



Agenda

Workforce Innovation Board: Service Delivery Committee Meeting

Monday, September 16; 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Location: 69 W Washington St, Chicago, IL, 60602. Floor 22, Conference Room G

Quorum: 33% or 4 of 11 board members

(Must be in person/proxies allowed)

9:30 – 9:31

Welcome

Amelia Fulgham, Board Liaison

9:31 – 9:35

Attendance; Approval of June Minutes*

Greg Polman and Pam McDonough, Co-Chairs

9:35 – 10:05

Adult & Dislocated Program Updates

Claudia Cattouse, Director of Program Relationship Management

- One Stop Operator Quarterly Update (Becky Raymond, ScaleLit)
 - Includes approval of 4 Comprehensive AJC's Recertification Process: AJCs @ Pilsen, King Center, Wheeling; Prairie State*

Amy Santacaterina, Director of Program Guidelines and Budgets

- Adult & Dislocated delegate agency funding recommendations*
- Career Pathway training and bridge program funding recommendations*
- Eligible training provider list*

- WIOA PY '23 Outcomes (Adults and Dislocated)

10:05 – 10:20

Program Performance Update

Marisa Lewis, Director of Program Performance

- Approve local plan revised language*

10:20 – 10:30

Public Comments & Adjournment

*Denotes items requiring a committee vote to recommend action to the WIB



Minutes

Workforce Innovation Board: Service Delivery Committee Meeting

Monday, June 17; 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Location: 69 W Washington St, Chicago, IL, 60602. Floor 22, Conference Room C

Quorum: 4 Board Members (in person)

In Attendance: Angela Morrison, Antoinette Golden, Pam McDonough, Rahnee Patrick

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 am by Pam McDonough.

Pam McDonough called for a motion to approve the March minutes. This motion was moved by Antionette Golden and seconded by Angela Morrison. Rahnee Patrick abstained from this vote due to being absent from the March meeting. This motion is carried.

Amy Santacaterina advises that there is \$18.8M in funding for Adult programs for the 2024 program year. This is a 10% increase compared to the previous year. The Dislocated Worker programs received \$19M in funding, this is over a 14% decrease from the previous year.

As a part of the overall budget plan for the year, we are recommending to transfer \$600 K from the Dislocated Worker to Adult funds. Amy states that 10% of incoming funding is delegated to administrative expenses, however it can be used for other purposes such as program related expenses. We cannot use the remaining 90% of a grant that has been allocated for program use for administrative expenses. Amy advised that we are repurposing \$2.5M in admin funds to the Adult program. We are seeing an increase of people enrolled into Adult programs. We will have \$1.2 M of carryover on the adult side. Adult programs will have \$21M program expense funds, Dislocated Worker programs will have \$17M for program expenses.

We reserved \$17M of Adult funding for the delegate agency network and training fund. We have also reserved \$750K for incumbent worker programs. Amy states a reminder that we are reserving money for contracts related to training agencies and other smaller



delegate agencies that become due October 1st. There is also money reserved for One Stop Operator.

Amy reviewed the American Job Center (AJC) benchmarks. Included in the materials packet is a spreadsheet comparing the performance of all AJC and Chatham centers. Each center is rated and evaluated on key benchmarks, such as comparing the percent of planned to actual placements. One new benchmark is reviewing if cases have up-to-date case notes. The compliance team is also reviewing planned to actual businesses served. Amy Santacaterina states that we are recommending that this Board approves the funding.

Pam McDonough called for a motion to approve the transfer of funds from Dislocated programs to Adult programs. This motion was moved by Antionette Golden and seconded by Angela Morrison. The motion was moved.

There are two AJC's changing locations. The East Garfield AJC is moving to Malcom X College. As there will be a lower capacity to staff this location and serve customers, we are reducing their allocation. The AJC at Daley College is currently located in a mobile trailer outside of the college. In August, the AJC will be moving into one of the main Daley College buildings. We will reduce funding allocations as we had budgeted for security while this AJC was in the mobile trailer. This security expense is no longer needed as we will be inside the college building.

Angela Morrison stated that moving an AJC from East Garfield to Malcom X College is a large geographical change.

Amy Santa Caterina stated that the AJC location in Austin will still serve the Westside.

Angela Morrison asked if there will there be a facility serving the community in East Garfield Park?

Amy Santacaterina stated that the Pilsen AJC is relatively close and would serve the community in East Garfield Park.

George Wright advised that the AJC locations in the Westside are about 3 miles apart. The stand-alone AJC and the AJC location inside the college learning center are close



to each other. The closest full AJC in the Westside is in Austin and is not close to Pilsen.

Rahnee Patrick asked if we anticipate a service gap in East Garfield Park by moving the AJC?

Amy Santacaterina advised there are about 3 miles between East Garfield Park and Austin. We will look at delegate agencies in the Westside. Amy said there is a community development center, a Food Hero site, and other programs for dislocated workers on the Westside.

Anegla Morrison stated on line 4 column P, that agency failed in the 3rd quarter if I am looking at this right?

Amy Santacaterina stated that some agencies may have failed benchmarks. Overall, their score is over 70%. On the WIOA performance benchmarks, the year does not end until we have all program data through the end of July. We may still see some upticks in performance.

Pam McDonough called for a motion to approve the funding allocations to the AJC's. Rahnee Patrick moved this motion, and it was seconded by Angela Morrison. The motion is carried.

Amy Santacaterina reviewed the sector center funding recommendations. This is focused on businesses. Amy stated that we looked at planned placements to the percentage of actual job orders placed. She advises that the sector centers scored well, and we are recommending approving funding.

Pam McDonough asked about sector center number 4?

Amy Santacaterina advised that we will monitor the score for individual categories is low, however we will pass agencies based on an overall score of 70%. This is the 4th quarter of employment for that agency. There may be more data coming in. When there is a small denominator, one or two people can make a difference in percentage.



Pam McDonough called for a motion to approve the sector center funding recommendations. This motion was moved by Angela Morrison and seconded by Rahnee Patrick. The motion was moved.

Amy Santacaterina stated that all the new providers for the training provider recommendations list meet the qualifications. Entries in bold are new trainers. In the previous board meeting held in March, we approved adding cosmetology and barbering as training program options.

Amy stated there are several programs up for recertification and have submitted paperwork. Currently there are 57 training programs remaining on our provider list. There are 5 programs that have removed themselves from the list as they are no longer offering programs.

One program applied to be on our training provider list and was denied. This program was for licensing to become a real estate instructor, this industry is not a part of the list of 40 approved occupations.

Pam called a motion to approve the training provider recommendations. The motion was moved by Rahnee Patrick, and seconded by Angela Morrison. The motion is moved.

Marisa Lewis advised that 4 years ago One Stop Operator was awarded to ScaleLit. We are required to hold a new RFP every 4 years for One Stop Operator. We used both an internal team and external team to evaluate the two proposals received for One Stop Operator. These teams evaluated the proposed program design, staffing design, and conducted a fiscal review. Further details are included in the spreadsheet.

Amy advised that there are two proposals, we chose ScaleLit as they were the provider with the higher score. This provider also came in with a budget of \$450K. We allotted \$500K in the budget plan for One Stop Operator, the extra \$50K will go to the ITA budget.



Pam McDonough called for a motion to approve the One Stop Operator procurement update and funding recommendation. The motion was moved by Angela Morrison and seconded by Antionette Golden.

George Wright said the communications department will send out a document outlining The Partnerships' accomplishments from this FY. George advised that The Partnership staff have achieved 57 new accomplishments within this year, averaging 1.5 per month per department. The Partnership has saved 800K this FY, with another 900K in savings by the end of this calendar year.

There were no public comments.

At 10:12 Pam McDonough called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rahnee Patrick moved the motion, the motion was seconded by Antionette Golden.



scaleLIT's mission is to help adult education organizations secure resources and training so that under-resourced adult learners can become economically successful, and reframe adult basic education as a critical public policy issue.

Closing the Literacy Gap

scaleLIT leverages literacy to power organization

American Job Center at the King Center **One-Stop Certification Memo**

To: LWIA 7 Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)

From: One-Stop Certification Team; Mark Sanders II, Department of Family Support Services (DFSS), Pamela Thomas, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP), Haven Allen, MHUB.

Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2024

CC: One-Stop Operator, scaleLIT; Larry Fitzpatrick, E&ES.

Re: Summary of WIOA One-Stop Certification Process and Certification Recommendation for American Job Center at the King Center

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates establishing and certifying One-Stop Centers to ensure comprehensive and integrated service delivery. The certification process is critical in setting the standard level of quality and consistency of services in AJCs across the state, including compliance with ADA Accessibility Standards. Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) are responsible for assessing the AJCs within their region to ensure that they meet the state's WIOA criteria at least once every three years.

The certification process involves several key steps to evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement of American Job Centers (AJC). This memo outlines the One-Stop Certification process and outcomes for the AJC located at 4314 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60653.

Application Review and On-site Evaluation Process:

In collaboration with the center's partners, the One-Stop Operator (OSO) compiled the documents supporting each of the certification criteria and organized them and the comments using the Disco platform.

The Certification Team, appointed by the LWIB, reviewed the basis for the determination and supporting documentation for each criterion. On June 18, 2024, the Certification Team conducted an on-site Evaluation of the Center, located at 4314 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60653. The on-site Evaluation included a tour of the facility and access to interview partner staff, job seekers, or employers directly.

Certification Recommendation and Outcomes:

After conducting a thorough review of the American Job Center located at 4314 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60653, the Certification Team has determined that the center meets the standards set forth by WIOA and recommends certification. The evaluation team recommends the American Job Center's certification at 4314 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60653. This certification will be valid for three years and subject to ongoing monitoring and annual reviews to ensure continued compliance and performance.

The full certification application is included as an attachment to this memo. The basis for determining each criterion is stored in the document collection platform (Disco) and can be provided upon request. Please contact Becky Raymond, scaleLIT Executive Director, at becky@scalelit.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Attached

- Application for Certification of One-Stop Centers

Certification Application - LWIA 7 AJC at the King Center

A. EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA	
1. GOVERNANCE: All required governing documents are in place prior to the center's certification	
<p>CRITERION 1: the current local MOU and, if applicable, an agreement between the chief elected officials (CEOs) are in place (or pending).</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p> <p>An executed MOU is required before the final certification of the comprehensive one-stop center can occur. Please provide the status and anticipated date of MOU execution: June 2024</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The MOU accurately reflects the name and location of the center and the way in which required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines. <input type="checkbox"/> A CEO agreement, if applicable, accurately reflects the roles and processes for appointing board members, designating a grant recipient and/or fiscal agent, collaborating on planning activities, and other governance functions. <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The LWIA 7 MOU (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026) reflects the name and location of the center and how required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: Implementation of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity (EO) provisions of WIOA has occurred.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist has been completed annually over the past three years with deficiencies corrected or a plan for correction identified <input type="checkbox"/> Methods of Administration / Nondiscrimination Plan has been developed and implemented <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist (completed by One-Stop Operator May 16, 2024) and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: A functional organizational chart has been developed.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The functional chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service integration relationships. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>LWIA 7 Org. Chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service.</p>
<p>CRITERION 4: A one-stop center operator is competitively selected at least once every four years.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A one-stop operator has been competitively selected and is in place. <input type="checkbox"/> Procurement documents contain clear conflict of interest policies, procedures demonstrating internal controls, and roles and responsibilities of the daily operation of the center and its staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership released a Request for Proposal for One-Stop Operator in 2020 and 2024.</p>

<p>CRITERION 5: The LWIB is certified and all board members are current.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documents attesting to the LWIB certification and currency of board members are available. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The current board member list, board materials and meeting dates are available at here. Documentation from Michael Baker in March 2024 stating LWIB Recertification information is currently under review by DCEO.</p>
<p>2. PROFESSIONAL STAFFING: Center staff have clear job descriptions, receive regular performance reviews, and are provided basic information about one-stop center programs, services, and eligibility requirements.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: Center staff roles and responsibilities are clear at all stages of service delivery.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence is provided that center staff understand their roles and responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop staff are familiar with service integration provisions in the MOU. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timely cross-training and program information resources addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs are provided to all one-stop staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The One-Stop Operator facilitates timely cross-training and program information resources regularly addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DISCO.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center has a system and procedures in place to assess staff members' skills and core competencies.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A culture of accountability is created in which every partner agency's representative has ownership in achieving desired results. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies are encouraging a culture of accountability related to service integration. <input type="checkbox"/> Core job competencies, organizational values, and performance expectations related to service integration are established and communicated to all center staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: Each partner and organization is responsible for the onboarding, on going staff development and performance evaluations of their staff. The one-stop operator encourages organizations to have all staff regularly reference WIOA AJC Manual and complete Systemwide Cross-Training Disco Modules in DISCO. The DISCO platform allows to track user activity and report back to partners on training module completed by staff.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides staff development that is appropriate for each individual's specialty as well as more general staff development needs.</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A staff training plan has been developed to address topics identified by staff and the one-stop operator including, but not limited to:

<p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Customer service (in-person and phone) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center partners' programs, services, and resources <input type="checkbox"/> Other IL workNet resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using center technology and other online resources (e.g. email) <input type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators, their importances, and how staff contribute to them <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and understanding the basics of assistive technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <p><input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop partners are regularly asked to identify their training, information, and/or resource needs as part of a training assessment that leads to employee development. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies provide appropriate employee development options in relation to service integration. Narrative should address staff training such as citing training schedules/logs, etc.</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator facilitates regular cross-training sessions addressing topics identified as a need or requested by staff. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DISCO.</p>
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3. Responsiveness to the needs of job seekers and workers: the center meets the career pathway and support needs of participants as established in local and regional plans.

<p>CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the one-stop center will integrate services and referrals among program partners as specified in the local and regional plans.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation exists that all job seeker and worker services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center as well as how they are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> The MOU identifies practices for integration through referrals, co-enrollment, and follow-up. <input type="checkbox"/> Methods or systems for sharing client information across programs as appropriate and feasible subject to confidentiality are used. <input type="checkbox"/> Informational materials and customer service plans reflect the most current available labor market information. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.</p>
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<p>CRITERION 2: Career pathway strategies drive service delivery and collaboration among partners.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been implemented. <input type="checkbox"/> Career planners coordinate career pathways goals with
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	<p>partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Career pathways opportunities align with the skill needs of employers. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been documented in the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7.</p>
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4. Responsiveness to the needs of businesses: the center meets the needs of local businesses as established in local and regional plans

<p>CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the center identifies and responds to local and regional economic and workforce needs.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation exists that all business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses are offered timely and coordinated access to all WIOA employer services whether on-site, through technology, at a partner site, or other appropriate and accessible community sites. Describe in comments below how this is occurring using business survey/evaluation results and anecdotal information. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The 2024 – 2027 WIOA Local Plan for LWIA 7 documents that business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided.</p>
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<p>CRITERION 2: The center has a local Business Services Team (BST) comprised of knowledgeable business services partners with the ability to connect employers to a full range of partner services.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A list of BST members by title and agency is available. <input type="checkbox"/> Updates and information from the BST are regularly provided to the LWIB. Describe in the comments below how updates are provided, e.g., content, frequency, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory list members by title and agency.</p>
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CRITERION 3: Each BST has a standardized process for contacting employers in each targeted industry sector and the capability of providing direct access to appropriate services or referral to others who can provide those services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- BST members are knowledgeable about all available services.
- ~~Appropriate team members are identified to serve as resources for employer service delivery.~~
- ~~The BST participates in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Provide in the comments below examples of how this is occurring.~~
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory identifies appropriate team members to serve business customers. Business Service Teams collaborate across partners to participate in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Business Services Website: <https://chicookworks.org/services/employers/>

CRITERION 4: The BST partners with employers to identify their needs and provide timely solutions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The BST uses current and timely labor market information to develop customized business services proposals for employer customers that describe solutions to address employers' needs and challenges.
- BST develops and communicates coordinated service plans with businesses based on needs assessments (e.g., Regional Economic Development team, Rapid Response, Incumbent Worker, etc.) and business profiles. Describe in the comments below how employer needs are identified and show the onestop center is responding.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The Business Relations and Economic Development at Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership provides training on [WIOA workbased learning](#) and timely labor market information in the WHERE ARE THE JOBS? on a quarterly basis.

5. Performance: the center supports the achievement of negotiated local levels of performance

CRITERION 1: Core partners, with assistance from the one-stop operator and their respective state agencies, regularly share performance information with the LWIB.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Core agency partners commit in the service matrix to sharing performance information. Describe in the comments below what and how specific performance information is shared.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available [here](#).

6. Program coordination: The center prioritizes program coordination, including collaborative efforts among required program partners to provide access to integrated programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: Partner programs coordinate programs, service delivery and referrals in accordance with the MOU.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff work collaboratively across programs to meet participants' service needs, including referrals and referral tracking, as defined in Section 8 of the MOU.
- Staff are trained to complete an initial assessment of participants' needs and inform them of the range of available services.
- The customer's service plan identifies which partners or other agencies are to provide the necessary programs, services and activities.
- Customers are co-enrolled in all appropriate one-stop programs in accordance with their service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The partner staff work collaboratively across programs to coordinate service delivery and referrals per the MOU. These discussions occur regularly at the centers and at monthly partner meetings. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.

7. Operational coordination: The center prioritizes operational coordination, ensuring streamlined and efficient intake and assessment, service delivery, and administration and expedited customer flow.

CRITERION 1: Customers are provided information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- All customers, as appropriate, are offered an orientation of the services available in various modes (e.g., in-person with staff, videos, written materials, or direct linkage) and in various formats (e.g., for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy).
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner. Upon request, accommodations are made for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy.

CRITERION 2: One stop partners offer customers appropriate assessments.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- As appropriate, partner agencies participate in assessment strategies, tools, and processes with co-enrolled consumers as a cross-agency assessment team for that customer.
- As appropriate, staff coordinate and share comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of customers.
- Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

LWIA 7 Airtable referral system has a universal initial referral form allowing to share basic customer needs and interests between partners.

Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan. Review the WIOA Program Objective Assessment (OAS) procedure to support customers in goal setting here.

The Center offers Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems(CASAS) testing to determine math and literacy levels The test is able to be proctored electronically or in person via a paper assessment.

CRITERION 3: Staff identify and implement best practices in internal communication.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Regular meetings are held with all WIOA one-stop partner staff identified by the one-stop operator.
- Staff are able to communicate suggestions and concerns to management on such issues as customer service, organizational climate, and other issues for continuous improvement purposes.
- Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, are used to provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings
- State interagency team representatives visit each center annually to discuss service integration processes, opportunities, and resource needs.
- Using the MOU as guidance, the one-stop operator collaborates with the partners to establish on-site expectations.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The one-stop operator hosts monthly hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings with WIOA partners. Standing agenda items include discussing outstanding center items, where staff can communicate suggestions and for ongoing continuous improvement. Post-meeting survey links are also distributed to gather partner satisfaction and input. Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings.

CRITERION 4: High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Websites, resource rooms and collateral material provide information about all programs and services available in the center.
- Resource room material describes all available services and includes a date or other method of indicating it is current.
- All services described on the center's website and resource materials align with the local service matrix.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers in person and online. The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center.

8. Service Hours: The one-stop center provides maximum access to partner program services during regular business hours and any timeframes determined by the local board to be feasible and effective.

CRITERION 1: The local board considers optimum business hours and any timeframes outside of regular business hours to accommodate customers' work, childcare, or transportation needs.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- LWIB meeting minutes reflect discussion regarding how regular business hours were established.
- Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center.
- Directions for arranging services outside of regular business hours are clearly stated and available.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center and LWIB meeting materials include MOU explaining regular business hours are established by the WIOA partners.

9. Equal Opportunity Awareness: center staff and program partners are familiar with and apply laws, regulations and policies regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all customers.

CRITERION 1: Staff and program partner trainings cover key topics in providing services in a universal and nondiscriminatory manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff and program partners demonstrate they are knowledgeable about using and accessing assistive resources to meet the needs of all customers and comply with federal requirements.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DCEO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.

CRITERION 2: Required partners ensure all customers have access to all services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Assistive technology is provided to customers with disabilities (e.g., visual, hearing, physical, mental, and intellectual) to access computers and other center resources/services.
- Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers.
- Corrective action plans are developed and implemented if any required partners or customers identify barriers to accessing services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DCEO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center. Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers

B. Accessibility and Infrastructure Criteria

1. Physical Layout: The location and physical layout of the center is accessible to all customers and provides suitable space for service delivery.

CRITERION 1: The center's layout supports access and inclusiveness, guided by federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Monitoring documents attest to the center's compliance with ADA standards.
- If deficiencies are identified, a corrective action plan has been developed with a timeline for remediation.
- Computers (hardware/software) and equipment that support direct linkage to center functions is up-to-date and operational.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DCEO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.

CRITERION 2: The center has space and capacity appropriate for customer needs, customer traffic, and key center functions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center layout is clear and logical in terms of customer navigation and flow.
- The resource room area provides customers with privacy and access to the internet, printers, copiers, and fax machines.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

CRITERION 3: Technology to support center functions is up-to-date and operational.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center has current and adequate technology, e.g., projectors, videoconferencing, hardware and software, and technology-related infrastructure.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. The Monitoring tool includes an inventory checklist for recommended resource room equipment. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

2. Center Location: The center is accessible by public transportation, driving, or walking.

<p>CRITERION 1: The center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public access road.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The center sign is visible from the public access road. <input type="checkbox"/> The LWIB has determined what a "reasonable distance" is from public transportation stops. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The Center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public road.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: Adequate parking is available and accessible for customers who drive to the facility.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center has suitable parking for the anticipated number of customers. <input type="checkbox"/> The parking lot has spaces closest to the door dedicated and marked for individuals with disabilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist addresses suitable parking and dedicated spaces for individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p>3. Center Appearance and Safety: the center is well maintained and provides a safe space for customers and staff.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center and center staff maintain a professional and welcoming appearance.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center and its furnishings are clean and in working order. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's exterior is clean and well maintained (building, landscaping, driveway, sidewalks, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Name badges identify the wearer as staff of the center (rather than staff of their respective agencies/programs). <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center provides a safe and secure environment for its employees and customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A written emergency response plan exists that addresses the full range of potential emergency situations and evacuation procedures and is shared with all center partners and their staff. <input type="checkbox"/> The center has security in place that is appropriate to the center and the local area (e.g., security personnel, locks/ security keypads, security cameras, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential information (paper and electronic) is handled sensitively and appropriately and is secured in a locked location when not attended by staff. <input type="checkbox"/> All new staff and partners receive an orientation in center safety and security. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p>

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. The center has security in place and Emergency Evacuation Plans posted in common areas.

4. Common Identifier: the center displays the one-stop delivery system common identifier as the location for required programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: One-stop center signage, logos and marketing material reflect the state identifier, "Illinois workNet", and "American Job Center Network".

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The common identifier is highly visible inside and outside of the facility.
- The common identifier appears on products and materials.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in terms of AJC Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. Materials reflect IL workNet and AJC Network.

5. Program Services: All customers have equal opportunity to access at or through the center all training, education, employment, support, and business services in accordance with the application sections of WIOA.

CRITERION 1: Access to all available services is provided at or through the center.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The local service matrix accurately reflects all services provided by all partners that are available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.
- The coordinated service delivery method and approach is accurately described in the local MOU.
- Services are delivered across programs in a consistent and quality manner.
- Job seeker/worker, employer customers and one-stop staff describe the customer experience with services as streamlined and aligned.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.

6. Direct Linkage: customers have access to a program staff member who can provide program information or services, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time internet communication.

CRITERION 1: All services are available on demand through a direct connection with the center either through on-site staff or through technology consistent with the "direct linkage" requirement.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff understand "direct linkage" protocols and relationships.
- Basic technology is physically present and enables real-time interaction (e.g., through Skype).
- The local service matrix indicates which program staff are stationed at the center.
- Career planners work with customers to develop individual employment plans encompassing all program

	<p>services, including those provided via direct linkage, appropriate to customers' needs and goals.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.</p>
<p>7. Accommodations: the center provides reasonable accommodations for customers with disabilities, language, or literacy barriers to fully access all services</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center has the capacity to accommodate customers with disabilities through available equipment, policies, staff training, and other resources.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology devices or other auxiliary aids are readily available.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Center staff can explain how the center handles the range of requests for accommodations.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate accommodations are made for people with disabilities consistent with ADA regulations.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center can connect non-English speaking customers to appropriate on-site staff, materials, or translation services.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's resources include materials or on-demand translation for limited English proficiency (LEP) persons in languages spoken by a significant number or proportion of the LEP persons in the eligible service population*. Describe in the comments below what is being done to accommodate LEP customers.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>*Access for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals is outlined in Subsection 38.9 of the Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 CRF 38).</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and improvement plans are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides information about available resources and services to customers of varying literacy levels, including nonEnglish speaking customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Written materials are developed for a minimum literacy level determined jointly by center staff and partners in consultation with the local board. Describe in the comments below how minimum literacy level was determined.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and</p>

improvement plans are developed with partners.

C. Continuous Improvement Criteria

1. Customer-centered design: The center has a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and using feedback from job seeker and business customers.

CRITERION 1: The center tracks job seeker and business customer experience and satisfaction.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Multiple approaches are used to solicit one-stop job seeker and business customer feedback.
- The center has a process for tracking and responding to job seeker and business customer comments/suggestions.
- Documentation exists that functional managers and staff use job seeker and business customer feedback to design, refine, and deliver integrated services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

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Certification Team Comments:

The center tracks job seeker and business customer feedback in multiple ways. Customer satisfaction survey data is collected via a QR Code posted on-site and Resource Room computer web links. Survey responses are reviewed monthly by the OSO at Center-Level Meetings. A survey dashboard with high-level metrics around customer experience, reason for visit, and likelihood to recommend the Center is available to partners via the DISCO platform. Post event surveys are requested from business customers to collect feedback/suggestions.

2. Evaluation of Internal Operations: Internal procedures and systems are monitored and assessed vis-a-vis operational effectiveness and opportunities for improvement by the LWIB and/or one-stop operator.

CRITERION 1: Internal systems are in place to identify and track operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- An LWIB-approved evaluation plan is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

An LWIB-approved evaluation plan within the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7 is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness. The one-stop operator will use this plan to implement internal systems.

CRITERION 2: Provisions of the MOU are periodically reviewed to ensure partner responsibilities and commitments are being met.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Board meeting minutes reflect that the MOU was reviewed.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The March 19, 2024 WIB agenda and materials reflect the MOU was reviewed.

3. Improving Performance: Core partners engage local boards in using customer feedback and operational data to continuously improve service delivery, operations and performance.

CRITERION 1:

Customer feedback is used to improve quality and use resources most effectively.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Local board meeting minutes reflect that customer feedback and performance data helped inform decision-making about strategic improvements to strengthen customer-center design goals.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available at <https://chicookworks.org/about-us/our-board/>
The one-stop operator shares customer satisfaction survey data collected Survey responses are reviewed monthly and discussed at Center-Level Meetings.



scaleLIT's mission is to help adult education organizations secure resources and training so that under-resourced adult learners can become economically successful, and reframe adult basic education as a critical public policy issue.

Closing the Literacy Gap

scaleLIT leverages literacy to power organization

American Job Center in Pilsen

One-Stop Certification Memo

To: LWIA 7 Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)

From: One-Stop Certification Team; Mark Sanders II, Department of Family Support Services (DFSS), Pamela Thomas, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP), Haven Allen, MHUB

Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2024

CC: One-Stop Operator, scaleLIT; Daniella Cueva, National Able Network (NAN), Jeffrey Routier, Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES).

Re: Summary of WIOA One-Stop Certification Process and Certification Recommendation for American Job Center in Pilsen

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates establishing and certifying One-Stop Centers to ensure comprehensive and integrated service delivery. The certification process is critical in setting the standard level of quality and consistency of services in AJCs across the state, including compliance with ADA Accessibility Standards. Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) are responsible for assessing the AJCs within their region to ensure that they meet the state's WIOA criteria at least once every three years.

The certification process involves several key steps to evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement of American Job Centers (AJC). This memo outlines the One-Stop Certification process and outcomes for the AJC located at 1700 W 18th St, Chicago, IL 60608.

Application Review and On-site Evaluation Process:

In collaboration with the center's partners, the One-Stop Operator (OSO) compiled the documents supporting each of the certification criteria and organized them and the comments using the Disco platform.

The Certification Team, appointed by the LWIB, reviewed the basis for the determination and supporting documentation for each criterion. On May 30, 2024, the Certification Team conducted an on-site Evaluation of the Center, located at 1700 W 18th St, Chicago, IL 60608. The on-site Evaluation included a tour of the facility and access to interview partner staff, job seekers, or employers directly.

Certification Recommendation and Outcomes:

After conducting a thorough review of the American Job Center located at 1700 W 18th St, Chicago, IL 60608, the Certification Team has determined that the center meets the standards set forth by WIOA and recommends certification. Key findings include:

Notable Practices: The Certification Team noted that security at this center is a noteworthy practice including; Security cameras at the front door and armed shooter door stops in each conference center. IDES' physical location at the center is a best practice. Serving new arrivals with the quest team is also a nice offering. An open floor plan is a great strength that seems to welcome collaboration. Bilingual staff or staff who are comfortable using translation devices is important.

Areas for Improvement: The Certification Team identified that the OSO and Center should consider working with the City and CTA to get a handicapped parking spot in front of the Center.

Given these findings, the evaluation team recommends the American Job Center's certification at 1700 W 18th St, Chicago, IL 60608. This certification will be valid for three years and subject to ongoing monitoring and annual reviews to ensure continued compliance and performance.

The full certification application is included as an attachment to this memo. The basis for determining each criterion is stored in the document collection platform (Disco) and can be provided upon request. Please contact Becky Raymond, scaleLIT Executive Director, at becky@scalelit.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Attached

- Application for Certification of One-Stop Centers

Certification Application - LWIA 7 AJC in Pilsen

A. EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA	
1. GOVERNANCE: All required governing documents are in place prior to the center's certification	
<p>CRITERION 1: the current local MOU and, if applicable, an agreement between the chief elected officials (CEOs) are in place (or pending).</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p> <p>An executed MOU is required before the final certification of the comprehensive one-stop center can occur. Please provide the status and anticipated date of MOU execution: June 2024</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The MOU accurately reflects the name and location of the center and the way in which required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines. <input type="checkbox"/> A CEO agreement, if applicable, accurately reflects the roles and processes for appointing board members, designating a grant recipient and/or fiscal agent, collaborating on planning activities, and other governance functions. <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The LWIA 7 MOU (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026) reflects the name and location of the center and how required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: Implementation of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity (EO) provisions of WIOA has occurred.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist has been completed annually over the past three years with deficiencies corrected or a plan for correction identified <input type="checkbox"/> Methods of Administration / Nondiscrimination Plan has been developed and implemented <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist (completed by One-Stop Operator May 16, 2024) and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: A functional organizational chart has been developed.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The functional chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service integration relationships. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>LWIA 7 Org. Chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service.</p>
<p>CRITERION 4: A one-stop center operator is competitively selected at least once every four years.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A one-stop operator has been competitively selected and is in place. <input type="checkbox"/> Procurement documents contain clear conflict of interest policies, procedures demonstrating internal controls, and roles and responsibilities of the daily operation of the center and its staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership released a Request for Proposal for One-Stop Operator in 2020 and 2024.</p>

<p>CRITERION 5: The LWIB is certified and all board members are current.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documents attesting to the LWIB certification and currency of board members are available. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The current board member list, board materials and meeting dates are available at here. Documentation from Michael Baker in March 2024 stating LWIB Recertification information is currently under review by DCEO.</p>
<p>2. PROFESSIONAL STAFFING: Center staff have clear job descriptions, receive regular performance reviews, and are provided basic information about one-stop center programs, services, and eligibility requirements.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: Center staff roles and responsibilities are clear at all stages of service delivery.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence is provided that center staff understand their roles and responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop staff are familiar with service integration provisions in the MOU. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timely cross-training and program information resources addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs are provided to all one-stop staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The One-Stop Operator facilitates timely cross-training and program information resources regularly addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DICSO.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center has a system and procedures in place to assess staff members' skills and core competencies.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A culture of accountability is created in which every partner agency's representative has ownership in achieving desired results. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies are encouraging a culture of accountability related to service integration. <input type="checkbox"/> Core job competencies, organizational values, and performance expectations related to service integration are established and communicated to all center staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: Each partner and organization is responsible for the onboarding, on going staff development and performance evaluations of their staff. The one-stop operator encourages organizations to have all staff regularly reference WIOA AJC Manual and complete Systemwide Cross-Training Disco Modules in DISCO. The DISCO platform allows to track user activity and report back to partners on training module completed by staff.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides staff development that is appropriate for each individual's specialty as well as more general staff development needs.</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A staff training plan has been developed to address topics identified by staff and the one-stop operator including, but not limited to:

<p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Customer service (in-person and phone) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center partners' programs, services, and resources <input type="checkbox"/> Other IL workNet resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using center technology and other online resources (e.g. email) <input type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators, their importances, and how staff contribute to them <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and understanding the basics of assistive technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <p><input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop partners are regularly asked to identify their training, information, and/or resource needs as part of a training assessment that leads to employee development. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies provide appropriate employee development options in relation to service integration. Narrative should address staff training such as citing training schedules/logs, etc.</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator facilitates regular cross-training sessions addressing topics identified as a need or requested by staff. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DICSO.</p>
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3. Responsiveness to the needs of job seekers and workers: the center meets the career pathway and support needs of participants as established in local and regional plans.

<p>CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the one-stop center will integrate services and referrals among program partners as specified in the local and regional plans.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation exists that all job seeker and worker services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center as well as how they are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> The MOU identifies practices for integration through referrals, co-enrollment, and follow-up. <input type="checkbox"/> Methods or systems for sharing client information across programs as appropriate and feasible subject to confidentiality are used. <input type="checkbox"/> Informational materials and customer service plans reflect the most current available labor market information. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.</p>
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<p>CRITERION 2: Career pathway strategies drive service delivery and collaboration among partners.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been implemented. <input type="checkbox"/> Career planners coordinate career pathways goals with
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	<p>partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Career pathways opportunities align with the skill needs of employers. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been documented in the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7.</p>
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4. Responsiveness to the needs of businesses: the center meets the needs of local businesses as established in local and regional plans

<p>CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the center identifies and responds to local and regional economic and workforce needs.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation exists that all business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses are offered timely and coordinated access to all WIOA employer services whether on-site, through technology, at a partner site, or other appropriate and accessible community sites. Describe in comments below how this is occurring using business survey/evaluation results and anecdotal information. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The 2024 – 2027 WIOA Local Plan for LWIA 7 documents that business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided.</p>
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<p>CRITERION 2: The center has a local Business Services Team (BST) comprised of knowledgeable business services partners with the ability to connect employers to a full range of partner services.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A list of BST members by title and agency is available. <input type="checkbox"/> Updates and information from the BST are regularly provided to the LWIB. Describe in the comments below how updates are provided, e.g., content, frequency, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory list members by title and agency.</p>
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CRITERION 3: Each BST has a standardized process for contacting employers in each targeted industry sector and the capability of providing direct access to appropriate services or referral to others who can provide those services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- BST members are knowledgeable about all available services.
- Appropriate team members are identified to serve as resources for employer service delivery.
- The BST participates in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Provide in the comments below examples of how this is occurring.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory identifies appropriate team members to serve business customers. Business Service Teams collaborate across partners to participate in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Business Services Website:
<https://chicookworks.org/services/employers/>

CRITERION 4: The BST partners with employers to identify their needs and provide timely solutions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The BST uses current and timely labor market information to develop customized business services proposals for employer customers that describe solutions to address employers' needs and challenges.
- BST develops and communicates coordinated service plans with businesses based on needs assessments (e.g., Regional Economic Development team, Rapid Response, Incumbent Worker, etc.) and business profiles. Describe in the comments below how employer needs are identified and show the onestop center is responding.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The Business Relations and Economic Development at Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership provides training on [WIOA workbased learning](#) and timely labor market information in the WHERE ARE THE JOBS? on a quarterly basis.

5. Performance: the center supports the achievement of negotiated local levels of performance

CRITERION 1: Core partners, with assistance from the one-stop operator and their respective state agencies, regularly share performance information with the LWIB.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Core agency partners commit in the service matrix to sharing performance information. Describe in the comments below what and how specific performance information is shared.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available [here](#).

6. Program coordination: The center prioritizes program coordination, including collaborative efforts among required program partners to provide access to integrated programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: Partner programs coordinate programs, service delivery and referrals in accordance with the MOU.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff work collaboratively across programs to meet participants' service needs, including referrals and referral tracking, as defined in Section 8 of the MOU.
- Staff are trained to complete an initial assessment of participants' needs and inform them of the range of available services.
- The customer's service plan identifies which partners or other agencies are to provide the necessary programs, services and activities.
- Customers are co-enrolled in all appropriate one-stop programs in accordance with their service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The partner staff work collaboratively across programs to coordinate service delivery and referrals per the MOU. These discussions occur regularly at the centers and at monthly partner meetings. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.

7. Operational coordination: The center prioritizes operational coordination, ensuring streamlined and efficient intake and assessment, service delivery, and administration and expedited customer flow.

CRITERION 1: Customers are provided information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- All customers, as appropriate, are offered an orientation of the services available in various modes (e.g., in-person with staff, videos, written materials, or direct linkage) and in various formats (e.g., for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy).
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner. Upon request, accommodations are made for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy.

CRITERION 2: One stop partners offer customers appropriate assessments.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- As appropriate, partner agencies participate in assessment strategies, tools, and processes with co-enrolled consumers as a cross-agency assessment team for that customer.
- As appropriate, staff coordinate and share comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of customers.
- Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

LWIA 7 Airtable referral system has a universal initial referral form allowing to share basic customer needs and interests between partners.

Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan. Review the WIOA Program Objective Assessment (OAS) procedure to support customers in goal setting here.

The Center offers Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems(CASAS) testing to determine math and literacy levels The test is able to be proctored electronically or in person via a paper assessment.

CRITERION 3: Staff identify and implement best practices in internal communication.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Regular meetings are held with all WIOA one-stop partner staff identified by the one-stop operator.
- Staff are able to communicate suggestions and concerns to management on such issues as customer service, organizational climate, and other issues for continuous improvement purposes.
- Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, are used to provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings
- State interagency team representatives visit each center annually to discuss service integration processes, opportunities, and resource needs.
- Using the MOU as guidance, the one-stop operator collaborates with the partners to establish on-site expectations.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The one-stop operator hosts monthly hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings with WIOA partners. Standing agenda items include discussing outstanding center items, where staff can communicate suggestions and for ongoing continuous improvement. Post-meeting survey links are also distributed to gather partner satisfaction and input. Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings.

CRITERION 4: High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Websites, resource rooms and collateral material provide information about all programs and services available in the center.
- Resource room material describes all available services and includes a date or other method of indicating it is current.
- All services described on the center's website and resource materials align with the local service matrix.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers in person and online. The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center.

8. Service Hours: The one-stop center provides maximum access to partner program services during regular business hours and any timeframes determined by the local board to be feasible and effective.

CRITERION 1: The local board considers optimum business hours and any timeframes outside of regular business hours to accommodate customers' work, childcare, or transportation needs.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- LWIB meeting minutes reflect discussion regarding how regular business hours were established.
- Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center.
- Directions for arranging services outside of regular business hours are clearly stated and available.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center and LWIB meeting materials include MOU explaining regular business hours are established by the WIOA partners.

9. Equal Opportunity Awareness: center staff and program partners are familiar with and apply laws, regulations and policies regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all customers.

CRITERION 1: Staff and program partner trainings cover key topics in providing services in a universal and nondiscriminatory manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff and program partners demonstrate they are knowledgeable about using and accessing assistive resources to meet the needs of all customers and comply with federal requirements.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.

CRITERION 2: Required partners ensure all customers have access to all services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Assistive technology is provided to customers with disabilities (e.g., visual, hearing, physical, mental, and intellectual) to access computers and other center resources/services.
- Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers.
- Corrective action plans are developed and implemented if any required partners or customers identify barriers to accessing services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center. Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers

B. Accessibility and Infrastructure Criteria

1. Physical Layout: The location and physical layout of the center is accessible to all customers and provides suitable space for service delivery.

CRITERION 1: The center's layout supports access and inclusiveness, guided by federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Monitoring documents attest to the center's compliance with ADA standards.
- If deficiencies are identified, a corrective action plan has been developed with a timeline for remediation.
- Computers (hardware/software) and equipment that support direct linkage to center functions is up-to-date and operational.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.

CRITERION 2: The center has space and capacity appropriate for customer needs, customer traffic, and key center functions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center layout is clear and logical in terms of customer navigation and flow.
- The resource room area provides customers with privacy and access to the internet, printers, copiers, and fax machines.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

CRITERION 3: Technology to support center functions is up-to-date and operational.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center has current and adequate technology, e.g., projectors, videoconferencing, hardware and software, and technology-related infrastructure.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. The Monitoring tool includes an inventory checklist for recommended resource room equipment. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

2. Center Location: The center is accessible by public transportation, driving, or walking.

<p>CRITERION 1: The center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public access road.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center sign is visible from the public access road. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The LWIB has determined what a "reasonable distance" is from public transportation stops. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The Center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public road.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: Adequate parking is available and accessible for customers who drive to the facility.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The center has suitable parking for the anticipated number of customers. <input type="checkbox"/> The parking lot has spaces closest to the door dedicated and marked for individuals with disabilities. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist addresses suitable parking and dedicated spaces for individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p>3. Center Appearance and Safety: the center is well maintained and provides a safe space for customers and staff.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center and center staff maintain a professional and welcoming appearance.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center and its furnishings are clean and in working order. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's exterior is clean and well maintained (building, landscaping, driveway, sidewalks, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Name badges identify the wearer as staff of the center (rather than staff of their respective agencies/programs). <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center provides a safe and secure environment for its employees and customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A written emergency response plan exists that addresses the full range of potential emergency situations and evacuation procedures and is shared with all center partners and their staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center has security in place that is appropriate to the center and the local area (e.g., security personnel, locks/ security keypads, security cameras, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential information (paper and electronic) is handled sensitively and appropriately and is secured in a locked location when not attended by staff. <input type="checkbox"/> All new staff and partners receive an orientation in center safety and security. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p>

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. The center has security in place and Emergency Evacuation Plans posted in common areas.

4. Common Identifier: the center displays the one-stop delivery system common identifier as the location for required programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: One-stop center signage, logos and marketing material reflect the state identifier, "Illinois workNet", and "American Job Center Network".

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The common identifier is highly visible inside and outside of the facility.
- The common identifier appears on products and materials.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in terms of AJC Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. Materials reflect IL workNet and AJC Network.

5. Program Services: All customers have equal opportunity to access at or through the center all training, education, employment, support, and business services in accordance with the application sections of WIOA.

CRITERION 1: Access to all available services is provided at or through the center.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The local service matrix accurately reflects all services provided by all partners that are available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.
- The coordinated service delivery method and approach is accurately described in the local MOU.
- Services are delivered across programs in a consistent and quality manner.
- Job seeker/worker, employer customers and one-stop staff describe the customer experience with services as streamlined and aligned.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.

6. Direct Linkage: customers have access to a program staff member who can provide program information or services, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time internet communication.

CRITERION 1: All services are available on demand through a direct connection with the center either through on-site staff or through technology consistent with the "direct linkage" requirement.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff understand "direct linkage" protocols and relationships.
- Basic technology is physically present and enables real-time interaction (e.g., through Skype).
- The local service matrix indicates which program staff are stationed at the center.
- Career planners work with customers to develop individual employment plans encompassing all program

	<p>services, including those provided via direct linkage, appropriate to customers' needs and goals.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.</p>
<p>7. Accommodations: the center provides reasonable accommodations for customers with disabilities, language, or literacy barriers to fully access all services</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center has the capacity to accommodate customers with disabilities through available equipment, policies, staff training, and other resources.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology devices or other auxiliary aids are readily available. <input type="checkbox"/> Center staff can explain how the center handles the range of requests for accommodations. <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate accommodations are made for people with disabilities consistent with ADA regulations. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center can connect non-English speaking customers to appropriate on-site staff, materials, or translation services.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's resources include materials or on-demand translation for limited English proficiency (LEP) persons in languages spoken by a significant number or proportion of the LEP persons in the eligible service population*. Describe in the comments below what is being done to accommodate LEP customers. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>*Access for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals is outlined in Subsection 38.9 of the Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 CRF 38).</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and improvement plans are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides information about available resources and services to customers of varying literacy levels, including non-English speaking customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written materials are developed for a minimum literacy level determined jointly by center staff and partners in consultation with the local board. Describe in the comments below how minimum literacy level was determined. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and</p>

improvement plans are developed with partners.

C. Continuous Improvement Criteria

1. Customer-centered design: The center has a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and using feedback from job seeker and business customers.

CRITERION 1: The center tracks job seeker and business customer experience and satisfaction.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Multiple approaches are used to solicit one-stop job seeker and business customer feedback.
- The center has a process for tracking and responding to job seeker and business customer comments/suggestions.
- Documentation exists that functional managers and staff use job seeker and business customer feedback to design, refine, and deliver integrated services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

-

Certification Team Comments:

The center tracks job seeker and business customer feedback in multiple ways. Customer satisfaction survey data is collected via a QR Code posted on-site and Resource Room computer web links. Survey responses are reviewed monthly by the OSO at Center-Level Meetings. A survey dashboard with high-level metrics around customer experience, reason for visit, and likelihood to recommend the Center is available to partners via the DISCO platform. Post event surveys are requested from business customers to collect feedback/suggestions.

2. Evaluation of Internal Operations: Internal procedures and systems are monitored and assessed vis-a-vis operational effectiveness and opportunities for improvement by the LWIB and/or one-stop operator.

CRITERION 1: Internal systems are in place to identify and track operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- An LWIB-approved evaluation plan is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

An LWIB-approved evaluation plan within the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7 is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness. The one-stop operator will use this plan to implement internal systems.

CRITERION 2: Provisions of the MOU are periodically reviewed to ensure partner responsibilities and commitments are being met.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Board meeting minutes reflect that the MOU was reviewed.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The March 19, 2024 WIB agenda and materials reflect the MOU was reviewed.

3. Improving Performance: Core partners engage local boards in using customer feedback and operational data to continuously improve service delivery, operations and performance.

CRITERION 1:

Customer feedback is used to improve quality and use resources most effectively.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Local board meeting minutes reflect that customer feedback and performance data helped inform decision-making about strategic improvements to strengthen customer-center design goals.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available at <https://chicookworks.org/about-us/our-board/>
The one-stop operator shares customer satisfaction survey data collected Survey responses are reviewed monthly and discussed at Center-Level Meetings.



scaleLIT's mission is to help adult education organizations secure resources and training so that under-resourced adult learners can become economically successful, and reframe adult basic education as a critical public policy issue.

Closing the Literacy Gap

scaleLIT leverages literacy to power organization

American Job Center at Prairie State College **One-Stop Certification Memo**

To: LWIA 7 Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)

From: One-Stop Certification Team; Jason Spigner, Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board (LWIB), Sarah L. Lewis-Weaver, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP); Pamela McDonough, LWIB & CCWP.

Date: Tuesday, June 25, 2024

CC: One-Stop Operator, scaleLIT
Matt Weis, CEO, National Able; Niasa Hollins-Watson, Program Manager, National Able;

Re: Summary of WIOA One-Stop Certification Process and Certification Recommendation for American Job Center at Prairie State College

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates establishing and certifying One-Stop Centers to ensure comprehensive and integrated service delivery. The certification process is critical in setting the standard level of quality and consistency of services in AJCs across the state, including compliance with ADA Accessibility Standards. Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) are responsible for assessing the AJCs within their region to ensure that they meet the state's WIOA criteria at least once every three years.

The certification process involves several key steps to evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement of American Job Centers (AJC). This memo outlines the One-Stop Certification process and outcomes for the AJC located at 201 S Halsted Street ATOC Building, Suite 148. Chicago Heights, IL 60411.

Application Review and On-site Evaluation Process:

In collaboration with the center's partners, the One-Stop Operator (OSO) compiled the documents supporting each of the certification criteria and organized them and the comments using the Disco platform.

The Certification Team, appointed by the LWIB, reviewed the basis for the determination and supporting documentation for each criterion. On June 13, 2024, the Certification Team conducted an on-site Evaluation of the Center, located at 201 S Halsted Street ATOC Building, Suite 148. Chicago Heights, IL 60411. The on-site Evaluation included a tour of the facility and access to interview partner staff, job seekers, or employers directly.

Certification Recommendation and Outcomes:

After conducting a thorough review of the American Job Center located at 201 S Halsted Street ATOC Building, Suite 148. Chicago Heights, IL 60411, the Certification Team has determined that the center meets the standards set forth by WIOA and recommends certification. Key findings include:

Notable Practices: The certification team has highlighted that being located within a college offers various advantages such as campus security, increased referral, and access to additional services for individuals. The center offers ample parking and transportation.

Areas for Improvement: The Certification Team identified the Center as one that could benefit from formal external signage on the main building indicating where exactly the AJC is located. They also expressed the need for more literature in other languages and suggested having a dedicated phone line in the resource room for better accessibility and inclusivity.

Given these findings, the evaluation team recommends the American Job Center's certification at 201 S Halsted Street ATOC Building, Suite 148. Chicago Heights, IL 60411. This certification will be valid for three years and subject to ongoing monitoring and annual reviews to ensure continued compliance and performance.

The full certification application is included as an attachment to this memo. The basis for determining each criterion is stored in the document collection platform (Disco) and can be provided upon request. Please contact Becky Raymond, scaleLIT Executive Director, at becky@scalelit.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Attached

- Application for Certification of One-Stop Centers

A. EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA

1. GOVERNANCE: All required governing documents are in place prior to the center’s certification

CRITERION 1: the current local MOU and, if applicable, an agreement between the chief elected officials (CEOs) are in place (or pending).

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

An executed MOU is required before the final certification of the comprehensive one-stop center can occur. Please provide the status and anticipated date of MOU execution: **June 2024**

Basis for Determination:

- The MOU accurately reflects the name and location of the center and the way in which required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines.
- A CEO agreement, if applicable, accurately reflects the roles and processes for appointing board members, designating a grant recipient and/or fiscal agent, collaborating on planning activities, and other governance functions.

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 MOU (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026) reflects the name and location of the center and how required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines

CRITERION 2: Implementation of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity (EO) provisions of WIOA has occurred.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist has been completed annually over the past three years with deficiencies corrected or a plan for correction identified
- Methods of Administration / Nondiscrimination Plan has been developed and implemented
- Other - describe the basic used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist (completed by One-Stop Operator May 16, 2024) and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.

CRITERION 3:
A functional organizational chart has been developed.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The functional chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service integration relationships.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

LWIA 7 Org. Chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service.

CRITERION 4:
A one-stop center operator is competitively selected at least once every four years.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- A one-stop operator has been competitively selected and is in place.
- Procurement documents contain clear conflict of interest policies, procedures demonstrating internal controls, and roles and responsibilities of the daily operation of the center and its staff.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership released a Request for Proposal for One-Stop Operator in 2020 and 2024.

CRITERION 5:

Basis for Determination:

<p>The LWIB is certified and all board members are current.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documents attesting to the LWIB certification and currency of board members are available. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The current board member list, board materials and meeting dates are available here. Documentation from Michael Baker in March 2024 stating LWIB Recertification information is currently under review by DCEO.</p>
<p>2. PROFESSIONAL STAFFING: Center staff have clear job descriptions, receive regular performance reviews, and are provided basic information about one-stop center programs, services, and eligibility requirements.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: Center staff roles and responsibilities are clear at all stages of service delivery.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence is provided that center staff understand their roles and responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop staff are familiar with service integration provisions in the MOU. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timely cross-training and program information resources addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs are provided to all one-stop staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The One-Stop Operator facilitates timely cross-training and program information resources regularly addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DICSO.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center has a system and procedures in place to assess staff members' skills and core competencies.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A culture of accountability is created in which every partner agency's representative has ownership in achieving desired results. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies are encouraging a culture of accountability related to service integration. <input type="checkbox"/> Core job competencies, organizational values, and performance expectations related to service integration are established and communicated to all center staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: Each partner and organization is responsible for the onboarding, ongoing staff development and performance evaluations of their staff. The one-stop operator encourages organizations to have all staff regularly reference the WIOA AJC Manual and complete Systemwide Cross-Training Disco Modules in DISCO. The DISCO platform allows users to track user activity and report back to partners on training modules completed by staff.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides staff development that is appropriate for each individual's speciality as well as more general staff development needs.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A staff training plan has been developed to address topics identified by staff and the one-stop operator including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Customer service (in-person and phone) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center partners' programs, services, and resources

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Other IL workNet resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using center technology and other online resources (e.g. email) <input type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators, their importances, and how staff contribute to them <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and understanding the basics of assistive technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <p><input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop partners are regularly asked to identify their training, information, and/or resource needs as part of a training assessment that leads to employee development. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies provide appropriate employee development options in relation to service integration. Narrative should address staff training such as citing training schedules/logs, etc.</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator facilitates regular cross-training sessions addressing topics identified as a need or requested by staff. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DICSO.</p>
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3. Responsiveness to the needs of job seekers and workers: the center meets the career pathway and support needs of participants as established in local and regional plans.

<p>CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the one-stop center will integrate services and referrals among program partners as specified in the local and regional plans.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation exists that all job seeker and worker services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center as well as how they are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> The MOU identifies practices for integration through referrals, co-enrollment, and follow-up. <input type="checkbox"/> Methods or systems for sharing client information across programs as appropriate and feasible subject to confidentiality are used. <input type="checkbox"/> Informational materials and customer service plans reflect the most current available labor market information. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.</p>
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<p>CRITERION 2: Career pathway strategies drive service delivery and collaboration among partners.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been implemented. <input type="checkbox"/> Career planners coordinate career pathways goals with partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Career pathways opportunities align with the skill needs of employers.
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Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been documented in the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7.

4. Responsiveness to the needs of businesses: the center meets the needs of local businesses as established in local and regional plans

CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the center identifies and responds to local and regional economic and workforce needs.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Documentation exists that all business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided.
- Businesses are offered timely and coordinated access to all WIOA employer services whether on-site, through technology, at a partner site, or other appropriate and accessible community sites. Describe in comments below how this is occurring using business survey/evaluation results and anecdotal information.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The 2024 – 2027 WIOA Local Plan for LWIA 7 documents that business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided.

CRITERION 2: The center has a local Business Services Team (BST) comprised of knowledgeable business services partners with the ability to connect employers to a full range of partner services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- A list of BST members by title and agency is available.
- Updates and information from the BST are regularly provided to the LWIB. Describe in the comments below how updates are provided, e.g., content, frequency, etc.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory lists members by title and agency.

CRITERION 3: Each BST has a standardized process for contacting employers in each targeted industry sector and the capability of providing direct access to appropriate services or referral to others who can provide those services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- BST members are knowledgeable about all available services.
- Appropriate team members are identified to serve as resources for employer service delivery.
- The BST participates in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Provide in the comments below examples of how this is occurring.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory identifies appropriate team members to serve business customers. Business Service Teams collaborate across partners to participate in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Business Services Website:
<https://chicookworks.org/services/employers/>

CRITERION 4: The BST partners with employers to identify their needs and provide timely solutions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The BST uses current and timely labor market information to develop customized business services proposals for employer customers that describe solutions to address employers' needs and challenges.
- BST develops and communicates coordinated service plans with businesses based on needs assessments (e.g., Regional Economic Development team, Rapid Response, Incumbent Worker, etc.) and business profiles. Describe in the comments below how employer needs are identified and show the onestop center is responding.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The Business Relations and Economic Development at Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership provides training on [WIOA workbased learning](#) and timely labor market information in the WHERE ARE THE JOBS? on a quarterly basis.

5. Performance: the center supports the achievement of negotiated local levels of performance

CRITERION 1: Core partners, with assistance from the one-stop operator and their respective state agencies, regularly share performance information with the LWIB.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Core agency partners commit in the service matrix to sharing performance information. Describe in the comments below what and how specific performance information is shared.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available [here](#).

6. Program coordination: The center prioritizes program coordination, including collaborative efforts among required program partners to provide access to integrated programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: Partner programs coordinate programs, service delivery and referrals in accordance with the MOU.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff work collaboratively across programs to meet participants' service needs, including referrals and referral tracking, as defined in Section 8 of the MOU.
- Staff are trained to complete an initial assessment of participants' needs and inform them of the range of available services.
- The customer's service plan identifies which partners or other agencies are to provide the necessary programs, services and activities.
- Customers are co-enrolled in all appropriate one-stop programs in accordance with their service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The partner staff work collaboratively across programs to coordinate service delivery and referrals per the MOU. These discussions occur regularly at the centers and at monthly partner meetings. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.

7. Operational coordination: The center prioritizes operational coordination, ensuring streamlined and efficient intake and assessment, service delivery, and administration and expedited customer flow.

CRITERION 1: Customers are provided information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- All customers, as appropriate, are offered an orientation of the services available in various modes (e.g., in-person with staff, videos, written materials, or direct linkage) and in various formats (e.g., for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy).
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner. Upon request, accommodations are made for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy.

CRITERION 2: One stop partners offer customers appropriate assessments.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- As appropriate, partner agencies participate in assessment strategies, tools, and processes with co-enrolled consumers as a cross-agency assessment team for that customer.
- As appropriate, staff coordinate and share comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of customers.
- Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

LWIA 7 Airtable referral system has a universal initial referral form allowing to share basic customer needs and interests between partners.

Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan. Review the WIOA Program Objective Assessment (OAS) procedure to support customers in goal setting here.

The Center offers Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems(CASAS) testing to determine math and literacy levels The test is able to be proctored electronically or in person via a paper assessment.

CRITERION 3: Staff identify and implement best practices in internal communication.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Regular meetings are held with all WIOA one-stop partner staff identified by the one-stop operator.
- Staff are able to communicate suggestions and concerns to management on such issues as customer service, organizational climate, and other issues for continuous improvement purposes.
- Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, are used to provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings
- State interagency team representatives visit each center annually to discuss service integration processes, opportunities, and resource needs.
- Using the MOU as guidance, the one-stop operator collaborates with the partners to establish on-site expectations.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The one-stop operator hosts monthly hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings with WIOA partners. Standing agenda items include discussing outstanding center items, where staff can communicate suggestions and for ongoing continuous improvement. Post-meeting survey links are also distributed to gather partner satisfaction and input. Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings.

CRITERION 4: High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Websites, resource rooms and collateral material provide information about all programs and services available in the center.
- Resource room material describes all available services and includes a date or other method of indicating it is current.
- All services described on the center's website and resource materials align with the local service matrix.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers in person and online. The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center.

8. Service Hours: The one-stop center provides maximum access to partner program services during regular business hours and any timeframes determined by the local board to be feasible and effective.

CRITERION 1: The local board considers optimum business hours and any timeframes outside of regular business hours to accommodate customers' work, childcare, or transportation needs.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- LWIB meeting minutes reflect discussion regarding how regular business hours were established.
- Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center.
- Directions for arranging services outside of regular business hours are clearly stated and available.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center and LWIB meeting materials include MOU explaining regular business hours are established by the WIOA partners.

9. Equal Opportunity Awareness: center staff and program partners are familiar with and apply laws, regulations and policies regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all customers.

CRITERION 1: Staff and program partner trainings cover key topics in providing services in a universal and nondiscriminatory manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff and program partners demonstrate they are knowledgeable about using and accessing assistive resources to meet the needs of all customers and comply with federal requirements.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.

CRITERION 2: Required partners ensure all customers have access to all services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Assistive technology is provided to customers with disabilities (e.g., visual, hearing, physical, mental, and intellectual) to access computers and other center resources/services.
- Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers.
- Corrective action plans are developed and implemented if any required partners or customers identify barriers to accessing services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center. Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers

B. Accessibility and Infrastructure Criteria

1. Physical Layout: The location and physical layout of the center is accessible to all customers and provides suitable space for service delivery.

CRITERION 1: The center's layout supports access and inclusiveness, guided by federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Monitoring documents attest to the center's compliance with ADA standards.
- If deficiencies are identified, a corrective action plan has been developed with a timeline for remediation.
- Computers (hardware/software) and equipment that support direct linkage to center functions is up-to-date and operational.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.

CRITERION 2: The center has space and capacity appropriate for customer needs, customer traffic, and key center functions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center layout is clear and logical in terms of customer navigation and flow.
- The resource room area provides customers with privacy and access to the internet, printers, copiers, and fax machines.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

CRITERION 3: Technology to support center functions is up-to-date and operational.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center has current and adequate technology, e.g., projectors, videoconferencing, hardware and software, and technology-related infrastructure.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. The Monitoring tool includes an inventory checklist for recommended resource room equipment. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

2. Center Location: The center is accessible by public transportation, driving, or walking.

<p>CRITERION 1: The center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public access road.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The center sign is visible from the public access road. <input type="checkbox"/> The LWIB has determined what a "reasonable distance" is from public transportation stops. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The Center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public road.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: Adequate parking is available and accessible for customers who drive to the facility.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center has suitable parking for the anticipated number of customers. <input type="checkbox"/> The parking lot has spaces closest to the door dedicated and marked for individuals with disabilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist addresses suitable parking and dedicated spaces for individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p>3. Center Appearance and Safety: the center is well maintained and provides a safe space for customers and staff.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center and center staff maintain a professional and welcoming appearance.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center and its furnishings are clean and in working order. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's exterior is clean and well maintained (building, landscaping, driveway, sidewalks, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Name badges identify the wearer as staff of the center (rather than staff of their respective agencies/programs). <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center provides a safe and secure environment for its employees and customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A written emergency response plan exists that addresses the full range of potential emergency situations and evacuation procedures and is shared with all center partners and their staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center has security in place that is appropriate to the center and the local area (e.g., security personnel, locks/ security keypads, security cameras, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential information (paper and electronic) is handled sensitively and appropriately and is secured in a locked location when not attended by staff. <input type="checkbox"/> All new staff and partners receive an orientation in center safety and security. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p>

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. The center has security in place and Emergency Evacuation Plans posted in common areas.

4. Common Identifier: the center displays the one-stop delivery system common identifier as the location for required programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: One-stop center signage, logos and marketing material reflect the state identifier, "Illinois workNet", and "American Job Center Network".

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The common identifier is highly visible inside and outside of the facility.
- The common identifier appears on products and materials.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in terms of AJC Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. Materials reflect IL workNet and AJC Network.

5. Program Services: All customers have equal opportunity to access at or through the center all training, education, employment, support, and business services in accordance with the application sections of WIOA.

CRITERION 1: Access to all available services is provided at or through the center.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The local service matrix accurately reflects all services provided by all partners that are available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.
- The coordinated service delivery method and approach is accurately described in the local MOU.
- Services are delivered across programs in a consistent and quality manner.
- Job seeker/worker, employer customers and one-stop staff describe the customer experience with services as streamlined and aligned.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.

6. Direct Linkage: customers have access to a program staff member who can provide program information or services, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time internet communication.

CRITERION 1: All services are available on demand through a direct connection with the center either through on-site staff or through technology consistent with the "direct linkage" requirement.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff understand "direct linkage" protocols and relationships.
- Basic technology is physically present and enables real-time interaction (e.g., through Skype).
- The local service matrix indicates which program staff are stationed at the center.
- Career planners work with customers to develop individual employment plans encompassing all program

	<p>services, including those provided via direct linkage, appropriate to customers' needs and goals.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.</p>
<p>7. Accommodations: the center provides reasonable accommodations for customers with disabilities, language, or literacy barriers to fully access all services</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center has the capacity to accommodate customers with disabilities through available equipment, policies, staff training, and other resources.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology devices or other auxiliary aids are readily available. <input type="checkbox"/> Center staff can explain how the center handles the range of requests for accommodations. <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate accommodations are made for people with disabilities consistent with ADA regulations. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center can connect non-English speaking customers to appropriate on-site staff, materials, or translation services.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's resources include materials or on-demand translation for limited English proficiency (LEP) persons in languages spoken by a significant number or proportion of the LEP persons in the eligible service population*. Describe in the comments below what is being done to accommodate LEP customers. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>*Access for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals is outlined in Subsection 38.9 of the Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 CRF 38).</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and improvement plans are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides information about available resources and services to customers of varying literacy levels, including nonEnglish speaking customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written materials are developed for a minimum literacy level determined jointly by center staff and partners in consultation with the local board. Describe in the comments below how minimum literacy level was determined. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and</p>

improvement plans are developed with partners.

C. Continuous Improvement Criteria

1. Customer-centered design: The center has a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and using feedback from job seeker and business customers.

CRITERION 1: The center tracks job seeker and business customer experience and satisfaction.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Multiple approaches are used to solicit one-stop job seeker and business customer feedback.
- The center has a process for tracking and responding to job seeker and business customer comments/suggestions.
- Documentation exists that functional managers and staff use job seeker and business customer feedback to design, refine, and deliver integrated services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

-

Certification Team Comments:

The center tracks job seeker and business customer feedback in multiple ways. Customer satisfaction survey data is collected via a QR Code posted on-site and Resource Room computer web links. Survey responses are reviewed monthly by the OSO at Center-Level Meetings. A survey dashboard with high-level metrics around customer experience, reason for visit, and likelihood to recommend the Center is available to partners via the DISCO platform. Post event surveys are requested from business customers to collect feedback/suggestions.

2. Evaluation of Internal Operations: Internal procedures and systems are monitored and assessed vis-a-vis operational effectiveness and opportunities for improvement by the LWIB and/or one-stop operator.

CRITERION 1: Internal systems are in place to identify and track operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- An LWIB-approved evaluation plan is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

An LWIB-approved evaluation plan within the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness. The one-stop operator will use this plan to implement internal systems.

CRITERION 2: Provisions of the MOU are periodically reviewed to ensure partner responsibilities and commitments are being met.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Board meeting minutes reflect that the MOU was reviewed.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The March 19, 2024 WIB agenda and materials reflect the MOU was reviewed.

3. Improving Performance: Core partners engage local boards in using customer feedback and operational data to continuously improve service delivery, operations and performance.

CRITERION 1:

Customer feedback is used to improve quality and use resources most effectively.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Local board meeting minutes reflect that customer feedback and performance data helped inform decision-making about strategic improvements to strengthen customer-center design goals.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available at <https://chicookworks.org/about-us/our-board/>
The one-stop operator shares customer satisfaction survey data collected Survey responses are reviewed monthly and discussed at Center-Level Meetings.



scaleLIT's mission is to help adult education organizations secure resources and training so that under-resourced adult learners can become economically successful, and reframe adult basic education as a critical public policy issue.

Closing the Literacy Gap

scaleLIT leverages literacy to power organization

American Job Center in Wheeling **One-Stop Certification Memo**

To: LWIA 7 Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)

From: One-Stop Certification Team; Jason Spigner, Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board (LWIB), Sarah L. Lewis-Weaver, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP); Pamela McDonough, LWIB & CCWP.

Date: Tuesday, June 25, 2024

CC: One-Stop Operator, scaleLIT
Lisa Maentz, Executive Director, Business Career Services (BCS)

Re: Summary of WIOA One-Stop Certification Process and Certification Recommendation for American Job Center in Wheeling

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates establishing and certifying One-Stop Centers to ensure comprehensive and integrated service delivery. The certification process is critical in setting the standard level of quality and consistency of services in AJCs across the state, including compliance with ADA Accessibility Standards. Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) are responsible for assessing the AJCs within their region to ensure that they meet the state's WIOA criteria at least once every three years.

The certification process involves several key steps to evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement of American Job Centers (AJC). This memo outlines the One-Stop Certification process and outcomes for the AJC located at 1400 S Wolf Rd. Suite 200, Wheeling, IL 60090.

Application Review and On-site Evaluation Process:

In collaboration with the center's partners, the One-Stop Operator (OSO) compiled the documents supporting each of the certification criteria and organized them and the comments using the Disco platform.

The Certification Team, appointed by the LWIB, reviewed the basis for the determination and supporting documentation for each criterion. On June 18, 2024, the Certification Team conducted an on-site Evaluation of the Center, located at 1400 S Wolf Rd. Suite 200, Wheeling, IL 60090. The on-site Evaluation included a tour of the facility and access to interview partner staff, job seekers, or employers directly.

Certification Recommendation and Outcomes:

After conducting a thorough review of the American Job Center located at 1400 S Wolf Rd. Suite 200, Wheeling, IL 60090, the Certification Team has determined that the center meets the standards set forth by WIOA and recommends certification. Key findings include:

Notable Practices: The certification team acknowledges that the Mini Mart, an extension of the job fair, provides individuals with assistance in interviewing techniques, resume workshops, and various other services. Additionally, they recognize the coat closet as a valuable resource for individuals in need of clothing for interviews. Furthermore, the team noted the seamless integration of the center with Harper college. Lastly, the AJC website was highlighted for its comprehensive listing of resources and services available at the center, along with a convenient 'Get Started Form' for customers to request assistance.

Areas for Improvement: The Certification Team identified the Center as one that could benefit from formal external signage on the main building and marquee indicating where exactly the AJC is located. Moreover, the certification team recognizes the necessity for staff badges and lanyards, guidelines on scheduling appointments after business hours, and the installation of an ADA accessibility button in the restroom.

Given these findings, the evaluation team recommends the American Job Center's certification at 1400 S Wolf Rd. Suite 200, Wheeling, IL 60090. This certification will be valid for three years and subject to ongoing monitoring and annual reviews to ensure continued compliance and performance.

The full certification application is included as an attachment to this memo. The basis for determining each criterion is stored in the document collection platform (Disco) and can be provided upon request. Please contact Becky Raymond, scaleLIT Executive Director, at becky@scalelit.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Attached

- Application for Certification of One-Stop Centers

A. EFFECTIVENESS CRITERIA

1. GOVERNANCE: All required governing documents are in place prior to the center’s certification

CRITERION 1: the current local MOU and, if applicable, an agreement between the chief elected officials (CEOs) are in place (or pending).

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

An executed MOU is required before the final certification of the comprehensive one-stop center can occur. Please provide the status and anticipated date of MOU execution: **June 2024**

Basis for Determination:

- The MOU accurately reflects the name and location of the center and the way in which required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines.
- A CEO agreement, if applicable, accurately reflects the roles and processes for appointing board members, designating a grant recipient and/or fiscal agent, collaborating on planning activities, and other governance functions.

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 MOU (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026) reflects the name and location of the center and how required partners will integrate services following the Governor's Guidelines

CRITERION 2: Implementation of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity (EO) provisions of WIOA has occurred.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist has been completed annually over the past three years with deficiencies corrected or a plan for correction identified
- Methods of Administration / Nondiscrimination Plan has been developed and implemented
- Other - describe the basic used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist (completed by One-Stop Operator May 16, 2024) and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.

CRITERION 3:
A functional organizational chart has been developed.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The functional chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service integration relationships.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

LWIA 7 Org. Chart includes all partners providing services at the center and their organizational/service.

CRITERION 4:
A one-stop center operator is competitively selected at least once every four years.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- A one-stop operator has been competitively selected and is in place.
- Procurement documents contain clear conflict of interest policies, procedures demonstrating internal controls, and roles and responsibilities of the daily operation of the center and its staff.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership released a Request for Proposal for One-Stop Operator in 2020 and 2024.

CRITERION 5:

Basis for Determination:

<p>The LWIB is certified and all board members are current.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documents attesting to the LWIB certification and currency of board members are available. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The current board member list, board materials and meeting dates are available here. Documentation from Michael Baker in March 2024 stating LWIB Recertification information is currently under review by DCEO.</p>
<p>2. PROFESSIONAL STAFFING: Center staff have clear job descriptions, receive regular performance reviews, and are provided basic information about one-stop center programs, services, and eligibility requirements.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: Center staff roles and responsibilities are clear at all stages of service delivery.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence is provided that center staff understand their roles and responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop staff are familiar with service integration provisions in the MOU. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timely cross-training and program information resources addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs are provided to all one-stop staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: The One-Stop Operator facilitates timely cross-training and program information resources regularly addressing the role, services, and eligibility requirements of all WIOA partner programs. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DICSO.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center has a system and procedures in place to assess staff members' skills and core competencies.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A culture of accountability is created in which every partner agency's representative has ownership in achieving desired results. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies are encouraging a culture of accountability related to service integration. <input type="checkbox"/> Core job competencies, organizational values, and performance expectations related to service integration are established and communicated to all center staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments: Each partner and organization is responsible for the onboarding, ongoing staff development and performance evaluations of their staff. The one-stop operator encourages organizations to have all staff regularly reference the WIOA AJC Manual and complete Systemwide Cross-Training Disco Modules in DISCO. The DISCO platform allows users to track user activity and report back to partners on training modules completed by staff.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides staff development that is appropriate for each individual's speciality as well as more general staff development needs.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A staff training plan has been developed to address topics identified by staff and the one-stop operator including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Customer service (in-person and phone) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Center partners' programs, services, and resources

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Other IL workNet resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using center technology and other online resources (e.g. email) <input type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators, their importances, and how staff contribute to them <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and understanding the basics of assistive technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <p><input type="checkbox"/> All one-stop partners are regularly asked to identify their training, information, and/or resource needs as part of a training assessment that leads to employee development. Describe in comments below how the one-stop operator assesses whether partner agencies provide appropriate employee development options in relation to service integration. Narrative should address staff training such as citing training schedules/logs, etc.</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator facilitates regular cross-training sessions addressing topics identified as a need or requested by staff. Recordings of cross-training presentations and One-Stop Operator Tools are saved and made available to all one-stop staff/partners on the learning management system platform, DICSO.</p>
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3. Responsiveness to the needs of job seekers and workers: the center meets the career pathway and support needs of participants as established in local and regional plans.

<p>CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the one-stop center will integrate services and referrals among program partners as specified in the local and regional plans.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation exists that all job seeker and worker services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center as well as how they are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> The MOU identifies practices for integration through referrals, co-enrollment, and follow-up. <input type="checkbox"/> Methods or systems for sharing client information across programs as appropriate and feasible subject to confidentiality are used. <input type="checkbox"/> Informational materials and customer service plans reflect the most current available labor market information. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.</p>
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<p>CRITERION 2: Career pathway strategies drive service delivery and collaboration among partners.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been implemented. <input type="checkbox"/> Career planners coordinate career pathways goals with partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Career pathways opportunities align with the skill needs of employers.
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Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

A strategy for agency integration of career pathways aligned with the Career Pathway Dictionary has been documented in the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7.

4. Responsiveness to the needs of businesses: the center meets the needs of local businesses as established in local and regional plans

CRITERION 1: Required partners identify specific ways the center identifies and responds to local and regional economic and workforce needs.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Documentation exists that all business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided.
- Businesses are offered timely and coordinated access to all WIOA employer services whether on-site, through technology, at a partner site, or other appropriate and accessible community sites. Describe in comments below how this is occurring using business survey/evaluation results and anecdotal information.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The 2024 – 2027 WIOA Local Plan for LWIA 7 documents that business services included in the local service matrix are provided through the center and how they are provided.

CRITERION 2: The center has a local Business Services Team (BST) comprised of knowledgeable business services partners with the ability to connect employers to a full range of partner services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- A list of BST members by title and agency is available.
- Updates and information from the BST are regularly provided to the LWIB. Describe in the comments below how updates are provided, e.g., content, frequency, etc.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory lists members by title and agency.

CRITERION 3: Each BST has a standardized process for contacting employers in each targeted industry sector and the capability of providing direct access to appropriate services or referral to others who can provide those services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- BST members are knowledgeable about all available services.
- Appropriate team members are identified to serve as resources for employer service delivery.
- The BST participates in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Provide in the comments below examples of how this is occurring.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 Business Services Team (BST) Directory identifies appropriate team members to serve business customers. Business Service Teams collaborate across partners to participate in community-based, business-focused events on a regular basis. Business Services Website:
<https://chicookworks.org/services/employers/>

CRITERION 4: The BST partners with employers to identify their needs and provide timely solutions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The BST uses current and timely labor market information to develop customized business services proposals for employer customers that describe solutions to address employers' needs and challenges.
- BST develops and communicates coordinated service plans with businesses based on needs assessments (e.g., Regional Economic Development team, Rapid Response, Incumbent Worker, etc.) and business profiles. Describe in the comments below how employer needs are identified and show the onestop center is responding.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The Business Relations and Economic Development at Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership provides training on [WIOA workbased learning](#) and timely labor market information in the WHERE ARE THE JOBS? on a quarterly basis.

5. Performance: the center supports the achievement of negotiated local levels of performance

CRITERION 1: Core partners, with assistance from the one-stop operator and their respective state agencies, regularly share performance information with the LWIB.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Core agency partners commit in the service matrix to sharing performance information. Describe in the comments below what and how specific performance information is shared.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available [here](#).

6. Program coordination: The center prioritizes program coordination, including collaborative efforts among required program partners to provide access to integrated programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: Partner programs coordinate programs, service delivery and referrals in accordance with the MOU.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff work collaboratively across programs to meet participants' service needs, including referrals and referral tracking, as defined in Section 8 of the MOU.
- Staff are trained to complete an initial assessment of participants' needs and inform them of the range of available services.
- The customer's service plan identifies which partners or other agencies are to provide the necessary programs, services and activities.
- Customers are co-enrolled in all appropriate one-stop programs in accordance with their service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The partner staff work collaboratively across programs to coordinate service delivery and referrals per the MOU. These discussions occur regularly at the centers and at monthly partner meetings. The Airtable User Guide specifically explains how to use our referral system among program partners.

7. Operational coordination: The center prioritizes operational coordination, ensuring streamlined and efficient intake and assessment, service delivery, and administration and expedited customer flow.

CRITERION 1: Customers are provided information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- All customers, as appropriate, are offered an orientation of the services available in various modes (e.g., in-person with staff, videos, written materials, or direct linkage) and in various formats (e.g., for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy).
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center in a service-focused, customer-friendly manner. Upon request, accommodations are made for individuals with sight or hearing disabilities or limited English and/or literacy.

CRITERION 2: One stop partners offer customers appropriate assessments.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- As appropriate, partner agencies participate in assessment strategies, tools, and processes with co-enrolled consumers as a cross-agency assessment team for that customer.
- As appropriate, staff coordinate and share comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of customers.
- Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

LWIA 7 Airtable referral system has a universal initial referral form allowing to share basic customer needs and interests between partners.

Customer assessments are used to develop appropriate goals that make up the customer service plan. Review the WIOA Program Objective Assessment (OAS) procedure to support customers in goal setting here.

The Center offers Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems(CASAS) testing to determine math and literacy levels The test is able to be proctored electronically or in person via a paper assessment.

CRITERION 3: Staff identify and implement best practices in internal communication.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Regular meetings are held with all WIOA one-stop partner staff identified by the one-stop operator.
- Staff are able to communicate suggestions and concerns to management on such issues as customer service, organizational climate, and other issues for continuous improvement purposes.
- Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, are used to provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings
- State interagency team representatives visit each center annually to discuss service integration processes, opportunities, and resource needs.
- Using the MOU as guidance, the one-stop operator collaborates with the partners to establish on-site expectations.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The one-stop operator hosts monthly hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings with WIOA partners. Standing agenda items include discussing outstanding center items, where staff can communicate suggestions and for ongoing continuous improvement. Post-meeting survey links are also distributed to gather partner satisfaction and input. Other communication vehicles, such as newsletters and meeting minutes, provide important information to one-stop staff who may be off-site or unable to attend staff meetings.

CRITERION 4: High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Websites, resource rooms and collateral material provide information about all programs and services available in the center.
- Resource room material describes all available services and includes a date or other method of indicating it is current.
- All services described on the center's website and resource materials align with the local service matrix.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

High-quality, up-to-date information about available services is accessible to all customers in person and online. The LWIA 7 AJC Orientation Videos and AJC Handouts provide customers with information about all services available through the center.

8. Service Hours: The one-stop center provides maximum access to partner program services during regular business hours and any timeframes determined by the local board to be feasible and effective.

CRITERION 1: The local board considers optimum business hours and any timeframes outside of regular business hours to accommodate customers' work, childcare, or transportation needs.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- LWIB meeting minutes reflect discussion regarding how regular business hours were established.
- Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center.
- Directions for arranging services outside of regular business hours are clearly stated and available.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Regular business hours are clearly visible outside and inside the center and LWIB meeting materials include MOU explaining regular business hours are established by the WIOA partners.

9. Equal Opportunity Awareness: center staff and program partners are familiar with and apply laws, regulations and policies regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all customers.

CRITERION 1: Staff and program partner trainings cover key topics in providing services in a universal and nondiscriminatory manner.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff and program partners demonstrate they are knowledgeable about using and accessing assistive resources to meet the needs of all customers and comply with federal requirements.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.

CRITERION 2: Required partners ensure all customers have access to all services.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Assistive technology is provided to customers with disabilities (e.g., visual, hearing, physical, mental, and intellectual) to access computers and other center resources/services.
- Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers.
- Corrective action plans are developed and implemented if any required partners or customers identify barriers to accessing services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center. Resources and services are made accessible to customers with language and literacy barriers

B. Accessibility and Infrastructure Criteria

1. Physical Layout: The location and physical layout of the center is accessible to all customers and provides suitable space for service delivery.

CRITERION 1: The center's layout supports access and inclusiveness, guided by federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Monitoring documents attest to the center's compliance with ADA standards.
- If deficiencies are identified, a corrective action plan has been developed with a timeline for remediation.
- Computers (hardware/software) and equipment that support direct linkage to center functions is up-to-date and operational.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The DECO Accessibility Report is used as the ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist and completed annually. Deficiencies are identified and plans for correction are developed with partners.

CRITERION 2: The center has space and capacity appropriate for customer needs, customer traffic, and key center functions.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center layout is clear and logical in terms of customer navigation and flow.
- The resource room area provides customers with privacy and access to the internet, printers, copiers, and fax machines.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

CRITERION 3: Technology to support center functions is up-to-date and operational.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The center has current and adequate technology, e.g., projectors, videoconferencing, hardware and software, and technology-related infrastructure.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. The Monitoring tool includes an inventory checklist for recommended resource room equipment. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.

2. Center Location: The center is accessible by public transportation, driving, or walking.

<p>CRITERION 1: The center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public access road.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The center sign is visible from the public access road. <input type="checkbox"/> The LWIB has determined what a "reasonable distance" is from public transportation stops. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The Center is accessible by public transportation and recognizable from the public road.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: Adequate parking is available and accessible for customers who drive to the facility.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center has suitable parking for the anticipated number of customers. <input type="checkbox"/> The parking lot has spaces closest to the door dedicated and marked for individuals with disabilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist addresses suitable parking and dedicated spaces for individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p>3. Center Appearance and Safety: the center is well maintained and provides a safe space for customers and staff.</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center and center staff maintain a professional and welcoming appearance.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center and its furnishings are clean and in working order. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's exterior is clean and well maintained (building, landscaping, driveway, sidewalks, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Name badges identify the wearer as staff of the center (rather than staff of their respective agencies/programs). <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center provides a safe and secure environment for its employees and customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A written emergency response plan exists that addresses the full range of potential emergency situations and evacuation procedures and is shared with all center partners and their staff. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center has security in place that is appropriate to the center and the local area (e.g., security personnel, locks/ security keypads, security cameras, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential information (paper and electronic) is handled sensitively and appropriately and is secured in a locked location when not attended by staff. <input type="checkbox"/> All new staff and partners receive an orientation in center safety and security. <input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination: <p>Certification Team Comments:</p>

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in the following areas: Accessibility & Safety, Cleanliness & Welcoming, Devices & Technology, and Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. The center has security in place and Emergency Evacuation Plans posted in common areas.

4. Common Identifier: the center displays the one-stop delivery system common identifier as the location for required programs, services and activities.

CRITERION 1: One-stop center signage, logos and marketing material reflect the state identifier, "Illinois workNet", and "American Job Center Network".

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The common identifier is highly visible inside and outside of the facility.
- The common identifier appears on products and materials.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool is used to identify if the Center is meeting criteria in terms of AJC Branding. This tool is completed annually and plans for improvement are developed with partners. Materials reflect IL workNet and AJC Network.

5. Program Services: All customers have equal opportunity to access at or through the center all training, education, employment, support, and business services in accordance with the application sections of WIOA.

CRITERION 1: Access to all available services is provided at or through the center.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- The local service matrix accurately reflects all services provided by all partners that are available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.
- The coordinated service delivery method and approach is accurately described in the local MOU.
- Services are delivered across programs in a consistent and quality manner.
- Job seeker/worker, employer customers and one-stop staff describe the customer experience with services as streamlined and aligned.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.

6. Direct Linkage: customers have access to a program staff member who can provide program information or services, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time internet communication.

CRITERION 1: All services are available on demand through a direct connection with the center either through on-site staff or through technology consistent with the "direct linkage" requirement.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Staff understand "direct linkage" protocols and relationships.
- Basic technology is physically present and enables real-time interaction (e.g., through Skype).
- The local service matrix indicates which program staff are stationed at the center.
- Career planners work with customers to develop individual employment plans encompassing all program

	<p>services, including those provided via direct linkage, appropriate to customers' needs and goals.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The local service matrix listed in the MOU indicates which program staff are stationed at the center. The Informational Handout reflects all services provided by all partners available in person or on demand via technology at or through the center.</p>
<p>7. Accommodations: the center provides reasonable accommodations for customers with disabilities, language, or literacy barriers to fully access all services</p>	
<p>CRITERION 1: The center has the capacity to accommodate customers with disabilities through available equipment, policies, staff training, and other resources.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology devices or other auxiliary aids are readily available.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Center staff can explain how the center handles the range of requests for accommodations.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate accommodations are made for people with disabilities consistent with ADA regulations.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The DECO Accessibility Report/ ADA Facilities Monitoring Checklist lists assistive technology devices and auxiliary aids available at the Center.</p>
<p>CRITERION 2: The center can connect non-English speaking customers to appropriate on-site staff, materials, or translation services.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The center's resources include materials or on-demand translation for limited English proficiency (LEP) persons in languages spoken by a significant number or proportion of the LEP persons in the eligible service population*. Describe in the comments below what is being done to accommodate LEP customers.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>*Access for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals is outlined in Subsection 38.9 of the Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 CRF 38).</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and improvement plans are developed with partners.</p>
<p>CRITERION 3: The center provides information about available resources and services to customers of varying literacy levels, including non-English speaking customers.</p> <p>Improvements needed to meet criterion:</p>	<p>Basis for Determination:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Written materials are developed for a minimum literacy level determined jointly by center staff and partners in consultation with the local board. Describe in the comments below how minimum literacy level was determined.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - describe below the basis used for determination:</p> <p>Certification Team Comments:</p> <p>The One-Stop Operator On-Site Monitoring Tool reviews several items regarding services and materials available to non-English speaking customers. This tool is completed annually and</p>

improvement plans are developed with partners.

C. Continuous Improvement Criteria

1. Customer-centered design: The center has a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and using feedback from job seeker and business customers.

CRITERION 1: The center tracks job seeker and business customer experience and satisfaction.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Multiple approaches are used to solicit one-stop job seeker and business customer feedback.
- The center has a process for tracking and responding to job seeker and business customer comments/suggestions.
- Documentation exists that functional managers and staff use job seeker and business customer feedback to design, refine, and deliver integrated services.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

-

Certification Team Comments:

The center tracks job seeker and business customer feedback in multiple ways. Customer satisfaction survey data is collected via a QR Code posted on-site and Resource Room computer web links. Survey responses are reviewed monthly by the OSO at Center-Level Meetings. A survey dashboard with high-level metrics around customer experience, reason for visit, and likelihood to recommend the Center is available to partners via the DISCO platform. Post event surveys are requested from business customers to collect feedback/suggestions.

2. Evaluation of Internal Operations: Internal procedures and systems are monitored and assessed vis-a-vis operational effectiveness and opportunities for improvement by the LWIB and/or one-stop operator.

CRITERION 1: Internal systems are in place to identify and track operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- An LWIB-approved evaluation plan is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

An LWIB-approved evaluation plan within the 2024- 2027 Local Plan for LWIA 7is in place that includes key questions, data sources, and methods of analysis for assessing service integration and operational efficiency and effectiveness. The one-stop operator will use this plan to implement internal systems.

CRITERION 2: Provisions of the MOU are periodically reviewed to ensure partner responsibilities and commitments are being met.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Board meeting minutes reflect that the MOU was reviewed.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

The March 19, 2024 WIB agenda and materials reflect the MOU was reviewed.

3. Improving Performance: Core partners engage local boards in using customer feedback and operational data to continuously improve service delivery, operations and performance.

CRITERION 1:

Customer feedback is used to improve quality and use resources most effectively.

Improvements needed to meet criterion:

Basis for Determination:

- Local board meeting minutes reflect that customer feedback and performance data helped inform decision-making about strategic improvements to strengthen customer-center design goals.
- Other - describe below the basis used for determination:

Certification Team Comments:

Partner performance information is shared at Quarterly WIB and Service quarterly meetings, as needed. WIB Meeting Minutes and Materials are available at <https://chicookworks.org/about-us/our-board/>
The one-stop operator shares customer satisfaction survey data collected Survey responses are reviewed monthly and discussed at Center-Level Meetings.

Workforce Innovation Board: One-Stop Operator

scaleLIT

September 2024



scaleLIT



This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership.

The Illinois workNet® Center System, an American Job Center, is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment by calling TTY (800) 526-0844 or 711. This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. For more information please refer to the footer at the bottom of any webpage at illinoisworknet.com.



***Thank you to the AJC Certification Teams:
Haven Allen, Sarah Lewis-Weaver,
Pamela McDonough, Mark Sanders II,
Jason Spigner, and Pamela Thomas***

American Job Center Moves at City Colleges of Chicago

WE'VE MOVED!

AmericanJobCenter in Garfield Park
has become

**AmericanJobCenter
@ MALCOLM X COLLEGE'S
WEST SIDE LEARNING CENTER**

4624 W. Madison St
Chicago, IL 60644

We look forward to serving you!

A graphic announcement for the American Job Center's move. It features a red banner at the top with the text 'WE'VE MOVED!'. Below this, it states that the American Job Center in Garfield Park has become the American Job Center at Malcolm X College's West Side Learning Center. The address is listed as 4624 W. Madison St, Chicago, IL 60644. At the bottom, it says 'We look forward to serving you!' and includes a red location pin icon. There are also decorative red plus signs scattered throughout the graphic.

American Job Center Moves at City Colleges of Chicago



AmericanJobCenter
AT DALEY COLLEGE

is relocating to the

Lower Level
Rooms L104 & L105

on September 3



Richard J. Daley College
7500 South Pulaski, Chicago

The poster features a black background with white and yellow text. It includes a location pin icon and decorative starburst graphics in the corners.



Cross-Training

August's In-Service Learning Circle

NEW ARRIVALS TRAINING

HELPING NEW ARRIVALS ACCESS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Thursday | August 15, 2024 | 2 P.M.



scaleLIT

SAVE THE DATE



IN-PERSON GATHERING!
SEPTEMBER 20
2024 @ 10 AM
AJC AT THE
KING CENTER



SYSTEMWIDE MEETING
2024

RSVP IN DISCO

**LOCAL WORKFORCE
INNOVATION AREA (LWIA) 7**

ONE-STOP OPERATOR

SYSTEMWIDE UPDATE



SEPTEMBER 2024
(JUNE 15-AUGUST 14, 2024)

Dear Partners,

We appreciate your continued collaboration and dedication to enhancing service delivery and integration. We are grateful to work alongside staff across the Chicago and suburban Cook County American Job Center (AJC) Network as your LWIA 7 One-Stop Operator (OSO). We are thrilled to have had our contract renewed at the June 2024 WIB meeting.

We send Systemwide Updates quarterly (March, June, September, and December). Our new learning management system, Disco, hosts the systemwide update and the partner directory. Most notable from the last quarter: We completed the Certification Applications for the four comprehensive AJCs in Wheeling, Prairie State College, Pilsen, and at the King Center.

A big thank you to the Certification Team:

- Haven Allen, MHUB, LWIB Member
- Sarah L. Lewis-Weaver, The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership staff
- Pamela McDonough, Retired, LWIB Member
- Mark Sanders II, Department of Family Support Services, LWIB Member
- Jason Spigner, Mount Sinai Health System, LWIB Member
- Pamela Thomas, The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership staff

As we embark upon this new contract, we'd like to draw your attention to three exciting updates:

- Two AJC locations have moved, now co-located at the City Colleges of Chicago.
- The OSO will host our first in-person Systemwide meeting on September 20, 2024, at the AJC at the King Center.
- LWIA 7 will have an updated meeting cadence, including an on-site technical assistance day. This on-site technical assistance will offer partners more accessible support for customer satisfaction surveys, Airtable referrals, and other specific needs.

This quarter's Systemwide Update features additional updates to the OSO Meetings, Cross-Training, and Business Services projects. Please contact the OSO team at oso@scalelit.org with questions.



One-Stop Operator

OSO Team

oso@scalelit.org

1016 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago IL 60607

www.scalelit.org

UPDATES:

- **REGULAR OSO MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS**
- **FACILITIES**
- **CROSS-TRAINING**
- **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**
- **UNIVERSAL REFERRAL SYSTEM**
- **BUSINESS SERVICES**
- **AJC ORIENTATION AND MATERIALS**

REGULAR OSO MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS



Consistent and quality communication is the foundation of service integration. OSO engages partners monthly and streamlines resource sharing in Chicago and suburban Cook County. For more information or to access the Partner Directory, visit [Disco](#).

OSO schedules partner meetings at the beginning of each year and follows a consistent meeting framework:

- **Center-level hybrid meetings:**
 - Agenda items include Airtable Data and Customer Survey Dashboard Review, Center Priorities for each Center, Upcoming Events, and Requested Partner Updates.
 - If you would like to request time to share a significant update, discussion topic, etc., or are interested in participating in a meeting:
 - Contact Ema Mailhot-Beutal at ema@scalelit.org for Chicago AJC meetings.
 - Contact Nidia Mejia at nidia@scalelit.org for suburban Cook County AJC meetings.
 - Contact Camilla Benjamin at camilla@scalelit.org to confirm in-person attendance.
- **Systemwide meetings:**
 - Agenda items vary based on relevant campaigns, funding opportunities, or significant OSO project developments.
 - [Visit Disco to access Systemwide meeting details.](#)
 - If you want to learn more about Systemwide meetings or propose topics:
 - Contact the OSO team directly at oso@scalelit.org.

2024 Partner Meeting Schedule	
September	Systemwide In Person Meeting: September 20 at 10 am
October	On-site Technical Support at AJCs
November	10 Center-level Hybrid Meetings
December	Systemwide Virtual Meeting: December 12 at 10 am

Every month, your OSO Manager consolidates resources from all partners into Resources Newsletters. Please continue sending your resources to oso@scalelit.org if you want the community partners to stay aware of your program or events.

FACILITIES



The Facilities Manager, Camilla Benjamin, supports The Partnership with indoor and outdoor signage at all the centers and provides:

- Technology inventory, solutions, and training (Owl camera, tablets, accessibility, etc.)
- Assistance with the physical space in the AJCs (e.g., scheduling temporary hoteling space for offsite partners, coordinating the use of shared meeting spaces, etc.)

Every month:

- Hybrid Partner Meetings
 - Visits each AJC to conduct hybrid Partner Meetings and connect with staff
- Onsite Activities and Staff Updates
 - Identify changes or updates to onsite activities or staff contacts
 - Communicate information to partners and OSO when appropriate

All Owl Ambassadors have completed the multi-part training; relevant resources are available on [Disco](#). During Center-Level Partner Meetings, partners shared their current usage and future plans for their Owl Camera. Partners are using Owls for the following activities:

- Hybrid Partner Meetings
- All Staff Meetings for onsite organizations
- Job Seeker Events (i.e., orientations and information sessions)

This quarter, the OSO has supported the moves of two AJC sites: AJC at Malcolm X College West Campus (previously AJC in East Garfield) and AJC at Daley College. We will continue to support partners so that service delivery is not disrupted.

If you have technology or general Facilities-related questions, concerns, or requests, please email Camilla Benjamin at camilla@scaleit.org.



CROSS TRAINING



Cross-training educates staff on the AJC Network and Partner programs. Cross-training will incorporate best practices in workforce development and OSO tools available throughout the Chicago and Suburban Cook County area.

As we develop additional cross-training sessions, OSO uploads recordings and materials to [Disco](#). This platform enables us to compile a collection of cross-training resources and monitor staff engagement.

158 partners have accessed the LWIA 7 Systemwide Partner Space in the past quarter (June 1 - August 14, 2024).

This quarter, we hosted mini-cross training sessions during center-level meetings for Title III partner Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). Additionally, scaleLIT held an In-Service Learning circle that focused on helping New Arrivals access the public workforce system.

The OSO will close the quarter with a Clean Energy Initiatives panel at the September systemwide gathering. Future cross-training sessions will include Career Pathways, Accessibility, and ADA equipment. We remain dedicated to enhancing our training offerings and expanding our impact.

Upcoming Cross-Training Schedule	
September	September 20 at the King Center - Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA)
November	OSO Cross Training for Assistive Technology at AJCs
December	Know Your Rights Spotlight



DISCO

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY



The Customer Satisfaction Survey standardizes the collection of feedback and simplifies survey administration.

Onsite Survey collects feedback from job seekers who walk into an American Job Center or related site.

- *Methods of Survey Collection: QR Codes on Flyers, Resource Room Computers, and Kiosks.*

Workshop Survey collects feedback from job seekers who attend a workshop or event hosted by a partner.

- *Methods of Survey Collection: QR Codes and Survey links in follow-up emails.*

The Facilities Manager provided new Onsite Survey flyers to all AJC and interested satellite sites. OSO Managers can provide new customized survey links and QR Codes that are unique to a particular site, organization, or event.

- Click this link to request a customized Workshop Survey link and QR Code. Your OSO Manager will provide appropriate details after receiving the request.

Partners can visit the LWIA 7 Systemwide Partner Space on Disco to access the live interactive dashboard at any time. OSO shares this dashboard during all center-level meetings. OSO Managers will send raw survey data to the appropriate partners quarterly or by request.



Contact the OSO team directly at oso@scaleit.org or your respective OSO Manager via email with any questions regarding Customer Satisfaction Surveys, data, posters, etc.

Customer Satisfaction Survey Metrics



Survey Responses Collected

12 Onsite Surveys
27 Workshop Surveys

8,800+

Total Onsite Survey Responses

3,500+

Total Workshop Survey Responses



Customer Satisfaction (Scale 1-5)

Overall, how would you rate your experience?

4.8

Average Satisfaction for Onsite Services

4.5

Average Satisfaction for Workshops



Net Promoter Score (Scale 1-10)

How likely is it that you would recommend this...?

9.5

Average Net Promoter Score for Onsite Services

9.6

Average Net Promoter Score for Workshops

June 14 - July 31, 2024 Survey Metrics

600+

Onsite Survey Responses

470+

Workshop Survey Responses

4.8

Satisfaction for Onsite Services

4.8

Satisfaction for Workshops

9.6

Net Promoter Score for Onsite Services

9.1

Net Promoter Score for Workshops

UNIVERSAL REFERRAL SYSTEM



The Airtable Referral System allows OSO and the AJC Network to view real-time data and referrals across organizations and agencies.

Airtable coordinates referrals for all **10 AJCs**, **3 Satellite sites**, and **63 partner organizations** in LWIA 7. In 2024, OSO has onboarded more partner organizations while facilitating concurrent cross-training to establish clear referral pathways. Airtable Onboarding is ongoing as the team identifies Points of Contact that will receive referral submissions. Interested organizations are onboarded at least once every quarter.

The following partners are using Airtable for referrals:

- LWIA 7 WIOA Title I AJC Service Providers
- Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) Local Offices
- Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)
- Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) North Suburban
- scaleLIT Career Pathways Navigators
- WIOA Title II Adult Education Providers
- Chicago Job Corps
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Providers
- 2nd Chance Reentry Providers
- WIOA Title IB Delegate Agencies
- Additional Partners

With the launch of The Partnership's [LevelUpAJC.org](https://www.levelupajc.org) Campaign, OSO restructured the Airtable space to include two referral forms: the Partner Referral Form and the Career Seeker Interest Form. Both forms will send referral information to the Airtable database. As of August 19, 2024, the site had more than 31,000 views and more than 12,000 new users with more than 1,700 career seekers and nearly 40 employers using the platform to complete a connection with an AJC.



UNIVERSAL REFERRAL SYSTEM



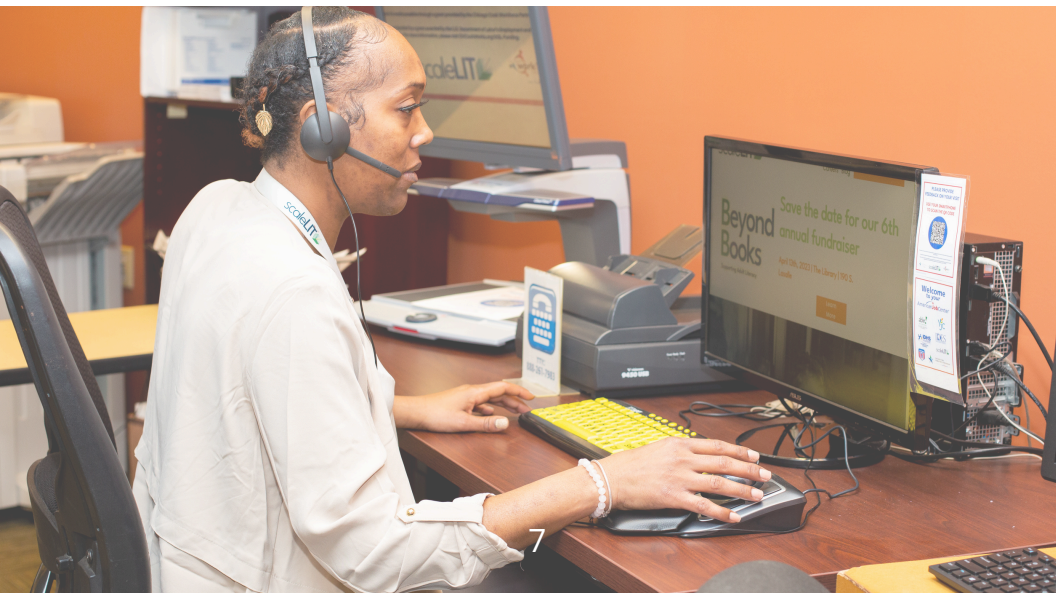
Please review the most up-to-date [Airtable User Guide](#) and the [Airtable Training Video Playlist](#) for more information.

If you have questions about Airtable, please attend the Airtable Office Hours on Tuesdays between 12:30 pm and 1:30 pm. *Click the image to join the Zoom.*

If you need technical assistance outside of Airtable Office Hours, use the [new Airtable Help Desk Ticket Form](#) to submit a request. To submit a Help Desk Ticket, partners should have completed the [Partner Referral Form](#) at least once, either during Onboarding or to refer a client to another partner for services.



The OSO prioritizes our partners' feedback and has finalized a [NEW universal partner referral form](#) that is ADA-compliant. The form allows more access to partners who utilize text-to-talk and tabbing or need higher contrast. Additionally, the form can now seamlessly be completed in English or Spanish.



UNIVERSAL REFERRAL SYSTEM



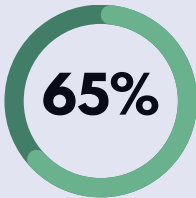
Airtable Referral Metrics

7100+

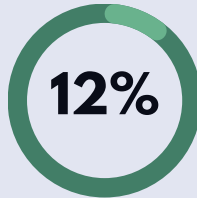
Total Airtable Referrals
(October 2, 2023 - August 14, 2024)

1500+

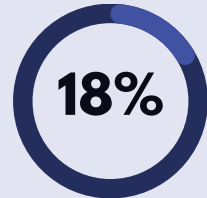
Referrals This Quarter
(June 15 - August 14, 2024)



Referrals
in Progress



Referrals
Completed*



Referrals
Closed**



Referrals Completed ~180
Created >> Completed = ~13 days
58% more efficient than last quarter

Referrals Closed ~260
Created >> Closed = ~ 17.5 days
56% more efficient than last quarter



*Referral Completed is the status option used when the Receiving Partner confirms the referred customer successfully completed the appropriate steps to move forward (i.e., attending an orientation or one-on-one meeting or otherwise receiving services)

**Referral Closed is the status option used when the Receiving Partner cannot contact the customer after three attempts or when the customer does not receive services

BUSINESS SERVICES



The Business Services Project identifies the priorities and conditions of business services staff across LWIA 7.

In 2023, OSO conducted the Inventory and Assessment (I&A) Survey with Business Services staff. We will perform a similar survey with Employer contacts shared by Business Services teams throughout the network.

In October 2023, The Partnership and OSO launched the Business Services Interest Form in Airtable. OSO created a space in Airtable to gather information, engage with employers outside their current network, and create new partnerships. So far, 37 new employer partners have connected with Business Services staff through the Business Services Interest Form.

OSO is collaborating with OrigamiWorks, an organization that specializes in business services. The business services working group will reconvene in 2025 to continue the next steps of the Inventory and Assessment.

If you want to participate in any upcoming Business Services working group activities, contact the OSO team at oso@scaleit.org.



AJC ORIENTATION & MATERIALS



The AJC Orientation and Materials provide a standardized orientation video and informational materials representing all partner services available at the AJCs.

All materials are available in English and Spanish for staff and participants. For more information about the AJC Orientation and Materials, refer to the [AJC Manual Volume 2.5](#) and the [Systemwide Cross-training Space](#) in Disco.

AJC Orientation Video

This is a ten-minute pre-recorded presentation covering all AJC Network offerings. All partners can use the video to educate staff and participants who wish to learn more about the network.



[Click here for the English Video](#)

[Click here for the Spanish Video](#)





ScaleLIT is the One-Stop Operator for Chicago and Cook County

EMAIL:
oso@scalelit.org

LEARN MORE:
scalelit.org/oso

**Scan the QR
Code to join the
Systemwide
Space in Disco**



This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership.

The Illinois workNet® Center System, an American Job Center, is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment by calling TTY (800) 526-0844 or 711. This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. For more information please refer to the footer at the bottom of any webpage at illinoisworknet.com.

Reference Guide for 2024 WIOA Adult and Dislocated Delegate Agency

- A. **Organization Name:** The name of the agency listed on the grant agreement.
- B. **Service Location:** Address of the delegate agency.
- C. **Total Served:** The total number of registered participants with an active service provided by the delegate during the program year through June 30, 2024.
- D. **Percent of Actual to Planned New Enrollments:** The percentage of actual new registrants to planned as recorded in Career Connect through June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 85% and above = 10 points, 70%-85% = 7 points, 55%- 70% = 5 points, below 55% =0**
- E. **Percent Actual to Planned Placements:** The percent of actual job placements to planned placements recorded in Career Connect through June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 85% and above = 10 points, 70%-85% = 7 points, 55%- 70% = 5 points, below 55% =0**
- F. **Percent of Businesses Served:** The ratio of actual business served to the planned number as reported into Career Connect through June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 85% and above = 10 points, 70%-85% = 7 points, 55%- 70% = 5 points, below 55% =0**
- G. **Percent of Cases with Current Case Notes:** The percentage of active participant files with a current case note (within 30 days) entered into Career Connect. (A snapshot in time of case notes). **Scoring: 85% and above = 10 points, 70%-85% = 7 points, 55%-70% = 5 points, Below 55% =0**
- H. **Program Compliance Score:** The overall rating score of a program compliance instrument assessing files and compliance with WIOA regulations. **Scoring: 90%- 100% = 10 points, 80%-89% = 7 points, 70%-79% = 5 points, below 70% = 0 points**
- I. **Fiscal Capacity:** The overall assessment rating of the organization's fiscal procedures, vouchering practices, and fiscal monitoring. **Scoring: Strong = 10 points, Medium= 7 points, Weak= 5 points.**
- J. **Percent of Positive Exits:** The percentage of participants exiting with a positive outcome to the total exits. **Adult Scoring: 70% and above= 10 points, 60%-69% = 7 points, 50%- 59% = 5 points, below 50% = 0 points. Dislocated Worker Scoring: 80% and above= 10 points, 73%-80% = 7 points, 60%-73% = 5 points, below 60% = 0**
- K. **2nd Quarter Employment Rate:** A mandated WIOA performance measure that identifies people who completed the program during the previous year and were verified as employed during the 2nd quarter after exit. The rate is the number of people showing earnings in the second quarter after exit compared to the potential possible in the exit cohort group.
- L. **2nd Quarter Employment Rate Scoring: Adult Scoring: 71% and above Exceed =10 points, 63.9%-71% Meet=7 points below 63.9% =Fail=4 points. DW Scoring: 78.5% and above Exceed =10 points, 70.65%-78.5% Meet=7 points below 70.65% =Fail=4 points N/A = 8 points.**
- M. **2nd Quarter Median Earnings Rate:** A mandated WIOA performance measure that calculates the median quarterly earnings among people in the second quarter after exit. The rate is the middle earnings of all the people who have recorded earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit.
- N. **2nd Quarter Median Earnings Rate Scoring: Adult Scoring: \$7500 and above Exceed =10 points, \$6750-\$7500 Meet=7 points below \$6750 =Fail=4 points. DW Scoring: \$11,000 and above = Exceed =10 points, \$9,900-\$11,000= Meet=7 points below \$9,900 =Fail=4 points NA = 8 points.**

- O. **4th Quarter Employment Rate:** A mandated WIOA performance measure that identifies people who completed the program during the previous year and were verified as employed during the 4th quarter after exit. The rate is the number of people showing earnings in the fourth quarter after exit compared to the potential people possible in the exit cohort group.
- P. **4th Quarter Employment Rate Scoring: Adult Scoring: 69% and above Exceed =10 points, 62.1%-69% Meet=7 points below 62.1% =Fail=4 points. DW Scoring: 77% and above Exceed =10 points, 69.3%-77% Meet=7 points below 69.3% =Fail=4 points N/A = 8 points.**
- Q. **Total Score:** Total point value earned on each benchmark. **Maximum amount is 100 points.**
- R. **Funding PY 23 Amount:** The total amount contractor was funded in PY 2023.
- S. **Recommended Funding PY 24 Amount:** The recommended funding level for PY 2024.
- T. **Justification:** An explanation of the reason and method used to determine funding level. Delegate Agencies failing key measures will be placed on a Program Improvement Plan. Delegate Agencies with low costs per placement were given an increase. Delegates with high costs per placement were given a decrease.

Reference Guide for 2024 WIOA Bridge Programs

- A. **Funding Title:** Adult or Dislocated Worker funding
- B. **Organization Name:** The name of the agency listed on the grant agreement.
- C. **Training Sector:** The industry sector for the training.
- D. **Total Served:** The total number of registered participants with an active service provided by the agency during the October 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
- E. **Percent Enrolled to Plan:** The percent of actual new registrants to planned as recorded in Career Connect through June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 75% and above = 20 points, 65%-75% = 15 points, 55%- 65% = 10 points, 45-55 5 points, Below 45% =0**
- F. **Percent Placements to Plan:** The percent of actual job placements to planned placements recorded in Career Connect June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 75% and above = 20 points, 65%-75% = 15 points, 55%- 65% = 10 points, 45-55 5 points, Below 45% =0**
- G. **Measurable Skills Gains:** The percentage of participants who showed documented gains in occupational or academic skills during the period of 7/1/23-6/30/24. **Scoring: 85% and above = 20 points, 75%-85% =15 points, 65%- 75% = 10 points, 55%- 65% = 5 points, Below 55% =0**
- H. **Percent of Active cases with current case notes:** The percent of participant case files with a case note entered within 30 days to the total participant files. **Scoring: 85% and above = 20 points, 75%-85% =15 points, 65%- 75% = 10 points, 55%- 65% = 5 points, Below 55% =0**
- I. **Compliance Score:** The overall rating score of a program compliance instrument assessing files and compliance with WIOA regulations. **Scoring: 90%-100% = 10 points, 80%-89% = 7 points, 70%-79% = 5 points, Below 70% = 0 points**
- J. **Fiscal Strength:** The overall assessment rating of the organization's fiscal procedures, vouchering practices, and fiscal monitoring. **Scoring: Strong = 10 points, Medium= 7 points, Weak= 5 points, and Fiscal Improvement Plan.**
- K. **Total Score:** Total point value earned on each benchmark. **Maximum amount is 100 points.**
- L. **Funding PY 23 Amount:** The total amount contract amount in PY 2023.
- M. **Recommended Funding PY 24 Amount:** The recommended funding level for PY 2024.
- N. **Justification:** The methodology used to determine the funding amount.

Reference Guide for 2024 WIOA Career Pathways Training

- A. **Organization Name:** The name of the agency listed on the grant agreement.
- B. **Training Sector:** The industry sector for the training.
- C. **Total Served:** The total number of registered participants with an active service provided by the agency during the October 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
- D. **Percent Enrolled to Plan:** The percent of actual new registrants to planned as recorded in Career Connect through June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 75% and above = 10 points, 65%-75% = 7 points, 50%- 65% = 5 points, Below 50% =0**
- E. **Percent Placements to Plan:** The percent of actual job placements to planned placements recorded in Career Connect June 30, 2024. **Scoring: 75% and above = 10 points, 65%-75% = 7 points, 50%- 65% = 5 points, Below 50% =0**
- F. **Measurable Skills Gains:** The percentage of participants who showed documented gains in occupational or academic skills during the period of 7/1/22-6/30/23. **Scoring: 75% and above = 10 points, 65%-75% = 7 points, 50%- 65% = 5 points, Below 50% =0**
- G. **Percent of Cases with Current Case Notes:** The percentage of active participant files with a current case note (within 30 days) entered into Career Connect. (A snapshot in time of case notes). **Scoring: 85% and above = 10 points, 70%-85% = 7 points, 55%-70% = 5 points, Below 55% =0**
- H. **Compliance Score:** The overall rating score of a program compliance instrument assessing files and compliance with WIOA regulations. **Scoring: 90%-100% = 10 points, 80%-89% = 7 points, 70%-79% = 5 points, Below 70% = 0 points**
- I. **Fiscal Strength:** The overall assessment rating of the organization's fiscal procedures, vouchering practices, and fiscal monitoring. **Scoring: Strong = 10 points, Medium= 7 points, Weak= 5 points, Below 70% =0 points.**
- J. **Percent of Positive Exits:** The percent of participants exiting with a positive outcome compared to the total exits. **Adult Scoring: 70% and above= 10 points, 60%-69% = 7 points, 50%- 59% = 5 points, Below 50% = 0 points. Dislocated Worker Scoring: 80% and above= 10 points, 73%-80% = 7 points, 60%-73% = 5 points, Below 60% = 0**
- K. **2nd Quarter Employment Rate:** A mandated WIOA performance measure that identifies people who completed the program during previous year and were tracked as employed during the 2nd quarter after exit. The rate is the number of people showing earnings in the second quarter after exit compared to the potential possible in the exit cohort group.
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- M. **2nd Quarter Median Earnings Rate:** A mandated WIOA performance measure that calculates the median quarterly earnings among people in the second quarter after exit. The rate is the middle earnings of all the people who have recorded earning in the 2nd quarter after exit.
- N. **2nd Quarter Median Earnings Rate Scoring: Adult Scoring: \$7500 and above Exceed =10 points, \$6750-\$7500 Meet=7 points below \$6750 =Fail=4 points. DW Scoring: \$11,000 and above = Exceed =10 points, \$9,900-\$11,000= Meet=8 points below \$9,900 =Fail=4 points NA = 8 points.**

- O. **4th Quarter Employment Rate:** A mandated WIOA performance measure that identifies people who completed the program during previous year and were tracked as employed during the 4th quarter after exit. The rate is the number of people showing earnings in the fourth quarter after exit compared to the potential people possible in the exit cohort group.
- P. **4th Quarter Employment Rate Scoring: Adult Scoring: 69% and above Exceed =10 points, 62.1%-69% Meet=7 points below 62.1% =Fail=4 points. DW Scoring: 77% and above Exceed =10 points, 69.3%-77% Meet=8 points below 69.3% =Fail=4 points N/A = 8 points.**
- Q. **Total Score:** Total point value earned on each benchmark. **Maximum amount is 100 points.**
- R. **Funding PY 23 Amount:** The total amount contractor was funded in PY 2023.
- S. **Recommended Funding PY 24 Amount:** The recommended funding level for PY 2024.
- T. **Justification:** An explanation of the methodology used to determine funding level. Delegate Agencies failing key measures will be placed on a Program Improvement Plan. Delegate Agencies with low costs per placement were given an increase. Delegates with high costs per placement were given a decrease.

THE CHICAGO COOK WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP FUNDING OVERVIEW

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

WIOA DELEGATE AGENCY AND CAREER PATHWAY TRAINING (PY) 2024

WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) Adult and Dislocated Worker PY 2024 Funding Recommendations:

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership continues to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act within our network of delegate agencies and American Job Centers. The Partnership received \$18,856,395 in WIOA Adult funds and \$19,088,671 in WIOA Dislocated Worker funds for PY 2024. This represents a total decrease between the two funds of \$1,424,510 with adult funds receiving a 10.88% increase and a (14.64%) decrease in Dislocated Worker funds. Please note that funding awards are based on a federal and state formula which factors in areas of substantial unemployment, economically disadvantaged adults, declining industries, and long term unemployed.

	PY 24	PY 23	Difference
Adult Funding	\$18,856,395	\$17,006,455	\$1,849,940
Dislocated Worker Funding	\$19,088,671	\$22,365,121	(\$3,274,450)

Program Review Process: The Partnership assessed the Delegate Agencies, Career Pathway Training Programs and Bridge Programs on their achievement of key benchmarks. The benchmarks are listed in their scope of services and included in a negotiated month by month forecast or “loading plan” for the year. Agency outcomes and job seeker and business service activity must be recorded properly within the Career Connect system. Agencies were rated on achievement of actual outcomes in comparison to planned activity through June 30, 2023, the last completed quarter. When rating the three WIOA performance rates, the Partnership reviewed the completed 3rd quarter results and the preliminary 4th quarter results and selected whichever rate was higher. The Partnership leadership team also reviewed the cost per placement. Organizations with low costs per placement are recommended for an increase in funding and those with excessive costs per placement received slight decreases.

In October of 2021, The Partnership issued a new RFP (Request for Proposals) and funded four new Delegate Agencies, seven new Career Pathway Training Programs and 1 new Bridge program. There is still limited WIOA performance data available on these newer agencies due to the data lag associated with exit-based performance measures. Benchmarks with zero reporting or small numbers in the grouping are denoted by a N/A (not applicable) in the chart and the performance will be waived for the benchmark.

Each benchmark was assigned a maximum point value and scoring range. The highest possible total points an agency can achieve is 100 points. Agencies scoring below 70 points or failing key benchmarks related to program compliance may be placed on a Program Improvement Plan.

The following is a listing of the key performance benchmarks:

Delegate Agencies	Career Pathway Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of actual to planned new enrollments. • Percentage of actual to planned placements. • Percent of active case notes with up-to-date case notes • Percentage of actual to planned businesses served. • Program Compliance Score • Fiscal Capacity Score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of actual to planned enrollments. • Percentage of actual to planned placements. • Percentage of Measurable Skills Gained • Percent of active case notes with up-to-date case notes • Program Compliance Score • Fiscal Capacity Score • Percentage of positive exits

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of positive exits • WIOA Performance 2nd Quarter Employment • WIOA Performance 2nd Quarter Median Earnings • WIOA Performance 4th Quarter Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIOA Performance 2nd Quarter Employment • WIOA Performance 2nd Quarter Median Earnings • WIOA Performance 4th Quarter Employment Rate
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Bridge Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of actual to planned enrollments. • Percentage of actual to planned placements in advanced training or employment. • Percent of active case notes with up-to-date case notes • Percentage of Measurable Skills Gained • Program Compliance Score • Fiscal Capacity Score

Delegate Agencies: The Partnership recommends continued funding for twelve WIOA Adult delegate agencies for \$2,260,957. Four delegate agencies are recommended for increases based on their low cost per placement: Calumet Area Industrial Commission, Central States Ser, Dynamic Workforce Solutions, Chicago Federation of Labor Workforce and Community Initiative. One program, Moraine Valley Community College, is recommended for a slight decrease due to the excessive costs per placement.

The Partnership recommends funding eight dislocated worker agencies at \$1,870,000. Three dislocated worker agencies are recommended for increases due to their low cost per placement: Calumet Area Industrial Commission. Dynamic Workforce Solutions, and Metropolitan Family Services. The Partnership recommends placing YWCA Metropolitan Chicago on a program improvement plan to address customer flow and low enrollments.

The Partnership recommends transitioning out South Suburban Community College’s program effective December 31, 2024, due to low performance, low program compliance scores and repeated program improvement plans. The current PY 23 contract will be extended with \$20,000 in both Adult and Dislocated Worker to transfer customers and close out the program.

Career Pathway Training Agencies: The Partnership recommends continued funding for the 11 Adult Career Pathway Training Program totaling \$2,245,000. Two agencies are recommended for increases due to their low cost per placement: Association House and OAI inc. Three agencies were recommended for slight decreases due to excessive costs per placement: Jane Addams Resource Center, Food Hero, and National able Network.

The Partnership recommends continued funding for the six Dislocated Worker programs totaling \$785,000. Greater West Town’s Manufacturing program is recommended for an increase due to low cost per placement while their shipping receiving program is recommended for a slight decrease. The Partnership is recommending a Program Improvement plan for Greater West Town ‘s shipping and receiving program to address program compliance issues.

Bridge: The Partnership recommends continued funding for the Calumet Area Industrial Council bridge program with slight increases due to performance goals. The bridge model is designed to improve basic skills with a goal of moving toward advanced training or placement. The Partnership recommends shifting funding from Jane Addams Resource Center’s program from dislocated worker to the adult program as fewer dislocated workers need bridge training.

**LWIB CHAIR AND CEO(S)
FORMAL REVISION APPROVAL LETTER TEMPLATE**

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

September 19, 2024

Michael Baker
Manager – Strategic Planning & Innovation
Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
500 E. Monroe St.
Springfield IL 62701

Dear Mr. Baker, on behalf of the WIOA Interagency Technical Assistance Team:

The revisions to the [Local Plan] for Program Year [2024] here enclosed have been reviewed and approved by the Local Workforce Innovation Board and Chief Elected Officials of Local Workforce Innovation Area [7].

Attached is a detailed report specifying the required revisions addressed and the location of the revisions in the [Local Plan] submitted [7/30/2024].

Sincerely,

Ms. Smita Shah
Co-Chair, Chicago Cook Workforce
Innovation Board

The Honorable Brandon Johnson
Mayor, City of Chicago

Ms. Jacki Robinson-Ivy
Co-Chair, Chicago Cook Workforce
Innovation Board

The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
President, Cook County Board of
Commissioners

ON BEHALF OF THE LWIA [#] LOCAL WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

CONFIRMATION OF REQUIRED REVISIONS MADE

LWIB CHAIR AND CEO(S)
FORMAL REVISION APPROVAL LETTER TEMPLATE

In the space provided below, please list the required revisions that were addressed by the local area in the revised submission of the regional and/or local plan and, if applicable, the page number on which the revision is located.

REQUIRED MODIFICATIONS

REQUIRED REVISIONS MADE	
Required Revisions in the Local Plan effective beginning July 1, 2024:	
<p>Separate Attachment</p>	<p>Provide a copy of the following local policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy and Security (Personally Identifiable Information) (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 2.2). <p>If there is no local policy, please acknowledge that.</p> <p><i>Response: We provided a copy of the local policy</i></p>
<p>33-38</p>	<p>Provide more forward planning details throughout the 4.E.1 through 4.E.5 sections. Provide information around enhancing services and avoiding duplication of services.</p> <p><i>Response: We added language describing the customer facing service Navigators stationed throughout our One Stop Network that reduce duplication of services and facilitate customer referrals. The plan is to continue to expand Navigator services to additional targeted special populations.</i></p>
<p>39-40 of original</p> <p>41-43 of revised</p>	<p>Provide further context about how the local board will support the state strategies identified in the 2024 – 2027 WIOA State Plan.</p> <p><i>Response: We added a detailed table listing our local strategies, and the ways that the LWIB for LWIA 7 is supporting those strategies.</i></p>
<p>50-51 of original</p> <p>55 of revised</p>	<p>Provide details about how the local area will carry out rapid response activities is compliant, but there is a lack of description about how the local board will support those activities.</p> <p><i>Response: We added a paragraph explaining the partners and functions for the Rapid Response Team, and how The Partnership/LWIA 7 is using Rapid Response as a layoff aversion tool.</i></p>
<p>60 of original</p> <p>64 of revised</p>	<p>Provide further context about "how" the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth will be met.</p> <p><i>Response: We added a paragraph explaining that the Partnership will continue to award a minimum of 80% of its WIOA youth funding to organizations serving out-of-school youth, which will ensure that we exceed the 75% statutory expenditure rate requirement. Through the regular Title I provider RFP and selection process, The Partnership selects and awards subgrants to out-of-youth serving organizations. Each year The Partnership plans and prepares youth budgets to ensure a minimum of 75% of youth funds are dedicated to youth out-of-school services.</i></p>
<p>73 of original</p> <p>78 of revised</p>	<p>Describe how the local area is exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults. If no plans are in place to explore, please not so.</p>

**LWIB CHAIR AND CEO(S)
FORMAL REVISION APPROVAL LETTER TEMPLATE**

REQUIRED REVISIONS MADE	
	<i>Response: We added details of The Partnership/LWIA 7's plans to explore integrating mentoring into our service offerings, including considerations related to recruitment, participant selection, funding, and evaluation.</i>
87 of original 92 of revised	Describe how the local board will ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs. <i>Response: We added text from our Individual Training Account Policy and procedures that emphasizes our commitment to customer choice.</i>
101 of original 106 of revised	As noted in this section, much of the required content was included elsewhere in the plan. Clarify in this section what new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment. <i>Response: We added new information about key service strategies that have demonstrated promising ROI. We have prioritized certain training models over others, for example, including On the Job Training, Apprenticeships, and Career Pathways. We also are focused on increasing the accessibility of training by expanding the number of locations and reducing prerequisites.</i>

2024-2028

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Plan

Illinois Local Workforce Innovation Area 7

Prepared by:



Submitted to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
on March 30, 2024

Revised by July 31, 2024

LWIA 7 Local Plan Components

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Regional Components:

Chapters 1-3: See Regional Plan for Illinois Economic Development Region 4

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Attachments:

- A – LWIA 7 WIOA Memorandum of Understanding PY2023
- B – LWIA 7 Service Integration Self-Assessments and Plans
- C – LWIA 7 WIOA Policy Letters and Agreements as required in Chapter 4, Section B.
- D – Public Comments to the Local Plan

Chapter 4: Operating Systems and Policies – Local Component

This chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs). LWIAs must incorporate key documents into the plan that describe the one-stop delivery system and the services that are provided by the workforce partners. LWIAs are required to provide information and analysis regarding the challenges and opportunities that are associated with the local operating system and policies.

➤ Challenges and Opportunities Associated with Local Operating System and Policies

Challenge or Opportunity	Analysis: How LWIA 7 is addressing or will address this challenge or opportunity.	Implementation
Facility costs. Finding the right sizing system to meet community needs and be most responsive. Locations, size, etc.	LWIA 7 continues to evaluate its facilities and locations from a range of factors, including accessibility; services targeting most at-risk and economically disadvantaged populations; commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and accessibility (DEIA).	The Partnership is currently reviewing all leases and location at its American Job Centers and other facilities. Factors being considered in the review include annual rental costs, Security, total square footage, participant usage, physical accessibility, accessibility to public transportation, proximity to other providers, equity and inclusion, partners present, and lease end dates.
LWIA 7 faced an ongoing set of challenges in facilitating referrals among partners, due to lack of a common tool, different methods per organization, and lack of follow up or tracking of referrals.	A new collaborative software system, AirTable@, is being used to improve making and tracking referrals among sites and partners	We will continue to closely monitor the progress of this new system as it is rolled out to evaluate its impact as well as see opportunities to expand its use, i.e. with New Arrivals.
Influx of New Arrivals and other arrivals of migrants that are arriving in Chicagoland.	Chicago and Cook County are major locations for the current influx of migrants, including those coming across the southern border and directly from crisis regions. LWIA 7 will continue to leverage the	New Arrivals (NAs) have been supported through TPS/EAD workshops since early November 2023 by providing them bilingual Spanish/English speaking staff and bilingual information pamphlets about adult education, ESL & digital literacy, and other workforce services.

	<p>diversity among our AJCs and Delegate Agencies, with broad language capability and specialty capacity in working with certain nationalities and language groups.</p>	<p>Contact information, education, basic skills and work experience information has also been gathered to personalize the facilitation of workforce services.</p> <p>Basic contact information is stored and managed through AirTable. This database assists with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A primary way to communicate with NA is primarily via email. 2. Used to refer clients to ESL, digital literacy, and other training opportunities. 3. Distribute information about work readiness, resource fairs, hiring events, etc. <p>Recent events prepared collaboratively with multiple partners were: 1). Resource Fair at Malcolm X College on 2/14/24 where approximately 215 NA clients participated; 2). A hiring event that was scheduled for 3/19 at MXC College, but, unfortunately, it was postponed.</p> <p>Efforts continue to expand engagement with Title II for ESL and other Adult Education and with community-based organizations for ongoing supportive human and social services.</p>
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A. Coordination of Planning Requirements

1. The Local Workforce Innovation Area 7 **Memorandum of Understanding** provides a description of the area's one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development services as required by WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan. *See Attachment A for a copy of the LWIA 7 Memorandum of Understanding.* (Of note, the MOU guides the work at the 4 Comprehensive American Job Centers.) Throughout this Plan LWIA 7 will reference its entire one-stop system which at the time of this Plan submission is made up of 10 American Job Centers (including 4 Comprehensive centers), 4 Sector Centers, 24 Delegate Agency Affiliates, and 27 Youth providers. The Partnership's American Job Center service delivery system is made up of comprehensive and affiliate centers, as well as virtual access points. The AJC brings together key workforce, education, and other providers to offer seamless services to individuals searching for jobs and hoping to build their technical and employability skills, and to employers looking for skilled workers. Comprehensive AJCs offer a physical location where job seekers and employers can access the programs, services, and activities of all required partner programs.

2. The Local Workforce Innovation Area 7 **Service Integration Self-Assessment Tool** provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). The Service Integration Self-Assessment Tool, and any subsequent modifications, is incorporated by reference into this plan. *See Attachment B for a copy of the LWIA 7 Service Integration Action Plan.*

B. Copies of the following local policies and agreements are attached to this Plan as Attachments numbered according to the Regional and Local Planning Guide.

1. Chief Elected Official (CEO) Functions and Agreement Between Multiple Chief Elected Officials (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 2)
2. Chief Elected Official Delegation of Authority and Acknowledgment of Financial Liability (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 3)
3. Local Workforce Innovation Board (LWIB) Certification and Recertification Requirements (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 5). *Note, LWIA 7 does not have a separate Policy document, but follows DCEO Policy which mirrors WIOA Final Rule, Part 679, Subpart C).*
4. One-Stop Operator Procurement (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 7)
5. Career Planning (WIOA Policy Chapter 4, Section 2)
6. General Follow-Up Services (WIOA Policy Chapter 4, Section 3)
7. Selective Service Registration Requirements (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 1.1)
8. Youth Eligibility (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 4)
9. Service Priorities (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 6)
10. Veterans' Priority of Service Requirements (WIOA Policy Chapter 5, Section 7). *Note the Veterans Priority policy is included in the preceding item #9, Service Priorities Policy.*
11. Individual Training Accounts (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.1)
12. On-the-Job Training (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.2.1)
13. Incumbent Worker Training (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.2.3)
14. Work Experience (WEX) and Transitional Jobs (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 2.5)
15. Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility – Eligible Training Provider List (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 3)
16. Supportive Services (WIOA Policy Chapter 7, Section 4)
17. Privacy and Security (Personally Identifiable Information) (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 2.2) - Please note LWIA 7 does not have an additional policy but simply refers to the State policy.
18. Property Control for Property Purchased with WIOA Funds (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 3.6)
19. Compliant and Grievance Procedures (Nondiscrimination) (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 5)

C. Describe the use of technology and other alternative means of service delivery in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

- 1. How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).**

LWIA 7 strives to build technology systems that allow for seamless use by customers – job seekers and businesses – and interoperability across programs such that a customer need not know which

program a given service is coming through and so providers can use the same systems for the WIOA program and other grants and programs being delivered locally. LWIA 7 will continue to strive for better technological integration and also support for inclusion of non-WIOA into the systems. The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership developed its data system, Career Connect, to reduce silos in workforce service provision. In June 2017, the Case Management component of Career Connect was launched across all area workforce providers. The Case Management functions paired with the Business Service components have been in use since 2015. In 2018, the Individual Training Account (ITA) application process was integrated into Career Connect, allowing career coaches to build ITA applications for participants and submit for approval and voucher processing. In 2020, customer self-service functions were enabled as a response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and customer profile creation presently remains active. Career Connect allows The Partnership and its network of workforce service providers to:

- Conduct WIOA Title I eligibility, case management, and performance management
- Track participation and outcomes in non-WIOA grants, including tracking co-enrollment in WIOA
- Create an individualized employment plan for each job seeker customer
- Initiate ITA applications on behalf of eligible participants
- Post job orders on behalf of employer clients
- Track services provided to employers
- Easily pull reports to track job seeker and employer status and outcomes

All WIOA data entered in Career Connect transfers to the State's Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) where it is compiled for WIOA Title I federal reporting and performance management. The annual maintenance cost of the Career Connect system are high and LWIA 7 will continue to explore cost efficient ways of collecting customer data.

LWIA 7 is aware that the State of Illinois is planning to replace or upgrade the IWDS system with a new system under Illinois workNet, projected to occur during the period of this Local Plan (tentatively Fall 2025). LWIA 7 plans to utilize that system when it is brought online and transition its data and case management system to reduce costs and achieve greater efficiencies. Until this

system is in place, Career Connect will continue to operate and be fully functional and supported, with the Partnership able to generate the same level of reporting, tracking and other data needs for the workforce area and all partners, Delegate Agencies and other service providers.

The Partnership is exploring opportunities to build additional data and reporting capabilities beyond those currently implemented in Career Connect and, later, the successor system to IWDS. The Partnership meets regularly with City of Chicago and Cook County staff to work toward a more comprehensive data reporting system to ensure quality programming and enhanced reporting across the Partnership's services.

In 2023, The Partnership launched the new Airtable© cloud application for referrals among partners and to supplement the case management systems. Airtable© is a collaborative, form-collection database that will allow OSO and the AJC Network to view real-time data and referrals across organizations and agencies. Partners using Airtable© can send, receive, and track referrals to/from other agencies via a single referral form as well as view and update the status of a sent referral. Airtable users can create different views/ways to present data and automate messages and notifications. Job Seekers and employers can sign up directly using a basic interest form that stores contact information in Airtable and then notifies the appropriate AJC staff of new interested customers. Additionally, Partners can view and update the status of a sent referral, provide comments on the outcome of referrals, and collect additional information as needed.

They also can communicate whether customers want to receive training, resources, or support relevant to their disclosed needs and interests. The Airtable database was custom designed for LWIA 7 partners and processes. The goal of implementing the Airtable© Referral System is to address the immediate needs of our partners by providing a pathway for inter-agency referrals. At the same time, the OSO will work with stakeholders to implement a statewide or regional referral solution. With this tool LWIA 7 is better able to streamline referrals from service providers across

Chicago and Cook County.

2. How the local area is using multiple methods to provide orientations for customers, including but not limited to, virtual and asynchronous orientations.

The AJCs and Delegate Agencies each deliver in-person orientation based on a standard orientation template with customization for the specific site and provider. All customers regardless of where they are viewing the orientation will receive the same information. The template is customer-centered, minimizes bureaucratic language and jargon, is in line with our equity commitments and includes both English and Spanish language versions. Partner programs, especially those that are on-site at the AJCs, are also invited to present directly at orientations as their capacity allows. In-person orientations are typically held weekly or on another regular schedule based on the scale and specifics of the site.

LWIA 7 partners also developed a virtual orientation for our American Job Centers that provides a standard overview of available services across the mandated partners. The universal orientation is available online for customers to view remotely or for staff to show in the centers. The virtual orientation is a 10-minute pre-recorded standard orientation video, available online in both English and Spanish, for prospective customers to view at their convenience. The orientation was created with input from all the Core and Required Partners in 2021. All ten AJCs use the same orientation video to ensure consistency across the LWIA 7 network. The orientation can be viewed virtually or used in person at the AJC. The AJC Operator worked with Literacy Works to ensure the orientation uses plain language that can be easily understood at an eighth-grade education level.

The in-person and virtual orientations includes information on:

- The resources the AJCs offer to support customers in their career including information about all Core and Required Partner Programs
- The availability of auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities

- The AJC Network in LWIA 7, which includes five AJCs in the City of Chicago and 5 AJCs in suburban Cook County
- Using the Resource Room(s)
- Services available at no-cost and the availability of additional services for older adults, youth, individuals with a disability, veterans, individuals who were formerly incarcerated, individuals who were recently laid off, and individuals who lost their job as a result of foreign trade
- How to access the services that best meet a customer’s individual needs
- Services available to everyone (Basic Career Services) including the Computer and Resource Rooms, job search workshops, hiring events, job referral boards and more
- Individualized services requiring an eligibility determination including one-on-one Career Coaching and Job Training Grants
- Eligibility requirements for Individualized Career Services
- Examples of how a customer’s career search journey may look

3. How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system through the use of technology and other means, such as online meeting software and mobile workforce centers. (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).

The State of Illinois currently provides multiple platforms for customers to access services through technology. LWIA 7 works successfully in utilizing these platforms and is delivering a range of online tools, software and resources including:

- Illinois workNet, managed by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), is a client-facing web portal that includes listings of all WIOA Title I providers including approved ITA training providers and programs. The site also includes links to

the websites of state agencies that administer or provide services under the other WIOA titles.

- Illinois JobLink, managed by the Department of Employment Security (DES), serves as the state’s labor exchange site. Employers post job openings and search for candidates. Jobseekers post resumes, search for and apply for the posted jobs. Unemployment Insurance recipients are required to post a resume on JobLink to maintain their benefits. JobLink also includes links to the websites of the other WIOA titles and partners.
- The Department of Human Services’ (DHS) website includes an online web referral for Title IV Rehabilitation Services. The simple form feeds directly into the Rehabilitation Service’s case management data system and is assigned to a vocational rehabilitation case manager based on zip code.
- The Partnership administers an online American Job Center customer satisfaction survey and shares the results with all American Job Center operators to better coordinate service delivery.
- The Partnership opened a job-seeker self-service portal on its Career Connect platform to enable remote, virtual WIOA Title I eligibility. Through the portal, jobseekers provide initial eligibility information and upload eligibility documents. Staff then review the information and documents and certify WIOA eligibility.
- LWIA 7 partners developed a virtual orientation for our American Job Centers that provides a standard overview of available services across the mandated partners. The universal orientation is available online for customers to view remotely or for staff to show in the centers. All customers regardless of where they are viewing the orientation receive the same information.
- LWIA 7 core and required partners at each AJC meet monthly in a hybrid meeting format

where participants can attend in-person or virtually. These hybrid meetings are successful because of the use of a technology solution called a Meeting Owl (<https://owllabs.com/products/meeting-owl-3>). The Owl is a camera and microphone that pivots automatically to find the speaker in the room so that virtual participants can always see and hear who is speaking. The Owl also handles the audio from virtual participants so that everyone in the room can hear clearly when someone online or on the phone speaks.

- The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Development and Southern Illinois University developed the Illinois workNet Virtual Job Fair platform. Employers can meet with job seekers looking for employment, host informational sessions, and recruit potential candidates for job openings.
- The Partnership continues to provide virtual digital literacy classes, open to the public, to help people transition to virtual learning and remote work.
- Through a National Dislocated Worker Grant, the Partnership purchased technology upgrades for American Job Center resource rooms that increased their capacity to set up virtual interviews between WIOA participants.
- The Partnership maintains flexibility to use various online meeting software as needed and as selected by each AJC or Delegate site.
- LWIA 7 launched the new Airtable© cloud software platform for intake and referrals across WIOA partners.
- LWIA 7 launched a new LevelUpAJC.org webpage where customers can quickly fill out an interest form with their information and select which AJC and which services, they are interested in receiving a call back from staff within 3 business days.

D. Describe how the Local Board will support the strategies identified in the Unified State

Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of the following, (§679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

- 1. Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i)).**

The Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) is a business-led board that sees, as part of its core mission, the importance of serving individuals with barriers to employment, and approaches this work using the six strategic methods outlined in the Unified State Plan.

Strategy 1: Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning

The Partnership has identified six key strategic themes and priorities which are reflected throughout this plan:

- Programmatic Geography and Special Populations
- Business Engagement and Sector Strategies
- Innovative Program Design
- Distribution of Training Funds
- Service Integration
- Workforce Innovation Board Operations and Committees

In pursuing these priorities, in particular innovative program design, LWIA 7 will work to leverage both WIOA funding and other programs that can maximize flexibility and services across the City and County. This includes not only the formal WIOA Partner programs but also other initiatives underway by partner entities including other divisions of City and County government.

Strategy 2: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

To ensure alignment between the regional talent pipeline and drivers of economic expansion, The Partnership works cooperatively with the Chicago Cook WIB and other stakeholders, including

elected officials. The Partnership supports local and regional economic development efforts, such as Mayor Brandon Johnson's priority communities on the south and west side of Chicago and *Economy 2030*. With *Economy 2030*, The City of Chicago is committed to reducing inequities across its neighborhoods, starting with economic and community development, through city-wide planning. The plan will guide investments that support inclusive growth and the reduction of racial inequity, and is focused on key sectors including Information Technology, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Transportation Distribution Logistics and Hospitality) that look to drive growth in the next decade.

Similarly, the local WIOA system will align with key Cook County initiatives such as the *Cook County Policy Roadmap 2018* which established a sector-based approach and *Cook County Policy Roadmap 2024* which further refines that approach. Cook County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy aims to address economic and racial inequity by aligning resources and targeting investments towards infrastructure, growing businesses, and human capital. Key industry sectors identified by the County include fabricated metals, food processing and packaging, transportation and logistics, and healthcare. These efforts pursue policies and programs that create an environment for economic growth and have an intentional focus on reducing inequities in areas that have historically experienced disinvestment in infrastructure, unjust housing policies, and a loss of jobs and economic opportunity.

The Partnership will continue to scale alignment with regional business-facing employment and training programs. In addition to substantial resources invested in employer-facing tools such as on-the-job training and incumbent worker training, The Partnership is directly involved in apprenticeship projects and recently was awarded a grant from DCEO to grow and expand the number of registered apprenticeships throughout Cook County. The Partnership will continue to work with the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development for opportunities to grow

apprenticeships within the manufacturing in southern and western Cook County. In August of 2023, members of The Partnership’s Business Relations and Economic Development team along with Sector Center staff participated in an Apprenticeship Boot Camp to learn the apprenticeship process. The Partnership plans to reposition the Sector Centers as the hubs for apprenticeship development in the future.

In August 2022, the Partnership received a \$18.5M Economic Development Administration Good Jobs Challenge grant, which we continue to use to create durable and resilient career pathways into intermediate and mid-level jobs in industries essential to Chicagoland’s economic recovery: healthcare; information technology (IT or “tech”); manufacturing; and transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL). Each sector’s effort is led by a hub organization driving a multi-partner sector initiative. The Good Jobs Challenge goal is to train 2,000 and placed 1,800 in employment.

In collaboration with the Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago, The Partnership created a Regional Business Services Team to address demand from business that have a regional or national footprint. This gathering of local business services representatives from ten counties is organized to strengthen regional integration of WIOA activities. The local business services representatives meet alternate months during a calendar year to discuss current grant activities, regional incumbent worker training projects, share best practices and business services strategies. Most recently, members of the business relations and economic development team participated in a talent pipeline management academy and an apprenticeship boot camp. This team also reviews and discusses sector focused regional activities and impacts.

Finally, Chicago-Cook County will build on and collaborate with industry sector targets and sector strategies that may be built regionally, as outlined in the EDR 4 Regional Plan and as continue to be developed through regional collaborative activities and efforts.

Strategy 3: Advance Equity: Provide Economic Advancement for All Populations through Career

Pathways

These efforts are guided by City of Chicago and Cook County commitments to equity and targeting services for the under-served, including the 2023 Cook County Equity Task Force Progress Report, the 2021 Equity Fund Report which promotes “good jobs” principles, and prioritizes services for historically marginalized populations. The Partnership seeks to provide economic advancement for all jobseekers by designing innovative, cross-system initiatives to address expanded access for special populations such as those identified in the Unified State Plan. In conjunction with DCEO and the US Chamber of Commerce (Foundation), the Partnership launched the TPM Academy (Talent Pipeline Management). The project aims to train business, workforce development leaders on the Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) approach to demand-driven strategy to create real career pathways for students and workers with talent future projected high demand career pathways aligned to dynamic business needs. This project is employer lead and driven to include business leaders, decision makers and community partners. Using WIOA formula funds, The Partnership perennially awards providers serving specific special populations including parenting youth, youth with disabilities, foster youth, and others. Using leveraged or braided resources, The Partnership is also able to design and scale pilot initiatives that specifically target additional populations, including opportunity youth, older workers, public housing residents, individuals affected by the opioid crisis, and individuals returning to their communities from incarceration.

The Partnership’s Opportunity Works initiative is a blended funding model that exposes suburban youth (ages 16 and 24) who are disconnected from school and/or the workforce to high growth careers, teaching foundational skills while youth participate in a paid internship. The program has attracted more than \$5 million in funding since inception and continues to attract funders and businesses.

The Partnership continues to expand capacity throughout the WIOA Youth service system to better

serve young adults exposed to violence in their communities. Supportive Workforce Access for Youth began in 2018 as a community of practice in which WIOA Title I providers, with the assistance of Illinois Collaboration on Youth (ICOY), explored the causes and effects of violence in Chicago, and designed strategies to use Trauma-Informed Care practices in serving youth. ICOY, in collaboration with Chicago Jobs Council, has turned these findings into a curriculum design specifically to teach trauma informed practices to front line WIOA staff. The Partnership continues to require youth delegate agency staff to participate in trauma-informed care training. Additionally, our recent National Dislocated Worker Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training QUEST grant program outlined below in Section H.3.(e) is enhancing our ability to target a broader pool of most disadvantaged low-income residents with access to quality employment and training opportunities.

Strategy 4: Expand Service Integration

In 2021 The Partnership issued two requests for proposals: Delegate Agencies and Career Pathway Training Programs. Both RFPs were designed to expand our outreach and access to historically underserved populations and communities. Through these initiatives, The Partnership funded 13 Career Pathway Training programs including two bridge programs and 14 delegate agencies.

As part of The Partnership's ongoing efforts aimed at service integration, the four comprehensive American Job Centers have begun formal service integration planning intended to deepen alignment in 2024 and beyond. Staff at each comprehensive American Job Center engaged in an individual planning process to set initial goals for the next year. Initial goals include a commitment to cross training for front line staff from all titles of WIOA, increased center level coordination and communication, and a shared customer database. The Partnership intends to roll out service integration planning to all American Job Centers and secure the engagement of the state agencies that administer the other titles of WIOA. LWIA 7 will work to collaborate with all system partners

and as noted in sections on Youth, focus particular effort on working with K-12 education as well as higher ed.

Strategy 5: Promote Improved Data-Driven Decision Making; and

Strategy 6: Advance Public-Private Data Infrastructure

Data is at the center of The Partnership’s effort to create smarter solutions to economic challenges faced by residents of Chicago and Cook County. The Partnership’s current case management and data system, Career Connect, has a range of features that allow us to analyze and adjust service provision to optimize customer outcomes. As noted above, LWIA 7 will join the State’s new case management system when it is launched within the next few years and expects our online systems to match or exceed the functionality and capability for staff and participants of our current Career Connect system. The business service functions of our system allow for rapid analysis of which sectors are being served by the system at any given time, allowing for a clear picture of how the WIOA system is addressing the needs of growth industries in the region. Job orders are posted directly to the system, allowing for better sharing of opportunities among the WIOA network of businesses who need workers. Business analysis can be run at the center level, putting new and dynamic tools in the hands of front-line service providers. Other reporting mechanisms of our system allow for geocoding, which gives new insight into how WIOA services and outcomes break down across geographies. Reporting by community area, municipality, or elected official district can give a unique picture for service providers and other stakeholders to use not only in analysis of current needs, but in ways to adjust service provision or align additional resources for better business and jobseeker outcomes in the future.

To promote informed decision making, The Partnership produces regular labor market reports for use by service providers, job seekers, employers, and key stakeholders. The “Where are the Jobs” report is created using the Labor Insight tool from Lightcast to analyze hundreds of thousands of

recent postings pulled from internet job boards. This data helps The Partnership understand current job demand and employer needs in Cook County and its 130+ municipalities. This report is published quarterly, posted on The Partnership’s website, and required for use by case managers/career coaches with job seekers when assisting them in developing individualized employment plans. The Partnership also uses this tool with business customers to improve their understanding of the local market as well.

Understanding real-time talent demand led The Partnership to create its current policy focusing Individual Training Account resources toward a limited number of growth occupations. On The Partnership’s website, each of the initial list of 40 occupations has a corresponding “Target Occupation Profile” (TOPs), a professionally designed printable brochure for use by providers and jobseekers. TOPs give an easy-to-understand picture of an occupation, from daily responsibilities to salary trends, to types of preferred and available training for prospective jobseekers.

ITA training and training provider data is housed in Illinois workNet, an online portal which houses resources for use by Illinois workforce development practitioners and jobseekers. There, jobseekers interested in pursuing training in the course of WIOA services can find data on every training program approved for ITA funding, including cost, credentials, and aggregate consumer outcomes.

The Partnership continually explores new data partnerships and affiliations to learn more about the WIOA system’s customers, gain insights to pursue operational efficacy, and to decode the needs of the region’s dynamic business community.

2. Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their State of Illinois High School Diploma and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credentials and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations.

The Partnership is working closely with the City Colleges of Chicago's leadership as they seek to implement innovative Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs across six colleges in order to increase the number of Bridge students obtaining an industry-recognized credential while preparing for the high school equivalency and/or strengthening English language skills. The Partnership is currently expanding support for and alignment with City Colleges of Chicago's (CCC) Bridge Programs. This tuition-free model helps students improve their reading, writing, math, and English skills while earning an industry certificate that can lead to entry-level job opportunities. The Partnership intends to work closely with CCC and explore ways to braid funding between Title 1 and Title II to grow the program and provide more comprehensive career pathway training and supportive services. As the program evolves, The Partnership intends to explore potential expansion of this support to the additional six sectors within the City Colleges Career Bridge Program, as well as consider the potential connection between these programs and successful systemic improvements. In 2020, The Partnership launched a Title II Navigator pilot program at the Near West American Job Center to connect individuals with basic skills deficiencies to workforce services and job seekers to adult education and ESL services. Through multiple funding sources including an ARPA grant from Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, ScaleLit employs eight (8) Navigators at several American Job Centers to assist individuals in obtaining services from the various WIOA partners. Navigators assist community residents in accessing career pathway tools, job training and education, and employment through outreach events, orientations, and a regular presence in American Job Center high traffic areas. They are working with City Colleges and Chicago Public Schools to expand information about WIOA programs and partner efforts including collaborations with Career and Technical Education and expanded work-based learning opportunities for youth and adults. Similarly, the Navigators have played a pivotal role at a suburban American Job Center

by facilitating the dissemination of information about Career Technical Education programs to partners and job seekers, streamlining referrals and enhancing engagement. Moving forward, more collaboration with our area suburban community colleges is needed by the Partnership and ScaleLIT.

3. How the core programs in the local area will leverage their business services to provide more holistic support to employers.

The Partnership contends that the best path for economically distressed communities is to ensure individuals are prepared for and connect to good jobs while working with employers holistically. The Partnership takes an industry-centered, demand-driven approach to workforce development and promotes innovative strategies in employer engagement, and our work is rooted in seven high-growth, high-demand sectors. Since 2012, The Partnership formed the Business Relations and Economic Development (BRED) Unit. BRED team member's work has been aligned with the region's high-demand sectors: Business and Professional Services, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, Information Technology, Construction/ Skilled Trades and Retail, Culinary and Hospitality & Tourism. In each of these sectors, a dedicated Business Relations Specialist engages with employers to ensure that The Partnership's program strategies align with latest industry demand and standards, and to create immediate and future job opportunities for our job-seeking customers. The Partnerships' BRED team has engaged thousands of employers and raised the private sector's awareness of the region's public workforce system as a pipeline for its talent demands. In the fall of 2023, three members of the BRED team participated in the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation' Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Academy. The eight-session course was designed to train business service team members on the TPM playbook for creating local and regional business sector partnerships and how to use the web tools for data collection and analysis.

To further support the region's employers, The Partnership created four industry Sector Centers, which are managed by the BRED Team members. The sectors include Healthcare, Hospitality and Tourism, Information Technology and Transportation, and Distribution and Logistics.

The Sector Centers deliver recruitment and retention services to employers. These services include but are not limited to:

- Coordinating recruitment events for large or small hiring needs.
- Providing applicant pre-screening services to ensure a business is presented with a qualified talent pool from which to choose potential employees.
- Promoting work-based learning, such as Department of Labor apprenticeship programs that provide new skills to entry-level employees to increase employee retention.
- Implementing train-to-hire initiatives to create a pipeline of pre-trained new hires who are ready to “hit the ground running” and enhance employer services.
- Working with employers and educational institutions/partners, such as City Colleges and the suburban college system, to coordinate Integrated Education and Training of adult education activities with other WIOA core programs and develop innovative programs for current employees and new hires.
- Connecting employers to tax incentives and training reimbursement grants to create cost savings that can be reinvested in a business
- Promoting business services offered by partners, such as Illinois Department of Employment Security services employer tax information, unemployment reporting, and hiring solutions, like Illinois Job Link and Work Share.

The Partnership's BRED Team and Sector Centers develop productive, working relationships with employers, partners and industry associations which lead to career advancement opportunities for employees and new hires. They work with the region's mandated partners to provide businesses with workforce system and economic development resources but not limited to internships, paid work experience, on-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeship, customized training, and incumbent worker training. These services will be informed by local business needs and will include human resource analysis, training assessments, curriculum development, career ladder development, job

matching/interviewing and job placement. Within the industry, a business may express a need to attract new workers, onboard new hires, train its existing workers or require Rapid Response re-employment services. The overall goal is to improve the competitiveness of the regional industry, increase access to the number of quality jobs within the industry sector and develop a pipeline of skilled workers that meet the labor needs of local employers in the targeted sector. Ultimately, Sector Centers are expected to act as a convener to bring together and educate key partners and the workforce system and to develop innovative solutions to business needs. These partners may include businesses, WIOA and non-WIOA workforce delegate agencies, local, State, and Federal departments, trade associations, community-based organizations, training providers, educational institutions, and labor unions.

The Partnership and our Sector Centers, AJCs and delegate agency network support our business through various hiring events and recruiting and screening events. While these activities occur regularly throughout the network several large-scale initiatives are highlighted below:

Hospitality Hires Chicago: This signature event began as a collaboration between Choose Chicago and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership as a way to bring together high demand hospitality industry professionals with the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership. Each year a high number of job vacancies go unfilled due to the limited access to qualified candidates. Choose Chicago felt the Partnership offered services to both employers and job seekers to help high-growth high-demand industries get the access they need to connect them to pre-screened job seekers, making the hiring process more efficient. As a result, the Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association, the Illinois Restaurant Association, and The Magnificent Mile Association decided to coordinate their hiring efforts with The Partnership and Hospitality Hire Chicago was born. Hospitality Hires Chicago is an annual hiring event built around the demand for talented employees in Chicago's hospitality, tourism and retail sectors. The Partnership coordinates candidate pre-screening and

prepares employers to make conditional employment offers on-site at the hiring event. In April of 2024 the Partnership will host its 7th Annual Hospitality Hires Chicago at the Palmer House Hotel with the following sponsors: Choose Chicago, Chicago Loop Alliance, The Magnificent Mile Association, Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association, Illinois Restaurant Association, the Near South Planning Board, Cook County and the City of Chicago.

Career Connector Events: In May of 2022, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle announced the launch of The Cook County Career Connector Program. The Program consists of holding hiring events at suburban Cook County sites within The Partnership’s network and promoting a more inclusive and equitable economy as Cook County emerges from the pandemic. These efforts are designed to connect residents to quality jobs while connecting employers to a skilled and diverse talent pool. The Program includes two main types of events large-scale signature regional events led by The Partnership’s five suburban Cook County American Job Centers (AJCs) and smaller hyper-local events, some of which targeted certain populations or industry sectors. A dedicated website is used for job seekers to register for events and employers to request assistance. More than 950 job seekers and nearly 135 employers attended a ½ dozen Career Connector events in the summer and fall of 2023 in suburban Cook County in suburban Cook County.

The Good Jobs Chicago project is an employer-led, community driven initiative to promote economic resiliency and growth for Chicago and Cook County. Through this grant, The Partnership will coordinate employer sector teams in healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and transportation logistics. This new grant will help The Partnership identify sector champions for Cook County and strengthen our sector strategies as recommended by the IWIB Business engagement committee.

4. Increasing the awareness of the services the workforce development system offers to

both individuals and employers in the local area.

The Partnership uses a plethora of communications tools to inform regional residents (career seekers) and employers (career providers) about the tools and services the regional workforce development network provides. They include website; e-mail blasts; e-newsletters; fliers and digital images; texting; press release and earned media; Hire Frequency podcast; The Partnership Show on WVON AM radio; press conferences; videos; and paid/purchased media. Social media followers have seen marked growth over the past 3 years, from September 2020 to September 2023 with the following increases: X (formerly Twitter) growing 28% to 1,496; Instagram growing 105% to 1,009; LinkedIn growing 202% to 2,725; and Facebook growing 162% to 2,702. We have also created web pages and Formsites and provided support for the organization's programs, events and initiatives aimed at specific populations, such as Road Home, Opportunity Works, Hospitality Hires; Hire Chicago and Cook County Career Connector events and more.

The Partnership is committed to sharing information about the 90 plus organizations in our regional workforce development network in Chicago and suburban Cook County. In late 2022, we undertook plans to create an awareness campaign focused on attracting more career seekers and career providers (employers) to the ten regional American Job Center (AJCs). Over the previous years, during the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person attendance at the AJCs had declined. In addition, the country as a whole had experienced a workforce shortage, while employer demand and inflation rates rose. Though nationally unemployment was quite low, in Chicago and suburban Cook County there were multiple neighborhoods continuing to experience unemployment above a rate of 20%. Throughout Illinois, racial disparities in unemployment persisted with Black and Hispanic workers were more than twice as likely to be unemployed as White workers. Over program year 2021 (July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022):

- Nearly 62% of Partnership adult customers identified as African American and nearly 19% identified as Hispanic.

- 43% of Partnership adult customers who had lost their jobs identified as African American and nearly 25 % identified as Hispanic.
- Currently, nearly 60% of Partnership youth/young adults (16-24) customers identify as African American and nearly 30% identify as Hispanic.

In 2023, the Partnership partnered with a creative agency called The Lemon Ad Stand to work with The Partnership’s small internal communications team (currently two people) to achieve this goal and to contribute to reimagining our AJCs in a post-pandemic economy. This work was not done in a vacuum. We worked closely with leadership and staff at the delegate agencies who operate the AJCs and partners; our one stop operator (ScaleLit); Partnership staff and ensured key stakeholders (DCEO, Cook County and The City of Chicago) were aware of the creation of this campaign. The collaboration resulted in LevelUpAJC.org, a website that speaks directly to career seekers and providers. We also utilized “public service announcement” capacity on Chicago’s digital billboards, distributed a press release and provided a digital toolkit with social media posts and copy for their own use; of course, we regularly post this information on our own social media platforms as well. We have also received earned media coverage of the campaign. The page launched the first week of October 2023 and as of early January 2024, more than 5,000 residents had visited the page and nearly 500 (approximately 10% of visitors) had used the page to reach out to an AJC and we feel sure that others have used this tool for awareness and have contacted an AJC in a different way, which includes a toll-free number. Another element of public outreach regarding this campaign and bringing awareness to the ten AJCs is re-naming the AJCs themselves and providing new, upgraded signage reflecting those names. Some of the AJC’s names were not intuitive, i.e.: Mid-South AJC (in Chicago at the King Center) or North Cook AJC (in the suburb of Wheeling.) We re-named these and others; we asked that the majority of the name change, and new signage be in place and complete by January 31, 2024, and ensured they are on our website and used correctly in materials.

5. Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments.

“Articulated Credit For Prior Learning,” a policy of City Colleges of Chicago, allows prospective students who completed career pathway courses of study in high school to reap between 3 and 12 college credits for classes leading to Basic Certificates, Advanced Certificates, or Associate Degrees at a City College. In order to receive articulated credit students must be Chicago Public School alumni who are no more than two years removed from graduation and submit both their transcripts and articulated Career and Technical Education award.

Suburban Cook County Community Colleges offer similar options for students. Moraine Valley’s policy, “Achieved Prior Learning” requires that students are enrolled and have completed some work in their course of study. Harper College’s Proficiency Exams and “College Level Examination Program” award credit in certain topics based both on secondary experience, and in some cases through an examination of extensive work/life experience in a course area.

In coordination with post-secondary partners, the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board will explore strategies for marketing these and other tools for the acceleration of post-secondary completion to youth and young adults pursuing WIOA training in regional community colleges.

6. How targeted marketing will be used to reach segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations, as well as younger jobseekers that do not yet have a plan for a post high school career.

The Partnership has been successful in engaging specific populations such as mature workers and the underemployed. The Partnership has become an integral part of the “BACK TO Work 50+” network, supported by AARP Foundation. This program targets the portion of the seasoned workforce that was hit hardest by the pandemic. The Partnership’s Back to Work 50+ program,

funded by AARP, was designed to help people age 50+ gain confidence and skills while exploring opportunities to compete and succeed in today's workforce.

The Program serves AARP members and non-members alike to equip older workers with the resources, know-how, and training needed to unlock economic mobility and build financial wellness. Members of this population can be especially susceptible to healthcare issues and were very reluctant to return to the workforce during, or even after, the pandemic.

Leveraging WIOA to provide additional wrap-around services, The Partnership has successfully engaged this population with targeted marketing in the form of BACK TO WORK 50+ in 7 Steps Guide for 50+ Jobseekers, coaching sessions, and a yearly symposium held to explore the unique challenges of older workers and attract businesses to the cause. The Partnership will continue to address these needs of our most vulnerable population and continue to support the work of BACK TO WORK50+ for Cook County and the Chicagoland Area. The Partnership also takes great pride in the connection it has fostered with underserved communities. LWIA 7 has a network of over fifty (50) public workforce service providers delivering a variety of programs in over sixty (60) locations, procured strategically to meet the needs of communities facing high rates of unemployment. In many ways, the geographic coverage of the network is the best form of targeted marketing, putting services at the doorstep of individuals who need them most.

To this end, The Partnership continues to utilize a strategic communications plan to establish a framework for targeting specific audiences of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed. Using a wealth of resources listed earlier in this document (such as texting platforms, social media, digital marketing tools, street marketing, media, billboard, radio, public service announcements, paid and free promotional ads,). The Partnership is able to provide a diverse strategy and reach throughout the Cook County region.

The Partnership aims to garner attention and generate awareness through attending community

events and working in cohesion with community partners, local and national influencers, elected officials, and key stakeholders to generate awareness about public workforce programs.

To date, The Partnership has generated support on a local and national level allowing the organization to amplify its support of a diversity of populations that are otherwise underserved and less likely to access workforce development resources. Some examples of The Partnership's outreach efforts include:

- **Media:** The Partnership invites media to attend program launch events, hiring events, and lifts up individual participant success stories. The Partnership uses media coverage to garner regional and possible national awareness around innovative efforts and initiatives. This helps contribute to the narrative about the positive efforts enhancing the quality of resources available to underserved communities and to showcase the success of the public workforce system in Chicago and Cook County, in turn exposing potential customers to an opportunity to seek services.
- **General Public:** The Partnership's network seeks to engage community members and general audience through inviting them to participate in hiring events, job fairs, information sessions and more. Ideally hosted at workforce service providers like American Job Centers, community-based events can make Chicago and Cook County residents feel connected to accessible resources. The aim is to create a space where the public can share their input, interact with service providers, and get education about the workforce system.

Further, The Partnership uses e-newsletters and mass messaging (usually via email) alerts for sharing events, success stories and information related to workforce development programming, while also soliciting feedback to be used for continuous improvement. In this way, audiences can feel connected to the workforce development system through regular communications about program efforts and highlights.

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

The Partnership currently funds career pathway training programs in the manufacturing, healthcare, culinary, banking, construction and transportation, distribution logistics sectors. These programs feature combined career coaching, basic skills training, technical training and supportive services. The Partnership periodically evaluates the effectiveness of these models and adjusts offerings accordingly.

The Partnership supports scaling of innovative career pathway models such as the Jane Addams Resource Corporation's *CNC and Welding Fast Tracks* programs for entry level employment in manufacturing. The curriculum stresses baseline skills in shop math, print reading and precision metrology. This bridge program is for learners with initial test scores between 5th and 8th grade in math and reading.

City Colleges of Chicago's Adult Education program plays a crucial role in supporting the regional economy and developing neighborhoods through providing opportunities for Adult Education students to transition into the workforce and career pathways. There are over 310,000 Chicagoans without a high school diploma and 615,000 people whose primary language is not English. Over the next several years, The Partnership looks to scale current efforts to co-enroll students from City Colleges' Bridge Program into WIOA Title I services for purposes of braiding funding. City Colleges support the first semester of the bridge program, concentrated on basic skills remediation for success in the field. The Partnership will support the second semester of training via ITAs for the certified nursing assistant credential. The Partnership and City Colleges will continue to review and improve on our efforts for joint programming.

8. Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification,

portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

The Partnership is committed to improving access to industry-recognized certificates and credentials, predominantly through Individual Training Accounts and Career Pathway training models. The Partnership's training provider eligibility and certification policy requires that ITA-eligible programs result in a recognized credential and requires that programs meet performance criteria of 70% successful completion rate and training-related entered employment rate and 60% credential attainment rate. Further, The Partnership continually examines the geography of workforce service provision to ensure that the network is serving areas of need, as well as aligning with other workforce and economic development plans.

E. Describe how local strategies will be coordinated with state (including the Unified State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities:

A. Chicago and Cook County leadership continue to provide critical high-level guidance on the goals and strategies of the local workforce system. Because Chicago has recently undergone a mayoral transition, the Partnership and local system partners are re-invigorating our efforts with support from local leadership. Mayor Brandon Johnson's administration is currently reviewing the City of Chicago's expansive workforce development investments and services for strategic alignment and the development of a comprehensive workforce agenda. Leadership from The Partnership are involved in these strategic planning sessions and committed to aligning, implementing, and leveraging services where possible to achieve the goals in the plan. Also, the Partnership will continue its productive working relationship with President Preckwinkle and the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, working aligned to service and inform Cook County businesses of available federally funded no cost business services. The Partnership

continues to facilitate federal ARPA funds to provide hiring events for suburban Cook County residents.

In addition, The Partnership has implemented a network of Navigators throughout our one stop system via our One Stop Operator. The Navigators are customer facing staff that work across WIOA titles to connect customers with the right programs and services and to assist with referrals and enrollments. Navigators obtain programming information across all required and core partners under WIOA to send comprehensive referrals for the system that are timely and relevant. The Navigators cultivate relationships with staff from all partners, so they can ensure follow-through with all referrals via the referral system described below. This reduces duplication of services, promotes a seamless customer experience, and provides continuity in the event of staff turnover or other issues.

1. The Navigator model gained national recognition with a 2020 award from National Skills Coalition and has grown to 8 Navigators covering 10 American Job Centers to support jobseekers. The Navigator model has built on promising best practices to expand services to targeted special populations. **Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).**

The Partnership is committed to service alignment across funding streams and program models that will ensure the maximum programmatic impact. Coordination with state partners is a continual process and happens both in the context of regular meetings between organizational leadership and that of Title I administrative agency, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and in the context of regular Workforce Innovation Board engagement. Representatives from Titles II, III, and IV of WIOA sit on the local workforce board and its committees, actively supporting and providing direction for the local workforce system.

Over the course of the prior Local Plan period, The Partnership procured a new One-Stop Operator

(OSO), ScaleLIT (formerly The Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition), to serve as the OSO for all ten American Job Centers. The OSO has standardized a number of procedures across all AJCs to enhance services and reduce duplication. The OSO convenes all Core and Required Partners, including Title I for each AJC on a monthly basis. The OSO also convenes all partners systemwide (from all 10 AJCs) on a quarterly basis to ensure partners are informed about each other's services and activities and able to identify opportunities to collaborate and reduce duplication of work.

The OSO also regularly engages all partners, including Title I, in Project Working Groups to create solutions for all partners. All partners are now able to use the same standardized WIOA Orientation, one coordinated universal referral system, use one standard Customer Satisfaction Survey and review the Survey data together at monthly partner meetings, and rely on one universal "AJC Manual" for onboarding new staff.

The Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago is a coalition of Local Workforce Boards (of the counties surrounding Chicago), developed over 15 years ago to serve as a platform for regional workforce investment and economic development coordination. This collaboration has expanded under WIOA to include Title I Administrators from each local workforce investment area and to provide a forum for periodic coordinated planning with core partners. The Workforce Partners of Metropolitan Chicago fundraises for jointly administered regional grants, committing to project coordination and information sharing.

Local coordination of services has also been extensive under WIOA. The Partnership convenes its network of 65 WIOA Title I service providers, gathering best practices and input for continuous systemic improvement. In addition to jobseeker services, The Partnership also leads coordination of Title I providers' business-facing efforts, meeting monthly with business service representatives from area Sector Centers and other Title I organizations to streamline business engagement and participate in an innovative shared-placement model that incentivizes collaboration between

service providers.

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

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership coordinates with the WIOA Title II system administered by the Illinois Community College Board in a variety of ways. The leadership team at The Partnership, City Colleges of Chicago and the Chicago Mayor's Office recently participated in a day summit to identify opportunities for aligning strategies, implementing new initiatives, and sharing data/ best practices. Among other ideas, both entities saw an opportunity for more coordination of bridge programming. The Partnership and City Colleges will continue to explore additional opportunities to leverage Title I and Title II funds in innovative ways.

Staff from The Partnership's OSO regularly attend meetings of the Title II Area Planning Council #508, a network of Title II funded community colleges and community-based organizations. As noted at the start of this section, the innovative Navigator project expanded from a piloted Title II Career Pathways Navigator to become a WIOA partner-wide system or services navigator. ScaleLIT, formerly known as Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition, created a Title II Navigator, a model that resulted in increased efficiency and streamlined provision of adult education services , as well as solutions for tracking and referral of participants that benefit all of the organizations serving the community. The model gained national recognition with a 2020 award from National Skills Coalition and has grown to 8 Navigators covering 10 American Job Centers to support jobseekers.

Many of the workforce organizations in Chicago and Cook County have WIOA Title II programs collocated in their offices and other Title II organizations connect to workforce locations by

technology for the seamless referral of WIOA customers when Adult Education services are needed. The WIOA Title II organizations in Chicago and Cook County are also partners in the development and approval of the annual WIOA Memorandum of Understanding at all comprehensive One Stop locations.

In addition to coordination at the WIB level, Title II staff attend the OSO's monthly partner meetings at each AJC, and the quarterly systemwide partner meetings referenced above. Title II staff have also been active participants in the Project Working Groups referenced elsewhere in this plan that have led to improved service coordination and reduction in duplication including the Universal WIOA Orientation, the new universal referral system in Airtable©, the standardized Customer Satisfaction Survey used by all partners, and the AJC Manual.

All Title II providers in Chicago belong to the Area Planning Council 508 and meet quarterly. The Partnership will be invited to participate in this meeting to improve coordination of services.

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

In addition to representation on the Chicago Cook WIB, the local WIOA Title III administrator, the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), is actively engaged in ongoing planning and service delivery. Coordinated service provision is common throughout the American Job Centers in the provision of veterans' services, Rapid Response activities, and business services.

The Partnership coordinates business and employer outreach at the American Job Centers with the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Wagner-Peyser services are physically collocated in the comprehensive American Job Centers, which facilitates the collaboration and coordination of employer engagement. The Partnership works with IDES on all aspects of business engagement including streamlined referral processes, hiring events and specialized projects for the benefit of employers.

The Partnership maximizes coordination of job seeker-services and avoids duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services through a variety of strategies. Collaborative efforts include connecting pre-screened job ready candidates including any registered unemployment insurance claimants and individuals served by WIOA to job openings at engaged businesses. Staff share job postings between Wagner-Peyser and Title I through both Career Connect and Illinois JobLink. In addition, Title I staff participate in Rapid Response activities including attendance at initial meetings and participation at workshops for affected employees. Job-seeker workshops and job clubs are open to participants of both programs and email blasts and phone notifications are targeted to participants of both programs.

Title III staff attend the OSO's monthly partner meetings at each AJC, and the quarterly systemwide partner meetings referenced above. Title III staff have also been active participants in the Project Working Groups referenced elsewhere in this plan that have led to improved service coordination and reduction in duplication including the Universal WIOA Orientation, the new universal referral system in Airtable©, the standardized Customer Satisfaction Survey used by all partners, and the AJC Manual.

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

The Partnership is taking concrete steps to expand coordinated activities with Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation entities. At the center level, The Partnership works to provide access to assistive technology and other accommodations in partnership with Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services to ensure ADA compliance (see Chapter 6B, below) and fully integrate jobseekers with disabilities into the WIOA service structure. In 2022, The Partnership secured a portion of Cook County's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to create Disability Navigator positions within the five Suburban Cook County AJCs based on the successful Title II Navigators referenced elsewhere in this Plan.

As with other Titles, Title IV staff attend the OSO’s monthly partner meetings at each AJC, and the quarterly systemwide partner meetings referenced above. Title IV staff have also been active participants in the Project Working Groups referenced elsewhere in this plan that have led to improved service coordination and reduction in duplication including the Universal WIOA Orientation, the new universal referral system in Airtable©, the standardized Customer Satisfaction Survey used by all partners, and the AJC Manual.

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

The Partnership ensures coordination with education providers in the county through a variety of strategies. On the Chicago Cook WIB, post-secondary interests are represented by the Deputy Executive Director for Adult Education and Family Literacy at the Illinois Community College Board, and the Chancellor of City Colleges of Chicago.

The Partnership funds a variety of secondary education entities, including school Districts 214 and 207, and various alternative high schools in Chicago. Under the CPS initiative “Learn. Plan. Succeed.” every graduating senior is required to have a post-secondary plan for their education and career pathway. Building familiarity with the WIOA system is critical in order to provide a full array of post-secondary career pathways and supports for graduating seniors. Partnership efforts, supported by the One Stop Operator “Navigators” described elsewhere, with CPS and suburban schools will further focus on expanding information access for students and expanding access and delivery of Career and Technical Education programs. The Navigators are versed in the integrated education and training (IET) programs that are tied to industry recognized credentials, including enrollment processes and dates.

As discussed elsewhere in this plan, entities like CPS and District 214 have set ambitious goals for incorporation of work-based learning experiences in the provision of Career and Technical

Education programming and similar processes are underway between suburban high school districts and suburban community colleges. The Partnership intends continued support these and other regional secondary work by examining ways in which WIOA resources can augment or directly support work experiences that lay a foundation for growth careers even before graduation.

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

The Partnership shares the joint vision of the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois State Board of Education, which oversee and implement Perkins V programming. Perkins V is designed to enhance and codify coordination between education and workforce systems in part through expanding the focus on industry-recognized credentials and incorporating the use of work-based learning in curriculum, while expanding access to low-income learners and special populations. These shared goals are represented in this plan. In addition to the commitment to participate in local needs assessments, The Partnership sits on the advisory council for Career Launch Chicago, a grant-funded initiative to develop goals that align with Perkins V, creating an apprenticeship system that aligns Chicago Public Schools, City Colleges of Chicago, the workforce system and the private sector, while expanding dual credit opportunities to speed completion of education and accelerate students' entry to and advancement in the workforce.

Staff representing Perkins V Career and Technical Education services also attend the OSO’s monthly partner meetings at each AJC, and the quarterly systemwide partner meetings referenced above. Perkins V staff have also been active participants in the Project Working Groups referenced elsewhere in this plan that have led to improved service coordination and reduction in duplication including the Universal WIOA Orientation, the new universal referral system in Airtable©, the standardized Customer Satisfaction Survey used by all partners, and the AJC Manual.

LWIA 7 supports the State Strategy as outlined in several sections of this Plan. The following table summarizes key local strategies supporting each element of the 2024-2028 State Plan. Most activities outlined are detailed in other sections of this Plan.

Goal 1 Strategies:	LWIA 7 Actions Supporting State Strategy
<p>1. Strategy: The Workforce Development System uses a customer-centered approach to service delivery.</p>	<p>As outlined in Section I.1., our customer-centered approach through the efforts of our Service Integration Self-Assessment process. We implement customer satisfaction surveys in each AJC and discuss insights/results at monthly Partner meetings hosted by the OSO, and we use other methods as described, such as increased use of virtual and technical tools, reducing paperwork, our “no wrong door” approach and similar efforts.</p>
<p>2. Strategy: The Workforce Development System advances diversity, equity, inclusion and access.</p>	<p>Equity is central to local efforts, guided by the Cook County Equity Task Force’s work outlined in Chapter 4, Section D.1. including promotion of “good jobs,” prioritizing low-income and disadvantaged residents for services, our QUEST grant and other activities. The staff training on DEIA outlined in section J.2. support this.</p>
<p>3. Strategy: WIOA partners and other workforce and education systems in Illinois enhance coordination and collaboration.</p>	<p>All of the coordination activities outlined throughout this Plan support local efforts to promote more coordination and collaboration among system partners.</p>
<p>4. Strategy: Jobseekers and employers have a broader awareness of the Workforce Development System.</p>	<p>As outlined in Chapter 4, sections D.1, D.2, D.4., all on Targeted Marketing, and D.6 and in Chapter 6. D. on our Equity Lens, LWIA 7 partners continue to host more outreach events, particularly in under-served communities. Our expanded use of Title II Navigators is a key element of broadening awareness for job-seekers, specifically those with lower basic skills and potentially greater needs.</p>

<p>5. Strategy: The state enhances local service delivery through supporting development to frontline workers.</p>	<p>Local professional development activities in Chapter 4, Section I., in Section J.2. including supporting staff gaining skills in trauma-informed care, partnerships with Chicago Jobs Council around training, and supporting staff in securing NAWDP Certifield Workforce Development Professional certification are examples of development for frontline workers.</p>
<p>Goal 2 Strategies</p>	
<p>1. Strategy: The Workforce Development System supports, informs and enhances employers’ talent strategies.</p>	<p>The partnership sent three members of Business Relations Team to the Talent Pipeline Management Academy in 2023. Moving forward we are training our sector centers and American Job Centers on TPM techniques to better assist employers with developing talent among their employees.</p>
<p>2. Strategy: The various partners in the Workforce Development System leverage their business services to provide more holistic support to employers.</p>	<p>As outlined throughout the Plan and specifically in Chapter 4, Section D.3., the local Business Service Teams led by the BRED department of the Partnership are a main component of our development of holistic employer engagement and business services.</p>
<p>3. Strategy: The Workforce Development System builds out tools and practices that can help employers adopt a culture that promotes equity and accessibility.</p>	<p>As outlined above, our QUEST program is a key strategy related to this. Additionally, our BRED team and delegate agencies advise employers on culture and equity within the workplace as part of their regular consultative services.</p>
<p>Goal 3 Strategies</p>	
<p>1. Strategy: The Workforce Development System educates and supports jobseekers regarding how to navigate the labor market.</p>	<p>The Partnership and its AJC and Delegate subcontractors develop “Where are the jobs” reports that are distributed throughout the local system and develop and provide targeted occupational profiles of hot jobs that are posted throughout AJCs and which career coaches share with customers.</p> <p>All job readiness services include access to LMI information for customers about job prospects, promising career pathways and the training programs and credentials most in demand by local employers.</p>
<p>2. Strategy: The Workforce Development System interacts with jobseekers in the places where they live and visit.</p>	<p>The custom RFPs outlined in Chapter 4, Challenges/Opportunities, in Section D.1. and our continual work outlined above to “right size” the system and maintain locations of our AJCs and Delegate Agencies where our customers live are critical to meeting customers “where they live and visit.”</p> <p>As outlined in Section I.2., LWIA 7 will continue to explore new methods of co-locating services with other</p>

	institutional partners including public libraries, other public agency locations and other community-based organization sites where residents already go or are familiar.
3. Strategy: The Workforce Development System uses a data-informed approach to reduce barriers to services for jobseekers who have historically faced barriers to accessing services.	The Partnership identified targeted communities and historically marginalized communities in its RFPs and has continued to prioritize directing services to these targeted populations facing multiple barriers to service and success, focused on placing services closest to where customers live and can access service. The decision to target these communities was based on high unemployment rates in these communities and other economic data. Beyond simply the locations, we use program data to continue to expand scale and types of needed supportive services delivered and maintaining or increasing the level of funds going toward needed supportive services.
Goal 4 Strategy:	
1. Strategy: The Workforce Development System provides exposure to individuals and jobseekers to career opportunities in emerging industries, such as electric vehicle production, battery energy storage, bio-tech, smart manufacturing, and solar energy.	In LWIA 7, the Partnership competed for and secured the CEJA Workforce Hub grant for the region. Under that grant, significant efforts will go toward developing business partnerships and worker training in fields such as electric vehicle and battery manufacturing.

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

A copy of the local Supportive Service Policy is attached along with all LWIA 7 Policies as required in Section B. Through approval of this policy, the Chicago Cook WIB endorses the provision of allowable support services to WIOA customers at the provider level. Transportation (such as public transit passes or gas cards) and other services are documented both in participant files and at the point of fiscal reimbursement. The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership is also

exploring new and innovative models for provision of support services. In 2022, The Partnership received foundation support for barrier reduction services. The Partnership's Construction Works program includes a barrier reduction and supportive services component. The Partnership has been able to expand access to supports for new tradespeople in the form of required tools, boots, personal safety equipment, and stipends to assist individuals during the start of unpaid apprenticeship training. The Partnership's Good Jobs Challenge Grant also includes a barrier reduction program. In 2024, The Partnership was named a finalist in two Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) Hub applications for the South Chicago and West/Southwest Chicago geographic areas. Each Hub includes plans for approximately \$2 million in barrier reduction funds for participants. The Partnership will continue to evaluate how best to deploy barrier reduction funding, the impact of these leveraged resources and explore additional fundraising and enhancements where appropriate.

F. Describe how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

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

The workforce development system in Cook County includes service delivery models that work together to provide employment and training to the region's adult and dislocated workers. (Note that youth programs are available to young adults ages 18-24 and will be addressed in the youth section) These include American Job Centers, Delegate Agencies, Career Pathway Training Program and Sector Centers. Training activities include provision of Individual Training Accounts, Internships/Paid Work Experience, Pre-Apprentice Training, On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training and Classroom Training including bridge programs.

This broad range of training and service models allows the residents of Chicago and Cook County to seek out options that best fit their needs/circumstances. These programs and activities are generally accessible across Chicago and Cook County through The Partnership's network of American Job Centers and Delegate Agencies. The location of each program type is ultimately determined by the procurement process – i.e., which entities respond and how their proposals rate through the selection process.

American Job Centers: The Partnership administers a comprehensive workforce development system with multiple entry points where job seekers and businesses can access the full range of WIOA services and benefits. The backbone of this system is our 10 American Job Centers (AJCs) located throughout Chicago and suburban Cook County of which four are designated as comprehensive Centers. These are high-capacity program sites serving the general job-seeking population as well as businesses and have active participation from the Core WIOA Partners. At the AJCs job seekers and members of the public can access basic career services including:

- Outreach, intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to information and other services available through the entire workforce delivery system.
- Determination of whether the individual can receive assistance from the adult, dislocated workers, or youth programs.
- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency.
- Labor exchange services through Illinois Job Link.
- Job search and placement assistance and individual career counseling as needed.
- Recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers including information and referrals to specialized business services.
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services.

- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information.
- Provision of information on eligible training providers, performance data and costs.
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals to those services.
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and or education programs not provided under WIOA.
- Provision of information regarding filing claims under UI programs.
- **Resource Rooms:** American Job Centers maintain a publicly accessible resource area (including access for disabled persons) as part of their WIOA services. This public space includes computers with hi-speed internet access, printers, copy paper, fax machines, a telephone, job postings, information on Unemployment Insurance eligibility, services, and financial aid. Staff should be able to provide tutorials for career exploration, job searching and resume writing.
- **Workshops:** AJCs provide a wide range of informational workshops to job seekers as part of its career services offerings. These workshops focus on job search and readiness skills, such as: interviewing techniques, resume preparation, effective networking techniques, effective communications skills, conflict resolution, financial literacy and computer literacy, workforce trends, high demand industries, labor market information, workers' rights and navigating virtual hiring events.

Individualized Career Services: Eligible Adults and dislocated workers may also enroll in WIOA Title I to receive individualized career services where they will be assigned to a Career coach. The career coach will assist the job seeker in preparing and implementing a detailed employment plan that delineates the steps and supports needed to secure the desired employment. Access to occupational training via an Individual Training Account and or On-the-Job Training through an

employer may be part of the employment plan and individualized placement assistance. The Partnership currently has 10 AJC locations.

American Job Center	Location
American Job Center at Daley College	7500 S. Pulaski Rd., Chicago, IL 60652
American Job Center in East Garfield Park	605 S. Albany Ave., Chicago, IL 60612
American Job Center in Pilsen	1700 West 18 th St., Chicago, IL 60608
American Job Center at Truman College	1145 W. Wilson Ave., Ste. 1917, Chicago, IL 606040
American Job Center at the King Center	4314 S. Cottage Grove Ave., Room 209, Chicago, IL 60653
American Job Center in Wheeling	1400 S. Wolf Rd., Wheeling, IL 60090
American Job Center in Maywood	1701 S. 1 st Ave., Suite 10, Maywood, IL 60153
American Job Center in North Riverside	7222 W. Cermak Rd., Ste. 301, North Riverside, IL 60546
American Job Center at Prairie State College	202 S. Halsted St., ATOC Building, Ste. 148, Chicago Heights, IL 60411
American Job Center in Harvey	16845 S. Halsted St., Harvey, IL 60426

Delegate Agency: Adult and Dislocated workers can receive the above listed basic and individualized career services with access to training at numerous delegate agency sites throughout Cook County. The delegate agency program model features small to mid-sized organizations serving job seekers from a distinct geography and/or special population. They also serve business customers and develop employer relationships and job leads for the network’s job seeker population. The 2021 Delegate Agency RFP targeted the following communities and populations:

Chicago Communities: Auburn Gresham, Austin, Bronzeville, Calumet Heights, Chatham, Garfield Park (East & West), Greater Englewood, Greater Grand Crossing, Humboldt Park, Little Village, Marquette Park, New City, Near and Lower West Side, North Lawndale, Roseland, West Lawn, Woodlawn, South Chicago, South Shore

Suburban Cook Municipalities: Bellwood, Berwyn, Blue Island, Calumet City, Chicago Heights, Cicero, Country Club Hills, Dixmoor, Dolton, Harvey, Lansing, Maywood, Park Forest, Phoenix, Riverdale, South Holland.

In addition to high poverty areas, The Partnership is prioritizing delegate agencies that serve individuals from the following populations:

- Returning residents (formerly incarcerated)
- Persons with disabling conditions
- Individuals who are experiencing homelessness
- Residents of public housing
- Persons with limited English proficiency

Currently The Partnership funds 13 delegate agencies serving adult and/or dislocated workers:

Agency Name	Address	Targeted Geography or Population
Metropolitan Family Services	3062 East 91 st , Chicago, IL 60617	Returning Citizens and Limited English Proficiency
Proviso Leyden Council for Community Action, Inc.	411 Madison Street, Maywood, IL 60153	Maywood and Austin Community
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago	839 W. 115th Street, Chicago, IL 60643	Far South side of Chicago
Calumet Area Industrial Commission	1000 E. 111th Street, Chicago, IL 60628	Roseland community
Central States Ser	948 W 26th St, Chicago, IL 60623	Little Village community
Chicago Federation of Labor-Worker's Assistance	130 E. Randolph, Chicago, IL 60601 and 9930 Derby Lane Westchester, IL 60154	Dislocated workers and connections with trades and unions
DESI (Washington Heights Workforce Center)	10325 S. Halsted, Chicago, IL 60628	Washington Heights
Moraine Valley Community College	9000 W. College Parkway, Palos Hills, IL 60456	South suburban and leverage relationship with Community College
National Able Network @ Evanston Library and Oakton Community College	1703 Orrington, Evanston, IL 60201	Evanston leverage relationship with Public Library and Oakton Community College
Polish American Association	3819 N. Cicero, Chicago, IL 60641	Limited English Proficiency
Safer Foundation (Chicago and South Holland)	571 W. Jackson, Chicago, IL 60661 and 249 W. 162nd St., South Holland, IL 60473	Returning Citizens
South Suburban College	15800 S. State, South Holland, IL 60473	South suburban and leverage relationship with Community College
St Sabina Employment Resource Center	1210 West 78th Place Chicago, IL 60620	Auburn Gresham Community

Career Pathway Training: The Partnership also funds specific Career Pathway Training programs available to adult and dislocated workers. The Career Pathway Training Program model features occupational skills training programs that are demand driven, within The Partnership’s focus sectors, and connect eligible job seekers to employment. The Career Pathway Training program serves two job seeker groups: low-income adults and dislocated workers. Career Pathway programs offer advanced vocational training instruction to job seekers and eliminate the need to issue Individual Training Account (ITAs) vouchers to participants. This holistic model combines career coaching, job readiness, supportive services with technical skills training in one of the following high demand industries:

- Business & Professional Services
- Healthcare
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Retail, Culinary & Hospitality
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics
- Construction

Currently The Partnership funds the following Organizations through the Career Pathway

Training Model:

Agency Name	Career Pathway Training Industry
Association House of Chicago	Business and Professional Services-Banking
OAI, Inc.	Health Care
Revolution Workshop	Construction
St. Paul Church of God	Construction
Food Hero L3C	Culinary
National Able Network	Information Technology
Chinese American Service League	Culinary
Greater West Town Development Project	Manufacturing
Greater West Town Development Project	Shipping & Receiving
Jane Addams Resource Center	Manufacturing
Symbol Institute	Manufacturing
Jane Addams Resource Center	Manufacturing Bridge
Calumet Area Industrial Commission	Manufacturing Bridge

Periodically The Partnership receives special grant funding to serve dislocated workers through the U.S. Department of Labor Disaster Recovery- National Dislocated Worker Program (DWG). DWGs are supplemental, time-limited funding assistance provided in response to major economic dislocations or other events that cause significant impact on states and local areas that exceed the capacity of existing formula funds and other relevant resources. DWGs enable states and communities to respond to and recover from large, unexpected dislocation events. Disaster Recovery DWGs provide temporary disaster relief employment, as well as employment and training activities, as appropriate, to minimize the employment and economic impact of declared disasters and emergency situations, in disaster-declared areas as defined in 20 CFR 687.110(b). In 2022 and 2023, The Partnership received funding as part of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants. The goal of QUEST is to enable individuals who have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the social and economic inequities that the pandemic exacerbated, to enter, return to, or advance in high-quality jobs in growth industries including infrastructure, environment and climate, the care economy, and other locally identified critical sectors. The activities of the QUEST DWG will yield improved individual and community resilience to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The QUEST DWG initiative will support employment equity and individual, community, and industry resilience as the nation prioritizes economic and employment recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

These funds enhanced our workforce system's ongoing efforts to empower unemployed and underemployed workers through worker and business engagement, elevate equity, and connect jobseekers with high-quality jobs.

The Partnership offers other programs available to Adult and Dislocated Workers including the

following:

ConstructionWorks: The Partnership manages multiple programs and relationships focused on connecting residents who have been historically underrepresented in the construction industry to family sustaining careers in skilled trades and construction management. One such program is ConstructionWorks Powered by the Illinois Tollway. The Partnership developed ConstructionWorks to connect people of color, women, and other groups to careers in the skilled trades. Accessible in locations throughout LWIA 7 and the entire Northeast Economic Development Region, Construction Initiatives programming provides participants with support services including access to a barrier reduction fund and training to prepare for employment and apprenticeship application processes. These initiatives provide access to lucrative career pathways for participants who are interested in skilled trades.

Good Jobs Chicago – Good Jobs Challenge Grant: The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership received a Good Jobs Challenge (GJC) grant from the US Department of Commerce. The Partnership together with partners-Chicago Workforce Funder Alliance, World Business Chicago, LISC and Women Employed will lead an employer-led, community driven initiative to promote equity, economic resiliency, and growth for Chicago and Cook County. GJC will create durable, resilient talent pipelines through to mid-level jobs, linking Chicago’s un/underemployed residents into jobs that pay family wealth-building wages.

The structure of GJC consists of four backbone organizations and several support agencies: Sector Backbones.

- Manufacturing: The Cook County Bureau of Economic Development (BED) and Co-Backbone: OAI
- Transportation/distribution/logistics: Olive-Harvey College (OHC) o Support Agency: YWCA

- Health: Health & Medicine Policy Research Group (HMPRG)
- Information Technology (IT): P33

Sector backbones will lead sector partnerships in their respective industries to determine the roles to target preferred training models and key learning outcomes. Backbones, training partners, and CBOs will work together to design training programs and identify barriers faced by trainees. They will focus on high- demand, high growth occupations across the four target sectors. The training plans should also have an equity focus that includes integrated services that encourage employers to create equitable workplaces for the new hires to thrive.

Climate Equity Jobs Act Workforce Hub: The Partnership was recently named a finalist in two Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) Workforce Hub applications for the South Chicago and West/Southwest Chicago geographic areas. Workforce Hubs engage with potential employers, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and community-based and labor-based training providers to ensure program-eligible individuals across the County have dedicated and sustained support to enter and build clean energy careers. The main objective of the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program is to increase access to and opportunities for education, training, and support services to help program-eligible individuals succeed in the labor market generally and the clean energy sector specifically. Upon completion, participants will be prepared for entry-level clean energy jobs. The Partnership along with City Colleges of Chicago, Elevate Energy and multiple community partners and trainers plan to roll out this program in the coming year.

Cook County Coordinated Reentry Council: The Partnership continues its work with the Cook County Justice Advisory Council on our Road Home program to align systems and policies to more effectively support successful reentry. With ARPA funding from the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, the program expanded to support 3 agencies: Phalanx, Safer Foundation and SERCO. These agencies are tasked with connecting individuals exiting facilities

with employment assistance and other resources. With the long-term goal of creating a coordinated reentry system for Cook County, The Partnership is aligning WIOA and other program resources to directly connect people to employment and training opportunities pre- and post-release from incarceration. These efforts will allow young adults returning home from incarceration to directly connect to career resources available from the public workforce system in Chicago and Cook County. The Partnership also continues to fund the Safer Foundation under its WIOA program which specializes in serving returning citizens. The Partnership works closely with the Chicago Mayor's office on Reentry Services and the welcoming centers in the City of Chicago.

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

The Partnership coordinates and supports Rapid Response activities with the State Rapid Response Unit (RRU) within the Illinois Department of Commerce and the Illinois Department of Employment Security with assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor. The Partnership is charged with assisting workers impacted by layoffs, employers, local government officials, and other stakeholders by providing resources, technical assistance, and labor market information. Generally, the State RRU receives first notice of major dislocation events, via notices provided under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Act petition notification. The State RRU enlists The Partnership to respond to dislocation events. From the initial information available, the State RRU works with the designated partners to determine the immediate needs of workers and employers and establishes an appropriate action plan for delivery of information and assistance to affected businesses and workers. Whenever possible, a local workforce center and/or labor organization is featured in

information sessions.

LWIA 7's American Job Center agencies, Dislocated Worker Agencies - where applicable, and/or Industry Sector Centers representatives, are invited/assigned to participate on the Rapid Response (RR) Team, along with a Partnership BRED (Business Relations Economic Development) Specialist and present a WIOA overview in the Rapid Response Pre-Layoff Workshops. The Pre-Layoff Workshops are currently facilitated on site at company locations OR virtually on Zoom. Workshop surveys are collected either on site 'manually' OR online 'electronically' in the ILworknet System off the Company Event Specific Page. Survey data by Company events can then be retrieved via the Illinois Employment Business System (IEBS). RR Surveys, which include requests to be contacted by the job seeker, are then sent to the participating AJC or Dislocated Worker Agency (if manually collected from job seekers) as well as are accessible in the IEBS system. The LWIA Rapid Response Coordinator may also send out as requested by any/all agencies for Dislocated Worker services.

When formal notice is not filed in accordance with the WARN Act, but a local rapid response staff or other local partner becomes aware of a WARN-level layoff or closure event, The Partnership initiates the Rapid Response process, notifying the state coordinator to formulate strategies for carrying out rapid response activities. When The Partnership or a local partner becomes aware of a layoff or closure event that does not meet the WARN threshold or is not TAA related, it will initiate rapid response per the local operational plan. Rapid Response assistance includes the following activities:

- Employer Consultation
 - Initial planning for Rapid Response workshops
 - Coordination to ensure customization of services to the specific needs of impacted worker group
- Consultation with labor representatives when workers are covered by a collective bargaining agreement.
- Services Delivered to Workers
 - Administration of needs assessment surveys

- Labor market information conveying labor reduction trends, and opportunities for transitioning workers
- Connections to local service providers, which may also include an appropriate sector center
- Presentations from RRU representatives on how to engage their respective agencies
- Delivery of collateral reference materials with instructions and service provider contact information

The Partnership has continued to provide the rapid response services listed above both in-person and virtually as needed for each given company and situation.

The State's Rapid Response Team that is enacted and is coordinated by DCEO locally includes the following partners: IL DCEO RRU representative, The Partnership (LWIA 7), the US DOL EBSA - Employee Benefits & Security Administration, and the IL Department of Employment Security. The Partners locally coordinate this through regular meetings and activities. Also in attendance may be American Job Center or Sector Center representatives as applicable to the location of the company layoff and/or the sector and/or occupational affected group of workers. Additionally, there are times when another company is aware of a neighboring company closure/layoff and inquire on the ability to connect with that specific group of affected workers and support quick transition of those workers to new opportunities in a most seamless transition. The Partnership will make that connection via working with the regional American Job Center who can facilitate specialty recruitment/hiring events. This activity would be termed as 'layoff aversion'.

G. Describe how the local area will provide youth activities including:

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

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership strives to be an effective steward of limited public and private resources and to create the biggest impact possible for young adult job seekers in Chicago and suburban Cook County. The region is home to a diverse and steady economy that attracts companies and job seekers from across the globe, however Chicago and Cook County are also confronted with a history of community disinvestment, structural racism in the job market, and more currently, the suburbanization of poverty. Despite historically low national unemployment rates, certain demographics of young adults have persistently high rates of joblessness. For example, African American males age 16-19 in Chicago are more likely to be unemployed than have a job.¹ In Chicago and Cook County, there are over 82,000 16-24-year-olds who are out of work and not in school.² This trend has been exacerbated in the past two years as we have seen that young adults who were disconnected before the pandemic are even more disconnected now, and employment rates among all ages within African American and Latinx communities has been slower to rebound as the economic recovery gets underway.

The Partnership works to address this crisis through strategically deploying workforce resources and building partnerships that directly address the difficult realities confronting young adult job seekers. The Partnership prioritizes funding programs that serve young adults who face intense challenges in establishing themselves in a family sustaining career. Specifically, youth who:

- Have a disability
- Have experienced homelessness
- Are involved with justice system
- Are not working and not in school
- Live in a community with high unemployment rates
- Are English language learners
- Pregnant or parenting
- Are in state care
- Resident of public housing

¹ Out of School and Out of Work 16 to 19 and 20 to 24 Year Olds in Chicago and Cook County in 2017. Wilson, May 2019. Great Cities Institute, University of Illinois Chicago. https://greatcities.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/OutofSchoolOutofWorkData_May2019.pdf

² Ibid.

The Partnership provides ongoing training, technical assistance, and monitoring of all youth programs to ensure a high level of program quality and integrity.

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership and Chicago Cook WIB envision a system where all young adults in the region can easily access a comprehensive and integrated set of education and training supports that increase the number of young adults productively engaged in the workforce, thereby increasing self-sufficiency, and reducing poverty. The Partnership funds a variety of successful workforce investment program models for youth that are implemented through a network of ten American Job Centers and other service providers.

Through the provision of youth workforce development programs, The Partnership seeks to:

- Align youth-serving institutions in order to ease access, reduce duplication, close service gaps, and promote collaboration.
- Connect young adults to the labor market, career pathways, education, and/or paid work experience.
- Improve outcomes for young adults through placement in employment or education, attainment of industry-recognized degrees or certificates, and achievement of literacy and numeracy gains.
- Grounded in these guiding principles, The Partnership dedicates youth funding in several categories including Out-of-School Youth (OSY), In-School Youth (ISY), Youth Innovation Fund, and program enhancements funded by private or other public resources. Youth services are accessible through all 10 American Job Centers within LWIA 7 as well as 31 delegate agencies strategically located throughout Chicago and Cook County. The following overview of current activities highlights successful models and provides a contextualized description of the multiple strategies that the Chicago Cook WIB is

engaging to address the employment needs of young adults and businesses in LWIA 7.

Out-of-School Youth Activities

LWIA 7 delivers a range of Out of School Youth services, including the following general types.

Reconnection to Education through Employment. For OSY who do not have a high school diploma or GED, programs include access to multiple education reconnection options including linkages to public schools, credit recovery programs, options schools (non-traditional schools), and other systems for attaining a secondary credential. Services include strong academic remediation curriculum to ensure skills gains in reading and math, as well as preparing young people to re-enter an academic setting. Programs offer supportive services such as transportation, work attire, and connections to other social services such as housing or court advocacy.

Post-Secondary Education/Training and Employment. Programs that focus on youth who already have a high school diploma or GED and are interested in continuing their career pathway through further education or advanced training. Services include academic assistance, and social support aimed at preparing youth for successful entry into, and progress through, post-secondary education and/or training. Program elements include strategies that help youth pursue, enroll, persist, and complete post-secondary education programs and then job placement and retention assistance.

Sector Based and Career Pathway Training and Employment. Aligned with wider Sector efforts, some providers and programs focus on business-focused projects linking youth to our targeted industry sectors. Career Coaches work closely with participants to develop a long-term career plan that involves securing immediate paid work (subsidized or unsubsidized), and/or training relevant to participant's career plan. Programs include occupational bridge programs, pre-apprenticeships, paid work experiences, and internships, and feature deep career exploration, job shadowing, academic and occupational skills training, job readiness, and high-quality work experience

activities within a specific industry. Services focus on helping youth with attainment of industry-recognized credentials, and placement into employment or advanced education in the target industry.

In-School Youth Activities

The Partnership targets In-School Youth funding to serve youth who are currently enrolled in school and are at risk of dropping out, have a disability, or are English language learners. In-School Youth programs emphasize activities designed to assist youth in completing their high school diploma and transitioning to post-secondary education/training, or into employment along a career path that will lead to economic security.

In-School Youth programs emphasize tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies that lead to attaining a high school diploma. Programs demonstrate strong connections to public schools for youth outreach, recruitment, and program delivery; as well as a strong school to college/career framework. In-School Youth programs are required to provide early introduction and exposure to post-secondary education/careers and career exploration activities that motivate youth to establish career goals. Programs include career mentoring services designed to help young adults plan beyond completion of their high school diploma.

Serving Youth with Disabilities

Based on program impact analysis and organizational priorities, The Partnership dedicates the majority of WIOA In-School Youth funds to programs that exclusively serve youth with disabilities. Program models for youth with disabilities include intense job readiness skill development and placement. Several programs include paid work experiences to orient participants to workplace environments.

The Partnership funds seven organizations to provide WIOA ISY services through independent program models at multiple locations including:

- AERO Special Education works with four schools in southwest suburban Cook County and has developed successful job readiness training for students, as well as training for employers to prepare them to be supportive work environments for their students. This program has a broad diversity of employer relationships including a hospital, airport hotels, a university, and a massage therapist.
- LaGrange Area Department of Special Education works with multiple schools in west suburban Cook County to provide paid work experience, career coaching, intensive interview preparation, and other workforce activities specifically designed for people with disabilities.
- Manufacturing Renaissance provides industry focused training and work experiences for Chicago Public Schools students interested in manufacturing careers.

Additional Program Enhancements and Program Models

In addition to the above-referenced WIOA youth programs, The Partnership encourages Title I Providers to leverage WIOA activities and supplement core youth programming with additional resources. By providing programs and additional support simultaneously, the providers can more easily connect youth to education and employment; consequently, enhancing the impact of WIOA Youth funds. Furthermore, as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, The Partnership raises funds through charitable giving and public or private competitive grant processes to innovate and expand service delivery throughout Cook County. These diverse funds when braided with WIOA dollars foster enhanced WIOA Youth programs, build organizational capacity of The Partnership, and ultimately allow the public workforce system to serve more youth. Examples of these innovations include:

Trauma Informed Care: With funding from the J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation, The Partnership convened a community of practice to study trauma informed care and develop service strategies

that support more effective youth engagement within workforce development programs. Fourteen Title I service providers participated in the community of practice, which included training from the Illinois Collaboration on Youth (ICOY), to learn and share their experiences.

Some additional custom programs are also available to adults and younger adults. They are described here in detail and referenced in Chapter 4, Section G on Youth Activities, below. Enhancement of staff training and capacity to deliver service strategies that include trauma-informed care is focused on staff serving Youth and young adults, and the Partnership is currently delivering this training for all Title I Youth staff. The Partnership hopes to extend this training to all staff of all service providers in the future.

Opportunity Works: Through funding and in cooperation with the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, The Partnership created Opportunity Works, a paid internship program for Opportunity Youth (young adults not in school or connected to employment. This program was created with a focus on supporting Suburban Cook County and supplementing other youth-focused initiatives in the city of Chicago. The program connects them with businesses in high-growth, high-demand sectors and exposes the interns to careers they may not have considered in Manufacturing, Information Technology, Healthcare, Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics. The program graduated its 1,000th intern in 2020 and has served over 2,000 young adults. The program funds the interns' wages, allowing employers to provide paid internships at no cost while connecting interns to career pathway opportunities.

Youth Workforce Development Funding Strategy

Recognizing the difficult realities that confront many young adult residents of Chicago and suburban Cook County, the Chicago Cook WIB advances multiple strategies to ensure youth who face barriers to employment can access and succeed in the workforce activities provided by the public workforce system. The Partnership invests in programs that employ best practices and

incorporate concepts and approaches of (1) youth development and trauma informed care that meets the psycho/social/emotional needs of young adult job seekers; (2) education and workforce strategies that are relevant to high-growth, high-demand business sectors; and (3) wrap-around services with particular focus on employment outcomes. Specifically, The Partnership supports projects that:

- Demonstrate meaningful partnerships with accredited higher education institutions, employers in high growth industries, and other relevant organizations and service providers that support employment, internships, and educational opportunities for young adults
- Provide long term career development services, such as occupational training, that leads to unsubsidized family sustaining employment in high demand industries
- Demonstrate collaboration with broader young adult initiatives (e.g., One Summer Chicago, Chicago Roadmap, Chicago Youth Service Corps, My Chi My Future, or other youth serving programs)
- Include innovative post-secondary bridge programs designed to accelerate credentials and skill building, such as use of contextualized and integrated curriculum and instruction
- Use structured work-based learning, such as paid work experiences, pre-apprenticeship programs, and career exploration, while providing maximum opportunities for young adults to learn theoretical and practical skills relevant to their career interests
- Provide intensive career mentoring and support services, including financial literacy education, to help young adults overcome complex barriers, successfully complete programs, and secure/retain employment
- Demonstrate investment in long-term follow-up with participants upon program completion to ensure continued support and success in post-secondary education, training, or employment

The Partnership prioritizes funding for programs that serve youth with disabilities, justice-involved youth, and young adults who are out of work and out of school. To ensure these priorities are met, The Partnership requires that a minimum of 80% of youth funding is dedicated to Out-of-School programs, and that the majority of In-School programs exclusively serve youth with disabilities who are nearing transition age. Further, The Partnership requires and trains all service providers to make programs accessible to individuals with disabilities and young adults who have experienced trauma.

To select youth service providers, The Partnership assesses providers through a competitive procurement process and offers contract extensions to agencies that are successful in delivering workforce development services to young adults and employers. The Partnership last conducted a youth services procurement in 2023. This procurement continues to align organizational strategy for youth workforce development activities with WIOA core partners' services, and The Partnership's guiding principles for youth programming. The process identified providers that are effective at reaching target populations and geographies, delivering high-quality programming, as well as maintaining a significant volume of service activities proportional to the high number of young adults in Cook County who are disconnected from work and/or school. The Partnership's youth programs consistently meet or exceed all performance metrics.

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

According to “Measure of America” of the Social Science Research Council, in Cook County there are 75,000 out of school youth. This represents 12.9% of that population.³ Despite strategic efforts across several public agencies the pandemic of youth unemployment persists. For this reason, The

³ That data is taken from this site/map. <https://www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive/>

Partnership will continue to award a minimum of 80% of its WIOA youth funding to organizations serving out-of-school youth, which will ensure that we exceed the 75% statutory expenditure rate requirement. Through the regular Title I provider RFP and selection process, The Partnership selects and awards subgrants to out-of-youth serving organizations. Each year The Partnership plans and prepares youth budgets to ensure a minimum of 75% of youth funds are dedicated to youth out-of-school services.

3. The design framework for youth programs in the local area, including how the 14 program elements will be made available within that framework (§ 681.460).

LWIA 7 has a well-developed system of WIOA Youth providers that successfully provide the 14 elements and related services. An RFP is regularly released to select providers that deliver the WIOA Youth program and currently 31 entities serve as Youth providers. Each provider must deliver or partner and refer to make all 14 WIOA Youth elements available to youth. Language from our WIOA Youth Request for Proposals that follows outlines the Partnership's expectations and guidance for how these elements are delivered. Each provider can customize and specialize the method of delivering the elements or partnering to ensure they are delivered for Youth participants.

From the latest WIOA Youth RFP:

WIOA youth services will assist young people, ages 16-24, who face significant barriers to success in the labor market, by providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and prepare youth to be productive in the workforce. The WIOA services will provide workforce services to in-school and out-of-school youth. The Partnership has allocated 80% of its funding toward out-of-school youth.

The following is a list of fourteen (14) required services all local programs must, at a minimum, provide to youth per Section 129 (c) (2) of WIOA (Service Elements). Participation in any one of these activities should be included in the ISS. A provider can directly provide the service or have a linkage agreement to make referrals to appropriate providers of such services.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and evidence-based dropout prevention strategies that lead to completion of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for a recognized postsecondary credential. Strategies can include:
 - Individualized instruction

- After school programming
 - Credit recovery services.
2. Alternative secondary school offerings such as:
 - basic education skills training, individualized academic instruction, and English as a Second Language training.
 - dropout recovery services, such as credit recovery, counseling to reengage in secondary school, and educational plan development, as appropriate.
 3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences and may take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector:
 - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year
 - Pre-apprenticeship programs
 - Internships and job shadowing
 - On-the-job training
 4. Occupational skill training, which include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized credential that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations.
 5. Leadership development opportunities, which include activities such as:
 - Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities.
 - Community and service-learning projects.
 - Peer centered activities including peer mentoring and tutoring.
 - Training in decision making, including determining priorities and problem solving.
 - Citizenship training, life skills and work behavior training.
 - Civic engagement activities that promote the quality of life in a community.
 - Leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role.
 6. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster can include career pathway training.
 7. Supportive services are offered to help the youth with his/her participation in a WIOA funded career service or training program or their retention of a job gained through WIOA participation. Reasonable support services can include:
 - Meals
 - Medical
 - Childcare
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Book/testing fees related to WIOA program participation activities.
 8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, which may occur both during and after program participation. Mentoring can include workplace mentoring and have activities that offer guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee.
 9. Follow-up services for a minimum 12-month period to ensure the youth is stable in their job or educational placement. Follow up services available to all youth are:
 - support services
 - adult mentoring
 - financial literacy education

- Labor market and employment information, career counseling and career exploration.
 - Activities to help transition to postsecondary education or training.
 - Other services to ensure success in employment or post-secondary education.
- 10.** Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth.
- 11.** Financial literacy education can include:
- The ability of participants to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts at banks.
 - Support participants in learning how to effectively manage spending, credit, and debt, how to determine the accuracy of a credit report and how to correct inaccuracies.
 - Support a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities and to make informed financial decisions.
 - Educate participants about identity theft, ways to protect themselves from identify theft, and how to resolve cases of identity theft and in other ways understand their rights and protections related to personal identity and financial data.
 - Support activities that address the financial literacy needs of non-English speakers.
 - Support activities that address the financial literacy needs of youth with disabilities, including connecting them to benefits planning and work incentives counseling.
 - Provide financial education that is age appropriate, timely, and provides opportunities to put lessons into practice, such as by access to safe and affordable financial products that enable money management and saving.
 - Implement other approaches to help participants gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high quality, age-appropriate, and relevant strategies, and channels, including, where possible, timely and customized information, guidance, tools, and instruction.
- 12.** Entrepreneurial skills training are different approaches to learn about running a business and can include the following:
- Entrepreneurship education that provides and introduction to the values and basics of starting and running a business by developing business plans.
 - Enterprise development that provides support and services that incubate and help youth develop their own businesses. Learn how to apply for loans or grants needed to begin business operations.
 - Experiential programs that help youth experience in the day-to-day operation of a business.
- 13.** Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations can include:
- Vocational exploration, identifying and exploring occupations.
 - Providing labor market information that includes education required for a certain occupation, starting salaries, and if they are a high growth industry.
 - Job clubs can provide resource materials that describe the skill sets required to successfully gain employment.
- 14.** Postsecondary preparation and transition activities can include:
- Exploring post-secondary education options including technical training schools, community colleges, 4-year colleges and registered apprenticeship programs.

- Preparing for SAT/ACT
- Financial Aid applications and searching for scholarships.
- Assist with college applications and college tours.

H. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment as outlined in Illinois' WIOA State Plan:

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

The majority of individuals The Partnership serves in adult programs are individuals with barriers to employment as outlined in the Unified State Plan. In PY 2022 over 95% of WIOA enrolled adults served had at least one significant barrier to employment. In the same program year, 75% of WIOA enrolled adults served were low income and nearly 50% were basic skills deficient.

In PY 2017, The Partnership established a priority of service protocol to ensure that priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. This procedure is still currently in place and being followed. All WIOA Delegate Agencies, American Job Centers, and Sector Centers must follow the priority of service order, outlined below, when enrolling eligible WIOA Adults into individualized career services and/or training:

- First, veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Adult Formula funding. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
- Second, individuals who are included in the WIOA statutory priority groups such as a recipient of public assistance, other low-income individuals or an individual who is basic skills deficient but is not a veteran, nor a spouse of a veteran.

- Third, veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who are not included in the WIOA statutory priority group.
- Fourth, unemployed adults who are in need of WIOA services to obtain employment.
- Fifth, employed adults who are working but earning at or below the self-sufficiency level.

In addition to ensuring compliance with WIOA mandated statutory priority groups, The Partnership also funds strategic initiatives targeting these populations. As described above, The Partnership, together with the Cook County Justice Advisory Council, received a grant to design a coordinated re-entry system for people returning to Chicago and Cook County from incarceration in Illinois Department of Corrections facilities and the Cook County Jail. The Partnership created a Coordinated Re-entry Council to generate system-wide policy recommendations for increasing the rate of successful community reentry and finalizing the design of a demonstration project from 2021 to 2023. With ARPA funding from the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, the program expanded to support 3 agencies: Phalanx, Safer Foundation and SERCO. These agencies are tasked with connecting individuals' exiting facilities with employment assistance and other resources. With the long-term goal of creating a coordinated reentry system for Cook County, The Partnership is aligning WIOA and other program resources to directly connect people to employment and training opportunities pre- and post-release from incarceration. These efforts will allow adults returning home from incarceration to directly connect to career resources available from the public workforce system in Chicago and Cook County. The Partnership also continues to fund the Safer Foundation under its WIOA program which specializes in serving returning citizens. The Partnership works closely with the Chicago Mayor's office on Reentry Services and the welcoming centers in the City of Chicago. The demonstration project will provide appropriate pre- and post-release services to participants with the goal of reducing recidivism. The Partnership also contracts with providers specializing in serving individuals with prior convictions via Title I

services.

The Partnership contracts with several workforce agencies that provide specialized services to specific populations that face barriers to employment as identified by the state plan. For example, Delegate Agencies provide Title I services to English Language Learners from a variety of backgrounds including Spanish, Polish, Mandarin, and Ukrainian speakers, and members of other immigrant communities. Recently, The Partnership has been supporting New Arrivals from Ukraine, Haiti, Afghanistan, Venezuela, and other countries expected to arrive in 2024, with basic career services in their native languages and making referrals to ESL classes through our Title II providers. The Partnership will continue to work with these providers to ensure that they are effective in delivering WIOA services to target populations and sharing best practices with the AJC Network in Chicago and Cook County.

Through the provision of technical assistance, semi-monthly service provider meetings and monitoring quarterly status reports, The Partnership will ensure that a minimum of 80% of WIOA Adults served are within the statutory priority and/or veteran groups.

2. Provide information on local programs, policies and procedures to address and mitigate barriers to employment and training.

The Partnership updated its WIOA enrollment procedures to allow for greater use of self-attestations on certain eligibility documents related to prior income, barriers, and housing situation. This has helped to process individuals more quickly through the enrollment process. The Partnership has instituted a policy letter that identifies sectors that qualify as substantial layoffs. The qualifying sectors are Leisure and Hospitality, Manufacturing, Trade Transportation and Utilities, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services. This policy is currently waiting for Board approval; however, it has been issued as a draft to the LWIA. Also, LWIA 7 has received substantial funding to open the doors for additional dislocated workers facing barriers, such as

long-term employed and marginalized communities, and COVID-related job loss, just to name a few. These additional grants allowed greater numbers of people to access individualized training accounts, on-the-job-training, and disaster relief employment opportunities. The expansion to 8 navigators within the American Job Centers also assists customers in navigating the enrollment process and connecting to job seekers to employment and training services.

Additionally, as described in other sections, the Partnership and its AJCs and Delegates have built an extensive network of partnerships with public agencies, local community-based organizations and nonprofits that deliver a range of human and social services targeted to address particular life challenges and barriers to employment, training, and retention.

As noted in other sections, our supportive service policy and new flexible funding will help us provide additional supportive services. Also, as WIOA will co-enroll some individuals in the new CEJA program, resources including the Barrier Reduction Fund are available to help address barriers. Additionally, non-WIOA programs that address barriers to employment and training are Opportunity Works, The Road Home, and Cook County Career Pathway Navigators.

- Opportunity Works connects low-income youth from Suburban Cook County to employment and apprenticeship training by partnering with local employers and unions.
- The Road Home is a re-entry program the connects formerly incarcerated individuals to vocational training and employment opportunities by providing resources, job readiness workshops, and paid work experience.
- Cook County Career Pathway Navigators refers individuals with special needs to appropriate resources for training and hiring events.

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

a. Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.

The Partnership regularly reviews disaggregated WIOA Title I data by race, gender, and target population characteristics to assess equitable access to services. This information is routinely shared with the WIB and its committees as well as with the Chief Elected Officials and their designees. Equity is at the core of our organization's approach. We recognize that systemic barriers disproportionately affect certain individuals and communities, and we strive to address these disparities through our programming.

We also prioritize accessibility and inclusivity in our services, making sure that all individuals, regardless of their background, have equal opportunities to participate and benefit from our programs.

By applying an equity lens, we are able to deliver programming and services that are more effective, relevant, and impactful for the community we serve. Illustrated herein are examples of data collection for the most recently completed program year in which 9,390 clients enrolled in Title I services.

Figure 1: WIOA Title I Participants by Gender, July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

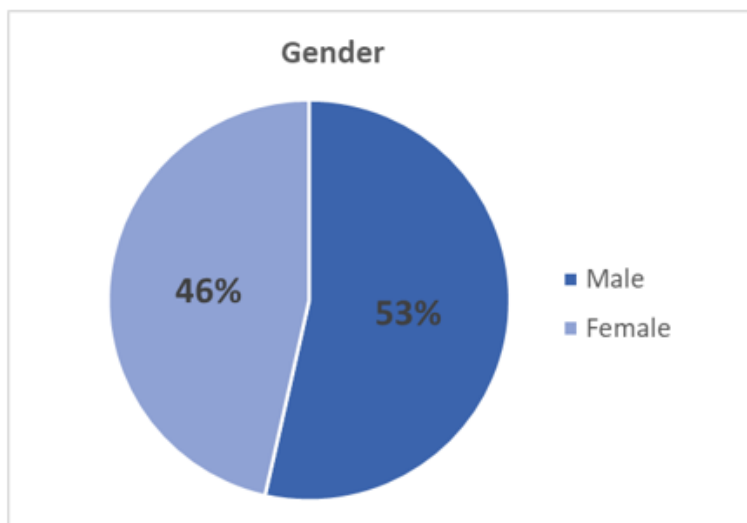
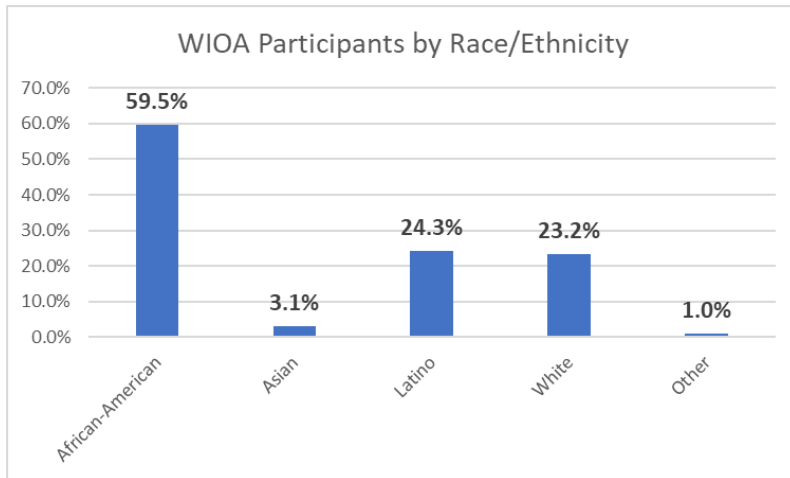


Figure 2: WIOA Title I Participants

by Race/Ethnicity⁴ July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023



As illustrated, over half of all enrollees were African American, and almost one-quarter identified as Latinx. The Partnership continues to focus efforts to ensure a diverse population on a range of characteristics.

The Partnership remains committed to using data analysis to strengthen and inform our work. In addition, to the demographic and employment data we regularly capture, we have a goal of implementing pre- and post-program assessments to measure the changes in participants' skills, career progression and ongoing needs to retain employment. Analyzing the outcomes data can provide valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and difficult to measure outcomes. The Partnership will also enhance our use of data visualization tools, such as dashboards and reports, to present program data in a visually engaging and informative manner. The Partnership has increased staff in our IT departments who will aid in the implementation of such tools over the next two years.

The Partnership works closely with the One Stop Operator to collect feedback from participants,

⁴ Participants may identify as more than one race; therefore, the total exceeds 100%. "Other" includes American Indian, Alaskan Native, Hawaiian Native, and Pacific Islander.

partner organizations, and stakeholders involved in the program referral process Analyzing this data can identify areas for improvement, successful referral pathways, and opportunities to enhance collaboration with local entities for better program outcomes. We have a long-term goal of implementing a longitudinal tracking system to monitor participants' progress over time, including their employment status, wage growth, and career advancement opportunities. We are in discussions with partner organizations and higher education groups to determine the best approach for such tracking.

We have increased the use of success stories as a tool for marketing, recruiting and program effectiveness. Our communications teams regularly showcase real-life examples of individual program participants who have overcome challenges, achieved their goals, and found success in their careers. Creating a personal connection and relatability can inspire participants by demonstrating that success is achievable, regardless of their circumstances. Testimonials and endorsements can build credibility, instill confidence, and inspire participants and employers by showcasing the tangible outcomes and benefits of the program.

The Partnership is seeking to further work on prioritizing and understanding a range of targeted populations by conducting data analysis on its high-need and targeted populations to better understand unique needs of individual groups and LWIA 7 programs' effectiveness in delivering services for them.

Another way that The Partnership addresses equity is by funding a variety of jobseeker service models. American Job Centers are higher volume centers that are either collocated with or connected to all five WIOA Titles. Currently, The Partnership supports 10 American Job Centers throughout Cook County. Delegate Agencies are community-based organizations focusing on serving special populations or specific geographies. Career Pathways and Bridge programs provide basic skills training along with occupational training and certification.

The Chicago Cook WIB has several strategies to continue to better understand the demographic make-up and barriers of the job seekers served by the American Job Center Network in LWIA 7, and to use that data to implement equity goals in conjunction with a wide variety of partners.

The Partnership analyzes training industries and outcomes by race, ethnicity, and gender to assess concentrations in sectors or training programs by race and gender. Staff determine if training outcomes, including successful completion, credential attainment, and employment, vary by race and gender both across and within sectors. Based on the results of this analysis, The Partnership intends to refine training policies and work with the ITA-certified training partners to form technical assistance plans that address any resultant equity gaps.

The staff conducts our analysis of training-related outcomes annually. This includes analyzing program and outcomes data by race and gender as well as by populations, including groups like Opportunity Youth, Returning Citizens and persons with disabilities. As a result of this analysis, we have implemented several best practices including equity-focused outreach along with additional support services and mentorship: Our communications team has developed targeted recruitment, while our Community Innovations team collaborates with community organizations and advocacy groups focused on racial and gender equity can leverage collective efforts to promote inclusive workforce development. The Partnership sits on several local committees which allow us to collaborate on outreach efforts, recruitment strategies, and support services to impact positive training outcomes.

In the next four years, The Partnership will support the improvement of training related outcomes by assisting with establishing mentorship programs and support networks for targeted participants, particularly those under-represented in key industries or occupational areas. This support will provide guidance, support, and encouragement throughout the training process, provide role models, and facilitate networking opportunities. Our training department has recently expanded

and one of our goals is to ensure that each delegate agency staff are trained on implicit bias, cultural competence, and diversity awareness. We also intend to include questions about diversity for training providers to ensure that providers are creating inclusive learning environments for participants.

The Partnership collaborates with state and local partners to attain a fuller picture of who the network serves. WIOA requires documented verification of any barriers used in determining eligibility but does not require all barriers to be identified in order to deem an individual eligible for services. As a result, providers often do not record all job seeker barriers in the program data system, nor do participants disclose all barriers. Additionally, individuals may see a stigma in disclosing some barriers such as disability, or justice involvement at the time of application. In order to more accurately assess how well providers are serving participants in targeted populations, and align services accordingly, The Partnership is exploring data analysis projects with other major human service stakeholders.

b. Exposing more high school students, particularly young women, and minorities, to careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

The Partnership currently funds several Sector Centers to engage businesses in growth industries and to educate the LWIA's network of American Job Centers and Delegate Agencies about career opportunities in these sectors. These include STEM fields such as Information Technology and Health Care. As the Chicago Cook WIB refines the role of Sector Centers, they will determine how to better connect them with youth-serving organizations to provide younger clients with information about and access to these career pathways.

The Partnership supports Chicago Public Schools in delivering Career Launch Chicago, a grant-funded initiative to build a sustainable non-traditional apprenticeship pipeline between Chicago Public Schools (CPS), City Colleges of Chicago (CCC), and the public workforce system. Career

Launch Chicago is a new public-private partnership that aims to build a robust youth apprenticeship system that connects education and workforce training, thereby launching students into high-demand careers. Through Career Launch, CPS and CCC will put in place the tools, processes, and technology to support the successful onboarding, implementation, graduation, and employment for students and employers.

The Partnership works with the Chicago Public Schools on the annual Skilled Trades Career Fair for thousands of CPS students to expose youth to careers in the construction industry and engineering fields. This 2-to-3-day event held at McCormick Place features interactive displays that provide hands on exposure of the many high-quality jobs in the trades and engineering field.

c. Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.

Currently, WIOA Title I mentoring programs generally focused on youth populations. The Partnership has found success using mentoring in work-based learning environments such as those used in the Opportunity Works initiative. Under Opportunity Works, a youth internship initiative detailed in section 4F in this plan, host businesses, as Keats Manufacturing Company, have assigned supportive supervisors to mentor interns on the jobsite, accelerating assimilation into their workforce and giving an enhanced and valuable work experience to the young adult participants.

Mentorship has proven to be a powerful tool in professional development for youth and could significantly support the growth and success of adult job seekers as well. Currently LWIA 7 is not delivering a significant level of adult mentoring but will continue to explore implementing

mentoring within Title I services by AJCs and in particular through Sector Centers. To explore this idea further, here are some areas The Partnership would need to consider:

- **Mentor Recruitment:** Identify and approach potential (and existing) mentors through multiple avenues including through business partners in our sector initiatives and other business customers of our AJCs and Delegates.
- **Program Structure:** Define the duration, format, and goals of the mentorship relationships and how they should fit into career readiness services, during training being delivered through ITAs and other training methods, apprenticeships and other programs and service strategies.
- **Participant Selection:** Develop criteria and processes for pairing mentors with mentees.
- **Availability of funding,** the costs of mentoring programs, and initial understanding of the ROI of mentoring in comparison to other uses of limited WIOA Title I or other funding.
- **Evaluation Metrics:** Establish ways to measure the effectiveness and impact of the mentorship component

By pairing participants with experienced mentors, valuable guidance, the fostering of skill development, and help navigating career paths with greater confidence and insight

d. Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to address equity gaps.

The Partnership has three employees who are participating in a Job Quality Fellowship with Results for America. Our goal is to provide a section of tools to business engagement staff across the Cook County WIOA network, while working with employers to assess opportunities to improve job quality and career pathway access. We will collect data through an online assessment

and provide action plans for employers who want to improve scores in one or more areas. Some of what we will measure are; the percentage of frontline employees making a living annual wage, percentage of employees eligible for insurance, the number of weeks' notice for schedule changes, the number of employees promoted from within and first year and/or 90-day turnover percentages. Systemwide, we will provide job quality education tools to frontline staff (specifically BSRs) and training to staff for educating employers and administering the job quality assessment.

To ensure that our workforce program staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to address equity gaps, we provide staff with the tools and strategies to promote a more inclusive and equitable workforce development system.

- Staff are trained in targeted outreach and recruitment, trauma informed care, culturally responsive programming.
- Program staff collect, analyze, and interpret data to identify equity gaps within our programs. They learn to use data to identify disparities in outcomes, such as employment rates and wages among different demographic groups. This data-driven approach allows us to pinpoint areas where we need to shift programming to address inequities.
- Staff are trained in providing support services tailored to the specific needs of marginalized populations.
- Staff are encouraged to build partnerships with community organizations that serve populations with barriers to employment and employers committed to diversity and inclusion.

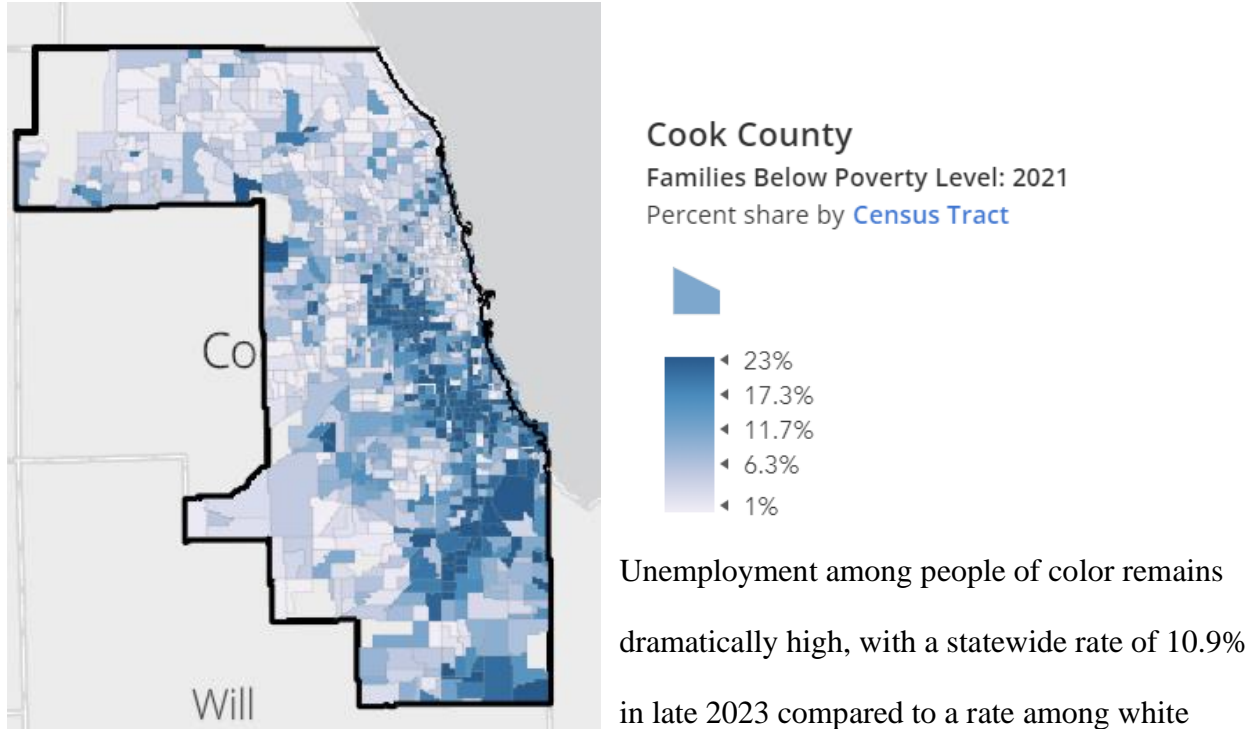
e. Ensuring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.

Poverty rates have grown throughout Cook County (Figure 5). However, poverty grew fastest on the south and west sides of Chicago and in south suburban Cook County. These areas are also

home to large concentrations of African American and Latino residents.

Figure 5: Geography of Poverty Rates in Cook County (Source:

<https://maps.cookcountyil.gov/everyonecounts/>



residents of 3.4%. (Recent data similar from IDES data and other sources). While the Chicago metro area has an average unemployment rate of 4.5%, we have within Chicago's 77 community areas, 37 – almost half – with unemployment rates over 10%. These areas are all on the South and West sides of the city and most have a majority African American and/or Latinx population. The unemployment rate in 2021 for Chicago's Black population (16%) was triple that of Chicago's white population (5%). Unemployment rates for Chicago's Latinx (8%) and Native American (8%) populations were nearly double that of Chicago's white population (5%). The unemployment rate for Chicago's young adults, ages 18-39, was over 9%, the highest among all age groups.

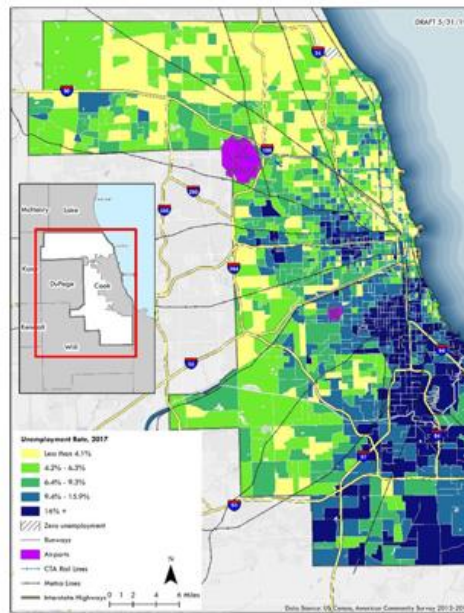
Over the summer of 2023, Mayor Brandon Johnson and his transition team identified key locations in Chicago for investment. This team used the Chicago Environmental Justice Index (Chicago EJ

Index) and Map that identifies Environmental Justice neighborhoods – Chicago communities most burdened by pollution and most vulnerable to its effects based on environmental exposures and conditions, sensitive populations, and socioeconomic factors at the census tract level. These communities include Austin, East Garfield Park, Englewood, Humboldt Park, Lower West Side, McKinley Park, New City, North Lawndale, Roseland, South Deering, South Lawndale, West Englewood, and West Garfield Park. Currently the Mayor’s Office is reviewing the City of Chicago’s expansive workforce development investments and services for strategic alignment and the development of a comprehensive workforce agenda. Leadership from The Partnership are involved in these strategic planning sessions and committed to aligning, implementing, and leveraging services where possible to achieve the goals in the plan.

Through multiple regional planning efforts, Cook County developed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that aims to address economic and racial inequity by aligning resources and targeting investments towards infrastructure, growing businesses, and human capital. The Partnership works closely with the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development, Housing Authority of Cook County, and aligned initiatives like the Chicago Metro Metals Consortium to pursue policies and programs that create an environment for economic growth. These efforts have an intentional focus on reducing inequities in areas that have historically experienced disinvestment in infrastructure, unjust housing policies, and a loss of jobs and economic opportunity. Cook County has identified 34 suburban towns and municipalities that they are prioritizing for investments in community and economic development. (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Cook County Priority Communities

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Alsip | Lansing |
| Blue Island | Lynwood |
| Burnham | Markham |
| Calumet City | Matteson |
| Calumet Park | Merrionette Park |
| Chicago Heights | Olympia Fields |
| Country Club Hills | Park Forest |
| Crestwood | Phoenix |
| <u>Dixmoor</u> | Posen |
| Dolton | Richton Park |
| East Hazel Crest | Riverdale |
| Flossmoor | Robbins |
| Ford Heights | Sauk Village |
| Glenwood | South Chicago Heights |
| Harvey | South Holland |
| Hazel Crest | Steger |
| Homewood | Thornton |



Map prepared by the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

Currently, LWIA 7 has ten American Job Centers, including five in the City of Chicago and five in suburban Cook County. These high-volume centers provide access to all WIOA Titles and are located to facilitate equal access throughout the service area. In addition, The Partnership also funds 42 Delegate Agencies to provide services in targeted geographies or to targeted populations such as returning citizens and youth with disabilities.

The Partnership plans to continually revisit the geographic locations of its American Job Centers and Delegate Agencies to ensure alignment with the City and County priority communities. The Chicago Cook WIB will explore several strategies to bring services into targeted areas that do not currently have service providers physically located in the community:

- Use the provider procurement process to establish services in targeted areas
- Implement innovative strategies to outreach and provide services in nearby communities that do not have physical workforce centers
- Collaborate with City and County officials to remove transportation and other barriers that prevent jobseekers from accessing current service locations

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership's implementation of the 2023 QUEST program in Chicago and Cook County will further support the initiative's goals of impacting social, economic and workforce inequities of the region's post-COVID economic recovery by focusing on employers in key economic sectors and individuals who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. With the state's unemployment rate at a low 4.0 as per the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the economy appears on paper to have rebounded. However, the reality is that the recovery has been disproportionate for individuals of color and underserved neighborhoods that show very high levels of unemployment and low levels of labor force participation. Through this initiative, The Partnership will recruit and provide training for underserved populations into careers in Manufacturing, Healthcare, Hospitality and Tourism, and the Transportation Distribution and Logistics (TDL), serving 100 individuals with a combination of career services, occupational training, work-based learning, and disaster relief employment.

The Partnership is targeting eligible participants from historically marginalized communities as well as people and communities who have been particularly impacted by COVID-19. Serving people from historically marginalized populations is consistent with our local plan and The Partnership targeted the following communities which have elevated levels of unemployment, poverty and underserved populations. Chicago: Bronzeville, Douglas, Garfield, Greater Englewood Kenwood, Oakland, Pullman, Robbins, Roseland, and Uptown. Suburban Cook County: Maywood and Harvey.

Additionally, amid the huge international displacement of millions of Ukrainians, The Partnership's AJC in Wheeling, AJC at Truman College, AJC in Maywood and Polish American Association plan to provide services to Ukrainian refugees. Staff at Polish American Association in particular are fluent in both Polish and Russian. Cook County is one of the largest counties that Ukrainians call home nationwide. Our agencies are working with Refugee One, World Relief and

Ukrainian churches to assist the unique population. Finding a job will be a critical step for refugees and their families. Also, this grant will assist the LWIA's migrant population, (known as New Arrivals) by providing them with basic career services, workforce resources and hiring events in 2024. Also, referrals to Title II's Adult education ESL courses will be offered at any City College. These activities are the focus of service delivery for the New Arrival customers while they wait for Work Authorization. Once the New Arrival receives work authorization, career and training workforce services can be provided.

Career and training services can help refugees gather documents needed for work, create resumes, search for jobs, prepare for interviews, and learn to use public transportation to get to their new jobs. Also, The Partnership is targeting laid off and current temporary workers in our Chicago Community Health Response Corps who are or were providing outreach and health information to communities hardest hit by COVID -19 and other health care inequities.

I. Describe how the local area will utilize a customer-centered approach to its service delivery model, including the following:

1. How a customer-centered or human-centered approach will be used over the course of this plan to improve local service delivery methods.

The local One-Stop Operator supports and coordinates a human-centered design approach throughout the American Job Centers, with a main resource for this work being the Service Integration Self-Assessment processes at each AJC. A commitment of the Service Integration Self-Assessment at AJCs is implementation of a customer satisfaction survey in all 10 AJCs. The survey gathers information and feedback on service delivery, gaps in service, and potential opportunities for program and site staff training or professional development. The surveys also solicit feedback as success stories that can lead to replication of successful service strategies or actions. QR codes

to access these surveys are posted throughout the AJCs so that customers can easily complete the survey on their phone. Staff are also trained to assist a customer without a smartphone to complete the survey on a Resource Room computer. Data from these surveys is shared with all partners to continually improve services.

The OSO hosts monthly partner meetings at all ten AJCs. These include cross-training sessions so staff across programs can be more knowledgeable about partner programs, improve capacity to refer customers to one another's' services, facilitate wrap-around services and otherwise improve service. Insights from customer surveys present starting points for dialogue and cross-training at partner meetings.

Each month the OSO administers an anonymous participant survey that partner staff can complete on their phones with a QR code. The survey allows the OSO to continually assess staff needs, including whether the content and format of the meeting was useful and engaging. The OSO plans to continue adjusting and evolving monthly partner meetings based on feedback from staff participants.

The OSO also applies a Human Centered Design approach to new projects by convening multi-partner project working groups. Project Working Groups identify problems based on data collected through surveys, generate ideas and explore options before selecting an approach to pilot in one or more of the AJCs. This is how LWIA 7 successfully implemented the new Airtable© universal referral system referenced below in response to question 4I(3). Over the course of this Plan, the OSO plans to implement a Business Services Working Group to gather data, identify pain points, and pilot new solutions for Employer Customers. Other virtual and technical tools LWIA 7 has brought and will bring online including virtual orientations, future resume matching, and other innovations all also support customer centered design and improve accessibility and user experience. Any state case management system that reduces duplicate paperwork across WIOA

partner programs will also improve customer experience by reducing administrative steps throughout the customer’s service experience.

At the core of LWIA 7’s commitment to a human-centered approach is the promotion of a system where the customer (job seeker or business) sees “no wrong door” and is not limited in services based on funding stream, agency or program. A seamless approach will continue to be pursued and will include close collaboration among all of the WIOA system partners, other nonprofit organizations, education, human service, and economic development entities and for business customers, other business-serving entities like City and County economic development agencies, small business development centers, Chambers and others.

- 2. Any efforts to provide services to customers in the spaces where they commonly visit (i.e., using a bus or other mobile solution to provide services outside of the one-stop center or having a local workforce are representative available at a public library at set times).**

Three of LWIA 7’s AJCs are located on a Community College campus, and a fourth AJC is located immediately next to a Community College Campus with College staff having an office at the AJC as well as on the College Campus.

The Partnership’s network of Title I Delegate Agencies are strategically located throughout Chicago and Suburban Cook County neighborhoods in high need of services. These Delegate Agencies are often community-based organizations already deeply embedded in the community they serve.

LWIA 7 will continue to explore new methods of co-locating services with other institutional partners including public libraries, other public agency locations and other community-based organization sites where residents already go or are familiar.

- 3. Any efforts to review and update the referral process, including creating a universal**

referral process, utilizing an electronic referral management system, expansion of referral pathways, etc. If there are obstacles to updating the local area’s referral process, describe them here.

Throughout 2023, the OSO convened a Referrals Project Working Group to identify pain points, generate ideas, and explore possible solutions for the challenges facing partners when it came to referrals. The Referrals Project Working Group quickly identified the need for a universal referral system for all partners. The Group further identified a list of must haves and “nice to haves” for any potential solution. The Group evaluated several different software options for processing and tracking referrals between partners, and ultimately selected Illinois workNet as the best potential option given a number of factors. After learning that DCEO planned to begin utilizing workNet as a statewide option in the near future, but would not be ready to launch in 2023, the Project Working Group began piloting a referrals software called Airtable©.

After an initial pilot with only 2 partners, the OSO began training and onboarding other partners to use Airtable©. At the time of writing, all of Title I and Title III were using Airtable© to refer customers to each other with plans for Titles II and IV to be onboarded in winter 2024. Throughout 2024 the OSO will continue training additional partners until all Core and Required partners can refer and track customers in Airtable©.

In addition to referrals between partner agencies, Airtable© also handles “self-referrals” from customers who fill out an interest form online. These customers enter their contact information to receive a call back from AJC staff within three business days. All referrals, whether between partners or self-referred from the website, can be tracked in Airtable© so a referring agency knows what happens to their customer after they’ve been referred to a partner and so all partners can see how long the customer journey takes and whether there are any areas needing improvement.

J. Describe training activities in the local area, including the following:

The Partnership budgets a minimum of 50% of WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program funds for training. These activities include not only occupational training delivered through the ITA program but also includes the use of On-the-Job Training, Work Based Learning, Incumbent Worker Training, Career Pathway and Bridge programs and working with employers to develop and implement DOL Registered Apprenticeship programs. The Chicago Cook WIB requires the public workforce network of American Job Centers, Delegate Agencies, and Sector Centers to make available various types of WIOA training tailored to the specific needs of jobseekers and employers. Staff from The Partnership regularly monitor and evaluate this activity to ensure total compliance therewith.

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

In recent years, The Partnership has invested more than 75% of training expenditures in Individual Training Accounts. While the demand and use of ITA's makes up most of the training expenditures, work-based learning activities such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), Apprenticeships, and Career Pathways trainings are a part of the training expenditures that we have been and will continue to expand upon. LWIA 7's base of American Job Centers and Delegate agencies have been encouraged to develop more OJT's and other work-based learning activities. Funding from special grants such as Governors Reserve funding are also being set aside for OJT's. Our business relations experts are also trained in relaying the benefits of OJTs to the business customers they engage as well. The Partnership will continue to set ambitious targets around the number or percent increases in OJT and IWT and will identify and strategically engage employers to facilitate this continued shift. The Partnership may consider

developing specific competitive contracts for OJTs. Through our formula funding we have been using ITA's in combination of other training funds such as OJTs to fund a growing number of Apprenticeship programs as well as working with companies to develop Apprenticeship and Incumbent Worker programs through additional funding from DCEO. We implemented train-the-trainer component to our four Sector Centers (Hospitality, Healthcare, Information Technology, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics), and they are now subject matter experts in OJTs and Incumbent Worker Training and can provide support to agencies. In addition, we want to increase in the local area other business services solutions such as Customized Training, Paid Work Experience (PWE), and Apprenticeship. Our newly form Administration department will be responsible for providing quarterly trainings on all the above-mentioned business solutions to agencies, and staff, providing technical assistance and tracking the number of trained participants and agencies in the local area. The engagement strategy will continue to include outreach to the employer community through Chambers of Commerce, industry associations, the County's Bureau of Economic Development and the Office of the Mayor of Chicago; and will result in the creation and marketing of a robust menu of WIOA services designed to support employer customers efforts to build a skilled workforce.

Supporting the efforts of WIOA core and mandated partners, The Partnership also engages actively in support of work-based learning strategies derived from other funding streams. Community Colleges, Secondary Districts, philanthropic and public/private partnerships have found that aligning with the WIOA system can bring the benefit of tangible leveraged supports for their participants. To that end, the Partnership has engaged in apprenticeship efforts, bridge programs, and other initiatives described elsewhere in this plan in order to encourage co-enrollment and the use of WIOA support.

2. How local areas will provide training and professional development opportunities to

staff regarding equity, access, trauma-informed care, and other topics concerning a customer-centered approach to service delivery.

The Partnership believes that training and professional development can 1). increase staff and agency staff's individual skills in one or more areas of expertise, 2). increase motivation to perform the job thoughtfully and correctly, and 3). boost a stronger customer-centered approach in the region's workforce services. Internal and external resources are shared with the network and Partnership staff. For instance, the Partnership offers Microsoft Outlook and Google Workspace trainings and work-based learning trainings several times during year of Partnership staff and agency staff. (Note: Microsoft Outlook and Google training is open to customers as well.) In another example, professional development opportunities are shared through Chicago Jobs Council (CJC), a coalition of community-based training organizations, advocacy groups, businesses and individuals working toward ensuring access to employment and career advancement opportunities for people living in poverty. Aside from promoting training through CJC, The Partnership is sharing CJC's Career Readiness Curriculum with its aim to create a culture shift in how job seekers are served. Next, WorkforceGPS provides an online, technical assistance website offering webinars, evidence based- research and other training resources created to help build capacity. Additionally, Illinois Workforce Academy (IWA) is another highly shared resource for continuous improvement. Through their Workforce Wednesday Webinars, supported by Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support (ICSP) and other State of Illinois agencies, they provide workforce professionals with the knowledge, skills, and capacity to effectively serve customers. IWA is sponsored by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor. Next, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (IDCEO) also provides training specifically to Partnership staff geared to understanding and implementing Federal, State, and Local guidance around requirements for conducting and

recording WIOA services, especially when updates have occurred. Also, the Partnership promotes participation in National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP). NAWDP offers professional development webinars, annual conferences, and certification credibility. Subsequently, The Partnership encourages staff to obtain the Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP) national workforce credential, obtainable through NAWDP. Lastly, the Partnership supports a culture of safety and empowerment and understands this is imperative in serving and supporting young people. Therefore, all youth delegate agencies are required to attend and report on an agreed upon number of trauma-informed care training for staff per program year.

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

The Individual Training Account Policy Letter, dated September 2019, is attached (Attachment D). The American Job Centers facilitate each jobseeker's ITA application and training selection process. American Job Center Career Coaches assist job seekers with researching and selecting training programs that align with the job seeker's IEP. Jobseekers use their training vouchers with approved training programs / providers listed on the Illinois Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) which is published on Illinois workNet.

The Partnership contracts with a third-party entity, referred to as the Training Assessment and Referral Agency (or TARA) to process ITAs. The TARA also analyzes patterns and trends and provides a system of checks and balances to ensure participants receive equitable services and to

minimize conflicts of interest. Customers are required to research different training providers and conduct site visits, as well as check outcomes for the training provider on Illinois workNet.

As outlined in the LWIA 7 Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy (dated September 19, 2019, attached to the Local Plan), we have a process in place to encourage true customer choice.

The Career Coach “will direct customers to compare training programs using the attached list of Target Occupations and the WIOA Approved Training Programs feature found at illinoisworknet.com. Unless a valid accommodation is requested, the customer must visit at least two programs offering the same training program before making a selection, in order to evaluate the facilities, accessibility, personnel, environment, and content of each, and must complete a training provider exploration form. The career coach verifies that the program aligns with the goals outlined in the customer’s Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

The requirement to investigate programs supports a well-informed choice. The initial research is conducted on Illinois workNet, and then each customer is required to visit at least two and ideally three or even more programs. The case manager tracks this activity with the customer. Within our Career Connect system, there are specific spaces for case notes for the Career Coach to document the customer’s visits and choice and the reasons for selected the training program they selected. As outlined in our updated ITA Initiation Procedure (updated 5/16/2024 and attached), the Career Coach completes a Training Exploration Form Results Case Note documenting the 2-3 schools the customer visited “document[ing] the school’s name, person they spoke with and which school they chose and why” and a Training Justification Case Note further detailing that the training is right for the customer. By documenting this, we are confident that that each customer does make a reasoned choice between options.

The TARA monitors the referral process and contacts clients to ensure they are exercising informed

customer choice and being offered sufficient choices among programs when appropriate. In LWIA 7, to further support customer choice, programs are available throughout the County, to best meet customer needs based on location, across the workforce area with programs available across the region in multiple locations (including at 7 community colleges and 125 total other providers). We work to make sure programs are available where the customer lives, based on language needs (for instance we have instructors with multiple languages, including Spanish, Polish, Ukrainian, Arabic, Russian, and plan to include other languages as needed).

4. How the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

Individual Training Accounts are by design a tool of customer choice, meaning that customers are free to choose from any approved training program for which they qualify. This framework has led to disproportionate spending in two categories of occupational training; nearly two-thirds of ITAs (by volume and by dollar amount) are invested in commercial driver's licenses and entry level healthcare certifications (certified nursing assistants, patient care technicians, phlebotomists, etc.). The Partnership is committed to exploring ways to diversify this investment across a greater variety of high demand occupational training while ensuring alignment with the economic and community development initiatives of the City of Chicago and Cook County. As part of its regular review of the ITA system (see item 4 below), The Partnership works to ensure the right menu of training programs and ITAs to meet both customer and industry demand. The Partnership will work to ensure that 1) training is delivered for the full range of most in-demand occupations providing good career pathway opportunities, with a diverse pool of customers undertaking the full range of options, and 2) the assessment of individuals and customer training selection process is sufficient to ensure the selected training program is a good match to the customer's skills,

interests, and suitability for a given program and its likelihood to lead to these career opportunities and pathways.

The Partnership is very invested in the continuous improvement of the ITA process and selection of qualified training providers as well as other training programs which assist local employers, workers and jobseekers. The Business Relations and Economic Development staff works closely with the training provider staff to determine what type of training may best benefit an employer. Currently we have worked on several Apprenticeship programs which are funded by ITA's as well as OJT funds. If an employer reaches out to staff and finds they are not eligible to qualify as an ITA provider, then we will see if there are perhaps services such as OJT or Incumbent Worker Training which they may be able to benefit from.

Additionally, Partnership staff is active in working with DCEO policy experts in moving toward new guidelines and practices which will enhance the state ETPL as well as the ITA provider application and renewal process. It is very important to ensure that providers are properly certified and connect a nationally recognized credential to their programs.

The Training Provider Eligibility and Certification Policy Letter (June 16, 2022) is attached in our attachment of Policy Letters and guidance. At the inception of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership in 2012, staff reviewed the extensive list of eligible training providers from three local workforce investment areas and sought to pare it down to ensure job seekers would be pursuing training for jobs in high-growth, high-wage industries. The Partnership reduced the then list of more than 700 occupations to a considerably smaller 40 occupational clusters. The occupations are both high-growth and high-demand and provide at minimum family supporting wages as set forth by Cook County. Based upon the duration and complexity of training, then assigned maximum tuition levels to each occupation. Finally, in accordance with labor market information, The Chicago Cook WIB narrowed the workforce system's focus to seven high-growth sectors for

the region – Healthcare, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, Information Technology, Business and Professional Services, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Culinary and Retail. Construction was recently added as another target sector.

The Partnership reviews the local Eligible Training Provider List on a quarterly basis to ensure it reflects the current local employment needs. The review covers existing program performance, and programs' continued eligibility is subject to renewal, as well as new programs.

As a result, over the past eight years, the Chicago Cook WIB has continued to refine the list, adding new target sectors, such as construction, and new occupations, such as early childhood education and addiction counseling. The Workforce Innovation Board reviews and approves all such changes.

5. How the local area tracks non-enrolling basic services provided to reportable individuals.

The Partnership collects data on non-enrolling basic services through a combination of sign in sheets within the resource rooms, workshops and orientations. Also, the Partnership's Career Connect System allows interested job seekers to complete an initial brief application on-line for our system. Additionally, the One-Stop Operator will be installing iPad kiosks in the AJCs to improve universal customer tracking and collection of customer satisfaction survey results from participants who do not have smart phones. Each American Job Center (AJC) will have a kiosk for customers to quickly input a minimal amount of information including basic contact information and the reason for their visit to the AJC to help staff accurately count the number of universal customers served at each AJC. Lastly The Partnership uses QR codes for pre-registering and attendance tracking at hiring events and resources fairs. The Partnership continues to explore efficient and reliable ways to collect data on non-enrolling services.

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

1. **To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.**
2. **To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).**
3. **To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).**
4. **To use funds for pay for performance contracts as outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3).**

Each year The Partnership submits a planned annual WIOA program budget to the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board. Any recommended plans for transfer of WIOA funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams are included in the budget as are any requests for incumbent worker training funds. Transfer of funds between Dislocated Worker and Adult streams along with the amount reserved for incumbent worker training are based on available dollars and local needs. The Partnership continuously evaluates the demand for funding. The Partnership may request modifications to the budget including transfer of funds and increases in incumbent worker funds during the program year as needed, to address issues and/or shortfalls. Recommendations for a budget modification are presented to the Board for approval and submitted to DCEO.

The Partnership does not currently plan to use transitional job models within WIOA. The Partnership is researching performance-based model contracts and reserves the right to pilot this model in the future.

L. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in the operating systems and policies as part of the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs)

Equity is a core value for LWIA 7 and the Chicago Workforce Innovation Board and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership and the local WIOA system. The following Equity Value is part of its list of core organizational values.

We intentionally acknowledge systems of oppression when providing the resources and supports people need to reach their full economic and human potential. We actively work to eliminate disparities people experience based on race/ethnicity, disability, background, gender, age, sexual orientation, or economic and educational status. We partner with employers who share our belief and are committed to the idea that all residents of our region can achieve a meaningful career that provides family-sustaining income.

The Partnership continues to examine its policies and deepened its commitment to racial equity in the workforce. The Partnership has begun incorporating a workforce equity lens into all of its work. In 2021, The Partnership joined the City of Chicago’s “Together We Heal” equity initiative. As part of The Partnership’s efforts to build a foundational understanding of equity among the staff, The Partnership led a Racial Equity Book Club where close to 30 staff members read and discussed the book *Caste: The Origin of our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. The Partnership’s staff all attended implicit bias training online as part of their work, and in 2022 all remaining Partnership staff will complete implicit bias training to continue building the organization’s understanding of racial equity.

A key part of the Chicago-Cook workforce system are our smaller, neighborhood-based organizations called “delegate agencies.” These providers are often deeply embedded in underserved, disadvantaged and often minority communities, which enhances the local system’s ability to serve people of color and other diverse populations.

The RFPs released to select service providers for AJCs, Delegate Agencies and Youth providers

specifically ask respondents to address access and equity both in jobseeker services and in employer engagement, and also to describe the diversity of their organizational and program staff and their capacity to deliver services to our targeted populations and communities. The delegate agency RFPs have targeted high need community areas and hard-to-serve populations.

The Partnership generates and analyzes quarterly WIOA Title I participant data by race, ethnicity, gender and geographic distribution throughout Cook County and provides this data to Chicago and Cook County leadership to help identify any inequities. We also use this data internally to measure how well services are reaching target populations and communities.

The Partnership will continue to focus on supporting employers in their own diversity and equity efforts by prioritizing those offering good jobs and career pathways to a broad spectrum of the potential workforce and providing training and technical assistance to employer customers on issues such as career pathways, reducing barriers to hiring (degree requirements, background checks, driver's license requirements, etc.) that unequally shut out certain populations from job opportunities.

The Partnership is also conducting a compensation analysis of its own staff. This process is ongoing, but The Partnership already uses ADP's national database to cross reference job description, years of experience, and level of education to create market specific salary range recommendations void of consideration for age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or any other protected class. Questions around equity are now part of our hiring process.

A member of The Partnership Leadership team participated in the Chicago Workforce Funder Alliance and Chicago Jobs Council (CJC) Learning Community series. The goal of the series is to improve the practice of workforce funding through an intentional learning community and facilitated peer-to-peer interaction. Topics included the following:

- Trust based Philanthropy
- Re-imagined a workforce system that is equitable

- Anti-Racist Workforce Development System framework
- Career readiness system framework
- Using Asset based language

Lastly, The Partnership will promote the work and usage of the Chicago Job’s Council’s “Anti-Racist Workforce Development: A Framework and Guide for Implementation” training and tool among The Partnership staff and within our network. We are also promoting the use of CJC’s Career Readiness Curriculum, which is a free curriculum based upon existing curricula and field expertise. Handouts, slide deck, facilitator guides and talking points and coaching questions are provided. CJC’s Career Readiness Curriculum aims to create a culture shift in workforce organization that transforms how job seekers are served.

Chapter 5: Performance Goals and Evaluation – Local Component

The plan must include information on the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6)) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)). LWIAs are required to provide information and analysis regarding the challenges and opportunities that are associated with performance goals and evaluation.

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

- 1. WIOA Performance Measures**
- 2. Additional State Performance Measures**

In Program Year 2022, the last year with complete data, The Partnership met or exceeded all the LWIA 7 WIOA performance measurement goals and the adjusted goals when applying the Statistical Adjust Model (SAM). As with all LWIAs, LWIA 7 will renegotiate performance during the same period this Plan is being drafted. As occurs yearly, the Partnership reports its performance each year and any new or changed goals to the WIB during regular WIB meetings. (See WIOA Performance Table below.)

WIOA Performance Goals & Outcomes PY 2022

WIOA Performance Measure	Adult	Dislocated	Youth
Employment in 2 nd Qtr. after Exit	67.33% (1255/1864) Meet	73% (1303/1785) Meet	74.42% (963/1294) Exceed
Median Qtr. 2 Earnings	\$9,496.75 Exceed	\$12,597.04 Exceed	\$5,718.75 Exceed
Employment in 4 th Qtr. after Exit	69.01% (1169/1694) Exceed	76.14% (1465/1924) Meet	74.42% (964/1286) Exceed
Credential Rate	70.92% (873/1231) Meet	72.76% (911/1252) Meet	69.72% (449/644) Exceed
Measurable Skills Gain	64.04% (1567/2447) Exceed	64.44% (908/1409) Exceed	62.49% (758/1213) Exceed

The LWIA 7 WIOA performance goals for PY2023 have been set as follow:

WIOA Performance Measure	Adult	Dislocated	Youth
Employment in 2 nd Qtr. after Exit	71%	78.5%	71%
Median Qtr. 2 Earnings	\$7,500	\$11,000	\$4,500
Employment in 4 th Qtr. after Exit	69%	77%	68.5%
Credential Rate	72%	73%	68.5%
Measurable Skills Gain	53%	56%	49%

LWIA 7 will propose a similar level of measures in its negotiations with the State for PY2024 and beyond.

By way of context regarding current circumstances, some additional data is regularly gathered and analyzed to show trends and project local performance toward WIOA and related performance goals. A recent snapshot of the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs presented to the Workforce Innovation Board showed the following information:

WIOA PY 2022 Adult Snapshot



July 2022 – June 2023

4,157 Registrants Served



4,157 Registrants
2,255 New Enrollments
1,319 Exiters
3424 In Training

45% female • 54% male
63.6% Black • 19.6% Hispanic • 21.6% White
• 3.4% Asian



16.7% college graduates,
7.8% some college,
54.5% high school diploma,
5.4% high school dropout



74.7% Low-income (62.8% on food stamps)
49.8% basic skills deficient
2% veterans
9% report having a prior felony



3

WIOA PY 2022 Dislocated Workers Snapshot



July 2022 – June 2023

2,919 Registrants Served



2,455 Registrants Formula
464 National DW/IE Grant
1,222 New Enrollments
1,309 Exiters
1,947 In Training

39.1% female • 59.8% male
49.4% Black • 25.7% Hispanic • 31.7% White
• 4.4% Asian



29.1% college graduates
6.2% some college,
49.1% high school diploma
4.2% drop out



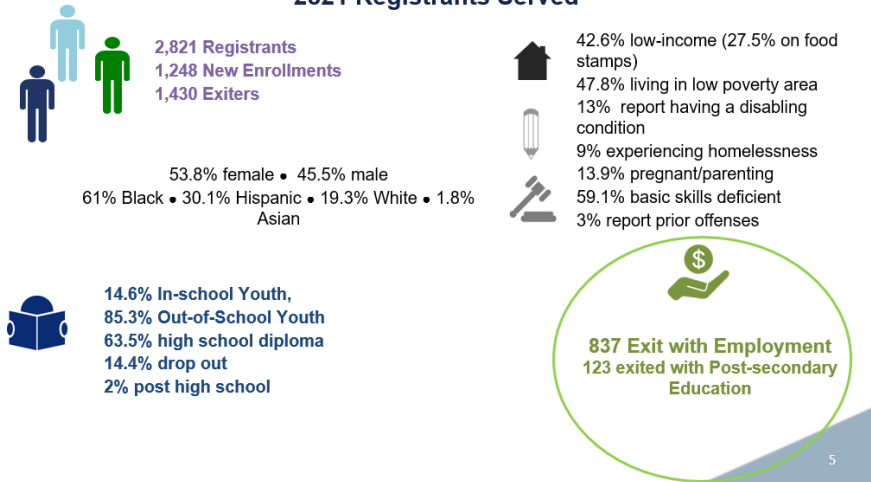
44.5% Low-income (19.8% on food stamps)
62.5% receiving benefits
35% exhausted unemployment
20.6% long-term unemployed
33.6% basic skills deficient
4.5% veterans



4

July 2022 – June 2023

2821 Registrants Served



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

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

The Partnership continues to analyze and evaluate our program to identify service strategies that yield the most promising return on investment. Going forward The Partnership is committed to assessing impact over outputs in our overall programming. The Partnership will continue to analyze facility and operating costs and look for more efficient and effective ways to serve job seekers and employers. Such activities may include:

- Comparison of program costs and outcomes across existing service models and service providers:
 - Comparative cost analysis of Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs
 - Comparative cost analysis of American Job Centers, Delegate Agencies, and Career Pathway programs as job seeker-facing service models
 - Comparison of service, training, credential, employment, and wage outcomes across American Job Center, Delegate Agency, and Career Pathway, service models
 - Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of existing service delivery system with

- respect to cost-effectiveness and performance
- Assessment of geographic coverage of existing service delivery system:
 - Evaluation of existing service locations in consideration of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of communities throughout LWIA 7
 - Evaluation of existing service locations in consideration of transportation and other accessibility factors
 - Evaluation of existing service locations in consideration of economic development priorities of Cook County and the City of Chicago
 - Evaluation of existing service locations in consideration of cost efficiency
 - Evaluation of existing service locations in consideration of service integration with WIOA Core Partners
- Evaluation of existing service strategies for priority populations:
 - Analysis of existing service delivery system’s responsiveness to priority populations with high rates of unemployment
 - Evaluation of capacity within existing service provider network for effectively serving high-need priority populations in Chicago and Cook County, including veterans, formerly incarcerated persons, persons with disabilities, and persons with substance use disorders
 - Assessment of service strategies in consideration of City of Chicago and Cook County strategies for priority populations.
- Evaluation of existing business engagement strategies:
 - Analysis of business services in consideration of the size and projected growth of employment sectors in the region
 - Analysis of wages and projected growth of occupations in which Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker program participants are placed.
 - Comparison of service, sector-based employment, and wage outcomes across business-facing models (Sector Centers) and job seeker-facing models (American Job Centers, Delegate Agencies, Career Pathway programs)
- Evaluation of existing customer training strategies:
 - Comparative cost analysis of On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), Career Pathway programs, and Individual Training Accounts (ITA) as current training strategies
 - Analysis of expenditure and performance outcomes of ITA “customer choice” model
 - Analysis of potential realignment of funds between IWT, OJT, Career Pathway, and ITA training models
- Evaluation of ongoing efforts to integrate service delivery with other WIOA Core Partners; Adult Education and Literacy (Title II), Illinois Department of Employment Security (Title III), Illinois Department of Human Resources Division of Rehabilitation Services (Title IV):
 - Analysis of current state of service integration with respect to physical collocation, utilization of technology for collaboration, Core Partner engagement, knowledge transfer between Core Partners, data sharing, customer experience, and employer experience
 - Formulation of research plan for ongoing Service Integration Self-Assessment Process
- Existing level of sector-specific services within The Partnership’s seven high growth sectors including:

- Ways to collaborate and leverage resources to provide common platforms for The Partnership, Cook County, and other partners to engage employers
- Ways to collaborate with partners like the Chicago Jobs Council to provide training and clarity for Delegate Agencies on allowable braiding and blending of funding sources
- Current service integration strategies that can be expanded beyond WIOA Core Partners
- Ways to further leverage ongoing digital literacy efforts to expand access to jobseekers experiencing homelessness.

The Partnership will at relevant times provide information on planned evaluation activities to the local board at quarterly board meetings. The Partnership will inform and engage relevant program administrators on planned evaluation activities through ongoing program meetings.

Based on evaluation of return on investment and other factors through the processes outlined immediately above, we have found a few key practices which have had more ROI than others and will be expanded/pursued accordingly.

Based on a wealth of trainee outcomes data over recent years, we recognized that certain training programs were performing better than others, in terms of the trainees completing training, securing industry-recognized credentials, securing employment and having solid family-supporting wages in that employment. Partnership staff held a series of meetings with training providers, by sector, to discuss findings, identify particular aspects of curriculum, training delivery, and surrounding services being delivered in conjunction with training that were proving more impactful and discussed ways to strategize to improve outcomes and learn from success. These were distinct for each program or industry, but some common elements included embedding more basic and foundational skills brush-up in curriculum, expanding time and day options for classes, adding more hands-on training components and open-entry/open-exit models. Based on outcomes and information, we have also prioritized OJTs and Apprenticeships, as they were proving to have better outcomes. This has led to some reduction in the overall numbers of ITAs while directing additional funding and effort to more OJTs and Apprenticeships.

In 2020-2021 and following, based on a comprehensive analysis, we have also expanded career

pathway training programs which were proving to be a successful model. In these programs training is embedded within a program of job-readiness, career-exploration, career readiness, supportive services, case management and placement, rather than the case where a more generalist Delegate merely sends a candidate to training elsewhere through an ITA. These more comprehensive career pathway programs continue to show strong outcomes and will continue to be pursued in greater scale.

The Partnership and LWIA 7 will also continue to expand and deliver a set of strategies that follow, each of which has been identified through the previously-outlined evaluation and assessment processes and through regular interaction among leadership and program staff of each of the relevant WIOA system partners:

- Explore methods for expanding service delivery in geographies with the greatest need and curtailing service delivery in geographies with less need. This includes “right-sizing” the local system to have sufficient AJCs and Delegate Agencies to reach targeted populations and communities, while reducing duplication or excess capacity.
- Augment existing geographic analysis to foster alignment with other local economic development initiatives. By aligning organizational infrastructure to support economic policy imperatives outlined by both the City and the County, WIOA funding can have an outsized impact on accelerating economic growth in communities across Chicago and Cook County.
- Explore alternative models for expanding service delivery in high-need geographies that lack service providers with the capacity to operate WIOA programs, such as satellite service locations at public libraries and community colleges, mobile service delivery, and virtual service delivery.
- Expand targeted marketing and community outreach efforts to increase participation by job seekers from high-need populations and geographies.
- Expand partnerships with community-based organizations to support wrap-around and supportive services needed by job seekers and workers to support retention and successful outcomes. Partnerships include organizations and other entities with expertise and services related to housing/homelessness, legal assistance, health and behavioral health and a range of other issues and barriers. This will also include focused effort to expand access to supports that all workers need such as improved and expanded childcare services; transportation access (including directly dedicating increased funding to transit passes and expanding partnerships and advocacy to expand transportation from where targeted populations live to where the jobs are).
- Align sector strategies with those of Cook County and the City of Chicago and continue to consider sector-based strategies and possible expanded Sector Centers.
- Expand incentives and requirements for American Job Centers and Delegate Agencies to collaborate with Sector Centers.

- Expand existing/develop new efforts to educate employers on WIOA business services and labor market conditions.
- Expand workers' rights trainings that have been brought on in response to recommendations from partners and advocates.
- Expand employer-based training services (Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Customized Training).
- Identify efficiencies and avoid duplication of services.

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

The Partnership is currently reviewing the volume and employment outcomes of Individual Training Accounts used for Commercial Driving License and may curtail the number of ITAs issued for CDL training or other high-volume ITAs each year.

The number of ITA requests can exceed the budget available for WIOA adults and youth, so The Partnership will explore ways to better distribute and space out the ITA usage to meet labor demand and ensure the best return on investment.

These are part of overall efforts to continuously improve the ITA system as noted in the section in ITA training above.

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

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

As outlined in Section 4.H, The Partnership invests a required minimum of 50% of Adult and Dislocated Worker program dollars in workforce training. More than three-quarters of those training dollars are invested in Individual Training Accounts, a customer-choice model that allows jobseekers to spend a training voucher on approved programs. The Partnership has increased the

use of On-the Job Training (OJT) and the use of work-based learning in its programming. The OJT model has shown a higher placement rate than the traditional ITA model. The Partnership will continue with its move to direct funds and programs directly with employer involvement such as OJT, apprenticeship, customized training and incumbent worker training.

LWIA has conducted significant research on the types of training offered and is aware as noted above that an inordinate level of ITAs are provided in Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training within the menu of available and targeted training programs. LWIA 7 is working to reduce this and considering setting firm limits [details?] and prioritizing exploration and delivery of other programs. Fields we have provided lower proportions of training, but that have many openings in the region and are in great need among regional employer partners include....

Expanding locations for training remains important. As noted in the section on Customer Choice, by ensuring that a given training is available in multiple locations across our large urban area, we can significantly reduce transportation time and costs and ensure that participants have more access to available training. We know that by providing training in more locations, we can expand access to more potential students and increase retention and completion of training.

Reducing prerequisites: By working to identify what prior experience, skill levels and other prerequisites are truly needed, we can reduce barriers that may be preventing workers from participating. We will work to parallel national “ban the box” movements that are attempting to reduce the types and numbers of jobs for which individuals with a criminal background are prohibited, by reducing parallel limitations for training programs where possible. We will also consider with education partners whether a high school diploma is required for certain trainings. We are also expanding/encouraging our community colleges to have more open-entry/open-exit programs and flexible schedules that allow students/customers to attend a broader diversity of programs with more options than in the past. Some promising outcomes are beginning to be

seen.

Individual Barriers: Addressing individual customer barriers to participation, training, employment, and overall success is also critical to success of our training initiatives. LWIA 7 WIOA Title I providers in particular during the WIOA assessment, IEP/ISS development, training referral and case management service phases are working to address individual barriers as early in an individual's participation with the WIOA system as possible. This is a critical step to ensuring success in workforce services and in particular in training through ITAs, work-based learning or other training services. We find significantly more success for customers in training if they have put in place a plan to address barriers up-front. Issues around housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare, etc., can all prevent success, so supporting each individual to put in place strategies and secure external social supportive services wherever possible makes a real difference.

C. Additional supportive services are and can be implemented that we may have not utilized in the past, such as helping customers with car insurance or other less-typical transportation costs than the more common bus/train pass services. We also have seen real success helping participant students purchase electronic equipment such as tablets or laptops to facilitate their studies and expand the mobility they may need to succeed in work, go to class, study and conduct other needed activities wherever and whenever they have time. We will continue to explore other methods as they are identified by Career Coaches, training partners and individual customers. The content immediately above in section B.2. also responds to this question, with regard to expansion of career pathway training and other strategies. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in the analysis of performance goals and implementation of evaluation activities.

For more detail on how The Partnership is incorporating an equity lens into all of its work please

see the response to Chapter 4, Section K above. With respect to analyzing performance goals and implementing evaluation activities, The Partnership is planning to examine its WIOA performance data in even more detail than current standard practices. The Partnership will move beyond an analysis of how many people of color its network serves, but also how well the network is serving them. The Partnership plans to analyze ITA training program participation and outcomes by race and ethnicity to help identify any patterns and ensure people of color have access to career training in all The Partnership's target, high-growth sectors. Based on the data analysis The Partnership will develop strategies to increase equity and improve outcomes in our services for people of color. As mentioned above in 4.K. above, The Partnership examines WIOA performance data by race, ethnicity, gender and geographic distribution on a quarterly basis and provides this data to Chicago and Cook County leadership.

Chapter 6: Technical Requirements and Assurances – Local Component

This chapter includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(iv)). LWIAs are required to provide information and analysis regarding the challenges and opportunities that are associated with meeting the administrative requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs.

A. Fiscal Management

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

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership is the designated administrative entity responsible for the disbursement of WIOA funds in Chicago and Cook County (LWIA 7).

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

The Partnership utilizes a request-for-proposals process to competitively procure American Job Centers and other Title I service providers, the One Stop Operator role, and other services. Please see attached Procurement Policy Letter, dated March 30, 2017 (Attachment F).

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

- 1. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities,**

programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).

The Comprehensive American Job Centers will maintain a culture of inclusiveness in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA 29 CFR 38, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and all other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. The WIOA Partners shall not unlawfully discriminate, harass, or allow harassment against any employee, or applicant for employment or services due to gender, race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, veteran status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition(s), age, sexual orientation or marital status. Partners will assure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and its amendments, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as other applicable regulations and guidelines issued pursuant to the ADAAA. Additionally, partners agree to fully comply with the provisions of WIOA Title I, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, WIOA Title IB, 29 CFR Part 38 and all other regulations implementing the aforementioned laws.

In partnership and cooperation with the WIOA partners and Equal Opportunity (EO) staff of The Partnership, the LWIA 7 Comprehensive American Job Center have at least one fully accessible workstation with staff trained on the operations of the adaptive equipment and programs. The WIOA Title I partners also commit to offering priority for services to veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals or individuals who are basic skills deficient when providing individualized career services and training services with WIOA adult funds.

Additionally, the physical characteristics of the facilities, both indoor and outdoor, meet compliance with 29 CFR Part 38, or most recent ADAAA standards for Accessible Design and the

Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards. In some cases, the facilities are leased by neither The Partnership nor its service providers (e.g., IDES CMS or the City of Chicago). In this case, organizational leadership is in active, urgent and ongoing negotiations with the parties to continue ADA compliance.

Services are available in a convenient, high traffic and accessible location taking into account reasonable distance from public transportation and adequate parking (including parking clearly marked for individuals with disabilities). Indoor space is/will be designed in an “equal and meaningful” manner providing access for individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, in terms of programmatic accessibility, all WIOA partners agree that they will not discriminate in their employment practices or services on the basis of race, color, creed, 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, veteran’s status, or on the basis of any other classification protected under state or federal law. The Partnership and WIOA partners have policies and procedures to address these issues, and those policies and procedures have been disseminated to staff/employees and otherwise posted as required by law. The Partnership and WIOA partners further assure that all are currently in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding these issues.

All WIOA partners will cooperate with compliance monitoring that is conducted at the local level to ensure that all Comprehensive American Job Centers, programs, services, technology, and materials are accessible and available to all. The LWIA 7 Equal Opportunity Officer has over 15 years of EO experience, and her network of internal EO designees at each Center, continually and expeditiously resolve any problems or complaints that might arise.

The Partnership has a combination of procedures and guidelines that enable the Comprehensive

American Job Centers to successfully provide individuals with complete access to all services, such as Sign Language Interpreter Services and Language Services (PROPIO). In addition to PROPIO services, bilingual staff is available to assist and translate at most Comprehensive American Job Centers. Request for Reasonable Accommodation is in place to assist individuals upon request. If additional services are required, individuals are also referred to WIOA vocational rehabilitation partners, Illinois Department of Human Services-Division of Rehabilitation Services. Also, technology translation assistance is available through Google Translate.

These services will be provided “on demand” and in “real time” in the physical American Job Center in person or via technology consistent with the “direct linkage” requirement as defined in WIOA (WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A) and Section 678.305(d) of the draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking). Additionally, staff members will be trained to provide services to all, regardless of range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style and intelligence or education level. An interpreter will be provided “in real time” as provided by the vendor to any customer with a language barrier.

The Comprehensive American Job Centers refer individuals with barriers to employment to appropriate workshops such as reading and/or math literacy training, job readiness training, computer literacy training and/or vocational training if it has been determined that the training will lead to employment opportunity in that field of study. The Comprehensive American Job Centers are provided with other material, equipment, and software to assist and address the needs of the individual with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities accessing services at the Comprehensive American Job Centers have access to the center’s resources not limited to: TTY and/or TextNet (Internet TTY services), Sign language Interpretation Service, Computer, Printer, Phone, Assistive Technology (scanning/reading software, specialty ergonomic keyboard/mouse etc.). The American Job Centers are educated on

the WIOA 2014, Title 29 Part 38, Section 188 Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity regulations. The American Job Centers adhere to and apply the EO policy and procedures to their daily operation as they assist and address the needs of individuals and individuals with disabilities. The Comprehensive American Job Centers have a selection of Assistive Technologies, listed below, available for individuals with disabilities. The assistive technology is available upon request and/or as needed for the following services: Orientation, Registration, Testing, Workshops, Job Fairs, Rapid Response and the Resource Room. In addition, the Comprehensive American Job Centers have access to TextNet Services (Online TTY) to assist individuals that are Deaf and/or Hearing Impaired and Language Services to assist individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). If an individual's needs are not within the Comprehensive American Job Center staff ability to address, in accordance with the "direct linkage" requirement under WIOA, the Comprehensive American Job Center will refer the individual to a WIOA partner (e.g., IDHS-DRS, IDES, Housing and Urban Development and others) that has the appropriate services and ability to assist the individual. This will be done within a reasonable time by phone or real-time.

Additionally, assistive devices, including but not limited to the following are currently available and being updated and distributed:

- TextNet
- ZoomText
- JAWS (a screen-reading software program)
- OpenBook
- Dragon (a speech-recognition software program)
- MS Office Professional (8 or higher)
- Wynn Wizard
- Computers
- Large Screen Monitors
- Intellikeys/Keyboard
- Enlarged Keyboard
- Adjustable Keyboard Trays
- Trackball Mouse
- Adaptive mouse and keyboard
- Large Print Labels (for keyboard)
- Scanners
- Magnifiers
- Headphones
- Audio Tape Players
- Adjustable Table/Chairs
- Pocket Talker (Assistive Listening System)
- Staff (Real Time) Reader
- Braille
- Large print material
- Audio Tapes
- Text transcripts
- Television w/ closed and open captions

The COVID-19 pandemic period led to expansions in our capacity to deliver services virtually, and many enhancements developed then have been continued as needed, including using supportive service resources to help participants with computer and internet access, delivering regular free virtual digital literacy courses to close the digital divide, and an online orientation standardized across the local system.

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

The Local Workforce Innovation Area 7 WIOA MOU is attached (Attachment A). Additionally, the Service Integration Self Assessments and Plans are attached. Partners at the AJCs receive significant cross-training in relation to service integration, information and updates on one another’s programs, policies, procedures and priorities, assessment tools, training programs, data and IT systems and other topics related to the activities and services at the AJCs and within the system. These occur at regular site team meetings and broader trainings delivered by The Partnership and other Partner agencies.

Challenges and Opportunities associated with administrative requirements:

Challenge or Opportunity	Analysis: How LWIA 7 is addressing or will address this challenge or opportunity.
The Partnership sees an opportunity to provide up to date program	The opportunity to provide up dated program material and other items used to inform our agencies

<p>material and items used to inform our agencies of their physical and programmatic responsibilities to provide accessible services.</p>	<p>of their physical and programmatic responsibilities to provide accessible services will be accomplished by using State provided resources, Partnership resources and through training our delegate agencies and Partnership staff.</p>
<p>The Partnership looks for ways to expedite the enrollment process and fast-track.</p>	<p>The Partnership continues to remind new frontline staff to use the State’s 5-year lookback period for more options to make a job seeker eligible as a dislocated worker eligibility. Also, the Basic Skills Deficiency tool is used to fast-track basic skills if a customer is not going for training. Although these are strategies that have been in use for a few years, there has been workforce staff turnover and refresher training is needed.</p> <p>Currently, as per guidance from DCEO, self-attestation can be used as a last resort to substantiate suitability when no other documentation is available, such as facility closure or substantial lay-off. Also, The Partnership’s Board recently approved a draft policy in November 2023, entitled <i>Sectors that Qualify as Substantial Layoffs</i> to assist with dislocated worker eligibility. This allows job seekers laid-off from the following sectors to have been part of a substantial layoff for purposes of dislocated worker eligibility: Leisure and Hospitality, Manufacturing, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Service to be eligible for dislocated worker services. Lastly, agencies can expediate the enrollment process through group eligibility and virtual services when fast-tracking is needed. These are examples of how we simplify the intake process and allow job seekers to connect to the system quickly and efficiently and obtain the appropriate mix of services to advance them along a pathway to economic mobility.</p>
<p>The State’s 50% training requirement creates challenges in managing WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding.</p>	<p>The Partnership will work with IWP and the State to advocate for the inclusion of more career coaching activities in the training definition</p>

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

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

representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).

To encourage public comment, The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership promoted the Local and Regional Plan’s public comment period with a public notice ad and through e-newsletters, social media and emails to the public, our network and stakeholders. The Partnership published the following notice in the Chicago Sun-Times and Chicago Tribune on February 16, 2024, to invite members of the public to comment on our proposed 2020 local plan:

“Chicago/Cook County Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 2024-2028 Local Plan is posted for public comment on 2/16/2024 at www.chicookworks.org.”

The Partnership posted the proposed WIOA Local Plan and the Regional Plan for the Northeast Economic Development Region (NEEDR) on The Partnership’s website on February 16, 2024, with instructions to submit public comment by email to localplan2024@chicookworks.org. Comments were accepted at this email address through 5:00 PM on March 17, 2024. Lastly, the request for comment and location of the Plan for review was distributed to a list of stakeholder entities (all Board and Committee members, AJCs, delegate agencies and other contracted/sub-grantee entities, key stakeholders, partners, business leaders, etc.).

The NEEDR Regional Plan was developed through a collaborative process between the seven (7) LWIAs in the Region, including the Partnership for LWIA 7, the WIOA core partners, Economic Development organizations, Educational entities, Business leaders, and other key stakeholders. In addition to soliciting input from each stakeholder group, a formal virtual meeting was held on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to discuss the plan in a single meeting. The intent was to allow for discussion between stakeholders about the concepts included in the plan and provide additional input to be incorporated in the draft version of the plan. Over 100 stakeholders from across the NEEDR attended the session and a lively discussion was held. After the stakeholder meeting, the Regional Plan was posted for public comment on Friday,

February 16, 2024, throughout the NEEDR. The Regional Plan was posted for the required 30 days. Prior to and concurrent with the public comment period, the Partnership conducted other activities to engage stakeholder and expert insights including a meeting of the WIOA system Partner agencies held February 5, 2024, a review of recent policies and guidance to ensure alignment, and dialogue with other workforce areas and partners to seek input on best models and practices. The Partnership held internal staff dialogues on key aspects of the Plan and consulted the One-Stop Operator and delegate agencies for input on key activities and service strategies underway at the line level to ensure a full and clear description of current activities. On March 6, 2024, the Partnership convened Board members and City and County leadership representing the Chief Elected Officials to secure additional input. All of these activities resulted in additions and improvements to the narrative descriptions in the Plan.

During and after the public comment period, The Partnership will review all submitted comments and consider them in relation to the overall strategy of the Chicago Cook WIB. Comments that align with or enhance organizational strategy will be incorporated into not only the body of the WIOA Local Plan but into ongoing practice through the local WIOA system. All comments submitted to The Partnership during the public comment period will be found in Attachment D.

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

The Workforce Board received comments from four (4) entities during the Public Comment period in regard to the Local Plan. These included:

- Chicago Jobs Council (CJC) on behalf of the Skills Agenda Coalition
- Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT)
- Employment and Employer Services
- William Rainey Harper College

The Board thanks these groups and individuals for their engagement in this process and for submitting thoughtful comments on the WIOA Local Plan, the Board and Partnership staff reviewed all public comments submitted while the WIOA Local Plan was posted for public comment and greatly appreciated the recommendations. In response to the public comment, LWIA 7 made some changes to the WIOA Local Plan to incorporate key ideas and perspectives surfaced through these comments and will take additional programmatic steps to incorporate ideas and recommendations as well. A summary of Public Comments follows. The full comments are available in Attachment D.

There were no public comments received in any of the seven LWIAs in response to the Regional Plan for the NEEDR.

Public Comments:

Chicago Jobs Council provided comments representing a group of organizations that are members of its Skills Agenda Coalition. Comments included:

- Recognizing Strengths of the Plan including addressing local needs, technology integration, targeted strategies, holistic support (wrap-around services) and investing in staff;
- Recommending additional content on migrants, their needs and challenges;
- Seeking clarification on refugee and migrant eligibility;
- Recommending additional data analysis on high-need populations;
- Recommending additional technological solutions to connect job seekers with employers and track program progress;
- Recommending development of user-friendly enrollment processes;
- Recommending advocating to the State for recognition of career coaching as a legitimate training activity within the State’s WIOA definition of Training;

- Recommending building stronger partnerships with community organizations and developing formal mechanisms for evaluating cultural competence within programs;
- Recommending expanding employer engagement in building training programs;
- Recommending piloting innovative technology solutions, such as AI chatbots, to enhance access and customer experience;
- Seeking more details on the nature and administration of transportation support services for job seekers;
- Requesting further details on the collaboration between AJCs and CCWP regarding outreach efforts;
- Requesting information on customer surveys, particularly regarding their accessibility and distribution to representative sample of customers;
- Recommending reorganizing the Plan content by target groups and the services catering to them.

Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) submitted comments including overall highlighting of the need to “reduce occupational segregation by promoting training for women and girls in high-skill, high demand and high wage jobs”; need for additional funding for support services; and interest in the system tracking outcomes in a more comprehensive manner with better disaggregated data by population group to help support equity efforts. They provided specific observations and recommendations to Plan content including:

- Recommending the Partnership to identify specific equity strategies to get more women, people of color, and people with disabilities engaged in apprenticeship programs that lead to good paying jobs and similarly working to reduce the over-representation of women in training programs that lead to poverty wages. Recommendations include women-only

pre-apprenticeships and other workforce preparation activities as well as the Partnership articulating an intentional effort to ensure that all apprenticeship programs are fulfilling their obligation to comply with Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) regulations.

(Chapter 4, Section D.1.)

- Recommending that the local workforce development system identifies tools and best practices to help employers adopt a culture that promotes equity and accessibility, including expanded customized placement and retention efforts per industry in conjunction with the Sector Centers and equity intermediaries. (Chapter 4, Section D.3.)
- Recommending expanded barrier reduction strategies including increased expenditures on tangible supports like financial, transportation, childcare, computer/internet access, and increased mentorship and peer to peer connections for workers to promote retention. (Chapter 4, Section E.7.)
- Further recommending improved and expanded assessment of all program components disaggregated by race, gender and target population, in order to better understand and respond to inequities in programming and outcomes. CWIT specifically recommends gathering new performance measures including longer-term (five year) retention, quality of job placements, based on factors like benefits, career development, worker safety, and company diversity levels as well as wages. (Chapter 4, Section H.3.a.)
- Encouragement and guidance for LWIA 7 to provide more customized staff training to fully understand the unique needs, skills and career aspirations of targeted populations, particularly in light of concerns that staff are inadequately prepared to truly customize their approaches and may continue to carry incorrect sex-based and other stereotypes. (Chapter 4, Section J.2.)
- Recommending LWIA 7 create a vision for an equitable, accessible, and effective

workforce development system that addresses occupational segregation and includes establishing goals for women and people of color's participation in job training and placement into non-traditional occupations, with specific actions recommended for implementation including steps listed above. (Chapter 4, Section L.)

Employment and Employer Services submitted observations and recommendations including:

- Need for Customer-Focused Assessment of Return on Investment including expanding focus on good jobs and innovative training partnerships with employers, supporting businesses that “hire for fit and train for skills;” further enhancing equity efforts to target services toward high-need populations and communities; and promoting continuous improvement to reduce administrative and data entry work by program staff.
- Need for Retooling CDL and ITA Training Process, recommending a thorough review and policy shift to reduce over-dependence by the local system on CDL training to the detriment of other critical skill economic sectors and with limited regard to ensuring the suitability of this training to individual customers' career pathway.
- Need for Robust Customer-Centered Operating Culture including a strong focus on human-centered and customer-centered design and programming throughout the local workforce system.

William Rainey Harper College highlighted additional collaborative endeavors between the Partnership and suburban community colleges including Harper, including Career Connector events held collaboratively, placement of One Stop Operator Navigators at college locations and other tools to disseminate information on Career and Technical Education opportunities.

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

It is important to The Partnership that stakeholders and the public provide input on modifications to LWIA 7's 2024 WIOA Local Plan. After the second year of the approved WIOA Local Plan, the modification period offers an opportunity to gain stakeholders and public views. First, the Partnership reviews the plan and makes relevant changes. Then, the plan is posted via a link for easy access along with an announcement via email, newspaper, The Partnership's website and/or other social media platform requesting public commentary for a 30-day period. A deadline date and time for public commentary is provided and an email or link is provided to provided commentary. Once input from the public is received, Partnership staff review the public comments and feedback and consider areas for added focus or revision. Public comments are included in the final Plan which is then shared with the members of the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board, submitted to the State and published on the Partnership's website.

D. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in with meeting the administrative requirement of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs

Incorporating a workforce equity lens is a fundamental aspect of our approach to meeting the administrative requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs. We recognize the importance of addressing systemic barriers and disparities that disproportionately affect certain individuals and communities. By applying an equity lens, we aim to ensure that our programming and services are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of all participants.

To achieve this, we have implemented several strategies:

1. Targeted Outreach and Recruitment: We actively engage with populations with barriers to employment, including low-income individuals, people of color, returning citizens, individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals with basic skills deficiencies, and youth who are in foster

care or have aged out of the foster care system, among other groups. Through our network of delegate agencies and high-volume American Job Centers (AJCs), we conduct outreach and recruitment efforts to reach these specific populations. We also collaborate with community-based organizations and agencies that serve these populations to ensure that our programs are accessible to those who face barriers to employment.

2. Comprehensive Support Services: We understand that participants may require additional support to overcome barriers to employment. Through our extensive experience in administering WIOA funding, we have developed expertise in efficiently delivering supportive services. Our Career Coaches conduct needs assessments with every enrolled WIOA customer and connect to supportive services and other community-based organizations when appropriate, ensuring that participants receive the comprehensive support they need.

3. Cultural Competence and Racial Equity: We recognize the importance of cultural competence when addressing racial inequity. Our approach is informed by both the professional and lived experience of our staff, who are deeply committed to addressing racial disparities in the labor market. We serve a predominantly Black population, as Black residents face particularly stark racial inequity in our region's labor market. By analyzing individual-level information through our data management system, Career Connect, we can identify racial inequities and design more effective programs and services to address them.

4. Measuring Impact on Underserved and Barriered Populations: We rigorously collect participant data to measure the impact of our programs on underserved and barriered populations. This includes data on race/ethnicity, education level, job history, veteran status, disability status, and wages upon entry into the program. By tracking participants' wages in the second quarter after their exit from the program, we can assess the extent to which participants with specific barriers to employment have increased their wages after completing our training programs.

5. Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations: To ensure that our programming is rooted in the community and responsive to the needs of underserved populations, we have established contractual relationships with dozens of community-based organizations concentrated in high-need areas of Chicago and Cook County. These organizations provide comprehensive workforce development services alongside other support services, allowing us to target our resources to those with the highest need. By working through trusted institutions and members of the community, we can effectively reach and serve individuals who may face multiple barriers to employment.

6. Infusing equity values into competitive procurement process to award subgrants. Since before the last local plan, The Partnership has been implementing an equity lens in its procurement process for Title I services. During procurement processes, respondents have been required to address equity in both jobseeker services and employer engagement within their proposals. The responses provided by the respondents were then carefully evaluated and incorporated into the scoring process. This ensured that equity considerations were given significant weight in the decision-making process.

The Partnership uses a competitive procurement process to award subgrants, and as already mentioned above in Chapter 4, The Partnership incorporated an equity lens into its most recent procurement process for Title I services. Respondents' proposals had to address equity both in jobseeker services and in employer engagement and those responses were incorporated in the scoring.

By incorporating a workforce equity lens into our administrative requirements, we are committed to addressing disparities, promoting inclusivity, and providing equitable access to training and employment opportunities. We believe that by doing so, we can create a more just and equitable labor market for all residents of our region. For more detail on how The Partnership is incorporating an equity lens into all of its work, see the response to Chapter 4, Question L above.

ATTACHMENT A

LWIA 7 WIOA Memorandum of Understanding PY2023

ATTACHMENT B

Service Integration Self-Assessments and Plans

ATTACHMENT C

WIOA Policy Letters and Agreements as required in Chapter 4, Section B.

**ATTACHMENT D - PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE WIOA LOCAL PLAN 2024-2028
RECEIVED DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**