

APPENDIX D

LOCAL PLAN TEMPLATE

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Area IV – Shenandoah Valley

SUBMITTED BY

Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board

PYs JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2028

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How to use this Template

This template presents the all the required topics for the LWDB plan for PYs 2024-2027. The template includes a guidance section and five sections that require completion. After reviewing the guidance section, address each of the elements included in the five sections. Each element includes a blank space labeled “click here to enter text.” Please enter your responses to each element in these blank spaces. You do **not** need to submit your LWDB strategic plan or action plan documents along with this template. Section 2 of the template requests information from the strategic plan. When fully completed, submit this Local Plan according to the submission instructions in Appendix C.

Guidance – Policy Emphasis

The areas in this section are receiving statewide emphasis and must be addressed in local plans to meet the requirement of consistency with the Combined State Plan.

- Prepare Virginia’s workers for current and future career pathways that provide competitive wages.
- Deliver workforce services that support business growth in Virginia’s leading-edge economy.
- Provide outreach and recruitment services that increase awareness and access to Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem.
- Reduce workforce system barriers through dynamic collaboration, coordination, and communication with Virginia Works as the hub-and-spoke model.

When creating and implementing this plan, the following regional partners must be included:

- Chief elected officials
- Business representatives
- Labor organizations
- Registered apprenticeships
- Community based organizations
- Youth representatives
- Adult education and literacy programs
- Higher education (including community colleges)
- Economic development
- Employment services under Wagner Peyser
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Social services

Other areas that must be addressed throughout the plan, when appropriate:

- Accessibility
- Use of technology
- Capacity building
- Continuous process improvement
- Streamlining service delivery

- Measuring performance
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Integrating resources

The local plan must ensure compliance with all Virginia Board for Workforce Development (VBWD) policies and Virginia Workforce Letter guidance documents. These documents can be found here: <https://virginiacareerworks.com/practitioners-corner/>

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please answer the questions in Section 1 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. The Virginia Works' labor market information website, <https://virginiaworks.com>, contains information that may help you address elements 1.1 through 1.7.

1.1 A descriptive analysis of the regional economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)]

The Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board (SVWDB) service region (LWDA 4) covers more than 5,000 square miles and includes ten counties (Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren) and six cities (Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Winchester) in the Shenandoah Valley. The region has a mix of urban and rural areas with a diverse blend of industry, agriculture, and tourism.

The population in LWDA 4 was 551,161 according to JobsEQs Economic Overview for the Shenandoah Valley. The region has experienced a 0.7% annual population growth. The median household income in LWDA 4 is \$7,632 and the median house value is \$295,379. The region has an 11.4% poverty level of all people, with 8.7% of all households receiving food stamps/SNAP and 5.4% of occupied housing units having no vehicle availability.

The largest employment sector in LWDA 4 is Manufacturing, employing 34,402 workers. The next-largest employment sectors in the region are Health Care and Social Assistance (33,079 workers), Educational Services (27,993 workers), and Retail Trade (28,157 workers). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the

national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Manufacturing (LQ = 1.72), Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (1.57), and Transportation and Warehousing (1.39).

Sectors in LWDA 4 with the highest average wages per worker are Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$122,829), Utilities (\$81,501), and Finance and Insurance (\$81,603). Regional sectors with the best job growth (or most moderate job losses) over the last 5 years are Healthcare and Social Assistance (+3,519 jobs), Manufacturing (+3,623), and Transportation and Warehousing (+2,099).

Over the next year, employment in the Shenandoah Valley LWDA 4 is projected to expand by 1,262 jobs. The fastest growing sector in the region is expected to be Transportation and Warehousing with a +1.1% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+291 jobs), Transportation and Warehousing (+193), and Manufacturing (+151).

The largest major occupation group in the Shenandoah Valley LWDA 4 is Transportation and Material Moving Occupations, employing 27,907 workers. The next-largest occupation groups in the region are Office and Administrative Support Occupations (25,861 workers) and Sales and Related Occupations (22,858). Occupation groups with the highest annual median wage are Management occupations (\$118,200) Computer and Mathematical occupations (\$101,400), and Legal occupations (\$113,700). The unemployment rate in the region varied among the major groups from 0.9% among Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations to 5.1% among Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations.

Over the next year, the fastest growing occupation group in the Shenandoah Valley LWDA 4 is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a +1.3% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (+218 jobs) and Healthcare Support Occupations (+140). Over the same period, the highest separation demand (occupation demand due to retirements and workers moving from one occupation to another) is expected in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (4,108 jobs) and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (3,606).

(Source: JobsEQ® Economic Overview, Occupation Snapshot, Industry Snapshot)

1.2 A descriptive analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)]

As appropriate, a local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet the requirements of this section. Local areas are encouraged to utilize regional economic development strategic plans in the identification and prioritization of industry sectors.

The SVWDB has identified five in-demand industry sectors based on quantitative and qualitative analysis that will be the focus of workforce activities in LWDA 4. Priority in-demand industry sectors selected have strong current and projected employment growth and offer a sustaining wage. The four identified target industry sectors are Construction, Health Care, Manufacturing, Information Technology and Transportation and Warehousing.

Health Care, Manufacturing, Information Technology and Transportation and Warehousing sectors align with priority industry sectors identified in the GO Virginia Region 8 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan, which covers the same geographic area as LWDA 4. In a survey of 156 employers in LWDA 4, conducted by Camoin Associates in 2017 for the development of the GO Virginia Region 8 Growth and Diversification Plan, employers identified analytics, problem solving, critical thinking, decision making, dependability, and ability to communicate as challenging skills to find when recruiting. In a 2019 study of the manufacturing sector in LWDA 4, commissioned by the SVWDB and conducted by Thomas P. Miller and Associates as part of the American Apprenticeship Initiative grant, employers identified the same basic work skills identified in the Go Virginia study as difficult or very difficult to find. Employer focus groups conducted in 2020 by SVWDB for strategic planning purposes, validated that essential work ready skills, as well as executive functioning skills, are lacking in the workforce. These findings were further validated in the Environmental Scan conducted through the Talent Pathways Initiative Grant by WorkEd Consulting in partnership with the SVWDB. The scan consisted of employer and community partner interviews, and they spoke to both the technical and durability (soft) skills gaps they are experiencing in the current workforce. These findings echoed what former studies have found, citing a lack of essential technical skills (ex. Mechatronics training, CDL licensing, etc.) as well as deficiencies in communication, reliability, adaptability and professionalism. To address the need to develop a workforce pipeline with the work ready and executive functioning skills consistently identified by employers as lacking in the workforce, the SVWDB has prioritized implementing a system-wide approach to developing the essential work ready skills and executive functioning skills employers require for the current and future workplace.

Preliminary Findings & Themes

Workforce Challenges

Workforce Shortages & Retention Challenges

High turnover rates and difficulty attracting and retaining workers, especially in manufacturing and transportation & logistics

Technical Skills Gaps

Deficiencies in technical skills (mechatronics, CDL, electrical systems) and soft skills (communication, reliability, professionalism).

Durable (Soft) Skills Deficiencies

Communication, reliability, adaptability, and professionalism impacting worker retention.

Barriers to Workforce Participation

Limited childcare, transportation, and affordable housing options impacting worker retention.

Low Industry Awareness & Engagement

Lack of student interest in manufacturing and transportation & logistics careers due to outdated perceptions and limited exposure.

Industry Successes

Leveraging Economic Strengths

Capitalizing on manufacturing leadership and strategic location along major transportation corridors to drive workforce and business growth.

Strengthening Talent Development Pipeline Efforts

Expanding dual enrollment, employer-driven training, and K-12 engagement to bridge skill gaps and improve career awareness.

Internal Recruiting Initiatives

Some businesses are developing in-house apprenticeships and training programs to address workforce gaps.

Expanding Access to Workforce Talent Pools

Expanding dual enrollment, strengthening employer partnerships, and leveraging regional relationships with training providers to create clearer career pathways and improve workforce readiness.



(Source: GO Virginia Region 8 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan, State of the Manufacturing Workforce Study 2019-2020, SVWDB Strategic Plan 2020-2022, TPI Environmental Scan)

Employment Requirements in In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Job posting for Construction occupations in LWDA 4 for the 30-day period ending March 25, 2025, shows 338 jobs posted by 172 employers. Top in-demand construction occupations identified through employment ads were Electricians (\$52,600 median annual wage), Journeyman Electricians (\$60,900 median annual wage), and Master Electricians (\$77,800 median annual wage). Certifications required in construction job openings include Driver’s License, CDL, and OSHA 30. Ability to lift up to 100 lbs., plumbing, power tools, heavy equipment operation, backhoes, and blueprint reading were the primary hard skills identified in the job postings for construction workers. Soft skill requirements for construction occupations include communications, team player, detail oriented, organization, leadership.

Job postings for Health Care occupations in LWDA 4 for the 30-day period ending March 25, 2025, show 3,200 jobs posted by 619 employers. Top in-demand health care occupations identified through employment ads were Registered Nurses (\$73,000 median annual wage), Physical Therapists (\$93,000 median annual wage), Cardiovascular Technicians (\$35,300 median annual wage), Certifications required in health care job openings include Basic Life Support, Registered Nurse (RN), and CPR. Nursing, Epic Systems, Home Health and Pediatric, long-term care and medical terminology were the primary hard skills identified in the job **postings for health care workers. Soft skill**

requirements for health care occupations include communications, team player, customer service, interpersonal relationships, reliability, adaptability.

Job postings for Production occupations in LWDA 4 for the 30-day period ending March 25, 2025, show 434 jobs posted by 181 employers. Top in-demand production occupations identified through employment ads were Machine Operators (\$40,600 median annual wage) Assemblers (\$38,100 median annual wage), First Line Supervisors (\$59,900 median annual wage). Certifications required in production job openings include Forklift Certified, Driver's License, Certified Welder, and HAZMAT. Manufacturing, Microsoft Office, mechanical, ability to lift up to 100 lbs., English, gauges were the primary hard skills listed in the job postings for production workers. Soft skill requirements for production occupations include communications (verbal/written), team player, detail oriented, organization, problem solving, adaptability and supervision/management.

Job postings for Transportation and Material Moving occupations in LWDA 4 for the 30-day period ending March 25, 2025, show 1,200 jobs posted by 493 employers. Top in-demand transportation and material moving occupations identified through employ), Class were), Class A Driver (\$34,400 median annual wage), Warehouse Associate (\$37,500 median annual wage), Class A Drivers (\$52,000 median annual wage), Certifications

required in transportation and material moving occupations include Commercial Driving License (CDL), Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL-A) and driver's license. Ability to lift up to 100 lbs., forklift, Tractor Trailer trucks, Warehouse Management Systems and cash handling are the primary hard skills listed in job postings for transportation and warehousing workers. Soft skill requirements for transportation and material moving occupations include communications, customer service, cooperative/team player, adaptability, organization.

Job posting for IT occupations in LWDA 4 for the 30-day period ending March 25, 2025, shows 178 jobs posted by 122 employers. Top in-demand IT occupations identified through employment ads were Field Service Technicians (\$41,500 median annual wage), Systems Administrator (median annual wage not available), Project Coordinator (\$62,200 median annual wage) and Service Technicians (\$44,000 median annual wage). Certifications required in IT job openings include Secret Clearance, Comp TIA (A+ Certification), CISSP and Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MCSE). IT Support, Computer Networking, Microsoft (Active Directory, Azure, Office), and Python were the primary hard skills identified in the job postings for IT workers. Soft skill requirements for IT occupations include communications, team player, detail oriented, customer service, analytical and problem solving.

(Source: JobsEQ Real-Time Job Postings 30 days ending 3.25.25)

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

According to the Talent Pathways Initiative Environmental Scan, the LWDA 4 labor force participation rate increased from 61.7% in 2018 to 64.1% in 2023, with unemployment at a low

2.8% as of September 2024. Job growth in Area 4 has been a positive indicator of the region's economic resilience and expansion. Between 2018 and 2023, total employment increased by 5.2%, surpassing the national average growth rate of 4.5%. This growth reflects a combination of increased demand in key sectors such as manufacturing, transportation, and logistics, as well as strategic investments in infrastructure and workforce development. The highest job growth has been concentrated in the Southern subregion, which is projected to see an additional 6.9% increase in jobs over the next five years. However, employers continue to face challenges in filling these roles due to skill gaps and competition for talent, particularly in the transportation and logistics sectors.

Educational outcomes in Area 4 reflect both strengths and opportunities for improvement. In the 2023–2024 academic year, 5,636 students graduated from high schools in the region. Among these graduates, 34.4% plan to attend a four-year college, while 33% plan to enter the workforce or have no plans, highlighting the importance of direct-to-employment training pathways.

Postsecondary completion data further underscores the need to align training programs with industry demand. In 2023, a total of 290 students completed programs in key fields such as engineering, repair technologies, construction, transportation, and production across Blue Ridge, Laurel Ridge, and Mountain Gateway colleges. However, with an estimated 12,432 annual job openings in related fields, there is a substantial gap between educational output and labor market demand. This mismatch presents an opportunity for greater collaboration between educational institutions and employers to expand programs in high-demand fields such as mechatronics, CDL training, and precision production.

The scan also cited several barriers to individuals entering the workforce, including structural barriers such as limited childcare options, lack of affordable transportation, and high housing

costs continue to restrict workforce participation. Public transportation in particular is insufficient in many parts of Area 4, making it difficult for workers to access job opportunities.

1.4 An analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)]

SVWDB promotes a training environment that fosters customer choice, performance accountability, and continuous improvement in the attainment of skills, credentials, certificates, and diplomas that lead to employment in occupations that are in demand in the local economy. Training providers and programs aligned with in demand occupations in LWDA 4 are included on the state Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and are certified annually to assure that all listed providers and their programs have met minimum state standards.

The Shenandoah Valley Region is fortunate to be home to nine nationally recognized public and private colleges and universities, three community colleges, and numerous career and technical institutes that provide a broad range of post-secondary education and training opportunities. The Valley has sixteen separate K-12 public school systems serving the 16 locality region. When a business identifies a training need, educators in the Valley respond with education and training solutions.

Education and training providers, including CTE instructors at public schools, are engaged with the workforce system through the SVWDB, local and sub-regional workforce focused groups, and through the region's Business Solutions Team (BST). The BST engages education and training providers in discussions with employers about talent pipeline needs and works toward providing a full range of education, training, and employment services.

1.5 An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in 1.4 and the capacity to provide these services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)]

While the Valley enjoys a strong education and training presence, the Valley continues to have a shortage of technically skilled individuals to support talent needs of businesses as evidenced in employer focus group comments conducted in the region for the development of this plan. In addition, all employer focus group participants identified recruitment and retention as their biggest challenge. In the Talent Pathways Initiative Environmental Scan, it was determined that childcare for employees is a growing and significant barrier to employment due to limited childcare options. Lack of affordable transportation and high housing costs continue to restrict workforce participation as well. Employers are working to adapt by changing recruiting practices, increasing wages and benefits to remain competitive, and seeking ways to diversify their workforce by tapping into populations challenged to enter certain sectors of the workforce due to language, disability, and cultural barriers.

These challenges and barriers create an opportunity for the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board to adopt a collaborative network of resources and services needed to support economic sustainability and growth in the region. Through Network2Work, a new model of workforce service delivery currently being implemented in LWDA 4, the SVWDB has developed a network of service providers connected through technology that can reach targeted populations in the community and connect them to training, education and, employment opportunities as well as provide the supports needed for sustainable employment. The SVWDB also continues to focus on developing and delivering services to individuals who are underemployed or underserved/underrepresented, expanding the talent pipeline of youth and adults, creating a collective strategy to influence the labor force participation rate in the region, and creating a collective impact strategy to promote family sustaining wages.

1.6 Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities. Please include:

- Local area's strategy for ensuring the availability of comprehensive services for all youth
- How the area will identify and select successful providers of youth activities and delivery of the fourteen youth program elements required under WIOA
- Strategies to ensure that all eligible WIOA youth receive access to the required program elements and activities during their enrollment in the WIOA youth program
- How the required program design elements will be addressed as part of the development of youth service strategies
- Strategies to identify, recruit, and retain out-of-school youth, and efforts to ensure the required percent of WIOA youth funds are expended
- Policy regarding serving youth who do not meeting income eligibility guidelines, including appropriate referrals
- Efforts to coordinate with Job Corps, youth opportunity grants where applicable, registered apprenticeship programs, local offices on youth, and other youth services, including those administered through community colleges and other higher education institutions and local human services agencies

- Efforts taken to ensure compliance with applicable child labor and safety regulations
- Pay-for-performance policy as applicable

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

The SVWDB is implementing an integrated service delivery model to increase the capacity to serve more youth, to expand outreach, develop targeted partnerships, evolve the service delivery approach, and provide a bridge for the transition into retained employment. The SVWDB's youth service delivery approach is intended to deliver higher quality services, build capacity in the numbers to be served, provide services to a broader geographic region, and to use technology and alternative resources to be less dependent on traditional workforce centers.

Focusing on the youth sub-population by sub-region identifies key partners and gaps in partnerships and services. To improve engagement, there must be an understanding of the support system by sub-population, a connection with the sub-population, and an appropriate alignment and integration into that support system. Organizations providing support to youth who are homeless, in foster care, in the justice system, or those not gainfully employed or enrolled in an education program are identified as key partners to improve engagement with youth sub-populations. These organizations will be engaged in the Network2Work program and serve as a starting point of contact to reach targeted youth populations and engage them in services, supports, and programs that provide the WIOA 14 Youth Elements.

All eligible WIOA youth, including those with disabilities, receive access to the following 14 Youth Program Elements and activities during their enrollment in WIOA:

- 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 postsecondary credential
- Alternative secondary school offerings
- Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning
- Paid and unpaid work experience, including summer employment opportunities, internships, pre-apprenticeship programs, job shadowing and on the job training opportunities
- Occupational skill training which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors and occupations
- Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavioral and soft skills, decision making, team work and other activities
- Supportive Services
- Adult mentoring for a duration of at least (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation
- Follow-up Services for a minimum 12- month period
- 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 individual youth

- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

SVWDB comprehensive services for youth meet the WIOA requirements for youth program design and youth are screened to determine eligibility to receive WIOA youth services. All eligibility requirements as contained in WIOA and state policy are adhered to, and documentation of individual program eligibility is maintained in each youth file. Once eligibility determination has been completed, the youth receives an in-depth objective assessment to measure aptitudes, abilities, interests, and educational levels. Once the objective assessment process has been completed, the Career Coach, working in conjunction with the youth, develops an Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS is designed to capture youth data such as work history, educational history, barriers, assessment results, etc. and is used to develop a comprehensive plan of action and program goals for the youth utilizing all required, available, and allowable Youth services and supports. Once completed, the ISS serves as a map of the sequence of youth activities that the youth job seeker will participate in and a projected duration of time for each activity in order to achieve planned program goals that have been developed for each youth. The Career Coach has frequent contact with the youth as he/she progresses through program activities. The Career Coach provides any assistance needed by the youth to achieve program goals.

Delivery of youth services includes preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities, as well as connections for youth to postsecondary opportunities. Youth are offered tutoring and GED preparation through the SVWDB's partnerships with local school systems, adult learning, and workforce centers. A strong component of the programs is the linkages between academic and occupational learning. The SVWDB and service provider partners work collaboratively to provide educational opportunity and labor market information to youth.

Additionally, work readiness training is provided to prepare youth for employment including placement into meaningful work experiences. This includes opportunities for alternative secondary school services, including programs targeted to GED attainment where appropriate, with contractors coordinating efforts with area alternative education schools and adult learning centers. Qualified older youth may receive, as appropriate, occupational skills training through service provider partners. Leadership development opportunities are available and include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors. Comprehensive guidance and counseling are provided as needed and may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling; referrals are provided through local DSS offices, area mental health offices, and local school system guidance counselors.

As funds and availability of services permit, supportive services such as transportation, childcare, and emergency assistance may be made available to youth to enhance their ability to complete training and find suitable employment. Supportive services are based on needs of individual youth. Documentation must be maintained in the youth file explaining the need for supportive services, other agencies contacted to provide services, supportive services actually provided, and results of the supportive services provided. Follow-up services are provided to all youth participants for up to twelve (12) months to measure progress, assess additional needs, and provide additional supportive services if needed.

Individual youth assessments coupled with opportunities for paid and unpaid work experience, community service, educational pursuits, and the 14 WIOA Youth Elements provides a robust strategy for integrating and delivering youth services. The results can be found in the success of the many active programs in LWDA 4.

The SVWDB Youth Policy requires at least 75% of the youth formula-funded program expenditures be for Out-of-School Youth. In addition, a minimum of 20 percent of youth funds are required to be spent on paid and unpaid work experience.

The strategy used to engage youth involves targeted outreach through appropriate communication channels, repetitive and consistent messaging, and collaboration and communication with community partners already assisting people with specified barriers to employment. Outreach to youth is ongoing to ensure that youth are made aware of available services and the required percent of WIOA youth funds are used to serve the youth population, particularly those with barriers to employment. Once the youth have been identified, their barriers to employment and workforce interests will be evaluated.

Upon determination of preparedness, the youth will be placed in an in-demand career pathway corresponding with their interests and abilities. Collaboration with their referral organization will continue to be a priority. This will allow a tailored approach to success by having all of the individual barriers addressed by experts in the field. Communication between all involved parties will be a requirement, and should occur on a minimum bi-monthly basis. Supportive services and funding from additional organizations will be utilized to meet the various needs of the youth as needed. When gaps are found in services and the 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements cannot be provided, the IST will discuss options to locate services and develop additional partnering and funding opportunities. As issues arise, the IST support team surrounding the youth will address them. Similarly, as successes arise all parties involved will celebrate them. This will be an integral part of the progress in order to keep the youth engaged and continuing down a successful path even when challenges arise.

Up to five percent of youth participants served by youth programs in LWDA 4 may be individuals who do not meet the income criterion for eligible youth. The SVWDB Youth Policy outlines a 5% exception for youth not meeting income eligibility, provided that the youth otherwise meets the eligibility requirements for the specific youth program in which they seek enrollment. Prior to using the 5% exception, the SVWDB CEO must approve participant enrollment. The region's priority of service remains low-income individuals.

Compliance with applicable safety and child labor laws is a requirement to deliver services under Title I WIOA Youth Programs. SVWDB staff verifies compliance of all child labor and safety regulations as a part of the local compliance monitoring review conducted annually.

Recently the WDB has added several components to enhance service delivery to young adults, including:

- Utilizing one of the Career Coaches who was formerly a teacher to provide tutoring. This became necessary to ensure that tutoring was more accessible.
- VR Headsets to expand opportunities for career exploration.
- Curated modules and pathways in Metrix Learning to focus on financial literacy.

1.7 Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area, including:

- Access to and delivery of career services (basic, individualized, and follow-up)
- The area's definition of self-sufficiency to be used when determining eligibility for intensive and training services for employed individuals
- The area's definition of hard-to-serve populations with additional barriers to employment

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]

The Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board operates two Virginia Career Works Centers and one Virginia Career Works Access Point in LWDA 4. The Virginia Career Works – Fishersville Center is the region's comprehensive workforce center, an affiliate Virginia Career Works Center is located in Winchester, and a workforce services access point is located in Harrisonburg. Virginia Career Works centers offer job seekers access to computers, phones, printers, and career services.

Basic Career Services are made available to all individuals seeking services from the Virginia Career Works network. These services include eligibility to receive assistance through the adult or dislocated worker programs; outreach, intake and orientation services, workshops, assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs. Labor exchange services provided include the provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and regional labor market information. Job seekers are provided information, referrals, and coordination of activities with other applicable programs, agencies, and services available through the Virginia Career Works and Network2Work delivery systems, including "wrap around" supports needed for career success. Education and training opportunities under WIOA are provided through the Eligible Training Provider List, including program cost and provider performance information. Additionally, information and assistance is provided to evaluate financial aid resources for training and education programs not provided under WIOA.

When it is determined that individualized career services are required for a job seeker to gain meaningful employment, comprehensive assessments of the skill levels and supportive service needs of eligible adults and dislocated workers is conducted through diagnostic testing and assessment tools as well as in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment

goals and any barriers to achieving those goals. An individual employment plan (IEP) is developed to identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and services required to achieve those goals. Individualized career services can include group or individual counseling and mentoring, career planning, pre-vocational and workforce preparation services to prepare individuals for employment, internships and work experiences, financial literacy services, out-of-area job search and relocation assistance, English language acquisition, and integrated education and training programs.

Follow-up services must be provided as appropriate for customers who are placed in employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. These services may include technical skills training, counseling, mentoring, crisis intervention, life skills, and emergency support required to sustain long-term employment. Follow-up services do not extend the date of exit in performance reporting.

Self-sufficiency for judging the suitability and effectiveness of training programs for adults is defined as those programs that result in income that is at least 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level, based on family size and income annualized for 6 months for the client's residence. Self-sufficiency for Dislocated Workers is defined as those programs that result in income that is at least: the higher of 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level, based on a family of one, annualized for 6 months for the client's residence; or 80% of the layoff wage, based on the last 6 months, annualized.

The SVWDB follows a Priority of Service Policy that defines and establishes a process and priority ranking system for receipt of individualized career services and training services funded by the WIOA Title I Adult programs. Priority of service is given to veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. The above priority established does not limit these services to the priority populations.

To ensure that adults and dislocated workers have the information needed to make informed career choices, we also have increased opportunities for customers to conduct informational interviews with various employers.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Please answer the questions in Section 2 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Section 2 responses should be greatly influenced by the members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders.

2.1 Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). The goals should relate to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance (found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/performance-indicators>) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The SVWDB is committed to preparing an educated and skilled workforce, as articulated in the Board's vision: We lead Virginia in ensuring a highly skilled and engaged workforce. We integrate workforce development and economic development activities to produce a vibrant economy with unparalleled quality of life.

The SVWDB mission is to Build partnerships to create workforce opportunities that cultivate business, grow jobs, develop people, and build community.

The SVWDB is in the process of completing the GO Virginia Region 8 Talent Pathways Initiative (TPI) which will be released June 2025. In addition, the Region 8 Growth and Diversification Plan is under development and will be released October 2025. Both reports will greatly impact the development of the SVWDB strategic plan. The development of the strategic plan is scheduled for October 2025 through March 2026. This local plan was compiled based on the most current information available at the time for the required report submission. With the completion of the two outstanding reports and the development of the SVWDB strategic plan, the local plan will be updated during the required review period. The local plan reflects strategic priorities, goals, and strategies for Program Years (PY) 2025 – 2028.

Strategic priorities are identified as the

- development and delivery of workforce services to individuals who are underemployed, 1 underrepresented, and nontraditional workers;
- creation of a regional collective impact strategy to expand the talent pipeline; and
- creation of a regional collective impact strategy to support businesses with talent attraction and retention.

These strategic priorities are supported by the following three goals:

- GOAL 1: Convene, Establish, and Support Sector-Based Partnerships for SVWDB's Target Industries
- GOAL 2: Identify, Create, and Sustain Talent Pipelines for SVWDB's Target Industries
- GOAL 3: Implement and Support an Investment in Durable Skills Development for Talent Pipelines.

These goals relate to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in the following manner:

Employment Rate 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit. The strategies identified to carry out goals include being culturally responsive in how to design and deliver services and to provide the support individuals need to stay engaged in participating in services. The strategies also include working with employers to provide support while individuals are placed on a job to ensure retention. Business focus groups, roundtables, and interviews were conducted as part of the TPI planning process. A key challenge identified by employers was labor shortage and retention citing high turnover and “job hopping” as a business strain and disruption to operations. In addition, an aging workforce and mismatched job expectations make retention difficult. In those conversations, employers cited examples and were open to exploring ways to assist new employees with job development techniques or career transition supports to help new employees become acclimated to a new work environment and culture.

Implementation of these strategies is an aid to support worker retention to the 2nd and 4th quarter after program exit and beyond.

Median Earnings. One strategic priority is to be a convener with community partners, economic development, and businesses to promote family sustaining wages. While this is a long-term strategy, businesses understand that wages impact retention, which they identified as a key challenge. Another strategy is to define a standard family sustaining wage for the region and/or each of the subregions. Providing this information and wage comparison reports to businesses will help them in making decisions related to wage rates and wage progression that will in turn help with retention. Developing the durable skills needed by workers may provide an opportunity to start at a higher entry level rate.

Credential Attainment. In Goal 1 through sector partnerships, businesses can relay the credentials they require for needed occupations within the target industry. Within Goal 2, and in conjunction with the Business Solutions Team’s work with employers in the SVWDB’s targeted industries, there will be continuous efforts made to identify the required industry recognized credentials and experience. If an employer does not require credentials, gain an understanding of why and seek to understand what they do require and why.

Measurable Skill Gains. Within Goal 3, work to implement a system that is focused on developing durable skills is aligned with regional employer input about the ‘skills gap’. Employers cited technical skills gaps with widespread gaps in basic technical skills and misalignment between training programs and industry needs which limits readiness. Employers also identified durable skills deficiencies and impact to business operations citing issues with punctuality, communication and adaptability all increase turnover. In addition, the emotional intelligent gaps cause workplace conflicts and inefficiencies. With intensive service delivery focused on these skills, Goal 3 supports skill gains among participants.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Efforts in Goal 1 to convene, establish and support sector partnerships increase the effectiveness in serving employers because these

partnerships are business-driven to develop customized responses to targeted industry needs and therefore highly accurate in their response to workforce challenges. Companies, education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations are organized to focus on key issues related to the target industry in its natural labor market region. Using sector-based partnerships for collective impact measures effectiveness in relationship development and implementing business-driven initiatives. Serving employers in this way is measured based on the outcomes of the work and the impact to the region. Business awareness will be based on the work and results not on a standardized outreach campaign.

2.2 Describe how the local board's strategic vision and goals will support the strategies identified in the Virginia Combined State Plan (found here: virginiaworks.gov). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The Combined State Plan identifies Governor Glenn Youngkin's vision for the delivery of workforce development services: *Virginia's nation leading workforce ecosystem will equip Virginians with the skills they need and enable employers to attract, grow, and retain them – ensuring the future of a thriving Commonwealth. In parallel with the stand-up of Virginia Works, we will accelerate the coordination, enhancement, and future-readiness of the Commonwealth's many workforce programs and stakeholders across the government and broader ecosystem through a formal process.* The plan states that Governor Youngkin embraces three strategic goals for the workforce system. These goals are:

Goal 1: Prepare Virginia's workers for current and future career pathways that provide competitive wages.

Goal 2: Deliver workforce services that support business growth in Virginia's leading-edge economy.

Goal 3: Provide outreach and recruitment services that increase awareness and access to Virginia's workforce development ecosystem.

The SVWDB's strategic priorities and goals were outlined in Section 2.1. To define the strategic priorities and goals; key workforce challenges were first defined and then strategies were identified to address the challenges.

Key Workforce Challenges

Through an environmental scan, challenges and successes analysis, and employer and stakeholder focus groups, roundtables, and interviews, seven key workforce challenges were identified.

1. Labor Shortage and Retention

- High turnover and "job hopping" strain employers and disrupt operations.
- An aging workforce and mismatched job expectations make retention difficult.

2. Technical Skills Gap

- Widespread gaps in basic technical skills.

- Misalignment between training programs and industry needs limits readiness.

3. **Durable (Soft) Skills Deficiencies and Impact**

- Issues with punctuality, communication, and adaptability increase turnover.
- Emotional intelligence gaps cause workforce conflicts and inefficiencies

4. **Barriers to Entry for Younger Workers**

- Lack of awareness and negative perceptions discourage younger workers.
- Age and safety restrictions limit early career exposure.

5. **Structural Barriers to Workforce Participation**

- Limited transportation, childcare and housing restrict participation.
- Shift-based work makes it difficult for parents to stay employed.

6. **Regional Disparities**

- Talent migration to Northern Virginia, Richmond and Charlottesville weakens the local workforce.
- Geographic and media barriers limit access to opportunities.

7. **Communicating Employer Expectations and Educational Outcomes**

- Gaps between training and employer needs leave hires underprepared.
- Automation and technology changes require targeted upskilling.

Strategies to Address Workforce Challenges

- Establish and Convene Sector-Based Partnerships
- Increase Flexible Work-Based Learning Opportunities
- Work with Employers to Develop Career Pathways
- Mitigate Structural Barriers
- Transform Industry Perceptions (manufacturing, skilled trades, transportation and logistics)
- Invest in Durability Skills Development
- Expansion of Talent Pipeline

Goal and Strategy Alignment

With strategies defined to address the workforce challenges, strategies were then aligned with the three goals.

Convene, Establish, and Support Sector-Based Partnerships for SVWDB's Target Industries

- Establish and convene sector-based partnerships
- Work with employers to develop career pathways
- Mitigate structural barriers
- Transform industry perceptions
- Expansion of talent pipeline
- Based on the needs of the employers engaged in the sector partnership, all strategies may apply or additional strategies may be defined.

Identify, Create, and Sustain Talent Pipelines for SVWDB’s Target Industries

- Increase flexible work-based learning opportunities
- Work with employers to develop career pathways
- Invest in durability skills development
- Expansion of talent pipeline

Implement and Support an Investment in Durable Skills Development for Talent Pipelines.

- Invest in durability skills development
- Expansion of talent pipeline

The following table shows the alignment of the combined state plan with the SVWDB strategic priorities and goals.

Strategic Goals in the Combined Plan	SVWDB’s Strategic Priorities (SP) and Goals (G)
1. Prepare Virginia’s workers for current and future career pathways that provide competitive wages.	(SP) Development and delivery of workforce services to individuals who are underemployed, underrepresented and nontraditional workers. (SP) Creation of a regional collective impact strategy to expand the talent pipeline. (G) Identify, create, and sustain talent pipelines for target industries. (G) Implement and support an investment in durable skills development
2. Deliver workforce services that support business growth in Virginia’s leading-edge economy.	(SP) Development and delivery of workforce services to individuals who are underemployed, underrepresented and nontraditional workers. (SP) Creation of a regional collective impact strategy to expand the talent pipeline.

	<p>(G) Convene, establish, and support sector-based partnerships</p> <p>(G) Identify, create, and sustain talent pipelines for target industries.</p> <p>(G) Implement and support an investment in durable skills development</p>
<p>3. Provide outreach and recruitment services that increase awareness and access to Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem.</p>	<p>(SP) Development and delivery of workforce services to individuals who are underemployed, underrepresented and nontraditional workers.</p> <p>(SP) Creation of a regional collective impact strategy to expand the talent pipeline.</p> <p>(SP) Creation of a regional collective impact strategy to support businesses with talent attraction and retention</p> <p>(G) Convene, establish, and support sector-based partnerships</p> <p>(G) Identify, create, and sustain talent pipelines for target industries.</p>

2.3 Taking into account the analyses described in 1.1 through 2.2, describe a strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the local board’s strategic vision and goals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

Each strategic priority as identified in Section 2.1 and 2.2 is aligned with a goal and varying strategies currently defined and being refined. The SVWDB’s approach to working with partners is to align resources to carry out these strategies through a team-based infrastructure, which includes the Business Solutions Teams, where all partners are represented and the SVWDB Partner Team. Each of these teams will work on implementation of specified strategies. Teams will be assigned specific strategies when the Operations Plan is completed. Each of these strategies will require investigation by the partners on how to align resources to ensure effective implementation across the workforce system.

Example strategies that will be implemented through these teams include:

- Develop a communication plan for job seekers and businesses with simple messages about the benefits of participating in the workforce development system, with a focus on intentional outreach to the underemployed, underserved nontraditional talent pipeline and to businesses who want to expand recruitment beyond the traditional pipelines.
- Assist businesses to develop new methods to expand recruitment and retain their current workforce, including how to provide supports with issues that impact a worker’s ability to get to work and stay at work.
- Continue to support the Business Solutions Team ins collaborating and continuously improving coordination of services to employers.
- Create methods to engage with individual businesses and groups of businesses with similar needs to provide ongoing support.
- Establishment and support of sector partnerships.
- Define a standard family sustaining wage for the region and/or each of the subregions.

- Ensure cultural responsiveness in how services are designed and delivered.
- Connect individuals to training and a system of wrap around services that is responsive to their diverse experience and needs.
- Confirm the competencies employers categorize as work ready durable skills by creating a list based on local feedback from employers and national research on the skills required for the current and future workplace.
- Validate the competencies with local employers within each targeted industry.
- Upon local employer validation, convene partners to ensure that the durable skills/competencies are a focus of their employability training programs and they are using curriculum aligned to teaching the validated skills.
- Develop a coordinated and accessible infrastructure to connect job seekers to the training opportunities to develop these skills.

2.4 Describe the local board strategic plan designed to combine public and private resources to support sector strategies, career pathways, and career readiness skills development. Such initiatives shall include or address:

- Regional vision for workforce development
- Protocols for planning workforce strategies that anticipate industry needs
- Needs of incumbent and underemployed workers in the region
- Development of partners and guidelines for various forms of on-the-job training, such as registered apprenticeships
- Setting of standards and metrics for operational delivery
- Alignment of monetary and other resources, including private funds and in-kind contributions, to support the workforce development system
- Generation of new sources of funding to support workforce development in the region

Adherence to this guidance will satisfy the LWDB's responsibility to prepare a demand plan for the initial year of this local plan, as required in the Code of Virginia Title 2.2 Chapter 24 Section 2.2-2472(E).

The SVWDB strategic priorities and goals are designed to support sector strategies, career pathways development, and career readiness skills development, which are defined as durable workplace skills. The development of the SVWDB plan was fueled by several key questions, *what are the workforce challenges that employers currently face and how do these challenges impact the economic growth of their business and the region and what solutions have they tried, or seen other businesses implement?* Many workforce related challenges were identified through the collection of qualitative data from businesses and regional stakeholders through over 100 interviews, employer roundtables, and focus groups. The most prevalent challenges are listed below. See Section 2.2 for more details.

- Labor Shortage and Retention
- Technical Skills Gaps
- Durable (Soft) Skills Deficiencies and Impact
- Barriers to Entry for Younger Workers
- Structural Barriers to Workforce Participation
- Regional Disparities
- Communicating Employer Expectations and Educational Outcomes

While the SVWDB works to collaborate and provide solutions in the form of strategic priorities, goals, and strategies for the next four years (with an update in two years), it is known that the most effective organizations in the twenty-first century will continuously refine their strategies as the external landscape evolves and new lessons are learned. In this spirit, the strategic plan is intended to be a dynamic workforce blueprint for the growth and sustainability of the region led and supported by the

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Please answer the questions in Section 3 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Many of the responses below, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners.

3.1 Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies:

- The programs that are included in that system
- How the local board will work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
- How the local board coordinates and interacts with Chief Elected Officials

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

The SVWDB seeks to establish a workforce system that stands in stark contrast to the “traditional”/historical transaction-based model, whereby each agency operates its own business and job seeker services, and participants move from place to place seeking services. Instead, the goal is to create integrated locations and a unified structure and process of proactive, transparent, and effective job seeker and business services provided by a seamless collaboration of talent development and support agencies. The workforce development system in LWDA 4 includes the following programs:

- WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs
- WIOA Title II Adult Education
- WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services
- WIOA Title IV Rehabilitative Services Program
- WIOA Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Carl D. Perkins Postsecondary Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, reauthorized in 2018 the as Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)
- TANF Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act
- National Farmworkers Jobs Program for Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers

- U.S.C. Chapter 41 of Title 39 Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) under Chapter 2 of the Trade Act of 1974
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs under Virginia unemployment compensation laws

Services delivered through Perkins V are carried out by community colleges and include the provision of career resources, program consulting, and referrals to the Virginia Career Works system. Sub-recipient service providers of Career and Technical Education, such as Skyline Literacy located in the Harrisonburg office, provide assistance to job seekers with limited literacy skills by providing literacy classes and tutoring and instruction for individuals with limited English skills and citizenship preparation.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among partners defines the parameters within which education, workforce, and other partner programs and entities operate to create a seamless, customer-focused service delivery system that aligns service delivery and enhances access to program services. By realizing one-stop opportunities together, partners are able to build community-benefiting bridges, rather than silos of programmatic isolation. These partnerships reduce the administrative burden and costs and increase customer access and performance outcomes.

SVWDB, in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials and other applicable partners within the LWDA, develop and submit a Local Plan that includes a description of the activities to be undertaken by the Board and its Partners, and that aligns its strategic vision, goals, objectives, and workforce-related policies to the regional plan and economy. The Board, in cooperation with the local officials, designs and approves the workforce system structure that

includes but is not limited to adequate, sufficient, and accessible one-stop center and office locations and facilities, sufficient numbers and types of career and training service providers (including services to individuals with disabilities, adult education, and literacy activities), a holistic system of supportive services, and a competitively procured one-stop operator.

The SVWDB collaborates with partners to:

- Designate through a competitive process, oversee, monitor, implement corrective action, and, if applicable, terminate the one-stop operator(s),
- Determine the role and day-to-day duties of the one-stop operator,
- Approve annual budget allocations for operation of the VA Career Works system,
- Leverage additional funding for the VA Career Works system to operate and expand one-stop customer activities and resources, and
- Review and evaluate performance of the LWDA and one-stop operator.

3.2 Describe strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:

- Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs
- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area
- Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development
- Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

These strategies and services may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the strategy described in 2.1.

The local board generally serves as the “regional convener” and each regional convener shall develop, in collaboration with other workforce development entities in the region, a local plan for employer engagement. VBWD Policy No. 403-01, Change 1 Business Service Requirements outlines the role and requirements of Local Workforce Areas and Virginia Workforce Centers in providing services to business customers, and presents required actions by the LWDA in regard to implementation of business services to enhance the business customer’s outcomes and satisfaction with the workforce system through Business Services Teams. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4), Code of Virginia 2.2. Chapter 24 Section 2.2-2472.1]

The SVWDB was awarded the Talent Pathways Initiative (TPI) contract for GO Virginia Region 8 and serves as the TPI Regional Coordinating Entity. The TPI final report is scheduled for release June 2025 with a regional roll-out June – July 2025. The workforce challenges as identified by 100+ interviewees have been aligned with recommendations to be considered for implementation. These recommendations are intended to produce actionable solutions for implementation projects. Strategies and services to support businesses are listed below.

- Establish and convene sector-based partnerships for target industries
- Increase flexible work-based learning opportunities
- Work with businesses to develop career pathways
- Work to mitigate structural barriers
- Work with businesses to transform perceptions of target industries, examples include manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and Health care
- Regionally invest in durable (soft) skills development
- Expand the talent pipeline to include a nontraditional pipeline

In addition to these strategies recommended by business, the SVWDB seeks to implement an Incumbent Worker Program, which has been dormant for years. This will be based on future allocations. In addition, programming changes have placed a priority on WBL to include on-the-job training, work experiences, virtual work experiences, pre-apprenticeship, registered apprenticeships, and employer developed training that is apprenticeship-like. With limited funding, the region needs to prioritize needs and allocate funding appropriately.

3.3 Describe how the direction given by the Governor and the local board to the one-stop operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public

assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

Collaboration between SVWDB and regional economic development entities exists because of a shared vision for a prosperous region and the understanding that business attraction and retention is based primarily on the region's workforce and ability to develop a talent pipeline of skilled workers.

The SVWDB is engaged with economic development in the region through collaboration with the Shenandoah Valley Partnership, a regional economic development organization representing twelve of the sixteen local governments in LWDA 4. The Director of the Shenandoah Valley Partnership serves on the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board. The Directors of Economic Development for Frederick County and the Town of Strasburg also serve on the SVWDB Board. The SVWDB engages with local economic development directors through the Chief Elected Officials Consortium to align workforce development strategies with the local economy.

The SVWDB participates in sub regional groups that address education and workforce issues. These groups include the Workforce Initiative in the northern region, the Talent Coalition in the Central region, and the Workforce + Education Committee in the Southern region. These groups are made up of business, education, local government, economic development, and community stakeholders that host events and initiatives to support the local economy. Initiative examples include career exploration events and competitions for K-12 students, Business and Education Summits, job fairs, sector strategies, and entrepreneurship programs targeting underrepresented populations.

The Shenandoah Valley region has an entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes two Small Business Development Centers, local government and community initiatives, and college and university resources that can be referral sources for entrepreneurial skills

development and microenterprises services. Some localities in the region host business plan competitions and incentivize entrepreneurial activities to stimulate economic development.

3.4 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities carried out in the region in which the local area is located (or planning region), and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

Collaboration between SVWDB and regional economic development entities exists because of a shared vision for a prosperous region and the understanding that business attraction and retention is based primarily on the region's workforce and ability to develop a talent pipeline of skilled workers.

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The Shenandoah Valley region has an entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes two Small Business Development Centers, local government and community initiatives, and college and university resources that can be referral sources for entrepreneurial skills development and microenterprises services. Some localities in the region host business plan competitions and incentivize entrepreneurial activities to stimulate economic development.

3.5 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

The SVWDB collaborates with relevant secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. Technical centers, which are part of the secondary school system, provide occupational skills training and related instruction for registered apprenticeship. Technical center representatives participate in planning activities for workforce program design and participate on the Business Solutions Team. The SVWDB works closely with technical centers to include programs on the Eligible Training Provider List that are relevant to in-demand occupations.

Numerous postsecondary education providers serve the region to provide instructional programs designed primarily for students who have completed high school or a GED. Postsecondary programs offer education and training to obtain a degree or certification and are included on the Education and Training Provider List when applicable to regional in-demand occupations.

Assisting low-skilled, low-income workers transition into postsecondary education improves employment opportunities and the ability to obtain a family supporting wage. The SVWDB has prioritized assisting the underemployed and underrepresented through the Network2Work service delivery model, a model that connects job seekers to the skills, education, training, and support services they need for employment in in-demand occupations

with family sustaining wages. Postsecondary education providers are a key partner in planning and implementing comprehensive and integrated workforce strategies aimed at elevating people to stable employment with a family sustaining wage.

Career Coaches maintain strong connections with workforce coordinators and community college instructors to ensure timely receipt of attendance records. They also engage in regular communication to stay updated on student progress, providing necessary support to those who may be struggling, aiming to prevent potential dropouts.

3.6 Describe how the local board will collaborate on local workforce investment activities with the community colleges in their area in the planning and delivery of workforce and training services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

SVWDB maintains close, collaborative relationships with Blue Ridge Community College, Mountain Gateway Community College, and Laurel Ridge Community College. Either the president or the vice-president for workforce services from each of these colleges sit on the SVWDB Board of Directors. All three community colleges participate in training the region's workforce and work closely with the region's businesses to ensure that career and technical training is directed at meeting business needs. The community colleges participate in co-designing and implementation support for workforce grant opportunities in the region and participate on the Business Solutions Team.

The SVWDB refers individuals to community colleges for grant funded training opportunities that complement WIOA services to assure that all available funding resources are utilized to support education and training of WIOA participants. The SVWDB works with community colleges to include programs on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to broaden training opportunities for WIOA participants. Through close collaboration with community colleges and their presence on the SVWDB Board of Directors, SVWDB works to avoid duplication of services with the community college system.

3.7 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Supportive services are not an entitlement and must be supported by demonstration of financial need and follow Priority of Service. Supportive services funded through WIOA are limited and must be leveraged with other local resources. Funds for supportive services are utilized in a manner that avoids redundancy and leverages funding from all available resources, including funding from private, community, and faith-based organizations. The provision of Supportive Services follows SVWDB Policy OP 12-08 and may only be provided to WIOA clients participating in WIOA programs who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs.

The LWDA 4 region is a mix of urban and rural areas. Three of the Cities in the region have public transportation systems serving the metropolitan areas providing affordable public transportation for workers fortunate to live and work where there is a public transportation system. Unfortunately, not all workers have access to public transportation, particularly those that live in rural areas of the region. Transportation is an identified barrier to employment in LWDA 4 and the SVWDB has a Transportation Resource Guide with more than 20 local resources for front line staff and partners to refer participants to available non-profit and private transportation services provided in the region. Virginia 211, an online resource guide for the Commonwealth of Virginia, also provides transportation and other supportive service resources by zip code and is available online for public use at www.211virginia.org.

The SVWDB is partnering with Network2Work USA to provide some transportation relief by providing customer access to a Loaner Fleet (a vehicle 'rental' program available to qualifying participants). This is an aspirational goal for the region but one that the SVWDB hopes to accomplish within the next 4 years.

3.8 Describe the plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

Virginia Works staff administer Wagner-Peyser employment services for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Wagner-Peyser services are provided at Virginia Career Works Centers as part of a full range of employment services available to job seekers. Career Services provided through the Wagner-Peyser program include basic career services, individualized career services, and follow up services. Wagner Peyser also includes services for migrant and seasonal farm workers.

Virginia Works is co-located in Virginia Career Works Centers in the Shenandoah Valley region and a party to the MOU and cost allocation agreement that guides center operations, defines partner services, and creates a seamless, customer-focused service delivery system. The local Virginia Works regional managers serve on the SVWDB Board of Directors and take an active role in planning and implementation of workforce initiatives in the region.

Title I staff communicate and refer regularly to Wagner Peyser/Virginia Works staff. They also participate in monthly staff meetings/training opportunities with Wagner Peyser staff, ensuring that Title I staff have a thorough understanding of the provision of Wagner-Peyser services, working knowledge of how those services are integrated into the workforce system, and how duplication of effort can be avoided.

3.9 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities, including a description of how the local board will carry out the review of local applications. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

Waynesboro City Public Schools holds the contract for Adult Education in LWDA 4 southern and central service regions and Laurel Ridge Community College holds the contract for the northern service region. The program managers of these adult educations programs sit

on the SVWDB Board of Directors, contribute to the development of the LWDA 4 Local Plan, and collaborate on workforce program alignment and system integration.

The SVWDB works with local Adult Education and Literacy application awardees and their second tier providers such as Skyline Literacy, to ensure that adult education and literacy programs demonstrate effectiveness and that program funds are used to promote alignment with local workforce development strategies. Skyline Literacy is located in the Harrisonburg Virginia Career Works Access Point in LWDA 4 and provide services such as basic literacy, English language learning and family literacy, computer literacy, citizenship preparedness, and test preparation.

3.10 Describe how the local plan shall:

- Specify the policies and protocols to be followed by all the region’s workforce development entities when engaging the region’s employers
- Address how the region’s workforce entities will involve employers in the formation of new workforce development activities
- Identify what activities will be undertaken to address employers’ specific workforce needs

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The Business Solutions Team in LWDA 4 is responsible for integrating resources and delivering services to employers to ensure a highly skilled workforce for sustainable economic growth. The SVWDB ensures the coordination of business service delivery to businesses and avoids duplication of services by partner agencies through Business Solutions Team protocols and the Partner MOU. The LWDA 4 Local Plan and Virginia Combined State Plan set a vision and standard for service delivery to employers.

The Business Solutions Team coordinates activities that include building relationships with businesses and business-focused organizations, integrating and streamlining business services, providing resources and labor market information to businesses, assisting with recruiting and training and providing customized solutions to business that incorporate all applicable resources in the workforce system. The Team uses an industry focused, sector

strategies approach to engaging businesses, where applicable, as the most effective way to align public and private resources to address the talent needs of employers.

A Team Charter and Communication Plan following WIOA and state guidelines, sets protocols for working with business customers including standardized timeframes for response and follow up with businesses. A single point of contact protocol is followed to engage businesses. Team members are made aware of the services provided by all team member agencies and organizations so appropriate referrals can be made. The Team meets monthly with different employers to discuss workforce needs and challenges. A coordinated team response to employers provides contact information for workforce system partners and services that can assist the employer with identified challenges. Feedback from employers engaged with the Business Solutions Team consistently shows that employers appreciate the team's integrated service delivery approach and information on the multitude of resources available through Virginia's workforce system to support businesses and job seekers.

The region is fortunate to have employers that engage with the Business Solutions Team and participate in surveys and focus groups to inform workforce development activities. Through the strategic planning process for local plan development, which included input from employers, SVWDB prioritized building awareness and identity of the SVWDB and the workforce system's opportunities and supports.

The SVWDB has also been working to support employers through the Talent Pathways Initiative Grant awarded by GOVirginia. Currently, the SVWDB and WorkEd Consulting are in the information gathering stage of the grant, meeting with employers and partners all over the region to gain a better understanding of the support needed and what role the SVWDB can play in providing meaningful services to employers.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Please answer the questions in Section 4 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Many of the responses below, such as career pathways and individual training accounts, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners.

4.1 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The SVWDB is committed to advancing a unified structure and process of proactive and effective job seeker and business services provided through a seamless collaboration of agencies and community partners carrying out core and support workforce programs. Working toward this objective, the SVWDB adopted the Network2Work service delivery model in 2020 to expand service delivery and available resources to under employed and underserved populations. The Board began transition to the new model by hiring staff to fill the roles needed to implement Network2Work.

Network2Work was founded on the premise that a community thrives when its residents thrive. Residents thrive when their capacity as human beings is unleashed, and their capacity as human beings can only be unleashed when their basic needs are met. Too many families in the Commonwealth, especially in communities of color, do not earn enough money to pay for the essentials of life, food, shelter, clothing, utilities, and the costs associated with working, which are primarily childcare and transportation. The Network2Work framework was designed intentionally to identify these families and connect them to quality jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.

Employers are the one group that has the interest and capacity to give people money, even more than they “need,” month after month, year after year. Yet, those who most need to connect to those employers often have the least access. Network2Work addresses this fundamental challenge by using a political style ground game of well-connected individuals in

low-income neighborhoods to recruit job-seekers. To make these connections, Network2Work utilizes custom-built, award-winning software that injects job and resource information directly into struggling neighborhoods through the smartphones of its community Connectors, the people who are at the center of social networks in neighborhoods, schools, churches, nonprofits, and immigrant communities. They are the individuals in the community to whom people turn for information and advice. These Connectors are the “secret sauce” of the Network2Work Job Seeker Network as many job seekers seek employment opportunities using personal connections.

Network2Work brings together three key networks, the Employer Network, the social and job-training service organizations (Provider Network), and a creative system of job seeker recruitment (Job Seeker Network). The three networks are created and sustained by human relationships, but those relationships are coordinated and amplified through the Network2Work technology platform.

Adopting and implementing the Network2Work model of service delivery expands access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment and those disconnected from available services. This new model of service delivery will allow the Board to focus on rebuilding an equitable economy where the opportunity for a career with family-sustaining income is available to even the hardest to reach populations.

In addition to the Network2Work program, Title I staff have developed a comprehensive Outreach Plan and it is currently being implemented. This plan encompasses over 60 entities across the region. The focus extends beyond traditional outreach targets, such as schools and libraries, to include organizations like food banks and faith-based institutions.

4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways, consistent with the Career Pathways Definitions, to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

During the latter part of 2020, the SVWDB began the process of developing a strategic plan that will drive positive change within the SVWDB and the community. One of the three key strategies carried out under the Board's strategic plan was to implement a system-wide approach to developing the essential work ready skills and executive functioning skills employers require for the current and future workplace. This strategy was selected based on input from employers through surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups that consistently identified executive functioning and work ready skills as lacking in the workforce. This goal was further vetted by results of the Talent Pathways Initiative Environmental Scan.

The Board laid out key objectives that follow a career pathways strategy of engaging employers to identify key competencies employers categorize as work ready, validate the competencies with local employers within each targeted industry, and convene partners to ensure that the essential skills/competencies are a focus of their employability training programs. Curriculum is then aligned to teaching the skills employers require for the current and future workplace.

Creating a career pathway begins with evaluating the current state of career awareness and readiness. The development of work ready and executive functioning skills provides the "first step" toward preparing individuals for continued learning along a career pathway that aligns with their career goals. The ability of the Board to successfully address the "work ready" gap in the talent pipeline will build recognition with employers that the Board is the "go to" organization to bring together the people and resources to address an identified deficiency in the workforce pipeline. Gaining recognition among employers as a resource for talent pipeline solutions sets the stage for employer engagement in future Board led career pathway

development initiatives.

In addition to Career Readiness/Workplace Essential skills, the Board has streamlined its ability to utilize ITA and other training opportunities that will allow participants to gain post secondary credentials more efficiently.

4.3 Describe how the local board will utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs to maximize efficiencies and use of resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The SVWDB follows an integrated service delivery strategy that aligns and braids resources of workforce partners to seamlessly, efficiently, and effectively address the training and support needs of job seekers. Co-enrollment with partner programs is used as a tool to reduce duplicative and administrative activities and leverage funding to provide a robust menu of services and supports that ensure job seekers have the skills and support to obtain sustained employment in the local economy. WIOA Title I co-enrolls participants in programs with Virginia Works/Wagner Peyser, Virginia Department for Blind and Vision Impaired, Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Adult Education, and discretionary grant programs such as the Apprenticeship Building America Grant and Network2Work.

SVWDB follows the Virginia Board of Workforce Development Policy 19-01 which requires all individuals assessed as eligible for Transition Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs be co-enrolled to receive WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker services. By co-enrolling Title I Dislocated Worker and TAA programs, services delivered to dislocated workers are seamless, efficient, and effective in assisting workers impacted by layoffs gain access to the training and supportive services needed to return to work. These programs are complimentary in nature and provide additional funding for dislocated worker services.

We strive to co-enroll participants with DARS whenever possible. If a participant discloses a disability or the Career Coach suspects one, the first step is to ask if they are already working with DARS. If they are, the Career Coach contacts the DARS counselor to

coordinate a plan. If they are not, the Career Coach offers a referral and works with the participant to ensure the connection is established.

4.4 Describe one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:

- A. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]

The one-stop delivery system in LWDA 4 consists of core program partners who collaborate to coordinate services for individuals. They design and implement strategies that align education, training programs, and support services, providing individuals with access to pathways leading to family-supporting wages. Continuous improvement of the workforce system is ensured through evaluation, accountability, the identification of best practices, and data-driven decision-making. The Board assesses job seeker service delivery through a Customer Satisfaction Survey, which is completed by job seekers utilizing services through the Virginia Career Works System. Similarly, business services are evaluated using a state customer satisfaction survey distributed by the Business Solutions Team to employers who receive these services.

Core partners within the region's one-stop system establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SVWDB. This MOU outlines the services provided through the one-stop delivery system, details how these services are coordinated and delivered, and includes a funding structure addressing cost-sharing and infrastructure funding. The MOU promotes consistency and transparency in one-stop services, serving as a reference point for evaluating service delivery and facilitating continuous improvement. Management teams of the partners at one-stop centers convene regularly to review intake, assessment, and referral processes as part of this continuous improvement effort.

One-stop center certification occurs every three years in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Code of Federal Regulations, and Virginia Board of Workforce Development Policy 300-06 regarding One-Stop Certification. This certification establishes requirements for the consistent delivery of workforce services, fosters continuous improvement in service delivery, provides a basis for evaluating service provider effectiveness, and maintains eligibility for one-stop infrastructure funding.

B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]

Workforce services in LWDA 4 are provided at three service access points called Virginia Career Works Centers. Due to the large geographic service area in LWDA 4, services are also made available in remote areas through outreach conducted at libraries, community colleges, training facilities, and through collaboration with community organizations such as Chambers of Commerce. The lessons we learned during Covid on how to deliver services virtually have since been refined and expanded when appropriate.

Technology applications, such as virtual orientations and workshops, virtual enrollment and assessment, virtual training, and virtual hiring events are widely used and accepted as service delivery practices in the region and expand services to remote areas with broadband connectivity. The Network2Work services delivery model adds an additional technology application and process to the service delivery system to reach populations in most need of services including those in remote areas. Community Connectors have access to the Network2Work application to connect targeted populations, even those with no broadband access, to the workforce system.

The use of VR Headsets has been a great asset to our ability to expand our service delivery. Since 2023, we have engaged with over 800 individuals to explore a variety of

careers using this tool. Career Coaches average 30 plus virtual meetings a month to conduct initial eligibility meetings, assessment, career coaching, and regular check-ins with customers.

C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 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. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)]

The Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board (SVWDB) complies with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by adopting strategies and practices that ensure physical and programmatic accessibility for all individuals, including those with disabilities and language barriers. Accessibility requirements for services at Virginia Career Works Centers are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the SVWDB and its core partners. To maintain ongoing compliance, accessibility is evaluated during the One-Stop Center Certification process.

The one-stop operator coordinates and delivers access to all required customer services through collaboration with one-stop system partners and supports the state's one-stop center certification process as mandated by the Virginia Board for Workforce Development.

One-stop staff receive training to assist all customers, regardless of their abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, or education level. The Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), a partner of the center, provides disability awareness training for center staff. Additionally, board and agency staff participate in WIOA Section 188 Compliance Training, provided statewide by DARS, and the Annual Equal Opportunity Training, provided by Virginia Works. Virginia Works and the SVWDB contribute to the purchase of accessibility tools and resources for Virginia Career Works Centers. "I Speak" language identification cards help identify languages spoken by customers, and tools like

Google Translate and a Language Line are available to staff. An interpreter can be provided in real-time or, if necessary, within a reasonable timeframe for any customer facing a language barrier. Resource centers have computers with adjustable stands, large print keyboards, and trackball mice. Assistive devices such as screen-reading software (e.g., JAWS, Magic, and Magnifier) and assistive listening devices are accessible to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility within the service delivery system.

The SVWDB website, Home - Virginia Career Works Shenandoah Valley Region, was created using the Virginia-approved website template and adheres to Virginia Career Works brand standards. It features a UserWay accessibility widget, an accessibility compliance solution that ensures the website offers a digital experience meeting and exceeding WCAG 2.1 AA requirements, as mandated by the ADA and other governing bodies.

D. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]

The one-stop system Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by core partners in LWDA 4 defines the role of all parties to the agreement. Partners agree to work closely together to ensure that all Virginia Career Works Centers are high-performing work places with staff that ensure quality of service and compliance with all provisions of state and federal nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and accessibility requirements. All partners agree to collaborate and reasonably assist each other in the development of necessary service delivery protocols, comply with all applicable federal and state laws related to privacy rights of customers, maintenance of records, and other confidential information relating to customers, and agree that all equipment and furniture purchased by any party for use in service delivery remain the property of the purchaser.

The Partner MOU includes a Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) where all parties agree that joint funding is a necessary foundation for an integrated service delivery system. The IFA reflects each partners' shared costs, or contribution, and establishes a financial plan (master budget), including terms and conditions, to fund the services and operating costs for that center. All costs are allocated according to partners' proportionate use, based on square feet occupied by partner program staff, and relative benefits received. Budgets are reconciled on a quarterly basis against actual costs incurred and adjusted accordingly. The IFA is expected to be transparent and negotiated among partners on an equitable basis to ensure costs are shared appropriately. All Partners must negotiate in good faith and seek to establish outcomes that are reasonable and fair.

Infrastructure costs are defined as non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the Centers including, but not limited to, rental of facilities, utilities and maintenance, equipment, including assessment-related products and assistive technology for individuals with disabilities, and technology to facilitate access, planning, and outreach activities. IFA contributions vary by center based on lease arrangements, partner presence, and use of the center. Shared costs include rent, utilities, maintenance contracts, janitorial supplies/services, facilities maintenance, computer maintenance, resource room computer maintenance, computer software, data plan costs, telephone/fax equipment and service fees, copier equipment, general supplies, signage, and printing of outreach and community awareness materials.

<p>E. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out by one-stop partners [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]</p>

The use of technology for program enrollments at one-stop centers in LWDA 4 has continued to be provided since the transition to virtual services during the COVID 19

Pandemic. Customers are able to complete the entire WIOA enrollment process from start to finish virtually, utilizing platforms such as Zoom, DocuSign, and the telephone. Files have been converted from paper to electronic, and all documents can be via an online state database.

The implementation of the Network2Work service delivery model provides an additional technology solution that uses an app provided to “community connectors,” to engage targeted populations in the workforce system and direct them to specific programs and services based on a questionnaire in the app.

F. Describe the services provided by each partner mandated by federal and state law, and other optional partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]
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The following chart shows the services provided by WIOA mandated partners in LWDA 4 and the programs that provide funding for these services. Implementation of Network2Work has expanded partnerships with community and faith based organizations that are not currently involved in the workforce system.

Partner Organization/Program	Services Provided
<p>Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board</p> <p>WIOA Title I Program (Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs)</p>	<p>WIOA Title I – Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Career Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic Testing, Assessments, Evaluations • Individual Employment Plan Development • Career Planning • Short-term Pre-vocational Services • Internships and Work Experience • Workforce Preparation Activities • Financial Literacy Services <p>Training Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Skills Training • On-the-Job Training (OJT) • Incumbent Worker Training • Entrepreneurial Training (Adult Program) • Skills Upgrading and Retraining • Adult Education and Literacy Activities <p>Supportive Services (based on availability of funds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation and Childcare Assistance • Payment of Credentialing/Licensing Fees • Reasonable Accommodations for a Disability • Books, Tools, and School Supplies • Required Uniforms and Work-related Expenses • Referrals to Community Services and Health Care
<p>Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board</p> <p>WIOA Title I Program (Youth Program)</p>	<p>Title I Youth Program Career Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Experience Opportunities • Occupational Skills Training • On-The-Job Training (OJT) • High-school Equivalency Education Assistance • Tutoring and Basic Skills Education • Leadership Development Opportunities • Financial Literacy • Career Counseling and Exploration Services • Post-secondary Education Preparation • Entrepreneurial Skills Training <p>Supportive Services (based on availability of funds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Assistance • Payment of Credentialing/Licensing Fees • Childcare Assistance • Books and Training Materials • Required Uniforms and Other Work-Related Expenses
<p>Laurel Ridge Community College</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult education and literacy activities, including GED and English language acquisition

<p>WIOA Title II Program (Adult Education)</p>	
<p>Shenandoah Initiative for Adult Education</p> <p>WIOA Title II Program (Adult Education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with Skyline Literacy to provide adult education and literacy activities, including GED and English language acquisition
<p>Skyline Literacy</p> <p>WIOA Title II Program (Adult Education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform job seekers with limited literacy skills of literacy services available • Provide skills needs assessment, guidance, information and interpretation services to job seekers whose limited English skills create a barrier to employment, job retention and self-sufficiency • Make referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers for tutoring, career counseling, job skills training and other educational opportunities • Provides classroom instruction for preparation for Citizenship
<p>Blue Ridge Community College</p> <p>Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs under Perkins V</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with Skyline Literacy assist job seekers with limited literacy skills by providing information about literacy classes, tutoring, career counseling, job skills training and other educational opportunities provided through Virginia Career Works Centers • Provide skills needs assessment, guidance, information and interpretation services to job seekers whose limited English skills create a barrier to employment, job retention and self-sufficiency • Make referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers
<p>Laurel Ridge Community College</p> <p>Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs under Perkins V</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide LFCC career resources and course catalog to center staff and consult with center staff on programs • Make referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>Employment Services (ES) program authorized under the Wagner- Peyser Act, as amended by Title III of WIOA, also providing the state’s labor exchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide basic career services and individualized career services for job seekers and workers • Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs • Conduct outreach regarding local workforce system’s services and products • Provide access to labor market information and assist with the interpretation of this information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings, information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs, and

	<p>information relating to local occupations in demand and their earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct outreach and assist employers fill their workforce needs with qualified job seekers • Provide customized recruitment and job applicant screening and referral services • Conduct job fairs, use one-stop center facilities for recruiting and interviewing job applicants • Post job vacancies in the state labor exchange system and take and fill job orders • Provide information regarding workforce development initiatives and programs • Develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships • Conduct intake, outreach, and orientation to the information services, programs, tools and resources available through the workforce system • Referral to training services • Information on the availability of supportive services and referral to such as appropriate
<p>Virginia Employment Commission</p> <p>Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs under Virginia unemployment compensation laws</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and services related to Unemployment Insurance taxes and claims
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) authorized under chapter 41 of Title 39, U.S.C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide individualized career and training-related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment • Conduct outreach and assist employers fill their workforce needs with job seeking Veterans
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>Rapid Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to announcements of layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers to ensure rapid reemployment and to minimize the negative impacts of the layoff
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) authorized under the Trade Act of 1974 (as amended)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TAA Program is a federal program established under the Trade Act that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The program develops On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide occupation skills training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) • Development of an individual employability development plan to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve the employment goals
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specialize assessments of skill levels and service needs • Review of Unemployment Insurance • Development of an individual employability plan to identify employment goals ,appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve the employment goals • Referral to training services and reduction in duration of UI benefits
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>Foreign Labor Certification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process H-2A and H-2B foreign labor applications, conduct employer housing inspections, conduct prevailing wage and practice surveys, and conduct employer outreach for foreign labor programs
<p>Virginia Works</p> <p>National Farmworker Jobs Program (Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In and out of area job search and placement assistance • Conduct outreach activities with growers and other employers
<p>Telamon Corporation</p> <p>National Farmworker Jobs Program (Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers • Participates on Business Solutions Team
<p>VA Dept. for Aging and Rehabilitative Services</p> <p>WIOA Title IV Program (Rehabilitative Services)</p>	<p>Vocational rehabilitation programs and services to assist people with disabilities to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. The scope of workforce services for job seekers determined eligible in open order of selection categories*, and based on an assessment of service needs, may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational Evaluation/Counseling • Career/Post-Secondary Education Planning • Training and Credentials • Work Readiness and Support Services • Job Development/Coaching/Placement <p><i>*When it has been determined that DARS does not have sufficient funds to serve all eligible individuals, federal law requires that DARS implement an order of selection. Order of selection prioritizes individuals into</i></p>

	<p><i>categories according to the significance of their disabilities and ensures that those with the most significant disabilities are selected first to receive services. Those individuals assigned to a closed category remain on a waiting list for services until there are sufficient resources to open closed categories and they are referred to the Virginia Career Works Center(s) for workforce services.</i></p>
<p>VA Dept. for Blind and Vision Impaired</p> <p>WIOA Title IV Program (Rehabilitative Services)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to and from Virginia Career Works • Cross train on services provided by each agency
<p>Goodwill Industries of the Valleys</p> <p>SCSEP Programs under WIOA Title V Program (Senior Community Service Employment Program)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and employment opportunities in community service positions for individuals age 55 or older who have low income including: • Job search and placement assistance, career counseling, labor market information identifying job vacancies, skills necessary for occupations in demand, and relevant employment trends in the local, regional, and national economies • Initial assessment of skills and needs • Information on available services and programs • Participate in job fairs
<p>Northern Virginia Workforce Development Board</p> <p>SCSEP Programs under WIOA Title V Program (Senior Community Service Employment Program)</p>	<p>SCSEP offers the following services to low-income individuals age 55 or older:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs • Development of individual employment plans to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve the employment goals
<p>Shenandoah Valley Department of Social Services</p> <p>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers • Cross training of services provided by VCW and DSS
<p>Harrisonburg-Rockingham Department of Social Services</p> <p>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers • Cross training of services provided by VCW and DSS • Cost allocation contribution

(TANF) authorized under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act	
Winchester Department of Social Services Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to Virginia Career Works Centers • Cross training of services provided by VCW and DSS

G. Identify the Virginia Workforce Center Operator for each site in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

Virginia Career Works – Harrisonburg Access Point
Center Operator: Tristan Meadows, Operations Director

Virginia Career Works – Fishersville Center
Center Operator: Chris Hurley, Local Office Manager Virginia Works

Virginia Career Works – Winchester Center
Center Operator: Michael Diaz, Local Office Manager Virginia Works

Regional One Stop Operator – Lori Strumpf, Strumpf and Associates

H. Identify the physical locations of each comprehensive Virginia Workforce Center in the local area, and the co-location strategy for each center (current and planned). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The Virginia Career Works – Fishersville Center, located at 1076 Jefferson Hwy, Staunton, Virginia, is the comprehensive Virginia Workforce Center in LWDA 4 where required partners provide access to their programs, services and activities. Wagner-Peyser Employment Services are co-located with WIOA Title I in both of the Virginia Career Works Centers in LWDA 4 and staffed as required in WIOA Sec. 121(e)(3). Virginia Works staff are accessibly via appointment or virtually at the Harrisonburg Access Point.

A team approach to working with clients is the primary strategy that guides the seamless provision of WIOA services at all LWDA 4 Virginia Career Works Centers. Tools and techniques used in LWDA 4 to ensure co-located partners provide seamless delivery of

comprehensive services to workers and businesses include: adoption of Virginia Career Works and American Job Center brand identity for center partners; offering a “No Wrong Door” policy for job seekers where center staff are cross trained on center programs, services, and referral processes; offering coordinated, single point of contact business services for employers; holding regular team meetings that include all center staff; and facility design that functionally aligns customer flow and services.

I. If applicable, identify the locations of Virginia Workforce Network affiliated sites, partner sites, or specialized centers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The Virginia Career Works – Winchester Center, located at 419 N. Cameron Street, Winchester, Virginia, is an affiliate workforce services delivery site in LWDA 4. The Virginia Career Works – Harrisonburg Access Point, located at 100 S. Mason Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia, is an access point for workforce services in LWDA 4.

4.5 Describe the policy, process, and criteria for issuing individual training accounts (ITAs) including any limitations on ITA amounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

Individual Training Accounts are used to fund training necessary to transition a WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Out of School Youth participant into the workforce and must be supported by the participant’s Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The Board’s ITA policy defines and establishes parameters for Individual Training Account development. Training provided through an ITA must support the stated purpose of WIOA and be in accordance with the description of training as contained in the Act.

Training provided through an ITA is for the sole purpose of facilitating transition into the workforce and must support occupations in demand in the labor market and determined to be of priority by the SVWDB. All training must be supported by local labor market data that is furnished by the Virginia Employment Commission, Weldon Cooper Center or other appropriate source.

Training length will vary according to the type of training and the requirements outlined in the vendor agreement. Because entering or returning to the workforce is a priority under WIOA, training cannot exceed more than 24 calendar months. If the participant IEP includes training lasting more than 24 months, a waiver must be requested prior to beginning the training. Waivers for special training and training in occupations that are not in SVWDB identified in demand occupations will be considered by the SVWDB and must be approved by the SVWDB CEO and meet specific employment criteria to be allowable. The SVWDB will not provide funding for courses/programs previously funded but not successfully completed.

WIOA funding for training is limited to participants who are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay for the costs of their training or require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources, including PELL Grants, to pay the costs of such training. To avoid duplicate payment of costs when an individual is eligible for both WIOA and other assistance, including a PELL Grant, all available sources of funds must be considered, excluding loans, in determining an individual's overall need for WIOA funds. Individuals must maintain an active application status for PELL assistance. The exact mix of funds shall be determined based on the availability of funding for either training costs or supportive services, with the goal of ensuring that the costs of the training program the participant selects are fully paid, and that necessary supportive services are available so that the training can be completed successfully.

The total training budget is supplied by the vendor based upon a formula used by institutions that determine financial aid. Whenever feasible, training vendors will be requested to allow participants to receive credit for required courses when equivalent courses have been completed and can be documented from other training institutions. Additionally, costs associated with CLEP Testing will be treated as a training cost if the testing relates to the curriculum of study.

The SVWDB limits training cost (per participant) to no more than \$5,800 for classroom training or \$8,800 if individual participates in an OJT after completion of classroom training within a fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), except as approved by the SVWDB CEO prior to the expenditure of funds. Funding of training, supportive services, and needs-related payments may not exceed a total of \$14,750 per participant per fiscal year.

All WIOA registrants will be made aware of any excess cost of training not covered by the program for which they will be responsible. Program operators are expected to work closely with participants to determine the individuals' ability to contribute to the cost of training and negotiate a funding plan that will adequately meet the needs of the participant while using WIOA funding in the most efficient manner possible.

Training through an ITA can only be provided by eligible training providers that complete an application process through the SVWDB and are approved to be included on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The Virginia Workforce System offers a wide variety of career, education, and training options through a database of eligible training providers that includes providers by region, types of training, provider credentials, costs, class schedules, success rates, and feedback from previous job seeker participants.

Required ITA documentation is maintained by the Coach and included in the job seeker electronic file. Regular contact with the job seeker is required and all participants must complete face-to-face training performance reviews with their Coach on, at minimum, a quarterly/ semester/module basis as outlined in the IEP. ITA funding is only authorized on a semester/quarterly/module basis and requires documentation that the job seeker has successfully completed previous work. This necessitates that the job seeker maintains ongoing contact with their Coach, and allows for discontinuation of funding for job seekers who are not performing or demonstrating satisfactory progress toward completion of training goals. Job seeker students are expected to maintain no less than a cumulative 2.0 grade point average

for the year in order to continue to receive WIOA funding.

4.6 If training contracts are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

Career Coaches are trained to explain all training options available when assessing program service options. Job seekers are directed to the list of Eligible Training Providers on the Virginia Workforce Connection website. After discussing training options with the job seeker, the job seeker selects the training provider of choice. As long as the selected program is on Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), tuition assistance can be provided. If the selected training option is not on the ETPL, the customer may select another program or assistance can be provided in other ways while they pursue their program of choice. The job seeker acknowledges their choice by signing a *Customer Choice in Training* form.

4.7 Describe process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

Virginia labor market supply and demand data and real time job openings are used to determine if a participant's training is geared towards occupations in demand. Local employer demand is also considered through current Indeed listings. Coaches review the labor market information for the occupation(s) the participant is interested in and conduct a budget analysis to determine self-sufficiency. If both of these items point to an in-demand career path that will lead the job seeker to self-sufficiency, the job seeker continues on their path. If not, the Coach works with them to determine the best pathway for their success.

4.8 Describe how rapid response activities are coordinated and carried out in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

The Virginia Rapid Response Team carries out Rapid Response activities in LWDA 4 and includes representatives from Virginia Works DWDA and Virginia Career Works Centers.

The Rapid Response Team responds to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating workforce services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. The team provides an informational session on WIOA services and programs to workers affected by the layoff. Persons interested in pursuing WIOA services are then connected to a Career Works Center Coach to begin the enrollment process. Business Solutions Teams are informed of the layoff, the number of workers impacted, and the skill sets of workers impacted. Business Solutions Teams assist in identifying employment opportunities that align with the occupational skills of the laid off workers.

Section 5: Compliance

Please try to answer the questions in Section 5 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Most of the response should be staff-driven responses as each are focused on the organization's compliance with federal or state requirements.

5.1 Describe how the local board meets its responsibilities for oversight, monitoring, and corrective action for WIOA Title I programs. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board (SVWDB), Chief Elected Officials, and Grant Recipient (Page County) enter into an annual fiscal agent agreement that designates the SVWDB as the fiscal agent responsible for receiving, managing, and overseeing WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) funds for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth, as well as other federal funds allocated to the SVWDB by the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement, also known as Virginia Works.

The SVWDB maintains strong internal controls and policies to manage conflicts of interest while also ensuring the protection and appropriate disclosure of necessary information. The organization closely monitors spending to ensure proper cost allocation and provides staff training on WIOA compliance.

Additionally, as the fiscal agent, the SVWDB functions as the service provider for WIOA Title I programs. It oversees the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, provides program services, case management, performance collection and monitoring, and implements necessary corrections. The experienced staff ensures that all programs meet federal, state, and local requirements by continuously monitoring its WIOA Title I programs, focusing on administrative, fiscal, and programmatic aspects throughout the year. This continuous feedback helps identify and resolve any issues that may arise. To prevent potential conflicts of interest during formal monitoring, the SVWDB has agreed with another Local Workforce Development Board to exchange professional monitoring services at no cost. This partnership benefits both boards by reducing expenses and eliminating potential conflicts of interest.

In accordance with local and state policies and guidance, the SVWDB formally monitors its WIOA sub-recipients and contractors at least once a year. These evaluations include thorough administrative, financial, and program reviews to ensure compliance with WIOA regulations, Virginia Works policies and guidance, and contract terms. When violations are identified during these reviews, corrective actions and follow-up measures are conducted. Corrective action plans are created and implemented to address deficiencies in operating procedures, accountability standards, or program performance metrics.

Lastly, the Finance Department undergoes an annual audit by reputable auditors selected through the Request for Proposal process, alongside state compliance monitoring by Virginia Works.

5.2 Describe how the local board conducts business in accordance with the Sunshine Provisions of WIOA staffing plans for the local board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The SVWDB operates in accordance with WIOA's Sunshine Provisions to ensure transparency, accountability, and public engagement. These Sunshine Provisions are detailed in SVWDB's Bylaws:

To comply with the Sunshine Provisions, the Board and any of its authorized subcommittees must:

- 1. Conduct official actions and engage in deliberations only during meetings that are open to the public. "Official action" includes making recommendations, establishing policies, making decisions, and voting on matters related to Local Board business. "Deliberations" refer to discussions necessary to reach decisions on Local Board business.*
- 2. Ensure that all meetings are held in accessible locations for individuals with disabilities and that all information is provided in accessible and alternative formats.*

3. Provide public notice of meetings in accordance with applicable state code provisions, including notifying the public in advance of any special meetings or rescheduled regular meetings. No public notice is required for emergency meetings called to address a real or potential emergency that poses a clear and present danger to life or property.

4. Ensure that votes by Local Board members are cast publicly, and that roll call votes are recorded.

5. Maintain written minutes of all public meetings, which should include the date, time, and location of the meeting, members present, the substance of all official actions, a record of roll call votes, and the names of any citizens who appeared and provided testimony.

To address staffing plans, SVWDB ensures that all employment opportunities with SVWDB are posted online through the Virginia Works website and the Virginia Workforce Connection. To reach a wide audience, job postings are also shared on various job search sites and through professional associations, distributed to partners and local directors, and featured on the Virginia Career Works—Shenandoah Valley website and social media channels.

Notices for open positions with SVWDB remain posted until the application deadline is reached, and the posting duration is designed to allow a broad range of candidates to view and apply for the positions.

A team of staff and board members reviews applications, conducts interviews, and makes hiring recommendations. The Chief Executive Officer has the final authority in the hiring decision. Additionally, SVWDB adheres to the "Equal Employment Opportunity" provisions established by law.

5.3 Describe the methods and strategies used to ensure timely expenditure of WIOA funds. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The SVWDB operates from an approved annual line-item budget. The entity-wide budget is developed by the CEO, Finance Director, and Finance Committee of the Board and approved by the entire Board prior to the beginning of each Fiscal Year. The line-item budget identifies the projected expenses for all internal operational costs of the SVWDB and its staff, as well as all program funding and contractor allocations.

Obligation data, which represents definite commitments resulting in future financial expenditures, is collected by SVWDB to provide an expanded picture of how funds are being utilized through the current period, as well as in future periods. Accurate tracking of obligation data provides SVWDB with critical information needed to manage grant funding over the period of fund availability and ensure timely expenditure of WIOA funds. The use of obligations provides for internal controls in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and is used as a measure of the SVWDB's financial performance.

The Board has authority to transfer program funds for employment and training activities between adult and dislocated worker programs. This gives the Board flexibility to ensure timely expenditure of WIOA adult and dislocated worker funds based on the local demand for adult and dislocated worker program services.

The Program Director and Finance Director track obligations vs expenditures on a monthly basis. A process to deobligate funds in a more timely manner has put in place, with coaches reviewing obligations quarterly and making deobligations when appropriate.

5.4 Describe the process for neutral brokerage of adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. Identify the competitive process and criteria (such as targeted services, leverage of funds, etc.) used to award funds to sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services, state the names of contracted organizations, and the duration of each contract. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

The selection of service providers of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker and Title I Youth program services in LWDA 4 follows a competitive procurement process consistent with Board procurement policies and the procurement standards of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. Competitive procurement of service providers is conducted every 3 years or more frequently based on the performance of the service provider(s). The procurement of service providers through a competitive process is intended to promote the efficient and effective delivery services and provide a mechanism for the SVWDB to regularly examine performance and costs against contracted service provider expectations.

Requests for proposals for WIOA Title I service delivery include the Board's mission, values, service delivery goals, strategies, and desired service delivery outcomes, including but not limited to, placement in employment, retention in employment, completion of training, attainment of credentials, measurable skills attainment, and wrap around services when necessary. Proposals require a budget that supports the program model in the request for proposals and includes evidence of leveraged resources and in-kind contributions. Proposals require that appropriate partnerships are created and maintained with mandated WIOA partners and local organizations to leverage resources to fulfill the needs of job seekers and address barriers to employment.

In January 2020, the SVWDB released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Adult and Dislocated Worker program services that outlined a new service delivery model identified by the Board to evolve, innovate, and expand service delivery. Questions from potential applicants about the RFP indicated confusion regarding the new service delivery model and how the requirements differ from the traditional delivery of WIOA services. On February 14, the SVWDB canceled the RFP, citing VA Code §2.2-4319. A revised RFP was released on February 20 clarifying the requirements and responsibilities of the new service delivery model.

One proposal to the February 14th RFP was received and evaluated. The proposal received a score of 355 (59%) out of a possible 600 points (100%). The proposal was rejected by the Executive and Finance Committees acting on behalf of the Board. After two unsuccessful attempts to secure a service provider for Adult and Dislocated Worker Services through the competitive procurement process, in June 2020, the SVWDB submitted a request for Governor's approval for the SVWDB to provide WIOA individualized and follow up services. The request was approved by the Governor and on July 1, 2020, the SVWDB began providing WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated services for LWDA 4 for PY 2020.

On June 1, 2020, the WIOA grant recipient (Page County), the Chief Elected Officials Consortium, and the fiscal agent (SVWDB) entered into an agreement to forgo procurement of Title I Youth Services and assigned the provision of Youth services to SVWDB for PY2020. Enrollment Specialists and Life & Career Coaches at Virginia Career Works Centers are providing services for the SVWDB's Title I Youth Program, including intake, objective assessments, development of individual services strategies, case management, supportive services, and follow-up services. Service delivery includes the 14 Youth Elements defined by WIOA and follows the Network2Work service delivery model using integrated resources to address all barriers that a youth job seeker may have prior to enrollment in training/internships or seeking employment.

Most recently, the SVWDB has received a waiver to continue providing Adult and Dislocated Worker programs until PY27, however the SVWDB continues to evaluate programs internally to ensure that no need for competitive procurement arises.

Currently the Executive Committee serves as the Youth Committee and plans to do so through the initial implementation of youth programming. The Executive Committee will consider the establishment of a Youth Committee for the long term provision of youth services.

5.5 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

The SVWDB is designated by the Chief Elected Officials in LWDA 4 to serve as the fiscal agent for the disbursement of grant funds for workforce development activities. A Designation of Fiscal Agent Agreement is entered into annually between the fiscal agent and Chief Elected Officials. When designating the fiscal agent, the Chief Elected Officials consider the fiscal agent's experience working with employment and training programs, working knowledge of federal OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal awards, and the capability of the fiscal agent's financial management system to track and account for WIOA Title I funds received.

5.6 Describe the strategy used by the local board to leverage WIOA funds with other federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

Resource diversification planning is an important component of workforce development for the SVWDB that includes asset mapping to identify sub-regional assets that can be leveraged, resource development planning, and grant seeking to generate financial resources beyond WIOA formula funds. SVWDB works to leverage current funds and resources to seek cost-sharing opportunities with partners and other stakeholders. Implementation of the Network2Work service delivery model includes the evaluation of sub-regional support systems, key partners, and gaps in partnerships. To effectively use and leverage available resources, SVWDB develops relationships and partnerships with partner and community organizations to align and integrate support systems with WIOA funds.

5.7 Indicate the negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

The SVWDB seeks to negotiate performance levels that reflect the region's economic conditions while allowing for successfully attaining negotiated performance levels. The following chart shows Program Years (PYs) 2024 and 2025 Final Negotiated and Accepted Performance Goals for LWDA 4.

WIOA Title I Performance - LWDA 04	VA-LSAM - Model Predictions	State recommended starting negotiation level	LWDA 4 Response	State Accepted level/LWDA Final Goals PY 24&25
Adult				
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	83.06%	83.06%	83.06%	83.00%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	83.95%	83.95%	81.00%	81.00%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$6,579.64	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
Credential Attainment within 1 year	74.07%	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%
Measurable Skills Gain	78.64%	78.64%	75.00%	75.00%
Dislocated Workers				
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	85.74%	86.00%	86.00%	86.00%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	98.40%	90.00%	85.00%	85.00%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$6,143.60	\$10,000.00	\$9,300.00	\$9,300.00
Credential Attainment within 1 year	75.92%	75.92%	75.92%	75.00%
Measurable Skills Gain	90.43%	75.00%	72.10%	72.00%
Youth				
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	79.51%	79.51%	79.51%	79.00%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	77.29%	77.29%	77.29%	77.00%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$3,139.13	\$4,700.00	\$4,700.00	\$4,700.00
Credential Attainment within 1 year	73.70%	73.70%	73.70%	73.00%
Measurable Skills Gain	91.65%	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%

5.8 Describe indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Fiscal Agent performance is evaluated through staff reviews of monthly income and expenditure budget to actual reports for each funding stream and contract prior to payment of invoices. Monthly budget performance reviews identify any potential variances that could be indicative of overspending, underspending, incorrect allocations, or incorrect coding. The Finance Committee meets quarterly to review budget to actual reports prior to submitting financial reports to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for review and approval.

Service provider contracts include the scope of services, cost of services, and performance metrics to be provided under the contract. Service contractor performance and costs are regularly examined to assure that the contracted services are being provided per the

contract and corrective action plans are developed and implemented to correct any deficiency or misalignment in contractor performance.

Training in continuous process improvement occurs within each of the individual partner agencies and within Virginia Career Works Centers. The steps used in continuous process improvement include: a) select the process to be examined, b) study the process, c) plan for revisions and improvements, d) implement revisions and improvements, and e) repeat the process. Additionally, all WIOA partners are engaged in information exchanges to identify best practices that have demonstrated strong results in other areas.

Continuous improvement in Virginia Career Works Centers includes monthly partner meetings, dashboard and program reports, and job seeker and employer surveys. Indicators used to evaluate performance and effectiveness of one-stop services include monthly WIOA program enrollment, center traffic, month-to-date performance metrics, referrals, residency, and unemployment information. The monthly program report provides information regarding center operations, outreach activities, classes conducted, customer satisfaction ratings and comments, success stories, and training program enrollments. Job seeker surveys capture participant customer satisfaction and include overall satisfaction, staff rating, quality of information received, wait time, source of referral, and comments.

5.9 Provide a description of any replicated cooperative agreements with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

A Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the SVWDB, Chief Elected Officials, and Virginia Career Works System Partners, confirms the understanding of the Parties regarding the operation and management of Virginia Career Works Centers in LWDA

4. The MOU defines the parameters within which education, workforce, economic development, and other partner programs and entities operate to create a seamless,

customer-focused service delivery system that aligns service delivery across system partners and enhances access to program services.

Partners to the MOU commit to cross-training staff, professional learning opportunities for staff, effective communications, data sharing following Federal and State privacy laws, and collaboration on system alignment and program integration. By realizing one-stop opportunities together, partners build community-benefiting bridges, rather than silos of programmatic isolation. These partnerships reduce administrative burden and costs and increase customer access and performance outcomes for customers of the workforce system, including individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment.

A Data Sharing Agreement between the SVWDB and the Virginia Employment Commission facilitates the transmittal of confidential Unemployment Compensation information for the purpose of determining eligibility for services and case management under WIOA. The agreement specifies the process for authorized staff to obtain data from the VEC and how the information obtained can be legally disseminated and maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Government Data Collection and Disseminations Practices Act.

5.10 Describe the actions the local board will take towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)]

SVWDB strives to be a leading, high-performing workforce development board and began the evolution process in 2012 by setting a vision that is inspirational, aspirational, and concise. The Board's priority actions are designed and implemented to realize its vision and to align resources in support of priorities. The SVWDB continues to stay true to its mission by pursuing and hiring professional, highly educated and credentialed, passionate staff and works to ensure the provision of WIOA Title I services are customer-focused and that staff are well trained and committed to providing excellent customer service to job seekers and businesses.

The SVWDB seeks to exceed state negotiated performance metrics, develop and measure meaningful regional metrics, and to continuously evaluate and improve the workforce system. The SVWDB pursues workforce development best practices and strives to establish new promising best practices. The SVWDB has undertaken actions to evolve into a higher-performing local workforce development board by engaging in four areas of development, which includes: (1) development of SVWDB members and the Board, (2) a movement to formal sub-regionalization, (3) partnership expansion through systems thinking, and (4) workforce service delivery through Netwotk2Work, a community based service delivery model. The development and evolution of the Board has increased the Board's effectiveness in strategic planning and created opportunities for Board member engagement. The SVWDB has completed a workforce system strategic plan and will now begin formalizing the organization strategic plan. Knowing what the strategic goals are for the workforce system, the SVWDB now turns to the organization to make sure the appropriate structure, capacity, and resources are in place to address workforce system strategic goals. The following are some of the topics to be discussed during the organization strategic planning process:

- Review of organization structure (501(c) (3), 501(c) (4), etc.) and options for reorganizing considering the delivery of program services and resource development.
- Review of Board and Executive Committee structure based on organization structure decisions.
- Review of Officer structure and succession planning.
- Review of Board bylaws based on organization and officer structure.
- Development of committee structure based on regional workforce system and organization strategic and business planning.
- Review of Board and committee meeting frequency, format, and staffing.

- Development of a succession plan for staff leadership.
- Development of Board member and/or Committee member onboarding, mentoring, training, and networking opportunities.
- Development of a communication structure and plan for internal customers; Board, Executive Committee, other committees, staff, Center staff, regional workforce partners, Title I Administrator and staff, CEO Consortium, City Councils, and Boards of Supervisors.
- Building rapport and relationship with the CEO Consortium.
- Review of CEO Consortium officer structure and bylaws.
- Funding diversification planning and implementation.

As workforce conveners, partnership brokers, and resource leveragers, the Board is at the center of business, workforce, and community systems. The Board is informed about the complexities of the workforce system and focuses their work on the alignment of resources, leveraging regional and partner expertise and assets, and ensuring the regional workforce ecosystem supports in-demand industry sectors and aligns with regional and community economic development. The SVWDB has pursued and is implementing new methods for advanced workforce service delivery and the modification of current service delivery processes to build and leverage relationships with employers, partner agencies, community stakeholders, social networks, and service providers to expand workforce services and supports in LWDA 4.

In summary, SVWDB has set and communicated a workforce vision that is aligned with the Commonwealth's vision, that creates and maintains strategic partnerships at all levels to achieve the vision, and uses data to ensure system accountability to the vision. All the while, the SVWDB remains mindful of the need to continually improve processes. In the final analysis, the SVWDB measures success by how well the needs of businesses, job seekers, and incumbent workers are met.

5.11 Describe the process for getting input into the development of the local plan and providing public comment opportunity prior to submission. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan. If any comments received that represent disagreement with the plan were received, please include those comments here. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)]

The SVWDB will release the local plan for public comment and partner input pending a vote from the Board of Directors. The plan will be available on our website, vcwvalley.com, and input will be solicited via email to Board Members, Partners, etc. There will also be a press release requesting public review and comment shared on all social media outlets.

5.12 Describe professional staff development strategies, including:

- Process used to ensure staff receive continuous training in workforce development practices
- Methods to ensure effective use of the Virginia Workforce Connection system of record and to adhere to timely data entry requirements for WIOA services
- Process to measure staff performance and delivery of high-quality customer service
- Process to meet and maintain staff certification and Virginia Workforce Center certification as required by Virginia Board of Workforce Development Policy 300-06

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)]

The SVWDB is committed to hiring professional, highly educated and credentialed, passionate staff and works to ensure that staff are well trained in the provision of WIOA Title I services and committed to providing excellent customer service to job seekers and businesses. Staff development is a continual process that includes federal, state, and Board policy compliance, case management, customer service, use of the Virginia Workforce Connection, and federal and state data entry requirements. Training focuses on an informed and effective implementation of WIOA, Virginia Board for Workforce Development policies, Virginia Community College System Virginia Workforce Letters (VWL), and SVWDB policies. Training also includes, building partnerships to leverage resources, and continuous improvement of services.

Staff at every level of the workforce system receive training to provide highly professional service to customers. Staff are supported and encouraged to pursue certifications that support their area of work. Virginia Works, as well as platforms like WorkforceGPS, host regular virtual training seminars. Directors participate in training and take information back to staff, as well as train staff on any new processes and procedures. Center staff participate in training opportunities that directly relate to their everyday responsibility. All workforce partners and staff have the opportunity to become certified through the Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Academy, an initiative for Virginia workforce professionals to align education and training programs to make it easier for individuals to access and complete pathways to family-supporting wages.

To ensure effective use of the Virginia Workforce Connection system of record and to adhere to timely data entry requirements for WIOA services, Directors monitor case note entry, soft exit reports, and new enrollments on a regular basis (weekly/biweekly). Coaches are given the tools to pull reports and set up alerts within the system, to ensure no issues arise.

Job seekers complete customer service surveys as a measure of staff performance and delivery of high-quality customer service.

To ensure consistency the Program Director has produced several SOPS, including initial service delivery, tutoring, and assessment.

In addition we have recently produced an OJT manual and a WEX manual. These are designed to keep all the policy, procedures and forms in one convenient place for coaches to access and as a training manual for new staff.

Statement of Compliance, Plan Signatures, & Fiscal Agent Designation

We hereby certify that this local plan was developed in accordance with the State guidelines, and that local board activities will be conducted in accordance with this plan and the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, its attendant regulations and the applicable state laws and policies. We further certify that the plan was developed by the local workforce development board in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials, and with the benefit of an open and inclusive plan development process and the required 30-day public comment period.

Local Area Name / #	Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board, Inc. Local Workforce Development Area 4
Local Plan Point of Contact:	Sharon Johnson, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer
Address:	PO Box 869, Harrisonburg, VA 22803
Phone/e-mail:	540-442-7134 / sjohnson@vcwvalley.com

Randy Doyle, Chair, SVWDB Board of Directors	
Typed Name & Signature of WDB Chair	Date

Brian Shull, Chair, Harrisonburg Economic Development	
Typed Name & Signature of Chief Elected Official Consortium Chair	Date

The Chief Elected Official(s) designate(s) the following entity as the fiscal agent:

Entity: Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board

Contact: Sharon Johnson, Ph.D, Chief Executive Officer

Address: PO Box 869, Harrisonburg, VA, 22801

Phone/Email: 540-442-7134, sjohnson@vcwvalley.com

Local Plan Required Attachments

Please provide the links to the documents listed below in the boxes marked “Click here to enter text.” If such links are not available, please include copies of the documents with your submission. It is preferred to have all materials in a single document if practical.

1. Current Chief Elected Official Consortium Agreement: https://vcwvalley.com/wp-content/uploads/SVWDB-Chief-Elected-Officials-Consortium-Agreement_final-12.6.19.pdf
2. Current Chief Elected Official LWBD Agreement: N/A
3. Current LWBD organizational chart **Click here to enter text.**
 - a. Identify board oversight and program administration
4. Copies of executed cooperative agreements (i.e. MOUs) between the LWBD or other local entities and the local office of the Virginia agency/unit administering programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination
 - a. <https://vcwvalley.com/wp-content/uploads/Shenandoah-Valley-2.pdf>
 - b. Cooperative agreements as defined in WIOA section 107(d)(11)
 - c. Other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B))
5. LWDB Policies: provide the link to all policies on the LWDB website
 - a. <https://vcwvalley.com/about/public-documents/#policies>