and Direction for Job Seekers) handbook with lesson plans appropriate for all ages, to allow teachers at all levels, plus community organization staff to promote career awareness, job getting and job keeping skills. Our Career Pathways tools offer information of careers at multiple levels and include education/credential requirements and average pay to promote interest and career succession past hiring. Rivers East WDB partners with organizations like Tradesformers (Pitt County youth apprenticeships promoting skilled trades) and others to promote work based learning as a means of skill development and career success.

III. **NCWorks Commission**

The NCWorks Commission recommends policies and strategies that enable the state's workforce and businesses to compete in the global economy.

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.

Employer-led job training programs have the best career outcomes. Employers know best what skills their workers need, and employer involvement is key for workforce development and job readiness. Businesses that invest in developing North Carolina's workforce will benefit from well-trained employees and a more innovative and diverse workplace that better reflects its community.

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 ensures collaboration with other employer-facing workforce program representatives, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Agriculture Services, Foreign Labor, Re-Entry, and Veterans Services, through processes and procedures for information sharing and efficient employer customer service delivery.

The local Workforce Development Board uses a variety of methods to outreach to employers regarding available business services. These many include, but are not limited to, social media, printed materials, promotional calls or visits, presentations at civic organizations, Chamber newsletters, community events, and introductions through partner agencies.

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.)

Rivers East WDB does not currently have an assigned Business Services Representative on staff, but does have plans to hire one in the next PY if funding allows. The Director and former Business Engagement Coordinator work to support the Center Managers and NCWorks Center staff with local business needs (including Work Based Learning, Incumbent Worker Training and collaborative planning) and the Strategic Initiatives Coordinator handles all request for labor market information from economic developers and other interested parties.

3. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB plans to increase NCWorks brand awareness at the local level (consult NCWorks Commission new 2021 Strategic Plan).

Rivers East maintains a strong social media presence, having accounts on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Information is also posted on the Board's website and shared on the various social media posts. The WDB forwards Press Releases to the local news outlets requesting the information to be shared. In addition, Local Area staff including Center staff participate and present at various partner agencies and Chamber events, including attending local festivals. The WDB also had professional outreach materials printed that are used by all staff and distributed throughout the communities for universal brand recognition.

4. Describe how the Local Area WDB and the partners identify and address local challenges for job growth and business expansions.

Rivers East Workforce Development Business Services Department coordinates employer outreach through a network of agency partners. The information is shared between the local K-12 Education System, Community College System, local, state and regional Economic Developers, NCWorks Career Center Managers, and the Workforce Development Board, which are all vital points of contact for employers to share needs associated with engaging talent for new and existing employment opportunities. The coordination of services is dependent upon which partner agency is notified of an employer need, and which partner is needed to help the employer satisfy the need. Once the point of contact is made other agency partners are engaged to deliver the needed services to help employers bring economic prosperity to the region. Extensive collaboration between economic development and workforce development is ongoing and aligns with the local area strategic plan to develop Business Advisory Councils in each county. Recent requirements issued by the Board of Education have mandated that each K-12 Career and Technical Education Director have an advisory board to include local area agencies and business leaders. This mandate has allowed for the proliferation of Business Advisory Councils throughout the east. Currently there are four such advisory council in the Rivers East Workforce Development Board local area.

RAMP East is a great example of how two workforce boards have partnered with economic developers and K-12 school systems in a 10 county area, along with 8 community colleges to address an anticipated need due to exponential growth in the area of Advanced Manufacturing.

Communities across North Carolina are developing great 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.

5. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB provides new and innovative solutions to support the growth of the local workforce system.

From building a Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan, providing career awareness in Advanced Manufacturing, providing teachers hands on experiences in local industry, and improving our

outreach, tools, technology and staff, the Rivers East WDB is always looking for ways to grow our horizons.

As an example of our innovation, we have provided Virtual Career Fair throughout the pandemic, and added text messaging services in our region, and are the only region in the state to have a collaborative team of partners working together to develop lesson plans which can be used by K-12, community college, community based organizations, Center and partner staff to teach “job getting” skills, and to soon include “job keeping” skills. In addition, we are the only WDB in the state to currently have a Golden Leaf Grant focused on educating students, parents and teachers about local manufacturing careers. We are currently implementing a new Virtual Service Delivery system to elevate services provided to our customers by phone, text, and chat to ensure all customers have consistent access to our services.

6. Is the Local Area WDB engaged in work-based learning? If so, please describe how the Local Area WDB is engaged in work-based learning projects with local employers.

Rivers East Workforce Development Board works through the NCWorks Career Centers and service providers to coordinate work-based learning with local area employers. These efforts are ongoing throughout the region and continue to be a supply source to employers of all sizes. The coordination and promotion of these opportunities are often extended through various partner agencies including economic development, Chamber of Commerce, Community College, HR groups and others. We are still working to improve our work based learning placement numbers back to pre-COVID numbers, as we understand its value and importance in helping our customers obtain meaningful sustainable wage jobs.

IV. 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 the XX date”.

1. Identify PY 2022 NCWorks Career Center location(s) including Tier 1, Tier 2, Affiliate, and Specialized 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 2022 NCWorks [Career Center Chart](#). [WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A) and (b)(1)(B)]
Name document: Local Area Name PY 2022 NCWorks Career Centers.

See attached: Rivers East WDB PY 2022 Career Centers

2. Provide the name(s) of the current service 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).

3. **The Rivers East WDB released a RFP for competitive procurement of Adult and Dislocated Service Provider and One-Stop Operator(s) on April 1, 2022 due April 30, 2022 following a vote by the local WDB at their March 9th meeting. Award was made at the May 11, 2022 meeting to award the**

contract to Career TEAM, LLC, following negotiation. The contract will be awarded for a two year period, with the option to extend a third year with satisfactory performance.

4. 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.

Rivers East WDB provides all services in Center using the Integrated Service Delivery model. Using an integrated staffing approach, outreach, intake, assessment(s), job search activities, and provision of labor market and career pathways information are provided by all staff. All staff are able to pre-screen for Title I eligibility for those interested in classroom or on-the-job training opportunities. If the customer elects to move into training services, Title I staff provide additional assessments to determine eligibility and suitability to receive additional services.

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

NCWorks Career Center staff will perform WIOA eligibility verification for all customers interested in or referred to training services. An interview, evaluation or assessment and career planning will determine the appropriate course of training for each customer. Through this process staff will determine if the customer:

- **Is unlikely to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wage comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;**
- **Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone, and**
- **Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.**

Training services will be provided either through an Individual Training Account (ITA) or through a training contract. Training services will be linked to in-demand employment opportunities in the local area or planning region or in a geographic area in which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. A list of training services and eligible training providers will be supplied to maximize customer choice, identify in-demand occupations, inform customers of relevant training provider performance, and coordinate to the greatest extent possible with other sources of assistance.

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

Follow-up services will be provided, as appropriate, for participants in adult or dislocated worker activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of employment. NCWorks Career Center staff will provide counseling regarding the workplace and labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance along with other Career Services as appropriate. Follow-up is provided in a variety of methods including by phone, text, e-mail or in person.

7. 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. Long after the initial start date does staff have full access to [NCWorks.gov](https://www.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, and inclusion.

NCWorks Career Center staff in each of our centers are trained according to the onboarding checklist established by the training entity prior to being granted full access to the NCWorks system. Title I staff receive at least 2 days of training from the Board's SuperUser, the Program Specialist. Title III staff receive training from the DWS Regional Analyst. All training is provided as soon as possible after hiring, normally within the first one to two weeks.

Training provided includes customer service training, labor market information, procedures for the NCWorks system, procedures for case management and documentation, Wagner-Peyser, and WIOA policies and procedures. In each of our centers, our Career Advisors serve all customers and provide Wagner-Peyser and basic career services. For new staff, training begins immediately and is continuous. All integrated service delivery staff receive training per the NCWorks Online onboarding checklist and using the Welcome to Workforce training available through the Training Center.

In addition, Local Area staff and the DWS Regional Analyst offer periodic on-site training, group training, and disseminate updated procedures via e-mail. Additional training is provided as needed utilizing the NCWorks Training Center to continuously improve their knowledge. In Rivers East, all Centers close at noon on the 2nd Friday of each month for Center Staff Training which is held collaboratively, by Center or via webinar. Examples of training include Disability awareness, Business services, Outreach opportunities, ISD, and Assessments such as E-skill and Traitify. This training, along with those listed above, will be held on an on-going basis to keep all staff current.

8. Briefly explain coordination with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services.

While in the Rivers East WDB area, there is currently little to no TAA activity, the programs have a history of working together to mutually assist the participant, maximize resources and prevent duplication. Through dual-enrollment, the participant can receive their weekly benefit from TAA, along with receiving assistance with tuition, books, fees, supplies, transportation, child care and other supportive services. Ultimately, the two programs will work together to determine which combination of services best fits the individual's needs and which program can provide the maximum benefit to the participant.

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

While our region has no bases, we are located within an hours drive of multiple active bases. One of the primary goals for Veterans exiting the service is to find meaningful employment in their local-area or hometown. As part of the Northeast Regional Collaboration, through the NCWorks Career Centers and as part of the Integrated Service Delivery System, all Centers are required to provide

a 24-hour hold on job positing to allow for the veterans' preference before posting the notice to the general public.

Through the NCWorks Career Centers, staff is available to assist exiting military, veterans, and military spouses with their employment and training needs. From entry into the Career Center, veterans are made to feel welcome as they are assessed, and directed to the appropriate veteran's staff who offer one-on-one career counseling services when needed. In addition to promoting hiring veterans through our NCWorks Career Center and partners, other methods used to promote the hiring of military veterans is addressed through our strong ties to Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Community College, and Veteran Services partners who actively market the military and the skills they bring to the region's employers. Additionally, several programs are in place to focus on creating an easier transition from military to civilian life; tools like the NC4VETS Resource Guides and GI Jobs magazines found in our NCWorks Career Center and countless tools such as, My Next Move for Veterans and Military Skill Translator, are on NCWorks Online to assist veterans in showing how their military skills can convert into civilian skills needed to find employment.

Our career center staff work with veterans and have the tools needed to assist them with military skills translation. However, we also have two Veterans focused staff positions in our Career Centers devoted to assisting Veterans with their employment needs. The Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs Specialists (DVOPs) assists all Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment to help them overcome their barriers and develop a plan to help them find meaningful employment. In addition, the DVOPs may assist with resume and cover letter writing and preparing them for interviews. The Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) visits with local businessmen and women, Human Resource Managers and Hiring Officials in Northeastern North Carolina Area to promote the hiring of Veterans. The LVER is involved in the community with the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Developers and Veteran Organizations to create Job Fairs and Veteran events. In the NCWorks Career Center the LVER trains the career center staff on assisting Veterans and offering Priority of Service.

10. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Center serve persons with disabilities.

All of the Centers in the region are programmatically and physically accessible to persons with disabilities. All Center staff have received Unconscious Bias training as well as Vocational Rehabilitation's Windmills Training. In addition, through the Center Enhancement Grant, the Board has purchased multiple assistive technology tools for each center to be installed and training received in June. Each Center is equipped with an adjustable height desk, armed desk chair, roller mouse, e-z see keyboard, pocket talker, smart pen, pen reader, and pen friend, as recommended by the NCDHHS Assistive Technology Center.

11. 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.

NCWorks Center staff and Rivers East WDB staff collaborate to coordinate outreach to local employers. All services are recorded in NCWorks Online, so staff are easily able to reference last contact date and related case notes. A shared database has been created in the Pitt County Center to ensure all outreach is documented properly to maximize resources and prevent duplication of services. Consistent communication is key.

12. 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)]
13. **In Rivers East, the Career Advisors in each of our centers serve all customers and provide Wagner-Peyser, Adult, and Dislocated Worker services, and provides limited information regarding unemployment insurance. All staff conducts EAIs and designated staff delivers RESEA services. The DWS Regional Analyst offers periodic on-site training, group training, and disseminate updated procedures via e-mail concerning UI. The Analyst regularly attends Center Manager meetings, shares updates and addresses any questions/issues.**
14. Attach a flowchart for services – flowchart must include:
- initial one-on-one interviews with customers,
 - NCWorks.gov dual registration,
 - skills assessments, and
 - determination of the need for further services.

Name document: Rivers East Workforce Development Board Services Flowchart 2022.

See attached: Rivers East WDB Services Flowchart 2022

15. Attach the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Area WDB and partners concerning operation of the NCWorks Career Center system. [WIOA Section 121(b) (A (iii))] Name document: Rivers East Workforce Development Board NCWorks Career Center MOU.

See attached: Rivers East WDB NCWorks Career Center MOU

16. Describe the Local Area WDB’s method for providing oversight to include:
- 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
 - the roles and any resource contributions of the NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 121(a)(3)] [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(D)]

The Rivers East WDB has a standing NCWorks Committee which oversees the operations of the NCWorks Career Centers in the region. Performance goals are set at the beginning of each program year and are tracked with monthly reports going to the Center Managers and bi-monthly reports going to the NCWorks Committee and full board. In addition, the NCWorks Committee has established a monitoring tool to perform in person reviews of the Centers once COVID restrictions ease and we return to in person meetings.

A “Customer Service Feedback Initiative” was developed in November 2020, tested in December and began full use in January 2021. This is a text based system where a customer can text in a letter grade to rate the services they received. Immediately a link is shared for them to complete a short survey as well. After the first successful quarter, we had only received A & B letter grades. If we were to receive a D or F, the customer would be contacted by the Center Manager to address the issue or concern and work with the customer to resolve it.

The MOU and Resource Sharing Agreement outlines the required monetary contributions of Center partners, as required by law. Outside of that, the Board enters into agreement with other partners on a case by case basis.

17. 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, and programs carried out by NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(21)]

Due to COVID, multiple new technologies have been integrated into daily Center functions. Text Request is being used for information and program inquiry, appointment scheduling, access to local events such as job fairs and specific training opportunities, as well as customer service feedback. Premiere Virtual Career Fair software and Zoom webinar are being used to promote employment opportunities and community resource offerings.

18. How does the Local Area WDB use data to monitor and track performance measures for serving individuals and business? Be specific about what systems are used, how regularly the Local Area WDB looks at these sources, and how the Local Area WDB might change the strategies based on the data.
- The respective Program Specialist generates reports for the WIOA enrolled participants receiving training services monthly. These reports are reviewed monthly and corrective action performed as needed. All participants that have completed goals/obtained employment or are not actively receiving services are required to be submitted for exit. Employment and wages are reviewed. After the operator records exit information into NCWorks, the SuperUser reviews the data to ensure it is recorded correctly. The NCWorks reports and FutureWorks data are reviewed monthly and/or quarterly for current program year performance and performance year performance. Programs are monitored to ensure all services provided are properly recorded.**

V. Employer Services

1. Please briefly describe the efforts of the Business Services Representative and/or Employer Services staff in the following areas:
- Utilizing regional and local employer data to inform priorities.
 - Making regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services.
 - 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)].
 - Including Historically Underutilized Businesses.

The priority of the Business Services Staff is to assist employers in a coordinated process to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce. The goal is to help employers connect with job seekers by engaging employers in the use of the Workforce Development Board and NCWorks Career Center services. Services may include referrals to appropriate partner agencies and explaining services that are available to them through the integrated service delivery system. The program's services available to employers include virtual recruitment events, on-site incumbent worker training, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training for new hires. Other services related to employer engagement include encouraging employers to use NCWorks online to post job orders and connecting employers with the appropriate NCWorks Career Center staff capable of providing the needed services. The goal of the Integrated Service Delivery System - Business Services is to offer seamless business services by providing the best-in-class customer service to our internal and external customers.

Business Service staff played a key role in gaining employer support of our Career Pathways work, and working with key partners like K-12, community colleges, economic developers and others. They provide local labor market data to the board, local economic developers and others regularly, pulling from multiple data sources.

2. 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. 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)]

Rivers East WDB staff, along with NCWorks Center staff, provides a multitude of services to the businesses in all five counties of the region including one-on-one consultations, incumbent worker training, development of collaborative recruitment plans, valuable labor market information, and connections with appropriate partners. We have collaborated with Northeastern and Turning Point WDBs on On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, RAMP East, and Career Pathways.

In addition, NCWorks Center staff focus on promoting the NCWorks Career Centers and its services to local businesses, along with the promotion and coordination of placements for work-based learning. NCWorks Center Managers and designated staff are also expected to provide services to businesses.

Labor market information is used regularly to provide data to multiple partners for discussion and implementation of plans to inform priorities. We share a labor force that is accustomed to crossing county lines and traveling more than 45 minutes each way to their place of employment. This requires cross collaboration with multiple boards to deliver such services as On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and mass recruitment efforts. Employer demands do not stop at county lines, and the ability to work well together has proven to be a great asset to our boards for improving economic opportunity of the region's constituents.

3. 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)].

Rivers East WDB staff partners with multiple entities to provide collaborative plans and solutions to local employer needs. This includes regional and local efforts to match employers with the right services at the right time. We provide materials and training to our local partners on our programs and services in order to help us connect at the right time and service. Examples include working with the local Customized Industry Training staff and NCSU IES partners to maximize impact by discussing funding options to supplement or fill the gaps in new and existing plans. We also partners with SBTDC and our local Small Business Centers to promote entrepreneurship. The Mid-East Commission, our administrative entity, leads the effort to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as required by EDA and Board staff along with Board members

serve on the update committees along with local economic developers, partner agencies, and local employers.

VI. 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 2021 and prior Program Years. (Reports available via Future Works)
 - a. What are some of the factors in the Local Area WDB that impact performance levels both positively and negatively? Be sure to consider factors such as the unemployment rate, factory closures/openings, economic development recruitment, retention and expansion efforts, regional industry growth priorities, and weather events and natural disasters that may have impacted the area, as well as internal operational factors that may impact the Local Area WDB's performance.

(Note: Provide at least two examples of positive factors and two examples of negative factors that have impacted the performance levels in your Local Area WDB, with an explanation of each).

The primary factors that impact local performance include the unemployment rate, community college attendance rate, number of new and expanding businesses, number of layoffs, and barriers to employment. The unemployment rate is lower than prior years which is positive for our citizens and improves the employment rate. This may also increase the amount of earnings with more full time employment and a higher entry level wage rate. The community college attendance rate has significantly dropped. This has caused a drop in the credential attainment rate of individuals attending and completing training. This could be a positive factor that more individuals are entering the workforce but also could be a negative impact of less skilled workers with credentials and certifications. New and expanding business are attracted to areas with a skilled workforce and quality employment pool.

The COVID 19 Pandemic continues to have a far-reaching impact on the local area performance measures for PY 21 and 22. With local unemployment numbers being lower than many areas, the candidate pool available for employment and training remains limited, our labor force participation rate has dropped and often this segment of the workforce will have more barriers to achieve sustainable employment.

With new and expanding businesses, the opportunity for local employment increases, however, the wages offered are not always at or above the median wage required to meet performance. The recent losses of higher paying jobs in our local area have certainly impacted performance and the COVID 19 pandemic will exacerbate the losses.

- b. Discuss whether or not participants that have been served and/or enrolled as a result of COVID-19 differ in characteristics as compared to participants who have historically been served by the Local Area WDB. If so, how do these differences impact service delivery and performance?

We have seen very few participants served and/or enrolled as a result of COVID, outside of EAI and RESEA claimants. It seems those few that are making career changes are focused on short term skill attainment that results in more sustainable wages and in demand jobs, such as truck driving.

- c. Discuss how your Local Area WDB's industries and business sector have been impacted by COVID-19.

(Note: Include which industries and businesses have been permanently affected, which are recovering or perhaps are expected to recover, and how these industry changes may impact how the Local Area approaches serving its participants).

Our region was very fortunate and saw minimal impacts from layoffs resulting in WARN notices being issued. While our manufacturers are still struggling to get parts/pieces/products to keep production in full swing, most have been able to keep their workforce busy during this time. The largest impacts in our area have been on small businesses. The service industry has seen the largest impact, with restaurants, fast food, and retail, like many other businesses continue to struggle to find workers. While for some skilled positions a skill gap remains in finding qualified workers, it seems the issue now can be best described as a "will gap"- as many are not willing to return to the workforce for various reasons.

2. What strategies and methods are in place to maintain or improve performance?

(Note: 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 reports are reviewed? Are Future Works reports used? If so, how often? How are staff held accountable? How often is training provided to staff)?

Consistent program oversight is a primary duty of the Rivers East Program Specialist, along with the WDB Director. The ability to interpret indicators to monitor the progress of the WIOA programs based on performance criteria and attainment of set goals is indicative of the regions past and future performance goals. Monthly desk monitoring is performed on program performance and contractor monthly reimbursement forms including line item budget tracking of training expenditure to ensure the appropriate percentage of expenditures.

Reports are run in NCWorks and distributed to operators to monitor performance. The Super User assists in recording/correcting data as applicable. Deficiencies and nonattainment of LA goals are addressed with the WDB and operator. Areas of performance are addressed, and training is provided at quarterly training sessions. Progress on indicators is also monitored through Futureworks.

Technical assistance is provided on a one-on-one basis in support of attainment of performance measures is also provided in areas such as: data entry and accurate recording of services, improvement in assessment and suitability screening, timely follow up, assistance with overcoming barriers, maintaining contact, career counseling, reporting of all supplemental data in NCWorks, increased coordination of services with other entities, and employability skills training.

It is with a keen eye on the details and business instincts that the Workforce Development Board will work diligently to ensure that all federal and state performance outcomes are met.

3. In the event the Local Area WDB is not on track to meet yearly performance indicator goals, please discuss what corrective actions/steps would be undertaken to address this situation.

(**Note:** 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, strategies for training and/or addressing potential issues, and follow-up accountability measures).

Board staff meet at least monthly with the contractor's local management team. Performance is discussed and reports are shared. Best practices are shared internally and from other local areas. Performance consist of number of customers and participants served, services and activities provided, and outcomes of credentials and employment. NCWorks Master Summary reports are used to monitor center services. Enrollment, credential and FutureWorks reports are used to monitor participants served, credential attainment and the employment rate.

All parties are aware that all contracts are performance based, and appropriate action will be taken as needed for consistent poor performance. The service provider must submit corrective action steps within two weeks of the meeting to addressed program deficiencies. Performance is monitored and reviewed monthly or after quarterly training for improvement and addressed at the next monthly review.

WDB staff provide quarterly training for all contractor staff, Center Managers are provided performance reports, and all Center staff receive additional training on the performance measures and the impact each staff and customers has on attaining overall performance. Additional training sessions on specific topics are scheduled monthly by contractor staff, and WDB staff provide additional training as needed, in addition to one-on-one technical assistance and caseload reviews. The Region is focused on providing staff the training and tools required to provide excellent customer service and continuous engagement with each customer until the time of employment and after to ensure retention.

In addition, the Board reviews performance at every meeting and performance issues are discussed. As an example, the Board will request the contractor submit a Performance Improvement Plan for enhanced accountability, reviews the plan once cleared by staff, and reviews the outcomes/activities at the next meeting to ensure the plan is actively in motion.

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.

(**Note:** This question should address how frequently [monthly, quarterly, etc.] performance information is shared and by what method/medium [e.g. print-out, electronically, verbally through meetings, etc.], how the performance information shared may differ for the various levels of staff at the Local Area WDB, and specifically for case managers, how performance data is shared with them and how they, in turn, use this information in their roles.)

WDB staff provide performance information to Center Managers for distribution to all Center staff. Staff receive additional training on the performance measures and the impact each staff and customers has on attaining overall performance. Specific contractor performance data is shared with their local management team and directly with local career advisors.

Performance data and enrollment reports are updated and shared with each Committee, the Board, and contractor at least bi-monthly. This data is, in turn, shared with local Career Advisors to drive actions and corrections to increase the performance. An example would be credential rates. If a contractor is not currently meeting their credential rate, board staff work closely with the contractor to follow up and identify credentials received but not properly recorded.

5. The Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) measure is a real-time indicator denoting participants who are making demonstrable progress on a track toward Credential Attainment. Please describe how the Local Area WDB makes use of the information the MSG measure provides as a means of ensuring the Local Area WDB achieves its Credential Attainment indicator goal.

(Note: For this question, describe the methods and/or strategies in using the MSG measure as a means of tracking Credential Attainment. Who is responsible for tracking the MSG performance indicator? Are the Roster Reports in FutureWorks utilized? If so, how? Who is this information provided to, and then used by, career advisors, the Local Area WDB, or other staff.)

Measurable Skills Gains helps to document incremental progress of individuals while in training. Successful completion of skill gains document satisfactory progress while enrolled in education, which helps lead to the completion of training and the attainment of credentials. Tracking progression through training and recognizing skill gains help our career advisors track progress and continually motivate participants toward the end goal of attainment and employment. Also, by tracking skill gains, other assistance needed to achieve successful completion is more easily identified (such as tutoring). By tracking measurable skill gains in real-time, credential attainment is more easily managed, additional services are offered when needed and we are able to better set our participants up to achieve their goals and meet our performance goals.

6. Describe how and when eligible training providers are reviewed at the local level and how customers are informed they have choices in choosing their providers.

Rivers East's goal is to offer a wide variety of training programs and occupational choices that are in demand and align with our established career pathways. Current, along with any additional providers, are evaluated based on demonstrated performance regarding credentialing/licensure rates and employment rates along with the capacity to provide comprehensive training at a reasonable cost. The Performance & Accountability Manager, along with the Director and Business Services Manager review all new providers or programs for relevance to the local labor market prior to approval. Providers are reviewed every two years on program outcomes including overall program completion rate, WIOA completion rate, and training completers and noncompleters that enter employment. This list of programs by provider is shared with and approved by the WDB.

A full list of eligible providers and programs is available in each Center and NCWorks Online. The list is reviewed with any customer who expresses a need and/or interest in training. Rivers East most often utilizes the local community college and university system, along with private providers for classroom training. Local area staff will continue to ensure a significant number of competent providers are available to maximize customer choice.

7. Define what "significant number of competent providers" means in the Local Area WDB. Include whether the Local Area WDB uses more strict performance measures to evaluate eligible training providers. Attach if a separate policy. *Rivers East Workforce Development Board ETPL Policy.*

The board defines "significant number of competent providers" in the local area based upon the following types of training providers that are located within the local area who are subject to the

ETPL requirements in order to receive WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide training services to eligible adult and dislocated worker individuals through ITAs:

- 1. institutions of higher education that provide a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;**
- 2. apprenticeship programs registered by the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship;**
- 3. public or private training providers, including joint labor-management organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs, and occupational/technical training; and**
- 4. providers of adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with occupational skills training.**

Based upon this criteria, the local area has determined that a significant number of competent providers are available within the local area (and adjoining local areas) to deliver WIOA funded training services to eligible Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth.

Customer choice is key. A full list of eligible providers and programs is available in each Center. The list is reviewed with any customer who expresses a need and/or interest in training. Rivers East utilizes the local community college and university system, along with private colleges when available. Current along with any additional providers are evaluated based on demonstrated performance regarding credentialing/licensure rates and employment rates along with the capacity to provide comprehensive training.

See Attachment: Rivers East WDB ETPL Policy

VII. 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]

Rivers East WDB EO Officer provides yearly training to all staff (Center and Board) on all EO policies. In addition, Center staff have completed “Windmills Training” and unconscious bias training.

2. Attach the Local Area WDB’s current Equal Opportunity (EO) Complaint Grievance Procedure to address EO requirements [29 CFR 38.35]. Name document: *Rivers East Workforce Development Board EO Complaint Grievance Procedure*.

See Attached: Rivers East WDB EO Complaint Grievance Procedure

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

The EO officer reviews and updates the policy yearly and remains abreast of policy updates through review of federal and state provided guidance.

VIII. 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)]

Strengths

- **Occupational Skills Programs (ITAs) – ITA services are delivered through the NCWorks Career Center WIOA program providers. Training outcomes are monitored by the Rivers East Workforce Development staff, and recommendations to achieve expenditure goals are made throughout the program year.**
- **On the Job Training Program – A portion of the local area’s county budgets is allocated for On-the-Job Training contracts. The NCWorks Career Center Committee reviews/monitors the progress of the program and makes recommendations to the Center and program operator on how to improve their level of service if needed.**
- **Short-Term Training offerings - Short-term training is central to the Integrated Delivery Service System and is systematically implemented as a second service strategy in each career center. Short-Term training providers are approved by the Rivers East Workforce Development Board Staff, and may vary by location. The results of the training are monitored by the NCWorks Career Center Managers and the Rivers East MIS Specialist.**
- **Vocational Continuing Education Programs – Vocational programs are part of the Integrated Service Delivery system. These services are part of the second service strategy and are usually delivered through the community college system.**
- **Career Pathways work (Business, Community Colleges, CTE, and Economic Development). Rivers East Workforce Development Board has completed four Career Pathways; Health Care, Business Support Services, Advanced Manufacturing and Agriscience/Biotechnology. A part of the strategy is to bring together Workforce Development, Business, Community Colleges, Career and Technical Education, and Economic Developers from the Northeast Region.**
- **Customized Training – The Rivers East WDB continues to partner with Customized Training through our local community colleges. We have partnered to offer pre-hire classes, job profiling, and recruitment planning. In addition, we continue assist with with pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships as part of a continuous business engagement strategy for the Rivers East Workforce Development Board.**

Weakness

There is a lack of transportation and internet access in our area. Large rural counties do not have transit systems. In rural areas customers rely on libraries for internet access. The Outreach Coordinator has worked with customers to access NCWorks services and assisted with job search and staff promote the mobile NCWorks app when possible. Additional services are being added as part of the Center Reorganization plan, including more community based services and the addition of a Virtual Services option.

2. 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.
 - a. Identify any service provider contract extensions.

At the March 11, 2022 WDB Meeting, the Board voted to put the Adult, Dislocated Worker and One-Stop program operations out for bid. An RFP was released on April 1, 2022 and was due April 30, 2022. A third party reviewer was procured to rate the proposals. At the May 11, 2022 WDB Meeting the Board reviewed the results and awarded the contract to Career TEAM, LLC beginning July 1, 2022 for a two year period.

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.

3. Provide the date and process for when the competitive procurement of the One-Stop Operator(s) occurred. Include the expected length of the contract (one-four years).

The Rivers East WDB released a RFP for competitive procurement of Adult and Dislocated Service Provider and One-Stop Operator(s) on April 1, 2022 due April 30, 2022. An award was made at the May 11, 2022 WDB meeting. The contract was awarded to Career TEAM, LLC for a two year period, with the option to extend a third year with satisfactory performance.

4. Attach the Local Area WDB's Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider list effective July 1, 2022 using the PY 2022 [Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List](#) provided. Name document: *Rivers East Workforce Development Board PY 2022 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List*.

See attached: Rivers East WDB PY 2022 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 high level goals, outreach strategies, services delivery, and expected outcomes.

The vision promoted by the Rivers East Workforce Development Board is holistic in scope and principal. The primary objective is to maximize the WIOA services offered to our customers. This is accomplished by utilizing a network of public and private entities to build collaborations and leveraging resources to meet the needs of our customers by establishing and maintaining a synergetic relationship between education, economic development, and workforce development. These relationships, along with those of our other partnering agencies, help extend the outreach of the WIOA programs and Career Center services provided into our local communities.

To improve integrated service delivery we must provide 21st century training for all front-line staff and partners that will imbue innovation and real-world tactics to effectively serve our customers. It is imperative to address our internal skill gaps by using proven career planning and business development procedures to gain the trust of those we serve. To achieve performance measures with integrated service delivery, a more comprehensive and individualized level of service and coaching is required. It is a paradigm shift from referring every customer that enters the career center to an employer or to classroom training. A strong focus is placed on identified high-growth industry sectors within our region. Career Development training is a science that uses the aforementioned holistic approach to assisting our customers achieve their work and life goals. Furthermore, by training our workforce staff in the use of career development planning will demonstrate to our private sector customers that we are capable of helping them recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce, and in turn increase performance outcomes.

The plan to provide more specialized training for the Integrated Service Delivery Staff will improve the odds of the desired outcomes as set forth in the WIOA performance measures. It will allow for innovative actions to build a destination where business and industry desire to come BSRause of the primary resource needed to make their dreams a reality – our existing and emerging workforce is the resource the seek, it is our responsibility to participate in their dream.

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)]

Rivers East WDB has a Priority of Service policy to ensure priority to targeted groups, including low-income individuals. Any individual may receive career services, but only those qualified as low income will receive training services. The only exception to this is those who were enrolled under Finish Line Grant, which used basic adult eligibility. That percentage is tracked and reviewed at least quarterly to ensure compliance.

7. Describe follow-up services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers.

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.

Follow-up services will be provided, as appropriate, for participants in adult or dislocated worker activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of employment. NCWorks Career Center staff will provide counseling regarding the workplace and labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance along with other Career Services as appropriate. Follow-up is provided in a variety of methods including by phone, text, e-mail or in person.

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

Formal programmatic and fiscal monitoring occurs one each year, normally near the mid-point of the program year. Each monitoring is completed using an established monitoring tool and includes a review of program management, relevant documentation, internal monitoring, administrative systems, and established policies and procedures.

Programmatic monitoring includes a review of a sample of participants (new, active and exits) in NCWorks Online to review eligibility, required documents, correct reporting of activity codes and case notes. The results of this online review are shared with the career advisor and their immediate supervisor during an in person visit. This monitoring is performed by the Board's Program Specialist.

Fiscal monitoring includes a review of required bonding, insurance policies, participant benefits, budgets, monthly expenditure reports, fiscal correspondence, staff payroll and travel, indirect, program income, profit and asset/property management. A sample of expenditures is pulled from the general ledger to match with documentation in NCWorks to ensure policies and procedures are being followed. This monitoring is performed by the Board's Compliance Manager.

In addition, beginning in PY20 a 100% review has been added so all files with an associated payment are monitored each month to ensure eligibility is complete, and all activities are updated and correct. The contractor is provided a list of corrections needed and the invoice is held until all corrections are made.

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 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	For Persons with Disabilities?	Brief Assessment/Model Used	Success Rating
Job Shadowing	Yes	Based on Traitify results	Yes
Paid Work Experience	Yes	Based on Traitify results and chosen career pathway	Yes
On-the-Job Training	Yes	Based on Traitify results and chosen career pathway	Yes
Industry Tours	Yes	Based on career interests	Yes

2. Describe how the Local Area WDB's broad Young Adult (NextGen) Program design is unique to include:

- a. providing objective assessments;

An objective assessment will be administered or obtain a thorough and in-depth assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each participant at the time of enrollment into WIOA activities. Assessment should be carefully planned and administered to collect specific, relevant information leading to an appropriate mix and sequence of services and interventions. Initial/entry assessment will include: basic skills, work readiness skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, barriers to employment, family situation, occupational interests and aptitudes, financial resources and needs, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. This information should be acquired through various means, including, but not limited to, standardized tests, structured interviews, behavioral observations, inventories, career guidance instruments, performance-based or competency-based assessment tools, and where the information is current and reliable, assessment results from another service provider (school or agency). Rivers East requires use of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for basic skills testing, and assessment tools for assessing career interests and aptitudes.

Assessment instruments, especially on-line tools, used to measure learning styles, life skills, etc. must be adequately researched by WIOA staff prior to use to determine that they are objective, and conform to widely accepted standards for validity and reliability, WIOA staff must have adequate training on the administration, scoring, and proper use of test results. Information collected from the assessment process serves as the basis for individualized service planning in order to achieve the educational and employment outcomes desired for each participant. Assessment should be an ongoing process throughout participation in WIOA in order to track progress and to measure and record personal growth, skill goal attainment, and achievement of planned objectives for each participant.

- b. supportive services needed; and

Supportive services will be provided as needed to include: linkages to community services, assistance with books, fees, school supplies and items for postsecondary classes, assistance with transportation/travel funds, child care and dependent care, payment and fees for employment and training related applications, testing, clinical and certifications, assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work related tools, referrals to health care, housing and legal aid services, reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and youth incentives. An assessment will be performed to identify the participant's needs. Some supportive services will be provided through referrals and some with WIOA funds.

- c. developmental needs of each participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(A)]

An Individual Employment Plan/Individual Service Strategy/Individual Service Strategy will be developed and updated as needed to provide a written, individualized plan of services and activities, including appropriate learning objectives and goals. The service strategy is based on the needs of the participant and is directly linked to one or more of the performance indicators. This is a plan of action to set goals which address their educational goals, performance goals, learning objectives and provide preparation for unsubsidized employment. Goals, objectives and services are linked to the participant's career pathway.

Comprehensive case management provides staff support and guidance to address needs and barriers, solve problems, and assist in attainment of the identified goals and objectives.

3. 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?

Each youth enrolled into WIOA will have a written, individualized plan of services and activities (an appropriate mix of the fourteen required program elements), including appropriate learning objectives and goals, based on the entry assessment information. The Individual Employment Plan/Individual Service Strategy (IEP/ISS) is intended to provide in-depth information about a youth, both history and present circumstances, in order to create a plan of action agreed upon by the young person and staff working together. The service plan should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the youth as they move through WIOA. Each service plan will outline the appropriate mix and sequence of services, indicate the rationale for decision-making, and include appropriate achievement objectives and expected timeframes. The IEP/ISS will be developed in partnership with each youth; will be client-centered and flexible in accommodating changes in plans as youth's needs and situations change. Each IEP/ISS will identify an educational goal, performance goal, selected learning objectives, and provide preparation for unsubsidized

employment. The IEP/ISS will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement, entry into employment in a targeted industry, and continued learning and development. The goal is to accurately evaluate youth in order to develop an appropriate service strategy to meet his/her individual needs. Assessment should occur throughout the program, at time of enrollment and then at appropriate intervals to document participant progress.

A quarterly review of the IEP/ISS will be made to evaluate the progress of each participant in meeting the objectives of the service strategy. The participant's progress in acquiring basic skills, work readiness skills and occupational skills, as appropriate, and the adequacy of the supportive services provided will also be included in the periodic evaluation. The IEP/ISS will be used as the basic instrument for the LA to document the appropriateness of the decisions made concerning the combination of services for the participant, including referrals to other programs for specified activities. Training provided by the service provider should be in accordance with the IEP/ISS. The IEP/ISS is an informal "contract" between the WIOA service provider and the client. The proposed contractor must assist the client in attaining the goals set forth in the IEP/ISS.

BSRause WIOA resources are generally insufficient to provide the full range of training or support services identified as needed in the IEP/ISS, every reasonable effort must be made to arrange basic, work readiness and occupational skills training as well as supportive services through other community resources for participants. WIOA service providers shall utilize the IEP/ISS document in NCWorks Online.

4. 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 goal of the youth program is to assist the youth in attaining their educational and employment goal. A high school diploma or equivalent is a key component of ensuring their attainment of sustainable employment. Career Advisors often visit students at their local high school or community college location to verify and encourage attendance. In addition, recruitment events are often held in these locations for these targeted audiences.

To ensure individuals are active in attaining their educational goal, we define that they must be making satisfactory progress in their education component to be allowed to participate in work experience. While the ultimate experience is a combination of both components, we realize the paid work experience component is often needed leverage to ensure the credential completion. In addition, our region uses a tiered work experience approach and youth are not allowed to proceed to Tier II work experience placement until they have completed their high school diploma or its equivalent.

5. Describe how follow-up services will be provided for (NextGen) youth.

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

Follow-up services will include:

- Leadership development and supportive service activities;
- Regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise;
- Assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education;

- **Work-related peer support groups;**
- **Adult mentoring; and**
- **Services necessary to ensure the success of a youth in employment and/or post-secondary education.**

Follow-up services will be provided in person, by phone, email, text or by mail, as appropriate.

6. Where does the Local Area WDB plan to serve the young adults (NextGen): NCWorks Career Centers Tier 1, Tier 2, Specialized Centers, Services Provider Offices, or Hybrid situations? Explain if it is both NCWorks Career Centers and Provider Offices or some other option.

NCWorks Career Centers -Tier 1 in Beaufort, Hertford, Martin and Pitt. In Bertie, Youth area served inside Martin Community Colleges Bertie Campus on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

7. Attach the Local Area WDB Youth Service Provider's chart, effective July 1, 2022, using the PY 2022 [Youth Service Provider List](#) provided. Complete each column to include specifying where Youth Services are provided. Name the document: *PY 2022 Rivers East Workforce Development Board Youth Service Provider List*.

See attached: PY 2022 Rivers East WDB Youth Service Provider List

8. Provide the date and process for when the competitive procurement of the Youth Programs was completed, to include any contract extensions.

At the May 12, 2021 WDB Meeting, the Board voted to put the Youth program operations out for bid. An RFP was released on June 1, 2021 and was due June 30, 2021. A third party reviewer was procured to rate the proposals. At the July 14, 2021 special called WDB Meeting the Board reviewed the results and voted to select Career TEAM, LLC as the service provider(s) for the remainder of PY21. The contract was awarded for a two year period, with the option to extend a third year with satisfactory performance. The WDB voted at their March 9, 2022 meeting to keep the current contractor through June 30, 2023 pending submission of a Performance Improvement Plan. The plan was reviewed and accepted at the May 11, 2022 WDB meeting.

9. 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. [WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A)] (CPS 09-2021)

Programs must be designed to serve and expend 75% or more on out-of-school youth and up to 25% in-school youth. There is a minimum expenditure and enrollment level for out-of-school youth.

Outreach and recruitment must be held at locations and with agencies that serve out-of-school youth, such as, but not limited to community based organizations, community colleges, housing authority, faith based, DSS, health department, and local juvenile justice or other defender services. Recruitment events are held at locations where out-of-school youth frequent. In addition, social media and technology tools are provided to allow potential participants to engage in services from wherever they may be.

10. 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)

Rivers East requires at least 30% of all funds are budgeted for work based learning opportunities such as paid work experience and on-the-job training. Expenditures are monitored monthly and reports provided to the Committee and Board bi-monthly. To support placement in work based learning opportunities, the Business Services Representatives works closely with the Career Advisor to track participants, their career goal and progress. When ready, they work together to secure appropriate work based learning sites for the youth to get hands on experience in their desired field of work.

The impacts of COVID have created a challenge the last 2 years in meeting the required 20% and dedicated staff time has been added to help meet the required 20% expenditure.

11. 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, and if so, state which level and how many?

The current Youth provider has a Business Services Representative assigned to the Rivers East region for a set percentage of time, providing services virtually and in person.

12. Does the Local Area WDB have a re-entry program for young adults? If yes, please briefly describe it.

N/A

13. 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 local Workforce Development Board meets at least yearly with the AEFLA staff from each community college to discuss outreach and recruitment. Many of the colleges have set aside time and/or space for Youth staff to meet with potential participants on campus.

Vocational Rehabilitation sends their Employment Specialist to several of our Centers once a week to be available to customers. In addition, staff make referrals to VR and they refer individuals to the Center and specific programs for assistance. One of our Local Area staff serves on the Project SEARCH committee which is a partnership between Pitt County Schools, RHA/VR, and Vidant Health.

All participants in the youth program have access to all 14 program elements. Those in adult education are also "tracked" by career pathway and often lessons are taught with the practical hands on technique. Project based learning and workforce preparation are essential, and all of these tracks align with the established Career Pathways.

14. Specify if the Local Area WDB plans to offer incentives for (NextGen) youth.

If yes, attach the Youth Incentive Policy to 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: *Rivers East Workforce Development Board Youth Incentive Policy*.

Note: Federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs.

See attached: Rivers East WDB Youth Incentive Policy

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

N/A

16. 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)]

To prepare youth for unsubsidized employment, a multitude of services may be needed. Work Readiness training is a base needed to ensure they have the “soft skills” to not only get the job, but keep the job. In addition, leadership development opportunities help them learn to communicate, problem solve and work within a team. To ensure youth are aware of in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the local labor market, career awareness and job shadowing may be utilized. With 4 completed pathways including career ladders, youth can take their “interest” from Traitify and connect it to the education needed to get the job they want.

Employer engagement serves as a centerpiece in the development of effective career pathways and work based learning opportunities for youth. Rapport must be established with local and regional employers to promote in-demand occupations and to build connections between work and learning. We must engage industry and coordinate work-related activities for program participants. The primary role of the Contracted Business Services Representative (BSR) is to engage employers and secure work based learning opportunities including, but not limited to, internships, job shadowing, work experience, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship along with unsubsidized job placements for program participants. In order to assist with these placements, Career Advisors meet with the BSR to provide case load review information on a monthly basis including each participant's name, anticipated career path, and current status.

17. 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 to demonstrate partnerships and potential use of shared funding. [WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(A)] Name document: *Rivers East Workforce Development Board Youth Program Elements Chart*

See attached: Rivers East WDB Youth Program Elements Chart

18. 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.
- b. If yes, please provide a response to the following:
 - a) Provide the committee's purpose/vision.

The Youth/NEXTGEN committee will provide information and assist with planning, operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which shall include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in

serving eligible youth. Responsibilities include the following: development of portions of the local plan related to youth with co-design by youth and business leaders; recommendation of providers of youth activities to be competitively awarded contracts; coordination and oversight of youth activities in the area with input from youth; oversight of eligible providers of youth activities; establishment of linkages with educational agencies and other youth entities and leverage of non-WIOA resources; implementation of youth friendly and on time service interventions; establishment of rapid attachment to work for out of school youth with focus on retention and advancement to higher level jobs; focus on continuous improvement. This committee will also coordinate with other school-to-work programs (Career Pathways) and will develop strategies to impact the success of these programs and participate in coordinated analysis of efforts to comprehensively serve youth. The committee will designate a committee member(s) as liaison with other local school-to-work efforts.

b) Provide the committee’s top three goals or objectives for PY 2022.

- 1. Strngthen and improve work-based learning at each NextGen site—including identifying careers based on local labor market information and Traitify/Career Assessment Tool results.**
- 2. Innovative program design and implementation.**
- 3. Implement a system for continuous recruitment of clients to the program**

c) List of 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: *Rivers East Workforce Development Board Youth Committee Members*. [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)] and,

See attached: Rivers East WDB Youth Committee Members

c. Complete the following chart for the PY 2022 Youth Committee’s planned meeting schedule to include dates, time, and location. *[Expand form as needed.]*

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)
September 14, 2022	1:30pm	NC TeleCenter 405 E Boulevard, Williamston, NC (Large Training Room) Or via Zoom, with a call-in option
November 9, 2022		
January 11, 2023		
March 8, 2023		
May 10, 2023		

X. Local Area WDB Innovations

1. List additional funding received by the Local Area WDB to include special grants (Finish Line, Youth Initiative), NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) (disaster), YouthBuild, Foundations, NCWorks Commission, and outside funding to include a brief description of the source and the amount.

Grant Name/Kind	Brief Description	Beginning and End date	Source and Amount	Partner Organization (if applicable)
Finish Line Grant	Operations funds for the FLG initiative	7/1/2020-3/31/2022	4050-8137 \$ 45,000	
Enhancement Grant (Program)	Center Enhancement Grant	10/1/2019-6/30/2022	4050-8025 \$ 142,500	
Enhancement Grant (Admin)	Admin for Center Enhancement Grant	10/1/2019-6/30/2022	4050-8026 \$ 7,500	
Finish Line Grant- Roanoke Chowan CC	Program funding for the FLG initiative	07/01/2019-3/31/2022	4050-8072 \$ 21,599.68	
FLG- Martin CC	Program funding for the FLG initiative	07/01/2019-3/31/2022	4050-8073 \$ 6,328.67	
FLG- Beaufort CC	Program funding for the FLG initiative	07/01/2019-3/31/2022	4050-8074 \$ 20,175.87	
FLG- Pitt CC	Program funding for the FLG initiative	07/01/2019-3/31/2022	4050-8113 \$ 55,818.45	

2. Describe one of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising Adult/Dislocated Worker program practices that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

As part of the integrated service delivery model, a pre-screening form has been implemented to assist with quality referrals from internal and external staff. Those who pre-screen as potentially eligible are scheduled for orientation. A standard presentation was developed so any Center staff member can hold orientation sessions for those interested in enrollment into training services. Staff

then follow up with attendees on a one-on-one basis for eligibility and suitability discussions. In addition to providing the individual with an overview of the Center and all of its services, it has helped streamline the process and ensured everyone has access to and receives the same information across the region.

3. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's best or promising youth program practices that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

The youth program in our local area has really struggled during and post pandemic with enrollments and work based learning placements. A current focus is better integration with Title II for outreach and for provision of work readiness training, as required by both programs. This is still a work in progress, but with the addition of a Youth Program Specialist on the Board level, we expect great results from this enhanced partnership.

4. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's best or promising regional strategy that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

In response to COVID-19, we have expanded our virtual service options to include text options, as well as offering Virtual Career Fairs. Customer can text for appointments, job search inquiries, training opportunities and events like drive up application events or virtual career and community resource fairs. We have launched "Job Hub" as a text group where customers can sign up to receive notice of upcoming events and have added more drive up and in person job fair/application events in our Centers, increasing public awareness of the Center and its services.

5. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's innovative business services strategies. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

Rivers East continues to partner with economic developers, K-12 and community college partners to provide collaborative plans for our local employers. Current efforts are targeted mostly with manufacturing, but we hope to expand this effort to other sectors in the next year.

6. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's best or promising virtual services strategies that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

Virtual Services have allowed the Rivers East WDB to launch a new service delivery model in May 2022, reducing our Center operating hours to 2 days a week in 3 counties, and expanding our reach into our local communities. A key component to this new model will be the launch of a regional Virtual Services Center in June/July to serve customers where they are, regardless of limitations of transportation and internet access.

7. Describe how the Local Area WDB's inform other Local Area WDB's of best or promising regional workforce practices.

Through the NCAWDB Executive Director's Council meetings, best practices are shared regularly. We have adapted multiple best practices from other local areas for implementation in our area due to the best practice sharing. One example is the launch of the new Virtual Services Center is a result of the best practice shared by Capital Area WDB.

8. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's business engagement practices that demonstrated employers taking charge and driving the agenda.

The Rivers East WDB Director is currently involved with at least two efforts to address current and future workforce needs in collaboration with the economic developer, the K-12 school system and community college focused on addressing current and future talent pipeline needs. We hope to use the US Chamber's TPM model to help build small employer cohorts to map these pipelines, with the entire process being driven by the employers.

XI. Program Year 2022 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 2022 Local Area Plan. The Local Area Plan is not complete without these documents. Name each document: Rivers East Workforce Development Board, 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 since PY 2021 and requires a review for PY 2022 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- 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 2022 (Yes/No) and needs review
1. Adult/Dislocated Worker Experience Policy	Y	N
2. Competitive Procurement Policy	Y	N
3. Conflict of Interest Policy	Y	N
4. Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures	Y	N
5. Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I	Y	N
6. Individualized Training Account Policy	Y	N
7. On-the-Job Training Policy	Y	N
8. Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool and Schedule	Y	N
9. Priority of Service Policy	Y	N
10. Youth Work Experience Policy	Y	Y
11. Supportive Services Policy	Y	Y
12. Sampling Policy/Self-Attestation Procedures & Monitoring Schedule	Y	N

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/revised since PY 2021 and requires a review for PY 2022 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- Do not add a blank document in WISE as a “placeholder”.

If “Yes”, load the policy as a separate document. Name documents: Rivers East Workforce Development Board, 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 2022 (Add Yes or N/A for this column)
1. Local Area WDB Guidance for Local Incumbent Worker Grants	Y	N
2. Local Area WDB Needs-Related Policy	N/A	
3. Local Area WDB Transitional Jobs Policy	N/A	
4. Local Area WDB Youth Incentive Policy	Y	Y
5. Local Area WDB Guidance for Finish Line Grant	Y	N

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	No set limit
Time Limits	No set limit
Degree or Certificates allowed (Associate, Bachelor’s, other)	Certificate, Diploma, Associate or Bachelor Degree
Procedures for determining case-by-case exceptions for training that may be allowed	Request for exceptions are submitted in writing to the LA for considerations. Information reviewed includes cost of training, past performance (outcomes) of training provided, and local labor market information.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Period for which ITAs are issued (semester, school year, short-term, etc.)	Semester
Supportive Services covered by ITA (provide examples such as uniforms, tools, physical exams, etc.)	Books and fees
Other	

4. 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 <i>(include examples)</i>	Emergency <i>(include examples)</i>	Other <i>(include examples)</i>
Travel reimbursement @ \$0.56 per mile and a max of \$168 per week	Up to \$140/week for the first child and \$85/week for the second child	Includes pens, pencils, notebooks, calculators, etc.	As needed, case by case Rent, utilities, car repairs under FLG	Licensing/exam fees, Required uniforms, Required tools, CRC test fees

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.