

**UNIFIED
REGIONAL
PLAN MODIFICATION
HEART OF GEORGIA
ALTAMAHA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT REGION**

March 25, 2020

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ACRONYM GUIDE

ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AEFLA	Adult Education & Family Literacy Act
AOP	Agricultural Outreach Plan
ASL	American Sign Language
BER	Benefits Eligibility Review
BGLI	Burning Glass Labor Insight
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics
BSU	Business Services Unit (housed in GDOL)
CAD	Computer Aided Design
CAP	Client Assistance Programs
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CAPI	Customized Apprenticeships & Paid Internships
CCR	College & Career Readiness Standards
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
CIL	Centers for Independent Living
CJCC	Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
CLEO	Chief Local Elected Official
CNC	Computer Numerical Control Operator
CR	Customized Recruitment
CRC	Certified Rehabilitation Counselors
CRCC	Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification
CRP	Community Rehabilitation Programs
CSB	Community Service Boards
CSPD	Comprehensive System for Personal Development
CSPM	Client Services Policy Manual
CSU	Constituent Services Unit
DBHDD	Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
DCA	Georgia Department of Community Affairs
DCH	Georgia Department of Community Health
DCS	Georgia Department of Community Supervision
DFCS	Division of Family & Children Services (DHS)
DHS	Georgia Department of Human Services
DJJ	Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice
DOAS	Georgia Department of Administrative Services

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DOC	Georgia Department of Corrections
DoDD	Division of Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)
DSU	Designated State Unit
DVOP	Disabled Veteran Outreach Program
EG	Employ Georgia (GDOL)
EMSI	Economic Modeling Specialists Intl
ERP	Eligibility Review Process
ES	Employment Services
ESP	Extended Services Plan
ETA	Employment & Training Administration (USDOL)
ETP	Eligible Training Provider
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
EXCEL	Executive Commitment to Excellence in Leadership
FB	Federal Bonding
FY	Fiscal Year
GaDOE	Georgia Department of Education
GALIS	Georgia Adult Learners Information System
GA-PRI	Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative
GDEcD	Georgia Department of Economic Development
GDOL	Georgia Department of Labor
GED	General Education Development test
GEPS	Georgia Enterprises for Products & Services
GLME	Georgia Labor Market Explorer
GOTSR	Governor's Office of Transition, Support & Reentry
GSE	Georgia Standards of Excellence
GVRA	Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
GWROPP	Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal
GWS	Georgia Workforce System
HDCI	High Demand Career Initiative
IATSE	International Association of Theatrical & Screen Employees
IAWP	International Association of Workforce Professionals
ICR	Information Collection Request
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IELCE	Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
IPS	Individualized Placement & Support
ISY	In-School Youth
ITA	Individual Training Account
ITP	Individualized Transition Plan
IWT	Incumbent Worker Training

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JFF	Jobs for the Future
LEOs	Local Elected Officials
LVERs	Local Veteran Employment Representatives
LWDA	Local Workforce Development Area (the local area, the Region, Region 9)
LWDB	Local Workforce Development Board
LWIA	Local Workforce Investment Area
MHS	Migrant Head Start
MIS	Management Information System
MOA	Methods of Administration
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSFW	Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers
MVR	Muskogee Vocational Rehabilitation
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NASWA	National Association for State Workforce Agencies
NDI	Non-Destructive Inspectors
NDT	Non-Destructive Testers
NDWG	National Dislocated Worker Grants
NEG	National Emergency Grant
NFJP	National Farmworker Jobs Program
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
NRS	National Reporting System
O*Net	Occupational Information Network
O.C.G.A.	Official Code of Georgia Annotated
OA	Office of Apprenticeship (USDOL)
OAE	Office of Adult Education (TCSG-OWD)
OCTAE	Office of Career, Technical & Agricultural Education (USDOE)
OJT	On-the-Job
OOS	Order of Selection
OSY	Out-of-School Youth
OWD	(The Technical College System of Georgia's) Office of Workforce Development
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PLC	Programmable Logic Controller
PWP	Personal Work Plan
PY	Program Year
REA	Reemployment Assistance Program
RESEA	Georgia's Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment
RFA	Request for Application
RSA	USDOE Rehabilitation Services Administration
SCSEP	Senior Community Service & Employment Program
SDVS	Georgia Department of Veteran's Services
SE	Supported Employment

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SES	Supported Employment Services
SETA	Southeastern Employment & Training Association
SILC	Statewide Independent Living Council
SIWDG	Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant
SMA	State Monitor Advocate
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SPC	Statistical Process Control
SPMI	Serious & Persistent Mental Illness
SRC	State Rehabilitation Council
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSDR	State Service Delivery Regions
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
STAR	Staff Technical Assistance & Review
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
SUP	State Unified Plan
SWAT	Special Workforce Assistance Team
SWDB	State Workforce Development Board
SWIS	Statewide Workforce Investment System
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TCSG	Technical College System of Georgia
TCSG-OWD	Technical College System of Georgia – Office of Workforce Development
TEGL	Training Employment Guidance Letter
TFSP	TANF Family Service Plan
UCX	Unemployment Compensation for Ex- service members program
UGA	University of Georgia
UI	Unemployment Insurance
UI and RO	Unemployment Insurance & Regional Operations
UIREA	UI Re-Employment Assistance
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDOE	United States Department of Education
USDOL	United State Department of Labor
USG	University System of Georgia
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
VRP	Vocational Rehabilitation Program
WARN	Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification
WFD	WorkForce Division (GDEcD)
WDB	Workforce Development Board (local)
WEX	Work Experience
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WIG	Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter

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WIOA	Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act
WOTC	Work Opportunity Tax Credit
WP	Wagner-Peyser Act/programs
WSP	TANF Work Support Program
YDC	Youth Detention Center

Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure:

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

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region 9 Fiscal Agent is:

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission
Brett Manning, Executive Director
5405 Oak Street
Eastman, GA 31023
478-374-4771
<http://www.hogarc.org/>

2. **Description of Strategic Planning Elements** – Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.
 - a. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

Information within this section was gathered in coordination with the Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis, Occupational Information Services Unit and Labor Insight/Burning Glass.

An analysis of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha (HGA) LWDA 16, Region 9, shows it is a geographically large workforce area with diverse industry sectors. The region has experienced employment growth shown in 2106 employment estimates in Health Care & Social Assistance (6,067), Transportation & Warehousing (6,864), and Office and Administrative support (12,586), Production and Manufacturing (10,431). As shown by 2016 to 2026 employment projections these occupations will increase. The need will be for Transportation and Warehousing (+17.55%), Healthcare and Social Services (+20.44%), Office and Administrative Support (+13.63%) and Production and Manufacturing (+8.02%). The average annual wages for these sectors are Administrative and Office - \$28,132, Transportation and Warehousing - \$39,000, Healthcare and Social Assistance - \$42,276, Production and Manufacturing - \$44,304.

The total civilian preliminary labor force for Heart of Georgia-Altamaha Workforce Investment Area, Georgia in December, 2019 was 114,732, of which 110,080 were employed and 4,652 were unemployed. The unemployment rate was 4.1% percent. The unemployment rate is low showing the need for skilled workers.

In order to gauge the employment needs of employers in existing and in-demand industries in Georgia and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Area, Governor Nathan Deal launched the High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI) in April of 2014. Common trends throughout the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Area include the following:

There is a growing problem with an aging workforce. Many employers have older employees and expect a large percentage of employees to retire in the near future. 2) Soft skills/workplace skills are a crucial need. Employers routinely discuss the importance of soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, problem

solving, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and work ethic. 3) Employers also have increasing difficulty in recruiting employees that can pass background screenings and drug tests. 4) Additionally, there is great demand for basic educational skills. Employers state that they are looking for individuals with “work ready skills,” such as proficiency in reading, mathematics, statistics, and writing. Consequently, there is a great need to begin introducing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to students at a much younger age. Employers report that STEM career fields need to be introduced to students at a younger age and made a key part of the curriculum. 5) Another common trend is the shortage of local skilled trades’ workers in the area.

To assist in solving these problems, many employers express the need for more on-the-job (OJT) training, and incumbent worker programs. Employers that currently use OJT and incumbent worker programs find these programs valuable in identifying, assessing, and training future and current employees. Employers also emphasize the importance of OJT in the employee development process. These programs help them fill positions that require years of specialized experience in addition to relevant training or educational background requirements.

The greatest employer needs are within the demand occupations of:

Transportation: Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers

Health Fields: Registered Nurse, Physical Therapists, Licensed Practical Nurse, Nursing Assistant

Production: Production and manufacturing technology

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

Locally there are gaps between supply and demand. The largest gaps in the labor force result from a deficiency in the development of skills. Educational attainment is an issue both nationally and in Georgia with the LWDA’s high school graduation rate at 71.4% and only 16.4% of the population having completed two or more years of college. The local area will continue to develop strategies for increasing its high school graduation rate, as well as connecting out-of-school and older youth with programs to complete degree equivalency programs and technical education programs.

New studies confirm that employers are substituting the attainment of a college degree with having the motivation and skills potential for employment. Many new job postings throughout the local area only require that an applicant have a high school diploma or technical certificate/diploma. However, the high school graduate data does not completely explain the skills gaps that exist in Georgia. The traditionally prescribed educational achievement levels focus on degree programs and traditional academics. They do not reflect other educational opportunities which may not result in a degree, but may produce a diploma, certificate or licensure. The occupations categorized as requiring only a high school diploma or technical certificate/diploma include advanced manufacturing and skilled trades such as carpentry, transportation, and agriculture. These occupations align with in-demand occupations, growth sectors, and the Governor’s strategic industries. Through apprenticeship and other targeted training programs, local citizens can be prepared to enter these growing occupations.

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

Data Sources:

The 2010-2017 U.S. Census, Georgia Department of Labor, Labor Market Explorer, Workforce Information and Analysis, Occupational Information Services Unit and Labor Insight/Burning Glass.

Population

The 2010 U.S. Census documented a Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region population of 303,199, despite the lack of a metropolitan area within its 17 counties. The projected 2020 census shows a population of 316,723 and increase of 4.3%. The Region was only one of four regional commissions in the state not to have a single county lose population from 2000 to 2010. Since 1990, the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region has increased in total population by one-fourth (25.5 percent), adding over 60,000 new residents. While all 17 Region counties experienced steady, consistent growth, the most noticeable growth has been primarily concentrated along the periphery of the Region adjacent to nearby growth areas, and internally among the Region's primary growth centers of Laurens, Toombs, and Wayne counties, which are Census Bureau recognized micropolitan statistical areas. Population growth in the Region has been at or slightly above that of the U.S. since 1990, while only about one-half or so that of Georgia as a whole. However, the Region's population has been growing at a higher rate than most of its surrounding regions, with the exception of the Coastal and Southern Georgia regions. The Region is projected to add another 74,352 residents by 2040, which would be a rate of growth just slightly less than one quarter (24.9 percent).

Employment Wage Statistics

The average weekly wage for Heart of Georgia-Altamaha Workforce Investment Area in 2019 was \$707. This would be equivalent to \$17.68 per hour or \$36,764 per year, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around.

Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data

The total civilian preliminary labor force for Heart of Georgia-Altamaha Workforce Investment Area, Georgia in December, 2019 was 114,732, of which 110,080 were employed and 4,652 were unemployed. The unemployment rate was 4.1% percent. The unemployment rate is low showing the need for skilled workers.

Industry Employment Distribution

The largest growing major industry sector was Healthcare accounts for 16.3% of jobs within the area with 1,066 employers and an average weekly wage of \$813. This is followed by Manufacturing with 14.2% of the jobs and 255 employers with an average weekly wage of \$852. Transportation and Warehousing has 3.6% of jobs within the area with 186 employers and an average weekly wage of \$750.

Population and Income Totals

The 2017 population of Heart of Georgia-Altamaha Workforce Investment Area, Georgia was estimated at 298,988. The projected 2025 population is expected to reach 329,952 an increase of 10%.

The Region's population has been somewhat older than that of the state for some time, and this is likely to continue. The percentage of the population in the younger age groups (under 18 and 18-24) has declined since 2000, while all other categories increased as a percentage. The largest change has occurred among the 55-64 age group, the "Baby Boom" generation, which is rapidly approaching retirement age. Project distributions for the Region shows a much greater percentage of people over 65 while age groups under 24 continue to decrease in percentage. As of 2017, one-fourth of the Region's population is age 55 or older, a higher percentage than those under 18. This growing retiree and elderly population will continue to present significant challenges to local governments in terms of health care services, transportation, recreation, housing, and the labor force.

Median household incomes in the Region are almost two-thirds of the state and national average. Although incomes have increased over the last two decades, the pace of growth locally has failed to keep pace with the rest of the state and nation. Five counties (Candler, Evans, Laurens, Tattnall, and Wheeler) actually experienced a decrease in median household income since 2010. The highest median household incomes are currently found in Evans (\$40,594), Treutlen (\$40,204), and Wayne (\$39,908) counties, while the lowest median household incomes are found in Telfair (\$27,657), Wheeler (\$27,779), and Candler (\$28,200) counties. It is likely that incomes will continue to rise in the Region, although not at the same pace as elsewhere.

Poverty rates in the Region have consistently been significantly higher than the state and the U.S. Constantly between one in four and one in five residents live in poverty. Eight (8) counties are considered to be areas of persistent poverty, meaning that more than 20 percent of a county's population has lived below the poverty threshold for the past three decades. Even more striking than the overall poverty rate is the fact that one-third of the population below 18 years of age lives in poverty. Improvements have occurred for the population over the age of 65 with most counties recording several point drops in percentage in this category. Many counties with an increase in poverty percentage are also counties where median rent values have risen and median household incomes have either remained stationary or declined since 2010.

Educational and Skill Levels

New studies of educational skill levels confirm that employers are substituting the attainment of a college degree with having the motivation and skills potential for employment. Many new job postings throughout the local area only require that an applicant have a high school diploma or technical certificate/diploma. However, the high school graduate data does not completely explain the skills gaps that exist in Georgia. The traditionally prescribed educational achievement levels focus on degree programs and traditional academics. They do not reflect other educational opportunities which may not result in a degree, but may produce a diploma, certificate or licensure. The occupations categorized as requiring only a high school diploma or technical certificate/diploma include advanced manufacturing and skilled trades such as carpentry, transportation, and agriculture. These occupations align with in-demand occupations, growth sectors, and the Governor's strategic industries. Through apprenticeship and other targeted training programs, local citizens can be prepared to enter these growing occupations.

Barriers to Employment

The Region's population remains somewhat older than that of the state as a whole, with one-fourth of the population being age 55 or older. As is the case with the rest of Georgia, the most significant shift in the Region's population is the burgeoning increase in the number of Hispanics. Just since 2000 alone, the number of Hispanics living in the Region has more than doubled and grown at a faster rate than the state as a whole,

although the percentage of the Region's population that is Hispanic is still slightly below that of the state. Georgia's population has limited language barriers, with only about 3.1% of households without a member over the age of 14 who speaks English.

Incomes in the Region continue to remain lower than the rest of the state, as has been the case historically. Poverty rates in the Region remain consistently higher than the state, and growth in both per capita and average household incomes lag behind the rest of Georgia.

The increase in the percentage of the population over 65 will have significant impacts on Georgia's economy. First, there will be an increase in demand for healthcare professionals, particularly for the elderly and aging populations. Second, it signifies a high percentage of workers on the verge of exiting the labor force, creating a need for replacement workers in addition to growth openings.

One of Georgia's most valuable labor resources is the returning military veteran population. Georgia has one of the largest veteran populations in the nation, with over 752,882 service heroes. The 2014 unemployment rate for veterans in Georgia was 7.6%, higher than the state unemployment rate. The 2014 unemployment rate for Post 9/11 veterans was 10.4%, well above the state rate. Many of these military veterans possess core competencies which correlate directly to civilian occupations in Georgia's high demand industries.

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

An analysis of the Local Area's workforce development activities demonstrates a broad range of services offered to Region 9 residents. The HGA's core partners provide services that assist the Region in delivering workforce, education, and training activities in a cohesive manner. An analysis of partner programs is provided below:

Employment Services

In many ways, the Georgia Department of Labor, Wagner Peyser funded offices serve as the entryway into the workforce system. As the provider of UI and WP services, GDOL is uniquely poised to welcome customers into the workforce system and provide comprehensive and targeted referrals to the other core partners. While a large amount of WP referrals come from UI, that system is not the only source of workforce customers. GDOL also utilizes BSU to attract customers.

Programs provided through the Wagner Peyser system offices include Veteran Employment and Disabled Veteran's Outreach programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, and Unemployment Compensation programs.

No matter the entry point into the workforce system, customers are first provided career services (previously core and intensive services). These services are provided through Region 9's seventeen one-stop locations/information centers and three additional affiliate sites. If the customer is deemed to be ready for gainful employment after receiving career services, WP staff assist the customer with job search and placement. If the customer is deemed to need training services, then the WP staff refer the customer to the

other core partners based on the needs of the customer. Training services are then provided to the customer through WIOA, TCSG, VR, or Adult Education Services.

WIOA

For PY14, over 3,444 distinct individuals, including carryovers, received services. Of these 2,044 individuals registered using GWROPP (Geo Solutions Virtual One Stop System), with 1,400 individuals enrolling in training under WIA in PY14.

An analysis of occupational training provided to 4,723 WIA/WIOA participants indicates that healthcare continues to be the largest training fields with 1,722, or 36.4% enrolled in healthcare occupations. The healthcare field continues to grow, with individuals receiving training in the following occupations: nursing (RN, LPN, and CNA), radiography, pharmacy technicians, phlebotomy, dental hygiene, physical therapy, respiratory care, medical technologists, medical educators, etc. 1,048 received training in computer operations and office support. The second largest area of training is in skilled trades with 16.1 % enrolled in skilled trades. This is followed by 13.4% in production, 12.8% in administrative/professional and 8.3% in service industry related training. These training areas align with the Heart of Georgia Altamaha region's current and projected demand occupational areas.

With the Local Area's focus on providing business services work-based learning including OJT and customized/incumbent worker training will be expanded through further capacity building and increased collaboration with economic development partners and local area employers.

WIOA staff-assisted services focus on providing the following: (1) comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, (2) individual employment plans to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participants to achieve employment goals, (3) individual counseling, and career planning, (4) case management for participants seeking training services, (5) short-term prevocational services including development of learning skills, resume building, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for employment. Training is provided for those who lack occupational credential/certification and require short-term continuing education in order to acquire certification/credentialing required for success in growing industries.

GVRA

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

VR services are provided by a skilled regional rehabilitation team with representatives from the appropriate disciplines and externally from community resources as needed. The VR Program believes that cooperation and collaboration is necessary to maximize resources and address all aspects impacting individuals with

disabilities in gaining or maintaining employment in Georgia. The VR Program is strongly allied with partners of the regional workforce development system and maintains many other cooperative agreements and working partnerships with entities outside the core workforce development system. To ensure participants, employers and businesses are engaged, GVRA will continue to focus on delivering activities already occurring within the regional workforce system as well as expand current efforts in a more organized and integrated manner to better serve individuals with disabilities.

GVRA provides assistance to individuals with disabilities. GVRA's goals and priorities include service improvement across multiple disciplines and areas in the Local Area.

TCSG (Adult Education)

In 2014, TCSG enrolled approximately 100,000 students throughout the state in adult education programs and 18,000 of those Georgians proudly obtained a GED, opening doors to increased earning potential, higher education, and better lives. Another 36,000 men and women enrolled in TCSG's English language programs. For adult learners looking to obtain a GED, increase skillsets, and capture the improved opportunities that follow education.

TCSG's educational and training programs are available across Georgia through our 22 Technical Colleges and 86 campus locations. In addition, last year over 63,000 students took an online course. TCSG offers students a choice of over 600 individual majors. These majors range from one semester Certificates to Diplomas and Associate Degrees that can take over two years to complete. In 2015, TCSG enrolled over 130,000 students and produced over 30,000 graduates.

Through its providers, the Office of Adult Education promotes and provides adult education programs across the state of Georgia. Literacy programs are available to adults needing basic, general, or specialized skills instruction. The Office of Adult Education facilitates collaboration among state and local entities to improve adult education efforts.

Economic Development (Quick Start) - The Office of Economic Development provides the customized workforce training needed by Georgia's businesses to stay competitive in today's global economy. Quick Start, Georgia's internationally acclaimed workforce training program, provides customized training free-of-charge to qualified new, expanding and existing businesses. In addition, the economic development offices at each technical college work every day to make sure their local companies have the customized, contract training they need to keep their workforces' skills up- to-date and cutting edge. Page 2 of 14 Our strategic plan is organized around four major goals that will help TCSG fulfill the agency mission and achieve our vision for the future. In addition, each goal has several strategic objectives that must be met to achieve the goal. However, developing a quality strategic plan is only the beginning of an effective planning process; implementing activities to achieve the goals and vision for the future is equally important. Consequently, TCSG is committed to measuring and tracking our success through forward looking metrics. To document progress in implementing the plan, we have identified eight strategic outcome measures to guide us. TCSG's Mission is to provide technical, academic and adult education and training focused on building a well-educated, globally competitive workforce for Georgia. The vision of the Technical College System of Georgia will be acknowledged as a world leader in technical education, providing access to student-centered, high-quality affordable postsecondary education and training. We will equip students for success, thereby building literate and economically strong communities and businesses for Georgia.

The TCSG Office of Adult Education (OAE) provides targeted professional development based upon a statewide needs assessment, research regarding best practices, and federal recommendations. OAE surveys local providers to ascertain areas in which there may be a gap in knowledge or a need for improvement. From these results, the OAE coordinates and executes broad-based training through a variety of modalities to assist program leaders and teachers in areas such as program improvement, instructional techniques, integrated education and training, CCR standards, transition to postsecondary education and employment, and the infusion of technology into instruction.

TANF - Local partners will access TANF services through the area's TANF office and/or through the Local One-Stop centers. Through technology and through on-site access, WIOA and TANF staff will make referrals for these services which include SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, and Child Support Enforcement. The four purposes of the TANF program are to:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes
- Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

CSBG - CSBG funding in the local area supports projects that:

- Lessen poverty in communities
- Address the needs of low-income individuals including the homeless, migrants and the elderly
- Provide services and activities addressing employment, education, better use of available income, housing, nutrition, emergency services and/or health

With the support of CSBG funding, states and CAAs work together to achieve the following goals for low-income individuals:

- Increased self-sufficiency
- Improved living conditions
- Ownership of and pride in their communities
- Strong family and support systems

Working together, agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. Partnerships among supporters and providers of services play a large role in the successful implementation of CSBG grants.

HUD – The Housing and Urban Development employment and training program is a place-based program that improves economic outcomes of public housing residents by combining employment-related services, rent-based financial incentives that reward work and community support for work. The program provides grants to Public Housing Agencies that partner with Workforce Investment Boards and other local service providers. The program leverages resources through a match requirement that can be met with cash or in-kind contributions. Jobs-Plus targets all work-able adults residing in a public housing development. It attempts to improve earnings by increasing the number of employed residents, increasing hours worked, improving job retention, and improving wages.

An Individualized Training and Services Plan (ITSP) is developed for each participant to establish goals and service strategies, and to track progress. Examples of employment-related services include job counseling, job placement, education and training referrals, transportation assistance, child care, and financial counseling. Work is rewarded through an earned income disregard that prevents rent increases due to increases in earned income. Jobs-Plus uses a neighbor-to-neighbor approach to promote work within the development on an ongoing basis. This is an intensive outreach effort designed to saturate the development with positive messages about work-related opportunities.

Senior Community Service Employment Program

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors. Participants also have access to employment assistance through American Job Centers.

SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities, including schools, hospitals, day-care centers, and senior centers. The program provides over 40 million community service hours to public and non-profit agencies, allowing them to enhance and provide needed services. Participants work an average of 20 hours a week, and are paid the highest of federal, state or local minimum wage. This training serves as a bridge to unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants.

Strengths of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development System

Over the past several years the local area has increased its focus on employer driven workforce services. The local area maintains a focus on creating a workforce development system that connects the wide array of services available through core partners to provide a professional level of services to employers including increasing OJT and incumbent worker training. In addition, employers are utilizing One-Stop for recruiting and training activities.

The HGA's One-Stop system across the seventeen-county area includes One Comprehensive One-Stop and twenty information centers/affiliate sites. Local area staffs can connect employers, educators, WIOA customers and partners daily. The increase in services and access for these key stakeholders are accomplished through utilization of technology through increased virtual access already in place in all One-Stop locations, and use of the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal data interface to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners.

The strength of the area is the already existing cooperative partnership between the required partners. The WDB has active and interested members on the Board. Cooperative and collaborative meetings have been taking place with staffs since the inception of WIA. The mandate to provide comprehensive services is already in place and has fostered existing working relationships between the partners.

Weaknesses of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development System

The weakness of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha area is the lack of major industry combined with the rural nature of the area, leading to a lack of employment in commuting distance for many of the area's unemployed. This is where the Economic Development partners play a crucial role in planning and employment opportunities.

Threats to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development System

As Georgia continues to become a destination for employers, businesses and industry growth, the local area needs to be proactive about potential threats and challenges because of this growth. Many of the local area's immediate employer needs and opportunities center on growth within the healthcare and trade professions and the need for an educated workforce (e.g., healthcare credentials and high school diplomas).

With only approximately 72% of HGA area residents obtaining a high-school diploma, the local area is developing strategies for increasing its high school graduation rate, as well as connecting out-of-school and older youth with programs to complete degree equivalency programs. Furthermore, the local area must align the training provided to produce students armed with the skills, knowledge, and work-readiness skills to supply labor market demands.

Moving forward, the local area needs to be more proactive about enabling employers to train and hire workers quickly to fill rapidly expanding openings in the skilled-trade sector across the area. Appropriate training such as OJT and incumbent worker training needs to be utilized to help fill the skills gap across the area and mitigate the risk of a lower resource pool for in-demand industries.

Moving Forward

To fulfill the Governor's vision, build upon strengths, and address the weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified above, the local area is leveraging its partner resources and focusing on targeted objectives.

The improving economy and rise of key industry sectors require the local workforce development system to adapt to growing workforce needs. The local area will maximize its capacity to provide services that connect employers and skilled workers. To that end, the local area has already taken several steps towards continuing to meet current capacity needs and is increasing service integration to meet future capacity needs.

With the support of the WDB and WIOA partners, the local area is focused on system capacity building and helping to ensure the current and future system can meet the needs of eligible participants through: developing strategies to support staff training and awareness; disseminating best practices; and developing and continuously improving the one-stop delivery system.

The local area training and information focuses on the following:

- Tracking Outcomes Under WIOA;
- Best Practices in Case Management;
- Identifying the local area's Demand Occupations by working with Economic Development Partners
- OSY and ISY Strategies Under WIOA;
- Coordination with Partners to Deliver First Class Services;
- OJT and Incumbent Worker Training as a Business Services Tool;
- Continuous Improvement of One-Stop services for customers and employers.

Over the past several years, the local area has taken steps to help ensure that adequate resources and capacity exist to meet growing employer and customer needs. The local area designated 20 one-stop/information centers throughout the region. This structure allows both rural and urban customers access to key services.

With current economic conditions on the rise, HGA area staff continue to help customers identify in-demand jobs. Employers look to quickly hire and on-ramp certain positions, thus the HGA area has identified shorter-term ITAs or work-based learning training options. The HGA area also continues to work with the TCSG as well as other qualified training providers, to ensure that customers have a wide variety of training options. The HGA area also works to ensure open communication with the community contacts needed to provide

current work-based learning opportunities with growing employers. As technology needs grow, many companies want to be able to train in house. The HGA area continues to enhance its already successful system of OJT and incumbent worker services to create more on-the-job and customized training opportunities.

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

The mission of the local WDB is to provide services and resources to new, existing and potential businesses and industries to supply a globally competitive, sustainable workforce. This will be accomplished by addressing the staffing and training needs of businesses and individuals by partnering with educational systems, economic development and other agencies. These services and resources will be provided to the region's businesses and individuals in an effective and efficient manner through a One-Stop delivery system in our seventeen counties.

Goals and Strategies for Workforce Development

1. Create a unified workforce system that connects the wide array of services available through core partners to provide an unprecedented level of valuable services to customers.
2. Utilize labor market and educational data and technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.
3. Increase the value of the workforce system as a tool for employers by emphasizing business services.
4. Increase the participation and utilization of the workforce system by both employers and individuals.
5. Serve as the driving force behind economic development stakeholders to connect individuals, educational systems, and employers, thereby helping create a sustainable, skilled workforce.
- 6.

Create a Unified Workforce System

The coordination of economic development and workforce development has been critical in making informed decisions based on the needs of employers throughout the LWDA. Through WIOA implementation, the LWDA will increase interagency cooperation among core partners to enhance service delivery to its customers.

The LWDA provides a variety of customized services to employers in various formats. For example, labor market information can be self-accessed by employers or acquired with varying levels of staff assistance. Employer centers in one-stop locations are used by employers in a self-service mode for recruitment and interviewing or with staff-assisted screening and testing.

Various marketing materials are also available and used to educate employers and facilitate employer involvement. The LWDA also markets to employers consistently by providing information related to employment, unemployment and partial unemployment benefits, tax and wage reports and payments, employing individuals with disabilities, employer committees, layoff information and resources, child labor info, labor market info, tax credits and incentives, workforce and business development services and resources, employment law issues, and recruiting new employee services.

The LWDA also provides information through the One-Stop system regarding workforce development services provided by other local area agencies. Region 9 citizens access local area services through a wide variety of avenues and the local area is actively working to educate each agency on what is offered through the workforce system to ensure each eligible participant is reached.

The local area is working to strengthen its partnerships between the core partners and extend the reach of the workforce system. The leadership of the required partners have convened to take advantage of an opportunity to enhance the local area's workforce system. Regardless of how a customer accesses the system, this enhanced workforce system will provide an integrated, seamless, and consistent provision of services. The local area plan provides the strategy and means by which the local area can achieve this goal of a fully unified workforce system.

With representation on the local WDB, the WIOA partners have members on the local WDB, and employers also have business representation through members of WDB. This business and partner representation will provide the foundation for guidance in implementing WIOA, and is instrumental in drafting the local plan. Finally, the WDB Board members will help guide the local area staff to provide oversight on co-location, procurement of one-stop operators, and performance reporting.

Utilization of Labor Market Information to Inform Workforce Decisions

It is important to the local area's success to stress the value of pairing available labor market analysis with data collected directly from employers. To assist local areas, TCSG-OWD has expanded the number of tools available to staff and local area administration. In addition to data made available through the Census Bureau and BLS, the local area utilizes GDOL's Workforce Statistics and Economic Research Division online database to provide resources needed by local staff to provide local labor market information to consumers. This allows the local workforce system to explore in-demand occupations, economic forecasts, and demographics of the local areas.

In addition to the LMI tools already discussed, there are other tools available which provide a more current and robust snapshot of regional economic statistics. Recently, the state has identified a need for real time data on actual, current job openings. To meet that need, TCSG-OWD has access to BGLI real-time labor market information. Together with other LMI resources, the region's workforce system can provide information on short- and long-term demands for skilled labor at the local levels. Local area staff can begin utilizing these resources for identifying needs and program planning.

Emphasize Business Services

The local area has consistently been recognized as one of the best regions to do business. The ongoing relationships with businesses continue to point to workforce demands and finding innovative solutions to meet those demands. Aligning more closely with economic development partners was one of many strategies designed to drive employer-driven strategies.

Now, aided by the vision of WIOA, the local area is working to enhance the number of tools available to employers, including work-based learning strategies, on-the-job training, and customized training. The options will help employers identify and train a workforce, but will also provide opportunities for workers.

Yet another strategy looks to build upon the local area's attraction to new business. The local area can attract employers by meeting their skill needs through close coordination between workforce development and economic development as well as programs/initiatives such as OJT, Incumbent Worker training, and the employer's use of the One-Stops within each of the seventeen counties for employment and hiring activities. In 2015, the LWDA provided incumbent worker training to 367 employees within five businesses. In addition, 129 customers received On-the-Job training. The local area has also developed a cohesive Rapid Response strategy and can provide services to employers who are closing or downsizing. The local area staff can be mobilized and ready to meet with employers and affected employees within 24 hours.

Increase Participation in the Workforce System

The local area's goal is to increase the opportunities for individuals and businesses. The HGA is working on ways to improve the number of individuals moving from under-employed and unemployment into education and employment opportunities.

The HGA is looking forward to aligning with the other LWDA's across the state under one name, identity, and brand. This brand will promote a unified appearance across the one-stop system, and help connect each LWDA with Workforce Development initiatives. The new brand will coincide with a marketing effort to promote the resources available from the core partners and is expected to launch at the beginning of PY 16. One of Governor Deal's greatest priorities while in office has been a reform of the criminal justice system. Georgia has become a model for the nation in rethinking the approach to incarceration through education and rehabilitation. Governor Deal fundamentally believes that employment is the best way to reduce recidivism. To that end, was the Region 9's Offenders Pilot Program. Through this pilot, the local area received a grant from the State. The LWDA proposed to offer job readiness training, re-entry transition awareness training, and CDL training in coordination with the local Technical College, to individuals who resided within transition centers. The pilot was highly successful and enabled the LWDA to enhance relationships with community partners and better serve ex-offenders.

WIOA places an increased emphasis on the development and use of career pathways. Every Youth is required to have an objective assessment conducted to identify appropriate services and career pathways for the participant. Following the objective assessment, WIOA-eligible youth work in tandem with their case manager to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), which heavily stresses career pathways. Youth are strongly encouraged to pursue credentials that will lead them into a sustainable, rewarding career. Additionally, the local area and schools work closely to ensure that K-12 schools relate to local industry representatives. The LWDA is committed to providing educational opportunities through career pathways that will ultimately optimize the progress and success of individuals with varying levels of abilities and needs. Through the development and use of career pathways, the LWDA's youth will be equipped to enter the working world with marketable credentials and valuable skills.

The region has determined that one of the most effective strategies for serving special populations is through the provision of targeted grants using Governor's reserve funding. The grants enable LWDA's to conduct pilot programs without using local formula funds. This alleviates much of the risk of building new programs while still promoting innovation.

An example of this strategy was the Region 9's Offenders Pilot Program. Through this pilot, the local area received a grant from the State. The LWDA proposed to offer job readiness training, re-entry transition awareness training, and CDL training in coordination with the local Technical College, to individuals who

resided within transition centers. The pilot was highly successful and enabled the LWDA to enhance relationships with community partners and better serve ex-offenders.

Connect Stakeholders for Economic Development

Workforce development is economic development and the local area WIOA partner will be operating at the center of a public-private conversation. With the local area's strong alliances with its WDB, Regional Commission and WIOA partners, it is positioned to help facilitate these discussions. The growth in employment within demand occupations provides a perfect illustration of the power of connecting the needs of employers with the educational systems that train individuals in those skills.

One goal of WIOA is that the workforce system should continue to find ways to bridge this gap between education and employment. Each core partner has a role in ensuring that the local area's workforce continues to meet the needs of the employers helping the LWDA remain one of the best regions in which to do business. The workforce system, through its partners, can identify the demand, help create solutions, and assist USG and TCSG in producing a skilled workforce.

Performance Goals

In addition to the WIOA mandated six performance measures for its core programs, the local area intends to

- 1) Utilize the cooperative partnerships to increase employment opportunities through economic development
- 2) Respond to any loss of employment with UI services and re-training
- 3) Provide employ specific training opportunities, resulting in lower costs and growth for the employer
- 4) Provide technical training opportunities to youth to prepare for the area's future workforce needs
- 5) Utilize partner programs to meet the needs of customer as they progress through the training and employment spectrum
- 6) Meet the needs of special populations as they relate to workforce development

Assessment of Effectiveness

The local area makes use of many activities to assess the successful provision of workforce services and the delivery of the Board's strategic vision and goals. The activities discussed below all play a role in ensuring that the local area can make continuous and quality improvements in terms of adhering to federal, state, and local regulations, providing quality services to the workforce system customer, and meeting federal and state outcome expectations.

Adherence to Local, State and Federal Regulations

The first way in which the HGA ensures the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system is through conducting monthly monitoring. The local area has a team of four internal monitors. This team conducts comprehensive internal monitoring, consisting of monthly review of customer records, monthly financial reviews, on-site monitoring of youth work experience sites and OJT sites, customer interviews across programs, tracking of customer data, performance monitoring, and monitoring for adherence to local, state and federal policy. The primary goal of this monitoring is to ensure adherence to local, federal and state regulations. The team monitors 100% of customer records using customized monitoring tools developed and maintained by local area staff. Interviews are also conducted to ensure customer satisfaction and local processes are being followed.

If the monitoring team identifies exceptions, the staff is given a list of corrective action tasks to complete. Monitoring staff work with other local staff to ensure that these corrective action tasks are completed and that overall process improvement takes place. Monitors will also give observations to staffs. Observations are indicative of items that could be improved upon, but do not rise to the level of an exception. Finally, local staff identify notable practices with the area to highlight best practices. The monitoring process ensures that all customers can receive the services they need in the most efficient manner possible. The local area also uses this process to determine the need for areas of training for local staff.

Provision of Quality Services to the Workforce System Customer

The second way in which the local area ensures effectiveness is through the customer satisfaction survey. Staff collect surveys through the local one-stops. The data is collected and the results are detailed in a report prepared for each WD Board meeting. The monitoring team also interviews customers to identify areas in which the workforce system can improve the customer experience and outcomes. If needed, those recommendations are distributed to staff within the interview reports. By focusing on customer experience, workforce staff ensure positive outcomes and word-of-mouth referrals to the workforce system. This type of testimonial is necessary to ensure that customers continue to seek services.

Meeting of Federal and State Outcome Expectations

The monitoring team also conducts monthly oversight of current performance to identify considerations that could affect performance in a positive or negative manner. Using this information, the team prepares customized reports for the WIOA Director, local staff and the WDB. Should monthly performance monitoring reveal poor performance, staff is provided technical assistance and training regarding program design and exit strategies.

The local area utilizes GWROPP to store participant information and to enroll WIOA participants. The system collects information which can be utilized by local area case managers and management to provide systems reports on local area performance. Local area staff provide local area Supervisors with standard weekly reports to track customers within the system. This self-assessment by the local area is used extensively by staff for performance monitoring and reporting to administration and the WDB.

f. Taking into account analyses described in sections “2. a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The local area strategy for workforce development aims to support the State’s core mission to meet the needs of Georgia’s growing economy and align programs and resources to create an effective and efficient method of workforce development. The local area strategy is focused on supporting a unified workforce system that involves the coordinated services and resources of all core program partners.

Local Strategy Implementation

The active collaboration between the LWDB, and the HGA’s one-stop delivery system is the key component of workforce development in the local area. This collaboration begins with the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, which is responsible for the appointment of the WDB members. The WDB’s duties include the development of a local area plan, which establishes the four-year strategy for the local area.

The WDB is also responsible for oversight of additional functions designated by WIOA which are listed below:

- Strategic Functions
 - Implementing the local area plan and meeting performance measures
 - Developing local area program to meet the needs of area customers, including program participants and partners
 - Developing/expanding strategies for partnerships in in-demand sectors/occupations
 - Developing and aligning policies
- System Capacity Building
 - Developing and oversight of strategies to support staff training and awareness
 - Disseminating best practices
 - Developing and continuously improving the one-stop delivery system
 - Supporting effective local partnerships
- System Alignment and Effective Operations
 - Developing strategies for aligning technology and data systems
 - Oversight of HGA formula funds
 - Developing policies and guidance on WIOA

Creating a Unified Workforce System

The local area aims to increase the opportunities the workforce system provides, both to individuals and to businesses. The LWDA is also embarking on efforts to analyze and improve the referral process and case management systems to further unify activities at the participant level. These efforts include standardized training for staff, use of virtual training and staff meetings and increased participation in job fairs, resource fairs and other collaborative meetings.

The local workforce system will provide customers a seamless, integrated, and consistent provision of services. The local area is also analyzing referrals among partner programs to identify opportunities to improve the number of individuals moving from under-employed or unemployment into education or employment opportunities through the workforce development system.

Finally, local core program partners are collaborating with DFCS which was recently awarded a USDA grant to develop a multiagency assessment and case management delivery system. This collaboration will enable staff delivering Wagner-Peyser services and related partner programs to provide intensive customized reemployment services to a broad segment of customers in need. Staff will be able to continuously share information and insights via a centralized MIS system. Similarly, all necessary participant tracking and reporting will be accomplished within a single system.

Utilizing Labor Market Information

The local area plans to coordinate with all core partner agencies to ensure data and data analytics are at the forefront of the workforce development system. The local area has several tools at its disposal to support this strategy including the State's BGLI system.

BGLI provides real-time LMI for the LWDA's to utilize in the development of sector strategies, career pathways, and skills training to address employer needs. Partners also assist with identifying and analyzing workforce trends, employer needs, and training opportunities. Finally, the local area continually utilizes data made available through the Census Bureau and USDOL/BLS.

Emphasizing Business Services

Heart of Georgia Altamaha's coordination between workforce development, economic development, and programs such as OJT, Rapid Response, and Incumbent Worker Training have further enhanced Region 9 as a destination for business and has resulted in attracting business to the Region. Partner agencies each have a role in assisting business with skilled workforce needs.

The local has molded its Rapid Response program into a proactive tool that now offers workforce services to employers throughout the business lifecycle, in addition to during layoffs and other large events. Rapid Response leverages the relationships and knowledge of the LWDA partners to help provide services to employers and workers. This integrated approach allows the Region to not only assist with mass layoffs and employment needs, but to assist the LWDA and local employers as they seek to identify key next steps. Throughout this process, key stakeholders communicate regularly with UI and TAA to help ensure the full range of services is available to both employers and employees.

The BSU, housed within GDOL, emphasizes employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff that is dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia's employers. BSU partners with economic developers, employers, and businesses to identify talent pools for target industries, customize solutions for workforce issues, and assist with critical industry expansion needs. BSU also manages the Job Readiness Program, Career Expos, Customized Recruitment Services, GeorgiaBEST for Students, GeorgiaBEST for Employers, Regional Summits, and the Employer Committee. The State also makes labor market information available to employers through self-access and web subscription services to help promote the workforce system as a tool for employers to meet their needs. Georgia has taken steps to educate employers on the resources available through presentations, various marketing materials, and outreach services.

As in-demand occupations grow and the skills gap widens, employers have an increased need for skilled positions and training programs. To that end, the local has also developed long-term work based learning strategies such as those delivered through Individual Training Accounts. The use of ITA's along with use of labor market information to identify employer needs, will build partnerships of employers, training providers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders around specific industries to address the workforce needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. The defining elements of local area strategies include a focus on customized solutions for specific industry/industries at a regional level, bringing the industry partnerships together.

Work Based Learning

In addition to developing of strategies to utilize work-based learning including OJT and Incumbent Worker training in the LWDA, through local area capacity building, the local has also developed long-term work-based learning strategies.

WIOA customer enrolled in Individual Training Accounts can be co-enrolled into OJT slots as they near the end of their schooling. This allows for the transition from education to employment while connecting with employers. Students can take classes part-time and work part-time. This will be a strategy that is used primarily for technical skilled trades for adults and older youth.

The State launched Georgia WorkSmart in partnership with the Office of Apprenticeship to provide more access to the Registered Apprenticeship program. Georgia WorkSmart is another tool to provide to

employers looking to train in place. Another resource Georgia has developed is Fast Track training. The combination of a shortened timeline, employer engagement, and use of classroom and on-the-job training has created a successful model for providing entry into growing industries. The region is working to expand upon these services, providing added resources and technical assistance to aid local workforce partners and expand their offerings.

Increasing Participation in the Workforce System

The core partner agencies (TCSG-OWD, GDOL, and GVRA) have recently joined other regional agencies and offices on a Career Pathways initiative. The LWDA seeks to ensure that an increased number of young people complete high school and attain postsecondary credentials that translate to value in the labor market. Local area partners are engaging educators and employers in building a system of career pathways that launches young people into promising careers.

The long-term goal in the LWDA is to create seamless pathways for students from primary and secondary education, through college and training, and into successful careers. This work will include: increasing the level of communication and collaboration between educational institutions and the businesses in their communities, increasing the number of work-based learning programs in the local area, improving the early exposure students have to industry and career options, analyzing state and local policies to ensure they properly foster this work, as well as other efforts.

The GaDOE also recently launched their new “Partner’s Educating Georgia’s Future Workforce” initiative, which is facilitated by their Career, Technical, and Agriculture Education Division. The meetings are hosted in the 12 economic development regions throughout the state, and each meeting features regional partners representing business, education, community, and civic leaders. The purpose of the meetings is to consider regional workforce needs and determine how the partners can work together to ensure needs are met for Georgia’s future workforce utilizing the K-12 education structure.

Representatives from the Local Workforce Development Areas were in attendance to offer their insight in regards to local and regional workforce needs and to discuss potential workforce solutions. The local relationships created at these meetings will foster future collaboration between the education and workforce communities especially in the K-12 arena.

In partnership with TCSG’s Adult Ed, the state began a pilot program called “Accelerated Opportunity” targeted at providing out-of-school youth an opportunity to reengage in a career pathway and obtain stackable credentials. Through the Accelerated Opportunity program, the workforce system enrolled disengaged youth with a combination of GED classes and work-based learning opportunities. At completion, the individuals exited with improved work readiness skills, GED credentials, and a stackable credential from their work experience that allowed them to continue in credential-granting programs at a technical college, or immediately join the workforce in that particular occupation. The program proved to be an innovative model and partnership with multiple workforce partners and has been expanded beyond the pilot to provide this opportunity to additional out-of-school youth.

Special Populations

The LWDA also recognizes that to reach the broadest possible range of individuals, efforts must focus developing a unified system. The LWDA has programs focused on enhancing services to veterans and

individuals within the criminal justice system. Surrounded by military installations, Region 9 is home to many active duty and veteran service members.

The LWDA has been rethinking the approach to incarceration through education and rehabilitation. The LWDA participates as a vital partner to ensure that the LWDA rehabilitates ex-offenders and provides them with marketable skills and opportunities to succeed. Georgia's goal is to continue to partner with the criminal justice system to remove barriers to employment and provide the resources needed to affect successful transitions into the workforce. Re-Entry programs that teach job readiness, job search and occupational skills will continue within the Region.

Increasing Employer participation

The LWDA provides a variety of customized services to employers in various formats. For example, labor market information can be self-accessed by employers or acquired with varying levels of staff assistance. Employer centers in one-stop locations are used by employers in a self-service mode for recruitment and interviewing or with staff-assisted screening and testing.

Various marketing materials are also available and used to educate employers and facilitate employer involvement. The LWDA also markets to employers consistently by providing information related to employment, unemployment and partial unemployment benefits, tax and wage reports and payments, employing individuals with disabilities, employer committees, layoff information and resources, child labor info, labor market info, tax credits and incentives, workforce and business development services and resources, employment law issues, and recruiting new employee services.

The LWDA also provides information through the One-Stop system regarding workforce development services provided by other local area agencies. Region 9 citizens access local area services through a wide variety of avenues and the local area is actively working to educate each agency on what is offered through the workforce system to ensure each eligible participant is reached.

Convening and Connecting Stakeholders for Economic Development

The LWDA's ongoing collaborations with partner programs provide examples of the power of connecting the needs of employers with the educational systems with the capacity to meet those needs. These ongoing collaborations will connect not only stakeholders within each key core partner agency, but among employers, employees, and economic drivers and decision makers across the Region.

Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

In supporting the activities identified to help accomplish the LWDA's strategies and goals for WIOA, Region 9 will also leverage the services and coordination efforts of programs outside the Unified Plan including, but not limited to, SNAP, TANF, TAA, and other regional programs providing employment-related services.

Alignment of Workforce Services to Human Services

Georgia's core partner programs are working closely with DHS to increase alignment of workforce development activities with overall human services activities. Recognizing that WIOA programs, TANF Welfare to Work, and SNAP E&T share similar goals, the region is looking to increase coordination. Moving forward, TANF will co-locate staff at the one-stop delivery system to enable better service delivery and communication, and staff will be increased as needed to enable this expanded presence. In addition, TANF and SNAP will coordinate with other core partner agencies to provide support services to assist participants.

This includes, providing shared assessments, sharing case management systems, cross-training program staff, and implementing family- oriented policies. Currently, with subsidized employment and work experience, TANF already provides work-based training strategies for adults and youth with barriers to employment.

Additionally, TANF Welfare to Work and SNAP E&T promote the development and maintenance of community connections and resources that address basic skill deficiencies and identify employment barriers. These local collaborations include the current core partners of WIOA, providing a platform to further enhance the referral process for TANF and SNAP customers eligible for WIOA services.

Alignment of Programs Serving Migrant Workers

Agricultural outreach is another opportunity for the region to coordinate with agencies and programs outside of the core partners included in the Unified Plan. As part of the region's agricultural outreach efforts, staff develop partnerships and provide available resources to local organizations serving MSFWs. Resources include, but are not limited to: TANF, SNAP, the Georgia Farmworker Health Program, the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Inc., the Georgia Free Clinic Network, Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, community food banks, the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and entities that provide Adult Literacy, ESL, and GED services to MSFWs.

Alignment of Veterans Programs

One of the most effective ways the workforce system coordinates and aligns services across programs and partners, specifically those not defined within the Unified Plan, is through work with the region's veteran population. Georgia provides priority of service for USDOL-funded workforce programs as outlined in 38 U.S.C. § 42 and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Covered persons (veterans and eligible spouses) are identified at the initial point of contact within the One-stop offices so that priority of service can be provided to veterans for the delivery of employment, training, job placement and related services as stated in the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288). LVER and DVOP staff are available for intensive employment and employability development. The roles of LVER and DVOP staff are distinct from one another. LVERs provide outreach and discuss the benefits of hiring veterans with employers, while DVOPs provide individual services to veterans and assist them in overcoming barriers to employment through intensive services and case management.

Georgia has a strong reemployment service delivery strategy that links a network of organizations and programs serving veterans which include GDEcD, GDOL, SDVS, Georgia National Guard and Reserve, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, GVRA, and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

Alignment with the Criminal Justice System

Finally, to further enable a unified workforce system, the core partner agencies will coordinate and better align services with the region's prison and ex-offender programs. The workforce system is a vital partner to ensure that the Georgia criminal justice system returns ex-offenders to society with marketable skills and opportunities to succeed. The focus of this effort is to decrease the Georgia prison population. The Region will collaborate and leverage alignment of services from GDOL, CJCC, DJJ, DCA, and DOC to create a viable pathway to employment while decreasing the recidivism rate.

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

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

To realize the Governor's vision and goals for the region's one-stop workforce system, local area required partners have elevated business services to the forefront of workforce strategies. While many partners have created independent business services units, these partners coordinate with one another to present a unified array of services to businesses.

Each core partner brings unique programs and strategies to employers which can be leveraged in partnership with one or more of the other regional partners. For example, GDOL's BSU routinely partners with the LWDA to work with employers seeking to quickly fill demand positions. GDOL may provide Customized Recruitment to identify the unique skills and experience required for the positions. Working with the LWDA's Rapid Response Team during employer layoffs, GDOL can identify UI claimants to quickly create a pool of qualified candidates. If the employer is looking for training to train these new hires in place, the LWDA can also funnel selected applicants through work-based learning such as Incumbent Worker or Customized Training.

Examples of the high-quality services provided to employers by each of the core partners are provided below.

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

Employment Services

The Business Services Unit (BSU) of the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) reflects a new direction and emphasis on employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. The realignment of vision and purpose has positioned GDOL to refocus on its commitment to the business community and provide a venue for a more proactive and employer friendly partnership.

- The Regional Coordinator Program partners with economic developers, locally, regionally and statewide by executing prompt turn-around data and customized solutions to workforce issues.
- The Business Services Recruiters devote their efforts towards developing and maintaining relationships with employers regionally.
- The SWAT (Special Workforce Assistance Team) team currently has fifty plus expert staff prepared to assist job seekers with résumé assistance and the marketing tools necessary to impress hiring managers.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

- Regional Career Expos that can be tailored to targeted industries, job seekers, and skill requirements.
- Georgia Department of Labor's Customized Recruitment (CR) is a specialized resource offered to eligible businesses (new to Georgia).
- GeorgiaBEST for Employers will assist employers with their existing workforce issues relative to soft-skills deficiencies.
- GeorgiaBEST for Students is incorporated in middle, high school and technical colleges preparing students with soft skills for their future careers.
- The Employer Committee provides a critical link between GDOL and the business community. The committees provide input and guidance in the development of policy and legislation by the Department of Labor as it impacts Georgia employers and employees.
- Regional Summits are designed to help business owners, managers, hiring professionals, and others better understand and conquer compliance challenges in the workplace. This program has been approved for 3.75 recertification credits through the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The local area takes advantage of programs offered through TCSG-OWD aimed at connecting with and providing workforce solutions to employers. State initiatives such as Go Build Georgia, Georgia WorkSmart, HDCl, and Operation: Workforce are designed to connect with employers, engage them in a dialogue concerning their future workforce needs, and deliver solutions appropriate to those specific needs.

The local area also connects with employers through the LWDA's Rapid Response Team, local job and resource fairs, and through participation in regional employer meetings.

The LWDA provides a variety of customized services to employers in various formats. For example, labor market information can be self-accessed by employers or acquired with varying levels of staff assistance. Employer centers in one-stop/information center locations are used by employers in a self-service mode for recruitment and interviewing or with staff-assisted screening and testing.

Various marketing materials are also available and used to educate employers and facilitate employer involvement. The LWDA also markets to employers consistently by providing information related to employment, unemployment and partial unemployment benefits, tax and wage reports and payments, employing individuals with disabilities, employer committees, layoff information and resources, child labor info, labor market info, tax credits and incentives, workforce and business development services and resources, employment law issues, and recruiting new employee services.

The LWDA also provides information through the One-Stop system regarding workforce development services provided by other local area agencies. Region 9 citizens access local area services through a wide variety of avenues and the local area is actively working to educate each agency on what is offered through

the workforce system to ensure each eligible participant is reached. The region will have at least one Comprehensive One-Stop. Information centers will be available in all seventeen counties due to the large rural geographic area. The region will use technology based systems, such as webinars and video conferencing to meet the needs of customers throughout this large geographic region.

The LWDB has business and organized labor representatives which provide input at regularly scheduled meeting. In addition, those members participated in the development of this plan.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

GVRA recently established a "Business Division" to create a single focused approach and strategy to engage employers in the most meaningful way. Under the GVRA business division, all agency efforts of engaging, contacting and relating to local businesses and corporate entities will be coordinated into a unified approach. The agency has hired a Director of the Business Division and all VR program staff will be supervised through this division. The overall goal of the GVRA business division will be to interface with employers to identify specific employer job and workforce needs and to provide the employers with qualified candidates to meet the employer's' needs through outreach, employer-based training education opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and connecting employers with resources for hiring individuals with disabilities.

In addition, the GVRA Business Division will also serve to provide education and training to VR program staff regarding the unique needs of specific employers' region-wide, to work together with the VR field staff to more effectively place individuals with disabilities in jobs and careers.

Technical College System of Georgia

Georgia's technical college system is a regular partner in the region's efforts to recruit and train skilled talent for employers. Training services can be offered by the tech colleges, usually through their Economic Development Divisions. These services can provide skills and professional certifications that are commonly required in the workplace. Examples could include customer service, ServSafe, forklift safety, computer skills, manufacturing fundamentals, CPR, First Aid, and many others. Each training program can be customized to meet the employer's requirements for employees. This partnership is often leveraged by providing business services through the nationally renowned QuickStart program. QuickStart offers customized training to eligible companies who are seeking to rapidly train a large group of employees in the Biotech/Healthcare, Warehousing/Distribution, Automotive, Advanced Manufacturing, Food/Agribusiness, or Services Industries. The staff at QuickStart can work with the company to develop proprietary curriculum and administer the training based on the employer's preferences. Training can be offered in classrooms, mobile labs or directly on the plant floor. The QuickStart program is a unique opportunity which is leveraged alongside other business services from core partners.

- c. How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

A growing regional economy presents opportunities for business expansion and increases the need for additional skilled workers. To seize the opportunities created by the Region's growing industries, the LWDA

designed a workforce development system integrated with economic development activities to help ensure workers and employers are prepared to support and sustain the Region's growing industries.

The collaborative relationship between local workforce development and economic development activities has resulted in highly successful relationships with new and existing employers. Employers are effectively using the One-Stop system for recruiting, screening and hiring. Economic Development Board members and their peers are in continual communication with WIOA partners to inform of employers staffing needs, new businesses moving into the area and the general economic conditions of the area.

Workforce development is economic development and the local area WIOA partner will be operating at the center of a public-private conversation. With the local area's strong alliances with its WDB, Regional Commission and WIOA partners, it is positioned to help facilitate these discussions. The growth in employment within demand occupations provides a perfect illustration of the power of connecting the needs of employers with the educational systems that train individuals in those skills.

A major part the region's future is evolving with collaboration from economic development partners. The region is poised for expansion as the "I-16 Corridor" begins to develop. The I-16 corridor which connects middle Georgia to the Georgia Ports is already bringing economic development, and future business growth along the corridor. The I-16 Corridor Alliance was formed in 2008 by Economic Development Directors and Chamber leaders to foster economic growth along the corridor. Interstate 16 is the major east-west corridor running through the Heart of Georgia that connects to Interstate 75 at Macon and Interstate 95 at Savannah. Within one-day, a shipment received at nearby Savannah and Brunswick port facilities can be as far as Memphis, Tennessee; New Orleans, Louisiana; Miami, Florida; and Richmond, Virginia by open road or the Norfolk Southern or Georgia Central Railways. Freight can be anywhere in the world in 24 hours via Hartsfield International Airport (ATL), which is less than two hours away and Middle Georgia Regional Airport (MCN) that is less than one hour away. By air, there is more to consider than Savannah's Airport and Atlanta's International Airport (both less than a 2-hour drive).

Furthermore, Georgia is focused on empowering front-line employees in the one-stop system with the leadership and tools necessary to proactively engage with local economic developers. For example, GDOL and WIOA Regional Coordinators are focused on partnering with economic developers, locally, regionally, and statewide by executing customized solutions to workforce issues. Located in the 12 service-delivery regions in the State, Regional Coordinators can help economic developers identify data critical for the successful location and expansion of industry.

With the Region's focus on employer services, work-based learning including OJT and customized training will be expanded through further capacity building and increased collaboration with LWDA economic development entities. Many state programs, such as Fast Track and Georgia WorkSmart are employer focused. The collaboration of the Region's WIOA programs with DOL Career Centers closely aligns workforce services with the Region's economic development needs. The plans include co-location of workforce services, increased virtual access, and data interface processes to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners.

Key stakeholders in economic development can connect employers, educators, and workforce representatives on an almost daily basis. Additionally, the Region's workforce development system continues to utilize labor market and educational data in coordination with local data to inform and guide

strategic workforce development decisions. Further, the working groups facilitate unprecedented interagency cooperation and coordination in designing the future of the Region's workforce development system.

In many ways, UI serves as the entryway into the workforce system. As the provider of UI and WP services, GDOL is uniquely poised to welcome customers into the workforce system and provide comprehensive and targeted referrals to the other core partners. While a large amount of WP referrals come from UI, that system is not the only source of workforce customers. GDOL also utilizes BSU to attract customers.

Business Services Unit

The Business Services Unit (BSU) of the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) reflects a new direction and emphasis on employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. The realignment of vision and purpose has positioned GDOL to refocus on its commitment to the business community and provide a venue for a more proactive and employer friendly partnership.

- The Regional Coordinator Program partners with economic developers, locally, regionally and statewide by executing prompt turn-around data and customized solutions to workforce issues.
- The Business Services Recruiters devote their efforts towards developing and maintaining relationships with employers regionally.
- The SWAT (Special Workforce Assistance Team) team currently has fifty plus expert staff prepared to assist job seekers with résumé assistance and the marketing tools necessary to impress hiring managers.
- Regional Career Expos that can be tailored to targeted industries, job seekers, and skill requirements.
- Georgia Department of Labor's Customized Recruitment (CR) is a specialized resource offered to eligible businesses (new to Georgia).
- GeorgiaBEST for Employers will assist employers with their existing workforce issues relative to soft-skills deficiencies.
- GeorgiaBEST for Students is incorporated in middle, high school and technical colleges preparing students with soft skills for their future careers.
- The Employer Committee provides a critical link between GDOL and the business community. The committees provide input and guidance in the development of policy and legislation by the Department of Labor as it impacts Georgia employers and employees.
- Regional Summits are designed to help business owners, managers, hiring professionals, and others better understand and conquer compliance challenges in the workplace. This program has been approved for 3.75 recertification credits through the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI).

- The region has expanded reemployment activities and to expand the reach of new employment services strategies, thereby increasing job seekers' abilities to reconnect to the workforce. Collaborating with UI to offer customized reemployment services through the REA strategies, provides a structured plan of employability to long-term unemployed job seekers and has shown to significantly increase their ability to get a job.

Veterans also receive reemployment services from GDOL through a FY15 UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. RESEA provides focused case management services, including reemployment orientation, individualized career assessment, and job search assistance.

In addition, GDOL's EG system provides specialized services to job seekers who are veterans. Conventional approaches to veterans' job placement are normally based on USDOL's Military Occupational Classification-Standard Occupational Classification (MOC-SOC) crosswalk which maps each military occupation to its civilian equivalent. However, these mappings are very literal, do not account for market demand, and fail many service members whose combat occupations have no civilian equivalents. EG's Focus Career Explorer uses a proprietary crosswalk of military and civilian occupations to ensure that every veteran receives matches for in-demand civilian jobs, including those whose military occupations do not have civilian equivalents (e.g., infantry). EG has undertaken a detailed review of each of the nearly 10,000 MOC's to identify matches based on corresponding high-demand careers at a variety of levels – for each specific MOC, for similar MOC's, and overall.

Consistent and strategic investment in staff development reflects Georgia's commitment to integrated workforce services. Employment services staff of GDOL are trained in both employment services and UI programs, enabling customers to receive seamless services geared to facilitate their return to employment.

Staff complete a structured training curriculum to equip them to provide high-quality services to both jobseekers and business. Training is comprised of intensive interviewing techniques, administering career assessments, accessing and interpreting labor market information, customized service strategies for employers and jobseekers, identifying the potential need for soft skills and skills gap training, developing workforce partnerships, identifying available supportive services, résumé writing expertise, and counseling to address barriers to employment and to assist with career selection.

Additional staff training is provided in the following areas: strategies for business recruitment events, as well as multiple methodologies to connect qualified jobseekers with employers, providing workforce statistics and prevailing industry wages, guidance on employment laws as it relates to the workplace, UI, FB, the WOTC, and other workforce services. Staff also have access to customer service training to enhance services to jobseekers and businesses.

Other staff development activities include:

- Comprehensive online resources on GDOL's website at www.dol.georgia.gov;
- Comprehensive internal online resources at www.theSource.gdol.ga.gov;
- Job shadowing for new staff at local offices;
- Active participation in IAWP; hosting the international conference in 2015;

- Active participation in NASWA;
- Active participation in SETA;
- Departmental leadership training program through EXCEL, offered through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia;
- Ongoing assessment of GDOL and partner staff training needs by local GDOL career center managers;
- Participation on LWDBs to keep abreast of information on local, State, and national issues; and
- Regular reviews by the STAR team, delivering on-site extensive technical assistance and staff training during site visits, and identifying training needs based on policy changes, new initiatives, etc.

GDOL offers training, technical assistance and support to partner staff who serve local job seekers and employers to ensure that program partners are highly engaged in local and State workforce partnerships that allow for the constant exchange of information on core programs, UI legislation, new workforce training providers, and available programs.

The UI and RO Division of GDOL provides subject matter expertise and technical assistance on UI policies, rules, procedures, and systems to all staff. In the training modules, staff is educated on how to detect, address, and resolve issues that affect UI eligibility. While in-depth training is provided to career center staff managing the UI claims process, an overview of the UI process is also available to WIOA and other workforce partners.

In addition to providing UI training, the UI & RO Division provides a dedicated customer service line staffed by experienced benefits analysts who address UI issues, questions and concerns; specify the benefits of ES; and resolve WIOA inquiries. The robust training and partnerships encourage exemplary service delivery to jobseekers and employers, and create opportunities to identify and/or create new training opportunities as laws and regulations change.

Finally, workforce partners have access to select data elements, such as customer contact information and work history from GDOL. Sharing data between organizations assists staff in providing comprehensive, unduplicated services while eliminating unnecessary trips or contacts for the customer.

Meaningful Assistance

The ability to file a UI claim will be available at every comprehensive one-stop center. Access and meaningful assistance is critical, whether the customer is in rural Georgia, relies on public transportation, or needs access to the Internet. Assistance is assured through:

- UI orientation provided to every new claimant explaining the full range of workforce services available to help them return to work;
- Online access via www.dol.georgia.gov where customers can file electronically from career centers, home, libraries or any other Internet portal;
- Dedicated, experienced staff at every one-stop;
- Fully staffed resource centers at all career centers, including Internet access, copies, phones, fax and resource libraries;

- A dedicated toll-free number for customers filing for UI at one-stops;
- Access points at over 40 one-stops and career centers across the state;
- An opportunity for each claimant to access in-person reemployment services as they come to career centers and one-stops to complete the UI filing process;
- The use of state-of-the-art EG résumé and job matching service as a requirement for ES registration for claimants;
- The availability of staff, technology, and written materials in a variety of languages to meet the needs of all customers;
- Fully accessible services, online and in person, to serve any customer with a disability;
- Joint participation of UI staff with other workforce partners in large layoff events;
- Daily referrals of customers from workforce partners to UI specialists to ensure that customers have access to all benefits to which they are entitled(c) The region's strategy for providing reemployment assistance;

All Customers

With Georgia's recovering economy, GDOL and partner staff can provide more in-depth services to customers who are most in need and face multiple barriers to reemployment.

Employment services provided with WP funding are available to all individuals eligible to work in the United States – those with jobs looking for better career opportunities; individuals who have lost their jobs; and those seeking employment for the first time. These services form a continuum ranging from self-service online, to group presentations, to customized one-on-one assistance. Individuals with more specialized needs (e.g., veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers) receive customized services to further their career goals.

Per State law, all UI recipients must register for ES. Georgia continues to run its federal profiling model when job seekers file their UI claims, at which time claimants are made aware of the requirements for reemployment services and the varied services available to them. These services may include: an assessment of skills relative to available jobs; workshops on effective job search, interviewing techniques and résumé development; an overview of multiple self-service employment resources; detailed labor market information related to growth occupations and industries, and wage surveys to assist with decision making; and direct referrals to job training, educational and supportive service opportunities in the community.

Profiling is a federally-mandated program designed to assist UI claimants who may be unlikely to find employment before their benefits are exhausted. The UI claim process links information from intake records and employers' files to assess each claimant's likelihood of finding another job within the period of UI eligibility. Those UI claimants who are least likely to find work quickly will receive structured job search services.

The claimant's occupation, job tenure, education, last employer's industry, and the area's unemployment rate are factors used in calculating a percentile score. The higher the score, the more likely a claimant will exhaust benefits before finding work. For workload management purposes, career center managers monitor the number of profiled claimants served each week, and, if necessary, adjust their career center's threshold (minimum score) to ensure that workshops are neither over- nor under-utilized, and that services can be delivered.

All claimants who are identified by the system as meeting or exceeding the career center's threshold and are mandated to participate in required services must complete either a Service Needs Evaluation/Assessment or a Quick Initial Assessment.

Other activities to promote reemployment of UI claimants include claimant access to:

- Information on community resources, labor market information, GED, occupational training, OJT, and support services that make training possible to enhance an individual's ability to return to work
- Integrated workforce services for citizens released from correctional facilities through the Governor's GA-PRI
- An Events tool on the Department's website to allow customers to access hundreds of career fairs, hiring events, and other activities to connect with hiring businesses
- A strong network of faith-based organizations that support reemployment efforts
- Collaborative services for claimant trainees and TAA-eligible customers
- Collaboration with HomeSafe Georgia for citizens needing mortgage assistance
- Job clubs sponsored by GDOL, faith-based organizations, and others
- Older worker workshop – the SCSEP
- Veteran work study program sponsored by the Veterans Administration that allows veterans in training to work part-time in career centers

RESEA Program

Recently, GDOL operated a REA targeting UI claimants in five GDOL career centers. As Georgia worked with the REA customer population, it became apparent that there were thousands of customers in other areas of the State in need of intensive reemployment services. Many of the customers are in areas of the State where there are military bases, resulting in a high number of UCX claimants. Because of these direct customer needs, Georgia redesigned its REA program to target UI claimants who are profiled and are most likely to exhaust their weekly benefits. This redesign will increase the number of GDOL career centers delivering RESEA services across the state to nine, including four new offices with the highest UCX claimant population in the State. Georgia's REA program will provide RESEA intensive services to a large percentage of traditionally underserved UI claimants with low education levels, language barriers, limited skill sets, and/or who are homeless veterans, justice-involved individuals, and seniors. This population includes a large percentage of food service workers and other workers in low-paying service jobs who cycle through the UI system regularly. They experience multiple layoffs and move laterally from one low-paying job to another, never developing the skills or solid work history needed to advance to a more stable position in the workforce. The expansion of the RESEA program over its REA predecessor allows it to serve more customers across a larger area of the State, and allows the State to evaluate the impact of delivering the intensive reemployment services to a significant number of veterans with workforce challenges.

The RESEA service delivery strategy focuses on UI claimants who are profiled and identified as most likely to exhaust all UI benefits. Customers are identified upon being determined eligible for UI benefits, and are advised of RESEA's mandatory participation requirements immediately upon being notified of their selection to participate. RESEA intensive customer services begin with an orientation to services, individual review and discussion of O*Net My Next Move assessment results, and development of a reemployment plan. Staff provides referrals to in-house workshops (e.g., résumé development, job search, and financial management), training, and other community workforce and supportive services as needed. Customers receive relevant labor market information and learn about helpful web sites which could enrich their job

search. Work history evaluation is conducted and job matches are identified in the EG system.

Georgia's robust and intensive approaches to facilitating the reemployment of UI recipients, including initiatives such as the former REA and emerging RESEA programs, has directly contributed to the lowest average UI duration average in the nation for the eight consecutive quarters (9.8 weeks through CY15 Q2).

Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the W-P Act

Georgia's UI and WP labor exchange systems are each administered by GDOL, and UI staff has access to all ES job referral, case management, employment, and other information as needed. Staffing is funded in accordance with Federal circulars, to the allowable benefiting fund source.

Aside from a limited number of exempt UI recipients, all receive reemployment services, as they are required to register with the region ES. Approximately 60% of ES registered customers are UI claimants.

Each GDOL career center has a resource area which customers can access for their employment needs. Some of the resources available to all customers include: the Job Information System which includes jobs in Georgia, throughout the Southeast, and across the nation; labor market information, including GLME, O*Net tools and others; over 40 TapDance Live! self-directed career exploration and assessment tools; instructional software for typing and résumé development; automated job referral options; training and education resources; financial aid information; online filing of initial UI claims; telephones, fax machines and copiers.

Services routinely provided to ES job seeker customers (including UI claimants) throughout the region include:

- Self-service resources such as EG labor exchange services, unemployment claims application, books, videos, and pamphlets;
- Access to computers and job search software;
- Résumé development and typing tutorials;
- Job openings in Georgia, the Southeast, and across the nation;
- Labor market information for career exploration, fields in demand, average salaries, etc.;
- Training and education resources, financial aid options;
- Vocational assessment;
- Automated referral assistance;
- Workshops on a variety of employment-related topics (e.g., effective job search, interviewing, résumé development, coping with job loss, financial management);
- Career expos;
- Job search assistance and job referral;
- Job development;
- Job clubs;
- Individualized assistance for customers with unique needs;
- Specialized assistance for veterans, other eligible individuals and migrant and seasonal farm workers;
- Assistance for ex-offenders;

- Assistance with federal bonding; and
- Referral to partner and community provider services.

Staff-assisted employment services are provided to more than 500,000 individuals annually, and tens of thousands of additional individuals receive self-services made available by GDOL at career centers and online. Also, Georgia businesses list approximately 150,000 available jobs daily, with a goal of increasing that number to 300,000 in the subsequent year, and more than 1.6 million job referrals were provided last year. This increased number of job openings are a result of growth in the local economy and the strengthening of employer relationships with the workforce system. Because of the improving economy and the focused reemployment strategies of connecting job seekers to meaningful job opportunities, Georgia's Entered Employment Rate shows steady recovery and is approaching pre-recession rates.

Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service

Georgia law requires that UI claimants register with the State's ES. This process is fully integrated into the claims application process. In addition, the process will be enhanced as the EG labor exchange is enhanced and becomes the State's ES registration process in 2015. Until a claimant registers, benefits are not released.

Once Georgia UI claimants are approved for their first UI payment, they are required to create an account and at least one searchable résumé in the EG system described previously. WP and UI staff, in addition to the job seeker, can manage and track job match alerts and job search activities.

Georgia maintains an active ERP through which UI customers are evaluated, typically at the 5th, 9th, and 14th weeks of their claim. At each of these dates, they receive additional guidance and resources for effective reemployment. Centers also offer workshops during these visits, on topics including interviewing techniques, networking, and dressing for success. These strategies contribute to the State's unmatched low average duration of UI claims noted above.

Administration of the work test for the State UI system, making eligibility assessments (for referral to UI adjudication, if needed), and providing job finding and placement services for UI claimants; Individuals receiving unemployment benefits in Georgia must be able to work, available for work, and actively seeking full-time work. If an individual earned the majority of wages in the base period used to establish the claim or part-time work, the individual would be allowed to restrict their work search to part-time. The only exception to the work search requirements are for the following:

- Individuals with a job attachment - This would include individuals for whom their employer has filed a "partial" unemployment claim for them or those individuals with a definite recall to work within six (6) weeks of their last day worked.
- Union members in good standing.
- Individuals who are approved and enrolled in a Commissioner-approved training program.

In Georgia's automated workforce system, customers enter work search information weekly. Staff have access to that information 24/7 and can contact a customer should questions arise or concerns be raised. In addition, EG captures a customer's résumé, job referrals and information regarding a customer's response to an employer's request. Should an employer contact GDOL that a job candidate did not respond to a request for an interview, that claimant can be contacted to determine if compliance with the required work test

occurred. To ensure accessibility to the automated system, staff are always on hand to assist claimants with the use of the labor market exchange. In addition, if the customer does not have a résumé, EG will build one for them. All claimants are subject to a work search audit and can be called into the office should questions arise.

During the initial claims filing application, individuals are asked questions regarding their availability. Negative responses require adjudication of the potential availability issue by GDOL claims examiners or services specialists.

Individuals referred to the UI REA program must report to their initial REA appointment, and must participate in all subsequent in-person and telephone appointments. During the in-person appointments, UI ERPs are performed, and staff question the individual about availability for work and any barriers to work they may be facing during all contacts. During all eligibility reviews (i.e., UI, REA, and REU) staff review the individual's work search, discuss the individual's availability, and any barriers to work.

Weekly UI benefit certification includes a question about whether the individuals is able, available, and actively seeking employment. A negative response places an issue on the certification which cannot be removed until a statement is obtained regarding availability. If an issue is determined, a benefits eligibility review is performed by the GDOL services specialist or claims examiner and a determination released, if in order.

Employers and anonymous individuals can report suspected UI fraud on the GDOL web site. This can include employers reporting individuals who do not report for interviews, individuals who are incarcerated, or are otherwise not able, available, and/or actively seeking work.

ES staff have contact with employers and receive notice when individuals fail to report to an interview or refuse work – resulting in an issue on the individual's claim. In the event a potential issue is discovered from any source, a BER is scheduled with a claims examiner or GDOL services specialist. If the individual is not able, available, and actively seeking work (and is not exempted from work search), an appropriate determination regarding UI benefits is released.

Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

The coordination of service delivery is a primary principle of WIOA, which brings together the core programs of Federal investment in skill development.

GDOL embraces WIOA's primary goal of service delivery integration to provide a more seamless experience for participants in federal skills development and employment services programs, as indicated below:

- Providing information to GDOL customers on community resources, labor market information, GED, occupational training, OJT, and support services that make training possible to enhance an individual's ability to return to work;
- As the "front door" to the workforce system, staff from the more than 40 career centers throughout the state identify customers' needs, assist them with UI, employment and reemployment assistance, trade services, automated resources, workshops and referrals to more intensive services such as training, which are provided by WIOA through LWDBs, and other partners.

4. Regional Service Delivery – (Only applies to regions that encompass two or more local areas) Describe how the region will address the items listed below.

- a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements (if applicable).
- b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs (if applicable).
- c. Describe plans for coordination of eligibility documentation and participant outreach.
- d. Describe plans for coordination of work-based learning contracts such as OJT, IWT, CT and Apprenticeship.

Not applicable.

5. Sector Strategy Development – Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.

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

Sector strategy development will be an on-going and evolving process. The first two sectors to be targeted are advanced manufacturing and health care. A series of meetings and training sessions have been held with staff and local partners. The area will apply for grants to facilitate the development of these sectors. The local economic development partners, employers, TCSG partners, WIOA staffs, Chambers of Commerce, Board members and others have met and will continue to meet as often as necessary to develop the sectors and individual employers.

The partners currently participating in the sector strategy development in Region 9 are Oconee Fall Line Technical College, Valmiera Glass USA Corporation, Workforce Investment Act Service Providers and Administration, the Economic Development Authority, the Department of Labor Career Centers and the Chamber of Commerce. With the expansion of advanced manufacturing within Region 9, this coordination is crucial to meet the needs of the employers.

These sectors have been chosen based on labor market information and the growth and development of business along the I-16 corridor because of the expansion of the Georgia Ports in Savannah. In the future, labor market information and local employer demand will influence the selection of additional sectors.

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

Meetings have been conducted with all the HDCI partners. High School personnel and other HDCI partners have been provided tours of Technical colleges and industry employers within the identified sectors. These meeting are in their fourth year and are currently ongoing.

As part of the plan to expand current sector partnerships, we plan to get those current and additional partners across the region actively engaged in the work moving forward on steering committees and in working groups. Each of them brings a unique base of knowledge and resources that will be beneficial to the overall work.

We face the challenge of a very large geographic area in the region therefore we plan to develop a more regional approach, inviting partners from all counties, to the work in order to have a greater impact as we develop additional strategies. This regional collaboration steering committee will be represented by the Workforce Development Board's One-Stop committee and Youth Committee. This regional approach opens the door for information sharing, collaboration, joint-strategy development, and learning opportunities among the different counties in the region. A strong sector partnership will need to include multiple sector strategies as part of the overall partnership. We will keep the steering committee engaged in the growth and development of the work.

Employer partners will be involved beyond providing the tours mentioned above. The goal will be to get as many employers as possible actively engaged in the steering committee which will help to develop and implement the strategies that the partnership develops. The steering committee will represent the larger group of partners involved in the sector partnership. The steering committee meetings will keep all of these members engaged and up-to-date with the work being done throughout the region. In addition to the steering committee, we plan to establish working groups as part of that larger steering committee. The actual work of the sector partnership will be completed in "working groups". Multiple work groups will be established to address the needs of multiple industries. This will be accomplished by ensuring we have at least one sector partnership fully built out with a steering committee and working groups and functioning before trying to expand to any additional industries.

These working groups will oversee the development and implementation of the multiple sector strategies that are developed as part of the sector partnership (e.g., "K-12 Engagement Working Group," "CTAE Program Improvement Working Group," "Post-Secondary Program Improvement Working Group," "Individuals with Disabilities Working Group," "Re-Entry from Incarceration Working Group," "Apprenticeships Working Group," etc.). These are the groups that will actually do the work of the sector partnership; this will divide responsibilities among partners based on their expertise, resources, and networks. These working groups will each be comprised of a diverse group of both employers and the other partners represented on the steering committee. With this structure in place, it will be possible to build out this work and keep it moving forward.

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

The employers outlined the jobs that were needed to be filled with the expansion of advanced manufacturing. The first project, currently underway, is with Oconee Fall Line Technical College, Valmiera Glass USA Corporation, Workforce Investment Act Service Providers and Administration. WIOA will accept applications, conduct testing for the employer and complete intake for the training programs.

Oconee Fall Line Technical College will be conducting the training. There will be seven different training tracks (listed below) and there will be night and weekend classes offered. The customers who successfully complete the training will receive an industry recognized credential. This credential is recognized by manufacturing employers, several who are locating within the industrial park in Dublin, Georgia.

Valmiera will be hiring 450-500 employees who successfully complete the training.

- d. Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:
 - i. Participating employers;
 - ii. Target occupations;

- iii. Training programs; and
- iv. Target Populations.

- i. The participating employers are Erdrich USA, Inc. and AWEBA Tool & Die Corporation.
- ii. The targeted occupations are manufacturing, production line, tool & die, material handlers, manufacturing technicians, process operators, machine maintenance, and related fields.
- iii. The training programs are Mechatronics, Maintenance Technician, Water Supply Technician, Glass Fiber Production Operator, Chemical Process Operator, Twisting Operator, and Material Handler.
- iv. The targeted population are the long-term unemployed, those who have been recently laid off and the underemployed.

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

This will be assessed by the current HDCI partners at the end of the fourth year. As of this writing the High-Demand sectors remain the same.

6. Description of the One-Stop Delivery System – Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

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

All potential providers must submit an application to a Local Workforce Development Board within the state of Georgia for each program of performance to become an eligible provider. The local Board will review the application including specific performance and cost data for each program. If the provider programs are approved and all requirements (such as accreditation) are met, the Board may approve the provider and submit the application to TCSG-OWD for placement on the ETPL. Once on the eligible provider list and, the performance of providers is shared with Board members at their regular meetings. Placement and performance information is reviewed by staff and reported regularly. Providers who are not meeting performance expectations, or not providing training in demand areas may be removed from the Local Area's list. Customer's will be informed of provider's performance to ensure they are selecting providers who will train them in demand employment areas and that can promise successful placement into employment.

Eligible providers will be required to include these standards to maximize the effectiveness of curricula and instruction, and to prepare students for transition to the workforce

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

Heart of Georgia Altamaha's One-Stop delivery system is focused on ensuring universal access across the seventeen-county area which includes two Comprehensive One-Stops and nineteen information centers/affiliate sites. Local area staffs are able to connect employers, educators, WIOA customers and partners on a daily basis. The plans to increase services and access for these key stakeholders are

utilization of technology through increased virtual access already in place in most One-Stop locations, and use of the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal data interface to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners.

The LWDA also provides information through the One-Stop system regarding workforce development services provided by other local area agencies. Region 9 citizens access local area services through a wide variety of avenues and the local area is actively working to educate each agency on what is offered through the workforce system to ensure each eligible participant is reached. The region will have at least one Comprehensive One-Stop. Information centers will be available in all seventeen counties due to the large rural geographic area. The region is using technology based systems, such as webinars and video conferencing to meet the needs of customers throughout this large geographic region.

The local area aims to increase the opportunities the workforce system provides, both to individuals and to businesses. The LWDA is also embarking on efforts to analyze and improve the referral process and case management systems to further unify activities at the participant level. These efforts include standardized training for staff, use of virtual training and staff meetings and increased participation in job fairs, resource fairs and other collaborative meetings.

- c. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha's One-Stop delivery system is focused on ensuring universal access across its workforce system. The local partners, maintain compliance with the provisions of WIOA Section 188 which require programmatic and physical accessibility. Through monitoring performed at both the state and local level, the local area ensures that all One-Stops are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize the Region's workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual, to meet federally-mandated accessibility standards. In addition, the local area maintains a Memorandum of Understanding for each One-Stop location which outlines how compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be maintained.

Per federal law, the LWDA has appointed a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officers are responsible for informing senior staff of applicable federal regulations and ensuring all programs and activities are implemented in compliance. Additionally, the local Equal Opportunity Officer collects and resolves local grievances and complaints as needed. The Local Equal Opportunity Officers actively trains with the State's Title I-B Equal Opportunity Officer and USDOL's Civil Rights Center to remain current on regulatory updates and guidance. They are then responsible for circulating new information locally and ensuring it is properly implemented.

The local area has also developed a regular monitoring system of on-site visits of One-Stops, use of the MOU's to outline requirements of the One-Stops and ensure adherence to all local, State and Federal policies. In addition, the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission has a Monitor who regularly visits and monitors One-Stops to ensure all requirements are met.

- d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development area includes the counties of Appling, Bleckley, Candler, Dodge, Emanuel, Evans, Jeff Davis, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Tattnall, Telfair, Toombs, Treutlen, Wayne, Wilcox, and Wheeler. This area receives Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds (Federal Department of Labor funds set aside for employment related services) for the seventeen counties.

ONE-STOP AND INFORMATION CENTERS

One-Stop and Information Centers are located in each of the seventeen counties to assist any citizen within the area's 17 county region with job search related services. One-Stop/Information Centers have computers which customers can use to search for jobs. Many have staff to assist with resumes. Some One-Stop/Information Centers have facilities which allow customers to fax resumes to employers and contact employers by phone. The region's website also has current job listings for the entire 17 county region.

With the Local Area's focus on providing business services work-based learning including OJT and customized/incumbent worker training will be expanded through further capacity building and increased collaboration with economic development partners and local area employers.

The HGA's One-Stop system across the seventeen-county area includes two One Comprehensive One-Stops and nineteen information centers/affiliate sites. Local area staffs are able to connect employers, educators, WIOA customers and partners on a daily basis. The plans to increase services and access for these key stakeholders are utilization of technology through increased virtual access already in place in several One-Stop locations, and use of the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal data interface to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners. Each core partner has a role in ensuring that the local area's workforce continues to meet the needs of the employers helping the LWDA remain one of the best regions in which to do business.

Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act

WIOA staff-assisted services focus on providing the following: (1) comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, (2) individual employment plans to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participants to achieve employment goals, (3) individual counseling, and career planning, (4) case management for participants seeking training services, (5) short-term prevocational services including development of learning skills, resume building, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for employment. Training is provided for those who lack occupational credential/certification and require short-term continuing education in order to acquire certification/credentialing required for success in growing industries.

On-the-Job Training Program

On-the-Job Training (OJT) allows our customers to work, earning a full paycheck from their employer while entering the job without all of the *specific* skills and/or knowledge needed to do the work. WIOA funds reimburse the employers up to 50% for customers' wages to compensate the employer for the time and extraordinary effort it takes to train the unskilled worker to do the job. After completion of a detailed training plan, if the employee has successfully completed training and learned the skills needed, the

employer retains the “OJT” worker and the subsidy ends. This allows the worker to earn a paycheck while learning new skills and provides the employer with an employee trained “their way” while being compensated for the time it takes to train the new employee. A Service Specialist is assigned to work with the employer and the customer, and will assist in explaining and completing all the necessary paperwork. The Service Specialist is there to assist both the employer and the OJT customer, should any problems arise.

Individual Training Account Program

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) allow individuals to receive training from eligible training providers such as local Technical Colleges. WIOA funds may pay for the remaining balance of tuition and books after the HOPE grant is exhausted. WIOA may also pay for tuition and books. Customers may also receive support payments for transportation and child care. A Service Specialist is assigned to work with the school and the customer, and assists in explaining and completing all the necessary paperwork. The Service Specialist is there to assist both the College and the ITA customer, should any problems arise.

Youth Program

The year-round youth program is designed to better equip youth with the ability to obtain and maintain employment. The youth program provides training, work experience, and tools to help youth to become successful in the work place or college. In-school youth are encouraged to remain in school and a Service Specialist monitors their academic progress. The youth may also be eligible to earn money through the work experience program. The youth program guides youth to ensure they complete an educational program, gain work-related skills and enter college or become successfully employed. A Service Specialist is assigned to work with the customer and the school (for in-school youth), and will assist in explaining and completing all the necessary paperwork.

Georgia Vocational and Rehabilitation Agency

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

VR services are provided by a skilled regional rehabilitation team with representatives from the appropriate disciplines and externally from community resources as needed. The VR Program believes that cooperation and collaboration is necessary to maximize resources and address all aspects impacting individuals with disabilities in gaining or maintaining employment in Georgia. The VR Program is strongly allied with partners of the regional workforce development system and maintains many other cooperative agreements and working partnerships with entities outside the core workforce development system. To ensure participants, employers and businesses are engaged, GVRA will continue to focus on delivering activities already occurring within the regional workforce system as well as expand current efforts in a more organized and integrated manner to better serve individuals with disabilities.

GVRA provides assistance to individuals with disabilities. GVRA's goals and priorities include service improvement across multiple disciplines and areas in the Local Area.

Wagner Peyser

The career and training services provided through the region's one-stop system are comprised of WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser funded services that are provided for the universal population in all designated one-stop centers either on location or through the referral system. Through the established system of partner coordination that has been in place since 2000, flexibility of one-stop services ensures customers receive direct access to the services which best fit their identified needs. The local area has created a system which offers two levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: career services and training services. Wagner-Peyser staff will also provide Reemployment assistance, assistance with Unemployment Insurance and assistance to other unemployed individuals.

Adult Education

Adult Education provides basic literacy and GED training through a variety of training providers and at over 200 locations throughout the state. Improvement in collaboration with WIOA and the one-stop system should increase access to GED services.

The TCSG, OAE is the State's Eligible Agency for Adult Education. OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible providers, and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. OAE will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive RFA process. The RFA is the mechanism through which OAE will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TANF and SNAP program goals align closely with WIOA's goals and outcomes as evidenced by varying levels of coordination that already exist across State regions. Moving forward, TANF and SNAP will work to co-locate staff at one-stop centers for enhanced service delivery and streamlined communication between WIOA partner programs. TANF staff will be increased strategically, starting in the metro areas, then moving where needed, to further provide integrated employment services to Georgia's citizens.

TANF and SNAP will also coordinate with other core partner agencies in providing support services to assist participants with completing their activities as well as coordinating common services to reduce duplication of services. This includes providing shared assessments, use of integrated case management systems, cross-training of program staff, and family-oriented policies. Currently, with subsidized employment and work experience, TANF and SNAP already provide work-based training strategies for adults and youth with barriers to employment. Staff will continue to promote this through integration with existing WIOA partner programs. Finally, TANF and SNAP identify employment barriers and promote the development and maintenance of community connections and resources that address basic skill deficiencies. These local collaborations already include WIOA partner programs, and TANF and SNAP will continue to expand this collaboration through a streamlined referral process for customers eligible for WIOA services.

SNAP provides services to adults ranging from ages 18-24 years. However, the program is also available to those up to age 49. The services are focused on training and assisting the SNAP recipient with achieving life-long, self-sufficiency. To achieve this, SNAP activities focus on barrier reduction, education, and job

search/work place skills training.

Technical College System of Georgia

Georgia's technical college system is a regular partner in the region's efforts to recruit and train skilled talent for employers. Training services can be offered by the tech colleges, usually through their Economic Development Divisions. These services can provide skills and professional certifications that are commonly required in the workplace. Examples could include customer service, ServSafe, forklift safety, computer skills, manufacturing fundamentals, CPR, First Aid, and many others. Each training program can be customized to meet the employer's requirements for employees. This partnership is often leveraged by providing business services through the nationally renowned QuickStart program. QuickStart offers customized training to eligible companies who are seeking to rapidly train a large group of employees in the Biotech/Healthcare, Warehousing/Distribution, Automotive, Advanced Manufacturing, Food/Agribusiness, or Services Industries. The staff at QuickStart are able to work with the company to develop proprietary curriculum and administer the training based on the employer's preferences. Training can be offered in classrooms, mobile labs or directly on the plant floor. The QuickStart program is a unique opportunity which is leveraged alongside other business services from core partners.

The region's primary mechanism for creating a job-driven education and training system is through TCSG. TCSG's OAE will work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to provide comprehensive, wraparound services to program participants. One-stop centers provide a place for connecting customers with OAE through intake/orientation for Adult Education services, transition resources, referral processes, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships. The one-stop delivery system works closely with the TCSG, USG, as well as for-profit and non-profit education providers. This partnership enables the local area to provide customers with a large amount of educational offerings, satisfying the USDOL mandate of customer choice. All education providers are listed on the State's ETPL. The ETPL is hosted on the state's case management website that all potential customers as well as local staff are able to view. The state actively maintains the ETPL.

As the unified provider of technical education, adult education, and customized business and industry training, TCSG is the largest provider of ITAs to the workforce system customer. TCSG also has a 100% employer guarantee, meaning that if a TCSG graduate was educated under a standard program and his/her employer finds that the graduate is deficient in one or more competencies as defined in the standards, the technical college will re-train the employee at no instructional cost to the employee or the employer.

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

The local area's current One-Stop operator is Job Training Unlimited, Inc. This provider was selected through the competitive bid process during PY17.

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

CONTRACT PROCUREMENT

The Request for Proposal (RFP) package is the competitive bid solicitation document and it is written by the staff and reviewed by the WDB Director and Board members. The WDB Planning and Review Committee will meet prior to all proposed procurements to discuss and identify needs based on the local area Plan in terms of adequate provision, as well as non-duplication, of goods or services. While providing fair and open competition, the process will facilitate open and objective actions by all persons in the procurement process and prohibit any arbitrary action in the procurement process. The process shall not place unreasonable requirements on firms in order to qualify them to do business such as prior or unnecessary experience in the local area, high net worth, or excessive bonding in relation to budget for the project. Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms, organizations, or affiliated companies or organizations is prohibited. Noncompetitive awards to consultants who are on a retainer contract are prohibited. Organizational conflicts of interest on the part of WIOA staff and WDB members in the evaluation of bids and selection of contracts is prohibited.

To ensure the RFP package provides the necessary information for proposers to develop a responsive proposal and become knowledgeable of Region 9 contractor requirements, the following information is included in the RFP package:

1. Submission requirements including due date and number of copies to be mailed to Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission.
2. A general description of the subgrant program including applicable federal and state laws and regulations with which proposers must comply. The RFP must reference Public Law 105-22, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as amended; USDOL Regulations 20 CFR Part 652 and Parts 660-671, 20 CFR Part 37, OMB Circulars A-87, A-21, A-102, A-11.
3. The population to be served, numbers to be served, type of training or service, funding parameters, performance goals, method of payment and invoicing, coordination requirements, review criteria used to determine responsiveness and competitiveness, records, the appeal process, equal opportunity provisions, monitoring and reporting requirements, all standard federal state and local assurances,

The Staff publicizes and advertises the availability of RFPs at least four weeks prior to the proposal due date. The staff maintains a list of organizations, agencies and individuals who have expressed an interest in providing services in Region

After RFP's are issued a bidder's conference will be held. When proposals are received, they must be logged in and the proposer must be given a receipt. RC Staff will review all proposals for responsiveness. A reader's committee will be chosen at the discretion of the WIOA Director and/or Board Chair. Review criteria will be evaluated. Other criteria may be established specific to the type of proposal requested. The WDB will vote on proposals and approve proposals for funding and the contingency list pending contract negotiation.

A failed procurement occurs when no proposal, or only one proposal is received. Staff, once authorized by the WDB to do so, will begin contract negotiations with the proposer. Contracts are not considered fully executed until all parties have signed the contract.

8. EEO and Grievance Procedures – Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES / EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS THE LAW FORM

Types of Complaints:

- 1) A Complaint that involves suspected fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, or other wrongdoing, in a WIOA-funded program.
- 2) A General Complaint alleging a programmatic violation of WIOA.
- 3) A Complaint which alleges discrimination.

A General Complaint (#2) must first be filed at the local level using local Complaint procedures. However, Complaints alleging fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, other wrongdoing (#1) or discrimination (#3), MAY BE, but are not required to be, immediately filed with the appropriate Federal Agencies.

If you believe you have been harmed by a violation of any policies or regulations surrounding the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program, you have the right to file a complaint and request a hearing. Complaints should be filed in accordance with the following procedures established by the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Area (Local Area).

- 1) A Complaint that involves suspected fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, or other wrongdoing, in a WIOA-funded program may be filed first locally or by immediately contacting one of the following agencies:

TCSG-OWD	Georgia OIG	USDOL OIG
Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Director 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, Georgia 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371 Email: wioacompliance@tcsgeu.edu	Georgia Office of Inspector General 2 M.L.K. Jr. Dr., SW 1102 West Tower Atlanta, GA 30334 Phone: 866-435-7644 Form: http://oig.georgia.gov/file-Complaint	United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General Attn: Hotline, Office of Inspector General U.S. Department of Labor 200 Constitution Ave, NW Room S-5506 Washington, D.C. 20210 Phone: 202-693-6999 Toll Free: 800-347-3756 Form: https://www.oig.dol.gov/hotlinecontact.htm

- 2) A General Complaint alleging a programmatic violation of WIOA.

Any entity within the Georgia Workforce System, including but not limited to, customers, participants, recipients, subrecipients, contactors and service providers may file a complaint. (Complaint procedures are also available on the website www.region9wib.org). Any complainant has the right to receive technical assistance in filing such complaint. General Complaints must be filed within one hundred twenty (120) days from the date of the action which gave rise to the complaint. The complainant may file a complaint using the Local Area's complaint form, available upon request. The complainant also has the right to make a written request for a hearing with such hearing occurring within sixty (60) days of the filing of the Complaint. The Local Area shall issue a written resolution for each Complaint received no later than sixty (60) days from the date the complaint is filed. As to General Complaints, the complainant must first file at the Local Area Level. If the Local Area does not respond within the 60 days, the Complainant may file a complaint with TCSG-OWD. If the Complainant is not satisfied with the Local Area resolution an appeal may be filed

with TCSG-OWD within sixty (60) days of the Local Area's resolution. TCSG-OWD shall not have jurisdiction over General Complaints until the Local Area has issued a written resolution on the Complaint or the Local Area has not responded within the sixty (60) day timeframe. Any resolution reached by TCSG-OWD may be appealed to the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration within sixty (60) from the receipt of the written resolution from TCSG-OWD. A Complainant may withdraw the Complaint at any time prior to resolution.

If a written request of a hearing is submitted as indicated above, the complainant(s) will be given a written notice of the hearing within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Complainant's written request. The notice will include:

- a) The date of the notice.
- b) The name of the Complainant and the name of the Respondent.
- c) A statement that the Complainant may be represented by legal counsel.
- d) The date, time, and place of the hearing along with the name of the hearing officer.
- e) A statement of the alleged violation.
- f) A copy of any policies or procedures for the hearing or the identification of where such policies can be found.
- g) The name, address, and phone number of the contact person issuing the notice.

Local Area	TCSG-OWD	USDOL
Job Training Unlimited, Inc. 107 North Duval St., P.O. Box 906 Claxton, GA 30417 ATTN: Sandy Bunton, EO Officer Phone: 912-739-7158 / Toll Free: 800-503-0204 Fax: 912-739-7126 sandy.bunton@jobtrainingunlimited.com	Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development Compliance Director 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, Georgia 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371 Email: wioacompliance@tcsge.edu	U.S. Department of Labor 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20210 Phone: 866-487-2365

3) A Complaint alleging discrimination.

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

Equal Opportunity is the Law

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

e recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities.

What To Do If You Believe You Have Experienced Discrimination

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either:

The recipient's Equal Opportunity Officer (or the person whom the recipient has designated for this purpose); or

The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210 or electronically as directed on the CRC Web site at www.dol.gov/crc.

If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).

If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you may file a complaint with CRC before receiving that Notice. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient).

If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

In providing any aid, benefit, service, or training under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, a recipient must not directly or through contractual, licensing, or other arrangements, discriminate on the basis of citizenship status. Individuals protected under this section include citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, and other immigrants authorized by the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary's designee to work in the United States. Citizenship discrimination occurs when a recipient maintains and enforces policies and procedures that have the purpose or effect of discriminating against individual beneficiaries, applicants, and participants, on the basis of their status as citizens or nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, or other immigrants authorized by the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary's designee to work in the United States.

Any customer, applicant, employee or interested party has the right to file a Complaint of discrimination. All discrimination based Complaints and ADR must be filed within one hundred and eighty days (180) of the alleged discrimination. The Complainant may submit their discrimination Complaint to either the Local Area, TCSG-OWD or the U.S. DOL, Civil Rights Center (CRC). If the Complainant chooses to file their complaint with the Local Area or TCSG-OWD, a Notice of Final action response shall be issued within ninety (90) days of the Complaint's filing. Options for filing the Complaint shall include alternative dispute resolution. The Complainant has the right to be represented in the Complaint by an attorney or other representative.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):

(a) The procedures that a recipient adopts and publishes for processing complaints permitted under this part and WIOA Section 188 must state that the recipient will issue a written Notice of Final Action on complaints within 90 days of the date on which the complaint is filed.

(b) At a minimum, the procedures must include the following elements:

- (1) Initial, written notice to the complainant that contains the following information:
 - (i) An acknowledgment that the recipient has received the complaint; and
 - (ii) Notice that the complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process;
 - (iii) Notice of rights contained in §38.35; and
 - (iv) Notice that the complainant has the right to request and receive, at no cost, auxiliary aids and services, language assistance services, and that this notice will be translated into the non-English languages as required in §§38.4(h) and (i), 38.34, and 38.36.
 - (2) A written statement of the issue(s), provided to the complainant, that includes the following information:
 - (i) A list of the issues raised in the complaint; and
 - (ii) For each such issue, a statement whether the recipient will accept the issue for investigation or reject the issue, and the reasons for each rejection.
 - (3) A period for fact-finding or investigation of the circumstances underlying the complaint.
 - (4) A period during which the recipient attempts to resolve the complaint. The methods available to resolve the complaint must include alternative dispute resolution (ADR), as described in paragraph (c) of this section.
 - (5) A written Notice of Final Action, provided to the complainant within 90 days of the date on which the complaint was filed, that contains the following information:
 - (i) For each issue raised in the complaint, a statement of either:
 - (A) The recipient's decision on the issue and an explanation of the reasons underlying the decision; or
 - (B) A description of the way the parties resolved the issue; and
 - (ii) Notice that the complainant has a right to file a complaint with CRC within 30 days of the date on which the Notice of Final Action is received if the complainant is dissatisfied with the recipient's final action on the complaint.
- (c) The procedures the recipient adopts must provide for alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The recipient's ADR procedures must provide that:
- (1) The complainant may attempt ADR at any time after the complainant has filed a written complaint with the recipient, but before a Notice of Final Action has been issued.
 - (2) The choice whether to use ADR or the customary process rests with the complainant.
 - (3) A party to any agreement reached under ADR may notify the Director in the event the agreement is breached. In such circumstances, the following rules will apply:
 - (i) The non-breaching party may notify with the Director within 30 days of the date on which the non-breaching party learns of the alleged breach; and
 - (ii) The Director must evaluate the circumstances to determine whether the agreement has been breached. If the Director determines that the agreement has been breached, the complaint will be reinstated and processed in accordance with the recipient's procedures.
 - (4) If the parties do not reach an agreement under ADR, the complainant may file a complaint with the Director as described in §§38.69 through 38.71.

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of his/her Complaint by the Local Area or TCSG-OWD, the Complainant may file a new Complaint with the CRC within thirty (30) days of the date on which the Complainant receive the Notice of Final Action. If the Local Area or TCSG-OWD does not respond within the 90 days, the Complainant may file a new Complaint with the CRC within thirty (30) days from receiving the Notice of Final Action or one hundred and twenty days (120) from the date on which the original Complaint was filed.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

Local Area	TCSG-OWD	USDOL
Job Training Unlimited, Inc. 107 North Duval St., P.O. Box 906 Claxton, GA 30417 ATTN: Sandy Bunton, EO Officer Phone: 912-739-7158 Toll Free: 800-503-0204 Fax: 912-739-7126 sandy.bunton@jobtrainingunlimited.com	Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Director 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, Georgia 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371 Email: wioacompliance@tcsgeu.edu	U.S. Department of Labor Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC) 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Suite N-4123 Washington, D.C. 20210 Online at: http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/external-enforc-complaints.htm Form: http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc DL1-2014A-Rev-April-2011.pdf

People with hearing impairments may call the Georgia Relay Center at 1-800-255-0056 or by dialing 711.

All complaints filed with the Local Area must contain the following:

- a) The full name, telephone number (if any), address of the person making the complaint.
- b) The full name and address of the person or organization against whom the complaint is made.
- c) A brief, clear statement of the facts including the date(s) that the alleged violation occurred.
- d) May include attached documents.
- e) The relief requested including whether or not a formal hearing is requested (or the complainant's representative)
- f) A SIGNED written statement that the information included in the Complaint is true and correct. A Complaint Form will be provided to the Complainant upon request.

A Complaint may be amended to correct any technical deficiency at any time up until the date of the resolution OR the date of a hearing, if a hearing is requested.

In the event the Complaint does not contain enough information to enable a resolution, the Local Area shall make reasonable efforts to contact the Complainant to gather additional, necessary information. In the event the Local Area lacks jurisdiction; the Local Area shall issue a written notice within 5 business days to the Complainant informing him/her of the lack of jurisdiction.

The Complaint Processing Procedures are as follows:

- 1) Initial, written notice to the complainant;
- 2) A written statement of the issue(s), provided by the complainant;
- 3) A period of fact-finding or investigation of the circumstances underlying the complaint;
- 4) A period during which recipient attempts to resolve the complaint, with an option of ADR; and
- 5) A written Notice of Final Action, provided to the complainant within ninety (90) days of the date on which the complaint was filed.

Equal Opportunity Is the Law

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

-Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity;

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- providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or
- making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities.

What To Do If You Believe You Have Experienced Discrimination

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either:

The recipient's Equal Opportunity Officer (or the person whom the recipient has designated for this purpose); or

The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210 or electronically as directed on the CRC Web site at www.dol.gov/crc.

If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).

If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you may file a complaint with CRC before receiving that Notice. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient).

If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

The above procedures are the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Local Workforce Development Area's Complaint procedures. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have been made aware of these Complaint procedures and understand my rights regarding filing Complaints related to WIOA.

Signature _____ Date _____

Revised: July 1, 2019

The staff designated at the EO Officer will maintain a complaint log.

Local Boards and Plan Development:

- 1. Local Boards** – Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.

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

The Regional Commission, Fiscal Agent, tracks Board memberships requirements, attendance, and continuing eligibility. Board vacancies are announced at monthly Regional Commission Board meetings. Members are recruited and selected by the Regional Commission Board. Nominated potential members are then selected by a vote of the Regional Commission Board at their monthly meetings and then appointed to the Workforce Development Board. The Technical Colleges nominate a potential member from the Technical College who is appointed by the Regional Commission Board to represent Adult Education and the Technical College. The local area is provided a list of State Labor Union Representatives within the area who can serve as a labor representative. These members are appointed by the Regional Commission Board.

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

The Board's annual planning retreat also includes a new member orientation session. New members are also assigned an existing Board Member Mentor and placed on a working committee.

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

The mission of the local WDB is to provide services and resources to new, existing and potential businesses and industries to supply a globally competitive, sustainable workforce. This will be accomplished by addressing the staffing and training needs of businesses and individuals by partnering with educational systems, economic development and other agencies. These services and resources will be provided to the region's businesses and individuals in an effective and efficient manner through a One-Stop delivery system in our seventeen counties.

A growing regional economy presents opportunities for business expansion and increases the need for additional skilled workers. In order to seize the opportunities created by the Region's growing industries, the LWDA designed a workforce development system integrated with economic development activities to help ensure workers and employers are prepared to support and sustain the Region's growing industries. The collaborative relationship between local workforce development and economic development activities has resulted in highly successful relationships with new and existing employers. Employers are effectively using the One-Stop system for recruiting, screening and hiring. Economic Development Board members and their peers are in continual communication with WIOA partners to inform of employers staffing needs, new businesses moving into the area and the general economic conditions of the area.

Workforce development is economic development and the local area WIOA partner will be operating at the center of a public-private conversation. With the local area's strong alliances with its WDB, Regional Commission and WIOA partners, it is positioned to help facilitate these discussions. The growth in employment within demand occupations provides a perfect illustration of the power of connecting the needs of employers with the educational systems that train individuals in those skills. As in-demand occupations grow and the skills gap widens, employers have an increased need for skilled positions and training programs. To that end, the local has also developed long-term work based learning strategies such as those delivered through Individual Training Accounts. The use of ITA's along with use of labor market information

to identify employer needs, will build partnerships of employers, training providers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders around specific industries to address the workforce needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. The defining elements of local area strategies include a focus on customized solutions for specific industry/industries at a regional level, bringing the industry partnerships together.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha's coordination between workforce development, economic development, and programs such as OJT, Rapid Response, and Incumbent Worker Training have further enhanced Region 9 as a destination for business and has resulted in attracting business to the Region. Partner agencies each have a role in assisting business with skilled workforce needs.

Rapid Response

The local has molded its Rapid Response program into a proactive tool that now offers workforce services to employers throughout the business lifecycle, in addition to during layoffs and other large events. Rapid Response leverages the relationships and knowledge of the LWDA partners to help provide services to employers and workers. This integrated approach allows the Region to not only assist with mass layoffs and employment needs, but to assist the LWDA and local employers as they seek to identify key next steps. Throughout this process, key stakeholders communicate regularly with UI and TAA to help ensure the full range of services is available to both employers and employees.

Business Services Unit

The BSU, housed within GDOL, emphasizes employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff that is dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia's employers. BSU partners with economic developers, employers, and businesses to identify talent pools for target industries, customize solutions for workforce issues, and assist with critical industry expansion needs. BSU also manages the Job Readiness Program, Career Expos, Customized Recruitment Services, GeorgiaBEST for Students, GeorgiaBEST for Employers, Regional Summits, and the Employer Committee. The State also makes labor market information available to employers through self-access and web subscription services to help promote the workforce system as a tool for employers to meet their needs. Georgia has taken steps to educate employers on the resources available through presentations, various marketing materials, and outreach services.

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

The local WDB meets at every other even numbered month on the second Tuesday of the month as provided by the rules of the board. The chairperson of the board has appointed subcommittees consisting of members of the board for purposes consistent with the duties and responsibilities outlined in the local WDB Bylaws. Standard reports are provided at each Board meeting outlining WIOA activities, WIOA performance, One-Stop performance and Labor Market information. At these Board meetings reports are also provided by each committee of the Board. Newsletters are submitted to Board members quarterly. The Board's annual planning retreat also includes a new member orientation. New members are also assigned an existing Board Member Mentor.

2. Local Board Committees – Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

There are currently ten committees which serve the Board. WDB members are assigned by the Board Orientation Committee to serve on the following committees: Attendance, Board Orientation, Budget and

Evaluation, Education, Legislative and State Board Liaison, One-Stop, Plan and Program Review, Public Awareness, Retreat/Nominating, and Youth. Each of these committees has a written mission statement and present new business to the Board.

- a. Attendance - The mission of the Attendance committee is to encourage the WDB members to attend WDB meetings.
- b. Board Orientation - The mission of the Board Orientation committee is to help new WDB members understand the mission and purpose of the WDB. The committee will also help the new members feel comfortable in meetings, encourage their participation, and make committee appointments.
- c. Budget and Evaluation - The mission of the Budget and Evaluation committee is to provide a fiduciary oversight for the expenditure of WIOA funds and to link those expenditures to the newly created common measures.
- d. Education - The Education committee of the Workforce Development Board exists to develop, implement and assess actions to create strong linkages between regional school systems and the Board
- e. Legislative and State Board Liaison - The Legislative and State Board Liaison committee exists to serve as liaison between the local WDB and the SWDB. The committee will work to get information to State and Federal Legislators about the accomplishments of Region 9 and also provide information relative to assistance required to better serve our constituents.
- f. One-Stop - The One-Stop committee's purpose is to increase marketing strategies and to identify sources to help us market to those who have a need for our services. An example of a source would be Faith Based organizations. We want everyone to know the purpose of a One-Stop and where it is located in their county. **The One-Stop committee and Youth Committee also act as the HDCI Steering committee.**
- g. Plan and Program Review - The Plan and Program Review committee's mission is to increase WIOA Board member's knowledge and accountability of WIOA programs and to form a collaborative union with school officials at every level of education.
- h. Public Awareness - The mission of the Public Awareness committee is to increase the recognition of the Workforce Development Board and its programs in Region 9 communities and to improve communication to all employers regarding the services and programs available to them through WIOA. The mission is to also develop marketing strategies through communication media and to identify employers to be targeted.
- i. Retreat/Nominating Committee - The Retreat/Nominating committee's mission is to plan a retreat that will increase the knowledge of the WDB members of the programs and services provided through WIOA. The committee's mission is to also nominate the best candidate for chair and vice-chair of the WDB.

There is also a WDB Executive Committee. This committee's membership is made up of the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and the committee heads. The executive committee can act on behalf of WDB when necessary.

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

The Board members and plan partners participated in several meetings:

- 1) Initial plan development discussions were held with Workforce Investment Act Staff, the WIOA Director, and the Regional Commission Director
- 2) A planning meeting was held with all the required partners in Vidalia, GA where they were given a copy of the available guidance. The WIOA director reviewed the outline of requirements and there was a question and answer session. A timeline was provided for submission of the partner's input.
- 3) A committee of the Board reviewed the plan and made a recommendation to the full Board for approval. Upon approval the plan was available and posted to the local website for a 30-day comment period.

Service Delivery and Training:

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

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha area has been working with WIA/WIOA partners since 2000. This coordinated effort to provide comprehensive workforce services through its one-stop delivery system will expand services to individuals through continued collaboration and attainment of common goals.

The one-stop delivery system is responsible for core program activities such as job search activities, use of computer labs to assist online students, referrals to partner services, workshops, employer services, and much more. The one-stop operator is responsible for accomplishing this in a seamless and fully integrated fashion so as to provide better access to the various core program services and to improve long-term employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance.

One-stop staff serve customers regardless of their barriers to employment, level of need, or degree of career development. Services are accessible to the “universal customer” at all of the one-stop/information centers throughout the region. The requirement to make services available to all customers is included in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by each of the partners that provide core program workforce services within the One-Stop/information center location. Each location, regardless of the partners co-located, participates in a system of referrals designed to link customers with partners and agencies within the area to meet their needs. In addition, a variety of labor market information and career development tools are available to the customers at all centers. These efforts continue to reach more customers each year and expand services as funds become available.

The local area works closely with education providers to ensure participant access to postsecondary credentials in for-credit diplomas, certificates, and degrees. However, both TCSG and USG also have continuing education programs which provide access to non-credit industry credentials. In some cases, diploma, certificate and degree earning programs also incorporate industry credentials. For instance, a technical college warehousing certificate may incorporate a forklift certification. These types of stackable credentials enable participants to learn the specific skills needed to gain employment in in-demand occupations. Stackable credentials also enable participants to continue earning additional credentials at a

later point. The area's two-year and four-year institutions have done extensive work to ensure that credits seamlessly transfer between institutions. This work enables the local area to better create career pathways for participants.

The core partner agencies (GDOL, GVRA, and TCSG) have recently joined other regional agencies and offices on a Career Pathways initiative. The LWDA seeks to ensure that an increased number of young people complete high school and attain postsecondary credentials that translate to value in the labor market. Local area partners are engaging educators and employers in building a system of career pathways that launches young people into promising careers.

WIOA places an increased emphasis on the development and use of career pathways. Every Youth is required to have an objective assessment conducted in order to identify appropriate services and career pathways for the participant. Following the objective assessment, WIOA-eligible youth work in tandem with their case manager to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), which heavily stresses career pathways. Youth are strongly encouraged to pursue credentials that will lead them into a sustainable, rewarding career. Additionally, the local area and schools work closely to ensure that K-12 schools are connected with local industry representatives. The LWDA is committed to providing educational opportunities through career pathways that will ultimately optimize the progress and success of individuals with varying levels of abilities and needs. Through the development and use of career pathways, the LWDA's youth will be equipped to enter the working world with marketable credentials and valuable skills.

The region has determined that one of the most effective strategies for serving special populations is through the provision of targeted grants using Governor's reserve funding. The grants enable LWDA's to conduct pilot programs without using local formula funds. This alleviates much of the risk of building new programs while still promoting innovation.

The career and training services provided through the region's one-stop system are comprised of WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser-funded services that are provided for the universal population in all designated one-stop centers either on location or through the referral system. Through the established system of partner coordination that has been in place since 2000, flexibility of one-stop services ensures customers receive direct access to the services which best fit their identified needs. The local area has created a system which offers two levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: career services and training services. These career and training services, coordinated through the one-stop system are listed below:

Career services for adults and dislocated workers includes three types of career services, as identified in §678.430 of the NPRMs: Basic career services; Individualized career services; and Follow-up services.

- (a) Basic career services are available and include, but are not limited to, the following services, as consistent with allowable program activities and federal cost principles:
- Determination of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs;
 - Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop system;
 - Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs;
 - Labor exchange services, including:

- o job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including the provision of information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
 - o appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop system;
 - Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
 - Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
 - o job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
 - o information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
 - o information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skills requirements, and opportunities for advancement in those jobs;
 - Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and provider type;
 - Provision of information on how the local area is performing on federal performance measures;
 - Provision of information on the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including, but not limited to:
 - o child care;
 - o medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program
 - o benefits under SNAP;
 - o assistance through the earned income tax credit;
 - o housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through US HUD; and
 - o assistance under a state program for TANF, and other support services and transportation provided through that program;
 - Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation, by which the local area provides assistance to individuals seeking such assistance.
 - Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA, including HOPE and PELL.
- (b) Individualized career services are available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. In accordance with TEGL 3-15, individuals must be declared eligible to receive these services. These include, but are not limited to, the following services, as consistent with WIOA requirements and federal cost principles:
- i. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - 1. Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 - 2. In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
 - ii. Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate

- achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information regarding the ETPL;
- iii. Group counseling;
 - 1. Individual counseling and mentoring;
 - 2. Career planning;
 - iv. Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
 - 1. Internships and work experience that are linked to careers;
 - 2. Workforce preparation activities;
 - 3. Financial literacy services;
 - 4. Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance; and
 - v. English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
- (c) Follow-up services are available and include, but are not limited to, guidance regarding the workplace for adult and dislocated worker participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment. These services are provided at a minimum of 12 months from completion of program activities.

Georgia has also added an innovative enhancement to its reemployment initiatives for local area job seekers and employers. The EG Focus Career Explorer is a state-of-the-art software application that offers job seekers a self-service tool to manage their career path and interact with Wagner-Peyser staff and services online to support successful career placement. It is a user- friendly system with real-time data to support a successful career search that also allows participants to upload, paste, or create up to five résumés and evaluate them to identify gaps in skills, experience, and education.

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

- i. Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- ii. On-the-job training;
- iii. Incumbent worker training;
- iv. Workplace training and cooperative education programs;
- v. Private sector training programs;
- vi. Skills upgrading and retraining;
- vii. Entrepreneurial training;
- viii. Apprenticeship;
- ix. Transitional jobs;
- x. Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above;
- xi. Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training; and
- xii. Customized training.

To complement and expand the delivery of career and training services through the one-stop centers, the local area is further integrating programs for targeted populations into the one-stop system to ensure access to services by the most vulnerable, such as work-readiness training for those being released from incarceration. The following are some key programs for targeted populations.

Low-Income Individuals Receiving SNAP support

WIOA and WP grant administrators are collaborating with DFCS to develop a strategy to reduce the number of Georgians who rely on SNAP support. The purpose of this collaborative initiative is to create a long-term reemployment solution to assist this population in regaining meaningful employment. This collaboration will enable one-stop Operators delivering WP and related partner programs to provide intensive customized reemployment services to a broad segment of Georgians in need.

Through this initiative, Georgia will develop and utilize a coordinated, multiagency assessment and case management delivery system. Rather than merely “handing off” or “passing along” participants from one entity to another, an integrated case management system will be employed. Primary case managers will work closely with secondary case managers (i.e., specialists in partner organizations), continuously sharing information and insights via a centralized MIS system. Similarly, all necessary participant tracking and reporting will be accomplished within a single system.

The region will carefully catalogue identified barriers and create a unique intervention plan for each participant. Customized supportive services will occur prior to, concurrently, or after specific activities. The proposed system will also include a state-of-the art online labor exchange platform that will combine unique self service capabilities to foster SNAP recipient self-reliance, with case management tracking capabilities. Finally, the project will rely on a newly created, multi-agency advisory committee that will not only ensure informed guidance throughout the life of the grant, but will also engender sustainability beyond the grant and technical assistance for all that choose to reprise the design.

Individuals with Disabilities

As the lead agency in serving individuals with disabilities, GVRA supports core partner programs in serving individuals with disabilities. Georgia Pathways to Work will change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. This will be accomplished by working with region-wide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized pathways. Additionally, this demonstration project will be implemented to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.

Youth with Disabilities

Georgia’s one-stop system engages youth in customized career pathways and SES through collaborative partnerships between VR and other core partner programs in the one-stop system. Georgia recently developed a strategic initiative to expand and improve VR services for youth with disabilities who are either in-school or out-of-school. The purpose of this initiative is to braid existing and new resources to offer a robust, comprehensive array of VR services to all schools. Current VR program policies and procedures are being reviewed and amended to reflect this new way of doing business. The plan includes the provision of pre-employment transition services and timely development and approval of an individualized plan for employment for each youth served. One subset of the proposed plan to expand and improve VR services is a newly awarded, five-year demonstration project entitled “Georgia Pathways to Work” funded through the US Department of Education’s Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The proposed Georgia Pathways to Work program aims to significantly change the way GVRA does business statewide in transitioning students and youth with disabilities in partnership with the core program partners, GaDOE, as well as local employers. This will be accomplished by working with statewide initiatives such as HDCI to ensure responsiveness to the known workforce demands in Georgia, as well as supporting their efforts to better engage those with disabilities. The overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive integrated employment through improving the 18 existing career pathways for students with disabilities, and creating community-based alternative career pathways for out-of-school youth. This will be achieved by tailoring the career pathways to a variety of work opportunities available in the communities. The program will also engage employers in the model design and employ social media strategies to connect youth across the nation. Additionally, a result of the program will be to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.

Ex-Offenders

Georgia's workforce development system works in concert with GOTSR and DJJ to help returning citizens find jobs, training and support services to become productive citizens. The partnership also includes a close relationship with the business community to solicit employer feedback to find ways for returning citizens to become gainfully employed. In doing so, Georgia enhances reentry success by increasing opportunities for returning citizens.

GA-PRI is a state/local partnership managed by GOTSR that includes a core team of state agency representatives. A critical focus of GA-PRI is to support businesses to help smooth the reemployment process for former inmates. One ground-breaking initiative is an executive order signed by Governor Deal in 2015 to remove the requirement that job applicants to disclose their criminal histories on employment. This requirement applies to all those seeking work with state agencies, thereby prohibiting those agencies from using a prior criminal history as an automatic disqualifier for job applicants. Those applicants will have the opportunity to discuss their criminal records in person.

Another way to support returning citizens is to provide incentives to the business community. The Federal Bonding Program, managed by GDOL, is a program that alleviates much of the potential risk involved in hiring an ex-offender. Federal Bonding provides employers with liability coverage at no cost when they hire job applicants who cannot be covered by a commercial bond. In addition, business can benefit from WOTC, a tax incentive to businesses that hire and retain new employees who are members of qualified groups, including ex-offenders. Information on Federal Bonding and WOTC is available at one-stop centers across the region.

Georgia also helps to reduce recidivism through The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program, or TOPPSTEP, operated by GDOL and DCS. GDOL delivers workshops and staffs a TOPPSTEP coordinator in over 40 centers across the state to help returning citizens find and keep a job.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

Specific details on the region's efforts to reduce barriers to employment for the Agricultural Industry are part of service delivery through GDOL career centers as detailed below.

TANF

Through the TANF Family Service Plan (TFSP) and TANF work activities, these individuals with barriers to employment are served as detailed below.

Long-Term Unemployed

The region has many strategies to reduce the number of weeks an individual spends separated from the workforce, with a particular focus on reconnecting the long-term unemployed. Strategies including assessing the risk of benefit exhaustion and intervention for non-performance of job search can be found below.

Workforce Services for Veterans

Georgia's unemployment rate for post 9/11 veterans is significantly higher than the national average. Services to veterans are provided by LVERs and DVOPs specialists located in one-stop centers across the region.

Georgia is also committed to helping veterans who enter, or are at risk of entering, the criminal justice system identifies and connects with appropriate services, treatment, and any other support they need to become productive citizens. As an example, GDOL is partnering with the Cobb County Court System, various veterans support entities and volunteer veteran mentors from the community to operate a Veterans Treatment Court in Cobb County. Veterans Treatment Courts are specialized diversion courts that work with troubled, justice-involved veterans. Active combat experience has left a growing number of veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. When left untreated, these mental health disorders often contribute to substance abuse, unemployment, anger management issues, including domestic violence, chronic illness, homelessness, and a host of other issues leading to involvement in the criminal justice system.

Georgia's DVOP specialists provide direct services to Georgia's Veteran Treatment Court system to help address the numerous barriers to employment of troubled veterans convicted of nonviolent crimes. While the offender is on probation, the DVOPs work directly with the court to provide case management services, job opportunities, and the full array of services available in Georgia's one-stop system to help the veteran become reintegrated into his or her community. DVOPs also coordinate with other supportive partnership agencies, for example community-based volunteer veteran mentors, to further encourage the veterans continued connection to sustainable employment and self-sufficiency.

2. Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha area has been working with WIA/WIOA partners since 2000, in a coordinated effort to provide comprehensive workforce services through its one-stop delivery system. The one-stop delivery system is responsible for core program activities such as job search activities, use of computer labs to assist online students, referrals to partner services, workshops, employer services, and much more. The one-stop operator is responsible for accomplishing this in a seamless and fully integrated fashion so as to provide better access to the various core program services and to improve long-term employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance. One-stop staff serve customers regardless of their barriers to employment, level of need, or degree of career development. Services are accessible to the "universal

customer” at all of the one-stop/information centers throughout the region. The requirement to make services available to all customers is included in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by each of the partners that provide core program workforce services within the One-Stop/information center location. Each location, regardless of the partners co-located, participates in a system of referrals designed to link customers with partners and agencies within the area to meet their needs. In addition, a variety of labor market information and career development tools are available to the customers at all centers. One-Stop and Information Centers are located in each of the seventeen counties to assist any citizen within the area's 17 county region with job search related services. One-Stop/Information Centers have computers which customers can use to search for jobs. Many have staff to assist with resumes. All One-Stop/Information Centers have facilities which allow customers to fax resumes to employers and contact employers by phone.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) allow individuals to receive training from eligible training providers such as local Technical Colleges. WIOA funds may pay for the remaining balance of tuition and books after the HOPE grant is exhausted. If the customer is not eligible for HOPE, WIOA may pay for tuition and books. ITA customers may also receive support payments for transportation and child care.

The local area offers a variety of work-based learning services, which provide employers an opportunity to customize the training offered to future employees based on the tasks and functions required for the job. Work-based learning also enables participants to learn transferable skills that will lead to employment and future advancement.

OJT is perhaps the most involved service that the LWDA can offer an employer. The LWDA works with local business leaders to determine where there may be a need for OJT. The LWDA works to make this process as streamlined and hassle free as possible for participating employers. OJT assists the employer by paying for a portion of an employee's training costs and wages while that employee is in the training period. Employers are then able to use resources in other ways, while not compromising on the quality of training that their new hires are receiving. OJT can support large scale hiring while ensuring that a company is able to train their employees correctly.

Through the local area's Rapid Response team, the LWDA has established a layoff aversion strategy which emphasizes developing relationships with employers prior to the announcement of a layoff, potentially enabling strategic interventions to prevent the layoffs under consideration. One of those strategies which the Region has successfully implemented is IWT. The LWDA uses IWT to upskill workers who would have been laid-off had they not received the appropriate training. The LWDA will continue to expand this network and the resources available to struggling employers.

The LWDA also plans to utilize IWT more proactively as WIOA allows for this strategy to be utilized independent of layoff aversion criteria outlined by the State. This will allow the LWDA to make this training opportunity available to employers who are seeking to upskill their current workforce. Incumbent workers will receive training leading to new skills, better positions, and higher salaries. The LWDA can utilize a portion of their Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide this training and, in many cases, they will also be serve unemployed individuals by backfilling the entry- or lower-level positions vacated by the incumbent workers.

Customized Skills Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers by allowing them to tailor and design work-based skills training. For each participant, the employer develops a training plan and measurable goals that determine the method by which the training is provided. Proficiency levels should be based on local business or industry skills standards. The training activity may

take place at the worksite or in a classroom setting. Additionally, the employer or an intermediary may provide the training.

The local area also promotes the use of the Fast Track program, which is an employer-driven training program unique to the State of Georgia. Fast Track leverages quantitative and qualitative data provided through available labor market information and HDCI to identify common workforce needs of multiple employers within a similar industry and region to develop a customized workforce training solution. Once the local area has worked with the employers to identify the specific staffing needs, the employers are able to provide feedback on the specific training elements that are needed or are generally lacking in traditional offerings. The LWDA then works with training providers to develop condensed training programs that meet the needs outlined by the employers and lead to industry-recognized credentials. The LWDA recruits a pool of eligible participants based on criteria set by the employers, from which the employers are able to choose the members of the training class. The training is paid for utilizing an ITA. Participants who successfully complete the program are guaranteed an interview with at least two of the employers in the group.

Georgia WorkSmart is a work-based learning initiative operated by WFD. The initiative promotes apprenticeship programs as a workforce development tool and assists Georgia companies in developing and implementing customized programs to meet their specific hiring and training needs. Using the apprentice model can help businesses grow their own talent and build a motivated and qualified workforce. Employers use apprentice programs to recruit and train new employees and to upskill their current workforce. The local area plans to work with WFD to implement Georgia WorkSmart in Region 9. Georgia WorkSmart can coordinate with the LWDA to enroll eligible apprentices in ITAs and OJTs, in order to leverage WIOA funding. By design, participants who complete these programs are exited with in-demand jobs, certificates and/or degrees from TCSG or other education providers, as well as the Registered Apprenticeship Certificate from USDOL. These credentials

The career and training services provided through the region's one-stop system are comprised of WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser-funded services that are provided for the universal population in all designated one-stop centers either on location or through the referral system. Through the established system of partner coordination that has been in place since 2000, flexibility of one-stop services ensures customers receive direct access to the services which best fit their identified needs.

The local area has created a system which offers two levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: career services and training services. These career and training services, coordinated through the one-stop system are listed below:

Career services for adults and dislocated workers includes three types of career services, as identified in §678.430 of the NPRMs: Basic career services; Individualized career services; and Follow-up services.

- (d) Basic career services are available and include, but are not limited to, the following services, as consistent with allowable program activities and federal cost principles:
- Determination of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker programs;
 - Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop system;
 - Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language

- proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs;
- Labor exchange services, including:
 - job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including the provision of information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
 - appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop system;
 - Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
 - Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
 - job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
 - information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
 - information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skills requirements, and opportunities for advancement in those jobs;
 - Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and provider type;
 - Provision of information on how the local area is performing on federal performance measures;
 - Provision of information on the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including, but not limited to:
 - child care;
 - medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program
 - benefits under SNAP;
 - assistance through the earned income tax credit;
 - housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through US HUD; and
 - assistance under a state program for TANF, and other support services and transportation provided through that program;
 - Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation, by which the local area provides assistance to individuals seeking such assistance.
 - Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA, including HOPE and PELL.
- (e) Individualized career services are available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. In accordance with TEGL 3-15, individuals must be declared eligible to receive these services. These include, but are not limited to, the following services, as consistent with WIOA requirements and federal cost principles:
- i. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 1. Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 2. In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate

- employment goals;
 - ii. Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information regarding the ETPL;
 - iii. Group counseling;
 - 1. Individual counseling and mentoring;
 - 2. Career planning;
 - iv. Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
 - 1. Internships and work experience that are linked to careers;
 - 2. Workforce preparation activities;
 - 3. Financial literacy services;
 - 4. Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance; and
 - w. English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
- (f) Follow-up services are available and include, but are not limited to, guidance regarding the workplace for adult and dislocated worker participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment. These services are provided at a minimum of 12 months from completion of program activities.

Georgia has also added an innovative enhancement to its reemployment initiatives for local area job seekers and employers. The EG Focus Career Explorer is a state-of-the-art software application that offers job seekers a self-service tool to manage their career path and interact with Wagner-Peyser staff and services online to support successful career placement. It is a user- friendly system with real-time data to support a successful career search that also allows participants to upload, paste, or create up to five résumés and evaluate them to identify gaps in skills, experience, and education.

Training Services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Examples of training services include occupational skills training, including:

- (1) training for nontraditional employment;
- (2) On-the-job training;
- (3) Incumbent worker training;
- (4) Workplace training and cooperative education programs;
- (5) Private sector training programs;
- (6) Skills upgrading and retraining;
- (7) Entrepreneurial training;
- (8) Apprenticeship;
- (9) Transitional jobs;
- (10) Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above;
- (11) Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training; and
- (12) Customized training.

To complement and enhance the delivery of career and training services through the one-stop centers, the local area is further integrating programs for targeted populations into the one-stop system to ensure access

to services by the most vulnerable, such as work-readiness training for those being released from incarceration. The following are some key programs for targeted populations.

Low-Income Individuals Receiving SNAP support

WIOA and WP grant administrators are collaborating with DFCS to develop a strategy to reduce the number of Georgians who rely on SNAP support. The purpose of this collaborative initiative is to create a long-term reemployment solution to assist this population in regaining meaningful employment. This collaboration will enable one-stop Operators delivering WP and related partner programs to provide intensive customized reemployment services to a broad segment of Georgians in need.

Through this initiative, Georgia will develop and utilize a coordinated, multiagency assessment and case management delivery system. Rather than merely “handing off” or “passing along” participants from one entity to another, an integrated case management system will be employed. Primary case managers will work closely with secondary case managers (i.e., specialists in partner organizations), continuously sharing information and insights via a centralized MIS system. Similarly, all necessary participant tracking and reporting will be accomplished within a single system.

The region will carefully catalogue identified barriers and create a unique intervention plan for each participant. Customized supportive services will occur prior to, concurrently, or after specific activities. The proposed system will also include a state-of-the art online labor exchange platform that will combine unique self service capabilities to foster SNAP recipient self-reliance, with case management tracking capabilities. Finally, the project will rely on a newly created, multi-agency advisory committee that will not only ensure informed guidance throughout the life of the grant, but will also engender sustainability beyond the grant and technical assistance for all that choose to reprise the design.

Individuals with Disabilities

As the lead agency in serving individuals with disabilities, GVRA supports core partner programs in serving individuals with disabilities.

Ex-Offenders

Georgia’s workforce development system works in concert with GOTSR and DJJ to help returning citizens find jobs, training and support services to become productive citizens. The partnership also includes a close relationship with the business community to solicit employer feedback to find ways for returning citizens to become gainfully employed. In doing so, Georgia enhances reentry success by increasing opportunities for returning citizens.

GA-PRI is a state/local partnership managed by GOTSR that includes a core team of state agency representatives. A critical focus of GA-PRI is to support businesses to help smooth the reemployment process for former inmates. One ground-breaking initiative is an executive order signed by Governor Deal in 2015 to remove the requirement that job applicants to disclose their criminal histories on employment. This requirement applies to all those seeking work with state agencies, thereby prohibiting those agencies from using a prior criminal history as an automatic disqualifier for job applicants. Those applicants will have the opportunity to discuss their criminal records in person.

Another way to support returning citizens is to provide incentives to the business community. The Federal Bonding Program, managed by GDOL, is a program that alleviates much of the potential risk involved in hiring an ex-offender. Federal Bonding provides employers with liability coverage at no cost when they hire job applicants who cannot be covered by a commercial bond. In addition, business can benefit from WOTC,

a tax incentive to businesses that hire and retain new employees who are members of qualified groups, including ex-offenders. Information on Federal Bonding and WOTC is available at one-stop centers across the region.

Georgia also helps to reduce recidivism through The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program, or TOPPSTEP, operated by GDOL and DCS. GDOL delivers workshops and staffs a TOPPSTEP coordinator in over 40 centers across the state to help returning citizens find and keep a job.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

Specific details on the region's efforts to reduce barriers to employment for the Agricultural Industry are part of service delivery through GDOL career centers as detailed below.

TANF

Through the TANF Family Service Plan (TFSP) and TANF work activities, these individuals with barriers to employment are served as detailed below.

Long-Term Unemployed

The region has many strategies to reduce the number of weeks an individual spends separated from the workforce, with a particular focus on reconnecting the long-term unemployed. Strategies including assessing the risk of benefit exhaustion and intervention for non-performance of job search can be found below.

Workforce Services for Veterans

Georgia's unemployment rate for post 9/11 veterans is significantly higher than the national average. Services to veterans are provided by LVERs and DVOPs specialists located in one-stop centers across the region.

Georgia is also committed to helping veterans who enter, or are at risk of entering, the criminal justice system identifies and connects with appropriate services, treatment, and any other support they need to become productive citizens. As an example, GDOL is partnering with the Cobb County Court System, various veterans support entities and volunteer veteran mentors from the community to operate a Veterans Treatment Court in Cobb County. Veterans Treatment Courts are specialized diversion courts that work with troubled, justice-involved veterans. Active combat experience has left a growing number of veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. When left untreated, these mental health disorders often contribute to substance abuse, unemployment, anger management issues, including domestic violence, chronic illness, homelessness, and a host of other issues leading to involvement in the criminal justice system.

Georgia's DVOP specialists provide direct services to Georgia's Veteran Treatment Court system to help address the numerous barriers to employment of troubled veterans convicted of nonviolent crimes. While the offender is on probation, the DVOPs work directly with the court to provide case management services, job opportunities, and the full array of services available in Georgia's one-stop system to help the veteran become reintegrated into his or her community. DVOPs also coordinate with other supportive partnership agencies, for example community-based volunteer veteran mentors, to further encourage the veterans continued connection to sustainable employment and self-sufficiency.

3. Description of Rapid Response Services – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

WIOA funds reserved by the State as a part of the Governor's set aside are managed by the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL). These funds are largely utilized for the statewide administration and oversight of WIOA activities, and to achieve the Governor's goal that DOL serve as a convener of partners, working to meet the workforce needs of Georgia employers.

The LWDA uses these funds on strategies which provide opportunities for layoff aversion strategies such as Incumbent Worker Training. In addition, the LWDA has transformed its Rapid Response model and placed greater emphasis on early detection and layoff aversion strategies. The key to this structure is the development of strategic relationships and partnerships within the LWDA and across the region that can provide timely intelligence on opportunities with employers.

Rapid Response

The LWDA's Rapid Response structure begins with the State Dislocated Worker Unit which provides WARN notifications to local area staff. The LWDA local area Rapid Response staff then work with State staff to coordinate local area partners' response activities for all separation events. The WARN notice is forwarded to a local Rapid Response representative and the response activities begin. Additionally, the State records the separation details in the online case management system to help the LWDA's to respond quickly and effectively. The state and local coordinators will contact the employer and schedule a time to explain all available workforce services. The state and local coordinators will then help coordinate partner activities to meet with the employer and create a plan of services to meet both the employers' and separating employees' needs. Through discussion with the employer, the Rapid Response team may offer strategies which include:

- Shared work/short-term compensation
- Assistance with filing Unemployment Compensation
- Assistance with filing Trade petitions, if applicable
- Information on retraining/upskilling opportunities
- Job search workshops
- Financial literacy and planning workshops
-

The team of partners work with the employer throughout the process and provide follow up at the conclusion to determine if any further intervention is necessary. Most of these services made available to employer are in response to an immediate separation event.

Additional opportunities may be discussed with employers when there is adequate time and opportunity for layoff aversion efforts. The foundation of the LWDA's layoff aversion strategy are activities which gather information and build partnerships. The Region focuses on exploring and sharing labor market information which may predict opportunities for intervention in the workforce system. It then utilizes this information to engage in outreach through multiple partners, such as GDOL's BSU and GDEcD, to engage businesses in workforce discussions. These conversations reveal opportunities for the LWDA to intervene in offering strategies such as IWT to help businesses upskill workers to become more productive or to learn on new technologies. The LWDA has also had success leveraging upcoming separation events as a talent base to

fill job openings with other businesses seeking skilled talent by hosting job fairs and recruitment events in coordination with the employer of separation.

Rapid Response: Responding to Disasters

While growing successful partnerships are at the center of Rapid Response's layoff aversion strategy, these same relationships and connections provide the foundation for a successful response when disaster strikes. Unforeseen and unpredictable, natural disasters can become extraordinarily damaging in the long run if there is no plan in place to respond to the loss of jobs or industry in the affected region. Partnerships and planning are vital to identify how the workforce system can continue to function and provide key resources to the recovery of an affected region.

In the event of natural disasters, the local Rapid Response team leverages its flexibility and mobility to assist in recovery efforts. The local area prepares for natural disasters by following the direction and warnings of each of the county's emergency management officials. The LWDA has operating plans in place to continue activities in the event of natural disasters, including operational plans to function without the use of technology. Local area partners have contingency plans in place to resume normal services as quickly as possible, such as the filing and processing of unemployment compensation.

Rapid Response: Trade Adjustment Assistance

GDOL works closely with GDEcD when layoffs and business closings occur, including those with a foreign trade impact, for which Trade petitions are submitted to USDOL. GDOL TAA staff promote a seamless array of activities from the initial phase of a Trade-certified layoff through ongoing services provided to Trade customers. All Trade customers are entitled to Rapid Response and employment services, which are provided consistent with the process for all layoff notifications.

Based on the nature of the layoff, early-intervention services provided by Rapid Response may include discussions with employers about TAA before a petition is filed. Once a petition is filed, TAA staff notify partners such as the LWDA's and Career Centers that the petition has been filed. If USDOL certifies the petition, TAA secures an affected worker list from the employer and notifies the workers and partners who provide services to dislocated workers. TAA coordinates and facilitates worker orientations to inform the workers about the benefits and services they may receive as well as the eligibility requirements associated with each benefit. The worker orientations often include LWDA representatives to provide guidance on demand occupations and available training in the LWDA. DOL staff assist workers with TAA registration and filing UI claims.

If the number of affected workers is small, or if there are workers who are unable to attend the group orientation, they can visit a nearby DOL Career Center to be served.

All participants are offered Trade case management services and information and access to the full array of Trade services including:

- a. Training, including remediation, occupational, OJT, customized and apprenticeships
- b. Income Support
- c. Wage supplements
- d. Health Coverage Tax Credit (to help pay health insurance premiums)
- e. Job search assistance
- f. Relocation allowances
- g. Comprehensive and specialized skills assessments
- h. Individual service plans to set employment goals and strategies

- i. Career Counseling
- j. Labor market and financial aid information
- k. Other services customized for harder-to-serve dislocated workers

Participants register in EG, the GDOL online registration system, which provides them the opportunity to develop a resume and access thousands of job opportunities listed by employers. Trade services are tracked in GDOL's GWS and reported quarterly to USDOL.

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

The local design framework provided by services providers includes intake, objective assessments, and the development of individual service strategy, case management, and follow-up services. The local youth programs are designed to do the following:

- Provide for an objective assessment of each youth participant that meets the requirements of WIOA sec. 129(c)(1)(A), and includes a review of the academic and occupational skill levels, as well as the service needs, of each youth for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants and informing the individual service strategy;
- Develop, and update as needed, an individual service strategy for each youth participant that is directly linked to one or more indicators) of performance described in WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(ii). This strategy must identify appropriate career pathways that include education and employment goals, considers career planning and the results of the objective assessment, and prescribe achievement objectives and services for the participant; and
- Provide case management of youth participants, including follow-up services.

The LWDB ensures appropriate links to entities that will foster the participation of eligible LWDA youth. Such links may include connections to:

- LWDA justice and law enforcement officials;
- Local public housing authorities;
- Local education agencies;
- Local human service agencies;
- WIOA Title II adult education providers;
- Local disability-serving agencies and providers as well as health and mental health providers;
- Job Corps representatives; and
- Representatives of other area youth initiatives, including those that serve homeless youth and other public and private youth initiatives (e.g., Youth Build).

The LWDB ensures that WIOA youth service providers meet the referral requirements in WIOA sec. 129(c)(3)(A) for all youth participants, including:

- Providing these participants with information about the full array of applicable or appropriate services available through the eligible providers, and/or one-stop partners; and
- Referring these participants to appropriate training and educational programs that have the

capacity to serve them either on a sequential or concurrent basis.

According to WIOA sec. 129(c)(2), the LWDA makes each of the required 14 youth elements described in the section below available to youth participants. According to WIOA sec. 129(c)(3)(C), the LWDB ensures that parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to youth programs are actively involved in both the design and implementation of its youth programs. A minimum of 70% of state and local youth funding will be used by LWDA's for out-of-school youth. At least 30% of local Youth formula funds will be used for work experiences, such as summer and year round employment, pre-apprenticeship, OJT, or internships and job shadowing.

Youth Program Elements

WIOA-eligible youth are individuals between the ages of 14 and 24, that are either OSY or ISY as defined by WIOA Section 129(a)(1), and meet one of the following additional conditions: Basic skills deficient; English language learner; an offender; homeless, runaway, in foster care or aged out of the foster care system; pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; or a person who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. In accordance with WIOA Section 129 (a)(4), the LWDA is committed to shifting its target youth audience from ISY to OSY.

Services are provided to eligible youth participants through a network of youth service providers and their partners. The LWDA's providers and partners are committed to providing the following required youth elements:

- (1) Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence based Dropout Prevention and Recovery Strategies;
- (2) Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services;
- (3) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences;
- (4) Occupational Skills Training;
- (5) Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation;
- (6) Leadership Development;
- (7) Supportive Services;
- (8) Adult Mentoring;
- (9) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling;
- (10) Financial Literacy Education;
- (11) Entrepreneurial Skills Training;
- (12) Labor Market and Employment Information Services;
- (13) Activities that Prepare for Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training; and
- (14) Follow-up Services.

In support of in-demand careers, Governor Deal launched Go Build Georgia on January 17, 2012, a state initiative designed to increase awareness of skilled trade careers that are focused on manufacturing, telecommunications, energy, logistics, and construction. This labor neutral, public-private partnership is designed to inform youth, educators, and the public at large about the benefits and opportunities within skilled trade industries. By building a broad coalition of key public and private stakeholders, GoBuild Georgia strives to increase the number of those entering the skilled trade workforce, while increasing the awareness of existing training programs leading to these in-demand occupations. The LWDA requires all youth to sign up for and learn about the options through the GoBuild initiative.

The importance of youth and young adults in gaining strong foundation skills, completing high school equivalence and earning industry-recognized certificates and degrees in order to gain economic stability and self-sufficiency cannot be understated. WIOA requires that local areas allocate at least 70% of their youth expenditures to serve out-of-school youth. The LWDA has begun this funding transition. The LWDA will work with the State staff to learn more about the available and expanding youth programs.

The LWDA is working to build a better educated and more employable workforce by enrolling and graduating a great number of youth through Adult Education programs. The LWDA will increase the number of GED completers annually while working to highlight the advantages of Adult Education to the general public. It is also the goal of the LWDA to increase the number of customers taking part in Adult Basic, Secondary Education, GED preparation and testing, and English as a Second Language programs.

The local area has worked with Adult Education providers to ensure that programming is innovative and responsive to the needs of the participants. The local area pairs GED services with Work Experience. The combination allows a youth participant to receive wages while preparing for their GED. It also allows them to gain valuable work experience prior to the completion of their training. The local area also provides soft-skills training, job search skills training and resume writing to all youth customers. All of these enhancements ensure that the participant will be a more attractive future employee upon receipt of their GED.

During this time of recession, young adults are experiencing above average rates of job loss and reduced access to highly-skilled positions. Young adults are competing against more qualified workers for fewer available entry-level positions. By creating multiple points of entry into the local workforce system, the LWDA is working with the youth customer to best match their skills with high demand occupations. Youth who are not interested or able to continue on to post-secondary education are offered technical skills training in industry recognized skills such as "Serv-Safe" and "Forklift Operations". This strategy offers out-of-school youth an enhanced set of skills, a GED, soft-skills training, job search skills and a professional resume with which they can greatly increase their chances of securing employment.

Post-program and follow-up services are critical as they continue to develop early in their career path. Staff dedicated to these follow-up services contact all youth for one year after officially completing WIOA services. Some young adults require continued follow-up to increase their chances of staying employed and progressing on their chosen career path. Staff provide referrals to local One-Stops for continued job search services, career coaching, mentoring, and employability skills to offer a continual improvement process for the young people in our area.

The LWDA focuses on reaching youth with barriers to employment, directly after high school graduation by offering services to help them transition into post-secondary education in high-demand occupation training areas. In order for this to be successful, the local area will partner with high schools and adult education programs to identify and engage the youth. Go-Build Georgia will be instrumental in increasing the youth's knowledge about high demand occupations within the state. The local area will partner with community organizations, non-profits and the Juvenile Justice system to engage youth with disabilities, foster youth, youth who are English language learners, and youth leaving the Juvenile Justice system. These partnerships will ensure that the youth are provided with the resources to ensure their successful entry into the workplace. The training provided to the youth will focus on the use of career pathways and stackable

credentials to promote lifelong learning and upward mobility. The local area will ensure all engaged youth are afforded the opportunity to successfully connect to the workforce system.

5. Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives – Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training programs, On-The-Job training programs, Customized Training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.

As in-demand occupations grow and the skills gap widens, employers have an increased need for skilled positions and training programs. To that end, the local has also developed long-term work based learning strategies such as those delivered through Individual Training Accounts. The use of ITA's along with use of labor market information to identify employer needs, will build partnerships of employers, training providers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders around specific industries to address the workforce needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. The defining elements of local area strategies include a focus on customized solutions for specific industry/industries at a regional level, bringing the industry partnerships together.

In addition to developing of strategies to utilize work-based learning including OJT and Incumbent Worker training in the LWDA, through local area capacity building, the local has also developed long-term work-based learning strategies.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) allow individuals to receive training from eligible training providers such as local Technical Colleges. WIOA funds may pay for the remaining balance of tuition and books after the HOPE grant is exhausted. If the customer is not eligible for HOPE, WIOA may pay for tuition and books. ITA customers may also receive support payments for transportation and child care.

The local area offers a variety of work-based learning services, which provide employers an opportunity to customize the training offered to future employees based on the tasks and functions required for the job. Work-based learning also enables participants to learn transferable skills that will lead to employment and future advancement.

OJT is perhaps the most involved service that the LWDA can offer an employer. The LWDA works with local business leaders to determine where there may be a need for OJT. The LWDA works to make this process as streamlined and hassle free as possible for participating employers. OJT assists the employer by paying for a portion of an employee's training costs and wages while that employee is in the training period. Employers are then able to use resources in other ways, while not compromising on the quality of training that their new hires are receiving. OJT can support large scale hiring while ensuring that a company is able to train their employees correctly.

WIOA customer enrolled in Individual Training Accounts can be coenrolled into OJT slots as they near the end of their schooling. This allows for the transition from education to employment while connecting with employers. Students can take classes part-time and work part-time. This will be a strategy that is used primarily for technical skilled trades for adults and older youth.

Through the local area's Rapid Response team, the LWDA has established a layoff aversion strategy which emphasizes developing relationships with employers prior to the announcement of a layoff, potentially enabling strategic interventions to prevent the layoffs under consideration. One of those strategies which the Region has successfully implemented is IWT. The LWDA uses IWT to upskill workers who would have been laid-off had they not received the appropriate training. The LWDA will continue to expand this network and the resources available to struggling employers.

The LWDA also plans to utilize IWT more proactively as WIOA allows for this strategy to be utilized independent of layoff aversion criteria outlined by the State. This will allow the LWDA to make this training opportunity available to employers who are seeking to upskill their current workforce. Incumbent workers will receive training leading to new skills, better positions, and higher salaries. The LWDA can utilize a portion of their Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide this training and, in many cases, they will also be serve unemployed individuals by backfilling the entry- or lower-level positions vacated by the incumbent workers.

Customized Skills Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers by allowing them to tailor and design work-based skills training. For each participant, the employer develops a training plan and measurable goals that determine the method by which the training is provided. Proficiency levels should be based on local business or industry skills standards. The training activity may take place at the worksite or in a classroom setting. Additionally, the employer or an intermediary may provide the training.

The local area also promotes the use of the Fast Track program, which is an employer-driven training program unique to the State of Georgia. Fast Track leverages quantitative and qualitative data provided through available labor market information and HDCI to identify common workforce needs of multiple employers within a similar industry and region to develop a customized workforce training solution. Once the local area has worked with the employers to identify the specific staffing needs, the employers are able to provide feedback on the specific training elements that are needed or are generally lacking in traditional offerings. The LWDA then works with training providers to develop condensed training programs that meet the needs outlined by the employers and lead to industry-recognized credentials. The LWDA recruits a pool of eligible participants based on criteria set by the employers, from which the employers are able to choose the members of the training class. The training is paid for utilizing an ITA. Participants who successfully complete the program are guaranteed an interview with at least two of the employers in the group.

Georgia WorkSmart is a work-based learning initiative operated by WFD. The initiative promotes apprenticeship programs as a workforce development tool and assists Georgia companies in developing and implementing customized programs to meet their specific hiring and training needs. Using the apprentice model can help businesses grow their own talent and build a motivated and qualified workforce. Employers use apprentice programs to recruit and train new employees and to upskill their current workforce. The local area plans to work with WFD to implement Georgia WorkSmart in Region 9. Georgia WorkSmart can coordinate with the LWDA to enroll eligible apprentices in ITAs and OJTs, in order to leverage WIOA funding. By design, participants who complete these programs are exited with in-demand jobs, certificates and/or degrees from TCSG or other education providers, as well as the Registered Apprenticeship Certificate from USDOL. These credentials

The career and training services provided through the region's one-stop system are comprised of WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser-funded services that are provided for the universal population in all designated one-stop centers either on location or through the referral system. Through the established system of partner

coordination that has been in place since 2000, flexibility of one-stop services ensures customers receive direct access to the services which best fit their identified needs.

The State launched Georgia WorkSmart in partnership with the Office of Apprenticeship to provide more access to the Registered Apprenticeship program. Georgia WorkSmart is another tool to provide to employers looking to train in place. Another resource Georgia has developed is Fast Track training. The combination of a shortened timeline, employer engagement, and use of classroom and on-the-job training has created a successful model for providing entry into growing industries. The region is working to expand upon these services, providing added resources and technical assistance to aid local workforce partners and expand their offerings.

6. Provision of ITAs – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Adults and Dislocated Workers within Region 9 are served by Individual Training Account programs and are referred to the ITA program the One-Stop System.

Once a One-Stop staff has determined an interest in ITA, the customer is referred to the appropriate Services Specialist for eligibility determination and assessment. This referral is made through the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (GWROPP), the online customer record and data collection system.

The ITA program provides financial support for those who qualify as disadvantaged adults or dislocated workers who need financial assistance while completing a course of study of two years or less. The training must take place at a local Technical College, University, or Training Provider which has been approved and is on the State Eligible Provider List (EPL). This list is available on the GWROPP.

Heart of Georgia places a limit on the amount of Tuition and academic required items of \$6,000 per customer and also limits the customer training time to two years. WIA funds are only used to pay tuition after HOPE and PELL. In addition, WIA funds will pay Support payments to WIA eligible customers for child care, travel, and other allowable expenses up to \$3,000 per customer per year. During a customer's time in the ITA program, a WIA funded Services Specialist provides case management service to the customer which consists of one-on-one contact at least once every two weeks to ensure the customer stays on track with their training goals. Near the end of the training period, the Services Specialist is charged with ensuring the customer is seeking employment and assists with job searches as needed.

If the customer drops out of training, the Services Specialist is charged with providing job search through One-Stop core services. In addition, Region 9 employs a Follow-up Specialist who provides follow-up services for one-year after the customer leaves the program to ensure the customer remains employed. Should the customer lose their job within that year, the Follow-up specialist refers the customer to the Region's One-Stop system for job search services and continues to maintain contact to ensure employment is secured.

7. Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services.

The LWDA will work with the small business agencies locally to coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training microenterprise programs which build on the unique ideas and skills of entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs by providing business assistance and small amounts of credit to support the development or start-up of businesses. The services of credit and technical assistance will be coordinated in a supportive context. Customers will attend training programs and manage their businesses in order to receive these services.

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

Another critical factor for Georgia's success under WIOA will be partnerships and collaboration with educational institutions. The region is currently expanding access points for adults, youth, and individuals with disabilities at secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Engagement of Adult Services with Educational Institutions

The region's primary mechanism for creating a job-driven education and training system is through TCSG. TCSG's OAE will work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to provide comprehensive, wraparound services to program participants. One-stop centers provide a place for connecting customers with OAE through intake/orientation for Adult Education services, transition resources, referral processes, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships.

OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible providers, and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. OAE will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive Request for Application (RFA) process. The RFA is the mechanism through which OAE will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible providers (an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals).

OAE will also ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. OAE will award funds to eligible providers for the delivery of adult education services, which are academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to:

- Read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- Obtain employment.

In accordance with federal regulation, eligible providers may receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities:

- Adult education;
- Literacy;

- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language and acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training.

OAE will further enhance adult education content through the adoption and execution of CCR Standards for Adult Education that were disseminated through the OCTAE. EPLs will be required to adhere to these standards in order to maximize the effectiveness of curricula and instruction, and to prepare students for transition to postsecondary education and/or the workforce. In order to ensure that all instructors are knowledgeable on CCR standards and that they understand how to use them effectively to guide classroom instruction, OAE will provide significant levels of professional development to all instructional staff in currently funded programs and to any future adult education grantees.

The Local Area will leverage OAE through its role in the one-stop system to provide technical assistance to educational institutions and customers. OAE will work with EPLs to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards, and enhance access to other educational institutions. The OAE will also help connect customer needs with financial resources such as the Georgia HOPE scholarship and the Carl Perkins Act program.

The OAE will provide professional development/technical assistance via phone, webinar, teleconference, on-site training, and seminars. To ensure that local training providers are adequately equipped to foster continuous improvement and maintain an ability to meet the needs of Georgia's workforce, OAE will:

Deliver technical assistance to increase the ability of instructors to provide impactful instruction and obtain desired results in key areas. Technical assistance will incorporate techniques gleaned from contemporary research and resources related to best practices in andragogy. Topics may include integrated education and training, and CCR standards.

Provide information regarding the role of adult education as a key component in the delivery of one-stop center services. Training will include resources to enable a local provider to establish, build upon, or maintain effective relationships with other core providers.

Provide training related to the use of technology to improve classroom effectiveness and program outcomes. Training may focus on NRS processes and the effective use of the statewide data system in order to maintain accurate student data. The OAE may also provide technical assistance to prepare instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance classroom experiences.

Engagement of WIOA Services with Educational Institutions

The one-stop delivery system works closely with the TCSG, USG, as well as for-profit and non-profit education providers. This partnership enables the local area to provide customers with a large amount of educational offerings, satisfying the USDOL mandate of customer choice. WIOA offers tuition assistance, supportive

services and comprehensive case management as part of the customer services. All education providers are listed on the State's ETPL. The ETPL is hosted on the state's case management website that all potential customers as well as local staff are able to view. The state actively maintains the ETPL.

As the unified provider of technical education, adult education, and customized business and industry training, TCSG is the largest provider of ITAs to the workforce system customer. WIOA funding supports a growing number of customers within these training institutions. TCSG also has a 100% employer guarantee, meaning that if a TCSG graduate was educated under a standard program and his/her employer finds that the graduate is deficient in one or more competencies as defined in the standards, the technical college will re-train the employee at no instructional cost to the employee or the employer.

Engagement of Vocational Rehabilitation Services with Educational Institutions

To complement the State's use of the technical college system, the region will further leverage relationships with educational institutions by enhancing VR services in schools. GVRA is working closely with GaDOE to develop a collaborative plan to enhance transition services region-wide for students with disabilities. The two agencies established a formal Interagency Cooperative Agreement to assure that cooperation and collaboration exist in implementing and maintaining a system of vocational rehabilitation service delivery to eligible students with disabilities. The main objective of this Agreement is to improve and expand the VR services that support secondary and postsecondary schools. Consultation and technical assistance services are essential components of this Agreement and enable educational agencies to utilize current and developing VR program practices.

Increased Access to Financial Resources

Many scholarship programs in the local area can be used in conjunction with WIOA funding to make post-secondary degree attainment a reality for students with financial needs. Georgia's HOPE Scholarship is available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated high academic achievement. The scholarship provides money to assist students with the educational costs of attending a HOPE eligible college in Georgia.

In addition to the WIOA ITA funding and the HOPE scholarship, Carl Perkins Act funds are used within Georgia to fund vocational-technical education. The Perkins Act defines vocational-technical education as organized educational programs offering sequences of courses directly related to preparing individuals for paid or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations that don't require a baccalaureate or advanced degree. Programs include competency-based applied learning which contributes to an individual's academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning, problem solving skills, and the occupational-specific skills necessary for economic independence as a productive and contributing member of society. Carl Perkins Act funds are allotted between GaDOE, as the secondary-level recipient, and TCSG, as the post-secondary recipient. GaDOE, in accordance with the Perkins Act, will distribute funds on an annual basis to eligible recipients according to several allocation factors. The majority of the funds are distributed based on two main factors: Local population of school-age children relative to state population of school-age children; and Percentage of local system enrollees whose families qualify for free/reduced school lunch

An additional portion of the funds may be withheld from allocation under the above formula and may be allocated based on a combination of factors that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Rural or urban designations;
- Local percentage of CTAE enrollees; and

- Local number of CTAE enrollee.

Carl Perkins Act secondary funds may only be used for students in grades 7-12, and only for new programs or improvement of existing programs. Carl Perkins Act also encourages state and local recipients to ensure that students are engaged in programs related to high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations.

TCSG, in accordance with Section 132(a) of the Perkins Act, distributes postsecondary Perkins funds to eligible institutions within the state by a formula which allocates funding proportionately to the college's percent of the statewide total of Pell grant recipients. No grant provided to any institution under this section shall be for an amount less than \$50,000. Any amount which is not allocated pursuant to Section 132(c) (2) shall be redistributed to eligible institutions in accordance with provisions of this section.

From amounts made available under subsection 112(a)(1), TCSG will allocate up to a 10% reserve to each eligible recipient as allowed under Section 112(c)(1) of the legislation. The reserve will be allocated using the percentage of rural areas in the State. Rural areas will be determined by the percent rural population for the college's service area according to 2000 census data.

The local area works closely with education providers to ensure participant access to postsecondary credentials in for-credit diplomas, certificates, and degrees. However, both TCSG and USG also have continuing education programs which provide access to non-credit industry credentials. In some cases, diploma, certificate and degree earning programs also incorporate industry credentials. For instance, a technical college warehousing certificate may incorporate a forklift certification. These types of stackable credentials enable participants to learn the specific skills needed to gain employment in in-demand occupations. Stackable credentials also enable participants to continue earning additional credentials at a later point. The area's two-year and four-year institutions have done extensive work to ensure that credits seamlessly transfer between institutions. This work enables the local area to better create career pathways for participants.

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

Currently there is no regional public transportation system.

The local supportive services policy:

The region will carefully catalogue identified barriers and create a unique intervention plan for each participant. Customized supportive services will occur prior to, concurrently, or after specific activities.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PAYMENTS

SPECIAL NEEDS RELATED PAYMENTS POLICY

This policy applies to all customers enrolled on or after July 1, 2016.

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

Supportive Services Definition:

Supportive services for adults and dislocated workers are defined as services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA.

Guidelines:

Supportive services will be paid only to customers who have been determined WIOA eligible. Prior to making any supportive service payments the "Eligibility Only Application" from GWROPP will be placed into the file which shows administrative approval of WIOA eligibility requirements.

In addition to WIOA eligibility requirements for customers, supportive services will be paid only to customers who are eligible for supportive services. This will be documented within the case notes, GWR assigned activities, and quarterly/semester transcripts (for ITA) and other file documentation. Supportive Services eligibility requirements are:

- Participating in core, intensive and training services and (documented by GWR activity assignment)
- Are unable to obtain support through other programs and (documented in case notes)
- Are complying with program regulations and policies during the period of training (documented in cases notes, along with transcripts).

Documentation of supportive services eligibility and determination of need:

Customers must be determined in need of supportive services which will be documented within file documentation and the case notes.

- Customers who are low income eligible under WIOA requirements or receiving unemployment benefits will have eligibility for supportive services documented in the file through their WIOA eligibility documents such as food stamps verification, low income, UI payments, or separation notice
- Customers must submit birth certificates for children for whom they are receiving daycare. These will be maintained in the file.
- The distance to the training facility must be documented within the file to justify transportation. "Mapquest" will be used to determine the distance from the customer's home to training, this will be maintained in the file.
- The case notes must also reflect why the customer needs this support in order to participate in training
- The amount the customer receives will depend on the local ITA support policy limits and the customer's need. This will be documented in the case notes. There will be an initial case note for each customer titled "Supportive Services Determination" which will outline the need, amount and justification. All documentation for supportive services, including customer time-sheets must be maintained within the customer file.
- All payments must be recorded by the case manager in GWROPP and updated in real-time.

Resources from other avenues must be exhausted. ITA Customers MUST apply for PELL and HOPE which will be documented in the file with the College Financial Aid documentation. For other types of support, the CM MUST attempt to find supportive services for the customer first from other agencies. (Example: The customer cannot pay their electric bill and comes to the CM for assistance. In the Heart of Georgia Area, the CM must document that either

the CM or the customer contacted Concerted Services for assistance with the electric bill.) This will be/must be documented in the case notes.

Customers can only receive these payments for as long as they are in need and while they are actively enrolled in training. Customers who have completed their course of study will only be eligible for job search related support such as testing fees, interview clothing, etc.

Customers who are denied supportive services will be provided an explanation in a face-to-face session with their case manager providing an explanation for the denial. This session and the denial reason will be documented in the case notes.

No unallowable costs will be paid. Examples of costs that are not allowed are rent deposits or housing deposits, mortgage payments, car payments, purchase of vehicles, fines, etc.

Transportation, Childcare, and Needs-Related payments (such as one-time medical services auto repair payments, automobile insurance, following GOWD guidelines, will be provided to Adults and Dislocated Worker customers.

Each service provider will be held responsible for providing payments to the customers on their caseload. (Should they not have the capacity to do so, or be in a transition state for whatever reason, Job Training Unlimited will accept that responsibility). Payments will be made in the form of a check and will be hand-delivered to customers (unless travel does not permit) once every two weeks.

Child care must be provided by a licensed or registered day care or documentation of adequacy of alternative day care must be maintained in the participant's file.

HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA POLICY

Payments will only be made to customers during the period when they have an *active* WIOA registration in the Georgia Work Ready System (from the first Date of Participation to the Closure Date).

Supportive Service Payment for Adults and Dislocated Workers Enrolled in ITA's

Child Care

A child care supportive service payment of \$8 per day, based on attendance, will be paid if the customer has legal and physical custody of a child under the age of five. No child care support payment will be paid if the customer receives child care funds from other sources.

Child care must be provided by a licensed or registered day care or adequate alternative day care. The documentation indicating who is providing daycare must be maintained in the participant's file.

Childcare may *not* be paid to a provider who resides in the same residence with the ITA Customer (example: spouse, older child, live-in parent). Therefore, ALL documentation of provision of daycare services must be documented on the JTU provided "Day Care Provider" form.

- All providers must complete the Day Care Services Information form which includes:
- Provider full name and
- Provider's home residence address and phone, (Not the ITA Customer address) and
- Relationship to the ITA customer and
- Provider's signed statement that they are being paid for their services.
- If the provider is a licensed daycare provider, the daycare license number must be included.

Transportation

In addition, a supportive payment of \$12 per day to cover transportation expenses will be paid to all customers (with or without children) based on days of attendance.

(Other) Supportive Services, Supplies, Tools, and Medical Services

Allowable supportive services provided during career and training services include, but are not limited to: Assistance with transportation; childcare and dependent care; uniforms or other appropriate work attire and related tools, including eyeglasses, protective eye gear, and other essential equipment; medical services; books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes; payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests and certifications.

Tools may be purchased for the participant if the tools are required to continue a training program or required to obtain employment. The service provider must document the tools are required and cannot be obtained by any other source. Tools can only become the property of the participant upon satisfactory completion of WIOA training or upon obtaining employment. If the participant fails to complete training or obtain employment the tools remain the property of WIOA and are to be returned to the service provider.

Medical services are limited to those of a one-time nature such as a medical examination or prescription eyeglasses.

Special Needs-Related Payments

Definition: Needs-related payments provide financial assistance to participants for the purpose of enabling individuals to participate in training.

Needs-related payment will be made available to the customers WIOA and/or intensive services only as a last resort. Documentation must be obtained and placed in the customer's file that alternative avenues have been explored. The amount of the needs-related payment is not to exceed:

One or more payments up to a maximum of \$500.00 per customer.

These payments may include but not be limited to, car repairs, utility shut-off notice, or rental eviction notice. *Payments will not be made until all other community resources have been exhausted.*

Prior approval from the Director or Program Director must be obtained by the customer's Case Manager, in writing, before any obligation or disbursement of funds.

Supportive Service Payments for OJT

Child care support if available for On-the-Job training customers for a duration of two weeks at the beginning of the training period or until the first paycheck is received.

On-the-Job training customers with documented special needs can receive a one-time support payment of \$25.00 at the beginning of the training period to assist with transportation.

Unallowable Costs: Payments are not allowed for titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated. Such items include: Rent or housing deposits, mortgage payments, car payments, purchase of vehicles and fines.

Revised: July 25, 2019

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

DFCS (SNAP, TANF) representatives will be included in meetings of the Workforce Development Board. Staff will continue to attend the DFCS hosted Family Connections meetings in each county monthly and

share information with WIOA partner staffs. SNAP and TANF will remain a partner for WIOA customers seeking public assistance through the standard system of referrals.

Coordination with Core Partners:

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

The active collaboration between the local LWDB, and the HGA's one-stop delivery system is the key component of workforce development in the local area. This collaboration begins with the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, which is responsible for the appointment of the WDB members. The WDB's duties include the development of a local area plan, which establishes the four-year strategy for the local area. The WDB is also responsible for oversight of additional functions designated by WIOA which are listed below:

- Strategic Functions
 - Implementing the local area plan and meeting performance measures
 - Developing local area program to meet the needs of area customers, including program participants and partners
 - Developing/expanding strategies for partnerships in in-demand sectors/occupations
 - Developing and aligning policies
- System Capacity Building
 - Developing and oversight of strategies to support staff training and awareness
 - Disseminating best practices
 - Developing and continuously improving the one-stop delivery system
 - Supporting effective local partnerships
- System Alignment and Effective Operations
 - Developing strategies for aligning technology and data systems
 - Oversight of HGA formula funds
 - Developing policies and guidance on WIOA

The local area WDB is required to comply with federal and state conflict of interest policies and sunshine provisions. The federal conflict of interest policy states that a member of the WDB may not vote on a matter regarding the provision of services by such member or measures that would provide financial benefit to such a member or his/her immediate family. A Local Area board member may not engage in any other activities determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict of interest as specified in the SWDB bylaws, and must sign an affidavit to satisfy the State's conflict of interest policy. The local WDB must also comply with federal and state sunshine provisions. These federal and state regulations require the local WDB to make available to the public, at regular intervals, all information regarding their activities.

The local area strategy for workforce development aims to support the State's core mission to meet the needs of Georgia's growing economy and align programs and resources to create an effective and efficient

method of workforce development. The local area strategy is focused on supporting a unified workforce system that involves the coordinated services and resources of all core program partners.

The local area will support the following activities to implement the State's five key strategies:

Create a Unified Workforce System

The local area aims to increase the opportunities the workforce system provides, both to individuals and to businesses. The LWDA is also embarking on efforts to analyze and improve the referral process and case management systems to further unify activities at the participant level. These efforts include standardized training for staff, use of virtual training and staff meetings and increased participation in job fairs, resource fairs and other collaborative meetings.

The local workforce system will provide customers a seamless, integrated, and consistent provision of services. The local area is also analyzing referrals among partner programs to identify opportunities to improve the number of individuals moving from under-employed or unemployment into education or employment opportunities through the workforce development system.

Finally, local core program partners are collaborating with DFCS which was recently awarded a USDA grant to develop a multiagency assessment and case management delivery system. This collaboration will enable staff delivering Wagner-Peyser services and related partner programs to provide intensive customized reemployment services to a broad segment of customers in need. Staff will be able to continuously share information and insights via a centralized MIS system. Similarly, all necessary participant tracking and reporting will be accomplished within a single system.

Utilize Labor Market Information

The local area plans to coordinate with all core partner agencies to ensure data and data analytics are at the forefront of the workforce development system. The local area has several tools at its disposal to support this strategy including the State's BGLI system.

BGLI provides real-time LMI for the LWDA's to utilize in the development of sector strategies, career pathways, and skills training to address employer needs. Partners also assist with identifying and analyzing workforce trends, employer needs, and training opportunities. Finally, the local area continually utilizes data made available through the Census Bureau and USDOL/BLS.

Emphasize Business Services

As noted under Local Area Strategies, Heart of Georgia Altamaha's coordination between workforce development, economic development, and programs such as OJT, Rapid Response, and Incumbent Worker Training have further enhanced Region 9 as a destination for business and has resulted in attracting business to the Region. Partner agencies each have a role in assisting business with skilled workforce needs.

The local has molded its Rapid Response program into a proactive tool that now offers workforce services to employers throughout the business lifecycle, in addition to during layoffs and other large events. Rapid Response leverages the relationships and knowledge of the LWDA partners to help provide services to employers and workers. This integrated approach allows the Region to not only assist with mass layoffs and employment needs, but to assist the LWDA and local employers as they seek to identify key next steps. Throughout this process, key stakeholders communicate regularly with UI and TAA to help ensure the full range of services is available to both employers and employees.

The BSU, housed within GDOL, emphasizes employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff that is dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia's employers. BSU partners with economic developers, employers, and businesses to identify talent pools for target industries, customize solutions for workforce issues, and assist with critical industry expansion needs. BSU also manages the Job Readiness Program, Career Expos, Customized Recruitment Services, GeorgiaBEST for Students, GeorgiaBEST for Employers, Regional Summits, and the Employer Committee. The State also makes labor market information available to employers through self-access and web subscription services to help promote the workforce system as a tool for employers to meet their needs. Georgia has taken steps to educate employers on the resources available through presentations, various marketing materials, and outreach services.

As in-demand occupations grow and the skills gap widens, employers have an increased need for skilled positions and training programs. To that end, the local has also developed long-term work based learning strategies such as those delivered through Individual Training Accounts. The use of ITA's along with use of labor market information to identify employer needs, will build partnerships of employers, training providers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders around specific industries to address the workforce needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. The defining elements of local area strategies include a focus on customized solutions for specific industry/industries at a regional level, bringing the industry partnerships together.

To comply with WIOA requirements, all the 19 LWDA's have been organized in 12 state regions. Region 9 will continue to develop regional partnerships and sector strategies and participate in the Georgia Sector Skills Academy sessions. Region 9 will participate in any strategy sessions, the LWDA will invite and ensure attendance of core partners, training/service providers, non-profit leaders, and industry leaders and ensure that all key stakeholder participate. During these sessions we will work to establish lasting relationships that will serve as the base for WIOA Sector Strategies.

Work Based Learning

In addition to developing of strategies to utilize work-based learning including OJT and Incumbent Worker training in the LWDA, through local area capacity building, the local has also developed long-term work-based learning strategies.

WIOA customer enrolled in Individual Training Accounts can be coenrolled into OJT slots as they near the end of their schooling. This allows for the transition from education to employment while connecting with employers. Students can take classes part-time and work part-time. This will be a strategy that is used primarily for technical skilled trades for adults and older youth.

The State launched Georgia WorkSmart in partnership with the Office of Apprenticeship to provide more access to the Registered Apprenticeship program. Georgia WorkSmart is another tool to provide to employers looking to train in place. Another resource Georgia has developed is Fast Track training. The combination of a shortened timeline, employer engagement, and use of classroom and on-the-job training has created a successful model for providing entry into growing industries. The region is working to expand upon these services, providing added resources and technical assistance to aid local workforce partners and expand their offerings.

Increase Participation in the Workforce System

The core partner agencies (TCSG-OWD, GDOL, GVRA, and TCSG) have recently joined other regional agencies and offices on a Career Pathways initiative. The LWDA seeks to ensure that an increased number of young people complete high school and attain postsecondary credentials that translate to value in the labor market. Local area partners are engaging educators and employers in building a system of career pathways that launches young people into promising careers.

The long-term goal in the LWDA is to create seamless pathways for students from primary and secondary education, through college and training, and into successful careers. This work will include: increasing the level of communication and collaboration between educational institutions and the businesses in their communities, increasing the number of work-based learning programs in the local area, improving the early exposure students have to industry and career options, analyzing state and local policies to ensure they properly foster this work, as well as other efforts.

The GaDOE also recently launched their new “Partner’s Educating Georgia’s Future Workforce” initiative, which is facilitated by their Career, Technical, and Agriculture Education Division. The meetings are hosted in the 12 economic development regions throughout the state, and each meeting features regional partners representing business, education, community, and civic leaders. The purpose of the meetings is to consider regional workforce needs and determine how the partners can work together to ensure needs are met for Georgia’s future workforce utilizing the K-12 education structure.

Representatives from the Local Workforce Development Areas were in attendance to offer their insight in regards to local and regional workforce needs and to discuss potential workforce solutions. The local relationships created at these meetings will foster future collaboration between the education and workforce communities especially in the K-12 arena.

In partnership with TCSG’s Adult Ed, the state began a pilot program called “Accelerated Opportunity” targeted at providing out-of-school youth an opportunity to reengage in a career pathway and obtain stackable credentials. Through the Accelerated Opportunity program, the workforce system enrolled disengaged youth with a combination of GED classes and work-based learning opportunities. At completion, the individuals exited with improved work readiness skills, GED credentials, and a stackable credential from their work experience that allowed them to continue in credential-granting programs at a technical college, or immediately join the workforce in that particular occupation. The program proved to be an innovative model and partnership with multiple workforce partners and has been expanded beyond the pilot to provide this opportunity to additional out-of-school youth.

Special Populations

The LWDA also recognizes that in order to reach the broadest possible range of individuals, efforts must focus developing a unified system. The LWDA has programs focused on enhancing services to veterans and individuals within the criminal justice system. Surrounded by military installations, Region 9 is home to a large number of active duty and veteran service members.

The LWDA has been rethinking the approach to incarceration through education and rehabilitation. The LWDA participates as a vital partner to ensure that the LWDA rehabilitates ex-offenders and provides them with marketable skills and opportunities to succeed. Georgia’s goal is to continue to partner with the criminal justice system to remove barriers to employment and provide the resources needed to affect successful

transitions into the workforce. Re-Entry programs that teach job readiness, job search and occupational skills will continue within the Region.

Increase Employer participation

The LWDA provides a variety of customized services to employers in various formats. For example, labor market information can be self-accessed by employers or acquired with varying levels of staff assistance. Employer centers in one-stop locations are used by employers in a self-service mode for recruitment and interviewing or with staff-assisted screening and testing.

Various marketing materials are also available and used to educate employers and facilitate employer involvement. The LWDA also markets to employers consistently by providing information related to employment, unemployment and partial unemployment benefits, tax and wage reports and payments, employing individuals with disabilities, employer committees, layoff information and resources, child labor info, labor market info, tax credits and incentives, workforce and business development services and resources, employment law issues, and recruiting new employee services.

The LWDA also provides information through the One-Stop system regarding workforce development services provided by other local area agencies. Region 9 citizens access local area services through a wide variety of avenues and the local area is actively working to educate each agency on what is offered through the workforce system to ensure each eligible participant is reached.

Convene and Connect Stakeholders for Economic Development

The LWDA's ongoing collaborations with partner programs provide examples of the power of connecting the needs of employers with the educational systems with the capacity to meet those needs. These ongoing collaborations will connect not only stakeholders within each key core partner agency, but among employers, employees, and economic drivers and decision makers across the Region.

Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

In supporting the activities identified to help accomplish the LWDA's strategies and goals for WIOA, Region 9 will also leverage the services and coordination efforts of programs outside the Unified Plan including, but not limited to, SNAP, TANF, TAA, and other regional programs providing employment-related services.

Alignment of Workforce Services to Human Services

Georgia's core partner programs are working closely with DHS to increase alignment of workforce development activities with overall human services activities. Recognizing that WIOA programs, TANF Welfare to Work, and SNAP E&T share similar goals, the region is looking to increase coordination. Moving forward, TANF will co-locate staff at the one-stop delivery system to enable better service delivery and communication, and staff will be increased as needed to enable this expanded presence. In addition, TANF and SNAP will coordinate with other core partner agencies to provide support services to assist participants. This includes, providing shared assessments, sharing case management systems, cross-training program staff, and implementing family- oriented policies. Currently, with subsidized employment and work experience, TANF already provides work-based training strategies for adults and youth with barriers to employment.

Additionally, TANF Welfare to Work and SNAP E&T promote the development and maintenance of community connections and resources that address basic skill deficiencies and identify employment barriers. These local collaborations include the current core partners of WIOA, providing a platform to further enhance the referral process for TANF and SNAP customers eligible for WIOA services.

Alignment of Programs Serving Migrant Workers

Agricultural outreach is another opportunity for the region to coordinate with agencies and programs outside of the core partners included in the Unified Plan. As part of the region's agricultural outreach efforts, staff develop partnerships and provide available resources to local organizations serving MSFWs. Resources include, but are not limited to: TANF, SNAP, the Georgia Farmworker Health Program, the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Inc., the Georgia Free Clinic Network, Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, community food banks, the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and entities that provide Adult Literacy, ESL, and GED services to MSFWs.

Alignment of Veterans Programs

One of the most effective ways the workforce system coordinates and aligns services across programs and partners, specifically those not defined within the Unified Plan, is through work with the region's veteran population. Georgia provides priority of service for USDOL-funded workforce programs as outlined in 38 U.S.C. § 42 and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Covered persons (veterans and eligible spouses) are identified at the initial point of contact within the One-stop offices so that priority of service can be provided to veterans for the delivery of employment, training, job placement and related services as stated in the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288). LVER and DVOP staff are available for intensive employment and employability development. The roles of LVER and DVOP staff are distinct from one another. LVERs provide outreach and discuss the benefits of hiring veterans with employers, while DVOPs provide individual services to veterans and assist them in overcoming barriers to employment through intensive services and case management.

Georgia has a strong reemployment service delivery strategy that links a network of organizations and programs serving veterans which include GDEcD, GDOL, SDVS, Georgia National Guard and Reserve, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, GVRA, and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

Alignment with the Criminal Justice System

Finally, to further enable a unified workforce system, the core partner agencies will coordinate and better align services with the region's prison and ex-offender programs. The workforce system is a vital partner to ensure that the Georgia criminal justice system returns ex-offenders to society with marketable skills and opportunities to succeed. The main focus of this effort is to decrease the Georgia prison population. The Region will collaborate and leverage alignment of services from GDOL, CJCC, DJJ, DCA, and DOC to create a viable pathway to employment while decreasing the recidivism rate.

Alignment with the Carl Perkins Act

Alignment with the Carl Perkins Act funds are used within Georgia to fund vocational-technical education. The Perkins Act defines vocational-technical education as organized educational programs offering sequences of courses directly related to preparing individuals for paid or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations that don't require a baccalaureate or advanced degree. Programs include competency-based applied learning which contributes to an individual's academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning, problem solving skills, and the occupational-specific skills necessary for economic independence as a productive and

contributing member of society. Carl Perkins Act funds are allotted between GaDOE, as the secondary-level recipient, and TCSG, as the post-secondary recipient. GaDOE, in accordance with the Perkins Act, will distribute funds on an annual basis to eligible recipients according to several allocation factors. The majority of the funds are distributed based on two main factors:

Local population of school-age children relative to state population of school-age children; and Percentage of local system enrollees whose families qualify for free/reduced school lunch

An additional portion of the funds may be withheld from allocation under the above formula and may be allocated based on a combination of factors that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Rural or urban designations;
- Local percentage of CTAE enrollees; and
- Local number of CTAE enrollee.

Carl Perkins Act secondary funds may only be used for students in grades 7-12, and only for new programs or improvement of existing programs. Carl Perkins Act also encourages state and local recipients to ensure that students are engaged in programs related to high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations.

TCSG, in accordance with Section 132(a) of the Perkins Act, distributes postsecondary Perkins funds to eligible institutions within the state by a formula which allocates funding proportionately to the college's percent of the statewide total of Pell grant recipients. No grant provided to any institution under this section shall be for an amount less than \$50,000. Any amount which is not allocated pursuant to Section 132(c) (2) shall be redistributed to eligible institutions in accordance with provisions of this section.

From amounts made available under subsection 112(a)(1), TCSG will allocate up to a 10% reserve to each eligible recipient as allowed under Section 112(c)(1) of the legislation. The reserve will be allocated using the percentage of rural areas in the State. Rural areas will be determined by the percent rural population for the college's service area according to 2000 census data.

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

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM (Employment Services)

Employment Service Professional Staff Development

The utilization of professional development activities for Employment Service staff is a consistent and strategic investment in staff development which reflects Georgia's commitment to integrated workforce services. Employment services staff of GDOL are trained in both employment services and UI programs, enabling customers to receive seamless services geared to facilitate their return to employment.

Staff complete a structured training curriculum to equip them to provide high-quality services to both jobseekers and business. Training is comprised of intensive interviewing techniques, administering career assessments, accessing and interpreting labor market information, customized service strategies for employers and jobseekers, identifying the potential need for soft skills and skills gap training, developing workforce partnerships, identifying available supportive services, résumé writing expertise, and counseling to address barriers to employment and to assist with career selection.

Additional staff training is provided in the following areas: strategies for business recruitment events, as well as multiple methodologies to connect qualified jobseekers with employers, providing workforce statistics and prevailing industry wages, guidance on employment laws as it relates to the workplace, UI, FB, the WOTC, and other workforce services. Staff also have access to customer service training to enhance services to jobseekers and businesses.

Other staff development activities include:

- Comprehensive online resources on GDOL's website at www.dol.georgia.gov;
- Comprehensive internal online resources at www.theSource.gdol.ga.gov;
- Job shadowing for new staff at local offices;
- Active participation in IAWP; hosting the international conference in 2015;
- Active participation in NASWA;
- Active participation in SETA;
- Departmental leadership training program through EXCEL, offered through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia;
- Ongoing assessment of GDOL and partner staff training needs by local GDOL career center managers;
- Participation on LWDBs to keep abreast of information on local, State, and national issues; and
- Regular reviews by the STAR team, delivering on-site extensive technical assistance and staff training during site visits, and identifying training needs based on policy changes, new initiatives, etc.

GDOL offers training, technical assistance and support to partner staff who serve local job seekers and employers to ensure that program partners are highly engaged in local and State workforce partnerships that allow for the constant exchange of information on core programs, UI legislation, new workforce training providers, and available programs.

The UI and RO Division of GDOL provides subject matter expertise and technical assistance on UI policies, rules, procedures, and systems to all staff. In the training modules, staff is educated on how to detect, address, and resolve issues that affect UI eligibility. While in-depth training is provided to career center staff managing the UI claims process, an overview of the UI process is also available to WIOA and other workforce partners.

In addition to providing UI training, the UI & RO Division provides a dedicated customer service line staffed by experienced benefits analysts who address UI issues, questions and concerns; specify the benefits of ES; and resolve WIOA inquiries. The robust training and partnerships encourage exemplary service delivery to jobseekers and employers, and create opportunities to identify and/or create new training opportunities as laws and regulations change.

Finally, workforce partners have access to select data elements, such as customer contact information and work history from GDOL. Sharing data between organizations assists staff in providing comprehensive, unduplicated services while eliminating unnecessary trips or contacts for the customer.

Local Area provision of information and meaningful assistance

The ability to file a UI claim will be available at each and every comprehensive one-stop center. Access and

meaningful assistance is critical, whether the customer is in rural Georgia, relies on public transportation, or needs access to the Internet. Assistance is assured through:

- UI orientation provided to every new claimant explaining the full range of workforce services available to help them return to work;
- Online access via www.dol.georgia.gov where customers can file electronically from career centers, home, libraries or any other Internet portal;
- Dedicated, experienced staff at every one-stop;
- Fully staffed resource centers at all career centers, including Internet access, copies, phones, fax and resource libraries;
- A dedicated toll-free number for customers filing for UI at one-stops;
- Access points at over 40 one-stops and career centers across the state;
- An opportunity for each claimant to access in-person reemployment services as they come to career centers and one-stops to complete the UI filing process;
- The use of state-of-the-art EG résumé and job matching service as a requirement for ES registration for claimants;
- The availability of staff, technology, and written materials in a variety of languages to meet the needs of all customers;
- Fully accessible services, online and in person, to serve any customer with a disability;
- Joint participation of UI staff with other workforce partners in large layoff events;
- Daily referrals of customers from workforce partners to UI specialists to ensure that customers have access to all benefits to which they are entitled(c) The region's strategy for providing reemployment assistance;

Reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals

With Georgia's recovering economy, GDOL and partner staff have the opportunity to provide more in-depth services to customers who are most in need and face multiple barriers to reemployment.

Employment services provided with WP funding are available to all individuals eligible to work in the United States – those with jobs looking for better career opportunities; individuals who have lost their jobs; and those seeking employment for the first time. These services form a continuum ranging from self-service online, to group presentations, to customized one-on-one assistance. Individuals with more specialized needs (e.g., veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers) receive customized services to further their career goals.

Per State law, all UI recipients must register for ES. Georgia continues to run its federal profiling model when job seekers file their UI claims, at which time claimants are made aware of the requirements for reemployment services and the varied services available to them. These services may include: an assessment of skills relative to available jobs; workshops on effective job search, interviewing techniques and résumé development; an overview of multiple self-service employment resources; detailed labor market information related to growth occupations and industries, and wage surveys to assist with decision making; and direct referrals to job training, educational and supportive service opportunities in the community.

Profiling is a federally-mandated program designed to assist UI claimants who may be unlikely to find employment before their benefits are exhausted. The UI claim process links information from intake records

and employers' files to assess each claimant's likelihood of finding another job within the period of UI eligibility. Those UI claimants who are least likely to find work quickly will receive structured job search services.

The claimant's occupation, job tenure, education, last employer's industry, and the area's unemployment rate are factors used in calculating a percentile score. The higher the score, the more likely a claimant will exhaust benefits before finding work. For workload management purposes, career center managers monitor the number of profiled claimants served each week, and, if necessary, adjust their career center's threshold (minimum score) to ensure that workshops are neither over- nor under-utilized, and that services can be delivered.

All claimants who are identified by the system as meeting or exceeding the career center's threshold and are mandated to participate in required services must complete either a Service Needs Evaluation/Assessment or a Quick Initial Assessment.

Other activities to promote reemployment of UI claimants include claimant access to:

- Information on community resources, labor market information, GED, occupational training, OJT, and support services that make training possible to enhance an individual's ability to return to work
- Integrated workforce services for citizens released from correctional facilities through the Governor's GA-PRI
- An Events tool on the Department's website to allow customers to access hundreds of career fairs, hiring events, and other activities to connect with hiring businesses
- A strong network of faith-based organizations that support reemployment efforts
- Collaborative services for claimant trainees and TAA-eligible customers
- Collaboration with HomeSafe Georgia for citizens needing mortgage assistance
- Job clubs sponsored by GDOL, faith-based organizations, and others
- Older worker workshop – the SCSEP
- Veteran work study program sponsored by the Veterans Administration that allows veterans in training to work part-time in career centers

RESEA Program

Recently, GDOL operated a REA targeting UI claimants in five GDOL career centers. As Georgia worked with the REA customer population, it became apparent that there were thousands of customers in other areas of the State in need of intensive reemployment services. Many of the customers are in areas of the State where there are military bases, resulting in a high number of UCX claimants. As a result of these direct customer needs, Georgia redesigned its REA program to target UI claimants who are profiled and are most likely to exhaust their weekly benefits. This redesign will increase the number of GDOL career centers delivering RESEA services across the state to nine, including four new offices with the highest UCX claimant population in the State. Georgia's REA program will provide RESEA intensive services to a large percentage of traditionally underserved UI claimants with low education levels, language barriers, limited skill sets, and/or who are homeless veterans, justice-involved individuals, and seniors. This population includes a large percentage of food service workers and other workers in low-paying service jobs who cycle through the UI system regularly. They experience multiple layoffs and move laterally from one low-paying job to another, never developing the skills or solid work history needed to advance to a more stable position in the workforce. The expansion of the RESEA program over its REA predecessor allows it to serve more customers across a

larger area of the State, and allows the State to evaluate the impact of delivering the intensive reemployment services to a significant number of veterans with workforce challenges.

The RESEA service delivery strategy focuses on UI claimants who are profiled and identified as most likely to exhaust all UI benefits. Customers are identified upon being determined eligible for UI benefits, and are advised of RESEA's mandatory participation requirements immediately upon being notified of their selection to participate. RESEA intensive customer services begin with an orientation to services, individual review and discussion of O*Net My Next Move assessment results, and development of a reemployment plan. Staff provides referrals to in-house workshops (e.g., résumé development, job search, and financial management), training, and other community workforce and supportive services as needed. Customers receive relevant labor market information and learn about helpful web sites which could enrich their job search. Work history evaluation is conducted and job matches are identified in the EG system.

Georgia's robust and intensive approaches to facilitating the reemployment of UI recipients, including initiatives such as the former REA and emerging RESEA programs, has directly contributed to the lowest average UI duration average in the nation for the eight consecutive quarters (9.8 weeks through CY15 Q2).

The Local Area's use of WP funds to support UI claimants

Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the W-P Act: Georgia's UI and WP labor exchange systems are each administered by GDOL, and UI staff has access to all ES job referral, case management, employment, and other information as needed. Staffing is funded in accordance with Federal circulars, to the allowable benefiting fund source.

Aside from a limited number of exempt UI recipients, all receive reemployment services, as they are required to register with the region ES. Approximately 60% of ES registered customers are UI claimants.

Each GDOL career center has a resource area which customers can access for their employment needs. Some of the resources available to all customers include: the Job Information System which includes jobs in Georgia, throughout the Southeast, and across the nation; labor market information, including GLME, O*Net tools and others; over 40 TapDance Live! self-directed career exploration and assessment tools; instructional software for typing and résumé development; automated job referral options; training and education resources; financial aid information; online filing of initial UI claims; telephones, fax machines and copiers.

Services routinely provided to ES job seeker customers (including UI claimants) throughout the region include:

- Self-service resources such as EG labor exchange services, unemployment claims application, books, videos, and pamphlets;
- Access to computers and job search software;
- Résumé development and typing tutorials;
- Job openings in Georgia, the Southeast, and across the nation;
- Labor market information for career exploration, fields in demand, average salaries, etc.;
- Training and education resources, financial aid options;
- Vocational assessment;
- Automated referral assistance;

- Workshops on a variety of employment-related topics (e.g., effective job search, interviewing, résumé development, coping with job loss, financial management);
- Career expos;
- Job search assistance and job referral;
- Job development;
- Job clubs;
- Individualized assistance for customers with unique needs;
- Specialized assistance for veterans, other eligible individuals and migrant and seasonal farm workers;
- Assistance for ex-offenders;
- Assistance with federal bonding; and
- Referral to partner and community provider services.

Staff-assisted employment services are provided to more than 500,000 individuals annually, and tens of thousands of additional individuals receive self-services made available by GDOL at career centers and online. Also, Georgia businesses list approximately 150,000 available jobs on a daily basis, with a goal of increasing that number to 300,000 in the subsequent year, and more than 1.6 million job referrals were provided last year. This increased number of job openings are a result of growth in the local economy and the strengthening of employer relationships with the workforce system. As a result of the improving economy and the focused reemployment strategies of connecting job seekers to meaningful job opportunities, Georgia's Entered Employment Rate shows steady recovery and is approaching pre-recession rates.

Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law

Georgia law requires that UI claimants register with the State's ES. This process is fully integrated into the claims application process. In addition, the process will be enhanced as the EG labor exchange is enhanced and becomes the State's ES registration process in 2015. Until a claimant registers, benefits are not released.

Once Georgia UI claimants are approved for their first UI payment, they are required to create an account and at least one searchable résumé in the EG system described previously. WP and UI staff, in addition to the job seeker, are able to manage and track job match alerts and job search activities.

Georgia maintains an active ERP through which UI customers are evaluated, typically at the 5th, 9th, and 14th weeks of their claim. At each of these dates, they receive additional guidance and resources for effective reemployment. Centers also offer workshops during these visits, on topics including interviewing techniques, networking, and dressing for success. These strategies contribute to the State's unmatched low average duration of UI claims noted above.

Administration of the work test for the State UI system

Administration of the work test for the State UI system, making eligibility assessments (for referral to UI adjudication, if needed), and providing job finding and placement services for UI claimants; Individuals receiving unemployment benefits in Georgia must be able to work, available for work, and actively seeking full-time work. If an individual earned the majority of wages in the base period used to establish the claim or part-time work, the individual would be allowed to restrict their work search to part-time. The only exception to the work search requirements are for the following:

- Individuals with a job attachment - This would include individuals for whom their employer has filed a “partial” unemployment claim for them or those individuals with a definite recall to work within six (6) weeks of their last day worked.
- Union members in good standing.
- Individuals who are approved and enrolled in a Commissioner-approved training program.

In Georgia’s automated workforce system, customers enter work search information weekly. Staff have access to that information 24/7 and can contact a customer should questions arise or concerns be raised. In addition, EG captures a customer’s résumé, job referrals and information regarding a customer’s response to an employer’s request. Should an employer contact GDOL that a job candidate did not respond to a request for an interview, that claimant can be contacted to determine if compliance with the required work test occurred. To ensure accessibility to the automated system, staff are always on hand to assist claimants with the use of the labor market exchange. In addition, if the customer does not have a résumé, EG will build one for them. All claimants are subject to a work search audit and can be called into the office should questions arise.

During the initial claims filing application, individuals are asked questions regarding their availability. Negative responses require adjudication of the potential availability issue by GDOL claims examiners or services specialists.

Individuals referred to the UI REA program must report to their initial REA appointment, and must participate in all subsequent in-person and telephone appointments. During the in-person appointments, UI ERPs are performed, and staff question the individual about availability for work and any barriers to work they may be facing during all contacts. During all eligibility reviews (i.e., UI, REA, and REU) staff review the individual’s work search, discuss the individual’s availability, and any barriers to work.

Weekly UI benefit certification includes a question about whether the individuals is able, available, and actively seeking employment. A negative response places an issue on the certification which cannot be removed until a statement is obtained regarding availability. If an issue is determined, a benefits eligibility review is performed by the GDOL services specialist or claims examiner and a determination released, if in order.

Employers and anonymous individuals can report suspected UI fraud on the GDOL web site. This can include employers reporting individuals who do not report for interviews, individuals who are incarcerated, or are otherwise not able, available, and/or actively seeking work.

ES staff have contact with employers and receive notice when individuals fail to report to an interview or refuse work – resulting in an issue on the individual’s claim. In the event a potential issue is discovered from any source, a BER is scheduled with a claims examiner or GDOL services specialist. If the individual is not able, available, and actively seeking work (and is not exempted from work search), an appropriate determination regarding UI benefits is released.

Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources

The coordination of service delivery is a primary principle of WIOA, which brings together the core programs of Federal investment in skill development.

GDOL embraces WIOA’s primary goal of service delivery integration to provide a more seamless experience

for participants in federal skills development and employment services programs, as indicated below:

- Providing information to GDOL customers on community resources, labor market information, GED, occupational training, OJT, and support services that make training possible to enhance an individual's ability to return to work;
- As the “front door” to the workforce system, staff from the more than 40 career centers throughout the state identify customers’ needs, assist them with UI, employment and reemployment assistance, trade services, automated resources, workshops and referrals to more intensive services such as training, which are provided by WIOA through LWDBs, and other partners.

Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)

Assessment of Need

Georgia has 4.5 million acres of cropland, with farm production valued at approximately \$72.5 billion. Agribusiness is Georgia’s oldest and largest industry and is expected to remain a significant economic driver in most of Georgia’s regions. One in seven Georgians works in agriculture, forestry, or related fields – resulting in more than 371,600 jobs. *(Data Source: 2015 Ag Snapshots – UGA, Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development)*

Although Georgia will likely always be known as the “Peach State” - according to the USDA, the value of blueberry production in Georgia surpassed the peach crop in 2005 - and the gap has been increasing since then. In fact, in 2012 Georgia’s blueberry crop was more than three times as valuable as the peach crop. Georgia also produces nearly half of the nation’s peanuts, and, in 2013, Georgia had the nation’s second highest acreage in onions, cotton, and watermelons, in addition to blueberries. Georgia continues to be the top State in the nation in the production of peanuts, pecans, broiler chickens, and blueberries.

Most of Georgia’s crops are concentrated in the south and south central regions of the State, but nursery products, vegetable growers, and agritourism are found in the north and central parts of the State as well.

The following crops produced in Georgia involve a significant number of MSFWs: beans, blueberries, cabbage, cantaloupe, cucumbers, eggplant, greens, nurseries, Vidalia onions, peaches, pecans, peppers, strawberries, squash, sweet corn, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and watermelons. While major crop activity is also seen for cotton, peanuts, wheat, field corn and pecans, the activity is mechanized and requires minimal workers for production. Table 1 provides the major crops and dates for which labor is typically needed.

Table 1

Significant Levels of Agricultural Activity Requiring Seasonal Labor All Georgia Crops

Crop	Months of Peak Labor Needs
Beans and Peas (Plant/Harvest)	March-October
Blackberries (Harvest/Pack)	May-July
Blueberries (Harvest/Pack)	May-June
Broccoli (Harvest/Pack)	January-March, June-December
Cabbage (Plant/Harvest)	Year Round

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

Cantaloupes (Plant/Harvest)	February-April, May-August
Carrots	December-May
Corn (Sweet)	May-July, October-December
Cotton (Ginning)	August-January
Cucumbers (Plant/Harvest)	March-November
Eggplants (Plant/Harvest)	March-November
Greens (Plant/Harvest)	January-June, August-December
Muscadine Grapes (Harvest)	April-November
Okra (Plant/Harvest)	March-December
Onions (Harvest)	April-June
Peaches (Prune/Thin/Harvest)	January-August
Peanuts (Ginning)	September-December
Pecans	August-December
Peppers (Plant/Harvest)	March-December
Squash (Plant/Harvest)	March-November
Strawberries (Plant/Harvest)	October-February, March-June
Sweet Potatoes (Plant/Harvest)	April-September
Tobacco (Plant/Harvest)	March-September
Tomatoes (Plant/Harvest)	March-December
Vidalia Onions (Harvest)	March-July
Vidalia Onions (Plant)	November-December
Watermelons (Plant/Harvest)	February-April, June-July

Georgia ranks as one of the leading States in providing employment services to MSFWs, according to USDOL. Due to the decrease in MSFW's migrating into the State, Georgia growers have had to put new strategies into practice, including the following:

- Substantial increases in the number of H-2A orders;
- Increase in number of farms and acreage; and
- Expansion of crops into new areas and methods of harvesting.

As previously mentioned, Georgia has become a State which produces high volumes of blueberries. Georgia farmers have embraced this booming crop, however the challenge for farmers is that Blueberries are typically harvested during the same time of year as another one of Georgia's leading crops, Vidalia Onions. With a decreased number of available MSFW's each harvesting season, Georgia farmers are struggling to identify qualified workers in large numbers. GDOL agricultural staff work with these employers to encourage early recruiting of workers to assist in meeting their workforce needs. Once additional qualified workers are identified, agricultural employers are faced with the problem of not having enough housing accommodations for the increased number of staff. Many Georgia growers are forced to lease housing for their workers, creating a new challenge for them because they are often unfamiliar with State and federal regulations pertaining to leased housing. The State has been working with partners such as USDOL Wage and Hour to provide information on leased housing requirements, and trying to assist farmers with recruiting more domestic workers to meet these changing business needs. The H-2A program continues to expand in response to employers' requests.

During calendar year 2014, Georgia received 139 H-2A applications (a 4% increase from calendar year 2013) for 12,391 workers (an 11% increase from calendar year 2013). The Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development reports that Georgia has 42,257 farms totaling 9,620,836 acres, with the average size of a farm coming in at 228 acres. The total harvested cropland in Georgia is 3,609,788 acres. Through the collaborative activities of the one-stop system, career centers, Telamon Corporation, and various local workforce partners, the workforce system has made every effort to meet growers' and workers' increasing needs.

Agritourism, a relatively new area of agricultural activity in Georgia, continues to expand and provide unique experiences combining traditional agriculture with tourism. Agritourism, which includes visits to working farms, orchards, ranches, wineries, and other agricultural operations, supports and sustains Georgia's farmlands, while providing tourists with educational, family- friendly outdoor adventures. Dining and food shopping experiences are also often part of agritourism opportunities as agricultural operators continue to update their operations to incorporate new activities and events for the public.

Outreach Resources

GDOL provides outreach through nine career centers in agriculturally significant areas. These offices are part of the State's WIOA one-stop system, serving as either a comprehensive one-stop center or an affiliated one-stop. Each outreach staff establishes a list of available resources and develops partnerships with local organizations serving MSFWs. Resources include, but are not limited to: DHS, Georgia Farmworker Health Program, the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Inc., Georgia Free Clinic Network, Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, community food banks, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and entities that provide Adult Literacy, ESL and GED services to MSFWs. One-stop centers/career centers collaborate with LWDBs to ensure MSFWs have training opportunities for jobs in demand in the area. GDOL believes that the current resources are sufficient but will continue to connect with other community resources and partners to meet the needs of customers, as they are identified.

Outreach Activities

Outreach staff participate in local clinics and fairs targeted to MSFWs and their families and, where possible, assists local health departments to educate migrant workers on health issues. Staff partner with other one-stop centers/ career centers in their area to provide services at the locations most convenient for the migrant worker, regardless of the counties each office typically serves.

Staff conducting outreach refer MSFWs to both seasonal agricultural employment and non- agricultural employment. This provides additional career opportunities and lengthens the period of employment for MSFW workers. With the diverse range of crops grown in Georgia, MSFWs have the opportunity for agricultural employment for nine to ten months of the year.

For PY2015, GDOL staff project over 9,750 MSFW contacts over a projected 1,548 days of outreach, with partnering organizations providing a subtotal of about 3,600 MSFW contacts.

Telamon Corporation operates the NFJP in Georgia and GDOL partners with them for services to a shared customer population. Telamon anticipates 300 outreach contacts to farms and other organizations for PY2015, reaching more than 1,800 MSFW contacts.

Agricultural staff contact growers prior to planting and harvesting seasons to plan for upcoming labor needs. Staff coordinate with the growers and with other one-stop centers/career centers to match the labor needs of employers with workers qualified to fill the jobs. In line with GDOL's renewed focus on services to business, regional staff provides outreach staff with comprehensive listings of area growers to aid in scheduling visits throughout the agricultural community. GDOL also collaborates with the Georgia Department of Agriculture to ensure all resources for growers and agricultural workers are coordinated in a seamless fashion. Additionally, GDOL has a strong relationship with the UGA County Extension Service/Department of Agriculture field staff to collaborate and improve services to agricultural employers and MSFWs.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) provides technical assistance and support on outreach to MSFWs and related functions, including onsite reviews of local services provided to MSFWs. Additional State staff assist local specialists with agricultural employment issues. Further, the SMA and GDOL employment services staff train local staff and provide technical assistance to enhance services to MSFWs (e.g., conducting workshops in Spanish, introducing migrants and other customers to office technology, and offering translation assistance within local communities). Additionally, the SMA performs the following required activities:

- Conducts annual State-level reviews of one-stop centers and career center services and protections provided to MSFWs
- Consults with State and local staff to ensure accurate reporting of MSFW-related information
- Compiles and reports on all statistical and other MSFW-related data reported by agricultural offices quarterly
- Reviews proposed State directives, manuals, and operating instructions that pertain to MSFWs
- Participates in federal monitoring reviews
- Prepares an annual summary report of Statewide services.

GDOL has a strong dual commitment to serve growers and workers in the agricultural community. The employment-related needs of MSFWs are an important focus for the following nine agriculturally-significant one-stop centers/career centers:

GDOL Career Center Locations	Counties Served
Eastman	Bleckley, Dodge, Telfair, Wilcox
Dublin	Emanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Treutlen, Wheeler
Vidalia	Candler, Evans, Jeff Davis, Tattnall, Toombs, Montgomery

GDOL currently has approximately 12 staff members in these one-stop centers/career centers serving both MSFWs and agriculture businesses. Each of these offices has knowledgeable, designated staff prior to and during peak season to assist growers and MSFWs through outreach activities. WP- funded positions are used in these offices for MSFW outreach and agricultural employers in these offices.

The region's strategy for coordinating outreach efforts with WIOA Title 1 section 167 grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups includes:

The NFJP, operated by Telamon Corporation in Georgia provides career and training services and related assistance for MSFWs. The cooperative agreement between GDOL and Telamon was developed to coordinate and enhance service delivery to MSFWs. This partnership provides for the sharing of labor market information, training, supportive services, and job-related resources available to MSFWs. GDOL and Telamon share reports on the staff hours spent performing MSFW outreach activity. In several parts of the State, Telamon staff is co-located in the area's comprehensive one-stop center. Telamon provided outreach contacts to 1,839 customers in PY2014. It is anticipated that perhaps half this number choose to receive workforce services such as job readiness, classroom or OJT, WEX, referral to ESL services, or emergency assistance. Telamon's contacts will focus on the following cities and surrounding areas: Dublin, Lyons, Statesboro (serving Evans, Candler, Emanuel).

The Telamon Corporation also has a MOU with LWDBs and other community partners focusing on integrated service strategies and resource sharing. Collaborative approaches reduce duplication of effort and ensure that resources are used effectively for the benefit of customers.

Additionally, Telamon serves as a delegate agency for the East Coast MHS Program. This program has a long tradition of delivering comprehensive and high-quality services to foster healthy development to low-income children aged six weeks to five years. The MHS program provides a range of individualized services in the areas of education and early childhood development, including medical, dental and mental health; nutrition; and parent involvement. In addition, the entire range of MHS services is responsive to the developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience of each child and family. GDOL outreach workers partner with Telamon to identify parents with youth that could benefit from these services.

The Telamon Corporation is also the NFJP housing grantee for the State of Georgia, and provides housing support services to MSFWs through rental and utility assistance. The SMA and GDOL outreach workers coordinate with Telamon staff in their efforts to assist growers in providing safe and affordable housing for farmworkers to provide the following services.

- (a) Explaining to farmworkers the services available at the local one-stop centers.
- (b) Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

- (c) Providing farm workers with a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.
- (d) Urging those farm workers who have been reached through the region's outreach efforts to go to the local one-stop center to obtain the full range of employment and training services.

Outreach contacts with MSFWs are made primarily during peak agricultural activity periods, which vary for different crops. Using available resources, contacts are made at locations where MSFWs live and congregate. Written and oral presentations are provided in the language(s) readily understood by workers. The typical menu of services includes the following:

- a. Information regarding the full array of services offered in the workforce system;
- b. Referral to agricultural, H-2A orders, and non-agricultural employment;
- c. Referral to training;
- d. Referral to supportive services;
- e. Career counseling;
- f. Job development;
- g. Information on the GDOL complaint system; and
- h. Summaries of farm worker rights (terms and conditions of employment).

Staff obtains permission from the grower prior to entering the property to conduct outreach, and obtains permission from the workers prior to entering their living areas. After describing services, outreach staff encourages MSFWs to visit the nearest one-stop center/ career center for the full range of workforce services. However, in the event MSFWs cannot or do not wish to visit a physical one-stop system location, outreach staff help the customers complete an application for ES, provide referrals to employment opportunities for which the individuals are qualified, assist them in preparing complaints, or make appointments for needed services. As appropriate, outreach staff carry out follow-up contacts with MSFW customers.

The SMA also performs a variety of advocacy activities, including, but not limited to: overseeing the operation and performance of the MSFW complaint system; contributing to the State AOP and reviewing the daily reports of outreach workers; participating in public meetings throughout the region; and meeting with farm worker groups and employers to promote the use of GDOL services. In addition to these activities, the SMA conducts field visits to the working and living areas of MSFWs to offer and verify job services. The SMA also meets and works with other workforce agencies to coordinate services to MSFWs. The SMA raises issues, as appropriate, to ensure that the development of new systems and strategies for service delivery will address the needs of MSFW customers.

The SMA conducts onsite reviews at local one-stop centers/career centers, ensuring local workforce systems are in compliance with the designated equity indicators and minimum service levels for MSFWs. The SMA also provides training and technical assistance, as needed, to staff of partner agencies regarding outreach and services to MSFWs, and the ES complaint system.

The activities planned for providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system include:

GDOL's web site contains a broad array of employment resources for job seekers and businesses, as well as information about other community resources and an extensive bank of available jobs. The website is user friendly and has features to translate the site content into seven languages, including Spanish. GDOL also continues its efforts to assist customers with limited English proficiency. Information on department services, including how to register for services, is available in Spanish and in other languages, ensuring that Spanish-speaking farmworkers have the full range of services available in their native tongue, whether services are received in the field or one-stop centers/career centers. Bilingual staff are also made available to assist

customers. The GDOL web site address is: <http://dol.georgia.gov>.

GDOL has added an innovative enhancement to its reemployment initiatives for Georgia's job seekers and employers. EG Focus Career Explorer is a state-of-the-art, user-friendly software application that offers job seekers a self-service tool to support successful career placement. The system extends sensitivity to specific job seeker target groups, including job seekers with limited English proficiency. EG includes on-screen translation facilities that enable a job seeker to build an English language résumé by answering questions about their experiences and skills in their native language. The résumé is then used to identify English language job postings which are also viewable in the job seeker's native language, constituting a major advance in mainstreaming non- native job seeker communities.

Agricultural employers are encouraged to use career centers for business service needs and to interview job applicants. Worker recruitment, provision of forms for farm labor contractor registration, and assistance with the H-2A temporary agricultural program are other resources available to agricultural employers. Upon request, GDOL continues to assist farmers with interstate clearance orders. Employers can expand job opportunities to workers in other States by listing interstate clearance orders with GDOL to obtain domestic referrals. GDOL contacts States with large farmworker populations and available workers potentially interested in the employment opportunities are identified.

Assessment of progress

The region's agriculturally-significant one-stop centers/career centers are evaluated during the months of July and October to evaluate the previous year's performance. Field checks are conducted on 25% of the job orders where workers were referred by GDOL and hired by employers. Staff also provides ongoing technical assistance to the nine agriculturally-significant one-stop centers/career centers regarding seasonal labor, labor exchange activity, and other areas of concern. Table 2 illustrates job order activity for PY2014.

Table 2

Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Job Orders and Job Order Activity Program Year 2014

Type of Job Order	Number of Job Orders	Number of Referrals Requested
Agricultural Job Orders (including H-2A)	169	1,572,831
Non-Agricultural Job Orders	104,641	1,672,186

In PY2014, GDOL anticipated serving approximately 3,270 MSFWs. In fact, 4,141 MSFW applicants were registered for Employment Services during the program year, which is 23% more than projected. In addition, agricultural staff provided 1,213 days of outreach activity, which also reflects the growing number of working farms, as well as the overall increase in agricultural business across the region.

Outreach activities are documented on the Log of Daily Outreach Activities, and the logs are maintained for two years. The monthly report of Services to MSFW is compiled for quarterly reporting on the ETA-5148 report. All USDOL-prescribed policies and procedures regarding documentation and reporting are followed. The region has met or exceeded all of the Equity Indicator Targets as well as the service indicator required levels. (See Tables 3 and 4 for data on Equity Indicators and Minimum Service Indicators.)

Table 3
MSFW Equity Indicators Program Year 2014

	Non-MSFW Customers in PY2014	% of Total Applicants	MSFW Customers in PY2014	% of Total Applicant	Equity Targets	PY2015 Projections MSFW
Total Applicants	545,514		4,141			5,917
Referred to Jobs	126,478	23.2%	3,632	87.7%	23.1%	5,189
Provided Some Services	325,652	59.7%	4,118	99.4%	59.7%	5,881
Referred to Supportive Services	51,496	9.4%	3,161	76.3%	9.4%	4,515
	Non-MSFW Customers in PY2014	% of Total Applicants	MSFW Customers in PY2014	% of Total Applicants	Equity Targets	PY2015 Projections MSFW
Counseled	41,236	7.5%	826	19.9%	7.5%	1,177
Job Development Contacts	18,715	3.4%	1,869	45.1%	3.4%	2,669

Table 4
MSFW Minimum Service Indicators Program Year 2014

	Number of MSFWs Receiving Service in PY2014	% of Total MSFWs in PY2014	Required Levels	PY2015 Projections
Placed in jobs	3,363	81.21%	42.50%	4805
Placed in jobs at \$0.50 above Minimum Wage	2,124	51.29%	14.00%	3,035
Non-Agricultural Jobs	134	3.24%	3.00%	192

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

II. ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS

The regional plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under title II, the AEFLA.

Aligning of Content Standards

TCSG OAE will align adult education content standards with the State-adopted GSE, through the adoption and execution of the CCR Standards for Adult Education that were disseminated through the federal OCTAE. The CCR standards are the result of a process that examined the CCSS from the perspective of adult education. The CCR standards reflect a broad agreement among subject matter experts in adult education about what is desirable for adult students to know to be prepared for the rigors of post-secondary education and training. GSE, although they have undergone some minor revisions, are based primarily upon CCSS.

Eligible providers will be required to include these standards to maximize the effectiveness of curricula and instruction, and to prepare students for transition to post-secondary education and/or the workforce. In order to ensure that all instructors are knowledgeable of CCR Standards, and that they understand how to use them effectively to guide classroom instruction, OAE will provide significant levels of professional development to all instructional staff in currently funded programs, and to any future adult education grantees. The professional development sessions will be presented by experts in the field of content standards, and will have the intensity and duration to ensure the successful transfer of understanding and skills.

Adult Education Funding

The TCSG-OWD, OAE is the State's Eligible Agency for Adult Education. OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible providers, and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. OAE will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive RFA process. The RFA is the mechanism through which OAE will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals and may include:

- a local education agency;
- a community-based or faith-based organization;
- a volunteer literacy organization;
- an institution of higher education;
- a public or private nonprofit agency;
- a library;
- a public housing authority;
- a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services;
- a consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and
- a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

Eligible individual means an individual who has attained 16 years of age; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

The OAE will ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. The grant competition will be publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the region. Information will be shared via the TCSG Office of Communications and Public Relations in the form of a

formal press release, a posting on the TCSG website, social media outlets, and other means of available communication.

The OAE will award funds to eligible providers for the delivery of adult education services, which are academic instruction and education services below the post-secondary level that increase an individual's ability to:

- read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- transition to post-secondary education and training; and
- obtain employment.

In accordance with federal regulation, eligible providers may receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities:

- adult education;
- literacy;
- workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- family literacy activities;
- English language and acquisition activities;
- integrated English literacy and civics education;
- workforce preparation activities; or
- integrated education and training.

- (1) Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
- (2) Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Federal Definitions

Adult education means academic instruction and education services below the post-secondary level that increase an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; transition to post-secondary education and training; and obtain employment.

Literacy means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.

Workplace adult education and literacy activities means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.

Family literacy activities means activities that are of sufficient intensity and quality to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family, and that better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities: (A) Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for post-secondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency. (B) Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children. (C) Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children. (D) An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. See Special Rule for Family Literacy.

Special Rule for Family Literacy

The OAE will not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the

purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that the agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, the OAE will attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

English language acquisition program means a program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and transition to post-secondary education and training; or employment.

Integrated education and training means a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Integrated English literacy and civics education means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training.

Workforce preparation activities means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of post-secondary education or training, or employment.

Federal funds may be used to increase the level of nonfederal funds that would be available in the absence of federal funds, and, in no case, replace those nonfederal funds. Federal funds must not be used for the purpose of supplanting, only for supplementing.

Request for Application

The OAE will ensure that all geographical regions of the State have adequate coverage, and that local providers are sufficiently equipped to meet the needs identified for each area. Further, eligible providers will be required to collaborate with other social services and employment-related providers in the area in order to provide concurrent or supportive services for eligible recipients.

Georgia will implement a funding formula in non-competition years for federal adult education funds. The formula will be designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared to established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

The grant application will collect basic information regarding an eligible provider (e.g. location, service area, the scope of the program, demographics served, fiscal management procedures, and audit history). Additionally, each applicant will be required to submit a proposed budget, as well as programmatic information regarding statutory requirements. Questions may include the following:

1. Provide the vision and mission of the program or organization. Please include a description of the population that the program will serve, including how the program will meet the needs of persons with barriers to employment (e.g. Displaced Homemaker, Low- income Individual, Individuals with Disabilities, Single Parents, and other individuals as described in the law).

2. Provide a description (and supporting documents, when available) of any cooperative agreements/contracts that the program has with other agencies and service providers for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities. Also, describe ways in which the program coordinates with other service providers to provide wrap-around services to participants (e.g. child care, transportation).
3. Describe how the program will align activities to the Local Plan for WIOA providers and supportive services. Include a description of how the program will promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs.
4. Describe the methods the program will employ to meet the State adjusted levels of performance. Additionally, describe the program's mechanism and process for collecting and reporting data to assess performance. The description of the program's methods to meet performance measures should focus on efforts to meet or achieve:
 - a. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment after program exit;
 - b. Median earnings of program participants;
 - c. Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma/equivalent during program participation or after exiting;
 - d. Effective service provided to employers.
5. Describe the program's current and/or future involvement as a local One-Stop Center partner, including how the program will contribute to products or services for One-Stop Center participants—with emphasis on individuals with barriers to employment. Describe how the program's contribution to the One-Stop Center will be coordinated with other core providers, and delivered to Center's participants.
6. Describe the scope of the program's activities, and the delivery of services to ensure that the needs of all eligible participants will be met.
7. Describe the program's ability to meet the 13 considerations used to assess the RFA that are listed below.

Assessing the RFA

The assessment of each grant application will involve an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area, and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within WIOA. At minimum, the review process and scoring rubric will consider the following:

- The ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs and English language needs identified for the population in the area. Particular emphasis will be given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment—including low literacy skills and an English language barrier;
- The eligible provider's ability to provide service to individuals with a (physical or learning) disability;
- The eligible provider's demonstrated effectiveness in providing literacy instruction, including its ability to meet State-adjusted levels of performance and improve the literacy levels of eligible individuals;
- The eligible provider's alignment with WIOA Local Plan;
- The depth, intensity, and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. The proposed program must incorporate the basic tenets of reading instruction. Attention will be given to

the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates stringent research in the grant proposal submission and the development of the literacy program itself;

- The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research and best practices;
- The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction, to include distance education, toward students' improved performance;
- The eligible provider's demonstrated integration of contextualized instruction, to blend literacy skills, and preparation for transition to post-secondary education or entry into the workplace. Particular attention will be given to activities that promote and lead to economic self-sufficiency, and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship;
- The qualifications and expertise of the eligible provider's instructors, counselors, and administrative staff. All instructors must hold (at minimum) a Bachelor's degree. The eligible provider must also demonstrate its ability and intent to provide high-quality professional development to instructors and staff, toward the improvement of student performance;
- The eligible provider's collaboration with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have (or have the means to establish) meaningful partnerships with elementary schools, secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, industry partners, and workforce boards;
- The flexibility of program scheduling offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with Federal, State, and local support services such as child care, transportation, and mental health services;
- The eligible provider's information management system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the State-administered designated MIS for all grant-related data collection and reporting; and
- The demonstrated need within the area occupied by the eligible provider for English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.
-

Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

OAE will carry out corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals within correctional institutions by offering a competitive, multi-year RFA process specifically for Corrections Education funding. OAE will not use more than 20% of the funds used to award grants and contracts under section 231 for activities under section 225.

A correctional institution includes any prison; jail; reformatory; work farm; detention center; or halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders. A criminal offender is any individual who is charged with or convicted of any criminal offense.

The funds shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions, and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for—

- (1) adult education and literacy activities;
- (2) special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- (3) secondary school credit;
- (4) integrated education and training;
- (5) career pathways;
- (6) concurrent enrollment;
- (7) peer tutoring; and
- (8) transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing

recidivism.

Each eligible provider that receives funds provided under section 225 to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution shall give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

OAE will establish and operate IELCE programs by offering a competitive, multi-year RFA process specifically for IELCE funds. The purpose of this program is to assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship. English language learners who hold degrees and credentials in their native countries are eligible to access all services provided by section 243.

OAE will make funds available under section 211(a)(2)(b) for the delivery of IELCE, in combination with integrated education and training activities, to adults.

Each program that receives funding under this section shall be designed to:

- Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and
- Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

In the application for funds, OAE will consider whether an eligible provider has demonstrated the need for these types of services in a designated service delivery area. Data sources could include tables from the U.S. Census Bureau, reports from the Office of Immigration Services, documentation of prior participation in these types of services, or other data.

The term “integrated English literacy and civics education” means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training.

Eligible providers must demonstrate in their application for funds the manner in which the program will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities. These activities can be provided directly or through collaboration with WIOA or other community partners.

Eligible providers will design programs that deliver the activities under WIOA including the integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. Eligible providers must demonstrate their ability to prepare English language learners for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency, and how they will integrate the program with the local workforce development system to carry out the activities of the program.

Local Area Leadership

The OAE will use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for the following adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the State. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out State leadership activities under section 223.

OAE will work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to provide comprehensive and wraparound services to program participants. State-level policy and planning bodies provide an opportunity for Adult Education to work with TCSG-OWD, GDOL, and other key agencies defined in the law. Adult Education will provide resources and services through One-Stop Centers (including intake/orientation for Adult Education services, and transition resources), referral processes, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships.

OAE will provide targeted professional development based upon a region-wide needs assessment, research regarding best practices, and federal recommendations. OAE will survey local providers to ascertain areas in which there may be a gap in knowledge or a need for improvement. From these results, OAE will coordinate and execute broad-based training through a variety of modalities to assist program leaders and teachers in areas such as program improvement, instructional techniques, integrated education and training, CCR standards, transition to post-secondary education and employment, and the infusion of technology into instruction. Professional Development may include:

- An annual operations meeting, wherein local program administrators are given an overview of changes in policy and related practices, budget management, and reporting requirements;
- An annual statewide professional development conference for a variety of adult education personnel;
- Regional institutes to address instructional needs in the areas of adult education and literacy, ELA, EL/Civics; and
- Webinars/Teleconferences.

Technical Assistance

OAE will deliver technical assistance to eligible providers to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards, and fulfill obligations associated with being a one-stop partner. OAE will provide professional development/technical assistance via phone, webinar, teleconference, on-site training, and seminars. Targeted technical assistance will focus on areas of national interest such as recruitment and intake, student engagement, data management and reporting, testing procedures, and transition to post-secondary education and employment. To ensure that local providers are adequately equipped to foster continuous improvement and maintain an ability to meet the needs of Georgia's workforce, OAE will:

- a. Deliver technical assistance to increase the ability of instructors to provide impactful instruction and obtain desired results in key areas—including reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, and distance education. Technical assistance will incorporate techniques gleaned from contemporary research and resources related to best practices in andragogy. Topics may include integrated education and training, and college and career readiness standards.
- b. Provide State and local level information regarding the role of adult education as a key component in the delivery of one-stop center services. Training will include resources to enable a local provider to establish, build upon, or maintain effective relationships with other core providers within the LWDA. Topics may include referral systems, data sharing/reporting, integrating education with occupational training, and transition strategies for post-secondary enrollment or employment.
- c. Provide training related to the use of technology to improve classroom effectiveness and program outcomes. Training may focus on NRS processes and the effective use of the region-wide data system in order to maintain accurate student data. The OAE may also provide technical assistance to prepare instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance classroom experiences.

Monitoring and Evaluation

OAE will engage in region-wide program monitoring procedures to maintain sufficient knowledge and oversight of

local adult education providers. Oversight will include continuous data monitoring, in addition to site visits and on-site reviews. Specific attention will be given to programs with low performance. OAE will develop targeted technical assistance to meet the specific needs of the program in need of improvement.

OAE will employ at least four methods to monitor programs and evaluate program improvement measures:

- a. Data Reviews – OAE-designated regional coordinators will conduct frequent and ongoing data reviews using the designated statewide MIS. Areas of review include overall performance and outcomes, assessment data, attendance, and compliance.
- b. Monitoring Visits – OAE will establish a monitoring schedule for all programs. Lower- performing programs are more likely to experience a visitation from their designated regional coordinator. While making site-visits, team members will meet with program administrators and/or staff, observe classroom instruction, tour facilities, and meet with stakeholders. Areas of concern will be addressed with the program administrator either through informal feedback or, in some cases, a formal plan.
- c. On-Site Program Reviews – OAE will partner with a public university that will provide logistical support and facilitation of the On-Site Program Review process. Programs identified for review will be evaluated on the quality of instruction, adherence to policies and procedures, and the overall quality of program administration. A formal written report will be provided, and each program will be asked to respond to areas that need improvement.
- d. Mid-Year Performance and Comparison Report – OAE will provide a Mid-Year Performance and Comparison Report to each local program halfway through the fiscal year. The report will include year-to-date performance for each of the WIOA performance outcomes. Comparisons to the prior year will be given for enrollment and number of students with a post-test. Local programs are asked to develop written action plans to address areas in need of improvement.
- e. Self-Assessment – Each year local program administrators complete a self-assessment of program functions and performance, rating their program against standards of performance in a variety of categories. Self-assessment data is analyzed for commonalities across regions and the State. Deficiencies are remediated through technical assistance, or professional development. The self-assessment corresponds to the areas on the On-Site Program Review.

Any time a program is asked to correct or improve in a particular area, OAE personnel will provide technical assistance, professional development, and other support until it is no longer needed.

The dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the region will be accomplished through a variety of avenues. The primary method will be through the delivery of technical assistance by OAE regional coordinators, who meet regularly with local program administrators to answer questions, provide guidance, and share the proven practices observed in other adult education programs. Another method will be through training sessions with OAE staff members, who understand the key practices that are necessary to build and manage a high-performing adult education program. Topics could include: recruitment and retention, local program classroom observations and monitoring, records management, student assessment, and data management. Further dissemination will occur during adult education State activities, such as program administrator meetings, the pairing of new program administrators with experienced ones, new program administrator training, and State-organized webinar and teleconference sessions where local personnel share best practices with their peer groups on a particular topic.

OAE reserves the right to use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for the permissible State leadership activities outlined in section 223 (such as the support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers; the development and implementation of technology applications; or the development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction). Not more than 12.5% of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out these adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the State.

Assessing Quality

Local eligible providers are responsible to meet all programmatic goals and outcomes that are required in their approved RFA. Performance outcomes for each provider will meet or exceed the levels of performance for each of the established NRS benchmarks. OAE will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities through data reviews, monitoring visits, performance reports, and on-site program reviews. If a program fails to meet performance goals or other programmatic requirements, specific actions will be taken to improve the quality of the program. OAE uses the following two plans to take action to improve the quality of the adult education and literacy activities.

1. Corrective Action Plan (CAP) - A CAP will be implemented with programs that are out of compliance with State and/or federal policies. OAE will provide technical assistance throughout the corrective process, and by the end of a designated timeframe, programs should be able to correct the identified issues and end their respective CAP.

2. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) - A PIP will be required for programs which are identified as low-performing when compared to the State performance on federal or State benchmarks. The PIP will include specific action steps, such as student retention, post-testing and assessment, data analysis, training, and professional development which will be designed to improve program performance.

As a part of both plans, OAE will provide ongoing technical assistance, professional development, and other support until the required steps of the plans are completed. The type of technical assistance, professional development, and other support will be based upon the specific area(s) of deficiency or need at an individual program.

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

Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the regional plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;

Since its inception in 2012, GVRA has worked to strengthen its collaborative relationship with the SRC. In order for this to be accomplished the following has been implemented to ensure that SRC's input is integrated into the ongoing work of GVRA: on-going technical support for the meetings and membership development; SRC members are invited to present regularly at GVRA Board meetings; staff members of GVRA and VR services representatives present updates at the quarterly SRC meetings; and, SRC members work in concert with GVRA and VR services to address opportunities for improvement of service delivery. Georgia spent \$10,026 of Innovation and Expansion funds in FY15 to support these SRC activities. These funds provided for travel to SRC meetings and public hearings, meeting rooms, meals, interpreters, publications such as the annual report and brochures, conference registration fees, and supplies.

Specifically, in regards to WIOA, GVRA presented information about WIOA to the SRC in April 2015, and assisted in the review of the WIOA NPRM. SRC did submit official comments to the proposed regulations in June 2015, as well as notifying GVRA of its comments. The SRC comments were as follows:

i. The Georgia SRC strongly supports the proposed changes in 361.20 clarifying when designated State agencies must conduct public hearings to obtain comment on substantive changes to policies and procedures

governing the VR program. This includes requirements under current 361.20 pertaining to the VR services portion of the regional plan giving descriptive examples of the distinctions for when public hearings are required.

ii. The Georgia SRC strongly supports the proposal to amend current 361.42(a)(1)(iii) to clarify that an applicant who meets all other eligibility criteria may be determined eligible if he or she requires VR services to advance in employment.

iii. The Georgia SRC does not support the proposal to delete paragraph (f) from current 361.42. Instead, it recommends that extended evaluations be further defined. The purpose is that these evaluations have proven to be valuable for VR counselors and their clients.

iv. The Georgia SRC supports the proposal to require the individualized plan for employment of each individual be developed within 90 days following the determination of eligibility unless the DSU and the individual agree to a specific extension of that timeframe.

v. The Georgia SRC supports the revision of the definition for SES, extending the allowable timeframe for the provision of these services from 18 months to 24 months.

vi. The Georgia SRC supports the proposed change to give State VR Agencies, operating under an Order of Selection, the option to serve eligible individuals with disabilities outside that order who have an immediate need for equipment or services to maintain employment as indicated in its portion of regional plan.

vii. The Georgia SRC does not support eliminating uncompensated outcomes including homemakers and unpaid family workers. This change will have a disproportionate and negative impact on individuals who are blind. When a working age adult loses his or her vision, the entire family unit is affected and must make adjustments to adequately support the individual. That often includes temporarily changing roles within the family (i.e., the breadwinner who is coping with vision loss may need to manage the household while the spouse works outside of the home). Furthermore, unlike other disabilities, the medical/healthcare system does not provide training in compensatory skills to help adults with visual impairments become independent and self-sufficient.

While the RSA gives instructions on how to refer these individuals to other government or community service providers, rehabilitation funding is generally not available through these other sources for training in critical skills; including but not limited to, Activities of Daily Living, Orientation, Mobility, Assistive Technology and Braille. The Georgia SRC strongly recommends striking this revision. If not, then further guidance is required to assure these individuals will not be denied the vital rehabilitation services they need to regain their independence and self-confidence. These services are required long before they can realize employment, which is the end goal.

viii. The Georgia SRC supports the proposal to clarify 361.5(c)(9)(i)(C) to state that self-employed individuals with disabilities are considered for receiving competitive compensation for their income as to be comparable to that of individuals without disabilities in similar occupations or performing similar tasks who possess the same level of training, experience and skills.

ix. The Georgia SRC supports the proposal to amend 361.24 to include the additional agencies and entities with which the DSU must coordinate its activities with under the VR program.

x. The Georgia SRC strongly supports amending current 361.45(c)(2) by adding a new paragraph (v) that would require a DSU to provide eligible individuals who are entitled to Social Security benefits under titles II or XVI of the Social Security Act, information on available assistance and supports available to them when entering the workforce (i.e., benefits planning and financial supports).

xi. The Georgia SRC supports RSA in providing additional clarification in proposed 361.22(c) regarding which entity, the local educational agency or DSU, is responsible for providing transition services to students with disabilities (who are also VR consumers) when such services fall under the purview of both entities. Also, the Georgia SRC believes it would be helpful to the entities involved for RSA to provide further clarification or directives that assist in decisions related to which entity will be responsible for providing transition or pre-employment transition services that can be considered both a special education or VR service. Additionally, for RSA to clarify if it will allow those decisions to be made at the State and local level as part of the collaboration between the VR

agencies, State educational agencies, and local educational agencies.

xii. The Georgia SRC comments below are for the proposed changes to section 106 of the Act made by WIOA that replaces the current standards and indicators used to assess the performance of the VR program with a cross-reference to the joint regulations of 677.155. This action will establish for the common performance accountability measures for the core programs in the workforce development system.

As those measures are being developed, the Georgia SRC is concerned that the joint regulations do not consider the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. For example, successful closures in VR are only after 90 days in employment. It is important for extra time to follow the individual ensuring appropriate job placement and satisfaction of both the employer and the client. Individuals with disabilities are in VR services an average of 3+ years and may take longer than others to achieve employment. The VR effectiveness standard of 55.8% ratio of successful to total closures recognizes that regions must provide services that give opportunities to persons with the most significant disabilities who may not achieve employment even after those services. If common measures result in a performance standard employment rate that is much higher, how can VR meet that measure and will it be a disincentive to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities?

The Georgia SRC recognizes the challenges in developing common performance measures for different programs serving different populations, and recommends that RSA and USDOL consider the unique needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities while developing these measures.

In addition to the comments made above, at their September 2015 meeting, the SRC had as a topic agenda, "WIOA Unified Plan and VR Section". At its meeting, members received copies of the Technical Assistance Circular (RSA-TAC-15-02) dated August 17, 2015, that was addressed to State VR agencies, SRCs, and CAP. SRC members received a chart highlighting the "Vision for the State VR services as a Core Program Under WIOA" and recommended actions in specific areas such as heightening the emphasis on provision of services to students and youth with disabilities, expanding outreach to employers and potential employers, and enhancing opportunities for work-based learning experiences (e.g., internships and apprenticeships) for individuals with disabilities. SRC members heard highlights of programs and services focused on students and youth with disabilities from the Augusta Area VR office. VR program staff highlighted the success of the High School High Tech Program, the Job Club Program and the Autism Social Club as part of its effort to provide services to students and youth with disabilities in their area. These programs have also engaged employers through career fairs, and are creating other opportunities for youth to obtain jobs and work experiences.

The GVRA Executive Director provided an update to SRC members for their meeting in October on actions the agency has taken to implement WIOA recommendations for expanding and enhancing services for youth with disabilities. This work includes the receipt of two new federal grant awards: (1) U.S. Department of Labor, ETA's Disability Employment Initiative Cooperative Agreements: awarded directly to TCSG-OWD in partnership with GVRA that focuses on the Georgia Disability Employment Initiative, Customized Career Pathways. (2) U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration's Demonstration and Training: Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities, Georgia Pathways to Work: awarded directly to GVRA that focuses on career pathways for youth with disabilities who are in school or out-of-school. In addition, GVRA has appointed a Director of Transition Services. This new position emphasizes the importance and significance of services to youth with disabilities before they leave high school. All of these activities are very innovative in preparing high school students with disabilities for competitive employment. The Council would like to see these programs expanded throughout the region as part of VR transition services.

Members of the SRC were present at the October 2015 awards ceremony of the Kennesaw State University's Certified Comprehensive Transition Program focusing on students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The SRC would like the other inclusion programs at Columbus State University, East Georgia College and Georgia Tech to also receive certification as a Comprehensive Transition Program to allow students, who are eligible, to

receive services from VR. The VR program is also working collaboratively with Georgia State University to expand inclusion programs to additional postsecondary institutions across Georgia.

SRC is very excited about the collaboration with WIOA partners and what it will mean for individuals with disabilities, including students and youth with disabilities, in being empowered to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society.

Overall, GVRA is supportive of SRC's input, comments, and recommendations for the WIOA NPRM, and the VR component of the SUP. The majority of the SRC's comments and recommendations are aligned with GVRA's plan and are viewed as being specific on how to provide the best benefit to each individual served.

GVRA has not rejected any SRC input regarding the VR portion of the regional plan. However, with respect to the SRC's comments on the WIOA NPRM, GVRA does reject one of SRC's NPRM comment: "vii. The Georgia SRC does not support eliminating uncompensated outcomes including homemakers and unpaid family workers." Although GVRA understands the rationale behind the SRC's recommendation, GVRA rejects the recommendation that the homemaker and/or unpaid family worker outcome should be included in future performance metrics. This outcome has been used historically to justify the lack of competitive employment in an integrated setting. GVRA continues to demonstrate a commitment to focus on competitive employment in an integrated setting.

Request for Waiver of Statewideness

GVRA is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

GVRA does provide regional instead of statewide services, as some areas lack demand or need for particular service, with one example being Transition Services. Currently, GVRA has Interagency Cooperative Agreements with 89 school districts across Georgia. Through these agreements, GVRA provides a transition counselor to work with the students. These 89 agreements do not cover every school district in the 159 counties in Georgia. In school districts that do not have a formal agreement at this time, or have opted to not formally engage with the agency, GVRA offers the same transition services through the Rehabilitation Counselors serving the area in which the school district is located. This allows GVRA to provide these services statewide. A new Director of Transition Services has been appointed to work with these school districts to remove barriers prohibiting a formal engagement with GVRA.

In addition, Project Search is only offered in a subset of communities across Georgia. The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique, one-year, school-to-work program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that takes place entirely at the workplace. This innovative, business-led model of school-to-work transition features total workplace immersion, which facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction; career exploration; and hands-on, worksite-based training and support. The goal for each student is competitive employment. Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and has been implemented at several sites in Georgia through a statewide initiative involving the collaborative effort of DoDD, a division of GVRA, area school systems, and several of Georgia's leading employers. GVRA is working to add Project Search partners across the state to create more opportunities for youth with significant disabilities in obtaining real-life work experience that improves successful transitions from school to adult life.

Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities under the Statewide Workforce Development System

GVRA believes that cooperation and collaboration is necessary to maximize resources and address all aspects impacting individuals with disabilities in gaining or maintaining employment in Georgia. VR is strongly allied with SWIS and maintains cooperative agreements and working partnerships with strategic agencies and entities outside the workforce investment system. These partnerships are described in the following paragraphs.

Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

GVRA has interagency cooperation with the following federal, state, and local agencies and programs:

xiii. Through a cooperative agreement with the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, GVRA is hiring a dedicated counselor to serve the school.

xiv. Since its inception, VR has maintained a cooperative relationship with MVR program. MVR works to empower American Indians with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society. Through this partnership with the Lower Muskogee Creek Indian Tribe, VR services provides disability assessment, evaluation, and referral Services that assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment.

VR also includes MVR staff in region-wide training programs. Through this agreement, MVR provides VR staff training on the Indian culture and its relationship to disability and work to ensure responsiveness to cultural needs. VR staff participate in the Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation and represent the organization at annual Native American summits and conferences. VR has a representative on the MVR Advisory Council and the MVR Director is a SRC member.

xv. VR collaborates with the Albany Advocacy Resource Center's EmployAbility Program to train and place persons with disabilities to work. The program has three steps: (1) Assessment, work adjustment and job readiness training; (2) Job development; and, (3) Job retention and follow-up. The goal of the program is to assist clients who have barriers to obtaining gainful employment by opening the doors to opportunities that have not traditionally been available for VR clients in southwest Georgia.

xvi. DOC Transitional Centers and GVRA have a long-standing partnership assisting offenders who have disabilities. Transitional Centers are community-based centers located across the region that prepare offenders who are at the end of their sentence for life in the community. VR provides services that help the offenders prepare for and maintain employment.

xvii. GVRA has a MOU with DBHDD to implement Customized Supported Employment. This partnership allows for a better-coordinated effort to serve those with the most significant disabilities, specifically in the provision of supported employment. One of the primary goals of this agreement is to identify funding that will supplement the VR milestone payments, particularly for extended services.

xviii. SILC has chosen GVRA as the "hosting agency" for their services. SILC consults with VR to develop the State Plan for Independent Living that addresses the long-term goals and recommendations for the need for independent living services and programs in the State of Georgia. VR continues to provide funding for the CILs. The goal is to develop a network of CILs, private, nonprofit, and community-based corporations that assist people with significant disabilities to live more independently and reach their personal goals relating to independence. During FY15, Georgia also used Innovation & Expansion funds for SILC and expended \$253,350 in support of SILC operations and activities such as quarterly meetings and public hearings.

Regional programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

Georgia VR does not currently have any cooperative agreements with regional programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. However, VR does work closely with the Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program. Currently, Tools for Life loans equipment for clients to try prior to purchasing the equipment. Additionally, GVRA is one of the pilot sites for Tools for Life and the State ADA office to test equipment that is under consideration for purchase by the State. Tools for Life provides training to VR's Assistive Work Technology team.

Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

VR partners with UGA's AgrAbility Program, assisting agricultural workers who have disabilities or chronic health conditions that interfere with their ability to work, overcome these barriers to maintain their farm

business. The VR program provides time-limited services such as medical management, assistive technology, work site modifications and accommodations, self-employment start-up costs, guidance and counseling, and home modifications. AgrAbility and VR services continue to collaborate in developing joint training courses that will improve services for mutual clients.

Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth;

VR does not have cooperative agreements with non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth. GVRA has partnered with DJJ to pilot a program with the YDC in Augusta. Through this pilot, GVRA worked with the mental health unit to develop an effective and efficient process for transitioning youth out of the facility and into employment or training opportunities upon their release. Additionally, the agency is finalizing a referral process by which the YDC will refer all youth whom they believe has a disability and may be appropriate for VR services.

GVRA has an established referral process with contracted service providers and strongly encourages them to refer out-of-school youth. The agency partners with Parent to Parent, a non-profit organization that provides advocacy and training for families of children and youth with disabilities. Lastly, the agency is a participant in GaDOE-Coordinated Career Academic Education/Project Success and Career Technical Instruction grant which provides intervention support services to students from special populations enrolled in career, technical, and agricultural education courses.

State use contracting programs

The Georgia State Use Council and DOAS administers the State Use law through the non-profit GEPS. Some of Georgia's CRPs and nonprofit partners are in GEPS. Some VR clients do receive services from those CRPS when deemed appropriate based on their individualized plans for employment.

To avoid duplication of effort and to enhance the number of individuals served, GVRA and SRC have developed working relationships to coordinate activities with other Georgia councils. Linkages to productive relationships exist with the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, Mayors Committees on Employment of People with Disabilities, Georgia Mental Health Planning Council, Georgia Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, Inc., Georgia Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Commission, the Council on American Indian Concerns, and other Georgia rehabilitation service agencies.

VR regional leaders continue to establish collaborative relationships with community organizations and businesses to assist people with disabilities in going to work. These organizations include, but are not limited to: chambers of commerce, city and county governments, the criminal justice system, urban leagues, churches, healthcare and social assistance services, housing authorities, and educational institutions.

Coordination with Education Officials

GVRA has been working closely with GaDOE to develop a collaborative plan to enhance transition services region-wide. The main objective of this plan has been to improve and expand services that support secondary and post-secondary schools. This has been identified as a need region-wide. Additionally, this partnership has been useful in identifying opportunities to improve both the services and reputation of the VR program.

The designated plans, policies, and procedures for coordination

GVRA has developed a strategic initiative to expand and improve VR services for youth with disabilities who are both in school or out-of-school. The purpose of this initiative is to combine existing and new resources to offer a robust, comprehensive array of VR services to all schools. Current VR program policies and procedures are being reviewed and amended to reflect this new way of doing business. The plan includes the provision of pre-employment transition services and timely development and approval of an individualized plan for employment for each youth served. One subset of the proposed GVRA plan to expand and improve VR

services is a newly-awarded, five-year demonstration project entitled “Georgia Pathways to Work” funded through the USDOE RSA.

In collaboration with GaDOE, Burton Blatt Institute, and Poses Family Foundation, GVRA is customizing the landscape of career pathways for young Georgians with disabilities. The Georgia Pathways to Work program-E³: Explore, Engage, Employ- connects *real* people to *real* jobs that fill a *real* need for employers in their individual communities. The purpose of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to improve the 18 existing career pathways by tailoring them to a variety of work opportunities available in the communities. The program will engage employers in the model design and employ social media strategies to connect youth across the nation. The project impact is to change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities.

The Georgia Pathways to Work program is designed for youth, ages 14 to 24, who have a disability and are either in school or out-of-school youth. This demonstration program contains the following elements:

- Development of comprehensive array of service for the over 3,000 project participants in either a school or community, integrated setting: PETS (including assessments for determining level of understanding career pathways selection for the participants); CAPI; and. customized employment to address the complexities of individualization.
- Engagement of employers using third-party agreements which will include employer presentations, job shadowing, internships, mentorships, and apprenticeships.
- Engagement of the youth’s families throughout the Explore, Engage and Employ process via support from Parent to Parent of Georgia, which will offer information, training, and support to families and youth with disabilities focusing on transition to adulthood.
- Employment of social media strategies to engage youth in understanding employment-related activities in new and creative ways, including the development of industry specific blogs.
- Supported Education and Strengths-Based Case Management to accomplish the completion of education and training programs while attaining industry recognized credentials.
- Utilization of Burton Blatt Institute/Southeast ADA Center to offer training and employer education and awareness of disabilities and job accommodations.
- Partnering with the Center for Leadership in Disability at Georgia State University to complete a project evaluation and assessment for Georgia’s Pathways to Work E³ program.
- The program will be launched in three school districts; an urban, suburban, and rural systems to ensure that the design of the program can be modified to overcome the unique challenges present in each of these settings. It will then be scaled to the entire State in Years four and five (2019 & 2020).

Georgia Pathways to Work will change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. This will be accomplished by working with region-wide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized pathways. Additionally, this demonstration project will be implemented to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.

GVRA will develop policies that address the WIOA requirements, ensure coordination of services with GaDOE, and meet the needs of youth with disabilities in and out-of-school. VR program’s current transition policies are as follows:

- xix. The VR CSPM states that transition services are to be provided to eligible students with

disabilities that facilitate the transition from the receipt of educational services in secondary school to the receipt of VR services oriented toward an employment outcome (CSPM 450.1.02).

xx. The coordinated transition activities are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and include: consultation and technical assistance to assist schools in planning for the transition of students with disabilities; outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transitioning services; transition planning that facilitates the development and completion of the student's IEP and ITP; development of an IPE which identifies the work plan goal and the VR services to enable the student to obtain the employment outcome. The Work Plan is to be completed and signed by the student prior to his/her graduation from high school (CSPM 450.1.03; CSPM 450.1.04).

These policies will be amended to include youth with disabilities who are out-of-school and being served in an integrated, community based setting.

Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

GVRA's plan is to execute a formal Interagency Cooperative Agreement with GaDOE that includes all the essential components outlining how to serve youth and students with disabilities. The intent of the agreement is for GVRA to offer a robust, comprehensive array of VR services to all schools statewide. These services will be customized to each school district depending on the local school district's unique strengths and/or needs, as well as the market drivers of the community's economy.

VR has a strong and effective partnership with GaDOE. The two agencies established a formal Interagency Cooperative Agreement to assure cooperation in implementing and maintaining a system of VR service delivery to eligible students with disabilities. Central to this Agreement are details regarding how Consultation and Technical Assistance will be provided to assist educational agencies in utilizing current and developing VR services. An updated Cooperative Agreement between GaDOE and GVRA was signed in July 2013.

Transition planning by personnel of the designated regional agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;

Another component of the Interagency Cooperative Agreement is transition planning for educational agencies that facilitate the development and implementation of IEPs. The agreement stipulates the following:

- i. VR provides GaDOE the eligibility criteria for VR services; works collaboratively with local school districts to identify and locate students with disabilities who may be in need of services; and, develops, in conjunction with the eligible student, an IPE prior to the student's graduation. This plan includes VR services that are determined to be appropriate for the student.
- ii. Each school district receives intensive, rehabilitation services for earlier identification of and interventions provided to students with disabilities that facilitates successful employment outcomes.
- iii. VR works with each eligible student to develop a work plan and determine the VR services appropriate to the students' goal.
- iv. VR is involved in school transition planning and IEP meetings with students, parents and school personnel.
- v.

Currently, GVRA has Interagency Cooperative Agreements with 89 school districts across Georgia. Through these agreements, GVRA provides a transition counselor to work with the students. In school districts that do not have a formal agreement at this time or have opted to not formally engage with the agency, GVRA offers the same transition services through the Rehabilitation Counselors serving the area in which the school district is located. This allows GVRA to provide these services region-wide. A new Director of Transition Services has

been appointed to work with these school districts to remove barriers that prohibit a formal engagement with GVRA.

Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining regional lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;

The Interagency Cooperative Agreement defines the terms, roles and responsibilities, including financial, for each agency. In particular, GaDOE is responsible for identifying and referring to VR those students with disabilities who appear to meet the requirements for eligibility for VR services, to include both those who do and do not qualify for special education and related services. While the student is in school, existing resources in the school or in the community sponsor needed services. VR will sponsor required employment-related services if they are unavailable through the school and/or community and if a student is eligible for those services through VR services.

Currently, VR and the school system share financial responsibilities with both entities contributing monetary and in-kind resources to support projects that promote transition for students with disabilities. Due to the success of this collaboration, funds continue to be made available to provide additional services to benefit students with significant disabilities. The federal funds allocated to the VR program may be matched by LEA funds for program expansion, more specifically to provide training and education for students with significant disabilities who are transitioning from school to post-secondary education and/or work. The collaborative participation requires the LEA to provide local and/or State funds (non-federal funds) equaling 21.3% to match the 78.7% of the federal funds from VR services. GVRA is planning to eliminate the requirement for LEA funds beginning July 2016.

Additionally, the agreements outline that the financial obligation for joint training and staff development is the responsibility of the agency of the personnel.

Collaboration with education, disability, and advocacy groups, as well as community organizations is essential to identifying students and out-of-school youth with disabilities in need of transition services. The VR Coordinator of Transition Services promotes school and integrated community- based programs to work activities through participation on region-wide committees and relationships with strategic partners. The following table is a snapshot of key local, state, and national relationships:

Collaborative Partners	
Local	Heart of Georgia Workforce Development, Family Connection, Local Interagency Planning Council, Community Services Board (Public Behavioral Health Authority), Local Interagency Transition Council, Project Search, Parent Mentor Groups, Children's Medical Services Providers, Support Employment Providers, two and four year Technical Colleges, Employer Committees
State	Heart of Georgia Workforce Development, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia State University, Parent to Parent, Georgia Advocacy Office, Center for Disability in Leadership, Inclusive Post-Secondary Consortium, Healthy Transitions Initiatives, State Interagency Transition Councils, Georgia Department of Family and Children's Services, Georgia Department of Community Health, Georgia Department of Education State Advisory Panel for Special Education, Atlanta Workforce Board's Youth Council
National	Boys and Girls Foundation, Burton Blatt Institute

Region-wide, VR counselors participate in community resource fairs, attend parent/teacher functions, and serve councils to further promote the availability of services and supports to youth with disabilities who are in

school, or who need to be served in an integrated, community-based setting. VR team members share information on community resources, partner in the transition process, and provide workshops on services and support opportunities for groups of students, families, and school personnel.

Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations.

GVRA is currently standardizing the process for all agreements within the agency, including Cooperative Agreements. VR services has traditionally utilized Cooperative Agreements with private non-profit organizations, especially with respect to the provision of services and supports. As GVRA both expands existing services and offers new and innovative services, the agency anticipates the need to amend current business practice to include "Request for Proposals" and "Request for Quotes". This process is consistent with current state policies and procedures regarding the development of new services.

GVRA has established a network of private non-profit providers for vocational rehabilitation services that have a wide variety of employment and work readiness services that can be offered to VR clients. These services include: vocational evaluation and training; work adjustment and skills training; supported employment and job coaching; job development, placement, and retention; extended and transitional employment; and, specialized services for individuals who have visual or hearing impairments. Cooperative Agreements (including contracts and/or MOUs) have been established with all entities from which services are purchased. Each Cooperative Agreement includes the following information:

- i. Defines the scope and nature of services provided by both agencies; including program services, number of persons to be served, and timeframe for provision of services.
- ii. Establishes principles for the development of working between the two agencies, including the legal basis for handling interagency disagreements.
- iii. Outlines the role, function, and responsibility of each agency including referral and reporting procedures.
- iv. Addresses client staffing and their rights of informed choice about their services.
- v. Defines program criteria for admission, monitoring and successful completion of services.
- vi. States the financial procedures for submission of invoices for services provided, payment amounts, and schedules based on client outcomes.
- vii. Defines type of supervision and number of work hours for each client receiving services.
- viii. Lists the criteria by which the cooperative operations may be reviewed and evaluated in order to determine effectiveness, and includes specific outcome measurements.
- ix. Provides a Statement of Assurance for compliance.

GVRA enters into Cooperative Agreements with a non-profit services provider utilizing the Step Process Outcome model. This model consists of a 3-Tier Reimbursement component and services are predicated on a client receiving services which lead directly to successful employment. Currently, service providers submit their service and budget proposal for review. If edits are required, the proposal is returned to the providers. Proposals are approved by VR leadership. VR reviews each provider's agreement at least once annually, and, if needed, agreements are amended based on changes in law and/or methods for improving the provision of services.

As of FY 2016, GVRA has 161 service agreements, 96 collaborative agreements, 24 CRP contracts, and 37 non-CRP contracts to provide services assisting people with disabilities to go to work.

Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services.

GVRA's VR services participate in interagency collaboration to expand services for persons with disabilities receiving SE services, including youth with the most significant disabilities. GVRA defines SE as competitive employment in an integrated setting with on-going supports for the employee as long as they are employed at that job. SE services typically include job coaching, specialized job training, natural supports, individually tailored supervision, and extended services. Extended Services is defined as those services needed to support and maintain the individual's employment. VR coordinates with certified providers to plan for those extended supports.

VR has established agreements with SE providers who agree to provide the services at the established fee rate, which includes the plan for extended services. In order to have an agreement with VR, a provider must agree to provide a minimum of two contacts per month at the worksite after the employee reaches stabilization. If off-site monitoring is deemed more appropriate, two face-to-face contacts plus one employer contact are required. As needed, VR will also provide post-employment services that are not available from the extended services; such as, job station redesign or repair and maintenance of assistive technology.

VR funds SES through incremental payments when the client reaches specific milestones in their employment path, with the final milestone being the point at which the client is stabilized on the job, and transitioned to extended services. VR program has updated their SE policies, rates, and procedures to reflect best practices, and to improve and expand access to these services region-wide.

One of the guiding principles of SE services is the use of all available resources and strategies to meet the needs of clients and employers. VR negotiates agreements with providers to specify the roles of consumers, service providers, and employers, and to share service provider resources. Currently there are 86 agreements between GVRA's VR services and non-profit, community-based organizations. The following is a description of formal collaborative work that the GRVA's VR services are engaging in to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities including youth, ages 14 to 24, in both school and integrated, community-based settings. DBHDD: GVRA has a formal MOU with DBHDD that utilizes the SE IPS model. This MOU covers both the behavioral health and developmental disabilities divisions of DBHDD to serve those individuals using Supported and Customized Employment.

This agreement allows VR services to collaborate region-wide with a network of providers including CSBs for the provision of SES. These agencies prepare VR clients for permanent jobs through supported employment and complementary services. The CSBs provide a wide scope of outpatient, day, residential housing, and community-based services that include SE. The Memorandum of Understanding with DBHDD allows for improved coordination of efforts to serve those with the most significant disabilities.

TCSG-OWD: GVRA has partnered with TCSG-OWD to engage youth in customized career pathways and supported employment. This work is funded through the USDOL ETA Disability Employment Initiative Cooperative Agreements.

Project Search: GVRA also collaborates with GaDOE, Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, and contracted SE Providers to meet the employment needs of transitioning students with significant disabilities through the Project Search model. This model assists students in preparing for, engaging in, and maintaining competitive employment.

The VR program also collaborates with other private non-profit CRPs to ensure the provision and choice of SESs region-wide.

Coordination with Employers. Describe how the designated regional unit will work with employers to identify

competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of: The purpose of GVRA is to connect *real* people to *real* jobs that fill a *real* need for employers in their communities. Too often, job development hinges on rapid-fire determination of an individual's interests, and the divining of a few job ideas, mostly stereotypical in setting and tasks performed. Without engaging a vast array of employers that represent in-demand jobs, the typical outcome usually occurs in settings that are overly familiar but that may not fit the ideal conditions of the worker. To ensure employers and businesses are engaged, the focus of GVRA will continue to be on the work that has already occurred with the State's HDCL, as well as to expand those current efforts in a much more organized manner.

To that end, GVRA has recently established a "Business Division" with the agency, and its primary function will be to create a single focused approach and strategy to engage employers in the most meaningful way. Under the GVRA business division, all agency efforts of engaging, contacting and relating to local businesses and corporate entities will be coordinated into a unified approach. The agency has hired a Director of the Business Division and all GVRA and VR program staff will be supervised through this division. The overall goals of the GVRA Business Division will be:

- 1) To interface with employers to identify specific employer job and workforce needs and to provide the employers with qualified candidates to meet their needs;
- 2) To interface with any employer who is a federal contractor and/or federal subcontractor to identify specific job and workforce needs pertaining to the employer's federal mandate and seven percent workforce quota and to provide employers with qualified candidates to meet their needs and fulfill their federal workforce compliance;
- 3) To interface with any employer to create employer-based training and education opportunities for individuals with disabilities, such as specific employer job education, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and career pathway customization to increase the qualifications of individuals with disabilities as potential job candidates for that employer; and
- 4) To interface with any employer to provide education and training to that employer regarding contemporary information about hiring individuals with disabilities, such as job accommodations, disability awareness, and federal contractor requirements to increase the employer's interest and willingness to hire individuals with disabilities.

In addition, this new GVRA Business Division will also serve to provide education and training to VR program staff regarding the unique needs of specific employers' region-wide, in order to work hand-in-hand with the VR field staff to better place individuals with disabilities in jobs and careers.

- 5) VR services; and

With the passage of WIOA, a greater emphasis has been placed on the State's workforce development system. GVRA has changed its organizational structure for its field staff, especially as it relates to employer engagement. The intent of this restructuring is to create a standardized approach for VR field staff to engage employers, as well as working with the VR program's provider network to create a unified approach to job development and job placement.

Partnerships: Throughout this document, partnership has been the foundation to expanding and improving service delivery region-wide. GVRA will continue to collaborate with the SRC, other State and local agencies, community stakeholders, businesses and other unique partners to share a common message that GVRA is "*good for business*" and supports employers in meeting their workforce needs and business goals with

individuals with disabilities who are qualified to perform the job.

Marketing: Prior to GVRA's existence, VR services were perceived as "invisible" to both the general public and the employer community, creating a less than positive reputation region-wide. To overcome this misleading reputation, GVRA has worked diligently to increase visibility and identify new opportunities to create value within the community. This has included the development of a constituent services function, marketing and communication function, a disability liaison function, and plans to add an outreach function this year. To complement these efforts, marketing collateral has been, and is being, developed for a variety of audiences to clearly educate and provide meaningful information to both increase the number of individuals with disabilities served, as well as the competitive employment opportunities for those individuals. Some of this material will include information on Accessibility Assessments, ADA Consultations, Disability Awareness Training, Job Analysis, Job Accommodation and Modification, Assistive Work Technology, and Support Services.

Business Services Division: As mentioned above, the Business Division of GVRA was recently established to focus on aligning the workforce with private and public sector career opportunities. Since its inception, the Business Division has been evolving into the centralized point of contact for all external employer relations. This division is responsible for the following:

- Developing new career opportunities, business partnerships and/or contracts. This includes expanding and developing relationships with corporations that turn into local hiring of persons with disabilities.
- Expanding relationships with current employers who look to VR first to fill their workforce needs and assessing what the drivers are for them to hire individuals with disabilities. This division promotes current employer's use of the Talent Acquisition Portal for job postings. Additionally, this division will be looking to these employers to engage with potential businesses to answer their questions and speak to their experiences when working with VR services.

Current Employer Partnerships by Industry Segment	
Retail/Commercial	Belk, Regions, JHOSS
Manufacturing/Logistics	JB Hunt, G&K Services, Yamaha Motor Manufacturing, Hyundai PowerTech, UPS, Mando, CSX, International Paper
Federal/Military	Delta, Manpower, Colsa Corp
Hospitality	Coca-Cola, Kroger
Hospital/Medical	Grady, Tanner Health Systems
Communication/Technology	SunTrust, Equifax, Rollins, Technicians USA

- Understanding the diversity within GVRA's total Talent Pool including placement profiles and marketing this pool to established partnerships region-wide.
- Working with the new marketing and outreach position to produce collateral tools that focus on awareness and inclusion.
- Providing consultation, technical assistance and support to employers on workplace accommodation and assistive technology.
- Creating a tracking database of new and existing business opportunities. The Employer Database is being developed to integrate with GVRA's current case management system in order to facilitate better record keeping of current and new relationships with businesses. VR will continue to work with the

Georgia Industries for the Blind's Call Center who contacts all Georgia employers quarterly to find out if they have open positions and will make this available in the database to be used by the Business Relations Specialists.

- Developing new business relationships with key community advocates and regional agencies.
- Promoting and scheduling staff training and development.
- Increasing opportunities for federal contractors/employers to hire persons with disabilities by collaborating with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and the Metro Atlanta Industry Liaison Group in hosting Disability Vendor Fairs.
-

GVRA Career Expo: The goal of the GVRA Career Expo is to assist GVRA clients with obtaining meaningful employment and careers.

The Employer Engagement Panel Discussions: The goals of The Employer Engagement Panel Discussions are to: (1) Engage the business community by specifically targeting industry segments and allowing them to provide GVRA with their industry perspectives including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; (2) Provide a forum for GVRA to clarify and explain the purpose and aims of the agency; and (3) Collaborate with other regional agencies to support GVRA's clients in obtaining long-term and meaningful employment.

- Transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

GVRA has made the internal decision that serving youth and students with disabilities should be the major focus of VR services to have the greatest long-term impact on Georgians with disabilities. As such, GVRA recently created a Director of Transition Services at the agency level, which will have responsibility and authority over all VR program transition services, as well as all other GVRA transition-related services, such as the VR services at the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation, the Cave Spring Rehabilitation Center, and the Business Enterprise Program. The director will also work with the VR program provider network to elevate the quality and capacity of transition services region-wide. GVRA is also implementing several strategies to better address transition services, including:

- Implementing the *Georgia Pathways to Work* grant. Coordination with Education Officials, GVRA was awarded a grant through the Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration. The *Georgia Pathways to Work* will significantly change the way GVRA does business region-wide in transitioning students and youth with disabilities in partnership with GaDOE, TCSG-OWD, and local businesses and employers. The focus of this proposed model will be to increase access for students with disabilities to the existing high school career pathways, as well as customizing those existing career pathways for students with disabilities, and creating community-based alternative career pathways for those youth who are not in school.
- Developing more mentorship opportunities that place students in contact with employers to facilitate earlier relationships with employers who are willing to hire the students after graduation.
- Partnering with WIOA programs to develop employer relationships and work sites both during the summer and during the school year.
- Facilitating better employer engagement in transition for Career Days and employer presentations to students.

6) Interagency Cooperation

GVRA has established collaborative relationships with multiple regional agencies in order to more efficiently and effectively assist individuals with disabilities in achieving employment in an integrated setting. In some cases, these collaborative relationships have been developed to enhance the working relationship between the VR program and other regional agencies. Several of these relationships have been formalized through Interagency Cooperative Agreements that were described in earlier in sections, Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations and Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of SES.

GVRA has identified other regional agencies in which formal agreements need to be developed to support collaboration and seamless service delivery region-wide.

- the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

GVRA has had preliminary discussions with DCH, which is the State agency that is responsible for administering the State Medicaid plan. GVRA continues to work towards developing and executing a formal Memorandum of Understanding between GVRA and DCH as it relates to title XIX of the Social Security Act. There has not been a determination as to the timeline in which this formal agreement will be put in place.

- the regional agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

GVRA executed a formal Memorandum of Understanding with DBHDD in 2015, the State agency responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The current MOU expands the capacity of the VR program to serve those individuals who have the most significant disabilities in both customized and SES. A description of this partnership is in Section

Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of SES.

- the regional agency responsible for providing mental health services.

GVRA executed a formal Memorandum of Understanding with DBHDD in 2015, the State agency responsible for providing services to individuals with a mental illness. The current MOU expands the capacity of the VR program to serve those individuals who have a severe and persistent mental illness in supported employment, specifically following the IPS model of SE. A description of this partnership is in Section Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of SES.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. The main goal of GVRA's VR services is to have a comprehensive system of personnel development. This is realized through the following strategies:

- i. Maintaining an established standard that all Georgia VR Counselors are certified by the CRCC or supervised by individuals who have obtained this credential.
- ii. Monitoring and providing support for counseling series positions that comply with and transition into the CRC, including preparation support to personnel who are taking the CRC exam, support to those who are engaging in continuing education, and CRC reimbursement.
- iii. Utilizing the counseling series to provide an avenue for development of non-counseling staff members to move into counseling positions.
- iv. Developing, improving and implementing foundational courses for direct services delivery positions to ensure services to people with significant disabilities are provided by qualified personnel. This also includes expanding the development and implementation of intermediate level courses for direct services delivery positions.
- v. Continuing to provide in-service training opportunities for all VR staff members that ensures services are provided by qualified personnel. This includes linking training to staff members' competencies and business outcomes.

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

Qualified Personnel Needs.

VR collects personnel data regarding the number of positions and vacancies in each job category, the number of incumbents, years of service, credentials and certifications, and education. In addition to this data, VR collects data on staff developmental performance, career plans and goals. Finally, information is kept on staff members' eligibility for retirement during the next five years.

The Training Coordinator and Training Specialist Team, in cooperation with VR leadership, employs the

principles of Human Performance Improvement to expand core capacity and capabilities. Areas of specific responsibilities for this team are: (1) workforce performance evaluation; (2) training needs assessment; (3) performance consulting; (4) training design and development; and, (5) synthesis of post training data collected. From concept to incorporation the Training Specialist Team determines appropriate interventions to expand core capacity and capability linked to business outcomes.

The projected requirements to meet the staffing needs for the next five years includes 100 additional Counselors, 50 Counselor Assistants and ten Rehabilitation Unit Managers. The entire staff works cohesively to provide the services to GVRA clients. In the table below, there is a historical look of those served over the past three fiscal years as well as the projected numbers that will be served through FY2020.

VR Employment Goals				
FY	Total Served	Applications	Plans	Successful Closures
2012	41,551	15,895	8,959	5,028
2013	36,343	10,767	2,999	4,177
2014	26,570	7,383	4,197	1,694
2015	30,356	10,824	6,205	2,666
2016	34,000	15,000	7,500	4,644
2017	39,000	17,500	8,750	5,500
2018	42,000	20,000	10,000	6,250
2019	46,000	22,500	11,250	7,000
2020	50,000	25,000	12,500	8,000

Based on the trend analysis and the steady growth that is projected, in FY2020 GVRA will be serving 25% more clients than this year. A review of these projections has led to and justifies the plan for the additional 100 staff listed above.

Personnel Development.

GVRA is working with Fort Valley State University, Georgia State University and Thomas University to increase the number of individuals completing these graduate programs as well as encouraging existing staff to further their education. The following table (i) lists the institutions of higher education that are preparing VR professionals; (ii) number of students enrolled at each institution; and (iii) number of students who graduated. Please note that the table indicates the number of students who graduated and are eligible for certification or license. Currently, there is no process in place to follow up with the students to determine if they received certification or licensure post-graduation.

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel.

The VRP continues to address the need to recruit and retain qualified staff, including those with minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities. It is the policy of the agency to give priority to applicants who meet the qualifications for CRC. However, in order to address the ongoing capacity needs the VR program, especially in areas of the State that do not have individuals who meet the qualifications, the agency allows for individuals to be hired into the counseling series at both the bachelor and Master's degree level, with supervision provided from a CRC counselor. This does not mean that GVRA has changed its minimum requirements. To ensure that services meet or exceed the standard of excellence that has been developed, VR continues to invest in the current personnel by providing internal training opportunities sponsored by the VR program. Additionally, VR has developed a reimbursement policy for both CRC initial testing and recertification. The VR program is also currently drafting policies for staff reimbursement for continuing

education credits for staff to engage in on-going learning.

To reduce turnover and retain qualified staff, the agency has implemented a formal reward system to provide a method of rewarding employees based on their years of experience in their current role. This has included the development and implementation of a “pay matrix,” which creates salary levels based on both education and years of experience, and is more comparable to the private marketplace. Likewise, GVRA implemented an annual “employee survey” to better understand the issues impacting retention from the staff’s perspective, as well as a mandatory supervisor training to foster better communication and improved morale among all staff. VR works closely with Rehabilitation Counseling graduate programs at Fort Valley State University, Georgia State University and Thomas University by offering opportunities for students seeking internships. Currently, the VR program has budgeted \$150,000 for students to experience paid internships. With this budget amount the VR program can sponsor up to 50 students per year. Additionally, VR staff actively participate in university career development activities which include the participation and hosting of Career Fairs. The VR program is also active on several advisory boards for the above institutions and willingly provides data for ongoing research activities regarding Vocational Rehabilitation.

Personnel Standards.

GVRA has developed hiring and retention competencies necessary to improve individual performance and agency outcomes. Georgia State law does not require certification or licensure for rehabilitation professionals or paraprofessionals; therefore, GVRA established the CSPD standard for the VR Counselor position. This is the CRC credential awarded by the CRCC and it follows national standards.

The CRC is the VR staff person with the authority to determine eligibility and priority category, develop Work Plans (IPE) including all amendments and all reviews, authorize funds, and close cases. One hundred percent (100%) of Georgia’s CRCs meet the CSPD standard and are eligible to independently perform core functions. The remaining counselors have obtained either a bachelors or master’s degree, work under the supervision of a CRC, and are encouraged to complete the education and certification process to become a CRC.

Staff Development.

A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated regional unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and GVRA has developed a training plan which provides opportunities for all VR staff and appropriate VR support staff to enhance their skills for the provision of high quality services. This plan has been designed to meet the personal and career development needs of VR personnel. GVRA’s comprehensive training plan includes specific training on assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and assistive technology. As referenced in the table above, GVRA employs 22 dedicated Assistive Work Technology and 47 Job Placement staff. These members provide subject matter expertise to both VR staff, community partners, local and state agencies, and consumers.

New Hire Orientation: New hire orientation at the Agency level provides basic training that includes the following:

- (1) A robust history of the agency and its mandate for providing services that are best practice and meet performance outcomes set forth by the State and funding entities;
- (2) A review of the vocational rehabilitation program and its core functions;
- (3) An introduction to how systems are integrated and policies guide seamless delivery of services agency-wide; and
- (4) Steps to building effective relationships and having healthy interactions with individuals with disabilities.

New VR Counselor On-Boarding. New VR Counselor On-Boarding provides task-specific training through modules that marry course instruction with hands-on training in overall case management. Module topics include: Roles of the Counselor, Service Delivery, Performance Indicators and Outcomes, Review of Georgia VR Terminology and Case Studies, and Computerized Case Management System.

Annual On-going Staff Development Training Sessions: GVRA provides annual training opportunities to staff in an effort to grow the team's knowledge base in providing services to individuals and to ensure that staff is prepared when changes occur to policies and practice standards. The following training sessions have been developed based on the feedback from personnel on what is pertinent to achieving high standards in service delivery:

- (1) Disability-Specific Topics (including Positive Behavioral Supports training for counselors who have clients with Most Significant Disabilities, Deaf Culture Literacy, and Individualized Placement and Support Training for Counselors Handling Clients with Severe & Persistent Mental Illness.
- (2) Customized Employment Training.
- (3) Case Management.
- (4) Eligibility for Services.
- (5) IPE Development.
- (6) Varying Types of Caseloads (including Supported Employment and Transition).
- (7) Values-based Training for Persons Working with Individuals with Disabilities.
- (8) Collaborative Training with School Personnel on Creative Individual Assessments.
- (9) Transition Resource Planning.
- (10) Road Map for Services Available to Georgians.
- (11) Job Development.
- (12) Employment Engagement Training (developing a work plan and work goal).
- (13) Compliance Training (including Sexual Harassment and Anti-Discrimination).
- (14)

Leadership Academy: GVRA developed the Leadership Academy to educate, develop and empower current and future leaders of the agency. The program follows best practice in executing the training:

- Communication Skills (including Listening Skills and Active Listening to Employees on Your Team)
- Conflict Resolution and Negotiation Skills
- Coaching and Mentoring Skills (including Positive Discipline and Open Coaching)
- Transitioning into a Management and Supervisory Role
- Situational Management
- Change Management and Problem Solving Decision Making Skills
- Team Building (including Achieving Buy-in and Building Morale)

VR continues to identify current information from research, rehabilitation trends and professional resources. This information is provided to agency staff through a variety of methods, including training at the regional, quadrant and local level. Most recently this training has been focused on Customized Employment.

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

GVRA recognizes the need for counselors who are fluent in non-English languages when English is not the first language of the client. Although there are not personnel that is representative of all the languages spoken by individuals served, GVRA does have an internal directory of multi-lingual employees which includes speakers of more than a dozen languages. This list also includes staff members who are fluent in using ASL. To meet the demands across the region, the agency has a statewide contract with a translation service that allows personnel to communicate with any potential client regardless of their proficiency in the English

language. This contract also allows for translation of documents such as manuals, policies, and procedures, where applicable. Within the next two years, all informational materials produced by the agency will be available in Spanish and will be further translated where needed.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

In implementing WIOA and IDEA, the designated regional unit collaborates with the State Education Agency to provide reciprocal training for personnel serving youth and students with disabilities on best practices. Training activities includes, but are not limited to:

- i. A statewide annual conference co-sponsored to provide personnel with information about the applicable laws;
- ii. Co-created Frequently Asked Questions disseminated to personnel bi-monthly; and
- iii. Designated State unit personnel participation in Local Education Agency meetings of Special Education Directors.

Local Area Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

In collaboration with SRC, GVRA conducts an on-going Statewide Needs Assessment to determine the VR service needs of individuals with disabilities across Georgia. Since its inception, GVRA and SRC have executed the following activities to gather the data from across the State and ensure that it is representative of a variety of sources and stakeholders.

- GVRA conducted statewide listening sessions in multiple locations across the State allowing key stakeholders to provide feedback about the needs that are unique to their communities.
- In follow-up to these listening sessions and to provide a forum to hear directly from individuals with disabilities, SRC conducted public hearings.
- SRC also encourages individuals to submit written statements and email comments, and to participate in internet surveys.
- As described in more detail in Section, Input of State Rehabilitation Council, there is a formal opportunity for SRC to provide input as well as individuals to make public comments at every GVRA board meeting.
- GVRA is represented at the following meetings: Georgia statewide Coalition of the Blind, CRPs, Georgia Association of Training and Employment Supports, Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Georgia Independent Living Network.
- GVRA has established two major agency functions to receive on-going input from persons served:
 - 1) Fully-staffed Constituent Services Department; and
 - 2) a Disability Liaison.

Based on the feedback that GVRA has received, there were some common region-wide needs identified from individuals who are in need for SES.

Order of Selection: Stakeholders and individuals with disabilities have expressed concern that the VR services truly focus only on those individuals with the most significant disabilities and that the priority category definitions need to be amended. To address this concern, GVRA has reconsidered the priority category definitions within the State's Order of Selection which will be discussed in detail under Section (M) Order of Selection (this has included reducing the number of categories used from seven (7) to four (4)).

Access to Supported Employment: There are concerns that there is both a paucity of Supported Employment Providers, and that from the supported employment providers' perspective, SES are cost-prohibitive. Concerns

regarding access to Supported Employment have highlighted the following needs for services expansion: (1) Increase in SES, especially for those individuals with significant disabilities. Many of these individuals have limited or no access to SES. (2) Increase in both services and actual Customized Employment opportunities. (3) Increase in the availability in specific skills training that is actually aligned with real jobs within the region and less on generic training.

Non-Disability Specific Barriers: There is on-going feedback for assistance to address some of the non-disability specific barriers to employment such as transportation, disincentives through entitlement benefits, and lack of family support for employment.

Based on the feedback that GVRA has received, there were some common region-wide needs identified for minorities with limited English proficiency or who have communication impediments, including those who use ASL. These concerns include: (1) Improve overall communication and cultural sensitivity for minorities. (2) Increase access to appropriate evaluation testing tools that document disabilities and associated functional limitations as well as recommendations to overcome limitations in regards to communication. (3) Increase number of providers who can fairly administer evaluations for clients with limited English proficiency (including ASL).

Based on the feedback that GVRA has received, there were some common region-wide needs identified for individuals who traditionally have been unserved or underserved by VR services.

Individual being served in Day Programs: There is an overall need to offer VR services to those individuals who are currently being served within day programs, in particular, to individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses and individuals with significant development disabilities.

Specialized Staff Training and Services: There is a need to enhance training and availability of services specific to individuals with Autism, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Chronic Mental Illness.

Veterans: As well as the need to increase specialized staff training and services for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury, there needs to be a greater emphasis on serving veterans with disabilities. Veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been identified as the most in need, but feedback in providing access to services for the region-wide population of veterans who remain unemployed and homeless.

Social Security Disability Recipients: Through the variety of sources used for continuous feedback, it has been identified that more information and planning assistance is needed for Social Security Disability recipients and their families on the positive impact of working.

Based on the feedback that GVRA has received, there were some common region-wide needs identified for individuals who have been served through other components of the region-wide workforce development system that center around improved communication and collaboration. This includes the following:

- i. Improve communication between GVRA and TCSG-OWD about opportunities provided by Local Workforce Development Boards and other workforce system partners.
- ii. Improve communication between GVRA and other regional agencies that serve a common population and/or specialty populations, including USG, TCSG, and the Georgia Council on Development Disabilities.
- iii. Enhance collaborative relationship between GVRA and TCSG-OWD regarding employment potential and abilities of individuals with disabilities. This also includes identifying opportunities

through grants and blended funding.

iv. GVRA will also explore feasibility of shared grant-funding and/or blended funding opportunities.

Additional concerns included:

- i. Lack of information about available VR program services and the process of application;
- ii. Concerns with identifying themselves as having a disability and the process of eligibility; and,
- iii. Concern with other non-VR program related barriers, such as transportation and paucity of services in certain parts of the region.

Based on the feedback that GVRA has received, there were some common region-wide needs identified for youth and students with disabilities.

These include:

- (1) Increase and enhance transition services overall, especially to younger students, ages 14-16.
- (2) Improve the quality of GVRA's transitional staff who are provided to the local school districts to ensure greater consistency of services.
- (3) Expand the array of transition services made available to schools.
- (4) Develop outreach efforts that engage youth with disabilities who have dropped out of school.
- (5) Improve alignment of GVRA's transition services with the needs of the local school districts.
- (6) Improve alignment of the VR program's training programs with the GaDOE's occupational clusters and career pathways.

- Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and GVRA has engaged in a dialogue with CRPs region-wide in order to work more effectively together and better serve Georgians with disabilities. The focus of these discussions has been to move towards shared performance outcomes and serving individuals together. Based on these discussions and other input received, the following have been identified as the needs for improving CRPs:

- (1) Develop more community-based, integrated training opportunities.
- (2) Develop more services in rural areas of the region.
- (3) Improve communication with all parties through joint meetings with clients, VR field counselors and CRP staff (include discussion on client's progress and plan for achieving successful outcomes).
- (4) Revisit the fee structure for CRPs and/or look at alternative funding strategies, such as performance-based fees.
- (5) Update and modernize the specific skills and/or customized training programs to be more aligned with the actual job needs in the local community.
- (6) Offer unique services to special populations, such as individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

- Assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities

GVRA has received a great deal of information and communication regarding the need to focus a majority of its efforts on transition services including coordinating VR service delivery with those services provided under the IDEA. The following have been identified as the needs for improving focus and coordinating transition services: (1) Offer access to VR services in students who are in middle school as young as age 14. (2) Provide a comprehensive array of services that can be customized to both the individual and the school. (3) Create consistency among the staff of GVRA who work with the schools. (4) Improve communication between GVRA and the school.

There is an additional concern regarding the use of local funds to support the cost of GVRA's Transition Counselor.

The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

In 2012, the overall percentage (prevalence rate) of individuals with a disability in the State of Georgia was 12.0%, meaning that 1,172,700 of the 9,772,000 of citizens reported one or more disabilities. In addition, the State has an overall percentage (prevalence rate) of people with a disability, ages 16 to 20, of 5.7 percent. In other words, 40,300 of the 706,200 individuals, ages 16 to 20, in Georgia reported one or more disabilities. According to the 2014 ACS, the estimate for Georgia's population, ages 18 to 64, is 6,088,938. Of those who are 18 to 64, 10.9% or 633,904 have a disability.

The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:
The VR Program;

GVRA anticipates a growth in those who are eligible and who will be served through VR services. This growth comes after a significant decrease that was seen through FY14. The following table provides a historical look of those served over the past three fiscal years as well as the projected numbers through FY20.

Employment Goals				
	al Served	lications	is	ccessful Closures
2	51	95	9	8
3	43	67	9	7
4	70	3	7	4
5	56	24	5	6
6	00	00	0	4
7	00	00	0	0
8	00	00	00	0
9	00	00	50	0
0	00	00	00	0

Based on the trend analysis and the steady growth that is projected, in 2020 VR services will be serving 25% clients than this year.

The Supported Employment Program; and GVRA, through its MOU with the Georgia DBHDD, is planning to serve a minimum of 720 individuals with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness, and a minimum of 130 individuals with a significant developmental disability in its Supported Employment Program.

GVRA intends that all individuals served in SE will be in the highest priority categories within the current and/or proposed Order of Selection.

The following table presents the number of individuals that will be eligible to receive services under each priority category when the new Order of Selection is in place. A detailed description of the proposed Order of Selection can be found in Section (M).

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

Clients Projected to be Served when New OOS is in Place				
SFY	(1) (permanent) Individual with a Most Significant Disability	(2) (permanent) Individual with a Significant Disability or recipient of SSI/ SSDI	(3) (permanent) Individual with a Disability	(4) (non-permanent) All Other Individuals with Disabilities who do not meet the criteria for one of the above categories
2016	12,813	4,720	918	0
2017	14,094	5,003	946	0
2018	15,503	5,303	974	0
2019	17,054	5,622	1,003	0
2020	18,760	5,958	1,033	0

The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and VR services does not have a waitlist.

The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

The following table projects the number of individuals to be served under the current Order of Selection and the Cost of Services.

Priority Category	Number of Individuals to be Served	Cost of Services 26	28
A	9,180	\$4,348	\$4,002
B	3,633	\$8,232	\$688
C	1,087	\$6,669	\$3,297
D	1,208	\$4,264	\$3,978
E	918	\$1,850	\$2,186

Note: 26 = Successful Employment Outcome and 28= Unsuccessful Employment Outcome

Local Goals and Priorities. The designated unit must use:

GVRA's local goals and priorities are based on a combination of best practices, findings, input, performance indicators, and other pertinent information relevant to the needs of Georgians with disabilities. These local goals and priorities are the result of the first three years of operation of this agency as a separate entity and reflect the needs that were identified during that time. Being developmental in nature, they have evolved over time and as more information is obtained each will be refined as real experience in the execution of each goal presents new opportunities to improve upon that goal.

d. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

GVRA has developed a great working, collaborative relationship and partnership with the SRC which has allowed for extensive dialogue, discussion, and planning between the two entities. The following State goals and priorities have been jointly developed and are agreed upon by both GVRA and SRC. If a goal needs to be revised based on new information, the SRC will be fully engaged in the process.

e. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. GVRA has identified the following goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and SE Programs. Goals:

1. Increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for all individuals with disabilities.
2. Increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for youth and students with disabilities.
3. Increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for unserved and underserved populations, to include veterans and individuals with sensory disabilities, mental illness, developmental disabilities or autism.

Priorities:

In order to effectively increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for all individuals with disabilities, GVRA has identified the following priorities (under Goal 1):

Integrate all VR services (VR program, Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute vocational services, Cave Spring Rehabilitation Center vocational services, and the Business Enterprise Program) to create an efficient and aligned VR infrastructure to oversee, coordinate and implement new and improved services.

- i. Partner with the VR provider network to establish shared performance indicators and move from a fee-for-service model to a performance-based pay model.
- ii. Develop a business division within GVRA to focus on formal employer engagement that will support all VR services and create more employment and career opportunities within the local employer community; having a particular focus on two major State initiatives: 1) Go Build Georgia and 2) High Demand Career Initiative.
- iii. Develop collaborative relationships with other regional agencies and organizations that share a similar mission and/or serve a common population; the intent of these relationships will be to create a seamless array of services that are complimentary and aligned in purpose.
- iv. Implement an internal training plan and schedule to address transformational leadership for all supervisors within the agency; and also extensive professional staff development that focuses on creative ways to improve and increase services for individuals with disabilities.

In order to effectively increase and improve the competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for youth and students with disabilities, GVRA has identified the following priorities (under Goal 2):

- i. Redirect VR resources (staff, equipment, services, etc.) to focus primarily on youth and students with disabilities based on the principle that serving this population will have a greater impact on the entire population of individuals with disabilities in the long- term, and thus should be a major focus of GVRA.
- ii. Develop, implement and offer a robust and comprehensive array of transition services to all school districts within the region that is a combination of traditional VR services, provider services, and unique and specialty services that can be customized to a certain degree based on individual school district needs. This will also include a new array of services available to youth as young as 14 years of age.
- iii. Develop and implement a career pathway model of services for both in-school students and out-of-school youth that will include Vocational Rehabilitation services that are aligned with the current GaDOE's Occupational Clusters and curriculum-based career pathways; as well as alternative integrated community-based career pathways for those youth who are not in school.

iv. Partner with GaDOE, TCSG and USG to develop collaborative arrangements that improve the transition from high school to post-secondary education for students with disabilities.

v. Recruit and train specialty staff, with expertise in transition and career pathways, to better facilitate service enhancements for youth and students with disabilities.

vi. Partner with all post-secondary inclusion programs to encourage the development of a vocational focus in the inclusion program and build support for certified transition programs.

vii. Use the agency's Business Division to develop formal agreements with local employers and provide a variety of youth and student-directed employer supports and services, such as, career exploration, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, job analysis, career pathway training curriculum development, and employment opportunities.

In order to effectively increase and improve the competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for unserved and underserved populations, to include veterans and individuals with sensory disabilities, mental illness, developmental disabilities or autism, GVRA has identified the following priorities (under Goal 3):

i. Recruit and train specialty staff, with expertise in the unique needs and strengths for the unserved and underserved populations, to become the agency's subject-matter experts who will guide the services delivery to these individuals.

ii. Expand the partnership with GDBHDD and Development Disabilities specifically to offer and provide complimentary SES for individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses and individuals with significant developmental disabilities.

iii. Develop, implement and offer a robust and comprehensive array of specialized services for the unserved and underserved populations.

iv. Partner with other key organizations who work with the unserved and underserved populations to both enhance service design and delivery, as well as provide outreach to those individuals who may benefit from such services.

v. Use the agency's Business Division to develop formal agreements with local employers and provide a variety of employer supports and services; such as career exploration, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, job analysis, career pathway training curriculum development, and employment opportunities specifically for the unserved and underserved population.

f. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

The most recent comprehensive region-wide assessment, including any updates;

GVRA goals and priorities identified above are based on the information provided through on- going comprehensive region-wide assessments, including information from the public-at-large, consumers and their families, the SRC, disability advocacy groups, other regional agencies, other disability organizations, local school districts, community providers and employers. A description of the Statewide Assessment and the needs and concerns that were identified can be found under Section (J)

The region's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA;

GVRA goals and priorities identified above are based on section 116 of WIOA, in that the six primary performance indicators for the core programs were incorporated throughout.

Other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

GVRA goals and priorities identified above have been discussed with the State Rehabilitation Council, as well as the inclusion of recommendations from the monitoring activities identified in section 107.

Order of Selection.

The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services. When applying the OOS and assigning the individual to a priority category, the VR counselor must determine the individual eligible for VR services. GVRA's VR services have previously used the following seven (7) categories in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

However, GVRA has revised its OOS based on the feedback described in Section ((L)) Local Area Assessment and in light of the draft WIOA regulations, condensing the number of categories from seven (7) to four (4). The proposed OOS will be presented at Public Hearings in the upcoming year.

By making changes to the current OOS, the goals are to:

- Clearly identify those classified as the "Most Significantly Disabled" in accordance with the Federal Regulations.

An "individual with a significant disability" means an individual with a disability who meets the following criteria as defined in the Rehabilitation Act, section 7(21)(A):

i. Who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities in the following areas: work tolerance, work skills, mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction and interpersonal skills;

ii. Whose VR can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and,

iii. Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, intellectual disability, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), spinal cord conditions (including paraplegia and quadriplegia), sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage disease or other disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

- Streamline the assignment process.
- Reduce the timeframe of "extended period of time" from six months to three months to allow for a broader capturing of short-term services that have a positive impact on successful employment outcomes. The following outlines the proposed OOS, Priority Category Description.

Order of Selection: Priority Category Description

I. Priority Category 1, Individuals with a Most Significant Disability: An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by GVRA to be an individual who:

- Has a permanent physical or mental impairment;
- Has three or more limited functional capacities;
- Requires three or more primary services with at least two services lasting over an extended period of time; or,
- Is a recipient of SSDI/SSI and meets criteria listed above.

II. Priority Category 2, Individual with a Significant Disability: An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by GVRA to be an individual who:

- Has a permanent physical or mental impairment;
- Has at least two limited functional capacities;
- Requires two or more primary services with at least one service lasting over an extended period of time; or,
- Is a recipient of SSDI/SSI unless eligible for Priority Category 1.

III. Priority Category 3, Individual with a Disability: An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by GVRA to be an individual who:

- Has a permanent physical or mental impairment;
- Has at least one limited functional capacity;
- Requires at least two or more primary services with no service required to last over an extended period of time.

IV. Priority Category 4, All Other Individuals with Disabilities who do not meet the criteria for one of the above categories: An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by GVRA to be an individual who:

- Has a permanent or non-permanent physical or mental impairment;
- Has one or more limited functional capacities;
- Requires one primary service with no service required to last over an extended period of time.

The justification for the order. It is the intent of GVRA's VR services to serve any and all persons in the State who are eligible for VR services. However, in the event of reduced funding, GVRA has chosen to establish an OOS to protect service delivery for those with the most significant disabilities.

Continuity of Service Provision when an Order of Selection is in Effect

When an individual is determined eligible for VR services and assigned to a priority category that is closed for services, they shall be placed on a waiting list to be served in the chronological order in which they were determined eligible. Individuals who are currently participating in an active IPE prior to the closing of the priority category for which they are assigned, shall continue to receive services. As closed priority categories are re-opened, individuals will be moved off of the waiting list in a chronological order with those with the most significant disability (Priority Category A & B) being served first.

GVRA shall administer and conduct its vocational rehabilitation program activities without regard to age, gender, race, color, creed or national origin. No qualified individual with disabilities shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under the VRP because the program's or a provider's facilities are inaccessible or unusable.

Information and Referral Services

Information and referral services shall be provided to applicants, potential applicants and eligible clients who do not qualify for VR services due to the program's Order of Selection and to clients who have been determined to be ineligible for VR services due to inability to benefit from services in terms of an employment outcome. Referral to other federal and State programs, including other region-wide workforce investment system programs, shall be provided in order to best meet the individual's needs.

- (2) The service and outcome goals.

(3) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

The chart below displays services and outcome goals and the timeframe within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category (in number of months). These are based on the current OOS since the proposed one has not been reviewed and approved. This will happen within the next year.

Priority Category	Number of Individuals to be Served	Outcome Goals 26s	Outcome Goals 28s	Time within which Goals are to Be Achieved		Cost of services	
				26	28	26	28
A	9180	1547	942	23	38	\$4,348	\$4,002
B	3633	559	263	37	34	\$8,232	\$688
C	1087	221	88	29	39	\$6,669	\$3,297
D	1208	185	90	15	38	\$4,264	\$3,978
E	918	244	49	32	24	\$1,850	\$2,186

***In addition, GVRA served 5,647 individuals who are currently in either status 02, and have yet to be determined eligible and assigned to a Priority Category, or status 08, and were closed prior to being determined eligible for services.

Individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services based on the following definition. Persons with the most significant disability are individuals who have a permanent physical or mental impairment(s) which seriously limits two or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome, and who require multiple primary services for rehabilitation with at least two primary services requiring provision over an extended period of time. In order to ensure these individuals are served first, they are placed in priority Category A.

The draft WIOA regulations allow eligible individuals to be served in order to maintain employment regardless of OOS. In the event of reduced funding, GVRA has chosen to establish an OOS to protect service delivery for those with the most significant disabilities.

Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

In order to meet the expectations and intent of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by WIOA, and to maximize the funds, GVRA has developed the following goals and priorities to expand access to and use of SE services region-wide:

- Increase the number of clients who will be co-enrolled with VR services and DBHDD to serve an additional 720 individuals with SPMI annually.
- Increase the number of individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are served under SE by 130 annually.
- Use the agency's Business Division to increase the number of members in the SE provider network by educating providers on the rate schedule that went into effect October 2015, enabling growth across all populations.
- Train SE staff in identifying and facilitating natural supports that can be found in the workplace

to best utilize the provider network's extended services and GVRA's post-employment services.

- Continue to emphasize individual employment placements and successful employment outcomes in competitive, integrated work settings.
- Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities.

Under WIOA, funds received under Title VI must be used for the provision of SES, including extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities for up four years. The following activities will be conducted with the reserved funds:

- Develop and implement an ESP for paid and non-paid long-term supports post-placement.
- Expand the IPS sub-group work currently being done with the DBHDD that is exploring the utilization of Supported Education and SES for youth with the most significant disabilities.
- Increase the use of natural supports in the Extended Services Plan.

GVRA's has developed the following strategies to leverage other public and private funds to increase the resources for extended services and expanded Supported Employment Opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities:

- Continue to expand the current blended funding relationship with DBHDD to increase SE service delivery to transitioning youth with developmental disabilities, or behavioral health diagnoses.
- Utilize new grant and private foundation funding to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Georgia Pathways to Work program in engaging youth with significant disabilities in early Supported Employment experiences such as supported internships, and apprenticeships.
- Explore funding options for extended supports through the Ticket to Work Program.
- Continue to expand and facilitate the SE provider network's use of natural supports.
- Increase the use of Social Security Reimbursements for additional program expenditures.

GVRA will also continue to explore new grant and funding opportunities to expand resources for extended services and SE opportunities.

Local Strategies

The following goals and strategies will be required in order to achieve the goals and priorities that were outlined in Section, Local Goals and Priorities.

Goal 1: Increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for all individuals with disabilities.

Strategies:

- Partner with the existing VR provider network to design and implement new types of services to better serve individuals with disabilities.
- Partner with new potential providers to design and implement new types of services in areas of the region where there is a paucity of services.
- Partner with existing mental health and developmental disability providers to assist them in transforming traditional services to become better at competitive employment.

- Identify a model for continuous quality improvement to evaluate existing and new services. The model should include: (1) Assessment of the stability of processes or outcomes to determine whether there is an undesirable degree of variation or a failure to perform at an expected level. (2) Identify problems and opportunities to improve the performance of processes. (3) Assess the outcome of the services provided. (4) Assess whether a new or improved process meets performance expectations.

Goal 2: Increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for youth and students with disabilities.

Strategies:

- Transform how GVRA and the VR services focus on youth and students with disabilities by integrating services agency-wide to make this population the highest focus.
- Partner with GaDOE to increase and deliver a comprehensive array of transitional services to every school district within the region, including a special focus on career pathways and customized career pathways.
- Develop a concentrated outreach effort to identify youth with disabilities that are not enrolled in school, and make the same robust services available to them.
- Partner with the existing VR provider network to create community-based career pathways for youth not enrolled in school.
- Partner with both TCSG and USG to improve post-secondary transition.

Goal 3: Increase and improve competitive employment outcomes and career opportunities for unserved and underserved populations, to include veterans and individuals with sensory disabilities, mental illness, developmental disabilities, or autism.

Strategies:

- GVRA's Business Division will develop and implement a comprehensive employer engagement plan.
- Develop formal third-party agreements with local employers to contribute to all career pathways available to youth with disabilities, both in school and out of school.
- Recruit and hire internal subject-matter experts to better serve the unserved and underserved populations, such as Veterans, and those with Autism.
- The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

The following methods will be employed to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities:

- Continue to expand the work with those regional agencies with whom GVRA has formal partnerships with (e.g., GaDOE and DBHDD) and develop collaborative partnerships with those State and local agencies with whom GVRA does not have formal agreements with (e.g., DCH).
- Utilize GVRA's relationship with the State's workforce system at the State and local levels to increase the resources made available to individuals with disabilities.
- Identify, train, and support counselors who are dedicated to serving these populations.
- Develop additional training offerings to the SE provider network to increase their knowledge and utilization of best practices.
- Utilize expanded SE model that supports the inclusion of alternative services suited to the diverse populations served.

- Identify additional tools to expand the opportunities for client and provider feedback, enabling the continuous improvement of services.
- How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a Statewide basis.

GVRA works closely with the Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program. Currently, Tools for Life loans equipment for clients to try prior to purchasing the equipment. Additionally, GVRA is one of the pilot sites for Tools for Life and the State ADA office to test equipment that is under consideration for purchase by the State. Tools for Life provides training to Georgia VR's Assistive Work Technology team.

Internally, GVRA employs occupational therapists and rehabilitation engineers who provide assistive technology consultation and assist in equipment acquisition for those individuals with disabilities who are served by the agency. The idea of having a VR Counselor who works closely with the IPS SE program ensures these individuals are afforded proper access to Assistive Work Technology and sensory services. GVRA has plans to continue expanding sensory and AWT access through VR involvement with clients with sensory disabilities.

Outreach procedures

The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, GVRA has dedicated Coordinator positions whose role is to identify and serve minorities with disabilities, those with the most significant disabilities, and those who have traditionally been unserved or underserved by VR services. As stated earlier in Section, Local Goals and Priorities, GVRA has set a priority to recruit and train specialty staff with expertise in the unique needs and strengths of these populations, and who will become the subject-matter experts leading improvements in service delivery. In addition, GVRA will provide all of its informational materials in Spanish and will further translate these materials when needed.

Provider development activities will continue to expand through the work of GVRA's Provider Relations Specialist as well as field staff.

Methods to improve and expand VR services

The methods to be used to improve and expand VR Services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services):

GVRA will utilize the following methods to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities:

- Develop and offer a comprehensive array of services to all school districts region-wide.
- Develop new and innovative services for both in-school and out-of-school career pathways.
- Develop a formal relationship and supportive services with TCSG and USG regarding transition to post-secondary education.
- Create formal employer engagements to ensure all vocational rehabilitation services lead to real jobs in the community.
- Partner with current, as well as new providers to offer new and/or improved services to this population specifically.
- If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the region.

Need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the region

GVRA has engaged in a dialogue with CRPs region-wide in order to work more effectively together, and to better serve Georgians with disabilities.

The focus of these discussions has been to move towards shared performance outcomes and serving individuals together. The plan is to accomplish the following:

- Develop community-based, integrated training opportunities. GVRA will do this by identifying specific training gaps region-wide, identifying and developing performance standards to address these gaps, and collaborating with both current and potential providers to develop new training programs addressing these gaps.
- Develop services in rural areas of the region. GVRA will do this by identifying specific service gaps region-wide, and collaborating with both current and potential new providers to develop services for the rural areas where there is a paucity of services.
- Improve communication with all parties through joint meetings with clients, VR field counselors, and CRP staff (include discussion on client's progress and plan for achieving successful outcomes).
- Revise the fee structure for CRPs and/or look at alternative funding strategies, such as performance-based fees.
- Review, change and/or create customized training programs that are aligned with the actual jobs in the local community.
- Offer unique services to special populations, such as individuals on the Autism Spectrum. GVRA will do this by identifying specific population needs region-wide, identifying and developing services to address these needs, and collaborating with both current and potential new providers to develop new services addressing these needs.
- Strategies to improve the performance of the region with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

GVRA will work with all core partners to develop and monitor appropriate and relevant performance indicators, including those identified under section 116 of WIOA. These will reflect the new, improved, and expanded services of GVRA.

- Strategies for assisting other components of the region-wide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

GVRA will work with all its core partners to improve collaboration, program development and implementation, and to expand innovative VR Services to individuals with disabilities throughout the region-wide workforce development system.

The agency's strategies to achieve goals and priorities by the region, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment:

GVRA will ensure that all of its goals, priorities, and strategies are based a region-wide, comprehensive assessment, detailing both current and future needs. This will also be supported through on-going program evaluation and constituent feedback.

GVRA will utilize constituent feedback to identify any service gaps, which will be used to plan and support innovation and expansion activities.

Past disparities in access have been experience by individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State SE Services Programs and have been addressed through a MOU with DBHDD. This formal agreement created a dedicated team of expert counselors serving only people with these disabilities statewide.

Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals

An evaluation of VR program goals

GVRA is only its third year of operation. In the 2014-2016 State Plan, GVRA set the following goals to guide the work of the agency.

- i.Goal I – Maximize available federal funds to assist more individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment goals.
- ii.Goal II – Expand transition services to assist more students with disabilities to go from high school to work or post-secondary education/training.
- iii.Goal III – Enhance services to unserved and underserved populations to increase their employment outcomes.
- iv.Goal IV – Help employers meet their human resources needs through hiring qualified individuals with disabilities.

Working closely with SRC, GVRA was able to make great strides in tackling and managing a greatly reduced budget for vocational rehabilitation services. In the 2014 program year, GVRA achieved the following towards its goals and objectives outlined in their 2014-2016 State Plan:

- Over 25,905 clients were served by GVRA for the most recently completed program year.
- VR collaborated with CRPs to call clients on the waiting list and quickly reengage them in the VR process. This partnership enabled VR to efficiently reduce the waiting list from 8,300 to zero.
- GVRA created a CSU to serve as a bridge to effectively meet the needs of clients and ensure that they receive excellent service in a timely manner and in accordance with all applicable regulations and policies.
- GVRA hired a Business Development Manager, and VR reorganized with a Director of Business Relations, and a refined Business Relations Unit to assist more employers to meet their workforce needs with higher-wage jobs for individuals with disabilities.
- The High School/High Tech Program expanded to 72 schools providing over 3,800 transition activities to 746 students with disabilities, the highest number to date. Of those, 109 students won the competition for computers to assist them in furthering their education.
- GVRA renovated, refurbished, or moved VR field offices to more appropriate spaces and closed offices that were far from clients. VR also provided technology to counselors to more effectively serve clients in convenient locations.
- GVRA and VR implemented a plan to increase the salaries of CRCs.
- VR collaborated with Kennesaw State University's Inclusion Program to develop a cooperative agreement for a VR Counselor to be onsite to serve students with developmental disabilities.
- GVRA and VR collaborated with DBHDD to increase and enhance services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, and for those with developmental disabilities.
- VR collaborated with Bobby Dodd Industries, a CRP in Atlanta, to develop a pilot program targeting transition students with significant disabilities who typically drop out of the program after graduating from high school. This pilot will keep them involved through social media and online technology for job clubs and other activities leading to employment.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

The primary strategy GVRA has used in realizing key achievements has been to establish and formalize partnerships. GVRA recognizes that in a time of decreasing resources and increasing need, leveraging the capacity of strategic partners is the only way to meet the needs and individual goals of persons served. Additionally, rich data through program evaluation, State Rehabilitation Council input, and constituent feedback has been used to inform and guide significant changes to GVRA over the past year. Finally, through the addition of personnel and providers who are experts in serving individuals with disabilities, GVRA has been able to identify and incorporate new evidence-based practices into its VR services as part of these on-going changes.

The major factors impeding the changes have been a longstanding culture that held to outmoded, inefficient way of doing business with the ongoing support and partnership of SRC, GVRA has been able to make significant changes in its organizational structure to improve service delivery, client satisfaction, and stakeholder buy-in. As started earlier in this section, the two main strategies that assisted in this included:

- GVRA created a CSU to serve as a bridge to effectively meet the needs of clients, and to ensure that they receive excellent service in a timely manner, and in accordance with all applicable regulations and policies.
- GVRA hired a Business Development Manager, and VR reorganized with a Director of Business Relations and a refined Business Relations Unit to assist more employers to meet their workforce needs with higher-wage jobs for individuals with disabilities.

b. An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

The primary strategy used by GVRA was the development of the formal MOU with DBHDD that has increased and enhanced services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and for those with developmental disabilities. In coordination with the Georgia DBHDD, GVRA also implemented an IPS pilot, which included cross-training among the staff of both agencies.

The Individual Placement and Supports-pilot model is a very specific type of Supported Employment with Behavioral Health at this time. The IPS approach assumes everyone can work with the right supports. The person decides when and how they want to go to work. There are no prerequisites (work adjustment, pre-vocational, sheltered, enclave, work evaluations, or otherwise) to go to work. Unlike other approaches, IPS-SE has been researched and proven to achieve higher rates of employment for people with severe and persistent mental illness.

The main factors that impeded the achievement of goals and priorities in the area of SEP were the development of a blended funding model, and the resistance of existing providers.

An analysis of GVRA's performance on the performance accountability indicators has improved year-over-year, and is expected to continue to improve.

How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

In FY15, GVRA spent \$10,026 in funds reserved for Innovation and Expansion to support SRC activities (including travel to SRC meetings and public hearings, meeting rooms, meals, interpreters, publications such as the annual report and brochures, conference registration fees, and supplies). In addition, \$253,350 of the I&E funds were expended for SILC operations and activities (including quarterly meetings, public hearings, and website costs).

Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

GVRA's SE Program is a statewide initiative to assist those with the most significant disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment in competitive, integrated settings. SE providers work to reframe, create, and find jobs in the community that meet employer needs and match client interests and contributions.

SE services in Georgia consist of 1) Traditional Supported employment 2) IPS 3) Customized Supported Employment. These various approaches allow us to meet the continuum of needs for all clients regardless of disability or situation.

The VRP's service approach with SE is one of partnership with community-based rehabilitation providers who are contracted for their services. GVRA has agreements with each provider of the service and payment is authorized and invoiced as each client attains, with support of the provider, a milestone along the SE

continuum. The last payment represents the completion of the case and transition to ongoing extended services, agreed to by all parties and funded in accordance with the SE fee schedule.

Program Evaluation

GVRA implements an extensive program evaluation at multiple levels across the program through the following methodologies:

- i. Case Review – On a monthly basis, a random sampling of case files is examined through the electronic case management system. Files are reviewed for the thoroughness of notes, sequence of service provision, and compliance with policy and procedure.
- ii. Pilot Outcome Evaluation – Both a process and outcome evaluation is completed on each pilot by an internal evaluation team in collaboration with pilot partners. Evaluation aims inform the sustainability of piloted approaches, and identify needed changes if replication is cost effective and benefits the targeted population.
- iii. Monthly Placement Monitoring – The number of individuals in the individualized, competitive employment is monitored monthly through the comprehensive case management system to track progress towards statewide goals.
- iv. Monthly Intake Oversight – statewide intake numbers are monitored monthly to ensure GVRA is serving the number of individuals as determined by the annual strategic plan.
- v. Fidelity Reviews – The IPS Supported Employment program model is evaluated through fidelity reviews that are completed in collaboration with DBHDD.

The timing of transition to extended services.

Transition to extended services begins once the individual has been successfully employed in a competitive, integrated setting; and support has entered stabilization. At this time, the SE provider is responsible for ensuring that the provision of paid and unpaid long-term supports on and off the job. Extended services may include such things as natural supports at work, transportation support from community, or ongoing support from the supported employment provider.

Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology:

1. **Description of Performance Measures** –Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system.

The core partners will provide all data required for WIOA federal reporting. The performance measures that will be used to assess the core programs are as follows:

- Percent of adult and dislocated worker participants employed in the 2nd quarter after exit;
- Percent of youth placed in employment or education in the 2nd quarter after exit;
- Percent of adult and dislocated worker participants employed in the 4th quarter after exit;
- Percent of youth placed in employment or education in the 4th quarter after exit;
- Median earnings of all participants in the 2nd quarter after exit;
- Credential attainment rate for all participants up to one year after exit;
- Measurable skill gains for all participants; and
- Effectiveness in serving employers.

Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs:

Core programs will be assessed according to WIOA performance measures.

Previous Assessment Results:

WIOA - PY 18 Performance

		Actual	Negotiated Rate
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	96.6 %	82 %
	Dislocated Workers	100 %	89 %
Q4 Employment Retention Rate	Adults	94.7%	83 %
	Dislocated Workers	100 %	90 %
Q2 Median Earnings	Adults	\$8,777	\$6,200
	Dislocated Workers	\$6,683	\$5,750
Credential Attainment Rate	Adults	90.8 %	80 %
	Dislocated Workers	72.7 %	74 %
Q2 Entered Employment/Training Rate	Youth (14-21)	82.5 %	79 %
Q4 Entered Employment/Training Rate	Youth (14-21)	85.1 %	76 %
Credential Attainment Rate	Youth (14-21)	86.6 %	84 %

Employment Services

As Georgia's economy has grown, the region's Wagner-Peyser performance rates have improved. However, it should be noted that, although Georgia's 'Entered Employment' and 'Employment Retention' rates exceeded federal USDOL-ETA expectations in PY14, the 'Average Six-Month Earnings' have been slower to recover. The region has increased in all Wagner-Peyser performance targets over the past four program years. In PY14, Georgia exceeded federal outcome expectations on two of its three negotiated measures, while almost exceeding the third measure. Georgia looks to build upon this success and strive for continual improvement. The region has made an effort to expand reemployment activities and to expand the reach of new employment services strategies, thereby increasing job seekers' abilities to reconnect to the workforce. Collaborating with UI to offer customized reemployment services through the REA strategies, provides a structured plan of employability to long-term unemployed job seekers and has shown to significantly increase their ability to get a job.

GVRA

The VR program is assessed primarily on its ability to meet or exceed the performance levels negotiated with the RSA for each fiscal year. GVRA has implemented many changes to the VR program over the last year and the improvements are demonstrated in the increase of most VR performance indicators across the most recent 2-year period. The most recent 2-year period with complete data is FFY2014 and FFY2015, which are shown below.

Performance Indicator	Performance Level	FFY2014	FFY2015
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Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.	Equal or exceed previous performance period	-2038	256
Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage who are determined to have achieved an employment outcome.	55.80%	64.81%	78.69%
Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who exit the VR program in competitive, self, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.	72.60%	92.13%	97.87%
Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.	62.40%	51.68%	91.07%
The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the region's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the region who are employed (as derived from the BLS report "State Average Annual Pay" for the most recent available year).	0.520 (ratio)	0.476	0.460
Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services.	53.000 (math difference)	76.400	79.700
The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities.	0.800 (ratio)	0.900	0.990

Adult Education

The Adult Education program is assessed primarily on its ability to meet or exceed the federal benchmarks negotiated with the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education before the start of each fiscal year. Each of the 15 categories has a target percentage that is based upon prior program performance and a comparison of the state with national averages. The percentages represent the portion of students that must meet the stated goal in each category. The most recent two-year period with complete data is FY13 and FY14, which are shown below. In summary, the Adult Education Program exceeded the negotiated goal in 29 out of 30 categories during the two- year period.

Adult Basic and Secondary Educational Functioning Levels	FY 2013 Negotiated	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2013 Outcome	FY 2014 Negotiated	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2014 Outcome
Beginning ABE Literacy	40%	52%	Exceeded	45%	57%	Exceeded
Beginning Basic Education	39%	50%	Exceeded	45%	50%	Exceeded
Low Intermediate Basic Education	38%	50%	Exceeded	47%	49%	Exceeded
High Intermediate Basic Education	34%	44%	Exceeded	39%	44%	Exceeded
Low Adult Secondary Education	36%	45%	Exceeded	41%	50%	Exceeded

English as a Second Language Educational Functioning Levels	FY 2013 Negotiated	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2013 Outcome	FY 2014 Negotiated	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2014 Outcome
Beginning ESL Literacy	37%	41%	Exceeded	40%	48%	Exceeded
Low Beginning ESL	41%	47%	Exceeded	46%	53%	Exceeded
High Beginning ESL	43%	51%	Exceeded	50%	55%	Exceeded
Low Intermediate ESL	39%	49%	Exceeded	48%	55%	Exceeded
High Intermediate ESL	34%	41%	Exceeded	40%	47%	Exceeded
Advanced ESL	28%	42%	Exceeded	30%	47%	Exceeded

Core Outcome Follow-up Measures	FY 2013 Negotiated	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2013 Outcome	FY 2014 Negotiated	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2014 Outcome
Entered Employment	26%	38%	Exceeded	26%	37%	Exceeded
Retained Employment	31%	62%	Exceeded	31%	56%	Exceeded
Obtained GED Credential	67%	88%	Exceeded	69%	84%	Exceeded
Entered Post-Secondary Education	25%	15%	Did not meet	25%	26%	Exceeded

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

Current assessment tools used by the LWDB include standard reports at regular meetings indicated customer feedback, One-Stop usage, numbers of customers served, website usage, numbers of activities provided to customers and quarterly newsletters.

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

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

Applications will be accepted by the local WDB at any time during the program year and evaluated and reviewed at regularly scheduled WIOA board or committee meetings as per local policy.

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

c.

LWDBs responsibilities include:

- Determining initial eligibility of entities providing training programs and considering the possible termination of providers due to submission of inaccurate eligibility and performance information or a substantial violation of WIOA requirements;
- Working with TCSG-OWD to ensure sufficient numbers and types of providers of training services exist, including providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities;
- Ensuring the dissemination and use of the State ETPL, including formats accessible to individuals with disabilities;
- Requiring additional criteria and information from providers to become eligible in that local area, if desirable; and
- Setting higher levels of performance than those required by TCSG-OWD as criteria for local programs to become or remain eligible to provide services in the local area, if desirable.

New Training Providers/Programs

All ETPs that were not previously approved as eligible under WIA (except Registered Apprenticeship programs) must submit the required information to be considered for initial eligibility under WIOA. Under WIOA, ETPs may receive initial eligibility for only one year for a ETP-specific program. For potential ETPs seeking initial eligibility, verifiable program-specific performance information must be provided.

WIOA requires that programs, not ETPs, be approved for ITAs. Therefore, potential ETPs must submit an application for each course of study or program.

Potential ETPs submitting initial eligibility applications should submit training program applications directly to a LWDB. Training program applications will be reviewed and evaluated by an LWDB. If the program application is approved by an LWDB, the program is submitted to TCSG-OWD for review, approval and placement on the State ETPL.

Program applications need only be made with one LWDB for possible inclusion on the State ETPL. Once approved for placement on the State ETPL, an approved program is available to all Georgia LWDBs and cooperative States.

A generic application and instructions can be accessed at www.workreadyga.org. Information regarding LWDBs is also available on the website. Additionally, Area 16 requires that a Training Provider that does not maintain a training facility in the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Innovation Area, must first submit an application to the Workforce Development Board that is located where the provider's training facility is located. The Training Provider, including those located outside the State of Georgia, must be approved or disapproved by the local WDB for inclusion on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

The current State ETPL can be accessed at: www.workreadyga.org An

Applicant must provide the following:

A detailed description of each training program – Provide information that the program is a high quality program, which can include information related to training services that lead to a recognized post-secondary credential, or a wage more than 150% of the Georgia selfsufficiency wage (\$10.88), or successful outcomes across all population groups; B. Performance information for each training program will include:

- Median earnings;
- Average wage at placement;
- Attainment of post-secondary credential;
- Completion rate;
- Employment rate; and
 - Training-related employment rate.
 - Describe in detail applicant's partnerships with business;
 - Describe the recognized post-secondary credential attained after training completion;
- Describe how the training program(s) aligns with in-demand industries and occupations;
- Applicant must also comply with the following to be considered for inclusion on the State ETPL:
 - i. Applicant must have been in business for at least six months prior to the initial application and must have a current business license or proof of active compliance with the Secretary of State Corporations Division;
 - ii. Training programs must be available to the general public, have published catalog price structures;
 - iii. Each training program must have proven outcomes and have successful program completions and training-related employment for at least five students per program;
 - iv. Applicant must be current on all federal and State taxes (Must supply certification from accounting/tax firm of current tax standing regarding federal and State taxes, including Unemployment Insurance taxes);

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

- v. Applicant must be in statutory compliance with the laws of the State related to operation as a training education institution. Proprietary colleges or schools operating in Georgia are required by the Nonpublic Post-Secondary Educational Institution Act of 1990 to have a certificate of authorization from the NPEC before beginning operation or advertising in the state;
- vi. Applicant must provide documentation of current accreditation/authorization;
- vii. Applicant must not have been found at fault in criminal, civil or administrative proceeding related to its performance as a training or educational institution. Must disclose any pending criminal, civil or administrative proceeding as either a defendant or a respondent;
- viii. Applicant must disclose any and all conflicts of interest with State or LWDB staff or board members including, but not limited to family ties (spouse, child, and parent), fiduciary roles, and employment or ownership interests in common; and
- ix. All applications must include a current federal tax identification number.

<u>STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – past 12 months period</u>	<u>Minimum Standard</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Must pass two of six measures		
Median Earnings	<u>\$11.50</u>	The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
Average Wage at Placement	<u>\$10.70</u>	Average wage at placement of completers obtaining employment
Attainment of Post-Secondary Credential	<u>60%</u>	The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program
Completion Rate	<u>70%</u>	Program completion rate for students completing all coursework and exams
Employment Rate	<u>70%</u>	Employment Rate for all students completing the program coursework
Training-Related Employment Rate	<u>70%</u>	Percent of completers exiting the program who have obtained training-related employment

Currently approved ETPs proposing new training programs

ETPs interested in adding additional, new training programs must complete an initial eligibility application for each new program.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Automatic Eligibility

Under WIOA, all Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs that are registered with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA) are automatically eligible to be included on the State ETPL. RA

programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements nor subject to a period of initial eligibility as other ETPs because they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure to become a registered apprenticeship program sponsor with USDOL/OA.

All RA programs will be informed of their automatic eligibility to be included on the State ETPL and will be provided an opportunity to consent to inclusion, before being placed on the State ETPL. The State will work with OA to develop a mechanism to contact all RA programs within the State regarding inclusion on the State ETPL. TCSG-OWD will work with the OA to collect information (to populate the State ETPL) on newly OA registered apprenticeship programs on a quarterly basis. Information required to populate the State ETPL includes: Occupations; name/address of program sponsor; name/address of instructional provider if different from the sponsor; method and length of instruction; and number of active apprentices.

Performance

There are no WIOA performance requirements for RA programs and RA programs are not required to provide ongoing reports to the State or LWDBs. TCSG-OWD will work in concert with the OA to encourage voluntary reporting of performance information.

RA programs must remain registered and in good standing with the OA to remain on the State ETPL. TCSG-OWD will work in concert with the OA to verify registration status.

LWDAs may not impose additional criteria, information or reporting requirements on RA programs. Additionally, if an LWDA has a local ETPL, RA programs should be included and should be noted as 'in-demand occupations'. If an issue arises, LWDAs should contact TCSG-OWD for assistance.

Continued Eligibility

RA program sponsors appearing on the State ETPL will remain there as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the TCSG-OWD that it no longer wants to be included on the State ETPL. However, RAs may be removed if determined to have intentionally supplied inaccurate information or to have substantially violated any provision of Title I of WIOA (e.g., civil rights of discrimination violations) or the WIOA regulations, including 29 C.F.R. part 38. An RA program whose eligibility is terminated due to intentionally supplying inaccurate information or substantially violating WIOA provisions will be terminated for not less than 2 years and is liable to repay all youth, adult and dislocated worker training funds, if received during the period of noncompliance.

If instances of substantial violation are reported to TCSG-OWD, TCSG-OWD will work in concert with the OA to make the determination of ineligibility. The opportunity for an appeal and hearing is described in the ETPL Appeal Procedures.

Biennial review will include verification of the registration status of RA programs and removal of any RA programs that are not currently registered or do not wish to continue as ETPs. Although RA programs are not required to provide ETP Performance reports, voluntary reporting of performance information is encouraged

under WIOA regulations and outcomes for WIOA participants in WIOA funded RA programs must be included in the State's annual performance report. WIOA § 116 (d)(2)

CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURES

This section addresses procedures for continuing eligibility for ETPs previously approved under WIA that are transitioning into WIOA and newly ETPs under WIOA. ETPs previously approved under WIA are subject to the application procedures for continued eligibility as of June 30, 2016.

New ETPs that were determined to be initially eligible under WIOA will be subject to the application procedure for continued eligibility after their initial year of eligibility expires.

WIOA Sections 116 and 122 and 20 C.F.R. § 680 detail the continuing eligibility criteria that States must take into account. However, until data from the conclusion of each WIOA performance indicator's first data cycle is available, the State has set minimum performance criteria. Once ETPs have two years of performance outcomes using the WIOA performance indicators specified in WIOA Section 116, the State will utilize the WIOA performance indicators for continuing eligibility.

Review of Minimum Performance Outcomes Required for Continued Eligibility (to be utilized until WIOA performance data is available):

For the Transition Year, ETPs are not required to complete a Continued Eligibility Application.

For a program to remain eligible to receive ITA funds for new enrollments after June 30, 2016, the State utilized data available through the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (GWROPP) to compare program level performance outcomes against established minimum State standards, covering the preceding program year. Programs with an enrollment of at least 10 students were evaluated for continuing eligibility.

In addition to the evaluation of performance information for the past program year, for those programs not meeting performance for the past program year, an additional evaluation reviewed performance for the previous two program years to ascertain if failing to meet performance standards occurred in the past.

If approved, a program's continuing eligibility will extend until the biennial WIOA performance measurement review. If not approved, an ETP will be notified by TCSG-OWD that the program will be removed from the State ETPL. The LWDA in which the program resides will also be notified.

<u>ALL WIOA STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – Preceding program year</u>	<u>Minimum Standard</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Must pass three of six measures		
Median Earnings	<u>\$11.50</u>	The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
Average Wage at Placement	<u>\$10.70</u>	Average wage at placement of completers obtaining employment

Attainment of Post-Secondary Credential	<u>60%</u>	The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program
Completion Rate	<u>70%</u>	Program completion rate for students completing all coursework and exams
Employment Rate	<u>70%</u>	Employment rate for all students completing the program
Training-Related Employment Rate	<u>70%</u>	Percent of completers exiting the program who have obtained training-related employment

Performance data is tracked through TCSG-OWD's data management system; however, ETPs may be asked to provide additional continuing eligibility information.

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

ETPL Appeal Procedure

Introduction

These procedures are designed to provide guidelines for filing and resolving Appeals made by an ETP or a prospective ETP. In the event that an ETP seeks to file an Appeal, it must do with the entity whose action the ETP disputes. For example, in the event that an ETP is removed from a Local ETPL, the ETP must file an Appeal with the LWDA in accordance with LWDA's policies. Once an ETP has filed an Appeal with a LWDA, received a written resolution, and is dissatisfied with the LWDA's resolution, the ETP may file second level appeal with the State.

Conversely, in the event that an entity is denied designation on the State ETPL, or if the ETP or is removed from the State ETPL, the ETP may file an Appeal directly with TCSG-OWD.

Local Appeal Procedures

Appeal procedures are established to provide recourse for proposers who think that their proposal did not receive proper consideration. Proposers entering an appeal must be prepared to document specific factors which put the aggrieved proposer at a competitive disadvantage and/or document violations of specific section(s) of the Act. Proposers may not appeal simply because they believe their program to be superior to the one selected. JTU and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Investment Board reserves the right to refuse to consider any appeal that does not identify specific procedural shortcomings.

The process outlined in the Job Training Unlimited Grievance Procedure will be used:

“Contractors, employees or individuals applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Investment Act funded by the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Investment Area will be treated fairly. If any individual, group, or organization has a complaint, the problem should first be discussed informally between those involved before a grievance is filed.”

“All Other Complaints (Violations of the Act or Regulations)”

All other complaints must be filed within twelve (12) months after the act in question by submitting a written request for a hearing to:

The Heart of Georgia Regional Commission
5405 Oak St., Eastman, Georgia 31023

Complaints filed shall contain the following:

- The full name, telephone number (if any), address of the person making the complaint.
- The full name and address of the person or organization against whom the complaint is made.
A clear statement of the facts including the date(s) that the alleged violation occurred.
- The provisions of the Act, regulations, grant or other agreements under the Act believed to have been violated.
The relief requested including whether or not a formal hearing is requested.

A request will be considered to have been filed when the reviewing authority receives from the complainant a written statement, including the information specified above which contains sufficient facts and arguments to evaluate the complaint.”

A copy of the full grievance policy is available upon request and shall be provided to all offerors.

TCSG-OWD Procedures for Second Level Appeals of LWDA Resolutions

An ETP may file a second level appeal of a LWDA resolution directly with TCSG-OWD so long as the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The ETP has completed TCSG-OWD’s ETPL Appeal form;
2. The ETP attaches the LWDA’s Written Resolution and any other pertinent information to the TCSG-OWD’s Appeal form; and
3. The Appeal is filed with TCSG-OWD no later than 30 days from the date the LWDA issued its written resolution.

The ETP shall have the option of requesting a hearing in the event that the Second Level Appeal cannot be resolved informally. In the event that a hearing is requested in writing, it will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The TCSG-OWD’s ruling on all Second Level Appeals shall be final.

D. TCSG-OWD Procedures for Appeals of denial or removal of an ETP from the State ETPL

An ETP may file an appeal directly with the TCSG-OWD in the event that the ETP is denied eligibility or is removed from the State ETPL. In order to Appeal, the ETP must satisfy the following criteria:

1. The ETP must complete TCSG-OWD's ETPL Appeal form;
2. The ETP must include all other pertinent information; and
3. The ETP must file the Appeal no later than 30 days from the date that the ETP is denied eligibility or is terminated from the State ETPL.

The ETP shall have the option of requesting a hearing if the Appeal cannot be resolved informally. In the event that a hearing is requested in writing, it will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The TCSG-OWD's ruling on all Appeals shall be final.

E. Hearing Procedure for State and Local ETPL Determination Appeal

As required by WIOA, every ETP shall have the opportunity for a hearing for any Appeal that is filed. A request for a hearing must be made in writing by the ETP, preferably at the time the appeal is initially filed. However, an ETP may file a written request for a hearing within sixty (60) days of the date the Appeal was filed. If a request for a hearing is made, then the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible to enable a resolution of the Appeal no later than sixty (60) days from the day the Appeal is filed. The LWDA and TCSG-OWD shall use the following procedures if a hearing is requested:

1. Upon receiving written notice of the ETP's request for a hearing, the LWDA or TCSG-OWD shall respond in writing acknowledging the ETP's request and notifying the ETP of the date of the hearing. Such acknowledgment and notice shall be transmitted to the ETP within ten (10) business days of receipt of the ETP's request. The notice shall include, at a minimum:
 - a. The date of issuance;
 - b. The name of the ETP;
 - c. The name of the Respondent against whom the Appeal has been filed (TCSG-OWD or the LWDA);
 - d. A statement reiterating that the ETP and Respondent may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing;
 - e. The date, time, and place of the hearing, including the name of the hearing officer serving as an impartial party;
 - f. A statement of the alleged violations of WIOA, (This may include clarification of the original Appeal, but must accurately reflect the content of the submitted documentation of the ETP);
 - g. A copy of any policies or procedures for the hearing or identification of where such policies may be found; and
 - h. The name, address, and telephone number of the contact person issuing the notice.
2. The hearing shall be conducted in compliance with federal regulations. At a minimum, the hearing must include:
 - a. An impartial hearing officer selected by the LWDA or TCSG-OWD;
 - b. An opportunity for both the ETP and LWDA/TCSG-OWD to present an opening statement, witnesses and evidence;
 - c. An opportunity for each party to cross-examine the other party's witnesses; and,
 - d. A record of the hearing which the LWDA or TCSG-OWD shall create and retain.

3. The hearing officer, considering the evidence presented by the ETP and Respondent, shall issue a written decision which shall serve as the LWDA's or TCSG-OWD's official resolution of the Appeal. The decision shall include the following information, at a minimum:

- a. The date, time, and place of hearing;
- b. A recitation of the issues alleged in the Appeal;
- c. A summary of any evidence and witnesses presented by the ETP and the respondent;
- d. An analysis of the issues as they relate to the facts; and
- e. A decision addressing each issue alleged in the Appeal.

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

After approved for continued eligibility, requests for changes to contact information, program cost, program description, corporate entity change, etc. should be submitted to the LWDB which approved the initial application. Changes related to contact information should also be submitted to TCSG-OWD.

ETPL/ITA-related questions should be directed to:

**Technical College System of Georgia
Office of Workforce Development
1800 Century Place NE
Atlanta, GA 30345
404-679-5442**

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

The local area has an ITA training policy as outlined below in "g".

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

The GWR is used to track all participant activity, including ITA's. Reports are provided weekly to supervisors and coordinators which include support costs, customers who are in an ITA, customers who have completed and are receiving follow-up services, the case management case notes for each customer, their current activity status, and each case manager's current case load. Reports concerning the numbers of customer served are provided to administration, along with the weekly reports. Performance outcomes are also provided quarterly as they are made available in GWROPP.

Financial tracking is conducted using the GWR supportive payments tracking system and local area spreadsheets.

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

ITA customers can only be enrolled in approved training provider programs that are on the approved statewide Eligible Training Provider Listing.

The maximum dollar amount of an individual's training account will be \$6,000 (tuition costs, books, testing fees, uniforms, exams, and any other items required by the course or school) for a maximum duration of two years. Following completion of training the customer must enter employment. Unique circumstances may arise for which the two-year maximum may be waived. This must be documented in the customer file and approved by the Administrative Entity Director.

PELL HOPE COORDINATION

The service provider must maintain documentation showing the amount of a customer's HOPE and PELL grant award and other financial aid/scholarship awards, a copy of the Financial Aid History and the manner in which the HOPE/PELL grant will be disbursed. Case Managers will use this information to document financial aid to ensure WIOA funds are not duplicating expenses paid by PELL or HOPE.

WIOA will pay for the remainder of the tuition not covered by HOPE and/or PELL.

Tuition will be paid for students who are not HOPE or PELL eligible.

WIOA will pay the remainder of the book balance after HOPE and/or PELL pays. WIOA will pay for books required by the instructor if HOPE or PELL is not available.

ATTENDANCE

Customers must stay on track to complete their course of study and receive their credentialing within the two-year limit. This "full-time" requirement is based on the training program and must take into consideration that the program must be completed by the customer within two years. Customers must take as much of a full case load as their curriculum allows. The number of hours a customer takes each quarter must be based on their program of study and may vary from the school's listed full-time requirements. Customers are not allowed to attend part-time due to other obligations, unless approved by the ITA Coordinator.

Each customer must maintain at least a cumulative 2.5 grade point average (GPA). Customers whose GPA falls below 2.5 in one semester will be placed on Academic probation for the next semester. If, at the end of the probation semester, the customer's GPA is less than 2.5 the customer may be terminated from training and be required to begin an employment search. Waivers must be documented and approved by the Program Coordinator.

Exceptions are made for customers that are part of a Rapid Response Event. Those exceptions include; GPA below 2.5 when entering the program. However, they must continually show progress to improve their overall GPA. They may also be required

to take a remedial course and/or prerequisites and are not excluded from receiving services during that time. WIOA provides services for a maximum of 2 years or \$6,000, whichever comes first.

No customer is permitted to sit-out any semester without just cause. Semesters when the student is not scheduled by the school to attend or when no classes are available for their course of study, are not considered to be sitting out. Justifying circumstances must be documented in the customer file and approved by the Program Coordinator. Customers who sit out semesters without just cause may be terminated from training and be required to begin job search.

ONLINE ONLY CLASSES

WIOA will cover the cost of tuition, books and supplies of online only classes, however, the customer will not be eligible for transportation or childcare support payments. An exception will be made if a customer must travel to a campus to complete in-person testing. This exception will allow such customers to receive transportation support payments for each day they are required to appear on such campus. This must be documented with course syllabus. Online classes taken concurrently with onsite classes will not receive transportation or childcare support payments on days not attending onsite.

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

Any Registered Apprenticeship program within the LWDA which are not currently on the ETPL, will be reported to the TCSG-OWD for inclusion on the ETPL. Registered apprenticeship programs are exempt from initial eligibility procedures and will remain on, or be placed on the list as long as the program remains registered.

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

The LWDA will provide professional customer (participant and business) assistance via webinar, teleconference, on-site training, and seminars and workshops. To ensure that local training partners and providers are adequately equipped to foster continuous improvement and maintain an ability to meet the performance outcomes beyond those mandates.

The technology used will provide information regarding the role of the LWDA partners as a key component in the delivery of one-stop center services. Technology will assist in providing customers with resources to enable a local customer or employer to establish effective strategies for job development, job search, hiring, assessment, and information on the local labor market, services offered, and providers of services.

State Initiatives and Vision:

1. **State Branding** – Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

We have updated all printed material and the Region 9 website. **All required signage is in place.**

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

The LWDA will follow the State's priority of service policy as follows:

PRIORITY FOR TRAINING SERVICES GUIDELINES – ADULT FUNDING

**ELIGIBILITY and SUITABILITY GUIDELINES FOR
ADULTS AND DISLOCATED WORKERS**

WorkSource Heart of Georgia's policy for adult and dislocated worker programs is to ensure that those enrolled in WIOA Title I training programs are determined eligible and that required documentation is maintained in the customer file. Enrollment into a WIOA Title I training program requires a complete 100% verification of eligibility.

Adults and Dislocated Worker customers who receive services funded under WIOA Title I other than self-service or information activities must be registered and must be a participant. Registration is the information collection process that documents a determination of eligibility.

1) Training Services Requirements (Adults and Dislocated Workers)

Training services may be made available to underemployed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who, after a documented interview, evaluation or assessment and documented career planning have been **determined eligible to receive WIOA training services** and:

- 1) Are determined to be unlikely or unable 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; and
- 2) Are determined to be in need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and
- 3) Have the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services; and
- 4) Have selected a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area, or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or relocate; and
- 5) Are unable to obtain *grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training, (including such sources as State-funded training and Federal Pell Grants) and require WIOA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance, including Federal Pell Grants;

Note: In determining whether a participant requires WIOA assistance in addition to other grant sources, one-stop operators should take into account the full cost of participating in training services (including supportive services, dependent care and transportation costs) and other appropriate costs and

- 6) (ITA's) Have selected a program of study from the Georgia State Eligible Training Provider List.
- 7) (OJT's) Have been determined to be in need of On-the-Job Training.

*NOTE: Veteran's Administration (VA) benefits for education and training services (e.g., GI Bill) are not included in the statutory and regulatory category of "other grant assistance". Veterans and spouses are not required to coordinate their entitlement to those benefits with any concurrent eligibility that they may have for (WIOA) funded training and therefore, should not preclude them from receiving WIOA funded services. WIOA service providers may not require veterans or spouses to exhaust their entitlement to VA funded training benefits prior to allowing them to enroll in WIOA funded training. (TEGL 10-09)

2) Adult Funding Eligibility

Adults must meet the following eligibility criteria for the WIOA Adult Program:

- U.S. citizen or otherwise legally entitled to work in the U.S.; **and**
- Age 18 or older; **and**
- Selective Service Registration (if applicable), unless an exception is justified **and**
- Unemployed or Underemployed.

3) Priority for Services (Adult Funding Only)

WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) requires priority for individualized career services and training services funded with WIOA adult funds be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The list below describes the priority of service for adult funded individuals served in the WIOA Adult Program based on the requirements of WIOA

1st Priority — Veterans and eligible spouses who are:

- low income (see definitions for low income requirements) or
- recipients of public assistance or
- who are basic skills deficient.

2nd Priority — Individuals (non-veteran/eligible spouse) who are:

- low income or
- recipients of public assistance or
- who are basic skills deficient.

3rd Priority — Veterans and eligible spouses who possess other barriers to employment, as defined below.

4th Priority — Individuals who possess other barriers to employment, as defined below.

4) Dislocated Workers Eligibility Requirements

Must meet the following eligibility criteria for the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program:

- U.S. citizen or otherwise legally entitled to work in the U.S.; and
- Age 18 or older; and
- Selective Service Registration (if applicable), unless an exception is justified **and**

Is an individual who meets one of the following five sets of criteria:

1. The individual:

- a. has been terminated or laid off through no fault of their own or has received a notice of no-fault termination or layoff from employment;
- b. is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation or has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that was not covered under a state's UI law; and
- c. is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.

2. The individual:

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

- a. has been terminated or laid off through no fault of their own or has received a notice of no-fault termination or layoff from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at a plant, facility, or enterprise;
 - b. is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; or
 - c. for purposes of eligibility to receive services other than training services, career services, or support services, is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close.
3. The individual was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community in which the individual resides or because of natural disasters. This includes individuals working as independent contractors or consultants but not technically employees of a firm.
4. The individual is a displaced homemaker, as defined in WIOA § 3 (16). A displaced homemaker is an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and who:
 - a. is unemployed or underemployed and experiencing difficulty finding or upgrading employment; **and**
 - b. has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; **or**
 - c. is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service-connected death or disability of the member.
5. The individual is a separating service member from the Armed Services with a discharge other than dishonorable, the separating service member qualifies for dislocated worker activities based on the following criteria:
 - a. The separating service member has received a notice of separation (DD214) from the Department of Defense or other documentation showing a separation or imminent separation from the Armed Forces to satisfy the termination or layoff eligibility criteria (These documents must meet the requirement that the individual has received a notice of termination or layoff, to meet the required dislocated worker definition);
 - b. The separating service member is eligible for or has exhausted of unemployment compensation for Exservice members (UCX); and
 - c. As a separating service member, the individual meets the eligibility criteria that the individual is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation in the military. (TEGL 19-16).
6. The individual is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who:
 - a. has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or
 - b. is unemployed or underemployed and experiencing difficulty finding or upgrading employment.
 - c. is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service-connected death or disability of the member.
7. **The individual is underemployed**, which is defined as:
 - a. A person who **was laid off from** a previous employer, but has found employment earning wages that are 85% or less of the salary that was paid at the employer of dislocation; and/or
 - b. A person who is in employment that uses significantly less skills or abilities than the job of dislocation and is not commensurate with the individual's demonstrated level of educational attainment.
8. An individual who may have been separated for cause, filed an appeal to UI and was determined to be 'no-fault' and eligible for UI (based on that employer's contributions) may be eligible as a dislocated worker.

NOTE: Documentation Required for 'Unlikely to Return' to a previous industry or occupation must be maintained in the individual's file using the 'Unlikely to Return'.

5) Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Area Resident Priority (Adult/Dislocated Workers)

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Region

Adult funded Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Area residents will receive priority for enrollment into WIOA programs. Enrollment of non-Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Area adult-funded residents may be waived by the WIOA Executive Director on a case-by-case basis with documented justifying circumstances. Exception to the policy must be clearly documented in case notes.

Dislocated Workers may be served through the Heart of Georgia Altamaha area when their residence is outside of Region 9, if their dislocation employer is located within Region 9.

An exception to any of the requirements outlined in this training services policy must be approved by the WIOA service provider manager or designee. Exception to policy must be clearly documented in case notes.

3. Alignment with State Goals – Describe how the area/region will align with each of the goals listed in the State Unified Plan.

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

Sector partnerships have become an integral part of the area's workforce system. The region's investment in sector partnerships have increased understanding of workforce needs and enabled greater coordination between employers and partner agencies. These partnerships have enabled workforce development professionals to hear directly from employers and strategize to meet their current and future needs. As a result of these discussions, each sector has identified employers and has begun a system of training and referrals to meet the employer's needs.

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

The region will continue to provide enhanced resources and guidance to the WIOA partners in order to accomplish seamless service delivery. Examples of this include a robust referrals system, coordinated participant intake and eligibility, as well as continuous communication between partner agencies. Employer partners are represented on the Board and maintain an active role in the service delivery strategy through the one-stops.

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

Region 9 is a rural area. The smallest regional population, with the largest geographic area. All WIOA partners continue to improve coordination efforts of economic development and workforce development to make the region one of those making informed decisions and developing a strategy to meet the needs of employers throughout the area. The Board's shift to an emphasis on business services will have allowed the region to increase services to partner customers and employers. Programs and initiatives such as work-based learning, participation in Rapid Response activities, coordination of the High Demand Career Initiative, WIOA career and training services, continue to be key components of the region's efforts to serve businesses. In line with Governor Kemp's goal to ensure someone's potential is not determined by their zip code or county, the Board has established a one-stop location within each of the seventeen counties within the region. This greatly enhances the workforce system's ability to serve rural areas and increase services.

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

Education systems are key partners of the workforce system. The region works closely with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). Through the HDCI grant with region is working with high-school seniors to create a pipeline into education and employment. High Schools are key partners in this effort participating in HDCI Technical College and employer meetings and tours. All WIOA core partners are committed to further aligning training services provided through the workforce system with education partners to best serve companies and individuals looking to play key roles in the economy of today and tomorrow.

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

The Georgia Department of Labor has reported a steadily decreasing unemployment rate in the region – reaching 4.1 percent as of December 2019. This low unemployment rate decreases the number of individuals actively participating and readily available to meet the needs of workforce challenges and shortages. The Georgia Department of Labor, Labor Force Estimates show that the area's unemployed and available to work in the month of December 2019 is 4,652. This is an opportunity to provide training and employment opportunities to these job seekers. In order to identify and serve individuals who are not considered active in the workforce system, the core WIOA partners continue to work to promote resources and opportunities among strategic populations. These populations include, but are not limited to, transitioning veterans, opportunity youth, returning citizens, English language learners, individuals who are basic skills deficient and individuals with disabilities.

Appendix 1 – Labor Market Information

Data Sources and Calculations

Industry Data

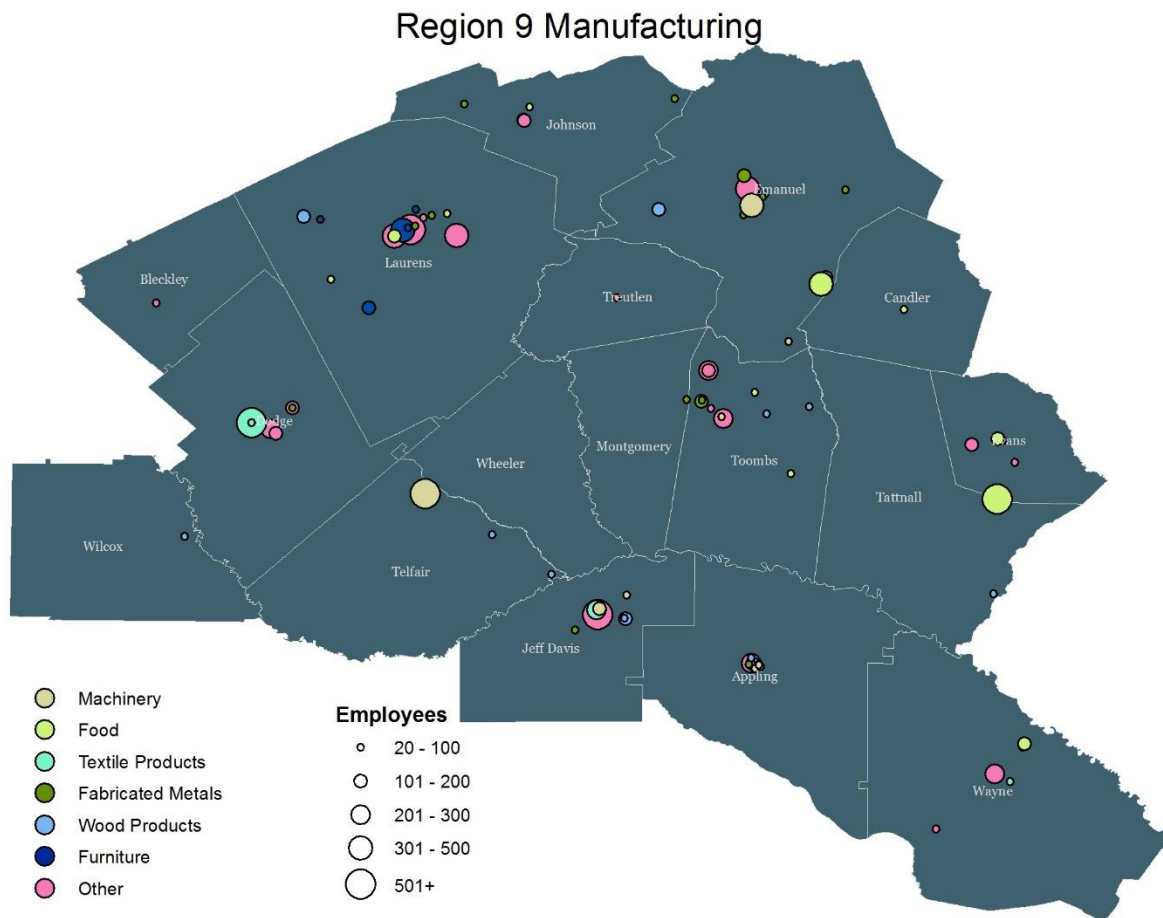
EMSI industry data have various sources depending on the class of worker. (1) For QCEW Employees, EMSI primarily uses the QCEW (Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages), with supplemental estimates from County Business Patterns and Current Employment Statistics. (2) Non-QCEW employee's data are based on a number of sources including QCEW, Current Employment Statistics, County Business Patterns, BEA State and Local Personal Income reports, the National Industry-Occupation Employment Matrix (NIOEM), the American Community Survey, and Railroad Retirement Board statistics. (3) Self-Employed and Extended Proprietor classes of worker data are primarily based on the American Community Survey, Non-employer Statistics, and BEA State and Local Personal Income Reports. Projections for QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees are informed by NIOEM and long-term industry projections published by individual states.

The following labor market information is part of the information for the sector strategies planning the region has begun to develop with the regional partner agencies. Additional Labor Market Information will be gathered and shared as needed for the sector strategies plan.

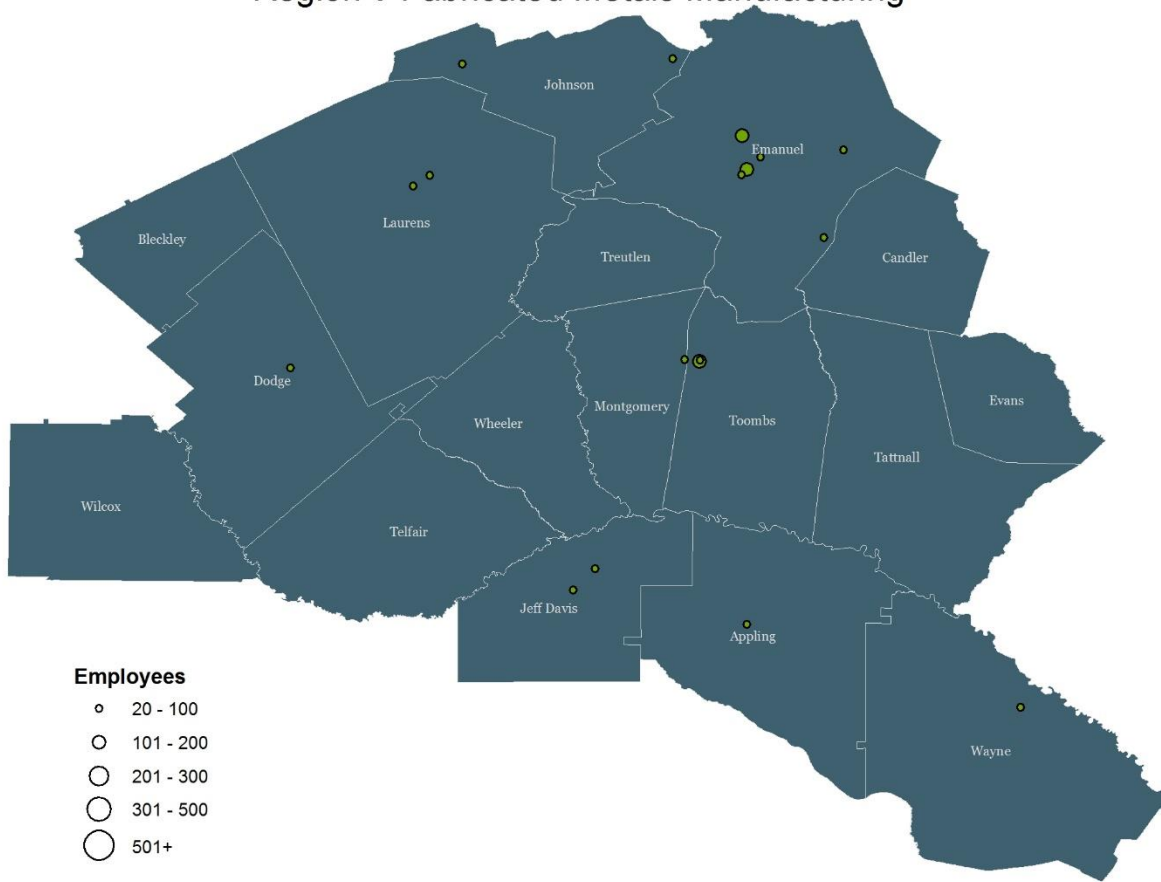
State Data Sources

This report uses state data from the following agencies: Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis, Occupational Information Services Unit and Labor Insight/Burning Glass.

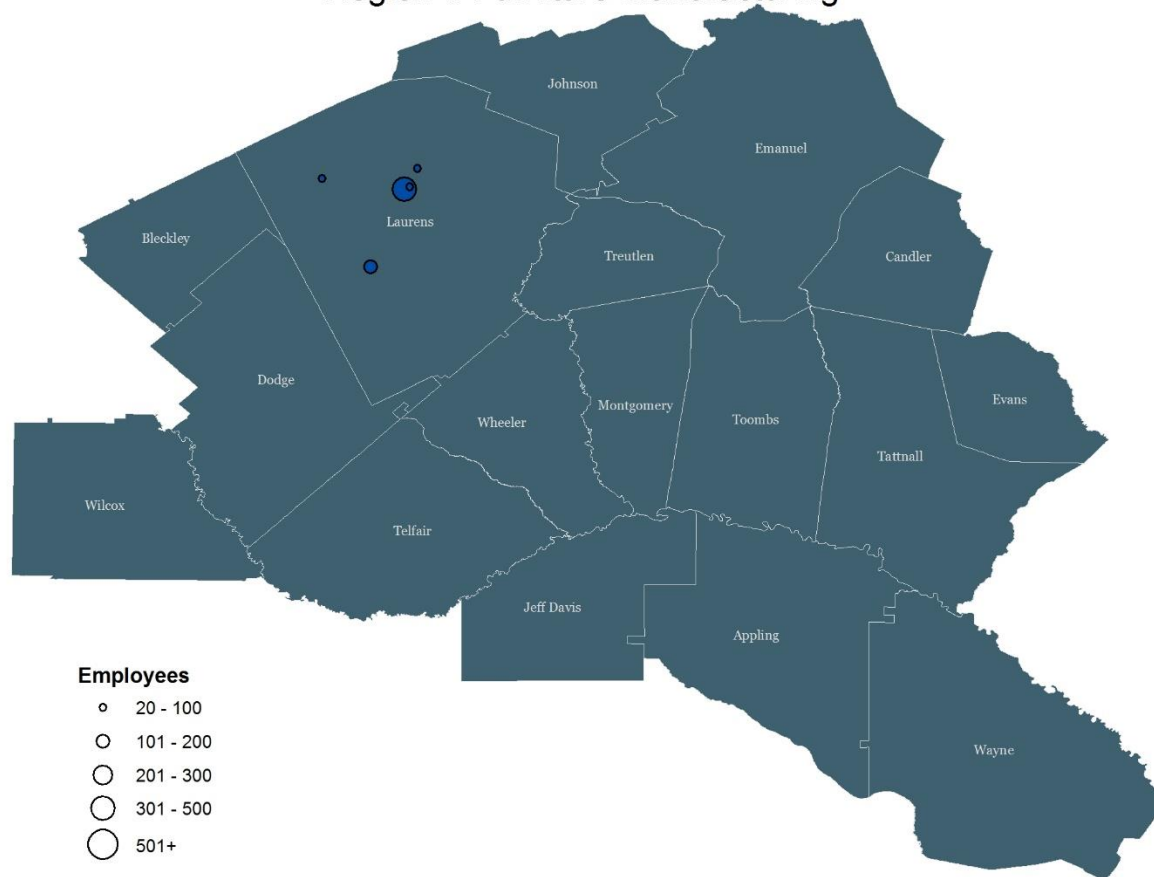
Appendix 3: Labor Market Information



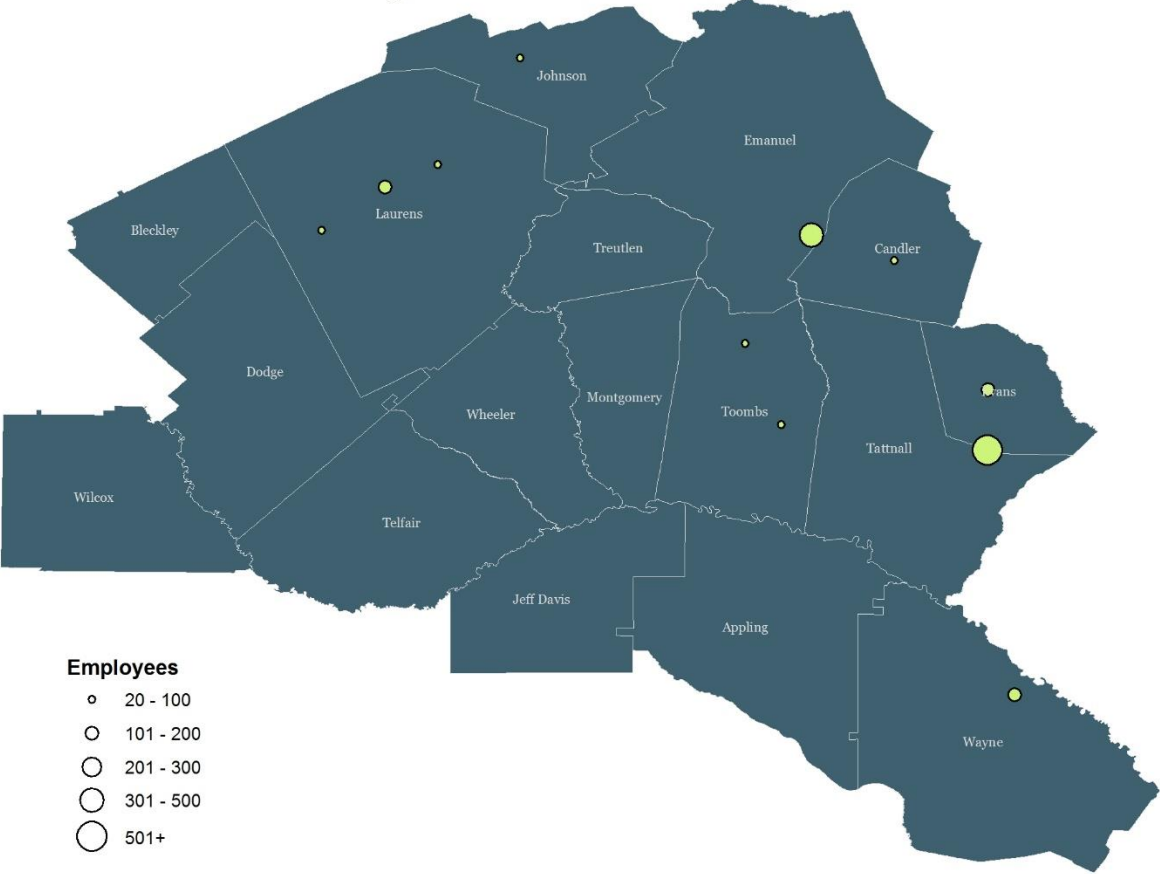
Region 9 Fabricated Metals Manufacturing



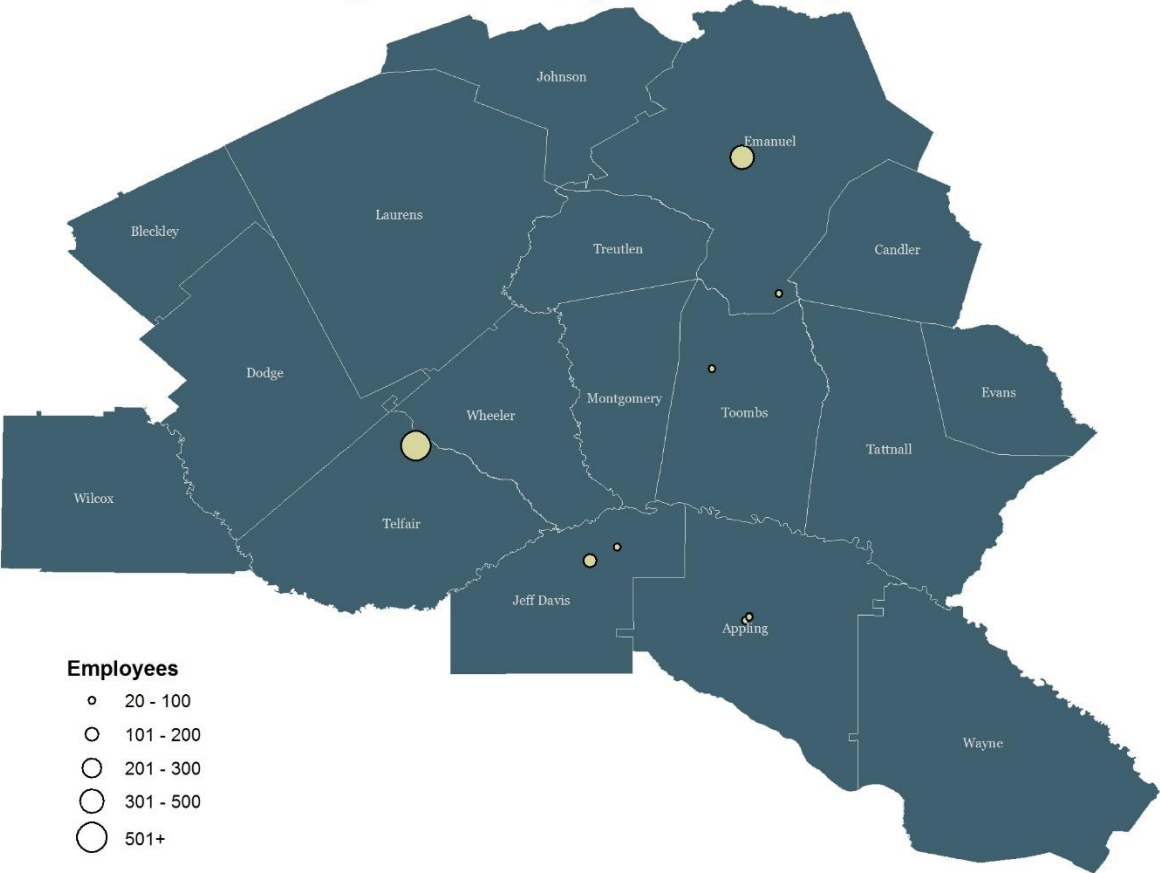
Region 9 Furniture Manufacturing



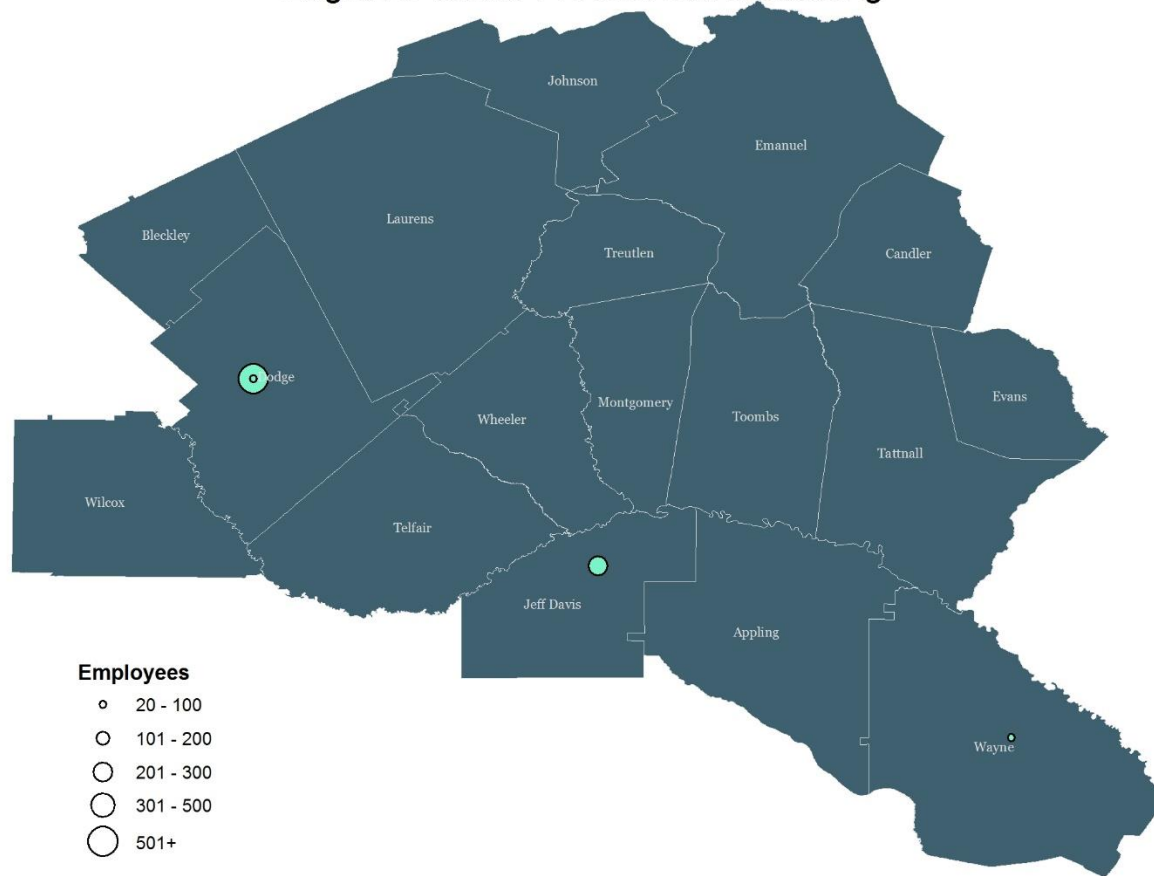
Region 9 Food Manufacturing



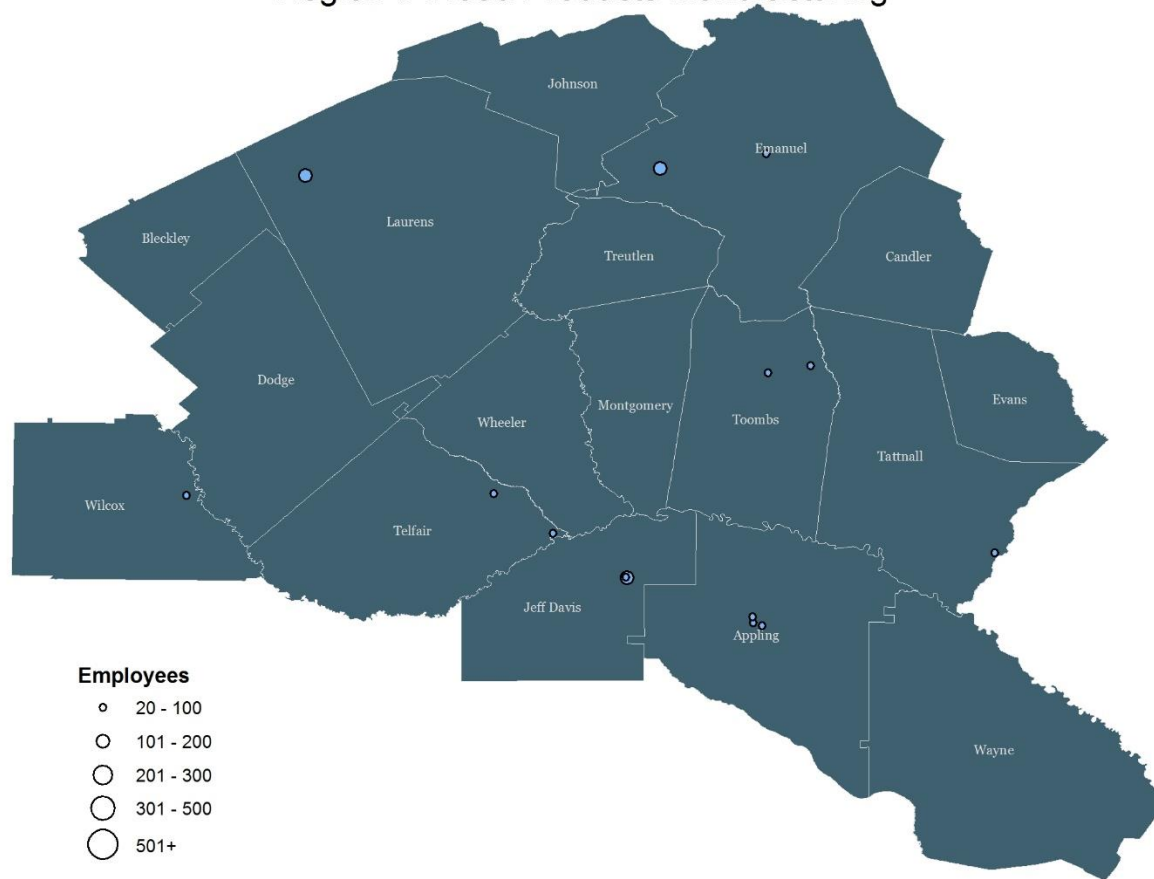
Region 9 Machinery Manufacturing



Region 9 Textile Product Manufacturing



Region 9 Wood Products Manufacturing



REGION 9 MANUFACTURING JOBS - LOCATIONS

Company Name	Primary City	Latitude	Longitude	Line Of Business	Employees At This Location	Primary US NAICS Code	3Dig
Mondi Bags Usa, LLC	Eastman	32.18896	-83.19564	Textile bags, nsk	2000	314910	314
Crider, Inc.	Stillmore	32.42791	-82.212585	Food preparations, nec, nsk	400	311999	311
Norman W. Fries, Inc.	Claxton	32.057139	-81.909762	Poultry slaughtering and processing, nsk	1700	311615	311
Sp Fiber Technologies Southeast, LLC	Dublin	32.511811	-82.841287	Paper mills	277	322121	322
ADVANCED METAL COMPONENTS, INC.	Swainsboro	32.55624	-82.337727	Sheet metalwork, nsk	116	332322	332
Evans Cabinet Sales, Inc.	Dublin	32.556971	-82.912659	Wood kitchen cabinets	100	337110	337
Hi-Tek Rations, Inc	Dublin	32.510888	-82.948949	Dog and cat food	120	311111	311
Thompson Hardwoods, Inc.	Hazlehurst	31.850727	-82.549946	Sawmills and planing mills, general	160	321113	321
Handi-House Mfg. Co.	Swainsboro	32.615174	-82.346318	Prefabricated metal buildings, nsk	133	332311	332
Evans Concrete, L.L.C.	Claxton	32.158106	-81.899648	Central-mixed concrete	30	327320	327
Claxton Bakery, Inc.	Claxton	32.161395	-81.908223	Bread, cake, and related products	130	311812	311
Evans Cabinet Sales, Inc.	Dublin	32.556971	-82.912659	Wood kitchen cabinets	100	337110	337
DOWN TO EARTH CONSTRUCTION & EQUIPMENT SALES, INC.	Baxley	31.772765	-82.332019	Motor truck trailers	50	336212	336
Boykin Erectors, Inc.	Jesup	31.628517	-81.865828	Fabricated structural metal	80	332312	332
Ogeechee Steel, Inc.	Swainsboro	32.57801	-82.31473	Fabricated structural metal	45	332312	332
Rentz Cabinet Company Inc	Rentz	32.386543	-82.992629	Wood kitchen cabinets	120	337110	337
Gilman Building Products Company	Dudley	32.54449	-83.1059	Sawmills and planing mills, general	120	321912	321
RUNNERS DIVERSIFIED INCORPORATED	Vidalia	32.278291	-82.407553	Mens and boys suits and coats, nsk	115	315210	315
Alliance Homes, Inc.	Adrian	32.556371	-82.49326	Prefabricated wood buildings	165	321992	321
EMMANUEL COUNTY NEWSPAPERS INC	Swainsboro	32.592506	-82.339691	Commercial printing, nec	222	323111	323
Parker-Hannifin Corporation	Dublin	32.511064	-82.948742	Space propulsion units and parts, nsk	215	336415	336
ERO INDUSTRIES, INC	Hazlehurst	31.86599	-82.600933	Fabricated textile products, nec, nsk	300	314999	314
Ips Balers Manufacturing, Inc.	Baxley	31.77138	-82.320405	General industrial machinery, nec, nsk	56	333999	333
Products Forest LLC Telfair	Lumber City	31.926636	-82.678216	Wood pallets and skids, nsk	47	321920	321
Lark Builders, Inc.	Vidalia	32.225348	-82.419055	Prefabricated metal buildings, nsk	126	332311	332
Dinex Emission, Inc.	Dublin	32.511284	-82.948484	Motor vehicle parts and accessories	50	336390	336
U.S. Energy Sciences, Inc.	Vidalia	32.225455	-82.419353	Lighting equipment, nec, nsk	46	335129	335
Georgia Hitech Fabricators, Inc.	Vidalia	32.22837	-82.445427	Industrial machinery, nec, nsk	56	332710	332
Stitch-N-Print, Inc	Twin City	32.439467	-82.20488	Yarn spinning mills, nsk	80	313110	313
COASTAL PLAIN VENTURES, L.L.C.	Swainsboro	32.547264	-82.347017	Metal doors, sash, and trim, nsk	90	332321	332
PRECISION PRODUCTS MACHINE & FAB., INC.	Hazlehurst	31.867355	-82.599721	Sheet metalwork, nsk	47	332322	332
Wild Bore Machine, LLC	Dublin	32.546169	-82.884939	Miscellaneous metalwork	70	332312	332
Electro-Mech Scoreboard Co.	Wrightsville	32.710156	-82.72564	Signs and advertising specialties	65	339950	339
HEART OF GEORGIA DYNAMICS, INC.	Eastman	32.214565	-83.124928	Plating and polishing	60	332813	332
McPherson Manufacturing Corporation	Hazlehurst	31.864322	-82.592849	Gaskets; packing and sealing devices	25	339991	339
US Pet Nutrition LLC	Lyons	32.2407	-82.327276	Dog and cat food	50	311111	311
Fram Renewable Fuels L.L.C.	Hazlehurst	31.940472	-81.305323	Industrial organic chemicals, nec	20	325110	325
Sylvan Hardwoods, LLC	Mc Rae	31.995549	-82.780761	Hardwood dimension and flooring mills, ns	80	321912	321

Company Name	Primary City	Latitude	Longitude	Line Of Business	Employees At This Location	Primary US NAICS Code	3Dig
S L T Services, Inc.	Wrightsville	32.738395	-82.828606	Fabricated structural metal	28	332312	332
PRECISION MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY, INC	Vidalia	32.22734	-82.41866	Sheet metalwork, nsk	67	332322	332
Arising Industries, Inc.	Hazlehurst	31.864237	-82.592942	Motor truck trailers	30	336212	336
Heart of Georgia Metal Crafters, LLC	Eastman	32.214565	-83.124928	Aircraft parts and equipment, nec, nsk	48	336413	336
Natures Choice Inc	Glennville	31.893713	-81.915158	Wood products, nec, nsk	34	321999	321
Southern Assembly & Packaging, Inc.	Hazlehurst	31.864322	-82.592849	Electrical equipment and supplies, nec, n	30	335999	335
Lord's Sausage & Country Ham, Inc.	Dexter	32.435875	-83.05878	Sausages and other prepared meats	36	311612	311
Landcare Services, LLC	Dublin	32.522609	-82.91814	Asphalt paving mixtures and blocks, nsk	25	324121	324
Bax-Steel Buildings, Inc.	Baxley	31.77195	-82.33798	Prefabricated metal buildings, nsk	41	332311	332
Campana Technology, Inc.	Baxley	31.772856	-82.33228	Millwork, nsk	30	321911	321
Appling County Pellets, LLC	Baxley	31.78241	-82.33344	Wood pallets and skids, nsk	30	321920	321
Spa Crest Mfg. Inc.	Claxton	32.120174	-81.878919	Manufacturing industries, nec, nsk	25	339999	339
McAfee Packing Company, Inc.	Wrightsville	32.73358	-82.715518	Meat packing plants, nsk	35	311611	311
Matos Industries, Inc	Eastman	32.17063	-83.153266	Mens and boys work clothing	48	315220	315
Twin City Precision Metals, LLC	Twin City	32.590642	-82.171593	Prefabricated metal buildings, nsk	21	332311	332
Manning Farms, Inc.	Lyons	32.100612	-82.265594	Pickles, sauces, and salad dressings	20	311941	311
Meredith Industries Inc	Vidalia	32.225455	-82.419353	Sporting and athletic goods, nec	34	339920	339
Advanced Veneer Technologies, Inc.	Lyons	32.204459	-82.307048	Hardwood veneer and plywood, nsk	33	321211	321
American Door & Drawer, Inc.	Swainsboro	32.582102	-82.310326	Millwork, nsk	26	321911	321
Dudley Cabinet, Inc.	Dudley	32.538913	-83.0764	Wood kitchen cabinets	30	337110	337
Better Built Buildings, Inc	Kite	32.747785	-82.465274	Prefabricated metal buildings, nsk	20	332311	332
Appalachian Veneer & Lumber, Inc	Lyons	32.215914	-82.233962	Hardwood veneer and plywood, nsk	57	321211	321
Clements Hardwood Lumber Co Inc	Abbeville	31.99235	-83.310459	Sawmills and planing mills, general	25	321113	321
Range Fuels Soperton Plant LLC	Soperton	32.40386	-82.56548	Industrial gases	20	325120	325
D & E Welding Services	Lyons	32.328989	-82.269424	Industrial trucks and tractors, nsk	20	333924	333
CrownTex Inc	Wrightsville	32.710588	-82.725704	Mens and boys trousers and slacks, nsk	70	315220	315
Middle Georgia Signs - Designeffex, Inc.	Cochran	32.395451	-83.360333	Signs and advertising specialties	22	339950	339
U.S. Lasers, Inc	Hazlehurst	31.891108	-82.548755	Optical instruments and lenses	20	333314	333
Hazlehurst Quality Machines and Fabrication Inc	Hazlehurst	31.831035	-82.637405	Industrial machinery, nec, nsk	20	332710	332
Bonnie's & Children Sportswear, Inc	Screven	31.487676	-82.014458	Mens and boys clothing, nec, nsk	28	315220	315
Creative Uniforms, Inc	Vidalia	32.212682	-82.403601	Womens and misses suits and coats, nsk	20	315240	315
Twin City Quality Buildings, Inc.	Twin City	32.439467	-82.20488	Prefabricated metal buildings, nsk	35	332311	332
Lawter Inc	Baxley	31.77366	-82.333736	Chemical preparations, nec, nsk	20	325998	325
Husqvarna Consumer Outdoor Products N.A., Inc.	Mc Rae	32.066155	-82.895443	Lawn and garden equipment	1300	333112	333
PEPSI-COLA METROPOLITAN BOTTLING COMPANY, INC.	Dublin	32.521665	-82.921693	Bottled and canned soft drinks, nsk	400	312111	312
Baxley Equipment Company	Baxley	31.770921	-82.320774	Woodworking machinery	40	333243	333
TRANE U.S. INC.	Vidalia	32.19891	-82.385144	Refrigeration and heating equipment, nsk	61	333415	333
HEXION INC.	Baxley	31.77366	-82.333736	Chemical preparations, nec, nsk	100	325998	325

Company Name	Primary City	Latitude	Longitude	Line Of Business	Employees At This Location	Primary US NAICS Code	3Dig
McPherson Manufacturing Corporation	Hazlehurst	31.864322	-82.592849	Gaskets; packing and sealing devices	20	339991	339
Art Stone, Inc.	Jesup	31.58229	-81.913519	Apparel and accessories, nec, nsk	100	315280	315
Husqvarna Consumer Outdoor Products N.A., Inc.	Mc Rae	32.066195	-82.895576	Lawn and garden equipment	860	333112	333
COCA-COLA BOTTLING COMPANY UNITED, INC.	Mc Rae Helena	32.076402	-82.896799	Bottled and canned soft drinks, nsk	34	312111	312
Propex Operating Company, LLC	Hazlehurst	31.857362	-82.598143	Broadwoven fabric mills, manmade, nsk	375	313210	313
Tumi, Inc.	Vidalia	32.196236	-82.381889	Luggage	160	316998	316
VALMONT NEWMARK, INC.	Claxton	32.150959	-81.953895	Concrete products, nec	50	327390	327
Evans Cabinet Sales, Inc.	Rentz	32.386543	-82.992629	Wood kitchen cabinets	120	337110	337
Flexsteel Industries, Inc.	Dublin	32.521283	-82.935102	Upholstered household furniture	336	337121	337
Lifetime Cabinet, Inc.	Dublin	32.524518	-82.92505	Wood kitchen cabinets	48	337110	337
EMERSON ELECTRIC CO.	Hazlehurst	31.868114	-82.595171	Textile machinery, nsk	200	333249	333
The Harris Waste Management Group Inc	Baxley	31.764875	-82.327065	Special industry machinery, nec, nsk	80	333249	333
Runners Diversified Incorporated	Vidalia	32.278258	-82.407232	Luggage	50	316998	316
Alcoa Inc.	Eastman	32.178663	-83.162265	Primary aluminum, nsk	120	331313	331
Palletone of Florida, Inc.	Hazlehurst	31.851576	-82.552132	Wood pallets and skids, nsk	70	321920	321
Griffin Industries, Inc.	Dublin	32.549148	-82.858096	Animal and marine fats and oils, nsk	60	311613	311
Coca-Cola Refreshments Usa, Inc.	Dublin	32.542029	-82.899214	Bottled and canned soft drinks, nsk	24	312111	312
Frito-Lay North America, Inc.	Jesup	31.634828	-81.862175	Potato chips and similar snacks	160	311919	311
Steelfab, Inc.	Dublin	32.528516	-82.912817	Fabricated structural metal	66	332312	332
PEPSI-COLA METROPOLITAN BOTTLING COMPANY, INC.	Metter	32.383595	-82.069646	Flavoring extracts and syrups, nec	26	311930	311
Nordson Corporation	Swainsboro	32.564136	-82.33218	Air and gas compressors, nsk	432	333912	333
Federal Prison Industries, Inc	Jesup	31.5688	-81.8869	Textile goods, nec, nsk	40	314999	314
MONDI BAGS USA, LLC	Eastman	32.18896	-83.19564	Textile goods, nec, nsk	100	314999	314
Forest Rayonier Resources LP	Baxley	31.767789	-82.31743	Sawmills and planing mills, general	20	321113	321

REGION 9 INDUSTRY GROWTH

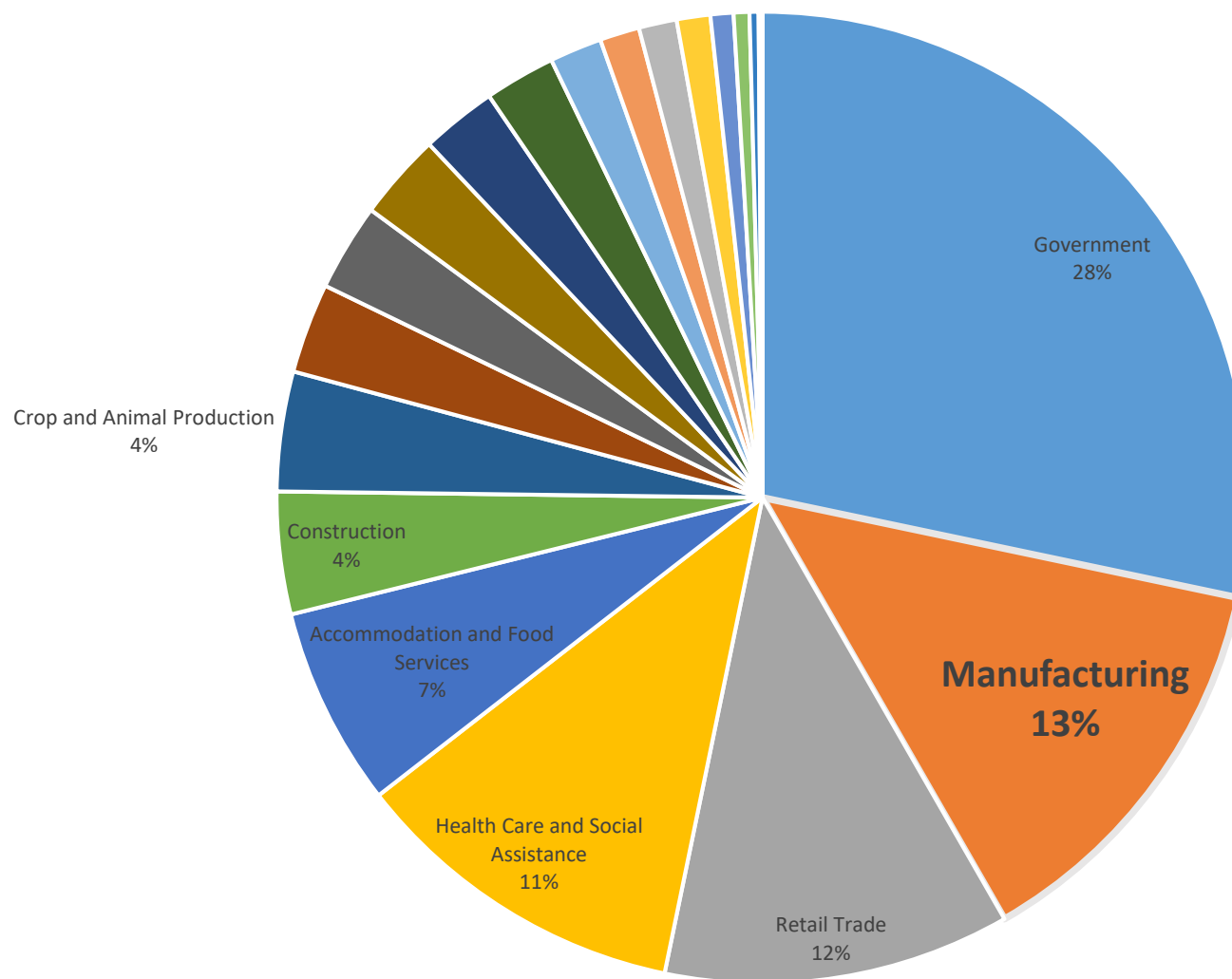
NAICS	Description	2010 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2020 Jobs	2010 - 2020 Change	2010 - 2020 % Change	2010 Loca tion Quot ient	2020 Loca tion Quot ient	2010 Jobs	2011 Jobs	2012 Jobs	2013 Jobs	2014 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2016 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	2019 Jobs	2020 Jobs
90	Government	25,649	23,719	23,624	(2,025)	(8%)	1.55	1.62	25,649	24,908	24,420	24,047	23,899	23,719	23,687	23,660	23,638	23,620	23,624
31	Manufacturing	12,149	11,992	10,936	(1,213)	(10%)	1.57	1.57	12,149	12,154	12,218	12,151	12,365	11,992	11,649	11,381	11,167	10,995	10,936
44	Retail Trade	10,444	11,473	11,316	872	8%	1.07	1.19	10,444	10,733	10,799	10,708	10,954	11,473	11,442	11,411	11,380	11,349	11,316
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	10,209	10,134	11,290	1,081	11%	0.92	0.91	10,209	10,201	10,320	10,256	9,925	10,134	10,411	10,662	10,893	11,110	11,290
72	Accommodation and Food Services	6,012	6,249	6,249	237	4%	0.80	0.77	6,012	5,901	5,854	6,015	6,185	6,249	6,249	6,248	6,248	6,248	6,249
23	Construction	3,689	3,479	3,458	(231)	(6%)	0.96	0.84	3,689	3,587	3,404	3,289	3,376	3,479	3,453	3,439	3,433	3,434	3,458
11	Crop and Animal Production	3,607	3,387	3,057	(550)	(15%)	4.21	3.71	3,607	3,523	3,432	3,228	3,282	3,387	3,300	3,226	3,160	3,102	3,057
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,719	2,617	2,669	(50)	(2%)	0.69	0.75	2,719	2,720	2,563	2,589	2,595	2,617	2,625	2,635	2,645	2,656	2,669
42	Wholesale Trade	2,630	2,836	3,025	395	15%	0.71	0.83	2,630	2,563	2,676	2,759	2,858	2,836	2,899	2,947	2,984	3,013	3,025
48	Transportation and Warehousing	2,610	2,583	2,706	96	4%	0.93	0.93	2,610	2,671	2,567	2,646	2,613	2,583	2,626	2,658	2,681	2,699	2,706
52	Finance and Insurance	2,286	2,220	2,203	(83)	(4%)	0.59	0.60	2,286	2,254	2,194	2,171	2,164	2,220	2,212	2,207	2,203	2,200	2,203
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,136	3,126	3,751	1,615	76%	0.43	0.66	2,136	2,704	2,883	3,530	3,296	3,126	3,336	3,490	3,607	3,697	3,751
22	Utilities	1,575	1,705	1,706	131	8%	4.23	5.19	1,575	1,725	1,681	1,698	1,697	1,705	1,712	1,714	1,714	1,712	1,706

55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,198	868	919	(279)	(23%)	0.96	0.67	1,198	937	853	743	834	868	889	904	915	921	919
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,145	1,209	1,217	72	6%	0.23	0.21	1,145	1,175	1,138	1,116	1,113	1,209	1,211	1,213	1,214	1,216	1,217
61	Educational Services	1,012	824	862	(150)	(15%)	0.45	0.36	1,012	840	800	835	859	824	831	839	847	855	862
51	Information	692	634	571	(121)	(17%)	0.38	0.35	692	681	631	643	659	634	622	608	593	578	571
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	474	482	563	89	19%	0.36	0.43	474	549	528	496	525	482	508	528	544	557	563
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	272	258	277	5	2%	0.21	0.20	272	257	256	264	256	258	264	269	273	276	277
99	Unclassified Industry	104	200	221	117	113%	1.01	1.61	104	124	195	135	203	200	206	211	215	219	221
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	13	11	10	(3)	(23%)	0.03	0.02	13	12	11	<10	16	11	11	11	11	11	10
		90,624	90,006	90,630	6	0%			90,624	90,220	89,422	89,328	89,675	90,006	90,144	90,260	90,366	90,466	90,630

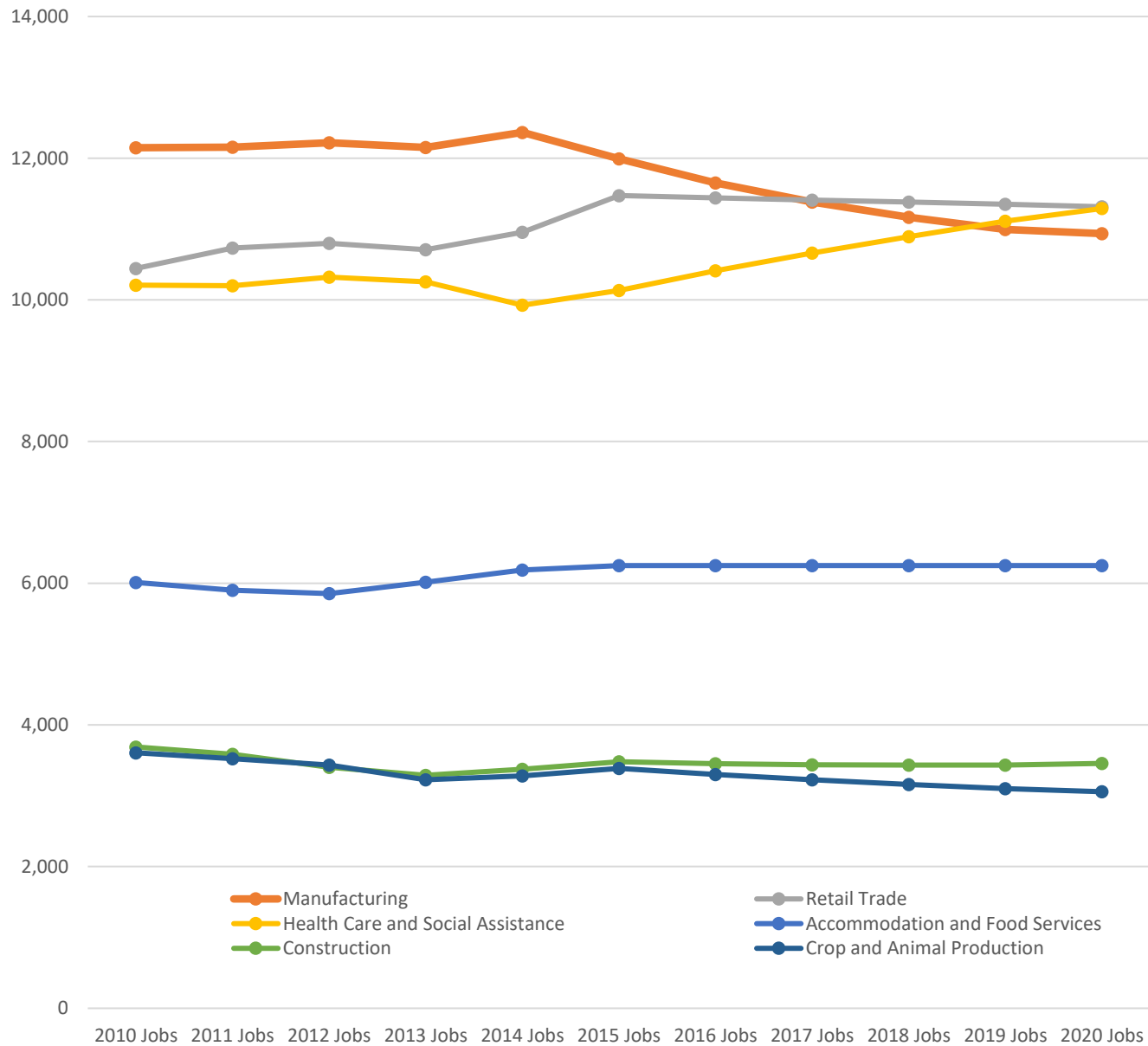
REGION 9 INDUSTRY AGE DISTRIBUTION

NAICS	Description	Age 14-18 % of Industry	Age 19-21 % of Industry	Age 22-24 % of Industry	Age 25-34 % of Industry	Age 35-44 % of Industry	Age 45-54 % of Industry	Age 55-64 % of Industry	Age 65+ % of Industry
90	Government	1%	3%	4%	19%	23%	25%	19%	6%
31	Manufacturing	1%	4%	6%	21%	23%	23%	18%	4%
44	Retail Trade	4%	8%	8%	23%	19%	19%	13%	6%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	1%	2%	4%	24%	26%	23%	15%	5%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	9%	15%	12%	26%	17%	14%	6%	2%
23	Construction	1%	4%	5%	25%	25%	24%	13%	4%
11	Crop and Animal Production	2%	4%	5%	22%	22%	22%	15%	8%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2%	4%	3%	19%	21%	23%	17%	10%
42	Wholesale Trade	1%	3%	4%	20%	23%	26%	17%	6%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	ISD	2%	3%	19%	27%	26%	18%	5%
52	Finance and Insurance	1%	3%	4%	20%	22%	25%	18%	9%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1%	6%	8%	25%	24%	20%	12%	4%
22	Utilities	ISD	ISD	2%	19%	21%	30%	26%	1%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	ISD	3%	5%	20%	24%	25%	17%	6%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1%	3%	4%	20%	26%	23%	17%	7%
61	Educational Services	3%	6%	5%	17%	23%	25%	15%	6%
51	Information	ISD	3%	4%	17%	26%	24%	19%	7%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	ISD	2%	5%	26%	22%	21%	17%	6%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6%	9%	6%	22%	17%	21%	12%	6%
99	Unclassified Industry	ISD	ISD	ISD	23%	27%	25%	15%	ISD
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0%	0%	0%	ISD	ISD	ISD	0%	0%
		2%	5%	6%	21%	23%	23%	16%	5%

Region 9 Industries



Industry Employment Trends



REREGION 9 – INDUSTRY SECTOR GROWTH

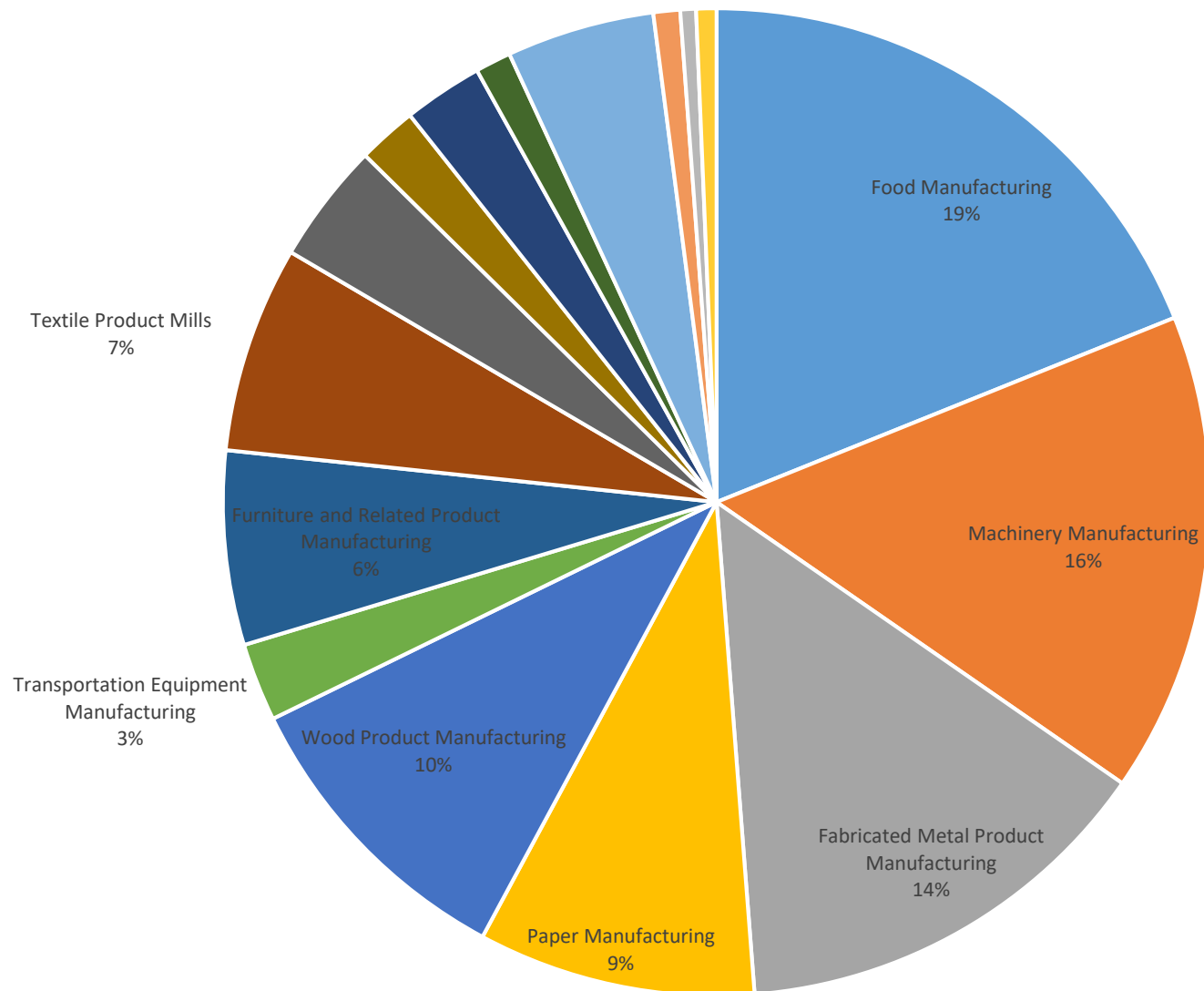
NAICS	Description	2010 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2020 Jobs	2010- 2015 Change	2010 - 2015 % Change	2010 Location Quotient	2020 Location Quotient	2010 Jobs	2011 Jobs	2012 Jobs	2013 Jobs	2014 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2016 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	2019 Jobs	2020 Jobs
311	Food Manufacturing	2,257	2,637	2,643	380	17%	2.32	2.97	2,257	2,165	2,252	2,680	2,664	2,637	2,650	2,655	2,655	2,651	2,643
333	Machinery Manufacturing	1,878	1,803	1,580	(75)	(4%)	2.81	2.46	1,878	2,031	2,121	2,092	2,038	1,803	1,733	1,678	1,635	1,599	1,580
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	1,686	1,598	1,551	(88)	(5%)	1.96	1.80	1,686	1,683	1,636	1,649	1,612	1,598	1,574	1,559	1,550	1,546	1,551
322	Paper Manufacturing	1,085	1,305	1,222	220	20%	4.09	6.15	1,085	1,237	1,334	1,368	1,350	1,305	1,278	1,256	1,239	1,225	1,222
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	1,183	1,223	1,298	40	3%	5.14	6.17	1,183	1,213	1,246	1,291	1,292	1,223	1,236	1,249	1,262	1,277	1,298
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	305	745	793	439	144%	0.34	0.85	305	448	447	577	715	745	761	773	781	788	793
337	Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing	759	579	411	(179)	(24%)	3.17	2.05	759	648	551	576	585	579	521	479	446	421	411
314	Textile Product Mills	808	572	296	(236)	(29%)	10.05	5.28	808	603	616	475	523	572	488	421	365	319	296
313	Textile Mills	471	352	164	(119)	(25%)	5.84	3.22	471	292	219	237	337	352	281	232	197	172	164
315	Apparel Manufacturing	232	222	97	(10)	(4%)	2.18	1.83	232	301	300	230	262	222	193	164	136	110	97
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	311	230	201	(81)	(26%)	1.25	0.90	311	333	301	228	220	230	220	212	206	201	201
323	Printing and Related Support Activities	140	158	163	18	13%	0.43	0.71	140	165	156	179	183	158	160	161	162	163	163
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing	578	149	154	(429)	(74%)	2.41	0.73	578	554	577	168	192	149	152	154	154	154	154
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	105	112	89	8	8%	0.27	0.26	105	135	134	103	103	112	104	98	93	90	89
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	61	74	63	12	20%	0.25	0.29	61	65	85	86	83	74	74	72	69	65	63
312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	79	56	40	(23)	(29%)	0.64	0.30	79	92	80	80	53	56	51	47	44	41	40
		12,149	11,992	10,936	(157)	(1%)			12,149	12,154	12,218	12,151	12,365	11,992	11,649	11,381	11,167	10,995	10,936

REGION 9 MANUFACTURING SECTOR AGE DISTRIBUTION

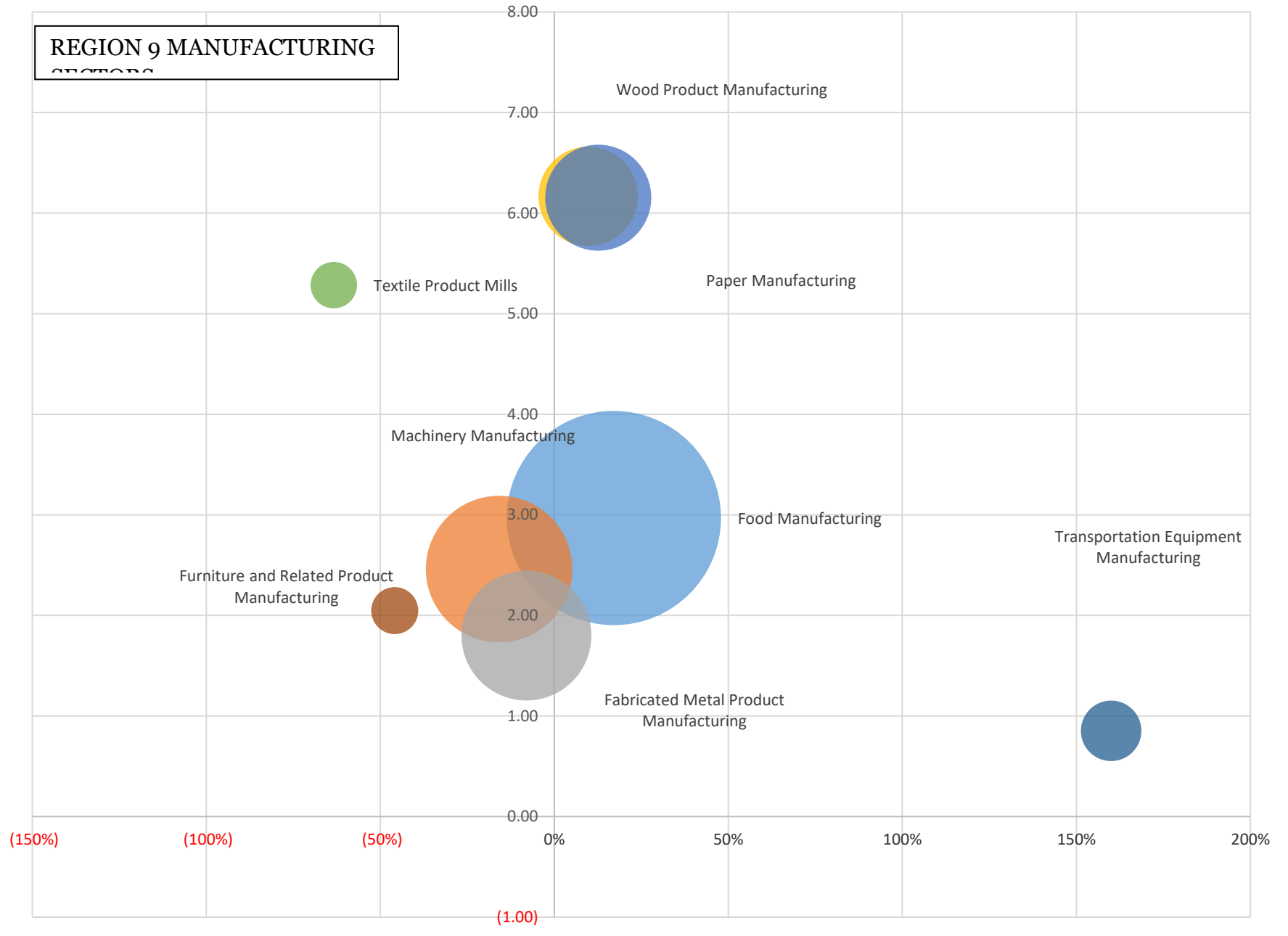
NAI CS	Description	Age 14-18 % of Industry	Age 19-21 % of Industry	Age 22- 24 % of Industry	Age 25- 34 % of Industry	Age 35-44 % of Industry	Age 45- 54 % of Industry	Age 55-64 % of Industry	Age 65+ % of Industry	% 45+
311	Food Manufacturing	1%	7%	9%	27%	22%	19%	12%	4%	35%
333	Machinery Manufacturing	ISD	7%	10%	24%	22%	14%	20%	3%	37%
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	1%	3%	4%	20%	24%	27%	17%	5%	49%
322	Paper Manufacturing	ISD	ISD	2%	17%	26%	30%	22%	2%	54%
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	1%	4%	5%	21%	23%	23%	16%	6%	46%
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	ISD	2%	3%	19%	24%	26%	24%	2%	52%
337	Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing	ISD	3%	4%	18%	25%	30%	16%	4%	50%
314	Textile Product Mills	ISD	3%	4%	19%	26%	25%	17%	6%	47%
313	Textile Mills	0%	ISD	ISD	12%	21%	22%	38%	3%	63%
315	Apparel Manufacturing	ISD	0%	ISD	14%	14%	33%	30%	7%	70%
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	ISD	ISD	ISD	15%	25%	28%	23%	4%	55%
323	Printing and Related Support Activities	0%	ISD	ISD	18%	28%	27%	21%	ISD	48%
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing	0%	ISD	ISD	8%	34%	22%	27%	ISD	49%
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	0%	ISD	0%	19%	20%	17%	18%	23%	58%
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	0%	ISD	0%	30%	ISD	ISD	59%	0%	59%
312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	0%	0%	ISD	ISD	25%	32%	21%	0%	54%
		1%	4%	6%	21%	23%	23%	18%	4%	45%

REGION 9 MANUFACTURING

SECTORS



REGION 9 MANUFACTURING
SECTORS



REGION 9 MANUFACTURING OCCUPATIONS GROWTH, EDUCATION & TRAINING

SOC	Description	Employed in Industry Group (2010)	Employed in Industry Group (2015)	Employed in Industry Group (2020)	Change (2010 - 2020)	% Change (2010 - 2020)	% of Total Jobs in Industry Group (2015)	Median Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
51-2092	Team Assemblers	1,581	1,649	1,430	(151)	(10%)	13.8%	\$10.58	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	465	469	431	(34)	(7%)	3.9%	\$23.72	Postsecondary non-degree award	< 5 Years	None
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	456	472	453	(3)	(1%)	3.9%	\$10.39	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	379	376	334	(45)	(12%)	3.1%	\$10.12	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-6031	Sewing Machine Operators	352	288	153	(199)	(57%)	2.4%	\$10.56	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	330	346	326	(4)	(1%)	2.9%	\$13.20	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9196	Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	294	331	313	19	6%	2.8%	\$21.31	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	281	287	271	(10)	(4%)	2.4%	\$13.29	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	277	295	275	(2)	(1%)	2.5%	\$14.14	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand	260	287	268	8	3%	2.4%	\$8.55	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers	259	256	227	(32)	(12%)	2.1%	\$9.44	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	246	286	294	48	20%	2.4%	\$10.49	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	228	258	256	28	12%	2.1%	\$18.01	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training

51-7041	Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	214	225	244	30	14%	1.9%	\$11.04	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	199	179	164	(35)	(18%)	1.5%	\$17.00	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term on-the-job training
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	187	186	169	(18)	(10%)	1.6%	\$11.83	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-7042	Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	161	143	129	(32)	(20%)	1.2%	\$13.33	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	145	161	158	13	9%	1.3%	\$11.07	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-6063	Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	141	119	44	(97)	(69%)	1.0%	\$12.86	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-4041	Machinists	139	157	178	39	28%	1.3%	\$16.47	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-7011	Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	137	96	83	(54)	(39%)	0.8%	\$13.73	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-4031	Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	119	105	93	(26)	(22%)	0.9%	\$15.67	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-2022	Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	118	31	32	(86)	(73%)	0.3%	\$13.95	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-2041	Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	111	99	92	(19)	(17%)	0.8%	\$13.77	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
53-7063	Machine Feeders and Offbearers	95	101	101	6	6%	0.8%	\$15.43	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery	93	85	84	(9)	(10%)	0.7%	\$16.92	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-6064	Textile Winding, Twisting, and Drawing Out Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	88	81	28	(60)	(68%)	0.7%	\$11.67	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9121	Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine	81	80	79	(2)	(2%)	0.7%	\$12.43	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training

	Setters, Operators, and Tenders											
51-4122	Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	77	81	79	2	3%	0.7%	\$15.31	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-4081	Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	74	74	66	(8)	(11%)	0.6%	\$10.94	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-3021	Butchers and Meat Cutters	71	75	70	(1)	(1%)	0.6%	\$11.21	Less than high school	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-6061	Textile Bleaching and Dyeing Machine Operators and Tenders	64	34	19	(45)	(70%)	0.3%	\$12.95	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training	
51-9023	Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	63	62	55	(8)	(13%)	0.5%	\$12.21	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-4033	Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	58	62	60	2	3%	0.5%	\$13.81	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-5112	Printing Press Operators	52	64	66	14	27%	0.5%	\$12.37	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-6062	Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	50	45	22	(28)	(56%)	0.4%	\$11.20	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	50	51	47	(3)	(6%)	0.4%	\$25.40	High school diploma or equivalent	< 5 Years	None	
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	49	48	56	7	14%	0.4%	\$14.21	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-6093	Upholsterers	48	43	24	(24)	(50%)	0.4%	\$15.95	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-9032	Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	47	54	52	5	11%	0.5%	\$13.33	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training	

51-2099	Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	47	43	42	(5)	(11%)	0.4%	\$9.05	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-3093	Food Cooking Machine Operators and Tenders	45	51	50	5	11%	0.4%	\$14.04	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	42	42	40	(2)	(5%)	0.4%	\$11.03	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other	40	35	35	(5)	(13%)	0.3%	\$12.27	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-8021	Stationary Engineers and Boiler Operators	39	39	34	(5)	(13%)	0.3%	\$20.67	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-9041	Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	36	35	33	(3)	(8%)	0.3%	\$12.53	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	35	37	34	(1)	(3%)	0.3%	\$26.14	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-9012	Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	33	33	29	(4)	(12%)	0.3%	\$13.47	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-2011	Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers	32	33	28	(4)	(13%)	0.3%	\$19.38	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-6091	Extruding and Forming Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Synthetic and Glass Fibers	32	26	13	(19)	(59%)	0.2%	\$13.31	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-4072	Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	29	22	20	(9)	(31%)	0.2%	\$11.98	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
49-9044	Millwrights	27	29	29	2	7%	0.2%	\$17.54	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
51-7021	Furniture Finishers	27	20	14	(13)	(48%)	0.2%	\$11.39	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training

51-3092	Food Batchmakers	27	32	33	6	22%	0.3%	\$11.75	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-6099	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other	26	17	<10	(17)	(65%)	0.1%	\$12.50	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	23	26	25	2	9%	0.2%	\$9.23	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
53-1021	First-Line Supervisors of Helpers, Laborers, and Material Movers, Hand	22	23	23	1	5%	0.2%	\$18.26	High school diploma or equivalent	< 5 Years	None
51-4035	Milling and Planing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	22	25	23	1	5%	0.2%	\$11.94	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9191	Adhesive Bonding Machine Operators and Tenders	21	28	31	10	48%	0.2%	\$15.06	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9051	Furnace, Kiln, Oven, Drier, and Kettle Operators and Tenders	21	21	20	(1)	(5%)	0.2%	\$17.94	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9021	Crushing, Grinding, and Polishing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	20	19	20	0	0%	0.2%	\$12.61	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-3099	Food Processing Workers, All Other	19	17	17	(2)	(11%)	0.1%	\$10.01	Less than high school	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
53-7011	Conveyor Operators and Tenders	19	20	21	2	11%	0.2%	\$11.51	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-9011	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	18	16	14	(4)	(22%)	0.1%	\$18.52	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-4111	Tool and Die Makers	17	17	19	2	12%	0.1%	\$20.38	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-6021	Pressers, Textile, Garment, and Related Materials	17	12	<10	(10)	(59%)	0.1%	\$9.36	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-4021	Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	16	23	20	4	25%	0.2%	\$11.43	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training

51-9031	Cutters and Trimmers, Hand	16	12	<10	(8)	(50%)	0.1%	\$10.41	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-9195	Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastic	16	11	<10	(7)	(44%)	0.1%	\$10.03	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-4032	Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	15	12	11	(4)	(27%)	0.1%	\$15.44	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-4193	Plating and Coating Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	14	23	27	13	93%	0.2%	\$14.21	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-4034	Lathe and Turning Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	14	12	12	(2)	(14%)	0.1%	\$12.36	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	13	12	11	(2)	(15%)	0.1%	\$22.05	High school diploma or equivalent	< 5 Years	None
51-2023	Electromechanical Equipment Assemblers	13	<10	<10	(5)	(38%)	0.1%	\$10.83	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-8091	Chemical Plant and System Operators	12	12	10	(2)	(17%)	0.1%	\$20.77	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	12	14	14	2	17%	0.1%	\$9.49	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	12	10	<10	(5)	(42%)	0.1%	\$14.89	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-2031	Engine and Other Machine Assemblers	12	<10	<10	(3)	(25%)	0.1%	\$13.27	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-4012	Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic	12	14	16	4	33%	0.1%	\$16.10	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
49-9099	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other	11	<10	<10	(4)	(36%)	0.1%	\$12.87	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training

49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	11	10	<10	(2)	(18%)	0.1%	\$16.38	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-5113	Print Binding and Finishing Workers	11	13	13	2	18%	0.1%	\$12.92	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-8031	Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	11	10	<10	(2)	(18%)	0.1%	\$15.68	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
51-4194	Tool Grinders, Filers, and Sharpeners	10	11	12	2	20%	0.1%	\$14.53	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-6042	Shoe Machine Operators and Tenders	0	13	13	13	Insf. Data	0.1%	\$9.89	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
51-6041	Shoe and Leather Workers and Repairers	0	<10	<10	5	Insf. Data	0.0%	\$8.27	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
49-2096	Electronic Equipment Installers and Repairers, Motor Vehicles	0	<10	<10	1	Insf. Data	0.0%	\$13.04	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term on-the-job training
49-3021	Automotive Body and Related Repairers	0	<10	<10	1	Insf. Data	0.0%	\$18.65	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
51-9082	Medical Appliance Technicians	0	<10	<10	1	Insf. Data	0.0%	\$18.41	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
53-7121	Tank Car, Truck, and Ship Loaders	0	<10	<10	1	Insf. Data	0.0%	\$17.14	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
49-2011	Computer, Automated Teller, and Office Machine Repairers	0	0	0	0	0%	0.0%	\$14.23	Some college, no degree	None	None
49-2021	Radio, Cellular, and Tower Equipment Installers and Repairs	0	0	0	0	0%	0.0%	\$19.81	Associate's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	0	0	0	0	0%	0.0%	\$20.00	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training

REGION 9 PROGRAMS - # OF COMPLETERS

CIP Code	Program	Completions (2010)	Completions (2011)	Completions (2012)	Completions (2013)	Completions (2014)
48.0508	Welding Technology/Welder	195	172	97	104	37
47.0101	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	25	15	28	14	3
52.0205	Operations Management and Supervision	0	5	5	0	0
47.9999	Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians, Other	0	1	0	2	0
48.0503	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	6	8	8	14	0
47.0302	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	10	9	4	2	0
47.0105	Industrial Electronics Technology/Technician	0	0	0	0	0
15.0404	Instrumentation Technology/Technician	0	0	0	0	0
47.0303	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	13	15	18	31	0
47.0608	Aircraft Powerplant Technology/Technician	20	12	2	0	0
47.0607	Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician	1	8	10	0	0
47.0609	Avionics Maintenance Technology/Technician	6	20	25	0	0

CIP Code	Title	Institution	Award Level	Completions (2014)
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Associates degree	3
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	East Georgia State College	Associates degree	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Associates degree	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Associates degree	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Middle Georgia State University	Associates degree	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0

47.010 1	Electrical/Electronics Equipment Installation and Repair, General	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
47.010 5	Industrial Electronics Technology/Technician	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 2	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 2	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 2	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.030 2	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.030 2	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
47.030 2	Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technology/Technician	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
47.030 3	Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0

47.060 7	Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician	Middle Georgia College- Eastman	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.060 7	Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician	Middle Georgia State University	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
47.060 7	Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician	Middle Georgia College- Eastman	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
47.060 7	Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician	Middle Georgia College	Associates degree	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	East Georgia State College	Associates degree	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Associates degree	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
48.050 3	Machine Shop Technology/Assistant	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 2 but less than 4 academic years	0
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	26
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0

48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	11
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Coastal Pines Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
48.050 8	Welding Technology/Welder	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
52.020 5	Operations Management and Supervision	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
52.020 5	Operations Management and Supervision	Southeastern Technical College	Award of less than 1 academic year	0
52.020 5	Operations Management and Supervision	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
52.020 5	Operations Management and Supervision	Southeastern Technical College	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	0
52.020 5	Operations Management and Supervision	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Associates degree	0

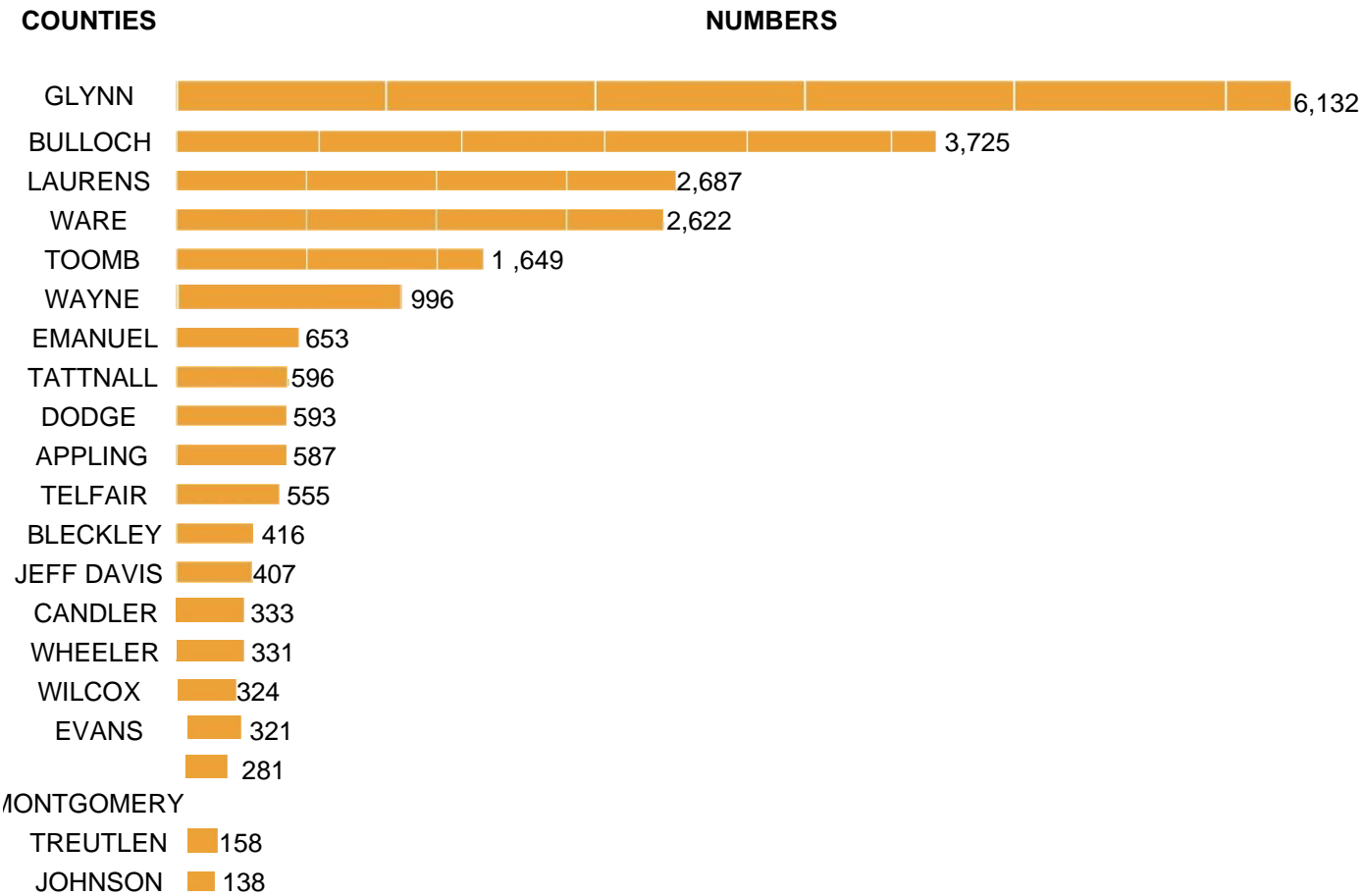
LABOR+INSIGHT/JOBS

All Aspects of the Labor Market

Top Counties

Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016

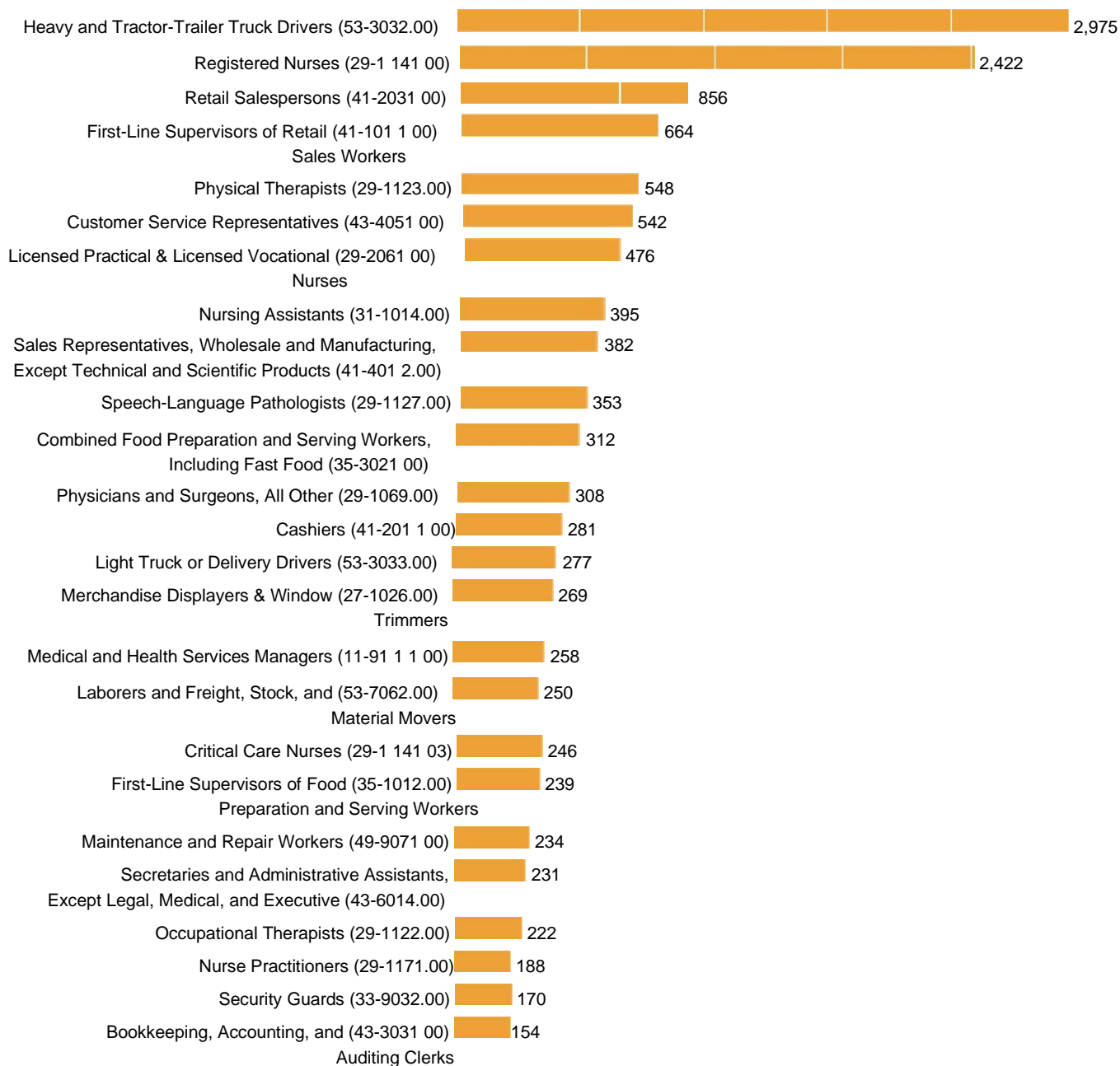
There are 23,504 postings available



Top Occupations

Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016

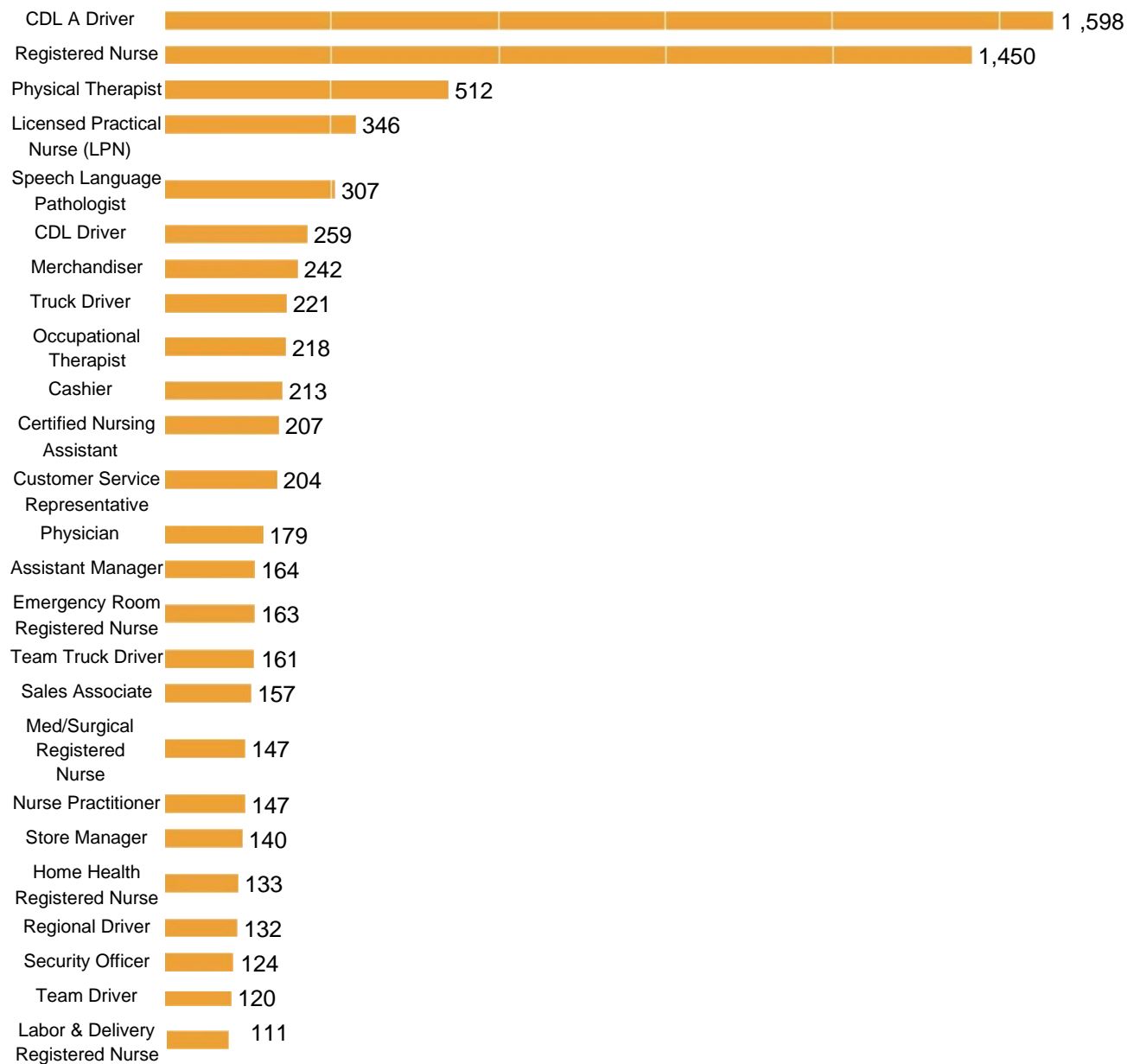
There are 23,504 postings available.



Top Titles

Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016

There are 23,504 postings available

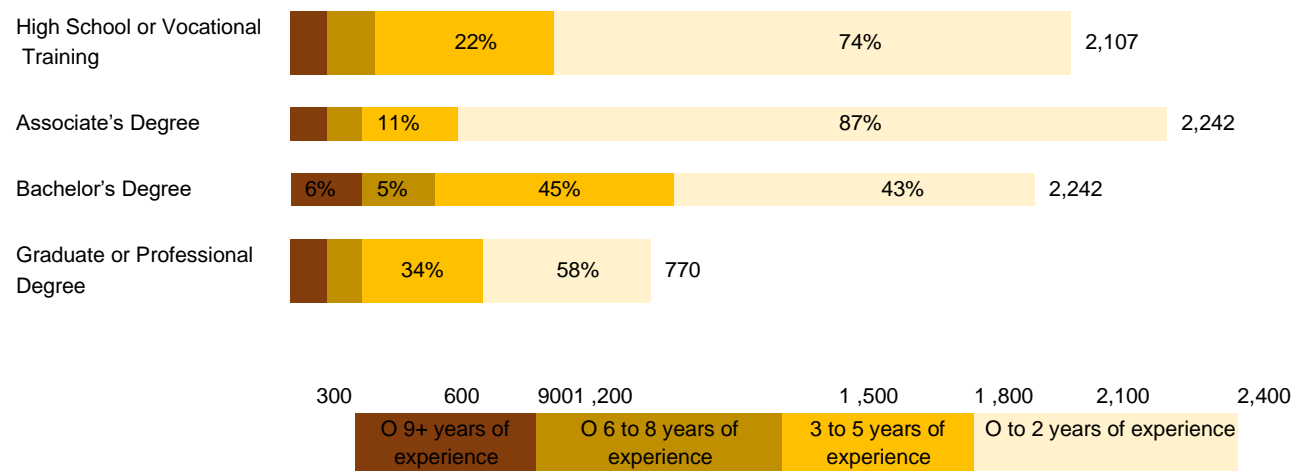


Education and Experience

Note: 76% of records have been excluded because they do not include both a degree level and experience requirements. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016

There are 23,504 postings available.

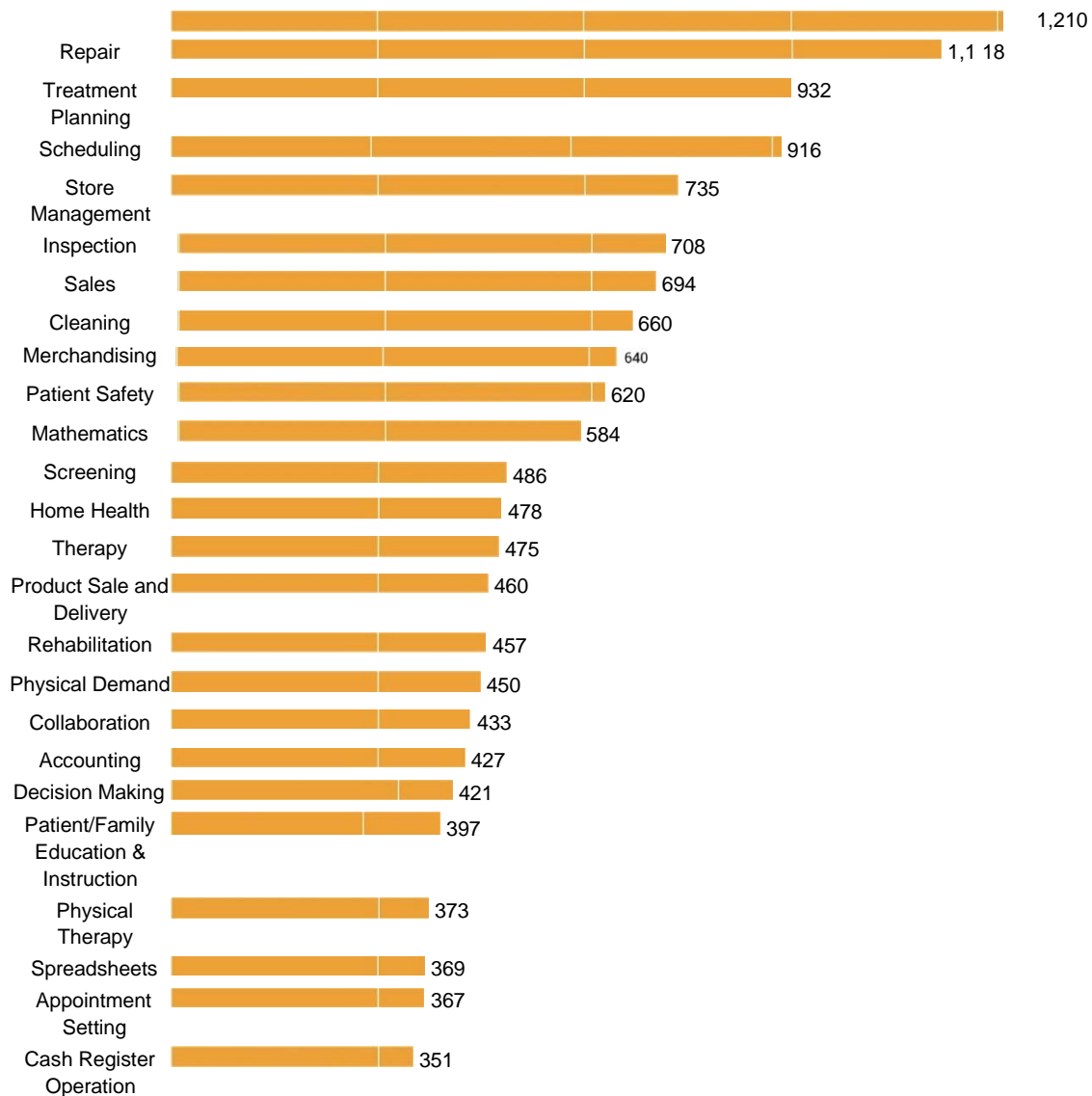


Top Skills

Note: 52% Of records have been excluded because they do not include a skill. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016

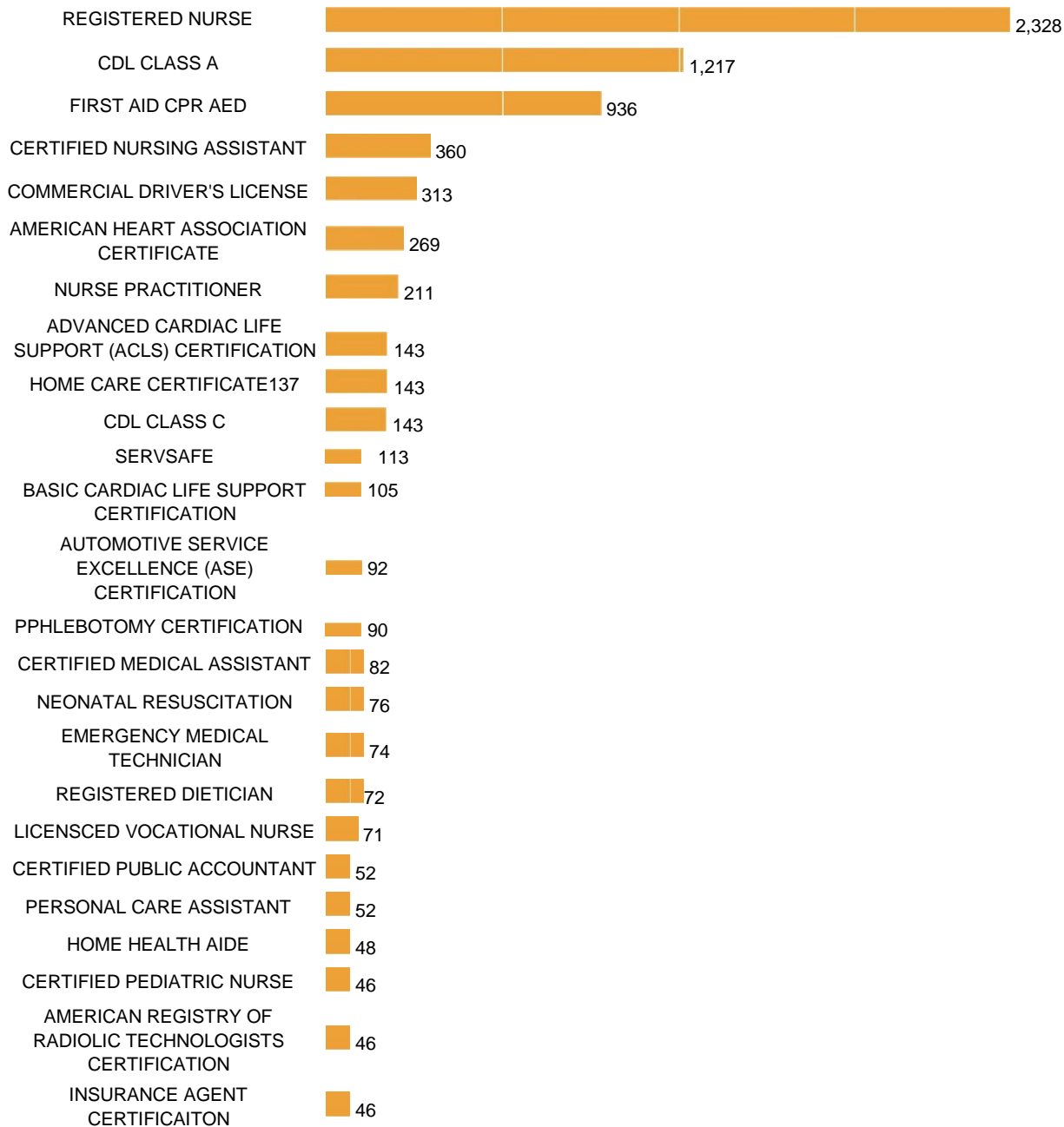
There are 23,504 postings.



Top Certifications

Note: 71 % Of records have been excluded because they do not include a certification. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample. There are 23,504 posting available.

Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016



Top Industry Sectors

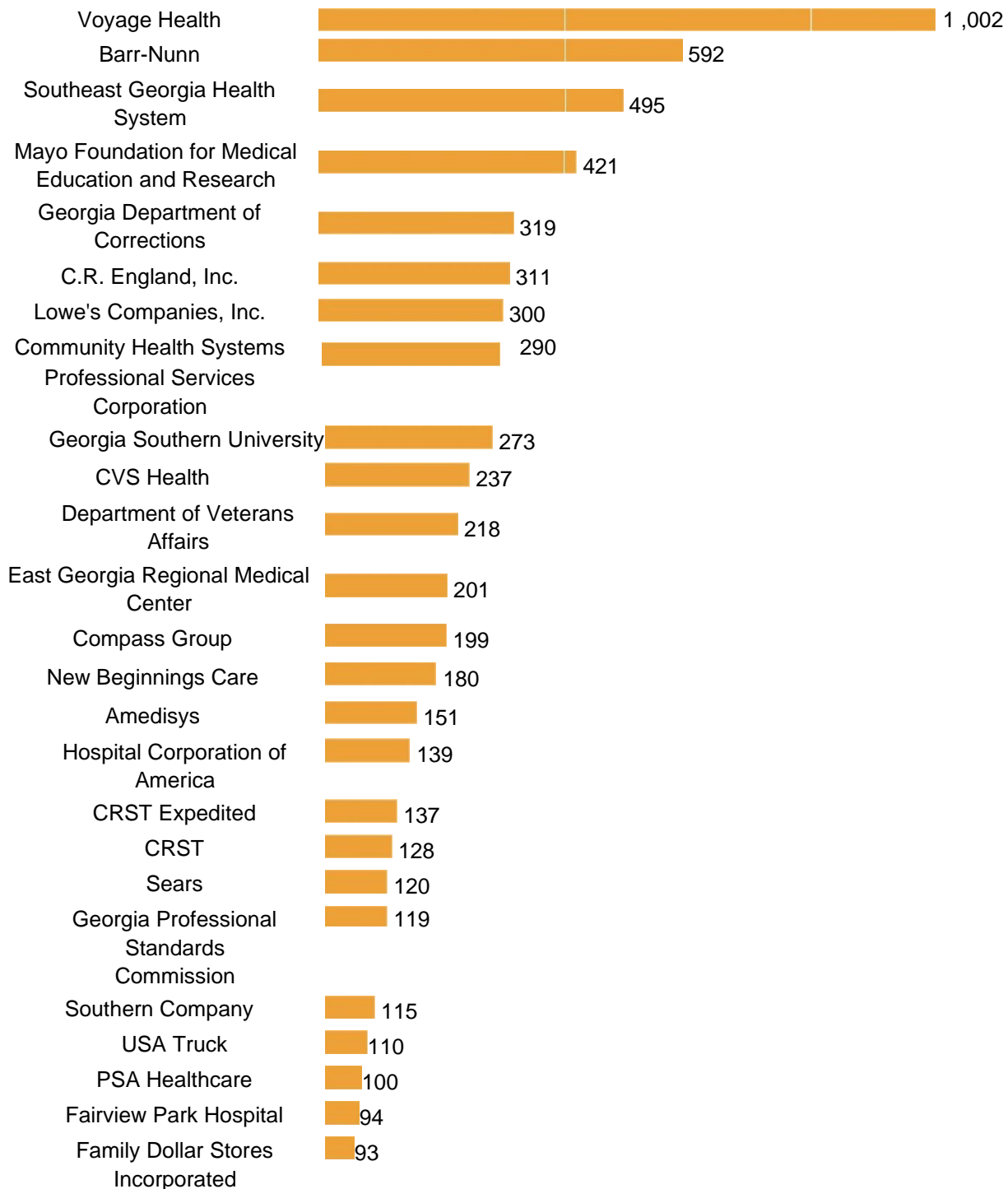
Mar. 01, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016

There are 23,504 postings.

Health Care and Social Assistance	6,173
Transportation and Warehousing	2,358
Retail Trade	2,265
Finance and Insurance	1,811
Accommodation and Food Services	1,016
Public Administration	927
Manufacturing	888
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	789
Educational Services	590
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	225
Other Services (except Public Administration)	221
Information	220
Construction	182
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	180
Wholesale Trade	143
Utilities	127
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	88
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas	79
Management of Companies & Enterprises	21
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7

TOP EMPLOYERS

There are 23,504 postings available.



800
1,200

Attachments

Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Spence Barron	Owner	Data Management & Research Services	Business
Roger Branch	Vice President	Southeastern Gin and Peanut	Business
Dan Bennett	Partner	Low Country Cremation & Burial	Business
Carolyn Blackshear	Owner	Crumco Record Company	Business
Keith Carter	Owner	K & C Rentals	Business
James Frank Cray	Owner	Cray's Trucking	Business
John Crowe	Owner	Shaved Ice Place, LLC.	Business
Rochelle Culver	Owner	Culver Rental Property	Business
Desse Davis	Owner	Davis Farms, Davis Rental Property	Business
Kimberly Edge	Owner	Edge's Aquatic Services	Business
Ashley McPherson Googe	Owner	McPherson Manufacturing Corporation	Business
Brian Hamilton	Quality Manager	Electro-Mech Scoreboard	Business
Tim Herrington	Owner	Herrington Daylily Garden	Business
Dr. Margret Hightower	Owner	The Factory	Business
Dr. Hank Hobbs	Owner	Engineered Outdoor Products	Business
Michelle Johnson	Credentialing Coordinator	Evans Memorial Hospital	Business
Mac Jordan	Representative	Ashford Advisors	Business
Martha McBride	Owner	McBride Farms	Business
Janice O'Brien	Owner	Glenwood Telephone Company	Business
Mel Powell	Owner	Powell Farms	Business
Clay Reid	Owner	Reid Construction, Owner	Business
Joe Sikes	Communication Specialist	Canoochee Electric	Business
Marshal Smith	Owner	Pride Pools	Business
Nolan Thigpen	Manufacturing Engineer	Electro-Mech Scoreboard	Business
Tamra Wells	Owner	Stitch n' Print	Business
Ted Buford	Board Chair	Wayne Co. Family Connections	Workforce
Bobby Cox, Sr.	Chair	Heart of Georgia Community Action Agency	Workforce
Lisa Livingston	Director	Area Agency on Aging	Workforce
Doug Rooks	Board Member	Progressive Resource Center	Workforce

Roy Selph	Board Member	Heart of Georgia Community Action Agency	Workforce
Meddy Settles	Organized Labor	Carpenters Local Union 256/Apprenticeship	Workforce
Ramona Thurman	Regional Manager	Telamon Corporation	Workforce
Billy Trapnell	Board Member	Family Connections	Workforce
John R. Turner	Board Member	Boys and Girls Club, Habitat for Humanity	Workforce
Jason Whitlow	Organized Labor	Local 1922	Workforce
Dr. Barry Dotson	Vice President, Student Affairs	Southeastern Technical College	Education and Training
Dr. Paul Scott	President Emeritus	Coastal Pines Technical College	Education and Training
Roy Williams	Dean T&I Transportation	Oconee Fall Line Technical College	Education and Training
Debbie Dyal	Career Center Manager	Georgia Department of Labor	Government & Economic Development
George Milligan	Executive Director	Development Authority of Johnson County	Government & Economic Development
Guy Singletary	Administrator	Emanuel County	Government & Economic Development
Ryan Waldrep	Director	Laurens County Economic Development	Government & Economic Development
Alfred Wheeler	Service Area 9 Manager	Vocational Rehabilitation	Government & Economic Development

Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance

WIOA Performance Measure	PY 18 Goal	PY 19 Goal
Adult Q2 Entered Employment	82	83
Adult Q4 Entered Employment	83	84
Adult Median Earnings	6,200	6,300
Adult Credential Rate	80	81
DW Q2 Entered Employment	89	89
DW Q4 Entered Employment	90	90
DW Median Earnings	5,750	5,850
DW Credential Rate	74	74
Youth Q2 Placement in Employment or Education	79	80
Youth Q4 Placement in Employment or Education	76	77
Youth Credential Rate	84	85

Attachment 3: Comments that Express Disagreement

Comment 1
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment 2
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment 3
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment 4
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Attachment 4: Signature Page

The undersigned hereby agree to adhere to all applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and policies in performing any duty associated with the funds made available to under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Name: Keith McNeal

Title: Chief Local Elected Official

Entity Representing: Regional Commission Board

Signature: _____

Name: Brett Manning

Title: Director

Entity Representing: Regional Commission

Signature: _____

Name: Mac Jordan

Title: Local Workforce Development Board

Entity Representing: Workforce Development Board

Signature: _____

Name: Douglas Keith Dixon

Title: Local Workforce Area Director

Entity Representing: WIOA Administrative Entity

Signature: _____