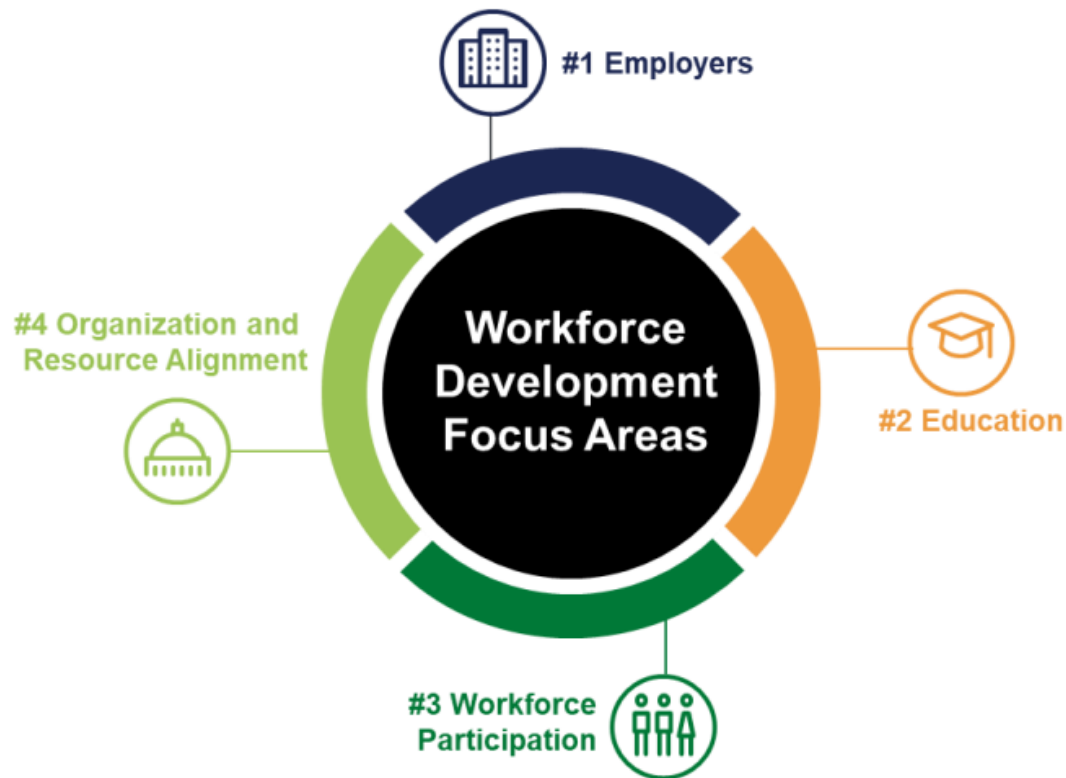


## **Committee: Workforce Participation and Sustainability**

### **(Strategic Plan: Goal #3)**



Chair: Dr. J.C. Gregory

KWIB Staff Contact: Elishah Taylor

#### **Connected Workgroups:**

1. Training and Communication
2. Opportunity Youth/Young Adults
3. Veterans & Transitioning Servicemembers

**GOAL #3: Increase Kentucky's workforce participation by creating opportunities, incenting workforce participation, and removing employment barriers for Kentuckians**

3a: Strengthen collaboration across workforce development, social services, employers and non-profits to address barriers to employment for individuals.

3b: Mitigate disincentives to work and explore ways to incentivize workforce participation for individuals currently receiving social services benefits in order to support their transition to sustainable employment.

3c: Embed programs serving specific populations across cabinets to promote workforce participation. Examples of priority populations include veterans, individuals with disabilities, re-entrants from the corrections system, individuals in recovery from substance abuse, young adults transitioning out of foster care and others.

3d: Develop and promote strategies for employers to address employment barriers.

3e: Develop and Pursue strategies that increase the number of Kentuckians, work-ready and free from the influence of substance abuse.

**Successful Deliverables:**

1. A significant increase in the statewide labor force participation rate, with Kentucky's labor force participation surpassing that of neighboring states
2. Elimination of as many precipitating factors as possible that cause workers to become discouraged and stop looking for work
3. A consistent focus on assisting those with barriers to employment, including correctional populations, individuals in foster care, individuals who have substance abuse issues and disabled individuals
4. Increased demand from employers to hire from priority populations, and those with barriers to employment
5. Established career coaching and guided assistance for youth in foster care prior to transitioning out of the system
6. Established systems to work with later-career individuals to support re-entry into the workforce through re-training and upskilling
7. Improved health statistics for Kentucky with established metrics for Healthy and Work Ready Communities initiatives

Full Strategic Plan can be viewed and downloaded here:

[https://kwib.ky.gov/About/Documents/KWIB\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_2020.pdf](https://kwib.ky.gov/About/Documents/KWIB_Strategic_Plan_2020.pdf)

## **Workgroup Goals**

### **In the short term, we will:**

- Develop a common level of understanding regarding the unique experiences of each priority population (individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, foster care, drug addicted, etc.) using the Work Matters Task Force
- Eliminate (as much as possible) disincentives to work (i.e., benefit cliff issues) that exist in public programs and policies
- Promote employer awareness of incentives to employ individuals with barriers to employment
- Apply best practices in identifying, addressing, and remediating drug abuse inside and outside of the workplace
- Establish a system where correctional facilities can access workforce system resources for exiting offenders
- Establish a partnership among Medicaid managed care providers and system resources to better serve populations in education, career, and health areas.

### **In the near term, we will:**

- Educate the employer community on the benefits of hiring individuals with barriers to employment, including longer retention and equal performance to those without barriers
- Establish employer resource networks to increase worker placement and retention
- Work with treatment providers and the recovery community to design policy and programs that harness the rehabilitative power of work for individuals impacted directly and indirectly by substance abuse
- Provide wrap-around services to further support customers on the road to self-sufficiency
- Integrate essential skills training and work placement services into drug rehabilitation and juvenile justice rehabilitation programs (regardless of conviction or circumstance)

### **In the long term, we plan to:**

- Lower the overall cost to hire and organizational risk to the employers to hire individuals who have barriers to employment
- Gauge impacts on workforce participation within all and especially affected priority populations and revise the theory of change practices