

**PY25-28**

**Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act**

**Local and Regional Plan**

**KentuckianaWorks**

**March 21, 2025**

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KentuckianaWorks Executive Summary

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**Local Workforce Development Area Name:** KentuckianaWorks

**Region Name:** KentuckianaWorks Bi-State Region

The responses received to questions addressed in each chapter, whether regional (R) or local (L). Answering regional questions necessitates the collaboration of LWDBs, CLEOs, and partners within the region to provide a unified regional response. The guidance for local and regional plans can be found here: [Guidance 21-007](#) released 1/1/2025. With the accompanying [Local and Regional Plans Toolkit](#) that provides statewide strategic objectives, programs, and initiatives that are referenced in the Combined WIOA State Plan.

## Chapter 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

A. **(R)** Provide a description of the planning process undertaken to produce the regional plan, including a description of how all local areas were afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process.

The planning process for the regional workforce plan was a collaborative, multi-step effort designed to ensure meaningful participation from all local areas within the region. Its primary goal was to align workforce strategies with current and projected labor market needs, while supporting the broader economic development goals of the region.

From the outset, both workforce boards—KentuckianaWorks and Southern Indiana Works—conducted a thorough assessment of workforce needs, demographic trends, and regional economic conditions. A wide range of stakeholders, including local employers, educational institutions, workforce professionals, and community-based organizations, were engaged throughout the process. These collaborative discussions were instrumental in identifying priority industries, critical skill gaps, and areas for improvement.

To guide planning decisions, data from labor market reports, unemployment trends, educational attainment levels, and employer surveys were analyzed. This evidence-based approach ensured strategies were grounded in real-time workforce and economic indicators.

A central component of the process was ensuring that each local area had the opportunity to contribute meaningfully. Local representatives participated in planning meetings, strategy sessions, and rounds of feedback. The draft regional plan—which addressed workforce training, skills development, employer engagement, and support for high-need sectors—was circulated to all partners for input. Their feedback was carefully considered and incorporated into the final version.

Further strengthening the plan, a six-month human-centered design process was conducted in 2024, involving the KentuckianaWorks Board of Directors, Southern Indiana Works, and local job seekers. This effort focused on identifying service delivery gaps using a framework that prioritized viability, feasibility, and desirability. Insights from this process informed the creation of a skeletal strategic roadmap aimed at connecting job seekers to the resources and services necessary for meaningful employment.

The finalized regional workforce plan was presented to stakeholders for approval, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each local area. Mechanisms for ongoing coordination and communication

were also established to support implementation, track progress, and make timely adjustments as needed.

B. (R) Provide a regional analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, as well as the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. This is in line with [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (1) (A)] and [20 CFR 679.560 (a)].

The Kentuckiana region, “region,” covers a 13-county footprint across Indiana and Kentucky, reflecting the coverage area for Southern Indiana Works and KentuckianaWorks (Clark, IN, Crawford, IN, Floyd, IN, Harrison, IN, Scott, IN, Washington, IN, Bullitt, KY, Henry, KY, Jefferson, KY, Oldham, KY, Shelby, KY, Spencer, KY, Trimble, KY). The region closely aligns with the Louisville/Jefferson County KY-IN metropolitan statistical area, “MSA,” the 43rd largest metro area in the country. Nearly 33,000 workers residing in the Southern Indiana Works coverage area are employed in the KentuckianaWorks coverage area; and 13,000 workers residing in the KentuckianaWorks coverage area are employed in the Southern Indiana Works coverage area. Large employment centers and industrial parks are located on both sides of the Ohio River.

The region hosts more than 700,000 jobs with a local Gross Domestic Product of more than \$97 billion. The median hourly wage in the MSA is \$22.30, just above the living wage for a single adult with no dependents, \$21.05.

The three largest industries in the region are: Health care and social assistance, Manufacturing, and Transportation and warehousing. This reflects the region’s historical economic footprint in manufacturing and logistics. Employment concentrations in these two industries are well above the national average. Healthcare is the region’s largest employer, but reflects an employment concentration on par with the size of the region’s economy. The region’s largest employers include UPS, Norton Healthcare, UofL Health, Ford Motor Company, Humana, Baptist Health, GE Appliances, and Amazon.

The three largest occupations in the region are laborers and hand freight, stock, and material movers, miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators, and registered nurses. Collectively, these three occupations account for 10% of the region’s workforce. These occupations again reflect the importance of the region’s largest sectors. Logistics and manufacturing employ large numbers of entry-level workers as material movers and team assemblers. These positions typically have a low barrier to entry, as they do not require a college degree or much work experience. However, the pay reflects that, with entry-level wages below the region’s living wage. Meanwhile, registered nurses do typically require a degree, but also provide earnings well above the living wage.

In addition to the region’s three largest sectors, there is also demand for workers in construction, business, information technology, and education. Collectively, these groups account for the region’s priority sectors. This is in alignment with the in-demand sectors recognized by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB).

After losing more than 100,000 jobs during the COVID-19 recession, the MSA regained its payrolled employment levels in the third quarter of 2022. The region has continued to add jobs to the payrolls, and currently has employment levels 3% above its pre-pandemic level.

Even though the MSA recovered the total level of payrolled employment lost during the pandemic recession, there are sectors whose employment levels are above and beyond their pre-pandemic levels, while other sectors' employment levels have yet to fully rebound. Specifically, employment levels in Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities are nearly 15% greater than their pre-pandemic employment levels. Construction, Mining, & Logging as well as Health Services & Private Education have also experienced strong employment growth in the last four years. Meanwhile, employment in Manufacturing, Government (including public education), and Leisure & Hospitality are still below their pre-pandemic employment levels. The recovery in the logistics sector has been particularly remarkable, and moved that sector into the ranking of the region's third largest employer.

Demand for healthcare workers is projected to grow the fastest over the next decade. As the population continues to age, demand for healthcare services continues to grow. Moreover, these positions are not well suited for technological substitution. Nursing and other allied healthcare positions such as radiologic technicians, respiratory therapists, and surgical technicians, do typically require formal education and certification. However, many positions are attainable with a two-year degree or less and provide attractive wages.

After healthcare, demand for IT and STEM workers is projected to grow the fastest over the next decade. The continued integration of advanced technology and machinery into workflows will continue to stimulate demand for IT and STEM workers. This field is changing quickly, and workers will need to embrace a mindset of lifelong learning to keep pace with new technologies. However, many IT positions are available to workers who do not necessarily have a college degree but can demonstrate skill expertise. Even the lowest paid IT professionals typically earn a living wage.

Jobs in business, transportation/logistics, and manufacturing have the largest projected job openings in the next 10 years, accounting for both job growth and replacement needs. These occupations employ the largest number of current workers, so demand for workers in these fields is high. Entry-level positions in these fields are plentiful, but wages are not always high enough to provide economic self-sufficiency.

The region also has a demand for construction workers as new buildings, roads, houses, and other structures are needed to keep pace with the region's growth. The region also secured a number of infrastructure awards from recent federal funding. Demand also stems from the need to replace an aging workforce -- nearly one in four of the region's construction workers are ages 55 and older. Jobs in the construction trades are attractive positions. They generally do not require a college degree, provide a living wage, and score well on other indicators of job quality including scheduling, benefits, on-the-job training, and union coverage.

Kentucky has been selected as the site of several large new and expanded manufacturing facilities centered around the production of electric vehicles (EVs) and batteries including Shelbyville Battery Manufacturing in Shelby County and BlueOval SK in Hardin County, just south of the region. These announcements are expected to create nearly 7,000 new jobs in Kentucky's manufacturing sector.

The EV-related workforce is similar to that of traditional transportation equipment manufacturing, which already includes high levels of advanced technology. Indeed, manufacturing is the state's fastest adopter of advanced technologies such as robotics, machine learning, machine vision software, and RFI inventory systems. Occupations central to EV-related production include team assemblers, machine

operators, industrial mechanics, material movers, engineers, and engineering technicians. Many of these occupations pay a living wage.

There is also a need for workers in education, including early childhood education. The KWIB added education to its list of in-demand sectors in 2024. Mayor Craig Greenberg has also identified early childhood education as one of his administration's top priorities. High quality child care produces a significant return on investment, with benefits accruing to the child, parent, and taxpayers. Caregiving is the number one cited reason prime working age Kentuckians provide as their reason for not participating in the labor force. Wages in early childhood education are notoriously low, so providing pathway opportunities is essential.

Sources:

Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW, OEWS, CES (2023)  
 Bureau of Economic Analysis (2022)  
 Lightcast 2024.3  
 MIT Living Wage Calculator (2024)  
 Louisville Business First, Louisville's Largest Employers (2022)  
 Biu et al., Job Quality and Race and Gender Equity, Urban Institute (2023)  
 US Census Bureau, Annual Business Survey (2018)  
 Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development  
 Kentucky Center for Economic Policy

C. (R) Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data and 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)] and [CFR 679.560(a)]

The region's labor force was made up of nearly 673,000 workers in 2024. The average size of the labor force was about 1% smaller than it was the year before the pandemic. This amounts to more than 6,000 workers who have not reentered the labor force in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is at least partially due to the age distribution of the region, which skews older. Other barriers to employment include access to reliable and affordable child care, reliable transportation, record of court involvement, and housing insecurity.

The unemployment rate averaged 4.4% in 2024. This is higher than the unemployment rate experienced in 2023, which averaged 3.7%. The region's economy is showing other signs of slowing. The volume of online job postings was 28% lower in 2024 over 2022. Monthly payrolled employment is still growing, but at a slower rate.

Among the region's working-age population ages 25 to 64, 43% hold an Associate's degree or higher, and a third have a Bachelor's degree or higher. But this is lower than the national average, where 45% of working-age adults have at least an Associate's degree and 36% hold a Bachelor's. Educational attainment rates vary across the region's counties, ranging from 20% to 58% among working-age adults with an Associate's or higher. The outlying, rural counties have much lower levels of educational attainment, while suburban and urban counties have higher rates.

Despite having overall lower labor force participation rates, women are slightly overrepresented among the region's college degree holders. The region's Black population is severely underrepresented among the region's college degree holders. Just 1-in-5 of the region's Black adults hold a Bachelor's degree while 1-in-3 of the region's white adults do.

A large number of youth and young adults (ages 16 to 24) in the region are not working and not in school. Roughly 1-in-8 of young people were disconnected from work and school in 2023, more than 17,500 young adults. The region's Black youth and young adults are especially at risk of being disconnected from work and school. The youth disconnection rate among the region's Black youth is triple what it is among its white young adults.

Sources:

Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS (2024)  
Lightcast  
Census Bureau, ACS (2023)

D. (R) Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training in the region. This will include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and the capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment and the employment needs of employers in the region.

**Note:** *Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).*

KentuckianaWorks continuously evaluates and adjusts its customer service flow for adults and dislocated workers to align with federal WIOA regulations, Kentucky state policies, regional labor market trends, available resources, and evolving best practices. This adaptive process ensures that services remain responsive, equitable, and mission-driven across the multi-county service area. The organization's values-driven, human-centered approach places both jobseekers and employers at the center of its workforce strategies.

Professional career specialists and business services staff work in tandem through a highly coordinated service model that begins at the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) sites and extends into the broader community through deep partnerships. Jobseekers—including dislocated workers, the underemployed, and those facing significant barriers to employment—are welcomed, assessed, empowered, upskilled, placed, and supported throughout their career journey. Simultaneously, KentuckianaWorks' business services team builds relationships with employers to gather workforce intelligence, address hiring challenges, and co-design sector-specific talent solutions.

Workforce development activities are embedded in a structured service flow that includes enrollment, career coaching, case management, individualized training plans, supportive services, and job placement. KentuckianaWorks also actively participates in RESEA classes, offering weekly sessions in collaboration with the Kentucky Career Development Office, which oversees unemployment insurance services.

## Specialized Programming and Service Delivery

KentuckianaWorks supports a wide array of specialized programs to meet the diverse needs of its adult and dislocated worker populations. These include:

- **Rapid Response Services:** When a local employer experiences a mass layoff or closure—often identified through WARN Act notifications—the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator (LARRC) from the KCC coordinates with the statewide Rapid Response team to conduct onsite or virtual sessions. These sessions provide immediate access to WIOA-funded services, information on UI, and direct referrals to partner agencies like OVR and the Department of Labor. Additionally, the KentuckianaWorks Director of Sector Strategies may organize customized job fairs to match affected workers with open positions in their field, creating an opportunity for continued employment rather than a transition to UI.
- **Veteran Services, RESEA, and Priority Populations:** Veteran services, re-employment assistance (RESEA), and targeted support for priority populations are embedded within the customer service flow. These services are supported by coordinated staffing and training models across KCC sites.
- **Customized Hiring and Business Services:** KentuckianaWorks' business services team helps employers design customized recruitment efforts, including on-site and virtual job fairs, pre-screening services, and labor market analysis. The team also conducts regional talent surveys, delivers employer-focused training on workforce trends, and supports economic development through sector partnerships.

## Strengths

- Highly professional and mission-aligned staff, supported by regular professional development and a proactive, people-first leadership culture.
- A consistent, values-based service delivery model that is technology-enabled and performance-driven.
- Deep integration with local partners, including education, economic development, and community-based organizations, to extend service reach and impact.
- Proven adaptability through innovative approaches like virtual service delivery, blended service models, and the creation of user-centered tools.
- Clear internal standards for staff recruitment and performance, which support high-quality service delivery across locations.
- Flexibility in service delivery post-COVID, with customers now able to access support virtually, in-person, or through hybrid methods, reflecting current expectations for individualized and accessible workforce services.

## Weaknesses

- Limited ability to serve individuals living in rural and impoverished urban areas, where infrastructure challenges such as lack of internet access, limited public transportation, and scarce community resources can restrict access to workforce services.
- Ongoing budget constraints and rising site-related overhead costs continue to challenge the sustainability of service access and staffing at the local level, requiring continued innovation and prioritization.

### Capacity Adjustments and Continuous Improvement

To retain consistent and equitable service access across all counties, KentuckianaWorks is implementing several targeted adjustments. These include:

- Strategically aligning staffing models to support high-traffic locations while maintaining service availability in lower-density counties through rotating or shared staff.
- Leveraging community-based access points (e.g., libraries, schools, and partner agencies) to deliver workforce services closer to where people live.
- Strengthening the use of virtual platforms for case management, enrollment, and training in response to increased customer preference for flexibility and digital access.
- Conducting internal data reviews and staff feedback sessions to continuously refine the service flow and address emerging needs.

These efforts are further supported by the WIOA-based one-stop partner network and regional management teams that prioritize continuous improvement, shared accountability, and innovation. Through coordinated systems and community engagement, KentuckianaWorks ensures that adult and dislocated worker services are responsive, inclusive, and aligned with the region’s evolving economic landscape.

E. *(L) Provide an 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)] and [20 CFR 679.560(a)]*

In 2024, the region had nearly 165,000 online job postings from more than 12,000 employers. Analysis of these postings reveals important insights into the knowledge, skills, and qualifications required to meet employer needs in the local area.

Among these job postings, 46% have no education requirement listed, while another 40% mention an Associate’s degree or higher. There is strong demand for both “degreed” and “non-degreed” workers in the region. Many entry-level positions in logistics, manufacturing, and customer service do not require education beyond high school. Meanwhile, jobs in healthcare and professional and technical services do typically require postsecondary training.

The majority of online job postings do not list a requirement for experience (57%), while another quarter seek minimal experience of at least 2 years. This allows people without much work experience to gain employment, particularly in sectors like logistics and hospitality.

The importance of soft skills to employers is evident in the job postings data. The top requested skills in the region's job postings last year included communication, initiative and leadership, and customer service. While specific and technical skills are also reported, employers are also clearly articulating the need for workers with strong interpersonal skills.

The data also highlights the most in-demand specialized skills across the region's priority sectors:

- Business Services: Accounting, auditing, invoicing, project management, data entry
- Construction: HVAC, plumbing, project management, use of hand tools, roofing
- Healthcare: Nursing, medical records management, direct patient care, vital signs monitoring, electronic medical records (EMRs)
- Information Technology: SQL, Agile methodology, automation, data analysis, technical support
- Manufacturing: Forklift operation, process improvement, machinery repair, and new product development
- Transportation & Logistics: Warehousing, truck driving, forklift operation, inventory management, warehouse management systems (WMS)

These findings help guide workforce development strategies to ensure alignment with employer expectations and industry standards. It highlights the importance of soft skills workshops, and underscores the need to expand access to training programs that build technical and analytical skills.

Source: Lightcast, 2024

## Chapter 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

A. (L) Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals aimed at fostering regional economic growth and self-sufficiency. Explain plans to prepare an educated and skilled workforce, especially for youth and individuals facing barriers to employment. As applicable, include a description of any plans to generate a new strategic vision and goals in the coming year and indicate the timeframe for such activities to occur. To the extent possible, strengthen goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

KentuckianaWorks strategic vision and goals can be found on the website

<https://www.kentuckianaworks.org/2024>

B. (L) Describe how the local board's vision and goals are intricately aligned with the Commonwealth's goals, initiatives, and priorities as outlined in the WIOA State Plan. This alignment is crucial in ensuring the success of the collective efforts.

The vision and goals of the KentuckianaWorks Board align closely with those outlined in the Commonwealth's State Plan. The Commonwealth's emphasis on operations and operational excellence is clearly reflected in the priorities set by the KentuckianaWorks Board.

C. (L) Describe how the local board’s vision and goals are considered and provide an analysis of the strategies for working with the required partners and other entities to carry out the core programs and align resources.

KentuckianaWorks' vision and goals are focused on building a thriving, equitable, and sustainable workforce that meets the evolving needs of both employers and job seekers in the region. Their vision emphasizes creating pathways for economic mobility, reducing disparities in workforce participation, and supporting individuals at every stage of their career development.

The KentuckianaWorks Board’s goals are in alignment with the Commonwealth’s State Plan, ensuring that the region’s workforce development efforts are cohesive and strategic. The Board prioritizes operational excellence, education and workforce alignment, and engagement, particularly focusing on racial equity and resource alignment to achieve long-term, meaningful outcomes for local communities.

Strategies for Working with Required Partners and Other Entities:

**Collaboration with Key Partners:** KentuckianaWorks employs a highly collaborative approach in working with required partners, including local workforce development boards, educational institutions, community organizations, employers, and other stakeholders. These partnerships help ensure that the region’s workforce development strategies are comprehensive, responsive, and aligned with the needs of both job seekers and businesses. Regular meetings, joint projects, and shared initiatives strengthen coordination and communication across the region.

**Alignment of Core Programs:** KentuckianaWorks works to align the core programs funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) with the needs of the local economy and workforce. This includes ensuring that workforce development programs, such as training, job placement services, and career counseling, are tailored to the industries with the highest demand for talent. Close partnerships with local educational institutions help bridge the gap between training and employment, ensuring that educational programs meet employer needs and equip individuals with the skills required in the job market.

**Resource Alignment and Braided Funding:** KentuckianaWorks strategically aligns resources to maximize impact, incorporating both federal and state funding such as WIOA, alongside additional resources from local governments, private sector employers, and philanthropic organizations. A key strategy in this alignment is the use of braided funding, which combines WIOA funds with other non-WIOA funding sources to create a more flexible and robust funding structure. By integrating diverse funding streams, KentuckianaWorks is able to enhance program offerings, improve service delivery, and ensure the sustainability of workforce development initiatives. This approach ensures that funding is not just additive but creates a stronger, more cohesive support system for participants.

**Engaging Diverse Stakeholders:** KentuckianaWorks makes a concerted effort to engage a wide range of stakeholders in the workforce development process, including historically underrepresented communities. Their commitment to advancing racial equity ensures that outreach efforts are inclusive and that services are designed to meet the needs of all individuals, particularly those facing barriers to employment. This commitment is reflected in their strategies for outreach, engagement, and

partnership-building, which involve tailoring communication and program delivery to serve diverse populations effectively.

**Continuous Feedback and Evaluation:** KentuckianaWorks actively seeks input from its partners and other entities to ensure that programs remain relevant and effective. Regular evaluations, stakeholder surveys, and feedback sessions help inform adjustments to programming and resource allocation, allowing KentuckianaWorks to adapt to changing workforce trends and emerging needs. This continuous feedback loop helps the organization remain agile and responsive to local challenges and opportunities.

## Chapter 3: Alignment of Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

A. (L) Describe the local board’s strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment and provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E); H. R. 803—442.1. This discussion should include a descriptive overview of the local workforce development system, including key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another.

**Note:** WIOA identified six core programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Programs, and Vocational Rehabilitation. The elected partner plan programs are Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers, Jobs for Veterans State Grants, and Unemployment Insurance.

KentuckianaWorks works with both core and non-core partners to carry out the mission of WIOA and the local and state strategic plans. The Board prioritizes its time and attention on partnerships that are likely to produce better outcomes. Currently, that means the following partnerships:

### 1. Adult Education

KentuckianaWorks partners with Adult Education in several ways across our seven-county region. They are co-located in two of our core programs locations. For the Adult and Dislocated Worker program, Adult Ed is onsite at the comprehensive center two days a week and offers GED classes using the Center’s training room. For the WIOA Youth program, locally known as The Spot, Adult Ed is co-located at the Jefferson County location. Adult Ed provides customers with Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessments, remediation opportunities, and GED instruction where needed. Additionally, The SPOT locations in the six surrounding counties have a strong relationship with Adult Ed through referrals.

### 2. Career Development Office (CDO)

KentuckianaWorks opened a new comprehensive center located in the historic West Louisville inside the West Louisville Goodwill Opportunity Campus. CDO has one person co-located onsite at the comprehensive center providing service to customers three days a week.

### **3. Community Services**

Both the adult and youth WIOA programs partner with the Community Action Agencies to share resources with customers. In fact, the Youth WIOA Program, The Spot, is located inside the HOPE Center in Henry County, which is operated by the Tri County Community Action Partnership. In addition, the One Stop Operator (OSO) shares community resources to a list of 400 people and partners. Also, KentuckianaWorks has a partnership with the Urban Seniors Job Program, which is the seniors community employment program operated locally by the Louisville Urban League.

### **4. County Government**

KentuckianaWorks has benefited from the support of the local government. Louisville Metro Government provides the primary funding for multiple workforce development programs either run or overseen by KentuckianaWorks. These include our youth summer jobs program (SummerWorks), our tech training initiative (Code Louisville), our adult college access services (KentuckianaWorks College Access Center, or KCAC), our adult reentry program (Reentry Works), and our young adult program (The Spot:Young Adult Opportunity Center). County Judge-Executives provide support for our efforts in their counties as well. Until recently, Shelby County provided a \$1 a year rent fee to host our Shelby County Kentucky Career Center location. Bullitt County provided a similar arrangement for a Kentucky Career Center location in that county until last year, when the Center was closed.

### **5. Job Corps**

KentuckianaWorks ensures Job Corps is invited and has a seat at the table for conversations to share resources and provide a referral platform for young adults. Due to the recent closure of the main Job Corps center in our region, the Carl D Perkins location has stepped into our region to avoid a gap in services. They are currently connected to the Kentucky Career Center in West Louisville and we're working on enhancing the partnership for the Jefferson County location with The Spot. The Spot in the regional counties has referred several students to Job Corps for occupational training and considers them an excellent resource for training their participants.

### **6. Public Housing**

KentuckianaWorks has a long history of partnering with the Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA). The organization is an active MOU partner who participates in the quarterly MOU partners meetings. In addition, referring customers using our regional referral system. LMHA also provides housing vouchers to participants of our training programs, in particular, the Reentry Works program.

### **7. Vocational Rehabilitation**

Our local vocational rehabilitation office is an active partner within our region. They are currently co-located in our comprehensive center five days a week. The regional leader is a member of the KentuckianaWorks Program Oversight Committee (POC) and Board. KentuckianaWorks also works with Retain Kentucky, an active referral source for our customers.

The key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery:

- 1. Elected officials.** The KentuckianaWorks region has formed a Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Governing Board comprised of the Mayor of Louisville Metro Government and the County Judge Executives of Bullitt, Henry, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, and Trimble Counties.
- 2. Local workforce development board and committee structure.** The KentuckianaWorks Board meets regularly to discuss the vision, mission, and strategic goals of the Board and to decide how to execute them. The Board typically meets 8-10 times a year for 90 minutes, with organized agendas set in advance by the Executive Director in consultation with the Office of the Chair (the current Board Chair, the incoming Chair, and the past Chair). The Board's priorities are communicated to the staff, who work daily to deliver results on these priorities and strategic goals. The Board also has a Program Oversight Committee, which meets approximately eight times yearly. As its name implies, this Committee dives into the details of individual programs, monitoring progress against goals, offering suggestions for improvements, and, where needed, advising the Board when a change in contractor or a shift in programmatic design may be called for. Finally, the Board forms additional committees as needed and lends its presence to other essential community endeavors focused on raising education and skill levels across our region.
- 3. Fiscal agent.** The CLEO Governing Board selected KentuckianaWorks as the fiscal agent after a competitive bid process in 2015. The CLEO Governing Board has renewed this selection of KentuckianaWorks as the fiscal agent multiple times since 2015, most recently in the Chief Local Elected Officials Fiscal Agent Agreement for Jefferson, Bullitt, Henry, Oldham, Spencer, Shelby, and Trimble Counties, Kentucky, which is effective from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2025. The CLEO Governing Board has made this selection in large part because the KentuckianaWorks staff has a long and proud history of strong financial management and oversight. Since 2002, the Board and staff have managed over \$250 million with no disallowed costs or significant audit findings. The most recent clean audit was recently received and approved by the KentuckianaWorks Board in February 2025 and will be shared with the CLEO Governing Board at their next annual meeting as well. It can be made available upon request.
- 4. Operator(s).** The One Stop Operator contract has been competitively procured three times. KentuckianaWorks worked through Louisville Metro Government Purchasing each time to ensure a fair and competitive process. Equus Workforce Solutions currently holds the contract. The KentuckianaWorks Board has approved an approach to implementation of the One Stop Operator contract that emphasizes 1) coordination and collaboration among the MOU partners, 2) building a robust referral system, 3) providing professional development to all MOU partners, and 4) ensuring excellent customer services and continuous improvement in the career centers. The One Stop Operator does not manage the centers in the KentuckianaWorks region.
- 5. Required program partners.** Under the direction of the KentuckianaWorks Board, KentuckianaWorks expects to continue to be engaged with our program partners to work together to enhance a service delivery strategy that maximizes resources while providing a high level of customer service to all who seek our help. The One Stop Operator is key to this mission, which is supported through quarterly MOU partner meetings and ongoing career center certifications.
- 6. Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program Contractors.** All contractors were competitively procured. Eckerd Connects is the current WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker career services provider. Goodwill Industries of Kentucky is the current WIOA Youth Services provider. Both contractors provide

career services at physical locations in Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Goodwill also has smaller office locations in Henry and Bullitt counties. In addition to in-person services, both providers offer an array of mobile and virtual career and business service options, such as training, workshops, job fairs, and career coach meetings, throughout the regional counties.

B. (L) Describe how the LWDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. This includes a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification and is portable and stackable. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

It is difficult to “expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals” when KentuckianaWorks’ federal funding has shrunk by a third in nominal terms, and more in real terms, since 2017. That being said, the Board has worked diligently to expand access to career pathways opportunities and to activities that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential in a number of ways, including:

- Using WIOA funding to provide a construction training program called Kentuckiana Builds, which is run by the Louisville Urban League (they were selected in a competitive bid process). The participants in this 6-week program receive multiple credentials, including the NCCER, OSHA-10 and CPR certifications;
- Utilizing our Director of Labor Market Intelligence to update, yearly, the Targeted Occupations List, and allowing WIOA customers to utilize Individual Training Account (ITA) funding only when they are pursuing training that will lead to an occupation on that Targeted Occupations List;
- Raising outside funding to build out a 7-person team focused exclusively on 15 Louisville-area high schools which have totally redesigned around the Career Academy model. This work has led to a huge increase in the percentage of students who are graduating “postsecondary ready” according to the definition provided by the Kentucky Department of Education, which includes the earning of industry-recognized credential while still in high school;
- Relocating our comprehensive Kentucky Career Center to the Norton Healthcare Goodwill West Louisville Opportunity Campus, a brand new, \$50 million, state-of-the-art building with numerous service providers on site and a commitment from all involved to partner for the benefit of anyone who walks through the door of the Center;
- Securing funding from both Louisville Metro Government and the Kentucky Legislature that has allowed us to expand the number of young adults who are served through our program called The Spot far beyond the tiny number that could be served through WIOA funding alone.

Together with our core partners, we will continue to explore and develop ways to expand services, ensuring that these opportunities grow as funding and staffing levels allow.

C. (L) Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that will be used to:

1. Meet the needs and facilitate the engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs and targeted sector strategies.

KentuckianaWorks is committed to meeting the needs of regional employers by building their awareness of diverse talent pools and providing practical guidance on effective hiring, upskilling, and retention strategies. As the region’s population grows increasingly diverse, KentuckianaWorks supports local employers in becoming magnets for underrepresented talent—including African-American and foreign-born workers, two groups that have historically been underemployed.

To reduce vacancy rates and connect employers with qualified candidates, KentuckianaWorks gathers real-time intelligence from regional businesses about evolving skill needs and hiring challenges. In response, we develop targeted initiatives that include:

- **Onsite upskilling classes** for incumbent workers, supervisors, and managers.
- **Development of I-BEST-style training programs and apprenticeship pathways**, helping build pipelines into high-growth industries where underrepresented groups can thrive.
- **A new employer resource library** offering self-paced guidance on inclusive hiring practices and accessing overlooked talent pools.

To further expand employer access to the workforce system, KentuckianaWorks will maintain key engagement channels, including individual business outreach, mass electronic communication, and learning-oriented group events. These learning sessions and workshops provide practical information on recruitment, training partnerships, labor market trends, and financial incentives such as tax credits.

A **dedicated business-facing staff**—both directly funded and through our contracted providers—will continue to serve as a bridge between the workforce system and employers. These staffers moderate in-person and virtual events, assist with job postings and recruitment, and connect businesses with resources such as incumbent worker training offered through partners like **Jefferson Community and Technical College**, which receives state funds specifically for this purpose.

We also contract with **trusted business intermediaries**, including Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI), the Oldham County Chamber, the Bullitt County Chamber, and the Shelby County Industrial Foundation. These organizations help employers better understand how to leverage the public workforce system to address their hiring and talent development needs.

### **Strategic Programs Supporting Employer Engagement and Talent Development**

Despite facing significant funding reductions—more than one-third in nominal WIOA allocations since 2017—KentuckianaWorks has proactively implemented WIOA Section 108(b)(4)(A) and (B) strategies to support employers and build a stronger workforce system:

- **Kentuckiana Builds:** A WIOA-funded, pre-apprenticeship construction training program operated by the Louisville Urban League. Participants earn credentials like NCCER, OSHA-10, and CPR and are often placed directly into union apprenticeships or entry-level skilled trades jobs.
- **Data-Driven ITAs:** The annually updated Targeted Occupations List, created by our Director of Labor Market Intelligence, ensures ITA funding is directed toward high-demand, high-wage career paths in priority sectors.
- **Career Academy Transformation:** Through philanthropic support and legislative investment, KentuckianaWorks embedded a team in 15 local high schools to develop career pathways,

expand work-based learning, and boost credential attainment among students—improving their postsecondary readiness.

- **Strategic Co-location at the West Louisville Opportunity Campus:** Relocating our comprehensive Career Center to this \$50 million facility has increased access to apprenticeship, customized training, and career navigation services.
- **Expansion of Youth Services through *The Spot*:** By securing funding from Louisville Metro Government and the Kentucky Legislature, KentuckianaWorks expanded young adult access to job training, educational advancement, and wraparound supports well beyond what WIOA funding allows.

2. Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

While it is increasingly challenging to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services—given that KentuckianaWorks’ federal funding has declined by more than one-third in nominal terms since 2017 (and even more when adjusted for inflation)—the Board has taken significant, proactive steps to implement the strategies outlined in WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B). These strategies are designed to ensure that the local workforce system continues to meet the evolving needs of local businesses, jobseekers, and the broader regional economy.

To support a workforce development system that is responsive, inclusive, and business-informed, KentuckianaWorks requires its service providers to maintain a high level of regulatory expertise and to demonstrate a strong value proposition for workforce services. These providers are expected to maintain high-quality, human-centered interactions with employer customers, grounded in a deep understanding of specific industries and workforce concerns. This approach fosters the co-creation of workforce solutions and ensures that even when multiple programs are engaged, the experience for the employer is unified and well-coordinated.

### **Business-Facing Strategy and Engagement Tools**

A key tool used to support this work is **regular business service coordination calls**, which bring together business-facing staff across KentuckianaWorks’ provider network and regional partners. These calls are designed to align front-line service activities with KentuckianaWorks’ strategic priorities and to create a space for knowledge-sharing, problem-solving, and collaboration across employer-facing teams.

Additional tools and objectives that guide our business service strategy include:

- **Providing high-quality employer services**, including job matching, real-time labor market and demographic data, and customized recruitment assistance.
- **Sharing sector-specific insights** with KentuckianaWorks’ industry-aligned team members to inform training and program design.
- **Identifying work-based learning opportunities** to connect employers with talent from jobseeker-serving programs, particularly those working with individuals facing employment barriers.

- **Coordinating with economic development agencies** across our seven-county service area and Southern Indiana. These ongoing relationships, along with regular updates to our **Targeted Occupations List**, ensure that training investments are tightly aligned with in-demand local jobs.

### Employer Services in Action: Key Initiatives

KentuckianaWorks has deployed a range of programs and strategies that reflect our commitment to supporting employer needs while strengthening the workforce system, including:

- **Kentuckiana Builds:** A WIOA-funded, six-week pre-apprenticeship construction training program operated by the Louisville Urban League. Participants earn NCCER, OSHA-10, and CPR certifications and are often placed directly into union apprenticeships or entry-level trades roles.
- **Data-Driven Individual Training Accounts (ITAs):** Guided by our annually updated Targeted Occupations List, ITA funding is prioritized for careers in high-demand, high-wage industries that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials.
- **Career Academies and Work-Based Learning in High Schools:** Through philanthropic and legislative funding, KentuckianaWorks supports a team embedded in 15 high schools to develop career pathways, expand credential attainment, and increase postsecondary readiness.
- **Strategic Co-location at the West Louisville Opportunity Campus:** Housing our comprehensive Career Center within this \$50 million integrated facility improves access to career navigation, apprenticeships, and customized training.
- **Expansion of Young Adult Services through The Spot:** With local and state funds supplementing WIOA resources, KentuckianaWorks has significantly expanded The Spot's capacity to provide career coaching, training, and wraparound supports for youth and young adults.
- **Use of Business Intermediaries:** KentuckianaWorks contracts with regional organizations like Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI), the Oldham County Chamber, the Bullitt County Chamber, and the Shelby County Industrial Foundation to serve as trusted intermediaries helping employers access workforce system resources and talent solutions.
- **Incumbent Worker Training:** KentuckianaWorks helps employers upskill existing workers by connecting them to our partner, **Jefferson Community and Technical College**, which has a dedicated funding stream from the State Legislature for incumbent worker training.

### Sustaining Innovation Through Partnership

KentuckianaWorks' ability to adapt and innovate—despite federal funding reductions—has been made possible through a combination of strategic partnerships, leveraged external funding, and data-informed planning. In collaboration with core and community stakeholders, we remain committed to refining and expanding employer services that strengthen the regional economy and ensure jobseekers can access meaningful, high-quality employment pathways.

4. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

KentuckianaWorks collaborates with State Wagner-Peyser staff by having them co-located at the comprehensive center. Our adult and dislocated worker service provider, Eckerd Connects, participates in RESEA sessions to offer support and resources to Unemployment Insurance (UI) participants. Additionally, Eckerd Connects conducts workshops for UI participants when they are referred.

5. Increase competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

The regional workforce development plan integrates a multi-faceted approach to increasing competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. These strategies are grounded in accessibility, staff training, cross-agency collaboration, and continuous service improvement. Specific strategies and services across the required categories are outlined below:

### **1. Service Accessibility and Assistive Technology**

Kentucky Career Centers (KCCs) are designed to be inclusive and accessible for individuals with disabilities. Each center offers a range of assistive technologies and tools to support individuals with vision, hearing, or interaction needs. These include accessible computer stations, keyboards for the visually impaired, and height-adjustable desks for wheelchair users. The GWOC-West campus is also fully ADA-compliant, offering accessible restrooms, parking, and elevator access.

Additionally, an accessible workstation has been installed at the Kentucky Career Center on Broadway to ensure individuals with disabilities can access digital resources and services independently. These investments in infrastructure help eliminate barriers and support full participation in workforce services.

### **2. Staff Training and Professional Development**

To ensure that staff are equipped to support individuals with disabilities, multiple Professional Development trainings have been delivered with a specific focus on disability awareness. These sessions are tailored for Workforce System staff and are designed to:

- Build awareness of various types of disabilities.
- Enhance understanding of disability rights and accommodations.
- Introduce staff to assistive technologies.
- Provide tools and communication strategies for effective service delivery.

The most recent disability-focused Professional Development training, held on March 26, 2025, emphasized connecting participants with appropriate community resources, including services that support their transition into the workforce. All staff also received training on Assistive Technology on December 18, 2024.

### **3. Partnership with the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)**

A core component of the strategy is the partnership with the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), which is co-located within the Kentucky Career Center on Broadway. This

integrated service model enables individuals with disabilities to receive OVR support directly on site, facilitating smoother referrals and coordinated service delivery. The co-location strengthens communication between workforce and rehabilitation professionals, increases access to specialized services, and ensures customers receive tailored employment planning and support.

Through this partnership, individuals benefit from:

- Coordinated case management.
- Access to customized employment services.
- Job coaching and supported employment resources.
- Employer engagement efforts aligned with individual needs.

#### **4. Community Engagement and Continuous Improvement**

In 2024, a six-month collaborative effort was launched between the KentuckianaWorks Board of Directors, Southern Indiana Works, and regional job seekers to identify and close service delivery gaps. This initiative utilized a human-centered design approach to assess the viability, feasibility, and desirability of current services. The findings were used to develop a skeletal strategic roadmap aimed at improving accessibility, aligning services with customer needs, and enhancing employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Further, the workforce system conducts regular customer satisfaction surveys to gather direct feedback from individuals with disabilities. This feedback loop ensures that the system remains responsive, inclusive, and continuously improves service delivery.

#### **5. Cross-Sector Partnerships**

To expand reach and effectiveness, the OSO has also partnered with Kitty Zachery, Executive Director of the Coalition for Workforce, to identify additional community-based resources, raise awareness about available services, and enhance support networks for individuals with disabilities. This partnership strengthens the system's ability to deliver holistic, wraparound services.

Through intentional investments in accessibility, professional development, strategic partnerships (particularly with OVR), and user-centered design, the region is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities have meaningful, equitable access to competitive, integrated employment. These efforts align with federal workforce priorities and reinforce the region's dedication to inclusive economic participation.

D. (L) Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

While it's true that the majority of our programmatic efforts are not centered on entrepreneurial skills or microenterprise services, we do engage with economic development entities, the Chamber, and other partners in a number of meaningful ways.

KentuckianaWorks collaborates actively with city, county, and regional Economic Development Organizations to support business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts across the region. These partnerships allow us to provide meaningful services to both new and existing businesses, including labor market intelligence, talent recruitment strategies, and guidance on job quality improvements. The KentuckianaWorks Board includes representatives from these economic development organizations, ensuring that their perspectives are embedded in strategic decision-making.

While entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise development are not currently core areas of focus within our WIOA-funded programming—due in part to limited federal resources—we maintain strong referral relationships with partner organizations that specialize in this work. These include Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), local chambers, or entrepreneurship-focused nonprofits], which offer business planning support, access to capital, and technical assistance for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Additionally, through our collaboration with local school systems and youth programming, we provide early exposure to business and entrepreneurship concepts. These efforts are intended to spark interest in future self-employment opportunities and cultivate a broader understanding of the career pathways available—including those that lead to business ownership.

As we continue to strengthen our regional workforce ecosystem, we remain committed to supporting entrepreneurship through coordinated partnerships and aligned service delivery, even when direct service provision is not feasible.

E. (L) Describe the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

It is important to note here that KentuckianaWorks utilizes its role as the Workforce Board to fundraise for and oversee multiple programs that provide “youth workforce activities.” Youth workforce programs that are primarily funded by outside dollars include:

- The youth summer jobs program we call SummerWorks in Louisville, which is funded by Louisville Metro government and private funders;
- A new program that focuses on the high school seniors in our 7-county region who are not going to college upon graduation, so that we help them obtain a good job upon graduation -- called, After the Tassel and funded by the State Legislature;
- The KentuckianaWorks College Access Center, whose Educational Talent Search grant is funded by the federal Department of Education, and whose team provides services in seven JCPS high schools, promoting college and career readiness for grades 9-12 students. The center is particularly committed to supporting low-income and first-generation college students, with at least two-thirds of participants coming from these backgrounds. By providing personalized

- support and resources, the KCAC plays a vital role in helping individuals overcome barriers to higher education and achieve their academic and career goals; and
- The Academies of Louisville Alliance, funded by private funders, which provides support for the partnerships between 220+ employers and 15 JCPS high schools which are now organized as full Career Academies.

WIOA Youth funding is utilized as the smallest of three core funding streams (the larger ones come from Louisville Metro Government and the State Legislature) to provide The Spot: Young Adult Opportunity Center, a young adult program for 16-24 year olds which has physical locations in Louisville, Bullitt, Shelby, and Henry counties, and provides mobile services in Oldham, Spencer and Trimble counties.

The goal of the Spot is to build a comprehensive care system through evidence-based and holistic strategies and services as we endeavor to help job seekers with education, training, and jobs while simultaneously connecting employers with skilled, qualified workers. The program emphasizes intensive case management, barrier reduction, violence prevention and career coaching focused on strong pathways to include quality jobs for youth and young adults. Each participant is paired with a Career Coach and is assessed for basic skills (including occupational skills, capacity, aptitude, interest inventories), completion of career assessments, and assessments of risk/needs/strengths/self-sufficiency, which concludes with the development of Integrated Employment/Education Plans to guide participation in services and programming.

Participants have access to a variety of services including but not limited to an on-site computer lab, education, training, employment, supportive services, leadership development and follow-up services. The main component of the education service is GED preparation. In Louisville, participants have access to on-site assessment and GED services at The Goodwill Young Adult Opportunity Center, in the Regional Counties, we partner closely with Adult Education sites to maximize availability of services to participants. Other educational services include assistance, both logistical and financial, with occupational skills training transitioning to post-secondary education.

Young adults also have access to employment services, including job readiness training and work-based learning opportunities such as internships and job shadows. The Spot in Louisville is able to offer more group programming such as career fairs, job shadow tours, and “lunch and learns,” while the Regional Counties utilize a more individualized approach due to a less concentrated and dense population. Furthermore, The Spot offers youth development activities such as workshops on financial management, healthy relationships, and leadership development.

Finally, the Spot provides supportive services and referrals for help with housing, transportation, food, childcare, and physical and mental health needs. In Louisville, most services are available on-site such as mental and behavioral health services by licensed clinicians, as well as services from partners like Dress for Success and Dare to Care. In the Regional area, supportive services are provided on a referral basis with a warm handoff from staff. Inclusive Work Experience is available through partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), The Office of the Blind, and the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, in which participants are offered tailored services and support to ensure youth with disabilities have the same opportunities as their peers. For example, through job coaching, adaptive technologies, and disability awareness training for employers, youth with disabilities can succeed in the workplace. Disability-Specific Career Counseling and Skill Development strives to help youth with

disabilities understand their rights, career options, and how to advocate for the accommodation they need in the workplace.

F. (L) Describe how the LWDB 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)]

KentuckianaWorks publishes a monthly Labor Market Update that is shared widely across the 13-county, bi-state region. It highlights trends and insights into what is happening in our regional labor market. Often, the Updates will include deep dives about particular populations (e.g. a recent issue focused on the region's foreign-born), occupations (e.g. a recent issue focused on IT job data), or the skills needs of particular sectors. All of these updates are useful to our higher education partners as they make decisions about educational pathways and the market demand in our region. Our Director of Labor Market Intelligence is also a frequent presenter in front of secondary and postsecondary education audiences, sharing her insights on the regional labor market and ensuring that key decision-makers have the best, most up-to-date information available.

The KentuckianaWorks College Access Center (KCAC), funded by the federal Department of Education and by Louisville Metro Government, serves as a comprehensive resource center aimed at helping individuals in the Louisville area navigate the path to higher education. By providing essential services such as financial aid assistance (including FAFSA filing), college admissions support, and scholarship searches, the KCAC ensures that adults and youth can access the tools they need to succeed in post-secondary education. The center also offers career counseling, assessments, and guidance on selecting the right school while focusing on the fastest-growing occupations to help individuals make informed career choices. Additionally, the KCAC runs an Educational Talent Search (ETS) program across seven Jefferson County high schools, promoting college and career readiness for grades 9-12 students. The center is particularly committed to supporting low-income and first-generation college students, with at least two-thirds of participants coming from these backgrounds. By providing personalized support and resources, the KCAC plays a vital role in helping individuals overcome barriers to higher education and achieve their academic and career goals.

G. (R) Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating childcare, transportation, and other appropriate supportive services for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

KentuckianaWorks has made intentional and strategic efforts to coordinate and expand access to supportive services across the local workforce development system. These services are critical to helping job seekers overcome barriers to employment, persist through training, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency.

To address participants' individualized needs—particularly in areas such as childcare, transportation, digital access, and essential supplies—KentuckianaWorks integrates supportive services into its core workforce investment activities through a coordinated network of partners, assessments, and referral systems.

A formal partnership has been established with the Louisville Office of Social Services, which plays a key role in connecting jobseekers to supportive services such as childcare and transportation. This partnership has been operationalized through the integration of Social Services into the MOU partner network and co-located service delivery structure. The Office of Social Services presented an overview of their services to the Kentucky Career Center Board (KCCB) on June 3, 2025, ensuring all stakeholders are informed of the support available to customers.

In addition, KentuckianaWorks has introduced its partners to the **Kentucky Early Educators Pool (KEEP) Project**, a workforce development initiative designed to address Kentucky's childcare shortage while also providing training and placement opportunities in early childhood education. This effort directly supports working parents while strengthening the local childcare workforce.

Transportation needs are met through multiple channels, including the **Goodwill Cars to Work** program, which supports newly employed individuals in acquiring reliable transportation. Program staff regularly share information about this and other transportation-related resources, including **TARC passes and gas cards**, with jobseekers and service partners to ensure broad awareness and access.

Supportive services are identified and coordinated early in the customer journey, during the initial engagement between jobseekers and Career Coaches. This includes an assessment of training and employment goals, as well as potential barriers to participation. Based on this assessment, Career Coaches develop an **Individual Career and Financial Plan (ICFP)**—or, when applicable, an **Individualized Career and Employment Plan (ICEP)**—which outlines both short-term and long-term goals and serves as a roadmap for service delivery. These plans are reviewed and updated quarterly to reflect changes in participant needs and progress.

Supportive services provided may include:

- Childcare referrals or resources through coordinated partners like the KEEP Project.
- Transportation assistance such as gas cards or public transit passes.
- Technology access for virtual training (e.g., laptops, hotspots).
- Work- and training-related equipment, such as uniforms, scrubs, and medical training supplies.
- State certification testing fee coverage.

All referrals and supportive service requests are documented in the KentuckianaWorks internal system of record and relevant grant database systems. Each record includes a justification for the service, the specific barrier it addresses, and the service timeframe. This documentation ensures accountability and enables the workforce system to align resources efficiently.

To further institutionalize this work, KentuckianaWorks convenes regular meetings and trainings for MOU partners and front-line staff to spotlight available resources, align on referral protocols, and share best practices. By leveraging collaborative relationships, shared intelligence, and proactive case management, KentuckianaWorks ensures that jobseekers receive comprehensive, barrier-reducing support services essential for success.

H. (L) Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing the coordination of services provided by DWD merit staff and the LWDB's contract providers to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

The One Stop Operator hosts a monthly meeting that brings together KentuckianaWorks' contracted service providers and the regional leadership for DWI merit staff to discuss coordinated services and upcoming opportunities for collaboration. In addition, the KentuckianaWorks Director of Business Services coordinates a monthly Business Services meeting that includes 1) Board business services and sector strategies staff, 2) Contracted business services staff, 3) State merit business services staff (including Veterans program staff), and 4) Other MOU partners with employer-facing staff. State Business Services staff from the Cabinet for Education and Workforce Development regularly attend these meetings as well, and often share information on employer-related state programs or new state resources. Over the years, the coordination in our system has evolved as customer needs change. The ultimate goals are to provide a positive and productive experience for job seekers and to provide value to employers in our region by coordinating staffing and resources.

I. (L) Describe how the local board will collaborate with WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]. This will include a discussion of how the local WDB will consistently review local applications submitted under Title II with WIOA sec. 107(d) (11) (A) and (B) (i) and WIOA sec. 232.

The Adult Ed program collaborates with the KentuckianaWorks workforce system in a variety of ways including:

- Co-located in the comprehensive center located at the Kentucky Career Center on Broadway (KCCB). They currently have staff onsite several days a week and use the training room to offer GED classes.
- Co-located at The Spot location in Jefferson County (2nd and Chestnut) and a mobile testing site.
- Both the Adult and Youth programs partner with Adult Ed by visiting their locations for referrals.
- Adult Ed are active members of the OSO's MOU partners meeting to share information and resources.

J. (L) Please describe any plans to follow the strategies of the state and the local WDB 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 consistent with WIOA sec—134 (c) (3) (E).

KentuckianaWorks has developed a policy addressing the Priority of Service for Adults that incorporates the conditions set forth in WIOA sec.134 (c)(3)(E). The KentuckianaWorks board staff is required to ensure that program service providers receive training and access regarding Board policies. The priority status of all adult participants is determined during the initial eligibility review, and the priority level is recorded in the participant file and data record.

K. (L) Please describe how the Kentucky Career Centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

KentuckianaWorks uses the case management platform Kentucky Enterprise Engagement Suite (aka KEE Suite). It is our state-funded and approved system of record. The Salesforce platform allows customers and case managers to enter and upload information and documents related to WIOA and career services. One of the statewide system's benefits is that all workforce boards can have access to customer information to provide seamless customer service.

The KCC's use a referral system called United Communities. United Communities is a community-wide initiative that uses a technology platform to initiate and close referrals across One-Stop and MOU partners.

## Chapter 4: Program Design and Evaluation

A. (L) Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:

1. The local board's efforts to collaborate with employers, to provide continuous improvement of business services, and to operate a "job-driven" delivery system.

The KentuckianaWorks Board continues to make major investments in time and money to support continuous improvement of business services. Throughout our region, there are more than 20 business-facing staff funded by KentuckianaWorks who work in concert with one another to connect local businesses to a variety of talent that meet current and future skill needs.

As mentioned earlier, KentuckianaWorks staff regularly convenes business services calls that bring together business services staff working for our service providers as well as individuals in similar roles operating in our region. The key objective of these calls is to support each business service team's activities and outcomes related to KentuckianaWorks' strategic priorities, mission and vision. The topics we cover vary to meet resource and communications needs of attendees.

2. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted services providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]

KentuckianaWorks collaborates with the State ETPL to ensure that service providers are deemed eligible before customers can use funding for training. Program directors and contract monitors at KentuckianaWorks consistently assess the performance of contracted service providers. This is done through performance reporting reviews, scheduled monitoring, and regular meetings with providers. These evaluations ensure that contractors meet contract requirements while also receiving the necessary support to effectively assist both job seekers and employers. The KentuckianaWorks Program Oversight Committee (POC) reviews the performance of programs delivered by contracted providers. They authorize the renewal of annual service contracts and approve corrective actions when needed, and their recommendations are ultimately considered by and voted on by the full Board.

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

KentuckianaWorks is committed to ensuring equitable access to workforce development services across all communities—especially for individuals in remote, rural, or underserved areas. In the last fiscal year,

39% of respondents to the KentuckianaWorks Career Services Feedback Survey indicated that they primarily accessed services virtually, underscoring the growing importance of accessible, tech-enabled options within the one-stop delivery system.

To meet this need, KentuckianaWorks leverages a broad range of technological tools and virtual service models that reduce barriers to participation and extend the reach of career services beyond traditional physical locations. Key virtual offerings include:

- Virtual workshops hosted on user-friendly platforms, providing job readiness training, resume support, and career planning—all accessible from any internet-connected device.
- Online training and certification programs offered through *The Spot*, designed for young adults seeking industry-recognized credentials without needing to travel.
- Mobile and virtual career coaching, with one-on-one appointments available via video or phone for individuals in areas with limited in-person access.
- TranslateLive devices, which offer real-time interpretation for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP), including ESL support—ensuring language is never a barrier to service.
- United Community, a collaborative referral and case coordination system used by KentuckianaWorks and regional partners. This platform facilitates remote navigation of workforce and wraparound services, such as housing, childcare, and transportation.

To further bridge digital access gaps, KentuckianaWorks collaborates with libraries, schools, community centers, and partner agencies to identify local access points where individuals can find Wi-Fi, devices, or technical assistance. These partnerships are essential to connecting residents to virtual services, particularly in areas where broadband or device access may otherwise be limited.

KentuckianaWorks is continually evaluating and expanding its virtual service delivery model to ensure it remains inclusive, responsive, and adaptable to the evolving needs of jobseekers across the region—regardless of geography.

4. 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)]

As part of Career Center Certification, career centers are reviewed to determine ADA compliance and to assure they are equipped to serve individuals with disabilities. The Department of Labor has indicated that for WIOA section 188, only technical changes have been made to the 30 rules proposed in 1999 to implement section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. KentuckianaWorks will continue with the following to assure compliance with section 188:

- Contracts will contain a non-discrimination clause referencing federal, state and local laws. Sub-recipients will be monitored.

- Partners under Memorandum of Understanding will provide assurances on nondiscrimination and equal opportunity and are subject to KentuckianaWorks monitoring.
- KentuckianaWorks will continue to cooperate with Equal Opportunity and nondiscrimination compliance monitoring by the Career Development Office.

5. Describe the process used by the local board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comments by representatives of businesses and representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the Local Plan, prior to submission of this plan.

The Draft Local Plan will be posted on the KentuckianaWorks website, and circulated to the Board, MOU partners, and other partners at the end of March. We will invite public comment and consider it before the Local Plan is finalized and submitted at the end of April.

B. (L) Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]

The type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities are severely limited due to the shrinking funding available to the Board to provide these services under WIOA. A decade ago, the Board would have been investing millions of dollars a year in making ITAs available to eligible participants. Those days are long gone, as the meager funding now coming to the Board has not allowed for that same level of investment. This is very problematic for adult and dislocated worker customers, particularly those who don't qualify for Pell Grant eligibility, because without that funding, they often have no way of paying for the training they want and need to get to the level of earnings they desire.

As just one example of this, in years past KentuckianaWorks provided a lot of ITA funding for people pursuing CDL training – a credential that leads to immediate employment in our regional economy, which has a big transportation/logistics sector. But in recent years we've had much less funding to invest in these ITAs, so many fewer people have found a way to pay for this training, even though jobs requiring a CDL still appear at or near the top of in-demand jobs in our region.

That being said, KentuckianaWorks offers a variety of training programs designed to equip individuals with skills for in-demand careers in sectors like construction and technology.

Kentuckiana Builds, which is WIOA funded, focuses on preparing participants for careers in the construction industry. The program offers pre-apprenticeship training in areas such as electrical work, heavy machinery operation, and fiber optic installation. Graduates are connected with local employers seeking these skills.

Code:You (which is NOT WIOA funded), is a tech training program aimed at equipping Kentucky residents with software development skills to secure entry-level tech positions. The program provides training, mentorship, career preparation, and connections with employers, fostering a supportive learning community to inspire participants to excel in tech careers.

Both programs are part of KentuckianaWorks' commitment to aligning workforce training with the region's economic and educational goals, simplifying the system, and making workforce development more accessible.

C. (L) Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

Rapid Response is a service available to any employer laying off individuals but is typically offered to companies who submit a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notice. The Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator (LARRC), who is part of the Adult and Dislocated Worker provider, works closely with the statewide rapid response coordinator to organize an event—preferably on-site—to explain available resources, including WIOA, how to file for unemployment insurance (UI), and the details of the application process. This service may also involve organizing job fairs with companies seeking individuals with similar skills to those being laid off, potentially helping workers avoid unemployment.

D. (L) Provide an analysis and description of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. Describe strategies the LWDA will use to increase the minimum WIOA out-of-school youth expenditure rate to 75 percent. Provide information on types of work-based learning activities planned for youth. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

KentuckianaWorks is proud to hold up its young adult workforce activities as among the best in the country. We were one of 30 sites around the country to receive a Youth Opportunity grant in 1998, and have remained deeply committed to providing programming that can help young adults get their lives back on the right track since that time. ALL of our WIOA-funded work is focused on out-of-school youth, and has been since at least 2004, so we have never had any trouble meeting the 75 percent expenditure rate required by WIOA.

Importantly, WIOA now serves as the smallest of the three core funding streams allowing us to serve young adults in Louisville, and also as just one of two funding streams allowing us to serve young adults in our six regional counties. Without the huge investment from Louisville Metro Government and the newest investment from the State Legislature, the size of our young adult program in Louisville would be a tiny fraction of what it is today. Similarly, the new investment from the State Legislature received in 2024 allowed us to double the size of our effort in the six regional counties – important because the counties are more rural, less densely populated, and require more “people power” to reach the young adults who most need our help.

Goodwill of Kentucky is the contractor we’ve selected to run both programs – which are contracted for separately. In Louisville, we now have two separate locations of The Spot, giving young adults two different physical locations to come and receive services. The program is designed to meet young people where they are, assess their strengths and needs, help them create a plan for success in education/training, employment and life – all while connecting them to caring adults who can guide and mentor them along the way. A network of partners – as well as outside grants we’ve sought and earned

– allow us to help address mental and behavioral health issues, housing needs, transportation issues and many other barriers.

In the regional counties, we're now running the largest program we've ever had there – but only because of a new investment from the State Legislature. If we were dependent on WIOA funding alone, the program would continue to be shrinking even though the needs of the disconnected young adults in those counties have not. Goodwill in those counties works tirelessly to find partners who can refer young adults who need our services, and to provide services both remotely and in person in multiple locations across the region. They follow the same program trajectory as the one outlined above for the Louisville sites – providing a single approach for young adults across our entire 7-county region.

KentuckianaWorks works hard to stay connected to leading national conveners around young adult policy like the National Youth Employment Coalition, so that we can benchmark our efforts against other workforce boards doing the best work in the country. Our work has been honored to receive awards and recognition from NYEC and others recently, and we continuously strive to provide the best programming possible for the investments we're able to make.

E. (L) Describe how training services will be provided in accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), as well as the process and criteria for issuing individual training accounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]. This should include how contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Accounts and how the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs.

KentuckianaWorks is committed to providing high-quality training services that align with in-demand occupations and lead to sustainable, family-supporting wages. In accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), the Board ensures that training services are delivered in a way that supports participants' career goals and regional labor market needs while also upholding informed customer choice and transparent decision-making.

### **Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)**

KentuckianaWorks has a well-established policy governing the use of Individual Training Accounts. This policy includes:

- **Eligibility criteria** for WIOA-funded training services, including assessment of basic skills, work readiness, and appropriateness of training based on the individual's employment goals.
- **Annual ITA funding limits**, which are reviewed periodically and may vary based on training program costs and funding availability.
- **Connection to career goals**, requiring that selected training programs align with a participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and lead to employment in an occupation listed on the region's **Targeted Occupations List**.
- **Priority of service** is observed in compliance with WIOA guidelines, particularly for low-income individuals, veterans, and individuals with barriers to employment.

The **Targeted Occupations List**, developed and updated annually by the Director of Labor Market Intelligence, is approved by both the Program Oversight Committee and the KentuckianaWorks Board. It

is grounded in regional labor market data and employer input and serves as the basis for eligible training program selection.

### Customer Choice

Participants are empowered to make informed decisions regarding their training provider and program.

Career Coaches help customers:

- Navigate the **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)**.
- Compare outcomes such as completion rates, job placement rates, and wage outcomes for various programs.
- Understand the financial implications of their training selections.

KentuckianaWorks supports full transparency and assists customers in reviewing relevant performance data and understanding program structures before committing to training.

### Coordination with Training Contracts

While ITAs are the primary mechanism for providing training services, the Board may also enter into **contract-based training agreements** when doing so better serves groups of individuals or meets targeted sector needs—such as through customized training, incumbent worker training, or cohort-based models. In all such cases, the use of contracts is coordinated with ITA policy to avoid duplication and ensure consistency with local training strategies.

Together, these processes ensure that training is effective, equitable, and aligned with both regional employer needs and participant goals. KentuckianaWorks continuously evaluates these systems to maintain quality and responsiveness in the face of evolving labor market dynamics.

## Chapter 5: Compliance/Performance/Administrative Cost

Responses should be focused on the local area's compliance with federal or state requirements.

A. **(R)** Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), between the local board and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and other individuals. This may include cross-training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts of cooperation, collaboration and coordination. WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)

The WIOA partners agreement is in compliance through June 30, 2025. There is a process in place to renew the agreements to be effective starting July 1, 2025.

B. **(R)** Describe the establishment of the administrative cost arrangement, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate for the region.

The WIOA partners agreement is in compliance through June 30, 2025. There is a process in place to renew the agreements to be effective starting July 1, 2025.

C. (R) Describe the establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach an agreement with the Governor (via the Department of Workforce Development) on local levels of performance for and report on the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region.

### **Regional Cooperation and Performance Negotiation**

KentuckianaWorks actively participates in the biennial WIOA performance negotiation process with the Kentucky Department of Workforce Development. This process begins with the state proposing performance targets that are informed by federal benchmarks, historical local outcomes, economic and labor market trends, and other contextual factors. While KentuckianaWorks can provide feedback and advocate for adjustments based on local conditions, the Kentucky Department of Workforce Development retains final authority over the established performance goals.

### **Collaboration Between Local Areas**

Although each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) negotiates its own performance targets, there is intentional and ongoing collaboration across local areas to support regional alignment. KentuckianaWorks works closely with neighboring LWDAs through regular planning meetings, inter-board communication, and statewide convenings facilitated by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board and the Department of Workforce Development. These forums provide space for:

- Joint evaluation of proposed performance metrics;
- Discussion of shared labor market challenges and opportunities;
- Exchange of best practices and service delivery innovations;
- Identification of cross-regional strategies to address employer needs and jobseeker barriers.

This cooperative approach ensures that local goals do not exist in isolation but are part of a broader, coordinated strategy for statewide workforce system success. When appropriate, workforce boards use regional data to collectively advocate for performance levels that more accurately reflect the realities of their communities.

### **Data-Driven Recommendations and Ongoing Monitoring**

KentuckianaWorks uses localized labor market data, program performance trends, and community insights to inform its recommendations during the negotiation process. These efforts aim to ensure that performance targets are not only ambitious but also grounded in the unique economic conditions of the region.

After targets are finalized by the state, KentuckianaWorks monitors progress throughout the program year through internal reviews and collaborative discussions with service providers. Performance outcomes are regularly assessed to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. If significant changes in economic conditions or service delivery capacity arise, the board may re-engage with state officials to discuss potential mid-cycle adjustments.

### Conclusion

Through ongoing collaboration with other local areas, transparent data sharing, and participation in statewide performance planning efforts, KentuckianaWorks helps foster a unified and responsive workforce development system. While the state ultimately determines performance targets, this regional cooperation ensures that local voices are heard and that negotiated goals align with both community needs and economic realities across the Commonwealth.

D. (L) Identify the local grant recipient of Title 1 responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

The CLEO Governing Board selected KentuckianaWorks as the fiscal agent after a competitive bid process in 2015, and has ratified that selection many times since. The most recent Chief Local Elected Officials Fiscal Agent Agreement for Jefferson, Bullitt, Henry, Oldham, Spencer, Shelby, and Trimble Counties, Kentucky, is effective October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2025.

E. (L) Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the method for sole sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes but is not limited to the method used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

KentuckianaWorks adheres to the purchasing policy of Louisville Metro Government, which outlines the competitive bidding process, evaluation, selection, and sole-source procedures. The KentuckianaWorks Board of Directors provides the final approval for vendor and sub-recipient recommendations. Additionally, KentuckianaWorks complies with WIOA's Buy American requirement. You can review the policy here [LMG Procurement Policy and Manual](#).

F. (L) Describe the indicators currently used or intended by the local board to measure the performance and effectiveness of the regional fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

**Note:** *This description may include when, how, and by whom the indicators are being employed and if the measured performance and effectiveness are used in a continuous improvement process.*

Program performance is outlined in each contractor's sub-contract and is presented to the Program Oversight Committee (POC) during their regularly scheduled meetings, which occur eight times per year. Additionally, WIOA Common Measure performance is shared with the POC on a periodic basis. Both the common measure performance and contract performance serve as key factors in evaluating the one-stop delivery system. In the future, a new common measure for assessing the effectiveness of employer services will further enhance this ongoing system review.

The Board undergoes an outside audit by an accounting firm each year, and reviews that audit each year at a Board meeting as a way of measuring the performance and effectiveness of the regional fiscal

agent. That annual audit is approved by the Board each year, and is also reviewed and approved annual by the Chief Local Elected Officials Governing Board. KentuckianaWorks has a 22+ year history of clean audits with no significant findings or disallowed costs, and has successfully managed over \$250 million in that timeframe.