

Strategic Committee: Workforce Participation

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Strategic Goal: Workforce Participation

In order to meet the demands of the economy and businesses, workforce development must align the right person with the right knowledge, skills, and abilities and employment options. Workforce participation is a leading indicator that impacts the future Labor Force Participation Rate. Workforce participation represents the talent acquisition, development, and management processes which support the depth, skill, acumen, and flexibility of the workforce to meet the demands of emerging employment trends and priorities across the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, barrier mitigation and deployment of support services to promote employment sustainability and career advancement.

Priority #1: Addressing Barriers to Employment & Finding Solutions

Strategic Action: Workforce participation is critically connected to experience of job seekers and workers. Emphasis is placed on the individual as the “center-of-gravity” through the approach of understanding barriers for those unemployed, under-employed, and seeking employment opportunities.

Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics:

Immediate Measurement (within one year): Conducting focus groups of individuals that are unemployed, underemployed, and seeking employment. Written analysis will lead to the overarching themes in the barriers to employment from the individuals' perspective.

Mid-term Measurement (within two years): Analyze baseline data in the barriers to employment that are impacting all Kentuckians, such as: access to childcare, reliable transportation, and affordable housing. Data will reflect statewide and regional perspectives, with best practices gathered from successful approaches.

Long-term Measurement (within four years): Measure the growth of public-private partnerships that address the barriers of employment and the growth in the number of programs and individuals that have successfully increased access and opportunity to employment, while reducing barriers to employment.

Priority #2: Employment Best Practices, a Worker Perspective

Strategic Action: Leveraging information gathered in overcoming unemployment, under-employment, and career growth. Best practices will be used to grow career access and opportunities through the partnership between organizations that serve Kentuckians with barriers to employment and employers that have strategically embraced growth talent pipelines.

Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics:

Immediate Measurement (within one year): Development of case studies on overcoming unemployment, underemployment, and career growth, at least three per category.

Immediate Measurement (within one year): Development of case studies from organizations that serve individuals with barriers to employment. This includes gathering of participants, placements, wages, and retention data points to demonstrate value to potential employers.

Mid-term Measurement (within two years): Available statewide and regional supportive services established

that address barriers to employment.

Long-term Measurement (within four years): Growth in individuals attaining employment by the utilization of services, best practices, and stronger employer involvement. The baseline quantitative data will be measured against annual updates on labor force participation rate, in addition to, wages, placements, and retention.

Priority #3: Addressing Barriers to Hiring, a Business Perspective

Strategic Action: Critical to the workforce development formula is employer willingness to hire, train, and develop all potential talent. Having a constant pulse check on employer perspective in hiring, development, training, and skills required will be conducted.

Qualitative Metrics (with industry pulse check):

Immediate Measurement (within one year): Creation of a simple survey of industry associations (starting with Kentucky's top industries) to keep track of challenges and barriers to employment, training, and development, as well as gathering data on benefits and quality of job indicators.

Mid-term Measurement (within two years): Ongoing analysis of data points gathered that can be shared regularly with stakeholders.

Long-term Measurement (within four years): Ensuring a proper response to the information gathered from the regular pulse check is addressed among government and nongovernmental stakeholders that serve individuals with employment barriers.

Full Strategic Plan can be viewed and downloaded here:

https://kwib.ky.gov/Documents/KWIB%20Strategic%20Plan_2026-2029%20%28002%29.pdf