

ARIZONA PYS 2024-2027

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED

As of May 30, 2024, some content in the plan is under revision.

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CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

The following areas of this plan are still being revised.

[VI. Program-Specific Requirements for State Vocational Rehabilitation \(Combined or General\). a. 2. In accordance with Assurance \(a\)\(1\)\(B\), if selected, please provide information on the current composition of the Council by representative type, including the term number of the representative, as applicable, and any vacancies, as well as the beginning dates of each representative's term.](#)

[VI. Program-Specific Requirements for State Vocational Rehabilitation \(Combined or General\). a. 3. If the SRC is not meeting the composition requirements in Section 105\(b\) of the Rehabilitation Act and/or is not meeting quarterly as required in Section 105\(f\) of the Rehabilitation Act, provide the steps that the VR agency is taking to ensure it meets those requirements.](#)

OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan— a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),

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- the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II), and
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program (authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III),
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined State Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" (Sections II-IV of this document) where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))¹

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the

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Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
 - State Strategy Implementation,
 - State Operating Systems and Policies,
 - Assurances,
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.² States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations. Use of links to external websites and documents is permitted within the State Plan narrative submission, if such links remain active and adhere to Section 508 accessibility requirements.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or

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retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

[2] Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a unified plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

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No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

No

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

Letter from Governor Hobbs

Letter from Superintendent Tom Horne

An Arizona for Everyone

Arizona is pleased to submit its 2024-2027 Unified State Plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Arizona's plan builds upon Governor Hobbs' vision of a just, prosperous, and resilient Arizona that provides opportunities for any Arizonan who wants to succeed across urban, rural, and tribal communities.

Building a future with long-term prosperity is incumbent on implementing ideas that are thoughtfully and collaboratively developed through stakeholder participation and planning. This Unified State Plan is a roadmap built from engagement with economic, educational, and workforce partners throughout the state aimed at strengthening the workforce system to help employers hire and retain skilled workers and help Arizonans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, enter into high-quality jobs and careers. When more businesses are able to grow, they make Arizona more competitive and attractive to workers. When more Arizonans are able to afford school supplies, medications, and child care, as well as given the opportunity for training needed for a good-paying job, they become part of a healthier and more dependable workforce. Recognizing that continuous engagement of WIOA workforce stakeholders is critical to ensuring that the ARIZONA@WORK system is a customer-centric workforce model, three regional (Central, Northern, and Southern) sessions were facilitated to

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engage stakeholders in the state plan development process. Over 130 state and local leaders of the workforce system engaged in the review of the state's current economic conditions, workforce attributes, and workforce development outcomes which lead to the finalization of the following WIOA State Plan goals and strategies:

Goal 1: Promote a Customer-Driven Workforce System Approach

Strategies

- **1.1:** Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
- **1.2:** Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals, including priority populations, with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.
- **1.3:** Refine the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure streamlined access to training, education, employment opportunities and supportive services that help to reduce barriers.
- **1.4:** Strengthen coordination and outreach across the ARIZONA@WORK system to increase public awareness and access to services.

Goal 2: Foster Business Engagement

Strategies

- **2.1:** Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.
- **2.2:** Promote a business-services model that links business growth with, and advocates for, quality jobs that support workers' economic stability and mobility.
- **2.3:** Strengthen workforce system teams by investing in tools and skill building that improves talent sourcing and matching for businesses.
- **2.4:** Convene the business community to explore and realize the employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by highlighting the workforce system's supportive services for prioritized populations.

Goal 3: Invest in Opportunity and Growth

Strategies

- **3.1:** Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.
- **3.2:** Braid federal, state, local, and private funding streams to maximize the impact of WIOA funds to meet the unique needs of local areas, job seekers, and employers.
- **3.3:** Facilitate data sharing, reporting, and performance analysis across WIOA partners to improve workforce system performance and outcomes.

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- **3.4:** Implement a state-wide technical assistance model to deliver training and facilitate best-practice sharing as aligned to the training needs of workforce system staff.

Goal 4: Prepare Arizona’s Youth for Workforce Success

Strategies

- **4.1:** Create a robust system, including partnerships with Career and Technical Education Districts and pre-apprenticeship models, for career exploration intended to build upon professional skills, workplace foundational academic skills, and career interests.
- **4.2:** Identify both in-school and out-of-school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.
- **4.3:** Develop work based learning opportunities for youth through partnerships with employers.
- **4.4:** Strengthen outreach to youth, their families, and school staff to provide information about the ARIZONA@WORK system, including supportive services and opportunities for meaningful employment and career pathways.

Arizona’s statewide collaborative approach to the development of the WIOA Unified State Plan goals and strategies supports growing the economy and setting Arizona up for long-term prosperity so that every Arizonan has the opportunity to reap the benefits of an affordable and thriving economy. This State Plan builds on investments in Future 48 workforce accelerators that will prepare thousands of Arizonans for jobs building our nation’s future in industries like semiconductors, renewable energy, aerospace, and defense. These efforts are further emboldened by the BuilditAZ Apprenticeship initiative that aims to double the number of apprentices in construction and the trades so that we can meet the needs of our 21st-century economy. Building the infrastructure, and deploying the technology needed to expand high-speed internet to every community across our state is crucial for businesses, healthcare, and education, particularly for our rural and tribal communities who are on the frontlines of our rapidly changing economy. These initiatives, along with a stronger higher education system, access to child care, and affordable broadband access for every Arizonan no matter where they live, will ensure more Arizonans have the opportunity to secure sustainable employment that supports themselves and their families.

Governor Hobbs’ vision for making Arizona the best place to live, work, and raise a family requires a commitment to collaborate through a cohesive approach among partners to strengthen and enhance its practices, build system effectiveness, support transparency, and align resources and strategies. The Unified State Plan reinforces workforce system partners thinking systematically about how workforce services are delivered, whether services are reaching priority populations, where to eliminate existing gaps to build a more prepared, responsive workforce for Arizona’s businesses, and identify opportunities to continue to improve outcomes for the businesses and job seekers across the state.

Commonly Used Abbreviations

AAO	Arizona Apprenticeship Office
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AAO	Arizona Apprenticeship Office
AATN	Arizona Advanced Technology Network
ABEC	Arizona Business and Education Coalition
ACA	Arizona Commerce Authority
ACMF	Arizona Coalition of Military Families
ADCRR	Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation & Reentry
ADE	Arizona Department of Education
ADES	Arizona Department of Economic Security
AES	Adult Education Services
AHCCCS	Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
AJC	Arizona Job Connection
AJLA	America's Job Link Alliance
AMS	Arizona Management System
AZSILC	Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council
BIL	Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
BOP	Bureau of Prison
BST	Business Services Team
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CRP	Community Rehabilitation Provider
CSBG	Community Services Block Grant
CSNA	Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CY	Calendar Year
DARE	Drug Abuse Resistance Education
DDD	Division of Developmental Disabilities
DERS	Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services
DOE	Department of Education
DOL	Department of Labor

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AAO	Arizona Apprenticeship Office
DW	Dislocated Worker
ELL	English Language Learner
ES	Employment Services
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
IIA	Investing In America
IET	Integrated Education and Training
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JA	Junior Achievement
JRT	Job Readiness Training
JVSG	Job for Veterans State Grants
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
LQ	Location Quotient
LVER	Local Veteran Employment Representatives
LWDAs	Local Workforce Development Areas
LWDBs	Local Workforce Development Boards
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MSFW	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker
NAICS	North American Industrial Classification System
NASWA	National Association of State Workforce Agencies
NFJP	National Farmworker Jobs Program
NRS	National Reporting System
NTN	Nineteen Tribal Nations
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity
PEA	Public Education Agency
PIO	Public Information Office
PPEP	Portable Practical Educational Preparation

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AAO	Arizona Apprenticeship Office
PROWD	Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development
PY	Program Year
RESEA	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment
RR	Rapid Response
SCC	Second Chance Centers
SCSEP	Senior Community Service Employment Program
SNAP E&T	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training
SRC	State Rehabilitation Council
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UI	Unemployment Insurance
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
WAC/the Council	Workforce Arizona Council
WARN	Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification
WBL	Work-Based Learning
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
WIPS	Workforce Integrated Performance System

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State’s current economic environment and identifies the State’s overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. Where requirements identify the term “populations”, these must include individuals with barriers to employment as defined at WIOA Section 3. This includes displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals

facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. Additional populations include veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include—

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Overview

ARIZONA@WORK serves as the comprehensive statewide network for workforce development, aiding employers of various sizes and industries in recruiting, nurturing, and retaining top-notch talent. The system extends a diverse array of resources and services to assist job seekers throughout the entire state in securing high-quality employment opportunities. As a collaborative effort between public and private entities, ARIZONA@WORK operates seamlessly across 12 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) areas and 73 local offices under a unified mission: Develop a customer-driven, integrated workforce system that delivers business, education, and training services to ensure equitable access to high-quality jobs that

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meet the diverse needs of employers and job seekers. Supported by federal funding, services are provided free of charge, ensuring accessibility to all.

Building on the foundation of ARIZONA@WORK's collaborative and federally-supported initiatives, Arizona's diverse economy has witnessed robust growth in various sectors, presenting ample opportunities for individuals seeking employment of all types. Arizona's economy consists of a wide range of industries offering opportunities for individuals seeking employment of all types. Following the economic downturn in 2020[1], Arizona has seen healthy economic growth across several variables.

- Arizona's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate hit an all-time recorded low of 3.4 percent in April and May 2023, down from the COVID-19 induced high of 13.8 percent in April 2020.
- In July 2023, Arizona's seasonally adjusted labor force level was over 3,689,000, up 6.1 percent from its pre-pandemic high in January 2020.
- From 2022 to 2024, Arizona's total employment is projected to grow by 90,625 jobs (1.4 percent annually); from 2021 to 2031, Arizona's total employment is projected to grow by 541,770 jobs (1.6 percent annually).
- From 2016 to 2021, Arizona's population increased by 488,364 people (1.4 percent annually); from 2022-2026, Arizona's population is projected to increase by more than 487,155 (1.6 percent annually).
- In 2021, Arizona's net domestic migration was over 89,000 people—most of Arizona's in-migration came from California and Washington.
- In 2021, almost a third of Arizona's population were aged 24 to 44 years old.
- From 2021 to 2031, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates that Arizona's population will get older: the percentage of the population aged 65 to 74 and 75+ will increase from 12.8 percent and 8.7 percent to 13.5 percent and 12.1 percent, respectively. During that same period, individuals aged 16-34 years old are expected to make up less of the population.

An in-demand industry, as defined under the WIOA, is an industry sector that has a substantial current or potential impact on the state economy and contributes to the growth or stability of other supporting businesses. In Calendar Year (CY) 2023, the Workforce Arizona Council (WAC) approved a list of six existing industries and one emerging industry to represent the state's in-demand industries; these seven industry sectors were selected because they present significant sources of economic opportunity for both job seekers and employers. Existing and emerging industries were defined as industries with either a large and strong statewide presence or smaller but fast-growing workforce, respectively. In-demand industries were selected, in part, because they express healthy employment levels (including historic and projected levels) and average weekly wages. In addition to qualitative discussions, the following variables were considered for each industry: current employment level, projected percent employment change,

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historical and projected numeric employment change, average weekly wage, historical wage growth, employment Location Quotient (LQ), and wage LQ.

From 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1, in-demand industry employment grew by an average of 1.6 percent annually, while Arizona total private sector employment grew by 2.1 percent. In-demand industry employment growth is projected to outpace Arizona total nonfarm employment growth through 2024, growing 2.1 percent annually. In comparison, Arizona total employment is projected to increase by 1.4 percent annually from 2022 to 2024. In-demand industries also provide competitive and quickly growing wages: Four of the seven in-demand industries offer higher wages in Arizona when compared to other geographies and six of the seven industries recorded positive wage growth from 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1. Table 1 and Table 2 display wage and employment characteristics among in-demand industries, respectively. These tables additionally feature the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. These codes are the standards used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the United States business economy.

Table 1: In-Demand Industries – Average Wage

NAICS Code	Industry Title	Average Weekly Wage (2022 Q1)	Wage Location Quotient* (2022 Q1)	Annual Wages Percent Change (2019 Q1 - 2022 Q1)
23	Construction	\$1,267	1.08	5.0%
52	Finance and insurance	\$2,203	0.71	7.4%
62	Health care and social assistance	\$1,146	1.17	3.8%
44	Retail trade	\$846	1.24	8.4%
48	Transportation and warehousing	\$967	0.97	-0.5%
31	Manufacturing	\$1,741	1.25	2.7%
59	Information Technology	\$2,338	0.93	3.8%

* A wage location quotient (LQ) allows for wages within one industry to be compared across different geographic areas. An industry with an above-average wage LQ (where LQ>1.0) is an indication that industry employees within the local area receive higher wages than employees working in the same industry elsewhere.

Table 2: In-Demand Industries – Individuals Employed

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Industry Title	Employment Level (2022 Q1)	Employment Location Quotient (2022 Q1)	Historical Employment Annual Percent Change (2019 Q1 - 2022 Q1)	Projected Employment Numeric Change (2022-2024)	Projected Employment Annual Percent Change (2022-2024)
Construction	186,400	1.21	4.0%	2,880	0.7%
Finance and insurance	177,722	1.36	2.8%	-4,825	-1.4%
Health care and social assistance	404,176	0.96	1.5%	14,000	1.6%
Retail trade	346,410	1.07	2.1%	5,470	0.8%
Transportation and warehousing	136,835	1.02	10.2%	9,640	3.5%
Manufacturing	187,148	0.71	2.1%	13,300	3.4%
Information Technology**	13,843	1.45	-11.9%	3,495	6.2%

* An employment location quotient (LQ) allows for wages within one industry to be compared across different geographic areas. An industry with an above-average employment LQ (where LQ>1.0) is an indication that an industry employs more people in the local area than in other regions.

** Information Technology is identified as an emerging industry because of its relatively small total employment and large projected percent change.

Construction

The Construction industry has recorded steady and sustained employment growth following the dramatic declines that occurred during the COVID-19 Pandemic. From 2019-2022, the Construction industry recorded the second-largest employment increase of all the selected in-demand industries, growing by 4.0 percent annually. Both commercial and residential building demand were responsible for the increase in Construction activity. Commercial building was strengthened by the increase in business activity occurring around the state. From 2020 to 2021, the total number of Arizona business establishments increased by 3.3 percent (for a total of 154,759 establishments)[2]. Residential construction continues to be needed to meet the demands of new residents moving into the state. From 2020-2022, Arizona recorded the eighth fastest-growing population in the nation[3]. During that same period, Arizona’s average count of new private housing units authorized by permits increased by 4.3 percent[4].

Health Care and Social Assistance

The industries in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector include physician's offices, hospitals, medical laboratories, nursing homes, and youth and family service centers. Health Care and Social Assistance is one of the largest and most reliable industries in the state; it was the only Arizona industry that continued gaining employment through the Great Recession. Among the in-demand industries, Healthcare and Social Assistance comprises the largest number of jobs. In 2022 Q1, from among the in-demand industries, Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to gain the most jobs from 2022-2024 (14,000 jobs, 1.6 percent annually) and was one of three industries with the highest wage LQ).

Finance and Insurance

The Finance and Insurance industry has a strong presence within the Arizona economy, employing 177,722 jobs in 2022 Q1. From 2021 to 2023, Finance and Insurance is expected to grow by 14,041 jobs (3.9 percent annually). Among in-demand industries, Finance and

Insurance boasts above-average wages and employment growth: the industry recorded the third highest historical annual percent change (2.8 percent annually from 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1), the second highest average weekly wage in 2022 Q1 (\$2,203), the second highest historical average weekly wage percent change (7.5 percent from 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1), and the second highest employment LQ (1.4 in 2022 Q1). With both a LQ greater than one and several international clients with a significant presence in the Arizona economy, Finance and Insurance is generally defined as an export-oriented industry in the state. Finance and Insurance is projected to grow by 14,041 jobs from 2021-2023 (3.9 percent annually).

Manufacturing

Manufacturing in Arizona has made a recovery after years of decline in the early 2000s. Manufacturing employment peaked at 213,400 jobs in 1998 before steadily declining to 149,000 jobs in 2010. From 2010 to 2020, the Manufacturing industry grew by more than 28,000 jobs (1.7 percent annually). Statewide Manufacturing employment growth has continued to speed up in recent years, growing by an annualized rate of 2.1 percent from 2019 to 2022. From 2021-2023, Manufacturing is expected to grow by 15,421 jobs (4.2 percent annually). Individuals working within the industry also report above-average weekly wages: the average weekly wage was the third highest of the in-demand industries (\$1,741) and a 2022 wage LQ of 1.2. This increase in manufacturing has had a substantial impact on the state's economy: Arizona's real state Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased 2.5 percent annually from 2021 to 2022[5].

Arizona has established itself as a premier location for chip manufacturing in recent years: the state has led the nation in chip investment since 2020 and has a current total of 115 chip-related companies[6]. This boom in the semiconductor industry can be partly attributed to the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) Act, which supports thousands of jobs and billions in investment. In 2022, the Computer and Electronic Parts Manufacturing subsector had an average year-over-year employment growth rate of 3.7 percent; after the passing of the CHIPS Act, from August 2022 to December 2022, Computer and Electronic Parts had an average year-over-year growth rate of 5.7 percent. Two of the largest manufacturers include Intel and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC). TSMC's Phoenix based chip plant marks the single largest private investment in Arizona history and is expected to create nearly 4,300 jobs over the next ten years[7].

In addition to federal investment from the CHIPS Act, Arizona's Manufacturing industry has been impacted by the Inflation Reduction Act—specifically, electric vehicle manufacturing. From March 2023 to August 2023, Arizona's total electric vehicle investment and associated jobs increased from \$3.7 billion and 7,600 jobs to \$10.9 billion and 11,500 jobs[8].

Transportation and Warehousing

The importance of Transportation and Warehousing within the Arizona economy has continually increased within the past several years. From 2010 to 2020, employment in Transportation and Warehousing grew by 49,000 jobs (5.5 percent annually). From 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1, Transportation and Warehousing employment grew at an annual rate of 10.2 percent, the largest growth rate among the selected in-demand industries. This trend is expected to continue: the industry is projected to gain approximately 23,000 jobs from 2021-2023 (8.3 percent annually).

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This strong employment growth can, in part, be attributed to an increase in online E-commerce as consumers have become more comfortable shopping online, demand for warehousing and shipping employment has increased. E-commerce represented 14.8 percent of total retail sales in 2022 Q3, up from 4.6 percent in 2010 Q3. Online shopping sales accelerated during the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, increasing to 16.4 percent of total sales in 2020 Q2 from 11.9 percent in 2020 Q1.

Information Technology (IT)

IT is an emerging industry within Arizona. While IT is not officially defined under the NAICS, the employment growth for specific high-tech sub sectors was large enough that a portion of the larger Information sector was targeted as an in-demand industry.

From 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1, IT recorded sustained job losses (-11.9 percent annually); however, it is projected to record the fastest job growth among all selected in-demand industries through 2023 (7,331 jobs, 13.5 percent annually). Additionally, IT boasts the second highest average weekly wage (\$2,338) and the second highest employment LQ (1.45) among selected in-demand industries.

Retail Trade

Retail trade is the only selected industry that was not selected during the previous planning process. Despite having the lowest average weekly wage (\$846), Retail Trade recorded the highest annual wage percent change from 2019 Q1 to 2022 Q1 (8.4 percent). The industry also has above average employment and wage LQ (1.07 and 1.24, respectively). In 2022 Q1, Retail Trade had an employment level of 346,410 individuals, making it the second largest in-demand selection. From 2021-2023, Retail Trade is expected to increase by 13,430 jobs (2.0 percent annually).

Federal Level Investment

In addition to the CHIPS Act mentioned above, Arizona is set to receive \$6.5 billion in federal investment through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act, according to the White House. These funds are to be used for a variety of projects across the state: \$4.1 billion to be used for transportation—including roads, bridges, public transit, ports, and airports; \$778 million to be used for water related projects; and \$993.1 million to increase access to reliable, high-speed internet. Projects include electric vehicle charging, clean energy and power, low-emissions buses, and infrastructure resilience, among others[9]. Many of these projects are related to Arizona's in-demand industries and may help drive growth as the need for labor increases.

In-Demand Occupations

The Workforce Arizona Council (WAC) identified 151 core in-demand occupations. The occupations selected were defined as those with large projected numeric employment change, significant percentage employment change, substantial annual job openings, and high hourly wages within the in-demand industries. Extra care was taken to select quality occupations accessible at every education level.

To supplement the data used by the WAC in selecting in-demand occupations, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) provides in-demand occupation analysis using a five star model. Projected employment change (percent and numeric), annual job openings, hourly wages, and the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) scores are ranked for each occupation and then

averaged together with equal weighting. Occupations were rated with respect to their required educational attainment; hence, five star occupations can be found within all education levels. This helps to ensure an equitable treatment of each educational level when promoting high-value occupations.

In 2022, there were 1,031,456 individuals employed within core in-demand occupations, roughly 32.6 percent of Arizona’s total private employment. From 2021 to 2023, employment in core in-demand occupations is projected to grow 4.8 percent annually. The core in-demand occupations also provide above-average wages for employees. In 2022, the average wage for in-demand occupations was \$74,672, while average wages for all industries was \$53,396.

A complete list of the 151 core occupations selected by the WAC is available in Appendix 2.

Table 3: Core In-Demand Occupations – Employment & Wages

# of Occupations	Average Wage	Total Employment	Share of 2022 Total Employment	Projected Growth Rate
151	\$74,672	1,031,456	32.6%	4.8%

Source: Arizona Commerce Authority/Office of Economic Opportunity

Table 4: Core In-Demand Occupations – Count of Occupations within Industries

Industry	Count of Core In-Demand Occupations
Construction	26
Finance and insurance	10
Health care and social assistance	50
Retail trade	15
Transportation and warehousing	13
Manufacturing	29
Information Technology	10

NOTE: Some occupations may fall within multiple industries.

Source: Arizona Commerce Authority/Office of Economic Opportunity

(iii) Employers’ Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Identifying future employment demands can ensure that individuals are investing time and energy into the right skill sets to meet the needs of employers. Table 5 identifies the most common knowledge, skills, and abilities required for employment within Arizona In-Demand occupations. This data is collected from the O*NET database, where it is assessed by occupational analysts; the Arizona OEO provides assessment for the selected in-demand occupations. Fundamental communication skills—including writing, listening, and speaking—were required in numerous In-Demand occupations and are critical skills for job seekers to focus on improving. Hard skills—such as mechanical, mathematics, and computers and electronics—are also valuable skills for job seekers to learn.

Table 5: In-Demand Occupations Top Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

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Knowledge	Skills	Abilities
Customer and Personal Service	Reading Comprehension	Oral Comprehension
Mechanical	Active Listening	Oral Expression
Medicine and Dentistry	Speaking	Near Vision
Building and Construction	Critical Thinking	Problem Sensitivity
Computers and Electronics	Monitoring	Written Comprehension

*Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity, O*NET*

Certifications and licenses are often occupation-specific. All occupations, including Arizona’s In-Demand occupations, are on the CareerOneStop website.

- For Certifications: <https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Training/find-certifications.aspx> [10]
- For Licenses: <https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Training/find-licenses.aspx> [11]

As ARIZONA@WORK pursues its strategies to develop a career pathway model and support transferable skills, more research and information on In-Demand credentials and licenses will be developed.

In addition to required knowledge, skills, and abilities, each in-demand occupation can be categorized by its minimum education requirement. Table 6 and Figure 1 display the count of in-demand occupations by minimum education requirements. Sixty-one occupations require at least a high school diploma; the most common educational requirement among the in-demand occupations.

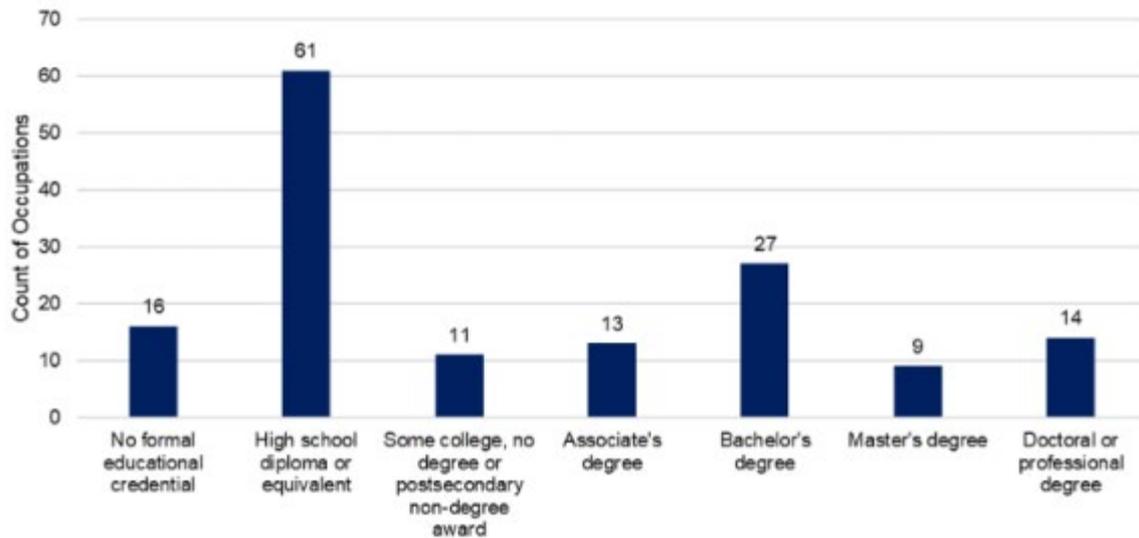
Table 6: Core In-Demand Occupations – Count of Occupations by Education Requirement

Education Requirement	Count of In-Demand Occupations
No formal educational credential	16
High school diploma or equivalent	61
Some college, no degree	1
Postsecondary non-degree award	10
Associate’s degree	13
Bachelor’s degree	27
Master’s degree	9
Doctoral or professional degree	14

Source: Arizona Commerce Authority/Office of Economic Opportunity

Figure 1: Core In-Demand Occupations – Count of Occupations by Education Requirement

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Source: Arizona Commerce Authority/Office of Economic Opportunity

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[care/#:~:text=The%20total%20number%20of%20employer,in%20Arizona%20and%20its%20counties](https://www.azeconomy.org/2023/05/economy/largest-number-of-businesses-in-arizona-are-in-health-care/#:~:text=The%20total%20number%20of%20employer,in%20Arizona%20and%20its%20counties)

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[10]<https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Training/find-certifications.aspx>

[11]<https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Training/find-licenses.aspx>

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce in the State and within various state regions. Provide key analytical conclusions in aggregate as well as disaggregated among populations to identify potential disparities in employment and educational attainment and understand labor force conditions for items (i)-(iii) below. Populations analyzed must include individuals with barriers to employment described in the first paragraph of Section II. Analysis must include—

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

(i) Employment and Unemployment. *Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.*

Population

Arizona's population increased by 1.7 percent (123,819 individuals) in CY 2022 (Figure 2). This growth is attributed entirely to in-migration to the state: Arizona's natural change accounted for -0.6 percent of this change (more deaths than births) while total net migration accounted for 100.6 percent of this change. Over the next decade, total net migration is projected to remain the driving force of population change in Arizona, although natural change is projected to increase. Figures 3 and 4 show the United States Census Bureau's breakdown of 2021 Arizona in-migration by Age and Education level.

Figure 2: Arizona's Population Growth and Growth Rates, 2006-2024

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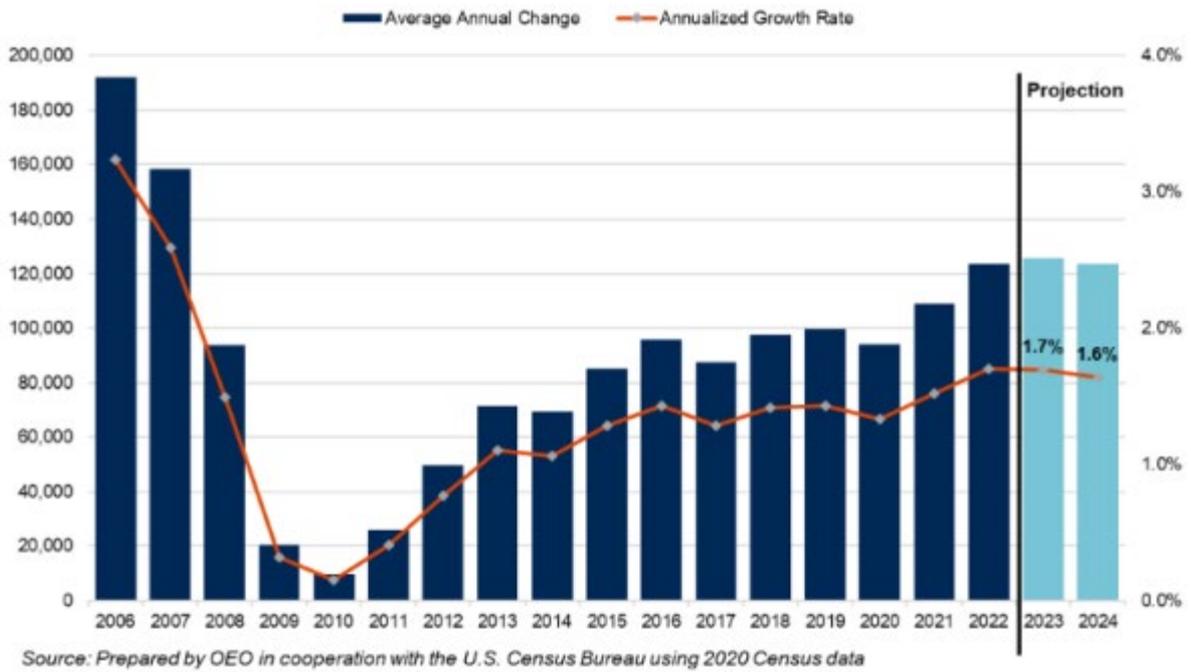


Figure 3: 2021 Migration by Age Range, Moved From Different State

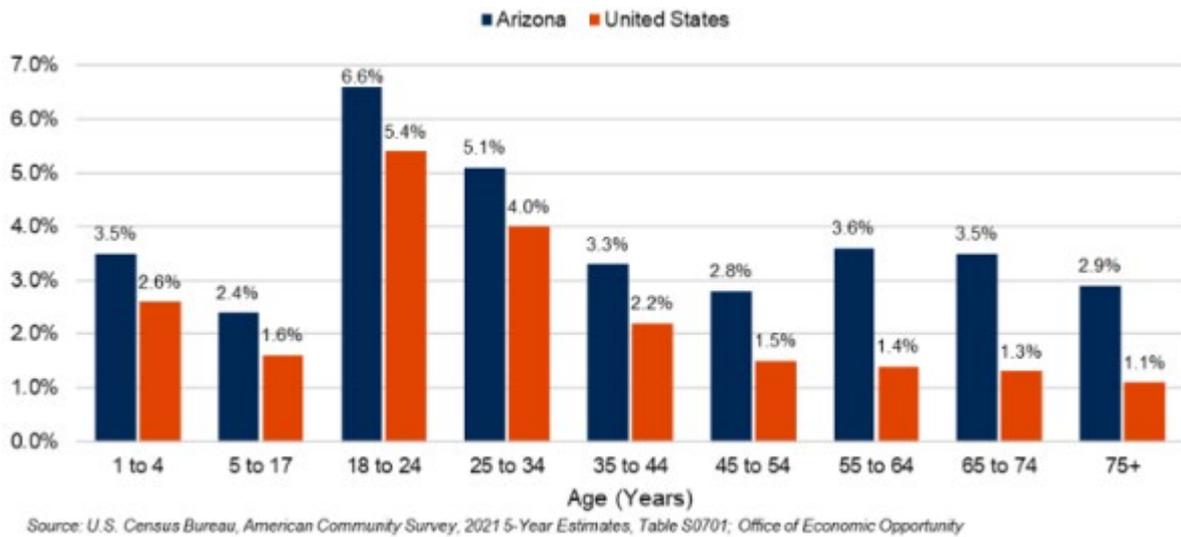
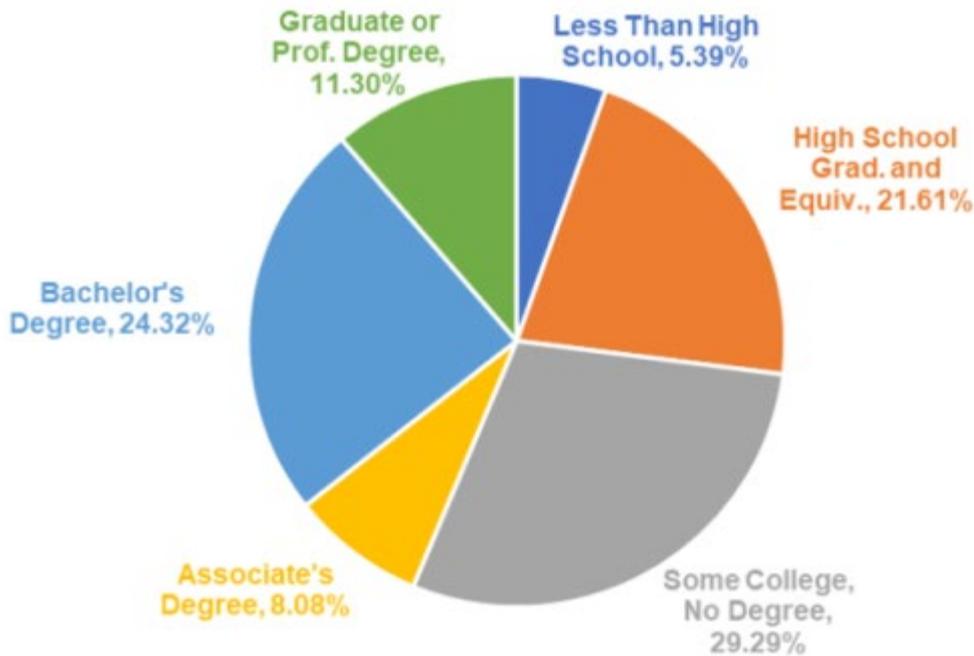


Figure 4: 2021 Migration by Education Level, Moved From Different State



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates

Arizona's population growth rate has exceeded 1.0 percent every year since CY 2012 (Figure 1). Due to impacts from the Great Recession, 2009 and 2010 had particularly low population growth rates. The employment levels in Arizona declined during these years, and, as employment opportunity is a major driver of population increases, net migration decreased as well. As the state recovered, net migration began to increase. This population growth can, in turn, fuel additional economic growth through the infusion of new consumers demanding goods and services.

Unemployment

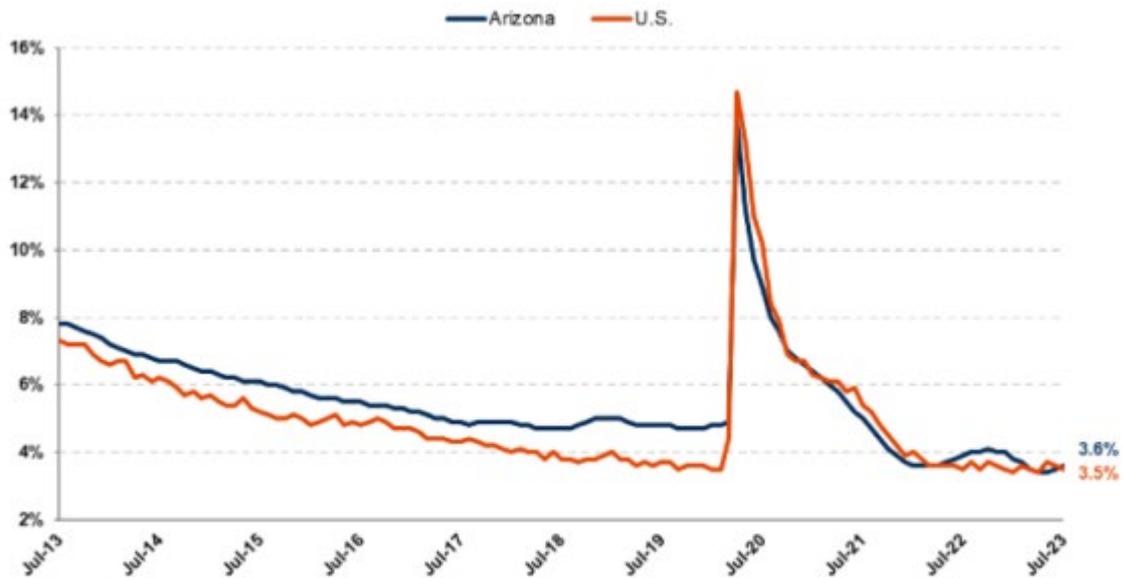
In both April and May 2023, Arizona had an unemployment rate of 3.4 percent, the lowest statewide unemployment rate since 1976. These historic lows fall on the tail-end of the COVID-19 induced economic downturn in February 2020[12], which led the unemployment rates for both Arizona and the United States to hit historic highs in April 2020 (13.8 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively). Currently, both the statewide and national unemployment rates sit at or below pre-pandemic levels. Prior to the pandemic (April 2008 to March 2020), the Arizona unemployment rate consistently trended above the United States unemployment rate. This trend extends into recent months,

May 2022-February 2023, and can be partly explained by the state's increases in population and labor force levels[13].

From 2010 to 2022, Arizona's civilian noninstitutional population increased by 15.8 percent. During that same period, the civilian noninstitutional population in the United States grew by only 11 percent. Consequently, a population increase in Arizona led to an increase in labor force levels, which grew by 16.7 percent from 2010 to 2022. These disparate trends are projected to

continue into the next two decades: Arizona's annual population growth rate is projected to be twice as high as the nation's rate (0.6 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively).

Figure 5: Arizona & U.S. Unemployment Rate, Seasonally Adjusted

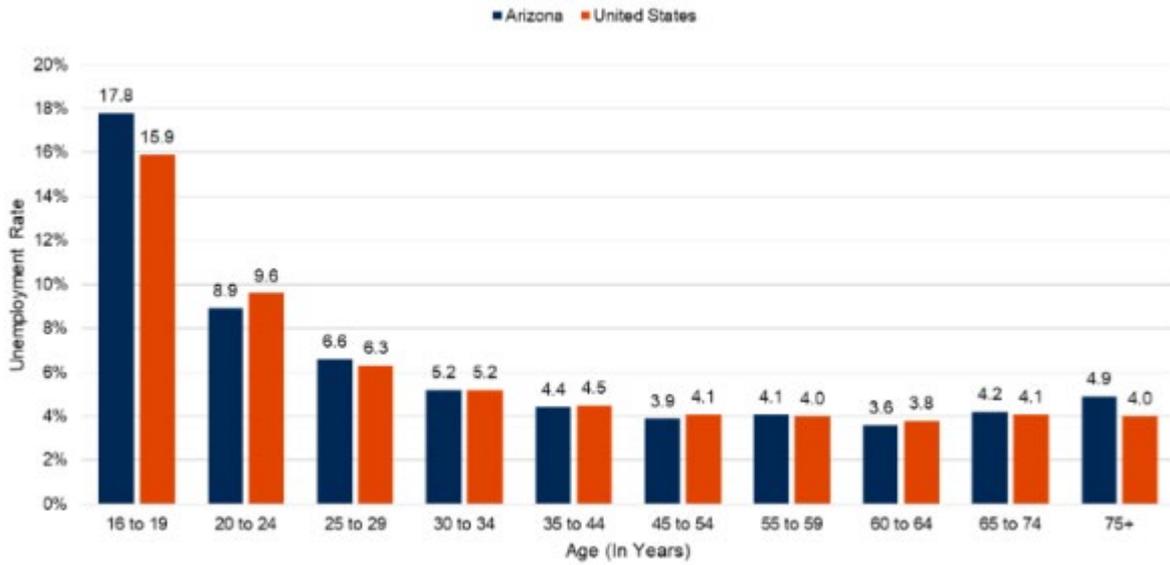


Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

From 2010 through 2016, Arizona's unemployment rate trended downward to historic lows (Figure 5). During the later years of the recovery from the Great Recession, 2017 through 2019, the Arizona unemployment rate began to flatten out or increase slightly. This change in trend was largely due to an increase in labor force levels: Arizona labor force growth was among the fastest of all states during this period.

Unemployment rates can vary based on different demographic characteristics. Table 7 and Figure 6 display 2021 unemployment rates by age group for Arizona and the United States. Unemployment rates were lowest among individuals 60 to 64 years old both in the United States and in Arizona. Similarly, in both the United States and Arizona, unemployment rates were highest for individuals 16-19 years old. Historically, younger age groups had higher unemployment rates when compared to older age groups. This gap in unemployment rates is partly because of the difference in the amount of work experience and skills acquired by the two age groups, with individuals in younger age categories typically having less of each than individuals in older age categories.

Figure 6: 2021 Unemployment Rate by Age Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, Table S2301; Office of Economic Opportunity

Labor Force

In July 2023, Arizona had a Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) of 61.8 percent[14]. Before COVID-19 forced many workers out of the labor force, the February 2020 Arizona LFPR was 61.9 percent. Prior to the pandemic, the Arizona Labor Force recorded impressive gains. From July 2013 through January 2020, the LFPR increased by 1.8 percentage points (60.3 percent to 62.1 percent). This change equated to an increase of over 409,900 individuals in the labor force (13.4 percent growth). In comparison, the United States Labor Force grew by 5.6 percent over the same period. Arizona’s Labor Force hit its lowest point during the pandemic in April 2020 with a level of 3,392,569 individuals. By October 2020, the labor force exceeded its pre-pandemic levels; currently, in July 2023, the Arizona Labor Force level has grown 6.1 percent since its pre-pandemic high in January 2020.

Figure 7: Labor Force Participation Rate

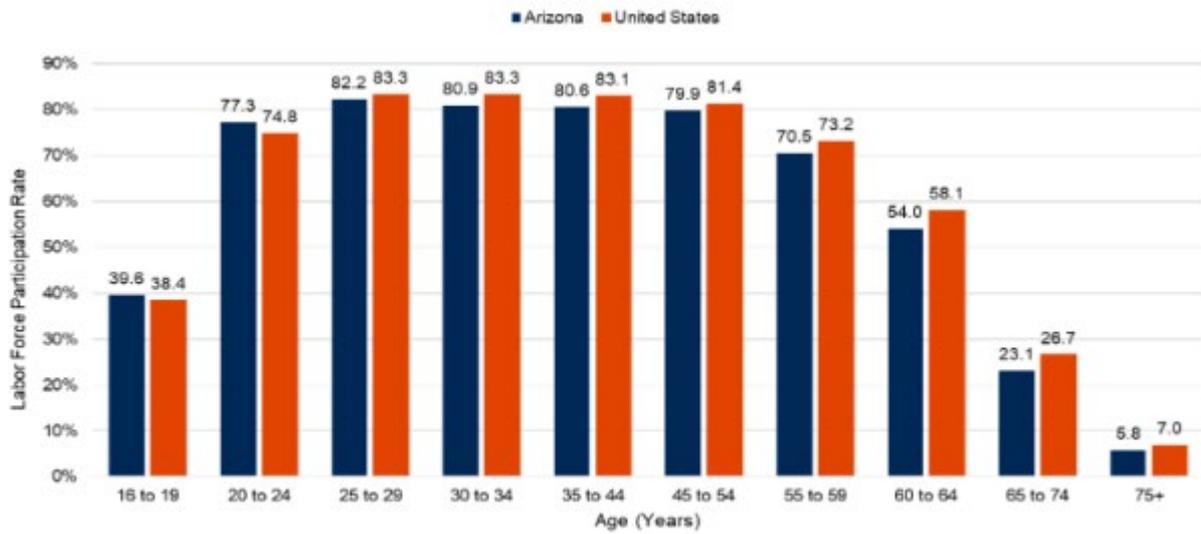


Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

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Table 7 and Figure 8 display the 2021 United States and Arizona LFPR for ten distinct age categories. Among all age groups, the LFPR was highest among the 25- to 29-year-old age group, regardless of geography. Except for individuals aged 16 to 24 years old, the LFPR trended higher nationally than statewide. There was a 4.1 percentage point difference between the LFPR among those 60 to 64 years old in Arizona and in the United States—this was the largest difference among all age groups.

Figure 8: 2021 Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, Table S2301; Office of Economic Opportunity

Table 7: Unemployment and LFPR by Demographic Characteristics, 2021

Demographic	Arizona			United States			
	Unemployment Rate	Employment/Population Ratio	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Employment / Population Ratio	Labor Force Participation Rate	
Age	16 to 19 years	17.8%	32.3%	39.6%	15.9%	31.9%	38.4%
	20 to 24 years	8.9%	69.0%	77.3%	9.6%	66.1%	74.8%
	25 to 29 years	6.6%	75.8%	82.2%	6.3%	77.0%	83.3%
	30 to 34 years	5.2%	76.0%	80.9%	5.2%	78.2%	83.3%
	35 to 44 years	4.4%	76.6%	80.6%	4.5%	78.8%	83.1%
	45 to 54 years	3.9%	76.7%	79.9%	4.1%	77.9%	81.4%
	55 to 59 years	4.1%	67.6%	70.5%	4.0%	70.3%	73.2%
	60 to 64 years	3.6%	52.0%	54.0%	3.8%	55.9%	58.1%
	65 to 74 years	4.2%	22.1%	23.1%	4.1%	25.6%	26.7%
75 years and over	4.9%	5.5%	5.8%	4.0%	6.7%	7.0%	
Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin	White alone	5.0%	55.7%	59.0%	4.6%	59.5%	62.8%
	Black or African American alone	8.3%	61.3%	67.8%	9.2%	56.9%	63.2%
	American Indian and Alaska Native alone	11.5%	47.1%	53.3%	9.2%	53.2%	58.9%
	Asian alone	3.6%	63.2%	66.0%	4.6%	62.7%	66.0%
	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	7.1%	62.7%	69.2%	7.2%	60.2%	66.1%
	Some other race alone	5.8%	61.2%	65.3%	6.7%	62.9%	67.7%
	Two or more races	7.3%	62.0%	67.4%	7.6%	61.9%	67.7%
	Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	6.1%	62.4%	66.7%	6.4%	63.1%	67.9%
	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	4.8%	53.9%	56.9%	4.5%	59.0%	62.2%
Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)	Less than high school graduate	7.3%	56.5%	60.9%	8.1%	56.0%	60.9%
	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	6.3%	66.5%	71.2%	6.1%	67.7%	72.3%
	Some college or associate's degree	4.6%	73.3%	77.4%	4.8%	75.1%	79.6%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	2.8%	81.7%	84.5%	2.9%	84.0%	87.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, Table S2301
Office of Economic Opportunity

Individuals with Barriers to Employment Target Populations

Veterans

In 2022, the BLS estimated a total population of 436,000 veterans in Arizona with 210,000 in the labor force (48.2 percent of all veterans). Among Arizona veterans, the 2022 unemployment rate was 3.2 percent, higher than the nationwide rate of 2.8 percent. In 2021, the unemployment rate among Arizona veterans was 4.0 percent. The 2022 LFPR for Arizona veterans was 48.2 percent, lower than the state’s total LFPR of 64.3 percent. However, analyzing veterans solely in aggregate masks differences in labor force participation between different service group eras. In 2020, 81.6 percent of veterans who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam were mostly retired and no longer in the civilian labor force. Nationally, in 2022, WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era veterans accounted for 34.0 percent of all veterans and had a LFPR of 14.8 percent.

Individuals with Disabilities

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Nationally, the BLS estimated that 21.3 percent of individuals with a disability were employed in 2022. Comparatively, 65.4 percent of individuals without a disability were employed nationally. The 2022 national LFPR among individuals over the age of 16 was 62.2 percent, significantly higher than the LFPR among individuals with a disability of 23.1 percent.

The 2022 national unemployment rate among individuals with disabilities was 7.6 percent, while the rate among people without a disability was 3.6 percent. This disparity is continued from previous years: the 2021 unemployment rates for individuals with and without a disability were 10.1 percent and 5.1 percent, respectively. This trend is also expressed at the state level. For 2021, the United States Census Bureau estimates that 24.9 percent of individuals with a disability and 57.9 percent of individuals without a disability in Arizona are employed.

In 2021, the United States Census Bureau estimates that 18.0 percent of Arizona residents with a disability and 11.0 percent of Arizona residents without a disability fall below the poverty level. At the national level, 19.6 percent of individuals with a disability and 10.1 percent of individuals without a disability fall below the poverty line.

Knowledge of the types of disabilities reported by Arizona residents allows the workforce development programs to prepare to meet the needs of Arizonans with disabilities to maximize employability.

Disability types are classified into six categories and detailed by age in the United States Census data. The data indicates that the State's rates for those reporting specific disability types are similar to the National rates as the State's rates are either equal to, higher than or lower than the National rate by less than one percentage point in each category.

Cognitive disabilities are the most frequently reported disability types among individuals ages 18 to 64 found in the 2022 one-year estimate data in six counties in Arizona. Coconino County and Mohave County's rates for cognitive disabilities among ages 18 to 64 exceed the National rural average by one percent. Mohave County's rate for ambulatory disabilities is two percentage points higher than the National rural average of 5.6 percent. Important to note that mental health impairments are not included in the American Community Survey data.

Table 8 provides specific data for the total civilian noninstitutionalized population. Table 8 categories include the population under 18 years and the population ages 18 to 64.

Table 8: Disability Types and Age: United States and Arizona

Disability Types and Age: United States and Arizona	Percent with a Disability					
	United States	United States Urban	United States Rural	Arizona	Arizona Urban	Arizona Rural
With a hearing difficulty	3.7%	3.3%	5.1%	4.1%	3.9%	5.6%
Population under 18 years	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
Population 18 to 64 years	2.0%	1.8%	2.9%	2.0%	1.9%	2.9%
With a vision difficulty	2.5%	2.4%	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%	3.3%
Population under 18 years	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Population 18 to 64 years	2.1%	2.0%	2.5%	2.3%	2.3%	3.0%
With a cognitive difficulty	5.7%	5.6%	5.9%	5.4%	5.4%	5.4%
Population under 18 years	4.8%	4.8%	4.9%	4.9%	5.0%	3.5%
Population 18 to 64 years	5.2%	5.1%	5.5%	5.0%	5.0%	4.9%
With an ambulatory difficulty	6.7%	6.5%	7.9%	6.5%	6.3%	7.6%
Population under 18 years	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	0.9%	0.5%
Population 18 to 64 years	4.4%	4.2%	5.6%	4.2%	4.1%	5.2%
With a self-care difficulty	2.6%	2.5%	2.8%	2.3%	2.3%	2.5%
Population under 18 years	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.3%	1.4%	1.2%
Population 18 to 64 years	1.7%	1.6%	2.0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%
With an independent living difficulty	6.0%	5.9%	6.5%	5.5%	5.4%	5.9%
Population 18 to 64 years	3.9%	3.8%	4.5%	3.8%	3.8%	4.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate

Ex-Offenders

Individuals who were previously incarcerated often face challenges when seeking out employment opportunities and are less likely to be employed than those who have not been incarcerated[15]. In Arizona, the incarcerated population is increasing at a faster rate than the general population. From 2000 to 2019, the residential population in Arizona increased by 38.9 percent while the prison population increased 61.1 percent. Additionally, in 2021, Arizona had a

higher incarceration rate than the United States (453 people per 100,000 and 350 people per 100,000, respectively)[16].

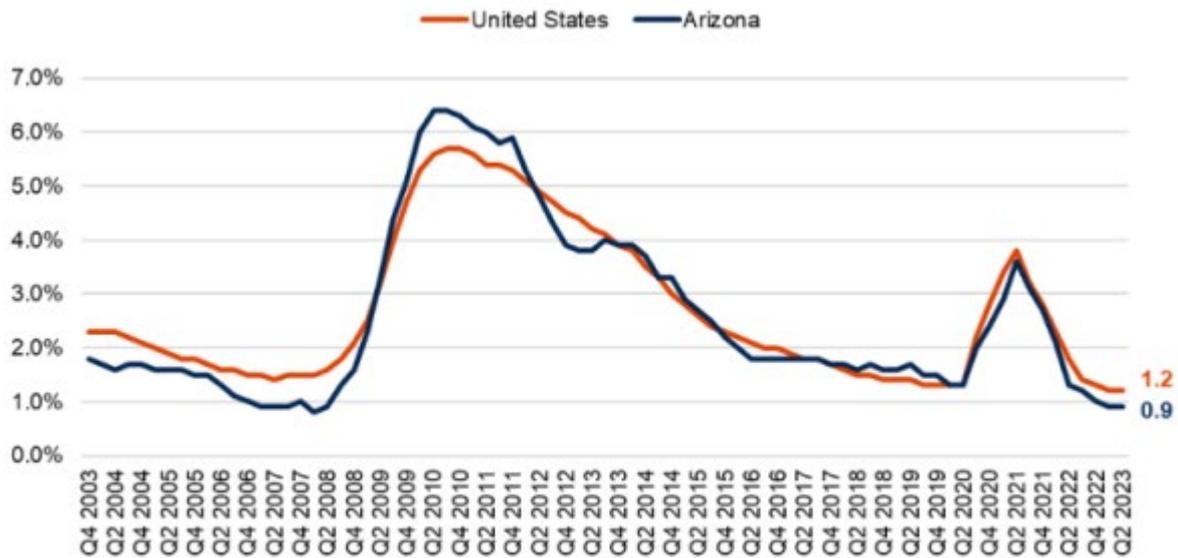
English Language Learners

Adults with low academic and/or low English language skills represent an additional group for which services are needed to help enter the workforce. According to the 2021 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 26.6 percent of Arizonans speak a language other than English at home and 8.1 percent of people speak English “less than very well.”

Long-Term Unemployed

In addition to the usual unemployment estimates, the BLS tracks alternative measures of unemployment. One of these measures, labor underutilization, tracks individuals who have been unemployed for 15 weeks or longer as a percent of the civilian labor force. Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, Arizona’s rate has been trending slightly below the nation’s: The Arizona U-1 measure was estimated at 0.9 percent in Q2 2023 and the national rate was 1.2 percent. This comes two years after a relative peak in Q2 2021 of 3.6 and 3.8 percent for the state and the nation, respectively. Figure 9 shows the statewide and national U-1 measure over time.

Figure 9: Percent of Civilian Labor Force Unemployed 15 Weeks or Longer



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity

Low-Income Individuals

According to the 2021 American Community Survey five-Year Estimates, 12.5 percent of the population for whom poverty status is determined fall below the poverty line in Arizona. Moreover, 6.5 percent of the population for whom poverty status is determined fall below 50 percent of the poverty level. Table 9 displays poverty level by select demographic characteristics.

Table 9: Percent of Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined by Demographic, 2021

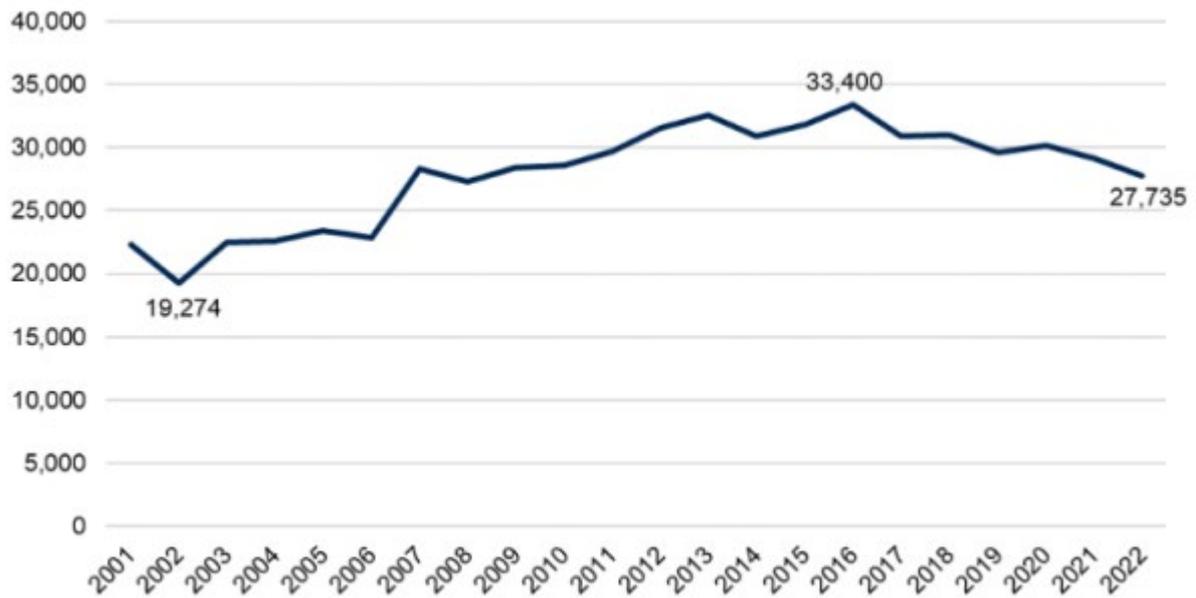
Demographic		Arizona		United States	
		Less than 50% of poverty line	Less than 100% of poverty line	Less than 50% of poverty line	Less than 100% of poverty line
Age	Under 18 years	8.2%	18.8%	7.7%	17.0%
	18 to 64 years	6.4%	12.8%	5.7%	11.8%
	65 years and over	3.6%	9.0%	3.2%	9.6%
Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin	White	5.4%	11.5%	4.7%	10.3%
	Black or African American	8.5%	18.7%	10.2%	21.7%
	American Indian and Alaska Native	15.9%	31.2%	11.1%	23.4%
	Asian	5.5%	10.9%	5.2%	10.3%
	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	7.6%	13.5%	7.7%	16.7%
	Some other race	8.5%	19.0%	8.1%	19.1%
	Two or more races	6.8%	15.1%	6.7%	14.9%
	Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	7.6%	18.2%	7.4%	17.7%
	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	4.7%	9.2%	4.3%	9.2%
Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)	Less than high school graduate	9.9%	23.8%	9.4%	23.9%
	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	6.5%	13.8%	5.8%	13.5%
	Some college or associate's degree	4.7%	10.0%	4.2%	9.4%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	2.7%	5.0%	2.2%	4.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, Table S1703 Office of Economic Opportunity

Farmworkers

According to the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis, farm employment accounted for 27,735 jobs in Arizona in 2022. Recently, farm employment in Arizona has been trending downward since its peak in 2016. The largest number of farm jobs were in Maricopa County (5,775 jobs) and Apache County (5,164 jobs) in 2022. Figure 10 and Table 10 show total Arizona farm jobs over time and the count of 2022 farm jobs by county, respectively.

Figure 10: Arizona Farm Jobs, 2001-2022



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity

Table 10: Arizona Farm Employment by County, 2022

Area	Number of Jobs
Arizona	27,735
Apache, AZ	5,164
Cochise, AZ	1,461
Coconino, AZ	2,088
Gila, AZ	179
Graham, AZ	405
Greenlee, AZ	137
La Paz, AZ	434
Maricopa, AZ	5,775
Mohave, AZ	479
Navajo, AZ	3,819
Pima, AZ	1,042
Pinal, AZ	2,051
Santa Cruz, AZ	401
Yavapai, AZ	1,190
Yuma, AZ	3,110

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity

WIOA Training Outcomes by Barrier to Employment

Barriers to employment refer to any circumstances that could create challenges in securing employment. These include issues like insufficient housing, clothing, or food, as well as challenges such as limited proficiency in English, a criminal record, or a lack of education, work

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experience, credentials, transportation, or childcare arrangements. These barriers can significantly affect one’s ability to succeed in finding employment. To assess how populations with barriers to employment are being prepared to enter the workforce, Table 11 displays Title I WIOA training program exiters from Program Year (PY) 2020 by barrier to employment. Low-income individuals account for the largest share of exiters. Table 12 displays Title I WIOA Program outcomes, in terms of measurable skill gain and credential rate, by barrier to employment.

In total, Title III participants (those receiving services via the Wagner-Peyser Act) comprise the largest share of program exiters. By barrier to employment, low-income individuals account for the most exiters across all titles. Table 12 displays WIOA Program outcomes, in terms of measurable skill gain and credential rate, by barrier to employment.

Table 11: WIOA Training Program Exiters in Title I

Barrier	Title I: Adult, Dislocated, Youth
Disability	383
Displaced Homemaker	54
English Language Learner	264
Ex Offender	1,182
Exhausting TANF	85
Foster Care Youth	46
Homeless	388
Low Income	3,918
Low Literacy	977
Long Term Unemp.	1,517
Migrant Farmworker	46
Older Individual	46
Single Parent	1,468
Sum:	10,374

Note: Data reflects WIOA training program participants from program year 2020

Source: *The Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity*

Table 12: Title I WIOA Training Outcomes by Barrier to Employment

Barrier	Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth	
	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains Rate
Displaced Homemaker	65.20%	65.60%
English Language Learner, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	63.10%	57.30%
Exhausting TANF	50.00%	40.60%
Ex-offender	72.10%	65.10%
Homeless / Runaway Youth	58.20%	54.90%
Long-term Unemployed	58.80%	58.40%
Low-Income	67.30%	62.40%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	63.60%	44.10%
Individual with Disability	65.10%	61.40%
Single Parent	68.80%	61.20%
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	41.10%	59.40%

Note: Data reflects WIOA training program participants from program year 2020

Source: ETA-9169 Annual Reports

Industry Employment

Arizona recorded nine straight years of employment growth from 2011 to 2019, growing by 531,300 jobs (2.5 percent annually). Comparatively, national employment grew by 1.7 percent annually over the same period. In recent years, Arizona total nonfarm employment growth has quickened, growing by 2.9 percent annually from 2021 to 2023.

Employment growth has been widespread throughout Arizona’s supersectors. All 11 Arizona super sectors recorded positive employment change from 2019 to 2023. Construction (13.9 percent) recorded the strongest employment growth rate among Arizona super sectors, followed by Financial Activities (10.6 percent), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (10.5 percent), and Manufacturing (9.6 percent).

Table 13: Annual Average Employment by Super-sector (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Super-Sector	Arizona			United States
	Average Employment (2019)	Average Employment (2023)	Percent Change (2019-2023)	Percent Change (2019-2023)
Total Nonfarm Employment	2,942,762	3,145,367	6.9%	6.9%
Construction	170,154	193,833	13.9%	10.5%
Financial Activities	227,931	252,167	10.6%	8.2%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	544,392	601,667	10.5%	6.1%
Manufacturing	178,169	195,233	9.6%	0.6%
Private Education & Health Services	462,962	500,767	8.2%	3.2%
Professional & Business Services	447,754	474,867	6.1%	10.6%
Leisure & Hospitality	331,869	342,433	3.2%	9.6%
Natural Resources & Mining	13,285	13,633	2.6%	13.9%
Information	49,392	50,567	2.4%	0.7%
Other Services	94,392	95,100	0.7%	2.4%
Government	422,477	425,100	0.6%	2.6%

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

COVID-19 Impact

The COVID-19 Pandemic was responsible for the largest employment losses recorded since the Great Depression (1939) in both Arizona and the United States as a whole. After the initial job losses recorded in the first half of 2020, many super sectors began adding jobs. Trade, Transportation & Utilities was the first industry to fully recover the jobs lost during the initial months of the pandemic, reaching pre-pandemic employment levels in September 2020. Arizona Private Sector employment recovered all of its lost jobs by October 2020. Similarly, five of the seven Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) within Arizona have surpassed pre-pandemic employment levels—only Flagstaff MSA and Sierra-Vista-Douglas MSA remain below pre-pandemic levels.

Sub-State Employment

A significant portion of Arizona's employment is concentrated in two MSAs[17]: the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale MSA and the Tucson MSA. In 2023, these two MSAs accounted for 87.8 percent of total nonfarm employment within the state.

Table 14 lists employment levels and growth for the seven Arizona MSAs and the United States. The Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale MSA recorded the fastest annual employment growth rate (8.3 percent growth; 180,162 jobs) from 2019 to 2023. The Tucson MSA recorded the second largest numeric employment gains, adding 8,974 jobs (2.3 percent) over the same period. The Lake Havasu City-Kingman MSA recorded the second highest annual employment growth rates (6.6 percent) followed by Yuma MSA (5.0 percent). Sierra Vista-Douglas MSA and Flagstaff MSA both recorded negative employment change (-0.4 percent and -0.1 percent, respectively).

Table 14: Annual Average Employment by Region (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Region	Average Employment (2019)	Average Employment (2023)	Numeric Change (2019-2023)	Percent Change (2019-2023)
United States	150,904,308	153,784,333	2,880,026	1.9%
Arizona	2,942,762	3,145,367	202,605	6.9%
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale MSA	2,180,238	2,360,400	180,162	8.3%
Lake Havasu City-Kingman MSA	52,054	55,500	3,446	6.6%
Prescott MSA	65,931	69,367	3,436	5.2%
Yuma MSA	57,577	60,433	2,856	5.0%
Tucson MSA	391,092	400,067	8,974	2.3%
Flagstaff MSA	67,992	67,933	-59	-0.1%
Sierra Vista-Douglas MSA	33,854	33,733	-121	-0.4%

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

Occupation Employment

Table 15 displays 2022 employment and wage estimates for 22 major occupation groups[18]. The largest major occupational group in Arizona by employment was Office and Administrative Support (435,370 jobs) followed by Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (274,410 jobs), Transportation and Material Moving (270,410 jobs), and Sales and Related Occupations (269,960 jobs). Together, these four major occupation groups represent 41.2 percent of Arizona’s total 2022 employment.

The four largest occupation groups in Arizona were also the largest major occupation groups in the United States. The largest difference in major occupation group composition between Arizona and the United States was in Office and Administrative Support employment: Office and Administrative Support represented 14.4 percent of total Arizona jobs and 12.6 percent of total United States jobs. The second largest difference in occupational composition occurred in Construction and Extraction Occupations, which represented 4.8 percent of total Arizona employment but only 4.1 percent of total United States employment. In total, the median difference between occupational employment composition between Arizona and the United States was -0.05 percent—the average difference was 0.0 percent.

The 2022 median hourly wage level for all occupations in Arizona was \$21.77, up from a median hourly wage of \$19.35 in 2020. The United States recorded a slightly higher median hourly wage: \$22.26 in 2022 and \$20.17 in 2020. In both Arizona and the United States, Management occupations had the highest median wages, paying \$47.17 per hour in Arizona and \$51.62 in the United States. The lowest median wage in Arizona was \$14.75 in Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations followed by \$15.18 in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations.

Table 15: 2022 Arizona & United States Occupational Employment & Hourly Wage Estimates

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SOC Code*	Occupation Title	Arizona		United States	
		Median Hourly Wage (2022)	Share of Total Employment (2022)	Median Hourly Wage (2022)	Share of Total Employment (2022)
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	\$21.77	100.0%	\$22.26	100.0%
11-0000	Management Occupations	\$47.17	7.1%	\$51.62	6.7%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	\$32.15	6.8%	\$36.95	6.5%
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	\$44.62	3.8%	\$48.29	3.4%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	\$39.34	1.7%	\$40.24	1.7%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	\$30.74	0.6%	\$35.74	0.9%
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	\$22.62	1.5%	\$23.74	1.6%
23-0000	Legal Occupations	\$38.67	0.7%	\$45.76	0.8%
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	\$23.28	4.8%	\$27.64	5.7%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	\$23.67	1.1%	\$27.90	1.4%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	\$38.17	6.0%	\$37.38	6.1%
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	\$16.22	4.3%	\$16.16	4.6%
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	\$22.03	2.6%	\$21.85	2.3%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	\$15.18	9.1%	\$14.25	8.5%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	\$15.58	2.8%	\$16.28	2.9%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	\$15.71	1.8%	\$15.07	1.9%
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	\$16.73	8.9%	\$16.96	8.9%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	\$18.92	14.4%	\$19.67	12.6%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	\$14.75	0.4%	\$16.33	0.3%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	\$23.32	4.8%	\$24.31	4.1%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	\$23.15	4.2%	\$24.08	3.9%
51-0000	Production Occupations	\$18.95	4.0%	\$19.19	5.9%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	\$18.32	8.9%	\$18.24	9.2%

*The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is a federal statistical standard used by federal and state agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data.
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Survey (OEWS), 2022 Estimates; Office of Economic Opportunity

(ii) Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

Short-Term Industry Employment Projections

Table 16: 2022-2024 Arizona Industry Projections

Industry	Estimated Employment (2022)	Projected Employment (2024)	Projected Numeric Growth (2022-2024)	Annualized Percentage Growth (2022-2024)
Total Nonfarm Employment	3,241,387	3,332,012	90,625	1.4%
Construction	194,733	197,613	2,880	0.7%
Education and Health Services	642,042	657,864	15,822	1.2%
Financial Activities	234,156	231,360	-2,796	-0.6%
Government	160,493	161,885	1,392	0.4%
Information	52,951	56,465	3,514	3.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	356,217	373,675	17,458	2.4%
Natural Resources and Mining	48,878	49,126	248	0.3%
Other Services	104,568	107,017	2,449	1.2%
Professional And Business Services	468,563	486,020	17,457	1.8%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	613,787	632,344	18,557	1.5%

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

Table 16 notes the most recent short-term industry employment projections. Between 2022 and 2024, Arizona total nonfarm employment is projected to increase by 90,625 jobs (1.4 percent annually). During this same projection period, only Financial Activities is expected to record job losses (-2,796 jobs; -0.6 percent annually). The largest growths are expected to occur in Trade, Transportation and Utilities (18,557 jobs); Leisure and Hospitality (17,458 jobs); and Professional and Business Services (17,457 jobs). The fastest growing industries are projected to be Information (3.3 percent annually), Leisure and Hospitality (2.4 percent annually), and Professional and Business Services (1.8 percent annually).

Table 17 displays short-term employment projections by local area. Through 2024, employment is projected to grow throughout all seven Arizona metro areas. Wholly, Arizona employment is projected to grow 1.4 percent annually. The largest numeric gains are projected to occur within Maricopa County (199,513 jobs) and Pima County (30,521 jobs). The fastest growing Arizona counties from 2022-2024 are projected to be Maricopa County (4.4 percent annually), Coconino County (4.3 percent annually), and Pinal County (4.1 percent annually).

Table 17: State and Sub-State Employment Projections

Area	Estimated Employment (2022)	Projected Employment (2024)	Projected Numeric Growth (2022-2024)	Annualized Percentage Growth (2022-2024)
Arizona	3,241,387	3,332,012	90,625	1.4%
City of Phoenix	1,013,840	1,095,437	81,597	3.9%
Coconino County	64,430	70,044	5,614	4.3%
Maricopa County	2,233,091	2,432,604	199,513	4.4%
Mohave and La Paz Counties	65,909	71,189	5,280	3.9%
Northeastern Arizona ¹	64,496	68,182	3,686	2.8%
Pima County	397,174	427,695	30,521	3.8%
Pinal County	71,978	78,038	6,060	4.1%
Santa Cruz County	14,735	15,461	726	2.4%
Southeastern Arizona ²	54,206	57,926	3,720	3.4%
Yavapai County	71,559	77,411	5,852	4.0%
Yuma county	71,560	76,512	4,952	3.4%

¹ Northeastern Arizona is comprised of Navajo, Apache, and Gila Counties

² Southeastern Arizona is comprised of Graham, Greenlee, and Cochise Counties

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

Short-Term Occupation Employment Projections

Table 18 displays short-term employment projections by occupation. From 2022-2024, twenty-one of the 22 major occupational groups are projected to record job gains. The only losses are projected to occur within Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations (-255 jobs, -0.9 percent). Transportation and Material Moving Occupations is projected to record the largest number of job openings (14,107 jobs), followed by Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (10,633 jobs). The largest employment percentage growth is projected to occur within Architecture and Engineering Occupations (5.7 percent), followed by Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (5.0 percent). Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations has higher numeric and percentage growth than in previous short-term projections because of the downturn in this category during COVID-19; the projected growth and recovery of this industry make gains seem larger than in prior years.

Table 18: Arizona Occupational Projections

SOC Code*	Occupation Title	Estimated Employment (2022)	Projected Employment (2024)	Numeric Change (2022-2024)	Percent Change (2022-2024)
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	3,241,387	3,332,012	90,625	2.8%
11-0000	Management Occupations	245,897	253,020	7,123	2.9%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	213,722	219,067	5,345	2.5%
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	111,174	115,533	4,359	3.9%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	52,503	55,471	2,968	5.7%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	19,436	20,110	674	3.5%
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	47,999	49,154	1,155	2.4%
23-0000	Legal Occupations	24,770	25,764	994	4.0%
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	136,421	138,030	1,609	1.2%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	47,269	49,469	2,200	4.7%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	188,349	193,982	5,633	3.0%
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	141,923	148,119	6,196	4.4%
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	65,336	66,743	1,407	2.2%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	276,487	287,120	10,633	3.9%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	100,421	102,903	2,482	2.5%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	71,771	75,147	3,376	4.7%
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	302,302	306,408	4,106	1.4%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	458,038	461,765	3,727	0.8%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	27,326	27,071	-255	-0.9%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	168,236	171,534	3,298	2.0%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	134,694	138,791	4,097	3.0%
51-0000	Production Occupations	124,283	129,674	5,391	4.3%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	283,030	297,137	14,107	5.0%

*The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is a federal statistical standard used by federal and state agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data.

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

Table 19 shows the educational attainment of Arizona’s total population. Arizona has a higher rate of individuals with no high school diploma, with associate degrees, and with some college, no degree than does the nation. In Arizona, the highest percent of people have some college, no degree; nationally, most individuals have a high school diploma or equivalent.

Table 19: Educational Attainment of Arizonans Age 25 and Older Compared to U.S.

Educational Level Attained*	Arizona		United States	
	Population Estimate (2021)	Percent	Population Estimate (2021)	Percent
Less than 9th grade	236,487	4.9%	10,793,507	4.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	323,973	6.8%	14,256,849	6.3%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,125,498	23.5%	59,636,386	26.5%
Some college, no degree	1,177,629	24.6%	45,042,031	20.0%
Associate's degree	433,004	9.0%	19,614,710	8.7%
Bachelor's degree	923,339	19.3%	46,354,331	20.6%
Graduate or professional degree	572,077	11.9%	29,454,503	13.1%

*Population estimates include all individuals age 25 and older including those not in the labor force

Source: U.S., Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table S1501

Tables 20 and 21 show broad educational attainment levels by age group and race or Latino Hispanic origin for the state, respectively. Of individuals aged 25 years and older, those between 25 to 34 years old recorded the highest rate of graduating high school or higher. Those aged 35 to 44 years old recorded the highest rate of possessing a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 20: Educational Attainment of Arizonans by Age, 2021

Age	High School Graduate or Higher		Bachelor's Degree or Higher	
	Population Estimate	Percent	Population Estimate	Percent
25 to 34 years	871,947	90.2%	294,704	30.5%
35 to 44 years	772,626	87.5%	295,960	33.5%
45 to 64 years	1,484,290	87.4%	516,094	30.4%
65 years and older	1,102,684	88.7%	388,658	31.2%

Source: U.S., Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table S1501

Table 21: Educational Attainment of Arizonans by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin, 2021

Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin	High School Graduate or Higher		Bachelor's Degree or Higher	
	Population Estimate	Percent	Population Estimate	Percent
White alone	3,236,525	91.1%	1,192,598	33.6%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	2,753,930	95.1%	1,090,018	37.6%
Black alone	181,889	91.0%	55,838	27.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native alone	141,846	78.7%	20,440	11.3%
Asian alone	147,578	88.9%	97,164	58.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	8,189	87.5%	2,051	21.9%
Some other race alone	206,407	69.2%	37,962	12.7%
Two or more races	309,113	80.5%	89,363	23.3%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	911,922	72.7%	190,869	15.2%

Source: U.S., Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Table S1501

Skills Gaps

As current economic conditions improve, the need for middle- and high-skilled workers continues to put pressure on today's labor market. Table 22, Table 23, and Table 24 categorize 2022 and 2024 occupational employment by their respective education, job experience, and on-the-job training requirements[19] to help identify current and forecasted needs.

Occupations requiring low levels of education represent a large portion of Arizona jobs. In 2022, occupations requiring either no formal educational credential or a high school diploma made up 62.0 percent of employment (Table 17)—this is projected to remain the case through 2024. Nearly as many Arizona occupations require a bachelor's degree as do no formal educational credential. From 2022-2024, the distribution of educational requirements is expected to remain stable: no one requirement level is expected to change by more than 0.1 percent.

Table 22: 2022-2024 Arizona Employment by Occupation Minimum Educational Requirements

Minimum Educational Requirement	Estimated Employment Level (2022)	Estimated Share of Total Employment (2022)	Projected Employment Level (2024)	Projected Share of Total Employment (2024)
No formal educational credential	750,783	23.2%	772,622	23.3%
High school diploma or equivalent	1,255,525	38.8%	1,286,615	38.7%
Some college, no degree	82,546	2.6%	83,851	2.5%
Postsecondary non-degree award	199,637	6.2%	206,560	6.2%
Associate's degree	68,571	2.1%	71,131	2.1%
Bachelor's degree	746,408	23.1%	768,837	23.1%
Master's degree	54,923	1.7%	56,893	1.7%
Doctoral or professional degree	74,276	2.3%	76,467	2.3%

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

More than four in five occupations do not require job seekers to have prior work experience to be competitive. In 2022, only 16.7 percent of Arizona workers were employed in occupations that required at least some work experience (Table 23). Work experience is an important attribute for occupations that require employee oversight, such as managers, supervisors, or administrators. This trend is consistent across all educational attainment levels that require work experience.

Table 23: 2022-2024 Arizona Employment by Occupation Job Experience

Job Experience	Estimated Employment Level (2022)	Estimated Share of Total Employment (2022)	Projected Employment Level (2024)	Projected Share of Total Employment (2024)
None	2,691,647	83.3%	2,766,025	83.2%
Less than 5 years	352,261	10.9%	362,656	10.9%
5 years or more	188,761	5.8%	194,295	5.8%

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

Table 24 identifies on-the-job training requirements for Arizona occupations. Unlike work experience requirements, most occupations require at least some on-the-job training. In 2022, only 35.8 percent of jobs provided no on-the-job training, while 61.3 percent of jobs required short-, moderate-, or long-term on-the-job training. Occupations requiring an internship, residency, or apprenticeship represented 2.9 percent of jobs in 2022.

Table 24: Arizona Employment by Occupation Job On-the-Job Training

On-the-Job Training	Estimated Employment Level (2022)	Estimated Share of Total Employment (2022)	Projected Employment Level (2024)	Projected Share of Total Employment (2024)
None	1,157,635	35.8%	1,192,799	35.9%
Internship/residency	35,699	1.1%	36,832	1.1%
Apprenticeship	56,596	1.8%	57,563	1.7%
Short-term on-the-job training	1,315,955	40.7%	1,350,306	40.6%
Moderate-term on-the-job training	573,443	17.7%	590,029	17.8%
Long-term on-the-job training	93,341	2.9%	95,447	2.9%

Source: Produced by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity in cooperation with the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

[12]Radin, C. (2021, July 19). *US Business Cycle Expansions and Contractions*. National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://www.nber.org/research/data/us-business-cycle-expansions-and-contractions>

[13]The labor force participation rate (LFPR) is the labor force as a percent of the civilian noninstitutional population.

[14]The civilian noninstitutional populations include persons 16 years of age and older residing in the 50 States and the District of Columbia who are not inmates of institutions (for example, penal and mental facilities, homes for the aged), and who are not on active duty in the Armed Forces.

[15]BLS, United States Department of Labor (U.S. DOL). The Economics Daily. *Employment of young men after arrest or incarceration*. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2019/employment-of-young-men-after-arrest-or-incarceration.htm> (visited August 23, 2021).

[16]The Sentencing Project. (2021, August 4). *State-by-State Data*.

<https://www.sentencingproject.org/the-facts/#detail?state1Option=Arizona&state2Option=0>

[17]The general concept of a MSA is one of a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities which have a high degree of economic and social integration with that nucleus.

[18]Occupation employment estimates group employment by the type of job an employee performs.

[19]BLS uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education, work experience in a related occupation, and typical on-the-job training to each occupation. Categories do not necessarily identify the exact level of education, job experience or on-the-job training an individual employed in that occupation has. For more information regarding education, job experience and on-the-job assignments visit: http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_education_tech.htm.

C. COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSION. DESCRIBE AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MEETING HIRING, EDUCATION, AND SKILLS NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ECONOMY COMPARED TO THE ASSETS AVAILABLE IN THE LABOR FORCE IN THE STATE.

Before this plan was submitted for public comment, three development sessions took place across the state with a distinct focus on assessing this report’s data and how it connects to larger goals and strategies. A key takeaway was a needed acknowledgement of the state’s aging

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population as these goals and strategies are developed over the next four years. Much of the remaining discussion pivoted away from workforce and economic analysis and had more to do with the need for improved operational efforts, such as an improved state-wide referral system. The attendees emphasized the importance of developing strategies around the in-demand industries and working with partner organizations to ensure federal investment in the state is considered when supporting individuals finding employment opportunities. This included a cognizance that we need to educate and train segments of the workforce with respect to the state's in-demand industries and large investment projects so that the provided opportunities are not left vacant.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required ⁶ and optional one-stop delivery system partners.⁷

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

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The ARIZONA@WORK system is the statewide workforce development network that bridges partnerships across state agencies, local organizations, and community-based programs dedicated to creating a skilled and adaptable workforce pipeline that meets the current and future needs of employers and the state's economy. ARIZONA@WORK system stakeholders include, but are not limited to the ACA, Arizona Department of Education (ADE), Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES/Department), the state's 12 LWDAs, the Arizona OEO, and the WAC. Primary components of the workforce system include its governance, coordination between and with partner organizations, and innovative services to exceed individuals' and employers' expectations.

Governance

Governance of the ARIZONA@WORK system is spearheaded by the WAC, established in 2015 to serve as the principal workforce development board for the state. The Council's composition includes members from state legislature, businesses, workforce including the trades, and the WIOA Core Program Partners. Council members are actively engaged in various statewide organizations, such as the Arizona Manufacturers Council, Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Arizona Association of General Contractors. This multi-council participation enhances their capacity to contribute valuable insights and perspectives, bolstering the execution of their responsibilities within the WAC.

To ensure effective oversight and implementation of policies within the ARIZONA@WORK system, the dedicated Executive Committee within the Council has been entrusted with the task of formulating and reviewing administrative policies. These policies encompass crucial areas such as local governance structure, service integration, service provider selection, job center certification, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA), monitoring, conflict of interest, and more.

A significant milestone for the Council was the strategic initiative to streamline efficiency within the ARIZONA@WORK system by revising the job center certification process. This forward-looking revision aimed to eliminate redundancy in assessment tools, thus optimizing the certification process. This proactive approach not only ensures a more efficient job center certification process but also reinforces the Council's commitment to continuous improvement and adaptability in addressing the evolving landscape of workforce development in the state.

As part of ongoing efforts to enhance the WIOA framework, all existing policies were subject to a thorough review in 2022 and 2023. This comprehensive review process not only ensures the relevance and effectiveness of current policies but also paves the way for the integration of emerging initiatives. One such initiative, the BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative, has been introduced to further align workforce development strategies with the evolving needs of the state.

The statewide changes, along with the updated and refined policies, collectively forms the foundation for the Council's governance structure, ensuring the continued success of the ARIZONA@WORK system in meeting the demands of a rapidly changing labor market.

State-System Leadership & Coordination

The Core Partner Programs of the ARIZONA@WORK system are administered across two state level agencies. ADES works with families, community organizations, advocates, and state and

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federal partners to realize the vision of a thriving Arizona that strengthens individuals, families, and communities for a better quality of life. ADES is identified as the state workforce agency responsible for the administration of the majority of the Core Partner Programs set forth in this Unified Plan. The Department administers the WIOA Title I (Governance/Adult, DW, Youth), Title III (Employment Service (ES)), and Title IV (VR) Programs within its Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services (DERS). The Division coordinates the efforts of the state's ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, which provide comprehensive services to both jobseekers and businesses. Additionally, DERS maintains the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) for the system, ensures ongoing viable Rapid Response (RR) activity, delivers technical assistance and training focused on the implementation of WIOA, and administers the following workforce programs:

- Arizona Apprenticeship Office (AAO);
- Foreign Labor Certification (FLC)
- Job for Veterans State Grants (JVSG);
- Justice Involved - Reentry Program;
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program;
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP);
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Career Advancement Network (Arizona's Employment and Training Program);
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA);
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Jobs
- Unemployment Insurance (UI); and
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and Federal Bonding.

Housed within ADES, DERS has access to and integration with the following human service programs administered within the agency focused on strengthening individuals and families, increasing self sufficiency, and developing the capacity of communities offers opportunities to connect individuals seeking services to address their basic needs with employment and training services:

- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG);
- SNAP;
- TANF;
- Support to individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities;
- Child Care Assistance;
- Child Support; and

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- Refugee Resettlement.

Additionally, ADES coordinates with programs outside the Unified State Plan, such as Child Support Services, where processes are implemented to assist and connect child support participants to employment and training resources, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), to coordinate ES for individuals co-enrolled in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and Child Care Administration, which connects parents receiving child care subsidies to employment opportunities through a referral process.

The ADE administers WIOA Title II funding to sub-grantees through its Adult Education Services Division in order to provide services in each of the LWDA's. A competitive grant application process is conducted approximately every four years, ensuring that all local workforce areas have Title II providers delivering high quality services in literacy education, including English acquisition, numeracy, digital skills, workplace preparedness, and Integrated Education and Training (IET). The ADE also houses the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program which is not included in this Unified State Plan but does present continued opportunities for deepening state-level coordination.

The most recent grant competition was held in PY 2019-2020, and in PY 2023-2024 there are 20 Title II providers, consisting of nine community colleges, four local education agencies (school districts), four community-based organizations, and three county governments:

- Arizona Center for Youth Resources;
- Adult Literacy Plus of Southwest Arizona;
- Arizona Western College Adult Education Services;
- Central Arizona College Adult Education Program;
- Coconino Community College - Adult Basic Education for College and Careers;
- Cochise College Adult Education;
- Friendly House Adult Education Program;
- Gilbert Adult Learning Program;
- Gila County Adult Education Program;
- Literacy Volunteers of Maricopa County, Inc.;
- Maricopa County Adult Probation Dept. Education;
- Mohave Community College Adult Education;
- Mesa Adult Education Program;
- Northland Pioneer College - College and Career Preparation;
- Pima Community College - Adult Basic Education for College & Career;
- Queen Creek Adult Education Program;
- Rio Salado College Adult Education Program;

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- Santa Cruz County Continuing Education;
- South Yuma County Adult Education Consortium; and
- Yavapai College Adult Basic Education.

WIOA Participant Definition

In the context of WIOA Title I Adult, Title I DW, Title II, and Title III programs, a participant refers to an individual whose receipt of services extends beyond those specified in 20 CFR § 677.150(a)(3) (or 34 CFR § 463.150(a)(3), as applicable). This occurs after fulfilling all relevant programmatic requirements, including eligibility determination.

Within the Title I Youth Program, a participant is defined as an individual who has fulfilled all pertinent program criteria for service provision. This includes eligibility determination, completion of an objective assessment, development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), and the receipt of one of the 14 WIOA Youth Program elements outlined in sec. 129(c)(2) of WIOA.

As for the Title IV VR Programs, a participant is an individual deemed eligible for VR services after applying, having an approved and signed Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), and initiating the receipt of services under the IPE.

WIOA Exiter Definition

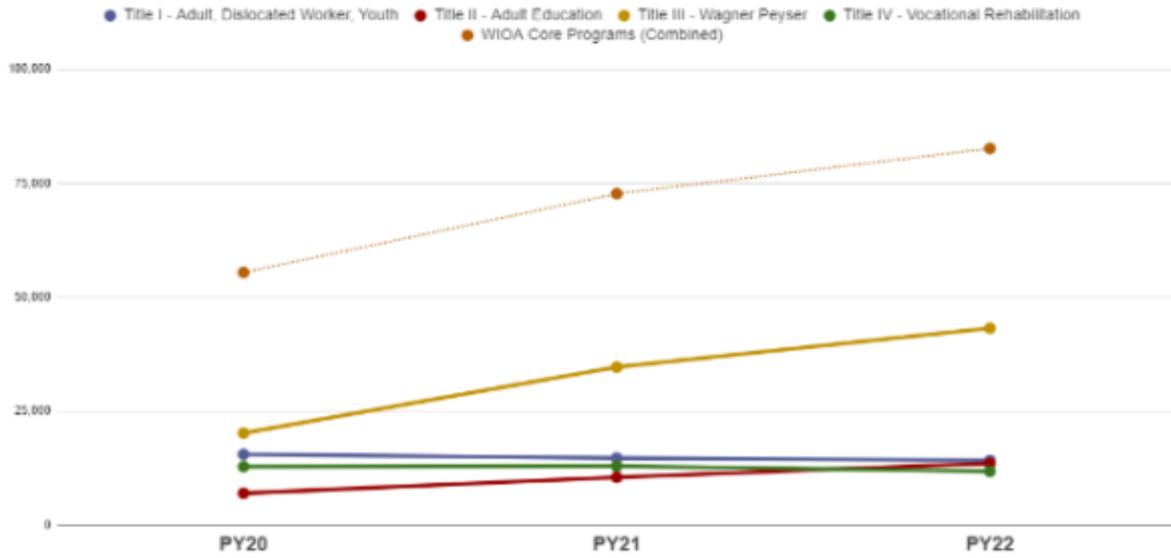
As delineated for performance calculations, an exit signifies the point at which a participant, benefiting from services through any program, satisfies the following conditions:

- For the adult, DW, and youth programs as sanctioned by WIOA Title I, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program under WIOA Title II, and the ES Program under the Wagner-Peyser Act (amended by WIOA Title III), the exit date corresponds to the last day of service.
- For the VR Program under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (amended by WIOA Title IV – VR Program):
 - Closure of the participant's service record in accordance with 34 CFR 361.56 is warranted when the participant achieves an employment outcome.
 - Closure of the participant's service record occurs if the individual fails to achieve an employment outcome or is determined ineligible after receiving services in accordance with 34 CFR 361.43.

Figure 11 below summarizes the participant counts for Core Partner Programs across PY 2020, 2021, and 2023 and is followed by Figure 12 which reflects exiter counts for the same years. Both demonstrate the number of WIOA participants impacted across all four core partner programs.

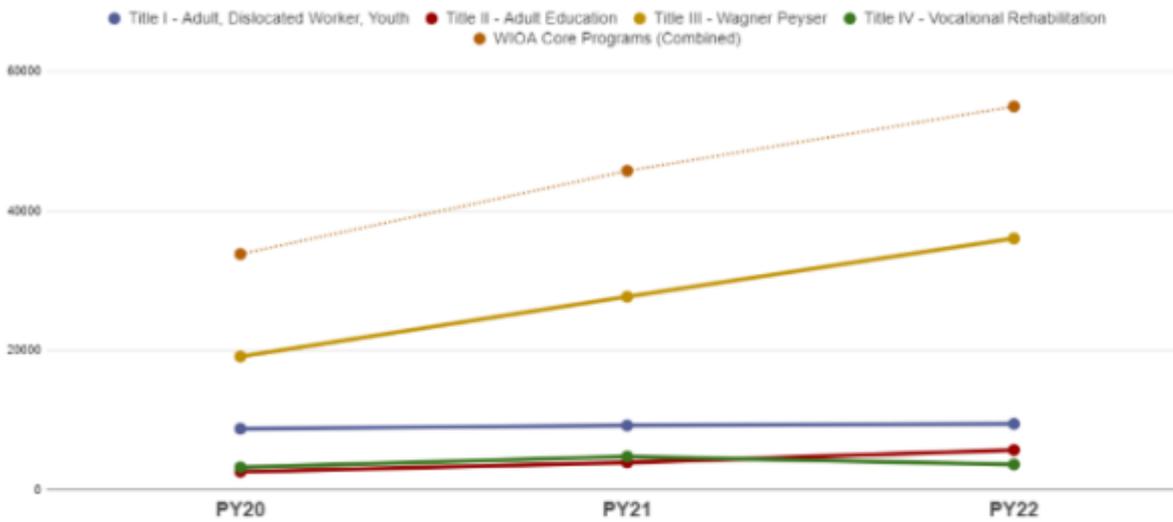
Figure 11: WIOA Participant Counts

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Program Year	Title I - Adult	Title I - Dislocated Worker	Title I - Youth	Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth	Title II - Adult Education	Title III - Wagner Peyser	Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation	WIOA Core Programs (Combined)
PY20	9,561	1,790	4,159	15,510	6,948	20,170	12,780	55,408
PY21	9,064	1,435	4,183	14,682	10,509	34,647	12,903	72,686
PY22	9,191	1,072	3,906	14,169	13,517	43,178	11,777	82,641

Figure12: WIOA Exiter Counts



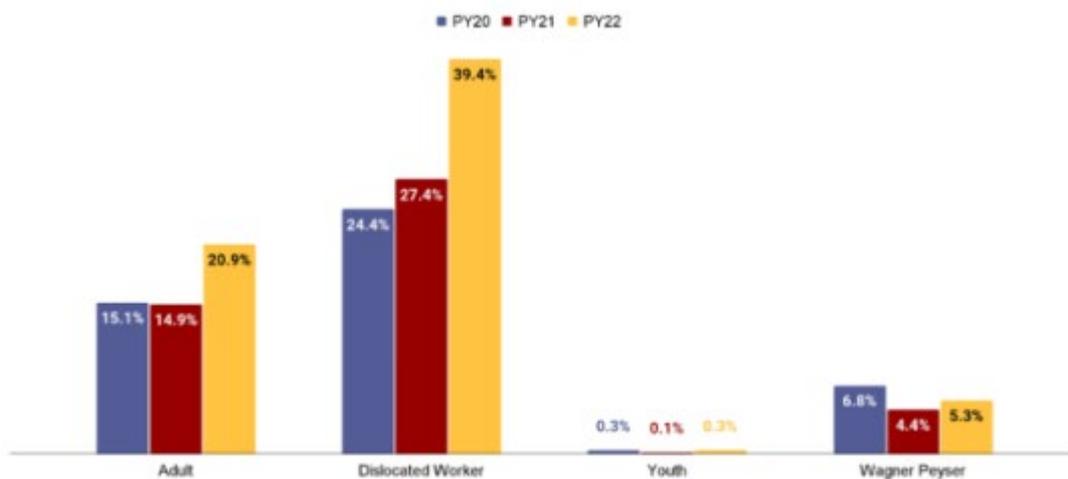
Program Year	Title I - Adult	Title I - Dislocated Worker	Title I - Youth	Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth	Title II - Adult Education	Title III - Wagner Peyser	Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation	WIOA Core Programs (Combined)
PY20	5,945	898	1,961	8,804	2,622	19,152	3,271	33,849
PY21	5,922	952	2,392	9,266	3,961	27,734	4,822	45,783
PY22	6,516	728	2,254	9,498	5,754	36,085	3,679	55,016

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Figures 11 and 12 above demonstrate an increase in overall participation across Arizona's WIOA core partner programs since PY 2020. The most significant increase over that time period occurred in the Title III - Wagner Peyser and Title II - Adult Education Programs.

State-level coordination across partner programs is led by both state agencies and the efforts for developing the Unified Plan have set a strong foundation for future cross planning focused on strengthening ARIZONA@WORK. The co-location of programs, inclusion of stakeholders in the WIOA state planning process, as well as regular monthly meetings which include ARIZONA@WORK partners, increases the State's ability to leverage resources and coordinate as a system. Figures 13 and 14 below highlight the State's current co-enrollment counts which demonstrate the baseline off which the ARIZONA@WORK system will continue to increase in coordination efforts.

Figure 13: Title I and Title III Co-Enrollment



Source: WIOA Annual Reports (DOL)

The rates of co-enrollment in Figure 13 are determined by the percentage of program participants who were enrolled in at least one of the other Title I or III programs during participation. Among these core partner programs, DW participants were the most likely, and Youth participants the least likely, to be co-enrolled in another program.

Figure 14: Co-Enrollment between TAA Participants and Title I DW Program Participants

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Source: WIOA Annual Reports (DOL)

Co-enrollment requirements between the TAA and Title I DW Programs are outlined in the statutory and regulatory language for each program. Figure 14 demonstrates the increased efforts in Arizona to meet requirements and offer eligible individuals the benefits that come with co-enrollment between these programs.

Services to Employers

Employers are central to the ARIZONA@WORK system, driving economic growth and ensuring a career-ready workforce. Arizona's business services model is focused on consulting with business leaders and providing value-added services and solutions to meet the business' recruitment, training, and retention needs. This is accomplished by ARIZONA@WORK Business Services Teams (BST) from across the state who aim to work collaboratively and strategically as workforce system partners to support statewide and local strategies and goals. The ARIZONA@WORK BST is composed of both State and local area business service team members, Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs), VR, Reentry employer coordinators, the Arizona Apprenticeship team, and our Adult Education Services (Title II).

The ARIZONA@WORK BST meets with employers to establish open communication to help determine what jobs are in demand in an LWDA, the types of training and credentials that individuals need to be qualified for these positions, development of career pathways, and identification of sector strategies, leading to a job-driven workforce system. When these collaborative environments are developed, strengthened, and aligned, they lead to enhanced services and job matching effectiveness. When employers become more familiar with the services, their interest in providing opportunities for job seekers expands into participation in work based training models, such as on-the-job training, customized training, and apprenticeship opportunities.

BSTs provide a wide array of supportive services to employers, including:

- Contacting the employer to inquire about the requirements of potential applicants;
- Conducting on-site meetings with employers to assess their needs and develop a strategy;

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- Validating and proactively addressing the growing demand from independently registered businesses, ensuring efficient support. Verifying and effectively responding to the increase demand from self-registered businesses;
- Developing comprehensive job announcements that clearly illustrate needed qualifications, educational, and experience requirements;
- Plan, support, promote, and manage the logistics of customized recruitment events to meet employer demand;
- Applicant screening to match job seekers who meet specific skill requirements;
- Connecting employers to career and training services such as On-the-Job Training Programs, Incumbent Worker Training programs, Customized Training programs, industry and sector strategies, and career pathways initiatives;
- Promoting Apprenticeship opportunities and provide assistance to become a registered apprenticeship program;
- Providing current and tailored labor market Information based on industry trends;
- Promoting the benefits of hiring Veterans, individuals with disabilities, and other priority groups;
- Educating employers on workforce solutions such as the WOTC, Federal Bonding, and candidate pool availability;
- Coordinating lay-off aversion strategies with businesses;
- Supporting businesses and affected workers through RR activities;
- Coordinating meetings, provide training, conduct orientations;
- Schedule interviews at job centers;
- Consistent communication and follow up with employers to facilitate the relationship building and cultivation process;
- Supporting the navigation of business services provided by ARIZONA@WORK and other entities;
- Establishing work-based learning models;
- Utilizing IET Programs to fill identified vacancies;
- Participating in sector partnerships and industry led projects; and
- Support the WAC in developing workforce strategies that provide direct employer support.

The figures below highlight Business Services impact throughout the state:

Figure 15: Business Clients in In-Demand Industries, PYs 2020 - 2022

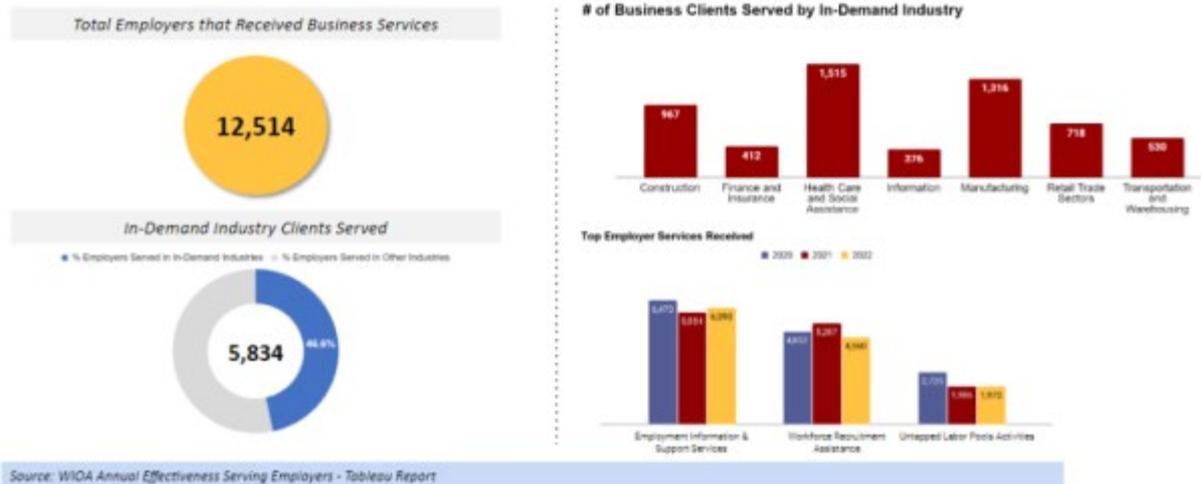
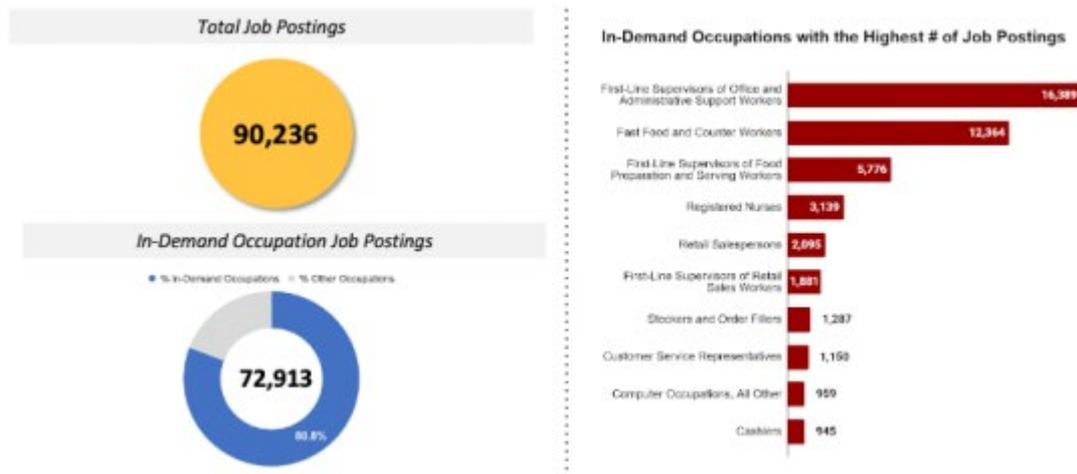


Figure 16: Number of Job Postings



Services to Individuals

The ARIZONA@WORK system provides services for adults, DW, and youth; individuals with disabilities; English language learners and adult education students; Veterans; and other priority populations (as defined in WIOA). Workforce services provided to qualifying individuals are targeted at ensuring that WIOA participants attain meaningful employment by providing services such as:

- Outreach, intake and orientation to information and other services available through the ARIZONA@WORK one-stop system and through local providers of adult education services;
- Determination of services an individual is eligible to receive, including through co-enrollment with other program areas;
- A workforce development support and advocacy agency, Jobpath Inc. Student Support Services in Pima and Pinal Counties, collaborated with community colleges and job-training facilities to empower under-represented adults in pursuing vocational degrees and certificates, particularly in IT, industrial trades, and healthcare for high-wage, in-demand careers;

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- Assistance developing an individualized employment plan;
- Initial assessment of skill levels as conducted by each program (e.g., VR participants receive additional psychological or medical evaluation to ascertain a diagnosis, vocational testing to assess aptitudes and skills, and assessment to determine assistive technology needs);
- Provision of information on potential employment options based on labor market information including: (i) nontraditional employment options and In-Demand industry sectors and occupations; (ii) Job vacancy listings in labor market areas; (iii) Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and (iv) Achievable employment goals based on the knowledge, skills, abilities, capabilities, and interests of the individual;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training; Information regarding how the LWDA is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information related to the local workforce area;
- ARIZONA@WORK system and local providers of adult education;
- Access to IET Programs through adult education providers;
- Group and/or individual career counseling and mentoring;
- Career planning;
- Case management;
- Short-term pre-vocational services;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance;
- Availability of supportive services or other programs providing assistance;
- Referrals to job openings and/or other services; and
- Follow up services.

Figure #17: Employment Trends by Core Partner Program

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Program Year	Title I - Adult	Title I - Dislocated Worker	Title I - Youth	Title II - Adult Education	Title III - Wagner Peyser	Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation
Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter after Exit						
PY20	67%	74%	70%	49%	60%	35%
PY21	69%	76%	75%	49%	57%	44%
PY22	72%	76%	76%	45%	61%	47%
Employment Rate, 4th Quarter after Exit						
PY20	66%	76%	70%	27%	58%	36%
PY21	62%	73%	72%	49%	54%	42%
PY22	67%	71%	75%	47%	55%	41%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter after Exit						
PY20	\$6,906	\$8,066	\$5,080	\$6,618	\$5,774	\$3,906
PY21	\$7,990	\$9,205	\$5,822	\$7,246	\$6,216	\$4,352
PY22	\$8,681	\$9,099	\$6,278	\$8,248	\$7,854	\$4,978

Figure #18: Credential and Skill Attainment Trends by Core Partner Program

Program Year	Title I - Adult	Title I - Dislocated Worker	Title I - Youth	Title II - Adult Education	Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation
Credential Attainment Rate					
PY20	76%	70%	61%	25%	18%
PY21	72%	75%	60%	16%	21%
PY22	71%	72%	59%	17%	25%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate					
PY20	66%	70%	63%	20%	49%
PY21	68%	73%	64%	35%	39%
PY22	75%	82%	67%	40%	23%

As reflected in Figure 18, a core piece of services to individuals is the education and training provided to qualified individuals. This may include support in participating in:

- Work-based learning (on-the-job training, apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, customized training, etc.);

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- Work Experience (e.g., internships, pre-apprenticeships, etc.);
- Training to obtain In-Demand Occupations with industry recognized credentials, including through IET Programs;
- Adult education courses (literacy instruction in language arts, mathematics, civics, English language acquisition, workforce preparation, IET Programs, etc.); and
- CTE.

Specific Services for Youth:

Title I-B Youth Program supports youth to obtain employment in career pathways or enrollment in postsecondary education or Registered Apprenticeships, during participation and after exit through follow-up services. The program provides services to youth with barriers to employment, with a targeted focus on supporting the educational and career success of out-of-school youth. The program ensures the availability for all eligible youth, the 14 elements required in WIOA and provides, as appropriate:

- Linkages and referrals to supportive services;
- Interaction with classroom and on-site training staff;
- Interaction with other professionals or family members having influence with the youth;
- Performance coaching/counseling;
- Comprehensive guidance counseling;
- Follow-up and supportive services;
- Through interaction with the participant, identify and assist to resolve issues and challenges that may impede progress and success;
- Links to appropriate professionals and/or supporting resources; and
- Development of ISS with goals, progress, and goal attainment development.

Figures 19 and 20 below summarize the most frequently accessed services by Youth as broken out by demographics for PY 2021. This data was sourced from the ETA Arizona WIOA Equity Analysis for PY 2022, which examined data quality, system reach, and differences in access to services and outcomes between demographic groups for WIOA Core Programs in Arizona. These analyses were produced in response to Executive Order (EO) 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government. This data, alongside a review of performance outcomes broken out by priority population, were used to assess equity gaps in service delivery to inform strategies to ensure equitable access.

Figure 19: Youth Services Received

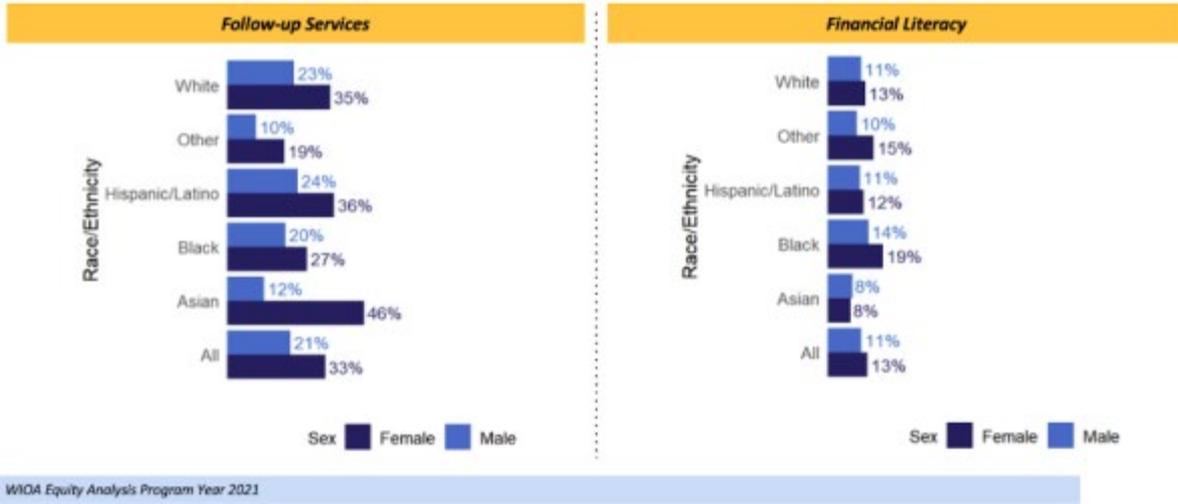
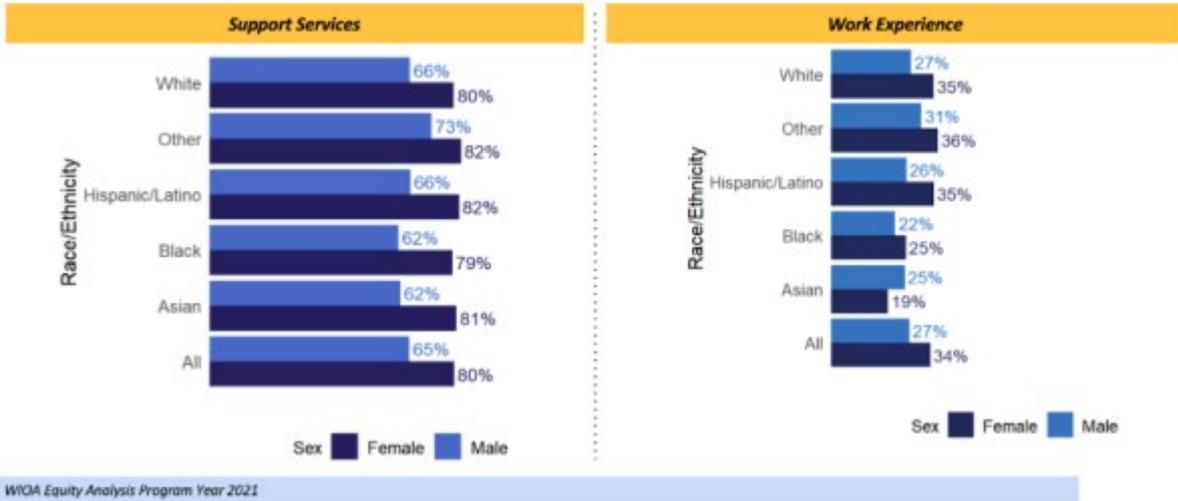


Figure 20: Youth Services Received



Title IV offers a specific set of job readiness services, Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), to all students with documented disabilities who are between the ages of 14 and 22 and enrolled in an educational program. These services are intended to help students with disabilities prepare for future employment; are short in duration; and include job exploration, work-based learning experiences, counseling on postsecondary training opportunities, work readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.

The workforce development activities and initiatives highlighted below demonstrate the summarized efforts of ARIZONA@WORK system stakeholders.

Achieve60AZ

The Arizona Coalition for Career Readiness (ACCR) supports Achieve60AZ, which aims to help 60 percent of Arizona adults attain a postsecondary degree by 2030. ACCR includes Arizona Business and Education Coalition, Junior Achievement of Arizona, Center for the Future of Arizona, Valley of the Sun United Way, and Pipeline AZ. The coalition aims to scale the use of MyFutureAZ, a virtual platform that provides Arizona K-12 students the opportunity to connect their personal interests with possible career paths as they move to graduation. Students are

provided resources and support to take the next steps in their journey to becoming career ready in their field of choice.

Arizona Advanced Technology Network (AATN)

The AATN has been in operation since 2019 and is a partnership through Maricopa Community College, Central Arizona College, and Pima Community College to develop a unified, industry recognized curriculum specifically designed to teach the skills needed for high-paying, high-tech advanced manufacturing jobs. The OEO is engaged in discussions with the participating Community Colleges to rebrand the project and infuse it with additional marketing dollars for potential expansion.

Arizona Western College Broadband Project

The Arizona Western College Broadband Project is a \$300,000 project that implements a broadband fiber optics training program at Arizona Western College, with a focus on related in-demand jobs in Yuma County. The program includes Fiber Optic Certification tuition assistance, paid work-based training, job placement assistance, and supportive services. The project serves local employers such as Arizona Public Service, Spectrum, ALLO Fiber Internet, Century Line and others.

BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative

The BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative [20] complements and underscores the aim to help develop a highly skilled workforce for employers and make quality employment available to workers and job seekers. Arizona is a national model for innovative and successful workforce development programs. Our collaborative approach brings together government, education, and industry to develop comprehensive, award-winning, and scalable solutions. BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative represents Arizona's latest workforce advancement, connecting workers with the skills and know-how needed for jobs in the state's construction and trades industry with the goal of doubling the number of construction and trade registered apprentices. All of this work is aimed towards meeting the building needs of our growing 21st-century economy, from housing to semiconductor fabs to broadband and electric vehicle infrastructure.

The BuilditAZ Apprenticeship initiative aims to double the number of construction and trades registered apprentices by 2026. As of the latest available data, there are 4,071 apprentices actively participating in a construction and trades registered apprenticeship program in Arizona. Additional BuilditAZ initiative goals include:

- Increased access to effective pre-apprenticeship programs that directly enroll in registered apprenticeship programs, creating pathways in the trades, especially for women and other underrepresented learners;
- Updated registered programs' rules and regulations to reflect current market trends and best practices;
- Creation of an apprenticeship grants office to secure funding that expands apprenticeship programs, and directs agencies for the first time to actively apply for federal apprenticeship funds;

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- Increase funding and development of strategies for meeting increasing green economy workforce demands and filling green jobs, for projects such as electric vehicle charging stations and solar panel installation; and
- Increased number of adults in Arizona with an industry recognized credential, contributing towards meeting the state's attainment goal, Achieve60AZ (60 percent education attainment by 2030).

To achieve these goals, the initiative organized a workgroup of over 40 volunteers from various sectors, including Industry, Education, Government, Trades, and Non-Profit Community Organizations, all operating under the leadership of the WAC. This workgroup is divided into five subgroups, each tasked with developing specific goals and strategies in key areas related to apprenticeship expansion.

These key areas typically included:

- Marketing and Outreach;
- Policy and Governance;
- Employer Engagement;
- Career Pathways; and
- Grants and Funding Opportunities.

DRIVE 48 Workforce Training Center

The "Drive 48" training center, located on the Central Arizona College Signal Peak campus in Pinal County, is a 13,000 square-foot training center that will equip future manufacturing technicians with the skills needed for high-tech jobs. Launched in 2021, the training center continues to train thousands of students each year, many of which have been hired by Lucid Motors a business that has embarked on a massive expansion of its facility in Casa Grande, Arizona, adding 2.85 million square feet to support more production, establish production, and create approximately 6,000 direct jobs with an economic impact of more than \$100 million by 2030. The training center was established through a unique collaboration between government, academia, and industry – one that can be scaled throughout the state. Using robots and other advanced technology, these students will gain hands-on experience in areas such as:

- Programming;
- Maintenance;
- Parts assembly; and
- Safety training.

ElevateEdAZ

OEO and ACA are funding a \$5,000,000 project for the Phoenix Chamber Foundation to expand its ElevateEdAZ Program. The program prepares individuals for college and career through stronger alignment between education, business and the community. ElevateEdAZ is focused on increasing the number of students completing high-quality education to workforce learning

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pathways that align with the needs of the industry. This includes working with school partners to support students in completing industry recognized credentials, attaining early post-secondary credit and participating in work-based learning experiences such as internships and job shadowing. In addition, ElevateEdAZ supports educator professional development by partnering to provide externship experiences for teachers and counselors.

ETPL

The ETPL is a resource to be used by participants in the Adult, DW, and Out-of-School Youth Programs as mandated by WIOA Title I-B. The ETPL includes approved Training Providers who are eligible to receive WIOA Title I-B funds to train eligible adults and DWs, In-School Youth, and Out-of-School Youth Program participants, including those who have barriers and/or require VR services. The ETPL provides training program description, training program cost information, credential information, labor market information, and performance information to inform consumer choice.

A training program must be listed on the ETPL for WIOA Title I-B Funds to be used to pay for the training. To meet the skill and educational development needs of eligible participants, the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) Programs align with the sector strategies and respective local plans that are focused on In-Demand occupations and result in a recognized credential. ADES and the LWDBs share the responsibility of managing the statewide ETPL including approving programs for initial and continued eligibility. The ADES State ETPL Coordinator approves training providers after ensuring the providers meet the state training provider eligibility requirements listed in the WIOA and State ETPL policy. The State and LWDB ETPL Coordinators review each training program individually to determine if the training programs meet state and local ETPL requirements, respectively, including initial performance data standards, and resulting in a federally or locally recognized credential.

Arizona requires that one or more of the WIOA indicators of performance for all students is provided by the training provider: Employment 2nd & 4th Quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, or credential attainment for the last four quarters. Programs that are approved at the local level are reviewed for accuracy and completeness by the State ETPL Coordinator prior to final approval for inclusion on the statewide ETPL, for a one-year initial eligibility period. The LWDB reviews the training provider's program performance for continued eligibility based on the performance accountability measures using data on all WIOA Title I-B and non-WIOA Title I-B participants who participated in the training program during the performance period. Programs are then reviewed every two years for continued eligibility. Initial Programs are those in the first year of approval.

ES Complaint System

ES and Employment-Related Law Complaint System sets forth the regulations governing the Complaint System for the Wagner-Peyser Act ES at the State and Federal levels. The Complaint System handles:

- Complaints against an employer about the specific job to which the applicant was referred through the ES system; and;
- Accepts, refers, and tracks complaints involving employment-related laws against any employer regardless of whether in the ES system.

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This includes responsibility to attempt informal resolutions at the local level of wage related complaints.

In October of 2022 Arizona opened an online access point for filing complaints as another means to support individuals throughout a career journey. State agencies must ensure information pertaining to the use of the Complaint System is publicized at each one-stop center. Complaints may be accepted in any one-stop center, or by a SWA, or elsewhere by outreach staff. The addition of online access has provided a direct referral source for partner agencies. Prior to the complaint system being available online an average of 30 complaints were received, since implementing online access, the average has increased to 300 per month. Informal resolution on wage complaints average recovered to date for 2023 is \$207,072.14.

Future48 Advanced Manufacturing Marketing Campaign

In partnership with Ideas Collide, a full service marketing agency, Future48 utilizes \$300,000 to change perceptions in the advanced manufacturing trades industry as a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) based career pathway in order to capture a diverse and emerging workforce. The campaign will create a wide variety of digital, print, and other forms of media that will guide interested individuals to a website for additional information on advanced manufacturing.

Google Career Certificate Program

In partnership with Google, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) is providing access to these certificates through state workforce agencies. ADES launched this program in August of 2022 and has awarded 1,728 scholarships and actively enrolled 1,159 recipients. The goal of the Google Professional Certificate is to connect local Arizona job seekers 18 years and older with no-cost access to Google Career Certificate training for well-paying, high-demand jobs in growing fields. Google expanded the opportunity to workforce staff in June 2023 for incumbent staff to provide upskilling opportunities and professional development. Designed and taught by Google employees, each certificate includes over 150+ practice and graded assessments, quizzes, or writing assignments to ensure rigor and mastery. The program also provides resources to help learners secure a job, such as resume templates, coaching from Career Circle and interview practice with Big Interview. The certificates equip people with job-ready skills in the high-growth fields of Data Analytics, Advanced Data Analytics, Business Intelligence Digital Marketing and E-Commerce, IT Support, Project Management, and UX Design. The online program can be completed in three to six months of part-time study—with no degree or experience required. After finishing the program, graduates are connected with an employer consortium of over 150 companies that consider them for relevant roles—including Deloitte, Ford, Verizon, Walmart, and Google.

Job Center Assistive Technology Needs Assessment

The VR Program within ADES partners with ARIZONA@WORK job centers to offer expertise and assistance to: identify a contact at the center that can assist both staff and the public with Assistive Technology accessibility questions; assess current assistive technology and accessibility needs, provide recommendations for equipment/services; and provide training resources to job center staff regarding how to assist an individual in accessing the assistive technology. VR partners with external providers to offer disability awareness workshops, assistive technology equipment recommendations, training, and resource development to all VR

and ARIZONA@WORK staff. VR also assisted with the development of a shared resource document that helps local area operators ensure basic programmatic accessibility in each job center location.

Jobpath Inc. Student Support Services

Jobpath Inc. received \$210,000 to support the success of 547 low-income students pursuing short-term degrees or credentials throughout southeastern Arizona. Job Path Inc. is a workforce development support and advocacy agency that provides Student Support Services in Pima and Pinal Counties, collaborating with community colleges and job-training facilities to empower under-represented adults in pursuing vocational degrees and certificates, particularly in IT, industrial trades, and healthcare for high-wage, in-demand careers. JobPath provides wraparound case management and financial support for students thereby removing barriers to success by helping students with both school and non-school related expenses.

Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) Semiconductor Technician Quick Start Program

MCCCD received \$2.5 million to develop a training program for semiconductor manufacturing technician jobs. The short-term training program is a collaboration with semiconductor companies in the area and is intended to qualify individuals for an exciting new career and full-time employment as semiconductor manufacturing technicians. Developed and implemented at Mesa Community College to assist the manufacturing industry by increasing the availability of a qualified and eligible workforce who are certified in manufacturing to increase the awareness of these efforts among employers, potential students, future talent pipeline and other potential partners. The project concluded in June 2023, yielding 557 graduates.

Rapid Response (RR):

ADES administers RR at the State level, partnering and coordinating RR activities with affected LWDAAs. In PY 2022, Arizona received 37 Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notices. In total, 5,161 workers were affected by facility closures and mass layoffs. State and local RR teams collaborated with 14 of the employers who filed WARN Act notices to provide services to DWs, delivering 2,096 resource packets on-site and coordinating 15 RR events with more than 500 affected workers in attendance who received indirect services. As a result, 176 DWs were directly served and received ES. During PY 2022, Arizona assisted with 16 Non-WARNs, affecting 532 workers throughout the state. RR teams worked with 16 employers to bring services and deliver 220 resource packets to on-site locations and coordinated one event, resulting in 29 indirectly served affected workers.

Reentry Program

The Reentry Program, a partnership between ADES and the Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation & Reentry (ADCRR), assists inmates and individuals on parole overcome barriers to employment and achieve success within their communities after release from prison through job readiness skills and finding sustainable employment. Reentry services are delivered in a Prison Based or Community Based model and include ES such as interview skills, resume assistance, soft skills development, job preparation, access to background-friendly employers, job fairs, and one-on-one assistance. Prison Based Reentry Services include Second Chance Centers (SCC) and Resource Employment and Development (RED). Within the SCC is an eight-

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week program of ES provided to inmates in the state run prisons. The program runs Monday through Friday, six hours per day program and is co-facilitated by an Arizona State Prison trained inmate Recovery Support Specialist, ADES staff in partnership with key organizations, and businesses. The classes are held in-person and virtually through an internet supported Google Meet platform. RED is a virtual internet based web conference hosted by ADES staff that runs Monday through Friday, four hours per day (morning and afternoon sessions). This 30-day pre-release ES Program includes but is not limited to work ethic, money management and cultural competency training. Community Based Reentry Services, specific to ADCRR participants, include ES through parole and probation offices and residential ES. ADES staff are co-located at community locations such as Native Health, Center for Opportunity, and New Freedom to provide ES to justice involved individuals in Arizona's two most populous counties, Maricopa and Pima. ADES provides virtual services to the remaining counties through the referral system with ADCRR.

The Reentry Program expanded in PY 2022 when ADES was awarded the U.S. DOL's Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD) grant to work in partnership with the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Building upon the existing prison-based and community based service delivery model, PROWD's multi-pronged goal is to improve employment outcomes of returning citizens, public safety of the community, and increasing capacity of justice and workforce system partnerships. In administering PROWD, ADES partners with community organizations and minimum- and low-security federal correctional institutions to provide coordinated services across three stages: during incarceration in federal prisons, during time spent in residential reentry centers, and after release into the community. The PROWD grant began October 1, 2023 and the period of performance ends September 30, 2027. ADES requested \$3,994,496 for PROWD second round funding to expand support and resources to medium/high security BOP facilities.

Career Readiness Program for Incarcerated Youth

ADES provides reentry services to youth incarcerated in the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) at Adobe Mountain School. Youth participating in the ADJC Adobe Mountain School Program are introduced to the world of work by ARIZONA@WORK representatives and local employers. For many of the youth, this is the first time they are learning workforce basics including how to identify career goals, what steps are required to obtain a career, how to write a resume, apply and interview for a job and much more. Guest speakers educate the youth about workforce opportunities including paid registered apprenticeship programs, training opportunities, and post-release educational and employment support. Through this program, Juvenile Corrections staff have become credentialed certifiers for the National Retail Federation's "Retail Industry Fundamentals." The retail credential is a tool designed to improve participant's hard and soft workforce skills culminating with a scored certificate that they can present to potential employers demonstrating mastery of employability skills and work environments. In 2023, NRF added, "Warehousing, Inventory and Logistics" curriculum access to the youth at Adobe Mountain School.

SciTech EcoSystem Hubs Project

Arizona SciTech received \$142,000 to forge a network of regional STEM communities of practice or "hubs" in the State. The hubs allow individuals in their regions to connect and

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engage local educational, civic, and community institutions; people and assets; ARIZONA@WORK; other regional workforce organizations; and employers.

The network of hubs will ensure that workforce efforts reach youth and untapped, underserved populations (e.g., minorities, rural residents, veterans, etc.) to catalyze a diverse pipeline of skilled, knowledgeable Arizonans entering the workforce. Hub members will also connect as a statewide community of practice to share best practices, build partnerships, and develop communication strategies to increase impact.

Training Accelerator Facilities

The creation of a statewide network of advanced manufacturing workforce training facilities that train job seekers in immediate and relevant occupational and professional skills providing career pathways into high-quality, in-demand jobs that offer upward mobility while also filling employers' critical workforce needs. Workforce Accelerators have been announced in Yuma County with Arizona Western College and Mohave County with Mohave Community College. A third Accelerator in Maricopa County with Maricopa Community College is forthcoming.

VR Job Readiness Training (JRT)

A four week program that helps clients learn and practice the skills they need to seek employment - participants completing the program, or nearing completion, are connected with an in-house VR Employment Specialist (ES) or contracted vendor to begin looking for work. Since JRT began in January 2020, 948 clients have participated in some level of training and 567 have completed the full program.

West-MEC's Energy and Manufacturing Systems Program

West-MEC, an Adult Education partner, received \$580,000 to create two new high school CTE programs in the semiconductor and electric vehicle technology industries. West-MEC's Energy and Manufacturing Systems Program explores the fields of mechanical systems, electrical systems, electronics, instrumentation & controls, energy production systems. Managed in close partnership with APS, Palo Verde Generating Station, and Estrella Mountain Community College, this two-year program includes core curriculum topics such as Solar, Nuclear, Wind, Construction Math, Basic Rigging, Construction Drawings, and Hand and Power Tools. The program's scope also includes topics intended for students aiming for a career as an industrial maintenance mechanic and industrial maintenance E&I technician, such as process mathematics, HP steam systems, heat exchangers, conductors and cables, hand bending, and conductor terminations and splices. The majority of the funds will be used to purchase equipment, supplies and materials at three different campuses in the West Valley.

WIOA Governor's Discretionary Fund

In the last quarter of PY 2022, the Governor's office requested grant applications for innovative workforce development pilot programs that engage individuals from communities with consistently high rates of unemployment and poverty. Approximately \$4,000,000 would be awarded, with a maximum annual award of \$500,000 per grantee, which is renewable for a combined term of three years. Applications from Arizona entities that include 501(c)(3) organizations; Arizona local, county, and state government entities; Arizona Tribal Nations and communities; Arizona public and charter school districts; Arizona institutions of higher learning

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(universities, community colleges, and trade schools); and any partnership of the above-listed organizations were accepted.

To increase participant accessibility and eliminate barriers to success, proposed programs are required to provide wraparound services during program enrollment and at least six to twelve months post-graduation. Examples of wraparound services include but are not limited to the following:

- Mentoring
- Trauma-informed care
- Personal employment counseling
- Employment readiness
- Childcare
- Transportation support
- Nutrition assistance
- Transitional housing

Furthermore, programs should strive to implement programming in the communities they seek to serve and will need to demonstrate existing partnerships with the public workforce development system, education and human services systems and private establishments.

(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

As highlighted above, the ARIZONA@WORK system provides a wide-range of services to the state's jobseekers and businesses. The system acts as a linchpin, facilitating intricate connections between individual skills and market demands, which requires an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses the system encounters in delivering services to shared customers.

The workforce system boasts an impressive array of strengths, providing widespread access to services through strategically located Comprehensive One-Stop offices, ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, to ensure convenience for all stakeholders involved. The emphasis on a "no wrong door" philosophy underscores a comprehensive approach that prioritizes the unique needs of individuals. The system's adaptability shines through its swift pivot to virtual and online services during the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, innovative educational instruction models, robust referral systems, and strong relationships with employers showcase the system's commitment to evolution and excellence.

The workforce system in the described context exhibits several strengths:

- **Access to Services:** The workforce system ensures widespread access to services through Comprehensive One-Stop offices strategically located in specific local areas. This facilitates convenient access for both employers and job seekers. Notably, these services are provided at no cost to employers and job seekers, making them easily accessible to a broad range of individuals.

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- **Appropriate Matching and High Success:** The ARIZONA@WORK system's effectiveness is enhanced by its ability to appropriately match individuals with the right programs and services. This tailored approach contributes to high success rates for participants.
- **Virtual and Online Services:** The system successfully adapted to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic by pivoting to virtual and online services. This adaptability showcases resilience and a commitment to providing continuous support in changing circumstances.
- **Innovative Educational Instruction:** The workforce system has embraced new models of educational instruction, including virtual and hi-flex approaches. This innovation ensures that participants receive training in ways that align with evolving educational trends and preferences.
- **Title II Providers:** The state boasts a considerable number of Title II providers, indicating a robust infrastructure for adult education and literacy programs across the state.
- **Agile Community College Training Partners:** Community colleges within the central region exhibit agility in responding to employer needs. This flexibility enhances the system's ability to align training programs with industry requirements.
- **Title III Participation Growth:** Over a three-year period, there has been a significant increase in Title III participation, demonstrating the effectiveness and appeal of the services provided.
- **Passionate Staff:** A notable strength is the passion of the workforce system's staff. Their dedication contributes to a positive and supportive environment for job seekers and employers alike.
- **Robust Referral System:** Specific local areas in particular regions benefit from a collaborative robust referral system, streamlining the process of connecting individuals with the most relevant services.
- **Strong Employer Relationships:** In specific local areas, the workforce system has cultivated robust relationships with employers. This connection is crucial for understanding and meeting the needs of the job market.
- **Co-Enrollment Growth:** Over a three-year period, there has been an increase in co-enrollment among the Adult and DW programs, indicating a collaborative and integrated approach to serving diverse needs.
- **Transparency and Collaboration with the State:** The workforce system has established transparent communication across the State, fostering collaboration and preventing duplication of efforts. This ensures a cohesive and efficient approach to workforce development.
- **Apprenticeship Leadership:** The state's leadership in apprenticeships, especially in Maricopa County, positions it as a trailblazer in fostering practical skill development and industry partnerships.

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- **State Characteristics and Prospecting:** The workforce system leverages the size of the state, recognizing and addressing similarities between larger and smaller communities. This inclusive approach ensures that services are tailored to the diverse needs of the population.
- **Cross-Border Collaboration:** In Yuma County, coordination with the Mexican workforce highlights the system's ability to engage in cross-border collaboration, acknowledging and incorporating the unique dynamics of the labor market.
- **Adaptation to Changing Youth Expectations:** The workforce system acknowledges and navigates the changing expectations of work among younger generations, adapting its strategies to effectively engage and support the evolving workforce.
- **AI Integration and Preparedness:** Recognizing the impact of artificial intelligence, the workforce system is proactive in preparing for changes in the job market. This includes acknowledging the emergence of new jobs and anticipating future developments in the workforce landscape.

However, the narrative is not without its complexities. The workforce system has identified weaknesses that demand attention for its sustained effectiveness, including improving the identification of eligible individuals from priority populations, including DWs and displaced homemakers. Addressing this challenge will significantly improve outcome data and prioritize strategic interventions to address this critical aspect of workforce support. Additionally, the need to address the basic needs of individuals and challenges with interconnected referral systems point to areas where improvements are imperative. Equity of access in the context of workforce development was also identified as a continued area of improvement, including location-based disparities, rigid diploma or high school equivalency mandates, constraints imposed by the lower living standard income level, youth guidelines, and variable co-enrollment performance outcomes. Language proficiency, basic skills assessments, and intake processes further contribute to inequities, particularly for individuals with disabilities. ARIZONA@WORK services exhibit uneven reach, with schools sometimes utilizing job fairs as incentives. Unfortunately, this approach inadvertently erects barriers for youth who are in dire need of these services. Additionally, outdated career pathways hinder equal opportunities, and there is a lack of priority of service for individuals aged 55 and above. Furthermore, data sharing barriers impede the development of targeted strategies to address these weaknesses in the pursuit of equitable access to workforce opportunities.

The low co-enrollment of youth, regional disparities, and shortages in educators and training providers reveal gaps that impact the system's ability to cater to the state's diverse geography and demographics, specifically for the State's rural and tribal communities including the unique industry needs of such areas. Furthermore, recognizing the unique challenges faced by veteran communities identifies the pressing need to bring supportive services directly to these populations. The workforce system must proactively explore innovative solutions to better address the dynamics encountered by veterans to ensure effective and tailored support for this valued demographic. Internal staff training deficiencies, limited capacity for English Language Learners (ELL) clients, and decreasing funding underscore the need for strategic planning and resource allocation.

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It is of critical importance to address these weaknesses through a comprehensive and coordinated effort across the ARIZONA@WORK system. Streamlining referral systems to build off of local area best practices, enhancing outreach, improving staff training, and adapting hiring policies are crucial steps. The workforce system must also address the evolving needs of the labor market, such as the aging workforce trend and regional economic disparities. By acknowledging both strengths and weaknesses, the goal is to foster a constructive dialogue that not only celebrates achievements but also identifies opportunities for growth. This approach aims to contribute to the ongoing refinement of the workforce system, ensuring its resilience and efficacy in navigating the dynamic landscape of the labor market.

The workforce system faces several weaknesses that pose challenges to its effectiveness in meeting the diverse needs of job seekers and employers. The ARIZONA@WORK system aims to address these within the Unified Plan:

- **Inadequate Matching and Low Success:** Although many times this is a strength of our workforce system, when resources and stakeholders fail to collaborate, the system struggles with the challenge of inadequately aligning individuals with suitable programs and services, leading to suboptimal success rates. This highlights the imperative for enhanced coordination and integration to address this weakness effectively.
- **Addressing Underlying Basic Needs:** The system sometimes fails to address underlying issues, such as basic needs (e.g., food, shelter), before expecting job seekers to commit to training programs. This can hinder the success of individuals who face immediate challenges beyond employment.
- **Referral System Challenges:** The presence of too many different referral systems among local areas complicates the process and may lead to inefficiencies. Additionally, direct referrals to all core partners do not consistently occur in all local areas, highlighting a need for streamlined and consistent referral processes.
- **Low Youth Co-Enrollment:** The co-enrollment of youth in the system is reported as being low, indicating a potential gap in engaging and supporting young job seekers effectively.
- **Regional Disparities in In-Demand Sectors:** Statewide In-Demand Sectors are not universally applicable to all local areas, signaling a need for more localized strategies to address specific regional industry demands.
- **Educator and Training Provider Shortages:** There is a lack of educators to train participants, and some programs struggle to maintain consistent operation due to a shortage of training providers, especially in rural areas.
- **Internal Staff Training Deficiencies:** Insufficient internal staff training and knowledge about the services provided by core and required partner programs, impact the effectiveness of service delivery.
- **Limited Capacity for ELL Clients:** The workforce system lacks the capacity to effectively serve low or zero-level English as a Second Language (ESL) clients, posing a barrier to participation for a specific demographic.

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- **Inadequate Marketing and Outreach:** Minimal efforts in outreach and awareness, hinder the system's ability to reach and engage its target audience effectively.
- **Decreasing Funding:** The ongoing decrease in funding poses a significant challenge, limiting the system's capacity to innovate and meet growing demands effectively.
- **Employer Engagement Opportunities:** The engagement of employers with the workforce system could be improved, suggesting the need for enhanced strategies to foster collaboration and partnerships.
- **Duplication and Competition Among Partners:** There is evidence of duplication of efforts and competition among partners. This hampers a cohesive and collaborative approach to workforce development.
- **Measurement Inconsistencies Among Partners:** Core and required partner programs measure success in different ways, making it challenging to assess the overall effectiveness of the system. Standardized metrics may be needed for more accurate evaluation.
- **Limited Connectivity for Core Partners:** Many core partners are unaware of how to connect to various projects and initiatives, indicating a need for improved communication and coordination.
- **Policy Deficiency during Turnover:** The lack of distinctive policy that upholds operational guidance during turnover within the state or local areas can lead to inconsistencies and disruptions in service delivery.
- **Outdated Career Path Lattices:** The use of antiquated career path lattices and recommendations for in-demand and entry-level jobs may hinder the system's ability to guide participants effectively in their career pathways.
- **Soft Skills Training Needs:** There is a reported lack of soft skills among job seekers, underscoring the importance of more efficient and timely soft skills training programs.
- **Aging Workforce Trend:** Arizona's older workforce is on track to age out soon, necessitating strategic planning to address the potential impact on the labor market.
- **Regional Disparities in Large Employer Attraction:** While large employers are moving to Arizona, there is a concentration in the Phoenix area, indicating a need to address regional disparities and promote economic development in northern and southern regions.

(C) State Workforce Development Capacity. Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

To implement WIOA requirements and strategies to meet the goals of this Plan,

ARIZONA@WORK needs to identify its capacity of the teams making up the ARIZONA@WORK system. Below is a summary of the State and LWDB team's efforts to support Arizona's workforce system.

Local Workforce Development Boards

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The 12 LWDBs in Arizona serve as strategic conveners to promote and broker effective relationships between the Chief Local Elected Officials and economic, education, and workforce partners throughout the LWDA. The LWDBs are responsible for developing strategies to continuously improve and strengthen the workforce development system in their local areas. This includes, but is not limited to, assessing the capacity of the ARIZONA@WORK one-stop and other local partners who together implement WIOA services in the LWDA. LWDBs conduct an assessment and describe the ARIZONA@WORK workforce development activities in their local plans. Local plans were developed in 2023 which included clarification on the local capacity to implement workforce development activities and support state strategies. These plans can be found on each local area’s ARIZONA@WORK website page.

ARIZONA@WORK Business Services

Who is Served: The ARIZONA@WORK BSTs play a crucial role in fostering collaboration with various stakeholders within the workforce system, particularly those dedicated to economic development. Through strategic partnerships, these teams create a dynamic synergy that enhances the overall workforce ecosystem. By working closely with economic development entities, they facilitate a seamless exchange of information and resources, allowing employers to gain a comprehensive understanding of available workforce services. This collaboration enables businesses to access a pool of skilled workers more effectively, fostering a mutually beneficial relationship where the right talents are matched with suitable employment opportunities. The concerted efforts of ARIZONA@WORK partners exemplify a holistic approach to workforce development, driving economic growth and prosperity in the region. For the data below, employer penetration rate are Arizona employers using program services and employer retention rate is the percentage of ARIZONA@WORK participants retaining employment.

Performance Metrics:

Reported Information	Employer Penetration Rate	Employer Retention Rate
PY 2021	4.4%	55.2%
PY 2022	3.9%	57.5%

Program Description: At the State level within the ADES, which includes the LVERs, Reentry and VR employer coordinators, and the State RR Coordinator, collaboration with LWDA business service teams continue to provide seamless engagement with employers and a large assortment of opportunities for Arizona job seekers. This cohesive business services model allows Arizona to fully leverage engagement with employers across the State and advocate for and connect businesses to a diversified candidate pipeline across ARIZONA@WORK Programs.

Title I: Adult, DWs and Youth

Who is Served: LWDBs provide Title I-B services, through contracts or grants, to eligible adults, DWs, and youth (aged 14 to 24). In the Title I-B Adult Program, which serves individuals 18 years and older, top priority for the receipt of individualized career and training services is given to covered persons [21] who are receiving public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient. The next priority is non-covered persons who are receiving public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient. The Title I-B DW Program serves individuals, including those who have been laid off through no fault of their own, displaced homemakers, and others

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identified in section 3(15) of WIOA [22]. The Title I-B Youth services are provided to youth, 14 to 24 years of age, with one or more documented barriers or conditions identified in section 129(a) of WIOA, such as being a homeless individual, etc. At least 75% of applicable funding must be used to serve out-of-school youth.

Performance Metrics:

Reported Information	Adult Program	DW Program	Youth Program
PY 2021 Total Participants Served	9,064	1,435	4,183
PY 2022 Total Participants Served	9,195	1,072	3,906

Program Description: Services assist individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment, to increase access to employment, retention, earnings, and attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials.

Title II, Adult Education:

Who is Served: Students who are 16 years of age or older, not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under A.R.S. § 15-802, are basic skills deficient, lack a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, or are English language learners. Additionally, adult education students must meet the eligibility requirements in A.R.S. § 15-232(b) of being lawfully present in the United States.

Performance Metrics:

Reported Information	Total Enrolled	Total Hours of Instruction
PY 2021	10,454	568,923
PY 2022	13,517	835,166

Program Description: This program provides adult basic and secondary education and English language acquisition services throughout the state, assisting adults in gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency. Program activities include pathways to the high school equivalency diploma, civic engagement, workforce preparation, and transition to postsecondary education/training through career pathways.

Title III: Wagner-Peyser Program:

Who is Served: The Title III Wagner-Peyser program, also known as ES, provides basic and individualized career services to job seekers and job development services to Arizona employers. Veterans and covered persons receive priority of service.

Performance Metrics:

Reported Information	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
PY 2021	34,647	27,734

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Reported Information	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
PY 2022	43,176	36,088

Program Description: ES seeks to improve the functioning of Arizona’s labor markets by bringing together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers. ES, a core partner in the ARIZONA@WORK system, co-locates in job centers and/or in a virtual capacity with other network partners across the state and aligns performance accountability indicators with other federal workforce programs. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information, referrals to support service programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized services include career and vocational counseling.

Title IV: VR

Who is Served: The VR Program provides rehabilitation and ES to individuals with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities in the state of Arizona who are between the ages of 14 to 22 and enrolled in an education program are also able to receive a limited set of work preparation services to prepare for future employment. To be eligible for the full range of VR services, individuals must have a documented disability, the disability must present a barrier to competitive and integrated employment, and the individual must require VR services in order to achieve competitive and integrated employment.

Performance Metrics:

Reported Information	Total Individuals Served
PY 2021	12,903
PY 2022	11,777

Program Description: The VR Program provides services and supports to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain, maintain, regain, or advance in competitive and integrated employment. VR services are individualized and adapted to meet each eligible individual’s specific vocational goal and disability-related needs. Examples of services available through the VR program include assessments for determining eligibility and rehabilitation needs, vocational guidance and counseling, job development and retention, vocational/educational training, mobility training, adjustment to disability training, and rehabilitation technology.

The ARIZONA@WORK Public Information Office (PIO) provides the following services:

- Communication: assist LWDAs with communication efforts including, material templates, content and design, promotion assistance of events and workshops, and website usage. Materials promote ARIZONA@WORK services and events to act as reference points for customers and staff, such as flyers, banners, pamphlets, posters, postcards, etc. Digital materials include videos, newsletters, social media posts, infographics, charts, and articles promoting ARIZONA@WORK programs and successes.
- Internal and external communication: critical messages are provided to the internal network to disseminate important updates, events, and news.

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- Branding: includes efforts such as the ARIZONA@WORK Style Guide to meet WIOA and State policy requirements to ensure brand consistency throughout the state. PIO distributes any updated branding materials to LWDA's.
- Social Media and Data: serving as the bridge to connect ARIZONA@WORK with the public. ARIZONA@WORK Public Information Officers (PIOs) manage the network's social media presence and assist the LWDA's with their local social media accounts. PIO will also strategize social campaigns with LWDA's in attempts to promote ARIZONA@WORK services.
- ARIZONA@WORK website: manage the general website content and delegate
- responsibilities to LWDA's to maintain area-specific content. PIO is available to assist LWDA's with web projects, updates, and upgrades. ARIZONA@WORK Facebook accounts reach thousands of people across the state each week.

ETPL

Who is served: The ETPL is a resource to be used by participants in the Adult, DW, and Out-of-School Youth Programs as mandated by WIOA Title I-B.

Program Description: The ETPL includes approved Training Providers who are eligible to receive WIOA Title I-B funds to train eligible adults and DWs, In-School Youth, and Out-of-School Youth Program participants, including those who have barriers and/or require VR services. The ETPL provides training program description, training program cost information, credential information, labor market information, and performance information to inform consumer choice. A training program must be listed on the ETPL for WIOA Title I-B Funds to be used to pay for the training.

To meet the skill and educational development needs of eligible participants, the ETP Programs align with the sector strategies and respective local plans that are focused on In-Demand occupations and result in a recognized credential. ADES and the LWDBs share the responsibility of managing the statewide ETPL including approving programs for initial and continued eligibility. The ADES State ETPL Coordinator approves training providers after ensuring the providers meet the state training provider eligibility requirements listed in the WIOA and State ETPL policy. The State and LWDB ETPL Coordinators review each training program individually to determine if the training programs meet state and local ETPL requirements, respectively, including initial performance data standards, and resulting in a federally or locally recognized credential. Arizona uses the training program's credential attainment rate as the performance factor for initial eligibility. Programs that are approved at the local level are reviewed for accuracy and completeness by the State ETPL Coordinator prior to final approval for inclusion on the statewide ETPL, for a one-year initial eligibility period. The LWDB reviews the training provider's program performance for continued eligibility based on the performance accountability measures using data on all WIOA Title I-B and non-WIOA Title I-B participants who participated in the training program during the performance period. Arizona requires that one or more of the WIOA indicators of performance for all students is provided by the training provider: employment 2nd and 4th quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, or credential attainment for the last four Quarters. Programs are then reviewed every two years for continued eligibility. Initial Programs are those in the first year of approval.

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MSFW Programs: MSFWs are vital to Arizona's agricultural production, especially during the peak harvest months. The MSFW Program delivers ES to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and English Language Learners (ELL) to help them achieve economic self-sufficiency and improved living and working conditions.

The SCSEP: also known as the Mature Worker Program, was authorized by the Older Americans Act in 1965 to assist low-income, unemployed individuals aged 55 years or older find employment. The program matches eligible mature adults with community service and work-based job training opportunities to help build skills and experience that lead to permanent employment and greater independence.

Preference is given to minorities, limited English speaking individuals and American Indians, as well as individuals with the greatest economic and special employment needs.

Participants in the program receive supervised training in a community service assignment, either at a non-profit or governmental agency (often referred to as a host agency) for an average of 20 hours per week. They are compensated at the higher of the federal, state or local minimum wage.

While in training, participants receive an assessment to determine individual needs for training, supportive services and their potential for unsubsidized employment. Other job-related training consists of developing and/or upgrading existing employment skills, limited educational opportunities and job search skills and counseling.

CTE Programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Act: This Law supports the development of career and technical skills among students in secondary and postsecondary education. Perkins IV aims to improve academic outcomes and preparedness for higher education or the labor market among students enrolled in CTE Programs, previously known as vocational education programs.

TAA: TAA provides job training and employment opportunities to those who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade or outsourcing to other countries. The TAA program helps trade-affected workers return to suitable employment as quickly as possible.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants: The JVSG Program has dedicated staff who provide individualized career and training-related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment. They provide case management to remove these barriers to help veterans become job-ready and find gainful employment.

Second Chance Act: Provides employment assistance, housing, substance abuse treatment, family programming, mentoring, victim's support and other related services that help reduce recidivism.

TANF: Cash Assistance helps families meet their basic needs for well-being and safety and serves as their path to self-sufficiency. The Cash Assistance program provides temporary cash benefits and supportive services to the neediest of Arizona's children and their families.

[20] BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative <https://arizonaatwork.com/sites/default/files/2023-08/BuilditAZ-Apprenticeship-Initiative.pdf>

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[21] A covered person is a veteran or eligible spouse, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4215(a). See also section III(b)(7)(A) of the State Plan.

[22] WIOA <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-113publ128/pdf/PLAW-113publ128.pdf>

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

1. VISION

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

2. GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment⁸ and other populations.⁹

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Using the tables provided within each Core Program section, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

4. ASSESSMENT

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1),

(2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment, which may include evaluation findings, and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

(1) Vision. Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

- **Vision:** Create a future where access to economic growth and opportunity is promoted through innovative workforce collaboration across business, education, and training systems designed to meet the diverse needs and full potential of all Arizonans.

The vision for the ARIZONA@WORK system is grounded in Governor Hobbs' top priority — to serve the people of our state. Focused on creating a just, prosperous, and resilient Arizona by acting with integrity, engaging communities, and making government a force for opportunity and growth, the Governor's priorities [23] include:

- Improving Education
- Economic Growth and Workforce Development
- Immigration and Border Security
- Affordability and Housing
- Water and the Environment
- Expanding Health Care

The Governor's priorities outline key opportunities for ensuring that the state is set up for long-term prosperity through economic growth and development priority. Due to its critical role in building the skills and abilities of people to meet the workforce needs of employers, the ARIZONA@WORK system is positioned to help Arizonans obtain and retain good-paying jobs. This includes creating meaningful linkages between business, education and workforce systems to help people of all backgrounds gain employment and prosper in a rapidly changing economy.

The ARIZONA@WORK vision statement will foster the understanding that when all Arizonans are given the opportunity for training needed for a good-paying job, they become part of a healthier and more dependable workforce. And when more businesses are able to grow, they make the state more competitive and attractive to workers. In pursuit of this aim, the ARIZONA@WORK system accompanies its vision with a mission statement that sets the foundation for the state goals and strategies that will strengthen collaboration across workforce employment, training, and educational programs:

- **Mission:** Develop a customer-driven, integrated workforce system that delivers business, education, and training services to ensure equitable access to high-quality jobs that meet the diverse needs of employers and job seekers.

These two statements reflect the collaborative input across Arizona's workforce system partners, including representatives of the WAC, partner state agencies, the state's 12 LWDAs, and community-based partners invested in strengthening opportunities for all Arizonans. Workforce stakeholders participated in survey opportunities and virtual workshop sessions designed to collect their feedback and input on the state's future direction. Alongside the goals and strategies outlined in this plan, system vision and mission will help unleash Arizonan innovation and grow the workforce.

(2) Goals. *Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—*

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations.

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

The WAC, the Governor's appointed state board, provides guidance and support to the ARIZONA@WORK system to ensure that the Governor's vision for Arizona is implemented. In 2023, the WAC established its first ever strategic plan providing a roadmap for achieving the best possible results for Arizonans. The WAC's strategic plan priorities include digital equity and inclusion, work-based learning, youth programs, advanced manufacturing, and enhancing the workforce development system. These priorities, alongside the guiding principles below, outline the efforts required to implement a workforce system that continually meets the needs of the state.

- Foster a business-oriented and customer-centric mindset.
- Cultivate a flexible and responsive organizational culture that values continuous improvement.
- Promote collaboration and engage a network of partners to effectively achieve our goals.
- Demonstrate innovation in our approach, incorporating cutting-edge technologies and industry best practices.
- Embrace a culture of collaboration and innovation, moving beyond compliance.
- Leverage data to inform our policy and decision-making processes.

In alignment with the WIOA State Plan priorities [24], the WAC's strategic plan, reinforces a clear set of opportunities for continuing to strengthen Arizona's public workforce system including:

- Establishing statewide, systems-level partnerships that maximize on federal level infrastructure investments;
- Designing and delivering worker-centered, industry-driven career pathways;
- Ensuring equitable access to resources, programs, and wraparound services that reduce barriers to employment for priority populations;
- Enhancing data-sharing systems and practices across ARIZONA@WORK system partners;
- Preparing Arizona's youth for success in the workforce.

These opportunities underscore that Arizona's collaborative approach to bolstering its public workforce system is a necessity for businesses and job seekers. Recognizing that continuous engagement of WIOA workforce stakeholders is critical to ensuring that the ARIZONA@WORK system is a customer-centric workforce model, a total of three WIOA State Plan development sessions were facilitated to engage stakeholders in the state plan development process. Over

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130 state and local leaders of the workforce system engaged in the review of the state's current economic conditions, workforce attributes, and workforce development outcomes collected thus far. A list of partner and organizational representatives that participated across all three sessions can be found in Appendix 3.

Through the use of data-informed, small group discussions each convening contributed to a collection of insights and recommendations that informed the state plan goals and strategies. The goals below are designed to ensure the implementation of a workforce system that fosters partnership across core partner programs, required one-stop partners and critical stakeholders in the development of quality career pathways that reinforce self-sufficiency.

- **Goal # 1: Promote a customer-driven workforce system approach** - Build worker-centered, industry driven career pathways and sector strategies to meet the current and future needs of jobseekers, employers, and the state's economy.
- **Goal #2: Foster Business Engagement** - Enhance workforce services that ensure employers have access to a diverse and skilled workforce.
- **Goal #3: Invest in Opportunity and Growth** - Leverage statewide, systems-level partnerships to strengthen collaborative, coordinated, and streamlined services to achieve results for all Arizonans.
- **Goal #4: Prepare Arizona's Youth for Workforce Success** - Enhance youth services to provide equitable access to high quality training, ensuring Arizona's youth are equipped for meaningful employment and long-term career success.

As the ARIZONA@WORK workforce system dedicates its efforts to ensuring all Arizonans are provided quality services, particular emphasis must be placed on the unique circumstances of communities across the state, including rural and tribal communities, and those individuals that experience barriers to employment. Individuals with barriers to employment, referenced as priority population throughout this Unified Plan, are defined by WIOA and Arizona as the following:

- Displaced homemakers;
- Eligible MSFW;
- Ex-offenders;
- Homeless individuals;
- Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities;
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act;
- Individuals who are English language learners;
- Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed;
- Individuals who have low levels of literacy;

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- Individuals without a high school diploma;
- Low income individuals, including TANF and SNAP recipients;
- Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians;
- Older individuals [25];
- Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents);
- Veterans; and
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system.

(3) Performance Goals. Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

See Appendix 1.

(4) Assessment. Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment, which may include evaluation findings, and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

Arizona is focused on enhancing its use of evidence and outcomes-based data to inform progress toward achieving its workforce system goals and strategies. By measuring progress and the results of implementation, the ARIZONA@WORK system will be able to collect data to inform the design and execution of initiatives focused on ensuring its customers have streamlined access to services. In order to facilitate operational excellence, efficiency, and excellent customer service the system will implement intentional, results-driven methods for continuously improving the workforce system and create assessment plans inclusive of measurable goals, progress benchmarks, and specific indicators to monitor progress.

At the State level, the WAC, ADE, and ADES will assess the overall health of the ARIZONA@WORK system through a check and adjust process, using lead measures for the State's strategies and other critical measures to improve the overall system and meet or exceed the federal performance measures. Using a dashboard on the ARIZONA@WORK website, agency scorecards, and tiered measures throughout the system, teams at all levels will be able to quickly identify progress and needed improvements, problem-solve to identify root causes, and implement countermeasures to course-correct and/or improve the measures. Regular reviews with the Council and/or the appropriate committee will ensure ongoing input and assessment of the ARIZONA@WORK system.

The WAC is responsible for implementing the Governor's strategic vision for a robust and effective workforce system in the State of Arizona, thus playing a critical role in the continuous improvement of the ARIZONA@WORK system. The WAC's 2023 Strategic Plan identifies major goals and strategies that reinforce the elements of this Unified plan and are necessary for achieving outcomes for the statewide workforce development system. As staff to the WAC, the Arizona OEO may establish workgroups as needed, consisting of workforce partners and stakeholders to support Council initiatives including the priorities of its Strategic Plan and those

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identified in the goals and strategies identified in this Unified State plan. Assessment of the effectiveness of the ARIZONA@WORK system will be one of the activities carried out by such workgroups, which will inform WAC actions to improve the system as a whole.

Within the context of the execution of the goals outlined in this Unified Plan, the WAC workgroups play a pivotal role in shaping the overarching framework for workforce development by shaping policies and strategies to strengthen the ARIZONA@WORK system. Notably, the Strategic Plan Workgroup has successfully contributed to the creation of the WAC's four-year strategic plan, providing a roadmap for the Council's activities and outlining priorities for the workforce development system overall. Concurrently, the ETPL Workgroup is actively engaged in revising policies related to the state's training provider list. This workgroup aims to enhance the overall quality of training programs and plays a crucial role in achieving the goals outlined in this Unified Plan connected to building industry driven career pathways. Looking ahead, a future workgroup will focus on apprenticeships, seeking to develop strategies and initiatives that will effectively elevate and improve apprenticeship programs throughout the state. This collaborative approach ensures a dynamic and responsive workforce development system aligned with the evolving needs of the state.

To reinforce a data-informed approach to strengthening the ARIZONA@WORK system, WIOA core partner program performance will continue to be assessed at least annually. Recognizing that continuous communication and collaborative planning are necessary to ensure Arizona's customer-driven workforce model comes into action, WIOA partners will convene annually to review progress on assessment plans. The state will bring together local, state, and federal subject matter experts to review progress toward the established goals and strategies outlined in this Unified Plan. Additional practices will be identified to promote the integration of partner programs within the ARIZONA@WORK system, including the establishment of committees to expand and align partner program participation in the implementation of WIOA.

These efforts are all bolstered by the state's intentional approach to improving state government by ensuring results that serve Arizonans. Through Governor Hobbs, and endorsed by the WAC, Arizona deployed the Arizona Management System (AMS) [26], a results-driven management system that transforms the way the government thinks and does business by providing methods and tools to drive continuous improvement in every state agency. Based on the principles of Lean management, the AMS is an intentional approach that incorporates elements of performance management, leader behaviors, and problem solving techniques that ensure strategic goals and objectives drive activities at every level.

To strengthen the connection of local area performance and overall state performance, the State uses a Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM) in accordance with 20 CFR § 677.170(c) to negotiate and assess local area performance for Title I Programs. The results of these assessments inform technical assistance and improvement efforts at the local level and ultimately help to impact statewide performance. ARIZONA@WORK will continue to align with the national Departments' phased-in approach to performance assessment, as described in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 11-19, Negotiations and Sanctions Guidance for the WIOA Core Programs.

Throughout the ARIZONA@WORK system, the evaluation of improvements will be continuous, with the goal of ARIZONA@WORK staff at all levels creating teams to solve problems, improving

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processes using standard problem-solving techniques while measuring progress to make those processes better, faster, and more cost efficient.

[23] <https://azgovernor.gov/governor/priorities>

[24] <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/tegl-04-23>

[25] <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-20/chapter-V/part-680/subpart-C/section-680.320>

[26] <https://results.az.gov/arizonas-approach>

C. STATE STRATEGY

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). "CAREER PATHWAY" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23)

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2)

In alignment with the goals outlined within this Unified Plan, the ARIZONA@WORK system has identified 16 strategies to support the attainment of each goal and meet the needs of the priority populations emphasized throughout this Unified Plan. Strategies are outlined below in correspondence to the specific goals; however, all strategies are designed to collectively impact all goals to create and promote a holistic system to benefit all customers.

The strategies below are responsive to an analysis of the system's strengths and weaknesses, intended to build off of the workforce development activities summarized throughout Section A, and aligned to the DOL priorities outlined in TEGl 04-23. Strategies are presented in accordance with each leading goal and are a result of stakeholder input collected across statewide data review sessions and survey feedback.

Each goal and strategy set is followed by a sample of the outcomes that the ARIZONA@WORK system aims to achieve. Arizona will use ongoing planning and data review sessions across Core Partner programs, LWDBs, and other system partners to establish annual benchmarks that guide strategy implementation to promote responsiveness to specific local area needs and

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ensure integrated access to shared customers, including people with disabilities, formerly incarcerated, veterans, immigrants and refugees, youth, etc.

Goal #1: Promote a Customer-Driven Workforce System Approach

Strategies

- **1.1:** Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
- **1.2:** Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals, including priority populations, with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.
- **1.3:** Refine the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure streamlined access to training, education, employment opportunities and supportive services that help to reduce barriers.
- **1.4:** Strengthen coordination and outreach across the ARIZONA@WORK system to increase public awareness and access to services.

What We Plan to Achieve

- WIOA participants will receive training and career services that promote career pathways and/or increase career-ready skills attainment, such as career exploration activities, JRT, and industry recognized credential attainment.
- The ARIZONA@WORK system will broaden the availability of non-traditional Registered Apprenticeship programs to expand the talent pool, reaching underrepresented groups, while improving equitable service delivery. These efforts will increase in the number of WIOA participants completing Registered Apprenticeships.
- To address the unique needs and circumstances of Arizonans, the system will ensure access to supportive services that meet the basic needs of priority populations and reduce barriers to employment.
- Increase the availability and accessibility of training programs and services to individuals, especially those from underserved populations, including rural, tribal, and low-income communities.

Goal #2: Foster Business Engagement

Strategies

- **2.1:** Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.
- **2.2:** Promote a business-services model that links business growth with, and advocates for, quality jobs that support workers' economic stability and mobility.
- **2.3:** Strengthen workforce system teams by investing in tools and skill building that improves talent sourcing and matching for businesses.

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- **2.4:** Convene the business community to explore and realize the employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by highlighting the workforce system's supportive services for prioritized populations.

What We Plan to Achieve

- Bolster the number of work-based training opportunities available to priority populations, including incumbent work training, on-the-job training, and registered apprenticeships.
- Reinforce partnerships with in-demand industry leaders by establishing Registered Apprenticeships within industries leading the state's economic growth.
- Improve the state's Effectiveness in Serving Employers by developing work-based learning opportunities to promote employee retention.

Goal #3: Invest in Opportunity and Growth

Strategies

- **3.1:** Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.
- **3.2:** Braid federal, state, local, and private funding streams to maximize the impact of WIOA funds to meet the unique needs of local areas, job seekers, and employers.
- **3.3:** Facilitate data sharing, reporting, and performance analysis across WIOA partners to improve workforce system performance and outcomes.
- **3.4:** Implement a state-wide technical assistance model to deliver training and facilitate best-practice sharing as aligned to the training needs of workforce system staff.

What We Plan to Achieve

- The ARIZONA@WORK system partners will strengthen coordination to increase the number of WIOA participants co-enrolled across core partner programs.
- Ensure the best practices for, and of, the ARIZONA@WORK system are shared through state and local area convenings.
- Strengthen planning efforts across workforce system partners and community-based programs through WIOA State Plan opportunities.
- Maximize on federal level investments through an increase in partnerships with state-level agencies and employers receiving Investing In America (IIA) funding.

Goal #4: Prepare Arizona's Youth for Workforce Success

Strategies

- **4.1:** Create a robust system, including partnerships with CTE Districts and pre-apprenticeship models, for career exploration intended to build upon professional skills, workplace foundational academic skills, and career interests.

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- **4.2:** Identify both in-school and out-of-school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.
- **4.3:** Develop work based learning opportunities for youth through partnerships with employers.
- **4.4:** Strengthen outreach to youth, their families, and school staff to provide information about the ARIZONA@WORK system, including supportive services and opportunities for meaningful employment and career pathways.

What We Plan to Achieve

- Engage youth in opportunities that develop leadership skills and promote meaningful career paths, including career exploration, work-based learning, and paid work experiences, such as Registered Apprenticeships.
- Support youth engagement in program offerings by ensuring access to supportive services to promote attainment of educational and employment goals.
- Build capacity for youth outreach through partnerships with programs and organizations serving in and out-of-school youth, including their families.

(1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D).

Ensuring that ARIZONA@WORK effectively delivers on its mission for a customer-driven workforce system requires that employers are emphasized in the definition of customer. As critical partners, all businesses provide essential input on workforce training needs, policy guidance to inform initiatives that are responsive to industry needs, and feedback to improve business services modeling in effort of strengthening partnerships. ARIZONA@WORK is committed to building partnerships with the business community that result in shared solutions for common workforce problems to meet the needs of its business community and provide jobseekers with career pathways. As a part of the overall strategy for developing a career pathway framework, Arizona intends to develop methods for connecting all core Title partner participants to diverse career pathway opportunities including CTE, Registered Apprenticeship programs, etc.

Career pathways are particularly impactful in serving populations with barriers to employment when designed in response to client population needs, specifically the priority populations emphasized throughout this Unified Plan. Combining career pathway programs with sector strategies informed by labor market trends has the potential to help move populations with barriers to employment into the labor force while also meeting employer's workforce needs. The strategies below have been identified to support partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors, occupations, and career pathways.

Strategy 1.1: Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.

- The ARIZONA@WORK system plans to bolster the number of work-based training opportunities available to priority populations, including incumbent work training, on-

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the-job training, and registered apprenticeships. WIOA participants will receive training and career services that promote career pathways and/or increase career-ready skills attainment, such as career exploration activities, JRT, and industry recognized credential attainment. The ARIZONA@WORK system will broaden the availability of non-traditional Registered Apprenticeship programs to expand the talent pool, reaching underrepresented groups, while improving equitable service delivery. These efforts will increase in the number of WIOA participants completing Registered Apprenticeships.

Strategy 2.1: Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.

- The ARIZONA@WORK system must be responsive to the state's economic conditions and the in-demand industries in order to create career pathways that lead to high-quality jobs that position the state for long-term prosperity. These work-based training opportunities require cross-collaboration among businesses, education, and training providers to ensure that the programs developed are responsive to the workforce needs of businesses. Developing these programs will help to promote employee retention, thus improving the state's Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Additionally, reinforced partnerships with in-demand industry leaders will support establishing Registered Apprenticeships within industries leading the state's economic growth.

Strategy 2.4: Convene the business community to explore and realize the employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by highlighting the workforce system's supportive services for prioritized populations.

- The state actively ensures that the business community comprehends the talent potential among WIOA eligible participants and the supportive services provided by the ARIZONA@WORK system for meaningful career pathways. Leveraging the convening power of the WAC, supported by OEO staff and the LWDBs, the state enhances business community awareness and utilization of ARIZONA@WORK, fostering regional partnerships tailored to unique local area circumstances. Key events such as the annual Workforce Arizona Convening, like Crossroad to Connections held on January 11, 2024, facilitate collaboration between employers and various sectors, celebrating innovation and impact on local boards. The WAC and local areas host numerous convening events throughout the year, addressing specific workforce needs. Moreover, the inaugural Arizona Workforce Summit in June 2023, was convened in partnership between the WAC and Maricopa County, City of Phoenix and Pinal Workforce Development Boards. This major event connected over 330 attendees from workforce development, economic development, and education. Governor Hobbs inaugurated the summit, announcing Arizona's two newest Future48 Workforce Accelerator programs in Kingman and Yuma. The success of this summit has ensured a second annual event in May 2024, focusing on Veterans, tribal communities, and rural, underserved populations in Northern Arizona, in collaboration with rural workforce boards. This spring summit aims to further collaboration and innovation on state and regional workforce development strategies.

Strategy 4.3: Develop work based learning opportunities for youth through partnerships with employers.

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- Arizona's future prosperity is contingent on the participation of youth populations in the state's evolving and growing economy. Identifying and designing these opportunities requires that business leaders are at the table in determining how to intentionally engage youth in the work-based learning program that can advance their future trajectory. The ARIZONA@WORK system seeks to engage youth in opportunities that develop leadership skills and promote meaningful career paths, including career exploration, work-based learning, and paid work experiences, such as Registered Apprenticeships.

The examples of programs and initiatives below will serve as a foundation for promoting progress on the strategies prioritized above.

Arizona Registered Apprenticeship Program

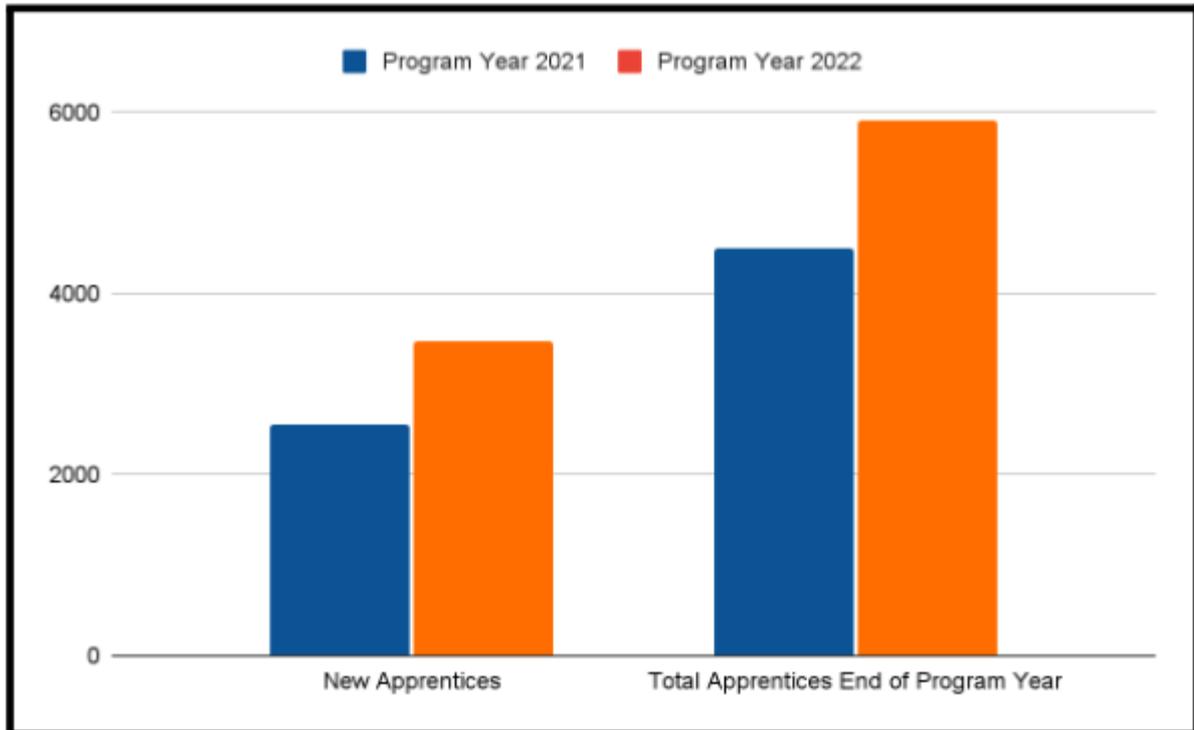
Cultivating a highly skilled workforce and helping individuals secure meaningful employment and promising career pathways continues to be the focus of the AAO, which is why it aims to increase its outreach capacity to further support local industries in Arizona.

The AAO aims to grow the team by adding more Apprenticeship and Training Representatives (ATRs) and supervisors, as well as a Compliance Specialist, to assist employers better in creating and maintaining quality Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs).

The AAO's dedication to fostering a skilled workforce is making a substantial impact on apprenticeship engagement as it observed a significant surge of 43 percent in apprenticeship enrollments, with 3,529 new registered apprentices, a substantial increase from the 2,455 recorded in the previous fiscal year.

As of June 30, 2023, there were 5,918 registered apprentices in Arizona, compared to 4,502 registered apprentices at the end of PY 2022, an increase of 31 percent. The presence and growth of Arizona's Registered Apprenticeship Program demonstrates a critical connection to ensuring access to career pathways for WIOA participants as aligned to the strategies listed above.

Figure 21: New Apprentices and Total Apprentices for PYs 2021 and 2022



During the PY 2023, 37 new Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) were created, contributing to a total of 270 RAPs established since the commencement of the Arizona Apprenticeship Program on June 16, 1941. The diversity of the RAPs present opportunities across various career paths and industry sectors, encompassing:

- Construction;
- Healthcare;
- Childcare;
- Manufacturing;
- IT;
- Transportation;
- Aviation; and
- Public Administration.

As of February 2023, 28 percent were on the State's ETPL, an equivalent to 76 Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs). Among the individuals who completed their apprenticeships in PY 2023, 66 percent or 532 out of 806, were from RAPs that were on the ETPL.

The AAO remains committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in RAPs, particularly among historically underrepresented populations. Notably, women exhibited an 11.6 percent participation rate in PY 2023, reflecting a 1.5 percent increase from the previous year. Individuals with disabilities in Arizona have a 2.2 percent participation rate, compared to the national average of one percent [27].

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AAO's collaborative efforts with local educational institutions have resulted in the integration of the apprenticeship model into their curricula, aligning with Arizona employers and industry workforce needs and requirements. Community Colleges and post-secondary institutions serve as RAP intermediary sponsors, providing related technical instruction and program administration for a variety of occupations in their respective regions in non-traditional industries such as IT, cyber security, and healthcare. The AAO aims to see more opportunities being presented through RAPs in emerging industries such as those in semiconductors and advanced manufacturing.

Further expansion of Registered Apprenticeship (RA) opportunities are being created through the strategic alignment of CTE Programs with RAPs through pre-apprenticeships and youth apprenticeships. Both programs compliment each other in growing and sustaining a much-needed workforce pipeline for various industries.

The AAO continues to collaborate with DOL-contracted national industry intermediaries and hold apprenticeship accelerator events to educate, raise awareness, and provide support for Registered Apprenticeship expansion. These events have garnered substantial interest from over 300 employers, industry associations, education providers, and workforce representatives across the state, resulting in engagements with over 50 employers and associations in establishing registered Apprenticeship Programs. These employers and associations directly engage with the State Apprenticeship Program team and have worked towards creating new RAPs or participate in existing multiple-employer programs.

BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative

The BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative [28] complements and underscores this Unified Plan's aim to help develop a highly skilled workforce for employers and make quality employment available to workers and job seekers. The BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative goals include:

- Double the number of construction and trades registered apprentices in Arizona by the end of 2026;
- Increased access to effective pre-apprenticeship programs that directly enroll in registered apprenticeship programs, creating pathways in the trades, especially for women and other underrepresented learners;
- Updated registered programs' rules and regulations to reflect current market trends and best practices;
- Creation of an apprenticeship grants office to secure funding that expands apprenticeship programs, and direct agencies for the first time to actively apply for federal apprenticeship funds;
- Increased funding and development of strategies for meeting increasing green economy workforce demands and filling green jobs, for projects such as EV charging stations and solar panel installation; and
- Increased number of adults in Arizona with an industry recognized credential, contributing towards meeting the state's attainment goal, Achieve60AZ (60 percent education attainment by 2030).

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).

Integrated service delivery supports the collaboration and coordination across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure that their support, services, and interventions meet the needs of the customers they serve. The strategies below have been identified to align core programs, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and other State resources to ensure access to the array of services funded across the state's workforce and education programs.

Strategy 1.3: Refine the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure streamlined access to training, education, employment opportunities and supportive services that help to reduce barriers.

- To ensure that the ARIZONA@WORK system provides easy access to the quality services that are available across its partner programs is the linchpin to successful outcomes. This Unified Plan emphasizes the importance of training ARIZONA@WORK partner program staff, specifically job center staff, to be knowledgeable about the services provided across all core, required, and optional one-stop partner programs. As a means of continuing to strengthen the system's "No Wrong Door" approach, it is critical that customers are connected to the resources and supportive services that address their needs, including being referred across partner programs and linked to supportive services. Tactics in support of this strategy include, but are not limited to, the implementation of referral systems across partner programs; strengthening of program accessibility at comprehensive one-stop centers via in-person and virtual methods, and research and evaluation efforts focused on assuring all customers experience an environment that is welcoming and responsive to needs.

Strategy 1.4: Strengthen coordination and outreach across the ARIZONA@WORK system to increase public awareness and access to services.

- Increasing public awareness and access to the ARIZONA@WORK system requires that system partners coordinate information sharing and outreach efforts. This Unified Plan emphasizes this strategy as a critical component to ensuring training programs and services to individuals, especially those from underserved populations, including rural, tribal, and low-income communities, are made available within communities across the state. The ARIZONA@WORK system will continue to build off of already existing coordination strategies, including monthly partnership meetings and the continued enhancement of the ARIZONA@WORK website to help communicate resources across partners including branding resources. As an example, Title IV presented at the Title II annual Institute in September 2023. The Session was titled "Making the Connection: Increasing VR and Adult Education Co-Enrollment." Title IV staff from field offices attended multiple sessions throughout the Title II Institute, adding to discussions of supporting Title II students who have disabilities. Additionally, in September 2023, the ARIZONA@WORK website's [29] content management system (CMS) was updated to a

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newer and improved platform. During the upgrade, content was updated and the layout was redesigned to include a customizable slideshow and a more user-friendly experience for our clients. Additionally, the ADES' public information team communicates with ARIZONA@WORK partner staff regularly to ensure they have access to materials and templates to support community outreach including:

- Weekly via ARIZONA@WORK Statewide Business Services Meetings;
- Monthly via ARIZONA@WORK Communications Meetings;
- Monthly via ARIZONA@WORK Meeting, as needed;
- One-on-one meetings with local areas; and
- Email communications that include important updates and access to tools including, branding guidelines, promotional flyers, events, slideshow presentations, and more.

The ARIZONA@WORK system, through the public information team's management, utilizes a social media presence via Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and LinkedIn to promote local campaigns and events. In the second quarter of 2023, there was an increase of over 600 percent in the reach on Facebook, over 250 percent in Twitter impressions, and more than 400 percent in LinkedIn impressions.

Strategy 3.1: Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.

- This Unified Plan acknowledges the tremendous opportunity to strengthen unity across partner programs by improving coordination across state level agencies currently part of the ARIZONA@WORK system. As an example, Title IV has developed an Assistive Technology and Disability Awareness Training to provide ARIZONA@WORK job centers capacity to promote inclusive and accessible services for persons with disabilities. Services include:
 - Educational Workshops - Purpose is to enhance staff competencies in areas including but not limited to disability awareness, disability etiquette, and assistive technology for individuals with vision, hearing, combined vision/hearing, cognition, speech, physical access & mental health impairments.
 - Site Evaluations - Conduct in person and virtual site evaluations which result in written recommendations for assistive technology purchases and staff training needs.
 - Training Services - Development and provision of in person and virtual training, and technical assistance that enables staff to identify, maintain, and assist individuals with disabilities in the use of specific assistive technology.

The expansion of partnerships with state-level agencies directly receiving federal level infrastructure investments will help to advance opportunities to bolster industry and sector partnerships that result in quality jobs for priority populations.

Strategic partnership with community-based organizations already serving priority populations is also critical to reducing barriers to employment that impede the ability of identified individuals to complete a training or educational program that could help them upskill or reskill to accelerate quality employment. Training for ARIZONA@WORK system staff to equip them with the skills, knowledge, and tools needed to help job seekers navigate the network of workforce system partner resources that can advance their individual career pathways; development a streamlined intake process that eliminates redundant assessments and improves customer experience; and ensuring equitable access to support services to reduce the barriers faced by priority populations are all tactics aligned to this strategy.

Strategy 3.2: Braid federal, state, local, and private funding streams to maximize the impact of WIOA funds to meet the unique needs of local areas, job seekers, and employers.

- The level of federal investment, including \$6.5 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding headed to Arizona with over 470 specific projects identified [30], presents an imperative partnership opportunity to leverage the state's utilization of the ARIZONA@WORK system. Following the passing of the BIL, approximately \$4.1 billion has been announced for transportation – to invest in roads, bridges, public transit, ports and airports – and roughly \$814 million has been announced for clean water and water infrastructure. Arizona received \$1.3 billion to connect everyone in the state to reliable high-speed internet. These investments emphasize opportunities to grow the number of trained/skilled job seekers available for positions in high demand sectors and partnerships with funded agencies and organizations can help to maximize the impact of WIOA funding. Alongside the prospect of leveraging federal level investment, is the opportunity to braid funding across state-level programs that can help increase the access to supportive services that promote access to employment opportunities, including childcare subsidies, substance abuse treatment, benefits planning, and assistive technology for people with disabilities.

Strategy 3.3: Facilitate data sharing, reporting, and performance analysis across WIOA partners to improve workforce system performance and outcomes.

- Cross system data sharing capacity is integral to the delivery of an integrated ARIZONA@WORK system and has been identified as a weakness of the current system. This Unified Plan emphasizes the implementation of tactics that promote the collaborative review and utilization of information that helps to connect customers to services that meet their unique needs. Strengthening data capacity will help to promote effective case management, leverage progress monitoring of the system's effectiveness in delivering services, and guide investment to help ensure that programs align with labor market trends and needs. Tactics in support of this strategy include but are not limited to, modernization of UI, VR, and workforce data software systems, cross partner program data reviews, the development of a workforce clearinghouse of resources, and the establishment of data sharing agreements to facilitate information gathering.

In addition, OEO's and WAC's impactful approach to policy development through collaborative working groups bring together key stakeholders, including core partners and members of the WAC, to collectively review and refine policies that impact workforce development. Noteworthy achievements of these workgroups include the successful completion of the WAC Strategic Plan and the ETPL Policy. By fostering an inclusive environment that encourages input from various

perspectives, OEO and the WAC aim to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of workforce policies. Looking ahead, the focus of upcoming workgroups will center on apprenticeships, reflecting a forward-looking strategy to address evolving needs in the labor market and ensure the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills for the future. This innovative and collaborative approach marks a significant step toward shaping comprehensive and dynamic workforce policies that serve the diverse needs of the community.

Strategy 3.4: Implement a state-wide technical assistance model to deliver training and facilitate best-practice sharing as aligned to the training needs of workforce system staff.

- The identification, implementation, and maintenance of best practices is essential to ensuring coordination at state and local levels. This Unified Plan intends to bolster the technical assistance modeling available to the ARIZONA@WORK system to ensure that the training needs of workforce system partners and their staff are met. Collaboration across the OEO staff, ADES's Policy Administration, and ADES's Program Oversight and Support Administration (POSA) will serve as integral stakeholders in the delivery of state-wide technical assistance. Strengthened technical assistance models are intended to facilitate planning efforts across workforce system partners and community-based programs, provide policy guidance, and disseminate best practices across the state to promote continuous improvement.

[27] Source: Apprenticeship USA Data and Statistics <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics>

[28] BuilditAZ Apprenticeship Initiative <https://arizonaatwork.com/sites/default/files/2023-08/BuilditAZ-Apprenticeship-Initiative.pdf>

[29] <https://arizonaatwork.com/>

[30] Source: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law State Fact Sheets: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/build/resources/state-fact-sheets/>

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the State's strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II(c) above.

Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

To effectively fulfill its functions as outlined in section 101(d) of WIOA, the Workforce Arizona Council (WAC) strategically structures its operational framework and decision-making processes.

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Operational Structures:

The WAC operates under a structured framework consisting of an Executive Committee, Full Council, and specialized workgroups. These entities ensure comprehensive representation and facilitate agile decision-making.

1. **Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee is responsible for strategic oversight, policy formulation, and decision-making on critical matters affecting workforce development in Arizona. Its streamlined structure enables swift decision-making and efficient resource allocation. This committee is targeted at swiftly moving through all compliance related activities and ensuring the 12 Local Workforce Development Boards are fulfilling their required activities as outlined in WIOA.
2. **Full Council:** The Full Council encompasses all appointed members of the WAC, fostering inclusivity and collaboration across various sectors. Through regular meetings and collaborative sessions, the Full Council deliberates on overarching strategies and ensures alignment with the state's workforce development goals.
3. **Specialized Workgroups:** To address specific statewide initiatives and emerging challenges, the WAC establishes specialized workgroups, comprising subject matter experts and stakeholders. These workgroups are entities designed to tackle focused objectives, ensuring targeted interventions and responsive actions. The workgroups bring their work forward to the WAC to push forward their strategic initiatives outlined in both the State Plan and Strategic Plan.

Decision-Making Processes:

The WAC employs robust decision-making processes to ensure effective implementation of its functions:

1. **Consensus Building:** Decision-making within the WAC is consensus-driven, fostering dialogue and collaboration among members. Through robust deliberations and stakeholder engagements, consensus is reached on key policy initiatives, strategic priorities, and resource allocations.
2. **Data-Informed Decision-Making:** Decisions undertaken by the WAC are informed by comprehensive data analysis and research through the Labor Market Information (LMI) team. Utilizing labor market insights and performance metrics, the WAC assesses program effectiveness and identifies areas for improvement, ensuring data-driven decision-making. Policy and other strategic initiatives can then be moved forward and supported by the WAC based on the data provided.
3. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The WAC actively solicits input from industry leaders, community organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies. By fostering inclusive dialogue and soliciting feedback from diverse perspectives, the WAC ensures responsiveness to the needs of Arizona's workforce ecosystem.
4. **Transparency and Accountability:** Upholding principles of transparency and accountability, the WAC ensures that its actions are transparent to the public and stakeholders. Through public meetings, annual reports, public comment on all policy,

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and stakeholder outreach efforts, the WAC maintains transparency and fosters accountability.

Strategic Initiatives:

The Workforce Arizona Council developed a 4-year Strategic Plan to guide their efforts in moving the Governor's priority of a thriving economy forward. The WAC, in partnership with state workforce agency and systemwide partners developed a plan of action:

1. Digital Equity and Inclusion
 - a. Goal: Promote digital equity and inclusion by providing equal access and opportunities to all Arizonans, regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or gender.
 - b. Strategies:
 - i. Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.
 - ii. Ensure digital training and resources are accessible to people with disabilities and other underserved populations.
 - iii. Align state policies and procedures to encourage the development of digital skills in training and employment.
2. Work-Based Learning
 - a. Goal: Enhance work-based learning opportunities and achieve favorable outcomes for participants, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
 - b. Strategies:
 - i. Work with apprenticeship programs to assess minimal requirements for entry into apprenticeships in order to ensure inclusivity, diversity, and meet employer needs.
 - ii. Increase the number of non-traditional Registered Apprenticeship programs to broaden the talent pool, reaching underrepresented groups, while improving diversity and inclusion.
 - iii. Ensure training providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) are aligned with industry standards and meet the needs of local employers, preparing students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success.
3. Youth
 - a. Goal: Prepare Arizona's youth for success in the workforce by providing high-quality training programs in partnership with the ARIZONA@WORK system.

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- b. Strategies:
 - i. Create a robust system for career exploration intended to build upon professional skills, workplace foundational academic skills, and career interests.
 - ii. Identify out of school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.
 - iii. Develop partnerships with employers to create work-based learning opportunities for youth.
- 4. Advanced Manufacturing
 - a. Goal: Develop a skilled workforce to meet the demand for jobs in advanced manufacturing industries in Arizona.
 - b. Strategies:
 - i. Build partnerships with industry leaders in advanced manufacturing industries to create work-based learning opportunities.
 - ii. Develop and implement outreach and awareness campaigns to increase interest in advanced manufacturing industries.
 - iii. Identify common knowledge, skills, and abilities required for all positions in advanced manufacturing.
- 5. Workforce System
 - a. Goal: Enhance the workforce development system in Arizona by creating a skilled and adaptable workforce pipeline that meets the current and future needs of employers and the state's economy.
 - b. Strategies:
 - i. Strengthen partnerships between businesses, education and training providers, and workforce development organizations to identify the specific skills and competencies needed by employers and develop training programs that meet those needs.
 - ii. Increase the availability and accessibility of training programs and services to individuals, especially those from underserved populations, including rural and low-income communities.
 - iii. Enhance the use of data and labor market information to identify emerging industry trends and skills gaps and adjust training programs accordingly to meet the needs of the workforce and the economy.

The WAC focuses on each element of the plan during their quarterly meetings receiving updates from Staff on how these items are being achieved. WAC staff carry out the strategies by leveraging robust operational structures and transparent decision-making processes with

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systemwide partnerships. The WAC effectively implements its functions under WIOA, driving meaningful outcomes and advancing Arizona’s workforce development agenda.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State’s Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE’S STRATEGY

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State’s strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

The following table provides the State’s 16 Strategies for the next four years, including implementation activities and initiatives proposed for each strategy. These strategies were derived from the four state goals, informed by the DOL priorities outlined in TEGL 04-23, the WAC’s Strategic Plan, and small-group insights collected across the three WIOA State Plan development Sessions held throughout November and December 2023:

Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
<p>1.1: Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote physical and virtual workplace career exploration activities, JRT, and industry recognized credential attainment that advance career pathways for participants. • Broaden the availability of Registered Apprenticeship programs, including non-traditional Apprenticeships, to expand the talent pool and reach underrepresented groups to improve equitable service delivery.
<p>1.2: Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals, including priority populations, with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the availability and accessibility of digital literacy programs and services to individuals, especially those from underserved populations, including rural, tribal, and low-income communities. • Collaborate with local organizations, schools, and community groups to expand the reach of the digital literacy statewide initiatives and offer workshops and training sessions in collaboration

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Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
	<p>with community partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create engaging and interactive materials, such as videos, tutorials, quizzes, and interactive simulations to support digital literacy skill acquisition. • Develop a structured curriculum that covers fundamental digital literacy topics, including modules on basic computer skills, internet navigation, online safety, information literacy, and critical thinking.
<p>1.3 Refine the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure streamlined access to training, education, employment opportunities and supportive services that help to reduce barriers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a streamlined intake and referral processes that eliminate duplicative assessments and improve customer experience. • Prioritize the unique needs and circumstances of Arizonans to ensure equitable access to supportive services to reduce the barriers to employment faced by priority populations (e.g., childcare, transportation, benefits planning). • Identify research and evaluation opportunities to Improve quality of services delivered at one-stop centers through emphasis on welcoming and inclusive environments that offer streamlined access to the state’s network of workforce system partners. • Identify opportunities to equip ARIZONA@WORK system staff with the customer satisfaction skills and tools (e.g. response to cultural differences, English Language Learner supports, trauma-informed care). • Promote the use of diversified means to increase access to ARIZONA@WORK services to rural clients, including the use of mobile units, virtual service delivery, and travel staff/faculty.
<p>1.4: Strengthen coordination and outreach across the ARIZONA@WORK system to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand training for ARIZONA@WORK system staff to equip them with the skills,

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Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
<p>increase public awareness and access to services.</p>	<p>knowledge, and tools needed to help job seekers navigate the network of workforce system partner resources that can advance their individual career pathways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement outreach and awareness campaigns for the ARIZONA@WORK system through local outreach efforts and convenings. • Engage ARIZONA@WORK system partners professional learning opportunities (e.g. stakeholder workgroups, committees, workshops, etc.) to increase knowledge of partner program services and best practices. • Identify data system solutions to improve data sharing for shared clients across ARIZONA@WORK programs.
<p>2.1: Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage employers in the development of work-based learning curriculums and programs in collaboration with education (e.g. community colleges) and training providers. • Promote collaborative learning by incorporating group discussions, forums, and peer-to-peer interactions. • Reinforce partnership with in-demand industry leaders by establishing Registered Apprenticeships within industries leading the state's and local area's economic growth.
<p>2.2: Promote a business-services model that links business with, and advocates for, quality jobs that support workers' economic stability and mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist employers to utilize work-based training, diversify registered apprenticeships, and upskill workers to increase employee recruitment and retention. • Design services and develop sector partnerships to create good jobs and well-defined career pathways

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Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Registered Apprenticeship programs within identified in-demand industries (e.g., BuilditAZ Apprentices Initiative[31]). • Develop a holistic framework to define good jobs that ensure job quality is a top priority for employers and job seekers.
<p>2.3: Strengthen workforce system teams by investing in tools and skill building that improve client management, talent sourcing, and matching for businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the state’s Effectiveness in Serving Employers by developing work-based learning opportunities to promote employee retention. • Invest in case management technology and expand skill development to streamline talent sourcing and matching for businesses. • Identify resources and deliver technical assistance for work-based learning opportunities, including on-the-job training and registered apprenticeship. • Reinforce relationship building and business service modeling that responds to locally identified needs.
<p>2.4: Convene the business community to explore and realize the employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by highlighting the workforce system’s supportive services for prioritized populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate business community convenings to highlight benefits of working with the ARIZONA@WORK system and its linkage to job seekers. • Improve business community outreach to strengthen awareness of supportive services available via partnership with ARIZONA@WORK system.
<p>3.1: Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen coordination to increase the number of WIOA participants co-enrolled across core partner programs. • Increase the number of WIOA participants accessing good jobs created by Investing in America investments. • Strengthen the coordination across supportive and care services that address the needs of individuals with barriers to

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Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
	<p>employment and to mitigate the “benefits cliff” impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of partnerships with community-based organizations serving priority populations. • Integrate additional workforce system partners in WIOA State Plan development and submission.
<p>3.2: Braid federal, state, local, and private funding streams to maximize the impact of WIOA funds to meet the unique needs of local areas, job seekers, and employers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen partnerships with state-level agencies and employers receiving Investing In America (IIA) funding to maximize on federal level investments. • Explore shared cost and braiding funding opportunities to expand the impact of WIOA funding. • Expand funding flexibility to foster capacity to meet locally identified workforce system needs and pivot to identify priorities.
<p>3.3: Facilitate data sharing, reporting, and performance analysis across WIOA partners to improve workforce system performance and outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the best practices for, and of, the ARIZONA@WORK system are shared through state and local area convenings. • Modernize and integrate state management systems that facilitate data sharing, reporting, and performance analysis across WIOA partners. • Improve data reporting and analysis to enable data-informed decisions that support continuous improvement.
<p>3.4: Implement a state-wide technical assistance model to deliver training and facilitate best-practice sharing as aligned to the training needs of workforce system staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate best practices for, and of, the ARIZONA@WORK system to strengthen service delivery, including the development of resource clearinghouse. • Facilitate WIOA planning efforts across workforce system partners and community-based programs to promote continuous improvement. • Improve training for ARIZONA@WORK

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Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
	<p>system staff to ensure client expectations of services are met and after-exit data captured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote comprehensive One-Stop Center standards for consistent service delivery across the State. • Promote an increase in the number of workforce system convenings at state and local levels.
<p>4.1: Create a robust system, including partnerships with CTEDistricts and pre-apprenticeship models, for career exploration intended to build upon professional skills, workplace foundational academic skills, and career interests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support youth engagement in program offerings by ensuring access to supportive services to promote attainment of educational and employment goals. • Strengthen coordination with CTE/Perkins to arrange work-based learning opportunities for in-school youth.
<p>4.2: Identify both in-school and out-of-school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage youth in opportunities that develop leadership skills and promote meaningful career paths, including career exploration, work-based learning, and paid work experiences, such as Registered Apprenticeships. • Expand youth-focused outreach campaigns to promote attainment of GED/HSE.
<p>4.3: Develop work based learning opportunities for youth through partnerships with employers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage employers to develop youth programs, work-based learning opportunities, and paid work experiences e.g, youth apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships and internships.
<p>4.4: Strengthen outreach to youth, their families, and school staff to provide information about the ARIZONA@WORK system, including supportive services and opportunities for meaningful employment and career pathways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify practices for preventive services and early intervention for at-risk youth. • Build capacity for youth outreach through partnerships with programs and organizations serving in and out-of-school youth, including their families. • Promote partnerships with school

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Strategies	Implementation Activities/Initiatives
	<p style="text-align: center;">districts to establish youth pipelines in hard to reach areas, e.g. rural communities, including an increase in job fairs, school clubs, etc.</p>

The agencies overseeing the Core Programs, ADE and ADES, will fund activities to implement this Unified Plan’s strategies. The strategies will include developing accessible work-based learning opportunities, implementing digital literacy programs, providing training across Partner Program workforce staff to increase coordination and co-enrollment, input on WIOA assessment plans and progress measures, and participation in WAC committees, as appropriate. In addition to these efforts, each core program under WIOA has a common set of performance indicators and is represented on the Governor’s WAC, which sets the strategic direction for ARIZONA@WORK.

ADE and ADES together administer nine education and employment programs: CTE, CSBG, JVSG, MSFW, SCSEP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), TANF Jobs, TAA, and UI; which increases the State’s ability to leverage resources and coordinate as a system. Likewise, the State Office of Apprenticeship is housed in ADES and staff participate in statewide and local activities with the Council and LWDBs to align apprenticeship information and opportunities for businesses and individuals. DERS, a division within ADES, supports ARIZONA@WORK and administers the following:

- WIOA Core Partner Programs: providing funding to the LWDBs for Adult, DW, and Youth workforce training activities authorized under WIOA Title I;
- Wagner-Peyser Act ES under Title III; and
- and VR under Title IV.

ADES collaborates with the ADE, which administers adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA to support coordination of services for individuals participating in programs overseen by both agencies. As an ARIZONA@WORK partner, ADE supports local Title II providers through its Adult Education Services office. Activities include working to ensure local program directors understand their roles in the one-stop system, as well as how support services available through partners can provide benefit to Title II participants. Recently, increased efforts have been made to ensure cost sharing and utilizing workforce set-aside funds to support the ARIZONA@WORK system.

The 12 LWDBs, with the required ARIZONA@WORK core partners and other local partners, will coordinate efforts to align with the State’s strategies. The LWDBs set local strategy, aligned with the state’s strategy, and through their local plans and IFA/MOU, will describe their coordination efforts to streamline processes and capitalize on all resources to best serve ARIZONA@WORK customers. Many of the local partners are co-located within the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, such as TANF Jobs, the RESEA Program, and JVSG Program staff, to facilitate increased communication and continuous improvement activities. ARIZONA@WORK supports job seekers and workers with training activities, job search, and job placement assistance through these core partners. Arizona employers are supported with recruitment assistance by connecting them to a skilled workforce.

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The coordination across all ARIZONA@WORK partners will entail regular meetings to share best practices, regional planning to implement the strategies, and statewide convenings to strengthen workforce development approaches connected to this Unified Plan. The strategies will be measured and data reviews facilitated throughout the life of the Unified State Plan to continue improvement for the goals of the ARIZONA@WORK system. Examples of strategies identified in support of system-level coordination include, but are not limited to:

- **1.1:** Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
- **1.2:** Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals, including priority populations, with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.
- **1.3:** Refine the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure streamlined access to training, education, employment opportunities and supportive services that help to reduce barriers.
- **1.4:** Strengthen coordination and outreach across the ARIZONA@WORK system to increase public awareness and access to services.

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B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

Collaboration is essential to ARIZONA@WORK's implementation of WIOA and entails the continuous engagement with a range of state, local, and community-based organizations serving shared customers. The success of workforce initiatives rely on seamless coordination among diverse stakeholders. Alignment is important for a collaborative approach that prevents siloed efforts and promotes a comprehensive and effective strategy.

Specific strategy implementation with core and required partner programs and alignment with activities outside the Unified State Plan includes:

- **2.1:** Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.
- **3.1:** Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.

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- **3.2:** Braid federal, state, local, and private funding streams to maximize the impact of WIOA funds to meet the unique needs of local areas, job seekers, and employers.
- **4.1:** Create a robust system, including partnerships with Career and Technical Education Districts (CTEDs) and pre-apprenticeship models, for career exploration intended to build upon professional skills, workplace foundational academic skills, and career interests.
- **4.4:** Strengthen outreach to youth, their families, and school staff to provide information about the ARIZONA@WORK system, including supportive services and opportunities for meaningful employment and career pathways.

The 12 LWDBs within the ARIZONA@WORK system, required, and other local partners (e.g., Job Corps, Youth Build, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] employment and training providers, and CTE providers), will coordinate implementation to align with the State's strategies. The LWDBs set local strategy, aligned with the state's strategy, in their local plans, and coordinate with other local partners not included in this Workforce Plan, such as Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Adult and Juvenile Correction agencies, local libraries, and city/town governments. Through the MOU, LWDBs describe their coordination efforts with partners in the local area to streamline processes and capitalize on all resources to best serve ARIZONA@WORK customers. Many of the required local partners are either co-located within the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, or partner through virtual collaboration, to facilitate increased communication and continuous improvement activities.

Additionally, the AAO plays a pivotal role serving as a key entity that actively engages with government agencies, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and employers to foster interconnected efforts within the workforce system. The AAO is just one of the essential players that are supporting the specific strategies of the Unified Plan. Registered Apprenticeship is linked with activities under WIOA by fostering a synergistic approach to workforce development. Registered Apprenticeship aligns with its objectives of enhancing employment opportunities, workforce skills, and economic development.

WIOA activities, such as skill assessments, career counseling, and job placement services, complement the structured training and on-the-job learning provided by Registered Apprenticeship programs. This alignment ensures that apprentices gain valuable skills and seamlessly transition into meaningful employment. Moreover, WIOA funding mechanisms can support Registered Apprenticeship initiatives, providing financial assistance for related technical instruction, supportive services, and other program-related expenses. Partnership with a Registered Apprenticeship enhances the effectiveness of any program, establishing a strong framework for individuals to gain sought-after skills and for employers to tap into a skilled workforce.

The AAO will continue collaborating with one-stop partners and educating them on effectively serving employers' workforce needs by supporting its employees through Registered Apprenticeship. Through ongoing engagement with one-stop partners, the AAO will share insights on leveraging WIOA resources to enhance employer support initiatives. The collaborative effort seeks to establish a seamless connection between employers, apprentices, and the resources available through WIOA, fostering an environment conducive to sustained employment and increased apprenticeship opportunities. By equipping one-stop partners with

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the knowledge and tools to effectively support employers, the Registered Apprenticeship team aims to contribute to the growth and success of apprenticeship programs while addressing workforce needs.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Over the next four years, ARIZONA@WORK partners will engage in efforts to ensure job seekers, specifically those priority populations that are unemployed or face barriers to employment, receive streamlined access to services across the workforce system agencies with which they might interact. As reinforced throughout this Unified Plan, priority populations include:

- Displaced homemakers;
- Eligible MSFWs;
- Ex-offenders;
- Homeless individuals;
- Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities;
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act;
- Individuals who are English language learners;
- Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed;
- Individuals who have low levels of literacy;
- Individuals without a high school diploma;
- Low income individuals, including TANF and SNAP recipients;
- Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians;
- Older individuals;
- Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents);
- Veterans; and
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the Foster Care system.

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WIOA Partners will continue to meet monthly via the ARIZONA@WORK meetings to discuss implementation and alignment efforts, address the progress and opportunities for improvement, elevate training opportunities for staff, and discuss resource sharing. The strategies identified below are a collection of those designed to ensure the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals:

- **1.2:** Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals, including priority populations, with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.
- **1.3:** Refine the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners to ensure streamlined access to training, education, employment opportunities and supportive services that help to reduce barriers.
- **3.1:** Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.
- **4.2:** Identify both in-school and out-of-school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.

As described in section III(b)(7) of the State Plan, the ARIZONA@WORK system facilitates and will continue to enhance coordination of services, including through referrals to Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff to provide individualized career services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment.

To fully address the wide range of barriers that eligible WIOA participants may face, a Title I Supportive Services policy was created and made available on the ADES website at: Section 400 - Supportive Services. The policy allows for LWDBs to define supportive services available in their local areas that are designed to maximize flexibility to meet the needs of the individuals served in their local communities, subject to the requirements of the Act, regulations, and the state policy. The policy includes a list of common items which may be available as a supportive service, but the policy is clear that LWDBs are not limited to items on this list. To provide services to participants in rural areas, in addition to transportation assistance, the policy also encourages LWDBs to develop policies which allow for reimbursement for cellular or internet service needed to create or maintain a wireless connection for distance learning, searching for employment, and job retention, as well as the purchase of software needed for various activities. The Title I Supportive Services policy was updated in August 2023 after guidance was issued by DOL that encouraged state and local supportive services policies to include the provision of food at a reasonable cost to assist or enable participants to participate in allowable program activities and to reach the participants' employment and training goals.

In the implementation of the State Strategy, coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals play a pivotal role. Various efforts across different titles contribute to the enhancement of customer-centered services. Below are key initiatives and actions undertaken in this regard:

- ADE - Adult Education Services (AES) supports local Title II providers in continually strengthening cost-sharing agreements to ensure Title II participants have full access to

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and benefit from supportive services available through partners. This includes focus on co-enrollment through supporting efforts to implement referral systems.

- Enhance co-enrollments from partner and internal programs to improve on customers experience to accelerate quality employment. By focusing on streamlining processes, consistency, better collaboration, and having a feedback loop, this will create innovation and personalization of an enhanced and cohesive customer-driven experience.
- LWDA's have developed and implemented referral platforms that provide a smooth transition for clients and staff between ARIZONA@WORK services and programs. This helps to provide a "closed loop system" in which all partner programs are able to track the progress and outcome of a customer. This enables a positive impact on ensuring no customer's needs are unmet and data is more accessible and accurate.
- Title III implements a state-wide technical assistance training and facilitates best-practice dissemination across ARIZONA@WORK system stakeholders to strengthen data sharing, reporting, promoting hiring events, outcomes and program updates to all WIOA partners across the state.
- Partnership with Arizona Department of Veterans Services (ADVS) to improve our outreach capabilities and provide Toolkit Assistance to all veterans that qualify across the state. The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services has partnered with ARIZONA@WORK and the Arizona Housing Coalition to provide veterans with the Veteran Toolkit, which funds expenses associated with beginning employment.
- The Re-entry program has leveraged technology and developed a QR code for Parole Officers in the field to expedite referrals of clients who are being paroled to receive ES and other support as they reenter the workforce. From the QR code, the Parole Officer can fill out the brief questionnaire with the client. The answers are generated to a spreadsheet that is maintained on a daily basis by a designated Employment Counselor in their area.
- Enhance the job seekers/employers experience across all ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers to ensure effective access to workforce system programs and supportive services in order to tackle barriers to employment. This will assist in providing a full range of assistance to job seekers in ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers or in a remote setting.
- Title IV efforts focus on programmatic accessibility considerations, including the availability of Assistive Technology and Disability Awareness Training at ARIZONA@WORK job centers. Assistive technology and disability awareness training are essential components in ensuring inclusive and accessible services, empowering individuals with disabilities and fostering a supportive environment within the workforce system. Educational workshops, site evaluations, and training services are provided to enhance staff competencies in disability awareness and assistive technology use, ensuring inclusive and accessible services for individuals with disabilities, including:
 - Episodic Disabilities;
 - Augmentative & Alternative Communication;

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- Blind & Visually Impaired;
 - Combined Vision & Hearing Loss;
 - Deaf & Hard of Hearing;
 - AT & Accommodations;
 - Disability & Civil Rights;
 - Cognitive Disabilities; and
 - Motor Disabilities & Ergonomics.
- Strengthen participation on all RR to employers by leveraging all WIOA partners to provide programmatic services to the employers and job seekers. Increasing resources, by extending the reach of shared knowledge and innovation will foster synergy, and collaboration, mutually benefitting all involved parties.
 - Strengthen partnerships across all 12 LWDA's agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination in efforts to accelerate employment outcomes for employers and job seekers. Business Service Representatives will collaborate with our LWDA's to identify the needs of employers and work with local training providers to create training programs to meet those needs.
 - Strengthen employer relationships by reevaluating and improving tools and methods of service. The advertisement of these improvements will increase employer retention and encourage new employer participation. In addition, increasing outreach strategies for ARIZONA@WORK, such as utilizing social media outlets and SendGrid emailing will be implemented to reach more job seekers. In return, the desired outcome will be to fill more vacancies and help Arizonans return to the workforce.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Arizona's businesses are a primary driver for and consumer of the State's workforce system as they are the most direct beneficiary of a skilled pipeline of workers. All ARIZONA@WORK system partners proactively engage businesses in the development of services, to ensure workforce solutions meet quality criteria and are responsive to employer needs. In addition to working with businesses to innovate new workforce solutions, the State's workforce system must also ensure businesses are benefiting from the wide array of existing professional development, support services, and incumbent worker resources available through ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers.

Arizona will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers that are built from prior in-demand industry and sector partnerships

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established by OEO and led by LWDBs in local identification of in-demand industries and engage ARIZONA@WORK partner to:

- Identify best practices to focus it's sector partnerships in Arizona's In-Demand industries;
- Coordinate efforts with businesses using State and local workforce development board members and ARIZONA@WORK business service teams;
- Engage economic development partners through the ACA and LWDBs' networks, and state and local economic government and associations;
- Identify educational partners to develop relevant curricula (such as CTE and ETPs); and
- Work with partners, such as Local First Arizona Foundation's Rural Development Council, to discover and support business needs in Arizona's rural and tribal areas.

Through these efforts, Arizona intends to expand the talent pipeline in the ARIZONA@WORK system to meet the identified industry needs through focused sector partnerships for In-Demand industries. Strategies within this Unified Plan in support of these efforts include:

- **1.1:** Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
- **2.1:** Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.
- **2.2:** Promote a business-services model that links business growth with, and advocates for, quality jobs that support workers' economic stability and mobility.
- **2.3:** Strengthen workforce system teams by investing in tools and skill building that improves talent sourcing and matching for businesses.
- **2.4:** Convene the business community to explore and realize the employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by highlighting the workforce system's supportive services for prioritized populations.

ES provides Title III Wagner-Peyser workforce development services that help job seekers find and keep good jobs, and help employers hire the skilled workers they need to grow their businesses. ES collaborates across all WIOA partner programs and works closely with LWDBs BSTs to coordinate services to employers throughout the ARIZONA@WORK system and promote cross-functional projects, using shared expertise to help Arizona's employers obtain needed assistance.

Arizona's RR promotes economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, and responding to layoffs and dislocations; and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses, and communities. RR works to ensure resources are available to proactively support employers and mitigate potential closures and layoffs, as applicable. Such activities include working with ARIZONA@WORK Business Services on the early identification of employers at risk of closures and layoffs, assessment of the needs of and options for at-risk employers, and the delivery of

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services to address these needs. Employers are also made aware of programs designed to prevent layoffs such as the Shared Work program which provides an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in force by allowing businesses to divide available work or hours among affected employees in lieu of layoffs. The program allows the employees to receive a portion of UI benefits while working reduced hours.

RR continues engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with businesses in the community and connects employers and workers with Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities. The State RR program connects employers interested in WBL with the appropriate ARIZONA@WORK system partners to help companies avoid layoffs and implement WBL programs such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), On-the-Job training (OJT), and Customized Training. Partners meet with employers to establish open communication to determine what jobs are in demand within a LWDA, the types of training and credentials that individuals need to be qualified for these positions, the development of career pathways, and the identification of sector strategies, leading to a job-driven workforce system. When these collaborative environments are developed, strengthened, and aligned, they enhance services and matching effectiveness. When employers become more familiar with the ARIZONA@WORK services, their interest in providing opportunities for job seekers expands into participation in work-based learning models.

The RR process includes communication and coordination with the local area RR coordinators, OEO, and appropriate partner programs and services to deploy resources within the affected LWDA. RR includes supporting layoff aversion activities. This support includes confidential consulting services to businesses to develop an Individualized action plan to access local capital, remain in the County, avoid laying off employees, and ultimately prevent business closure. The program connects businesses with relevant partners who can help them overcome their challenges. The services include reemployment resources and assistance to affected individuals through coordination and collaboration with core partners and community partners to bring affected individuals services for temporary needs such as rental/housing, utilities, and nutrition assistance. This service is available at no cost for businesses and offers assistance in the form of government aid, utility support, and expert guidance.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges, adult education providers, area career and technical education schools, providers on the State's eligible training provider list, and other education and training providers, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv). Include how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments to enhance access to workforce development programs at these institutions.

Educational institutions are critical partners to the success of the ARIZONA@WORK system's capacity to create a job-driven education and training system. These institutions collaborate with businesses to meet their need for a qualified workforce and support employed and unemployed individuals to obtain training and credentials. The Unified Plan emphasizes several

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strategies contingent on the engagement of the state's community colleges, CTE providers, and other education partners, including those listed on the ETPL, in the design and implementation of workforce development programs, including:

- **1.1:** Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
- **1.2:** Develop and implement digital literacy education and training programs that provide individuals, including priority populations, with the necessary digital skills for the workforce.
- **2.1:** Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.
- **4.2:** Identify both in-school and out-of-school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.
- **4.3:** Develop work based learning opportunities for youth through partnerships with employers.

The aim of these strategies is to ensure a job-driven education and training system. This system is to engage WIOA participants in career pathways and aims to increase career-ready skills attainment through activities such as career exploration, JRT, and industry recognized credential attainment. By implementing a framework for supporting statewide models for identified career pathways, all individuals, regardless of education, skills level, or program enrollment, will have a point of entry for the career path based on their specific career needs. For example, students enrolled in adult literacy classes or individuals who are justice-involved and re-entering the workforce will be able to identify where they are on a pathway of interest, what additional skills, training, and/or postsecondary credentials (including registered apprenticeships) are needed and receive support from the ARIZONA@WORK system to identify support and resources (e.g., transportation, training) to meet their goals.

The pathways will utilize labor market information to ensure sustainable careers. They will engage partners, including eligible training partners, other educational institutions, and businesses, to develop the pathways. Arizona will coordinate across all core and required partner programs (e.g., TANF Jobs, SNAP E&T) to share the developed career pathways, aligning them as a system. This collaboration aims to assist all customers in reaching their potential. An increased availability of, and accessibility to, training programs and services, especially those from underserved populations, including rural, tribal, and low-income communities, will help to ensure that the workforce meets business needs and that individuals secure family-sustaining employment.

Title II is critical to the success of these strategies as its services are provided through grant-funded adult education programs, which include community colleges, school districts, county education offices, and community-based organizations. ADE conducted a grant competition in PY 2022 during which additional education entities, including CTEDs will be encouraged to apply for Title II funding. Currently funded Title II providers based in community colleges work closely with their CTE departments to provide training opportunities through IET to help

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participants identify desired career pathways and earn one or more stackable industry recognized credentials.

To meet the skill and educational development needs of eligible participants, the ETP Programs align with the sector strategies and respective local plans that are focused on In-Demand occupations and result in certification or accreditation. ADES and the LWDBs share the responsibility of managing the statewide ETPL including approving programs for initial and continued eligibility. The ADES State ETPL Manager approves training providers after ensuring the providers meet the state training provider eligibility requirements listed in the WIOA and State ETPL policy. The State and LWDB ETPL Coordinators review each training program individually to determine if the training programs meet state and local ETPL requirements, respectively, including initial performance data standards, and resulting in a federally or locally recognized credential.

Arizona uses the training program's credential attainment rate as the performance factor for initial eligibility. Programs that are approved at the local level are reviewed for accuracy and completeness by the State ETPL Coordinator prior to final approval for inclusion on the statewide ETPL, for a one-year initial eligibility period. The LWDB reviews the training provider's program performance for continued eligibility based on the performance accountability measures using data on all WIOA Title I-B and non-WIOA Title I-B participants who participated in the training program during the performance period. Arizona requires that one or more of the WIOA indicators of performance for all students is provided by the training provider: employment 2nd and 4th quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, or credential attainment for the last four Quarters. Programs are reviewed every two years for continued eligibility. Initial Programs are those in the first year of approval.

F. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

The focus of the State's strategies is for the ARIZONA@WORK system to produce a pipeline of qualified workers, including those who have earned recognized postsecondary credentials. Recognized postsecondary credentials include educational diplomas and certificates, educational degrees, such as an associate's (2-year) or bachelor's (4-year) degree; registered apprenticeship industry recognized certificates; occupational licenses; and other industry or association recognized certificates including personnel certifications. A job seeker with recognized postsecondary credentials demonstrate and have documented skills, fill the employer's need for skilled positions, aid in creating talent pipelines, and compete in and strengthen the state and national economy. By increasing the number of skilled workers with recognized postsecondary credentials, businesses will be encouraged to expand and relocate to Arizona. Employed and unemployed individuals can benefit from recognized postsecondary credentials, experiencing improved labor market outcomes, higher earnings, greater job mobility, and increased job security.

The ARIZONA@WORK system will engage business partners to identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for occupations in In-Demand occupations, including required

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postsecondary credentials, and opportunities for participation in registered apprenticeships. Through implementation of a framework for statewide models, the ARIZONA@WORK system will also identify career and training pathways in specific industries and occupations. Arizona strives to develop career pathways that allow individuals to enter and exit the pathway at any level and identify the appropriate credential to allow for portability and stacking of training, and credentials as an important component of the career pathway development. The strategies outlined below are geared toward improving access to postsecondary credentials and aim to reinforce industry partnership that increase the number of WIOA participants enrolled in Registered Apprenticeship programs, including non-traditional programs that expand the talent pool, reaching underrepresented groups, while improving equitable service delivery.

- **1.1:** Enhance accessible work-based learning opportunities to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations.
- **4.1:** Create a robust system, including partnerships with CTEDs and pre-apprenticeship models, for career exploration intended to build upon professional skills, workplace foundational academic skills, and career interests
- **4.2:** Identify both in-school and out-of-school youth and develop opportunities to attract them to the workforce system through training programs in high growth industries.
- **4.3:** Develop work based learning opportunities for youth through partnerships with employers.

The Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) fosters sustainable employment and skills development and is a critical element to many of the strategies listed above. RAP facilitates hands-on experiential learning and relevant theoretical knowledge acquisition through mentorship. Applicants, as with any employment opportunity, express interest by applying for specific apprenticeship programs, and upon acceptance, formalize their engagement through indenture. Structured onboarding and mentor-guided on-the-job training characterize the apprenticeship journey. Related Technical Instruction (RTI) is a key component, delivered through accredited institutions to supplement the On-the-Job Learning (OJL). Wage progression corresponds to program advancement. All successful program completions result in the acquisition of a nationally recognized industry credential. In some apprenticeship programs, RTI received may be credited by postsecondary institutions and allow individuals to translate them into associates or bachelors degrees, contributing to workforce development and the cultivation of skilled professionals in diverse sectors.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) may opt in to the ETPL. The ETPL team is working with the Arizona Apprenticeship Program to identify any barriers or misconceptions that prevent RAPs from opting into the ETPL to increase the number of RAPs on the ETPL. ETPL designation enables registered apprentices to qualify for funding to offset expenses associated with their related technical instruction. This financial support covers the purchase of essential resources such as books, tools, and materials, thereby facilitating a more accessible and comprehensive learning experience for individuals engaged in apprenticeship programs. The LWDBs encourage participants by providing an orientation on ARIZONA@WORK programs and resources that are available which include the ETPL. The LWDBs engage the participants with work readiness and soft skill classes and require each participant to research at least three providers that meet the participants individual needs prior to selecting a program on the ETPL.

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This supports the participants and allows them to make an informed consumer choice when selecting a provider or training program.

G. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

Economic development agencies play a crucial role in fostering economic growth, job creation, and overall prosperity within Arizona. Effective coordination between these agencies and state strategies is essential to maximize their impact and ensure a cohesive approach to development. Aligning the objectives of economic development agencies with the broader goals outlined in this Unified Plan is a fundamental principle for effective and coordinated development efforts. The ARIZONA@WORK system will identify relevant economic development entities in the state, including government agencies, local authorities, business chambers, and community organizations in order to coordinate activities identified, leading to a more effective, structured, comprehensive, and integrated approach to economic development for the following strategies:

Strategies

- **1.4:** Strengthen coordination and outreach across the ARIZONA@WORK system to increase public awareness and access to services.
- **2.1:** Build partnerships across businesses, education and training providers to develop career pathways and create work-based training opportunities to develop requisite workforce skills.
- **2.2:** Promote a business-services model that links business with, and advocates for, quality jobs that support workers' economic stability and mobility.
- **2.3:** Strengthen workforce system teams by investing in tools and skill building that improve client management, talent sourcing, and matching for businesses.
- **2.4:** Convene the business community to explore and realize the employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by highlighting the workforce system's supportive services for prioritized populations.
- **3.1:** Strengthen strategic partnerships across key state level agencies, workforce system partner programs, and community-based organizations to expand coordination across programs to accelerate quality employment for priority populations.
- **3.2:** Braid federal, state, local, and private funding streams to maximize the impact of WIOA funds to meet the unique needs of local areas, job seekers, and employers.

The OEO has engaged with community partners, economic development agencies, local workforce development boards, and educational institutions to convene several statewide initiatives that will foster business engagement and invest in opportunity and growth for Arizona.

Quality Jobs: The OEO has announced two million in funding as a first round of support for the Governor's priorities around Improving Education, Housing and Human Services, Health and Reproductive Freedom, Resilience, Water, and the Environment, Affordable and Thriving

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Economy, and Infrastructure. The funds will go towards targeted high school CTE and adult community college training programs that lead to a “Quality Job” opportunities defined with:

- Self-Sufficiency Wages: Providing sufficient income to afford a decent standard of living;
- Safe Working Conditions/Worker Engagement: Providing dignity and respect and welcoming engagement in workplace operations;
- Predictable Hours: Providing a predictable number of hours that are offered per week to minimize hardship on employees and their families;
- Comprehensive Benefits: Providing basic benefits that increase economic security, improve health and overall well-being including healthcare, childcare, transportation, wellness programs, and access to retirement savings programs, among other supports;
- Accessible Hiring and Onboarding Practices: Providing transparent and accessible hiring and onboarding practices to ensure that employer and employee are set for success;
- Training and Advancement Opportunities: Providing opportunities to build skills and access new roles and responsibilities in a workplace.

Grants Office: The establishment of a Grants Office represents a significant step towards strengthening our region's workforce and economic development efforts underscoring our unwavering commitment to investing in growth and prosperity. This office will be ready to meet the urgent requirements of local and regional sectors, with a particular focus on high-demand industries like construction. The OEO Grants Office will work closely with local and regional partners to secure federal workforce grants, which represents a significant commitment to enhancing our state's economic prospects. The office will strengthen the grant application by empowering applicants with technical support and essential data, and enhancing competitiveness through state funding and subsidies for grant writers.

Outreach: A common industry theme emerging is the need to raise awareness and effectively recruit new talent into apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. The state-led marketing and outreach campaign aims to promote pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs in Arizona, showing that construction represents not just a good job but a good career. Its objectives are to create awareness, drive interest towards a dedicated informational/registration portal with consistent key messages, and establish a strong branding presence on social media based on research. The campaign will primarily target priority populations within Arizona and utilize social media platforms, while collaborating with partners on content and additional funding to enhance its reach. The campaign's success will be measured through various metrics, including impression volume, creative impact, audience engagement, website traffic, and form fill rates, with the ultimate goal of guiding individuals towards these valuable career opportunities.

Workforce partnerships play a pivotal role in fostering business development by emphasizing education and training initiatives. These collaborations between businesses and educational institutions create a synergistic environment where the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the evolving demands of the industry. Through targeted training programs, employees gain expertise in cutting-edge technologies, industry-specific practices, and leadership skills. This not only enhances the overall productivity and efficiency of

the workforce but also contributes to innovation within the business. Moreover, workforce partnerships facilitate a seamless exchange of ideas and best practices between academia and industry, ensuring that educational curricula remain relevant and responsive to the dynamic needs of the business world. As a result, businesses benefit from a well-trained and adaptable workforce that propels growth, fosters a culture of continuous improvement, and ultimately contributes to the long-term success of the enterprise. Here are a few examples of these efforts across many partnerships and braided investments statewide that support economic development strategies:

Northern Arizona Good Jobs Network (NAGJN): The Northern Arizona Good Jobs Network (NAGJN) is a three-phase project focused on developing regional training-to-employment models for the healthcare & social assistance, construction, manufacturing & transportation, and retail & hospitality sectors across five Northern Arizona counties. Modeled after the federal Economic Development Administration's Good Jobs Challenge, NAGJN aims to build and strengthen systems and partnerships that bring together employers who have hiring needs with public- and private-sector entities to train workers with in-demand skills that lead to good jobs. The effort is designed to increase and enhance community and regional growth by augmenting resources at work in rural Arizona for historically underserved populations and those facing labor market barriers. The NAGJN includes four community colleges, local government, economic development organizations, community-based organizations, and Local First Arizona in its role as the state's Rural Development Council.

Phoenix Workforce Hub: To unleash the full economic and job-creation potential of public- and private-sector investments, the Biden Administration has identified an initial set of five Workforce Hubs, each centered on key industries. In each Hub, the Administration has partnered with state and local elected officials and community leaders to drive effective place-based workforce development efforts that are essential to building an economy from the bottom up and the middle out. Each Workforce Hub, consistent with the needs of the specific city or region, will work to secure private-sector and state and local commitments to expand pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, develop or expand CTE Programs aligned to Investing in America jobs and careers, and provide supportive services that are particularly critical to helping underrepresented students and workers succeed. Phoenix and the surrounding region are a growing hub for semiconductor manufacturing, optical cable, and critical mineral and battery manufacturing efforts. Investments in these sectors, along with transportation and other infrastructure projects, provide an opportunity to ensure equitable pathways to good jobs, including for workers in the local Tribal and Hispanic populations. The neighboring Four Corners region is a high-priority Energy Community where renewable energy programs, including those supporting Tribal communities, will be based. Phoenix is also using American Rescue Plan funds for innovative workforce investment, including providing child care for airport workers, redeveloping an abandoned big box store into a workforce training center, and investing in training for in-demand jobs.

Good Jobs, Great Cities Academy: To complement the White House's Workforce Hubs, the U.S. DOL announced 16 cities that have been selected to join the Good Jobs, Great Cities Academy. Through partnership with the National League of Cities, the Academy will spur innovative and scalable city-led solutions that upskill and reskill all workers, including those who have too often been left behind, into quality, high-demand jobs in infrastructure, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing, made possible by President Biden's Investing in America agenda.

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The Academy will provide its 16-member cohort with in-depth technical assistance to accelerate each city's efforts to design, develop, and launch a new workforce initiative. The initiative will leverage partnerships with local government, workforce boards, education and training providers, industry, labor unions, labor-management partnerships, and community-based organizations. City participation will culminate in the launch of new or expanded training programs that place workers in quality jobs. The city of Tempe was awarded and created **The Tempe Workforce Skills Accelerator** in partnership with Rio Salado and Tempe Chamber, offering three online microcredentials to upskill Tempe businesses' workforce. To alleviate financial burdens, 20 scholarships are available through the Tempe Chamber and Tempe Chamber Foundation to member companies who need assistance to offer this opportunity to their workers. This initiative aligns with the City of Tempe's goal to achieve 65% educational attainment among residents aged 25 or older by 2030. The program aims to boost productivity, enhance customer service, and contribute to the economic growth of Tempe.

Drive48 represents a unique collaboration among government, industry and academia to bolster Arizona's workforce training efforts. The state-of-the-art facility serves the region and state by providing a training center for high-tech manufacturing jobs in fields such as automotive assembly, advanced manufacturing, heavy equipment and more. Guided by the pioneering spirit of the 48th state, Drive48 steers the next generation of talent to advance their skills and power the manufacturing industry.

Future48 Workforce Accelerators: Partnerships in Yuma, with Arizona Western College, and Kingman, with Mohave Community College, will target growing industries such as aerospace and solar. These innovative collaborations with Arizona's community colleges will provide customized, industry-led training in Arizona's fast-growing advanced manufacturing sectors. With advanced manufacturing jobs plentiful, these two new workforce partnerships are in development to provide advanced skills training in rural Arizona. The new training programs will launch in coordination with higher education and industry partners.

Launch of the Maricopa Future48 Workforce Accelerator: In 2023, Governor Hobbs announced a partnership with Maricopa Community Colleges focused on meeting the needs of Arizona's rapidly growing semiconductor industry. Training at the state-of-the-art facility in Maricopa County will take place in close collaboration with semiconductor industry partners, establishing first-of-their-kind training pathways to help more Arizonans enter the microelectronics industry. The new facility represents the third of six Future48 Workforce Accelerators in the state.

Additionally, the ACA is leading several state efforts to support federal investments under the Investing in America agenda. These investments will have a significant impact on economic growth and job opportunities for Arizonans. The ACA has extended its public-private model to strategic partnerships and forward-thinking initiatives to ensure Arizonans avail themselves of these projects and investments through equitable access to high quality training, education, and workforce development services.

Broadband: The Arizona State Broadband Office, within the ACA, prioritizes equitable access to internet service that connects unserved, underserved, and marginalized families across Arizona. Notably, the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program[32] coupled with the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program [33], offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to comprehensively address connectivity challenges and create a more digitally equitable Arizona.

Deploying broadband infrastructure requires a skilled workforce, including engineers, project managers, construction workers, and technicians, amongst others and fair labor standards and practices. The ACA is working with its partners and state agencies to promote equitable access to employment and education opportunities regardless of race, gender, or other demographic factors.

CHIPS and Science Act: Led by the ACA, the Arizona Semiconductor Task Force is a consortium focused on pursuing competitive CHIPS Act funding. Over 80 people are from various companies in the semiconductor industry. Individuals in important fields like cars, airplanes, defense, and medical devices, Arizona universities and community colleges, and economic development partners throughout the state of Arizona. The Taskforce includes a Workforce Subgroup strategizing to meet the current and future workforce needs of Arizona's growing semiconductor industry.

Arizona Infrastructure and Investments Jobs Act Taskforce: Chaired by the President/CEO of the ACA, the Arizona IJA Task Force [34] was formed in April 2022 to enhance collaboration among experts, agencies, tribes and community members to strategically address and maximize IJA grant funds for high-priority infrastructure issues in Arizona.

[32] <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment-bead-program>

[33] <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/digital-equity-act-programs/state-digital-equity-planning-grant>

[34] <https://results.az.gov/IJA-Taskforce>

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section **II Strategic Elements**. This includes—

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGIES (E.G., LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, JOB BANKS, ETC.).

Arizona is committed to modernizing its workforce operating systems to support the coordinated implementation of the strategies outlined within this Unified Plan. Currently ARIZONA@WORK partners use separate data systems that will gradually be integrated through modernization efforts. While ADES and ADE can report on each individual WIOA program to the respective federal oversight agencies, Arizona does not currently have an integrated system that is accessible to all partner programs. Addressing these data coordination gaps and the continued emphasis on the utilization of data-informed insights across partner programs will support each achieving all strategies of this Unified Plan.

Title II, Adult Education and Literacy, uses Benchmark Integrated Technology Services' Advansys system, branded as the Arizona Adult Education Data Management System (AAEDMS). It is an internet-based educational data management system that meets all National Reporting System (NRS) requirements for data and participant tracking of attendance, assessments, and outcomes. It includes the features below to support data collection and reporting processes:

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- Real-time online access for authorized users to scores, demographic information, and performance data at the state, local program, classroom, and student levels;
- The ability to produce standard and recurring federal, state and agency reports as directed by ADE and aligned with NRS reporting requirements;
- The ability to provide custom and ad hoc reports as directed by ADE;
- The ability to download raw data into XML or TXT files for ADE to create custom reports as needed;
- The ability to collect social security numbers (SSN) securely and privately and/or assign a unique personal ID for each student separate from the SSN;
- Adherence to all ADE data governance and privacy concerns;
- The ability to provide multiple levels of access, including view-only access for certain authorized staff personnel; and
- Edit checks and validation systems to ensure accurate data reporting.
- Local adult education providers enter program and participant data according to policy and have full access to their own data and reports for program improvement purposes. State staff can access all data at both the statewide and provider level to assist in desk monitoring efforts and to inform professional development needs across the State.

In addition to adult education data collection, ADE also uses Benchmark's STARS system: manages high school equivalency testing records from 1942 to the present; collaborates with high school equivalency testing vendors for real-time access to score reports; provides data matching of secondary diploma receipt to the educational database; issues diplomas and transcripts to high school equivalency testing candidates; and provides access to transcript verification for third-parties through a secured, web-based portal upon request by the high school equivalency testing candidate.

Title I-B and Title III Programs utilize the Arizona Job Connection (AJC) as the system of record for case management, WIOA performance indicator collection, information management, and DOL reporting. (AJC is also the data system of record for the following WIOA required partners: JVSG, MSFW, and TAA.) America's Job Link Alliance (AJLA), the AJC vendor, provides data in the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) format to upload to DOL's Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) for the Title I-B and Title III programs. To ensure data integrity, ADES reviews local area performance quarterly, utilizing the data that is uploaded to WIPS. ADES works with LWDB staff to ensure their service providers review WIOA performance data, improve program operations, and ensure data accuracy. ADES has an integrated, cross-functional help desk that supports the following programs and their clients statewide:

- Adult, DW, and Youth;
- Wagner-Peyser ES;
- VR;
- UI Benefits;

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- UI Tax and Wage (Employers);
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant;
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program;
- TAA Program;
- SNAP E&T;
- TANF Jobs Program;
- RESEA Program;
- Reentry Program; and
- PROWD Grant Program.

Title IV currently utilizes an accessible web-based data management system called “System 7” offered by Libera, Inc. System 7 offers case management, fiscal and contract management, and federal reporting modules. A role-based approach is utilized within System 7 to allow appropriate access to data across all modules and users. System 7 integrates with various assistive technology software programs allowing staff who are blind or low vision to use the program.

Title IV successfully contracted with CMSuite to develop a modernized case management system. inFormed is built on mobile-first technology, meets WCAG 2.0, W3C, Level A and Level AA success criteria to conform with 508 accessibility standards and ensure user access and operability with third party assistive technology software. The new case management system uses data driven design elements to produce guided workflows, eliminate duplicative entry, and reduce manual efforts to create and maintain reports. Project implementation began in November 2022 and tentative launch is planned for October 2024.

Efforts to expand the functionality and reporting capabilities of AJC and Libera for Titles I, III and IV to allow data-driven decisions based on data by region/LWDAs and improve cross-program reporting is critical to strengthening the data sharing capacity of the ARIZONA@WORK system. This is currently underway with the AJC data team’s expansion of tableau reports accessible to all partners. As a best practice, and to support the use of the AJC system, monthly workgroup meetings, consisting of State administrators, LWDB representatives, and provider staff, are facilitated to review and prioritize enhancement requests from AJC users prior to submitting to America’s Job Link Alliance (AJLA). Additionally, in June 2023, ADES and the AJC vendor implemented DocuSign to enable clients to sign their Terms of Agreement electronically. Since implementation, an average of 43 percent of clients used DocuSign rather than the available manual methods. There are plans to expand the DocuSign functionality to the VR program and the required RESEA Program form in early 2024.

Arizona’s labor market information systems will also support the strategies in this Plan, including the identification of and changes to In-Demand industries and occupations, sector partnerships, transferable skills, and career pathways throughout the life of this plan. Labor market data is communicated through regular communication systems, such as monthly data updates across the state, and a variety of Tableau tools on the OEO website. In addition, statewide and regional labor market information is available to businesses, job seekers, and

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ARIZONA@WORK staff through the improved ARIZONA@WORK website, additionally providing easy access for all individuals engaged in implementing state strategies.

Workforce and education evaluation will additionally be executed on the Integrated Data System (IDS), a statewide longitudinal database which links administrative data for statistical analysis. This IDS serves as a tool to measure the impact of government programs and interventions. Current initiatives utilizing the IDS include an evaluation of predictive features for ARIZONA@WORK adult education programs, designed to identify areas driving the greatest impact on wage outcomes. The IDS will additionally support an industry of employment analysis, focused on evaluating employment following participants' completion of workforce development programs, providing insights into whether the training will lead participants into high-impact areas of employment. By leveraging the IDS, stakeholders can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how state agencies intersect with and influence the lives of Arizonans, thereby enabling targeted enhancement of initiatives aimed at improving economic outcomes.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (FOR EXAMPLE. CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ONE-STOP PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS.

State policies are dedicated to fostering service delivery alignment and promoting business creation and growth. A commitment to continuous improvement underlies our approach, with policies regularly reviewed and revised to ensure seamless implementation of the strategies within this Unified Plan which are centered on customer needs and market demands.

For easy access, WAC Policies can be found on the ARIZONA@WORK website's policies/reports webpage and are applicable to all Core Partner programs. Likewise, WIOA Title I-B programmatic policies are available on the DES WIOA Title I-B Policies and Procedures webpage.

Noteworthy updates to our administrative state policies include:

- Local Governance (Revised 2023):
 - Articulates the State's vision and purpose for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
 - Provides guidance on LWDB appointment and certification, delineates roles, responsibilities, and authority of Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and LWDBs.
 - Outlines the LWDA designation process.
- One-Stop Delivery System (Revised 2023):
 - This policy offers LWDBs and ARIZONA@WORK partners a vision and structure for administering the Job Center Service Delivery system.

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- One-Stop Operator and Service Provider Selection (Revised 2023):
 - Provides LWDBs and partners with guidance on roles and responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator and career service providers.
 - Outlines the selection processes required under WIOA.
- ARIZONA@WORK Job Center MOU and Infrastructure Costs (Revised 2023):
 - Defines the purpose and criteria for MOU development, including infrastructure costs.
 - Addresses steps if agreement on infrastructure cost sharing is not reached.
- LWDA IFA Guidance (Revised 2023):
 - Addresses gaps observed during the 2017 IFA execution.
 - Highlights mandated partners, defines infrastructure costs, identifies acceptable cost allocation bases, and ensures proportionate cost-sharing.
- One-Stop Certification (Revised 2023):
 - Establishes statewide criteria and procedures for LWDBs to certify ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers.
 - Adheres to WIOA requirements and outlines tools to aid in the certification process.
- WIOA Statewide Monitoring Policy (Revised 2023):
 - Establishes monitoring processes to ensure compliance with WIOA law and regulations.
 - Aids in continuous improvement of the workforce system.
- Conflict of Interest (Revised 2023):
 - Establishes guidelines for conflict of interest, firewalls, and internal controls required under WIOA for LWDBs and entities with multiple roles in the ARIZONA@WORK system.
- ETPL Policy (Revised 2022 and 2024)
 - Simplified the policy and process to add new providers and programs to the ETPL.
 - Removed requirements that providers must have a physical address in the State to provide more training options.
 - Clarified roles and responsibilities of the State and local teams
- Support Services (Revised 2023)
 - Allows for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to define supportive services available in their local areas that are designed to maximize flexibility to

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meet the needs of the individuals served in their local communities, subject to the requirements of the Act, regulations, and the state policy.

- Includes a list of common items which may be available as a supportive service, but the policy is clear that LWDBs are not limited to items on this list.
- Encourages LWDBs to develop policies which allow for reimbursement for cellular or internet service needed to create or maintain a wireless connection for distance learning, searching for employment, and job retention, as well as the purchase of software needed for various activities.
- Updated in 2023 after guidance was issued by DOL that encouraged state and local supportive services policies to include the provision of food at a reasonable cost to assist or enable participants to participate in allowable program activities and to reach the participants' employment and training goals.
- RR Policy (Revised 2022 and 2024)
 - Clarifies the roles of the State and Local RR teams to emphasize the partnership between the State and LWDBs and provide LWDBs access to RR funds to quickly meet the needs of the community.
- Youth Policy (Revised 2024)
 - Revised to streamline the youth eligibility determination process and to provide flexibilities as allowed pursuant to TEGL 9-22.
- Co-enrollment:
 - The Title I Adult and DW Policy on Program Registration, Eligibility, Enrollment and Tracking instructs Title I service providers to co-enroll participants with other workforce partners and work closely to address the needs of co-enrolled customers and ensure services are made available to eligible individuals who are referred by partner programs based on priority of service criteria.
 - Encourages automatic registration for ES when applying for UI compensation.
 - Promotes co-enrollment with core ARIZONA@WORK partner programs, ensuring non-duplicative services and shared outcomes.

The WAC, through its Executive Committee and workgroups, will explore best practices within and outside the system, ensuring continuous improvement. Additionally, ADE and ADES will oversee policy implementation for core programs to align with Workforce Plan strategies. The WAC is committed to providing ongoing technical assistance and interpretation, fostering innovation, and staying connected with state and local entities' implementation efforts.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

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Arizona's integrated one-stop workforce development system, branded ARIZONA@WORK, is comprehensive, accessible, and provides services to businesses, workers, and job seekers. The ARIZONA@WORK system is charged with enhancing the range and quality of workforce development services available to businesses and job seekers through a coordinated approach among education, businesses, public agencies, and community-based organizations.

Services are provided through a variety of access points, both virtual and physical, with at least one comprehensive center in each LWDA. ARIZONA@WORK fosters employment, education, and training opportunities, particularly for priority populations with barriers to employment, such as those who are low-income, justice-involved, with disabilities, or low levels of literacy.

ADES serves as the state's human services agency, administering a range of programs that promote enhanced safety and well-being for Arizonans by focusing on three primary goals: strengthening individuals and families, increasing self-sufficiency, and developing the capacity of communities. ADES' Executive Deputy Director is appointed by Arizona's Governor, overseeing and setting the strategic direction for the agency with a mission to strengthen individuals, families, and communities for a better quality of life. To fulfill this mission, ADES collaborates with community partners statewide to expand its reach to vulnerable populations and connect them with resources and support while they work towards greater independence and self-sufficiency.

ADES is designated as the administrative and fiscal agency for WIOA Title I funds and oversees the administrative and fiscal activities of the 12 LWDBs that implement ARIZONA@WORK services throughout the State. Within ADES, is DERS whose mission is to strengthen Arizona communities by bridging and minimizing gaps to employment and independence. Overseen by an Assistant Director, DERS administers the state's public labor exchange activities by assisting individuals to overcome barriers to employment to prepare for and obtain gainful employment, providing temporary wage replacement through unemployment benefits to individuals who have lost their jobs or are experiencing a reduction in employment wages and hours, connecting job seekers with jobs and training programs, and assisting Arizona employers with recruitment and connecting them to a skilled workforce. DERS also provides services and support to individuals with disabilities with the ultimate goal to prepare for, enter into, or retain employment. DERS administers the following WIOA core programs:

- Adult, DW, and Youth programs, authorized under WIOA Title I through contracts with 12 LWDA's;
- Wagner-Peyser Act ES, authorized under Title III; and
- VR, authorized under Title IV.

ADES organizational charts can be found in Appendix 5.

The ADE administers adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA to support the coordination of services for individuals participating in programs overseen by both agencies. The ADE is led by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, an elected position. Within ADE, Adult Education Services is positioned in the division of Exceptional Student Services: Child and Adult Programs, overseen by an Associate Superintendent. The State Director of Adult Education holds the agency title of Deputy Associate Superintendent. Direct services to Title II participants are performed by grant-funded adult education programs throughout the state,

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with the state office providing operational and professional development support and monitoring for compliance with grant requirements and state and federal laws, including WIOA.

Additionally, CTE, a required partner administered through a separate business unit in the ADE division of Exceptional Student Services: Child and Adult Programs. CTE provides students with the academic and technical skills, and the knowledge and training necessary to reach career goals.

ADE organizational charts can be found in Appendix 6.

Each core program under WIOA has a common set of performance indicators and is represented on the Governor's WAC, which sets the strategic direction for ARIZONA@WORK.

Arizona's structure additionally includes the OEO which functions as the primary coordinator for workforce planning in the state. It offers staffing assistance to the WAC, oversees the state's workforce data evaluation system, conducts economic and demographic research and analysis, including constitutionally mandated population estimates. The OEO is also responsible for generating employment and unemployment estimates, and it plays a crucial role in developing labor market information to inform the state's workforce strategy.

OEO organizational charts can be found in Appendix 7.

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively. Also, provide a membership roster for the State Board consistent with 20 CFR 679.110-120, including members' organizational affiliations and position titles.

In the realm of Arizona's workforce development, the WAC (the Council) stands as the authoritative architect, strategically navigating the intricacies of the WIOA. As the orchestrator of statewide initiatives, the Council assumes a pivotal role in not only formulating policies and procedures but in sculpting the very foundation of Arizona's economic landscape. With an unwavering commitment to precision, equity, and collaborative excellence, the Council emerges as the eminent force propelling the state towards a future characterized by a resilient, adaptable, and inclusive workforce ecosystem. The State Plan embodies the commitment of the State of Arizona to cultivate a dynamic and responsive workforce system. This narrative outlines essential components of the plan, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Council, local workforce development boards (LWDBs), job center certification, and other critical activities aligned with WIOA guidelines.

WAC Activities:

Policy Development and Oversight:

- **Strategic Alignment:** The Council takes a lead role in developing policies that strategically align with federal and state workforce development goals. This involves continuous assessment of economic trends, labor market demands, and emerging opportunities.

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- **Implementation Oversight:** The council ensures policies are effectively implemented at the local level. This includes providing guidance to local workforce development boards (LWDBs) on how to interpret and apply policies in a manner that maximizes impact.

LWDB Oversight:

- **Performance Monitoring:** The Council continuously monitors and evaluates the performance of LWDBs to ensure they adhere to WIOA regulations. Metrics such as job placement rates, training completion, and participant satisfaction are considered in this evaluation process.
- **Technical Assistance:** The council provides ongoing technical assistance to LWDBs, offering support in areas such as program design, performance improvement, and the effective use of WIOA funds.

Job Center Certification:

- **Criteria Establishment:** The Council establishes comprehensive criteria and procedures for certifying job centers within the state. These criteria encompass service quality, accessibility, and the ability to address the diverse needs of job seekers and employers.
- **Regular Assessments:** The council conducts assessments of certified job centers every two years to ensure they maintain high standards. This involves virtual and on-site visits, feedback sessions, and performance evaluations.

Local Plan Approval:

- **Thorough Review:** The Council rigorously reviews local workforce development plans submitted by LWDBs. This involves a comprehensive analysis of the proposed strategies, activities, and budget allocations outlined in each plan.
- **Feedback and Improvement:** The council provides detailed feedback to LWDBs, with an emphasis on enhancing the quality and effectiveness of local plans. This iterative process ensures alignment with statewide goals.

Strategic Planning:

- **Economic Alignment:** The Council engages in strategic planning activities that closely align workforce development efforts with state and regional economic priorities. This includes identifying and capitalizing on growth sectors, addressing skills gaps, and anticipating future workforce needs.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** The council collaborates closely with key stakeholders, including businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations, to gather insights, build partnerships, and create a shared vision for the workforce system.

Resource Allocation:

- **Transparent Process:** The Council actively participates in the transparent allocation of WIOA funds, ensuring that resources are distributed to programs and services that align with workforce development goals.

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- **Equitable Distribution:** The Council works to ensure the equitable distribution of resources among local areas, considering factors such as population density, economic challenges, and the unique needs of different regions.

Performance Measurement and Evaluation:

- **Metric Establishment:** The Council establishes robust performance metrics to assess the effectiveness of workforce development programs. These metrics include key performance indicators such as employment outcomes, skills attainment, and participant satisfaction.
- **Continuous Evaluation:** The Council conducts regular evaluations to gauge the impact of programs and services, allowing for continuous improvement and adjustment of strategies based on performance data.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- **Collaborative Initiatives:** The Council fosters and sustains collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders, including employers, educational institutions, community organizations, and advocacy groups.
- **Input Gathering:** The Council actively seeks input from stakeholders to inform decision-making. Regular workgroups are utilized to gather insights, ensuring that the workforce development system remains responsive to the needs of the community.

In each of these activities, the WAC plays a pivotal role in guiding, overseeing, and enhancing the workforce development system within the state of Arizona.

WAC Membership Roster

The WAC board roster effectively aligns with the mandates of WIOA sec. 101(b)(1) by incorporating diverse and representative members with expertise in key areas such as workforce development, economic development, and education. The composition of the board reflects a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that various stakeholders, including elected officials, employers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions are represented. Additionally, the board's structure demonstrates a strategic approach to addressing the workforce challenges outlined in WIOA, fostering collaboration and leveraging the unique strengths of each member to enhance the overall effectiveness of workforce development initiatives in the State. This membership roster adheres to the guidelines outlined in 20 CFR 679.110-120, ensuring diverse representation from key sectors contributing to the workforce development ecosystem within the state of Arizona.

As of December 2023, the WAC membership is as follows:

The Governor; Meeting the requirements of WIOA sec. 101(b)(1)

Name	Affiliation	Title
Governor Katie Hobbs	State of Arizona	Governor of Arizona

State Legislature; Meeting the requirements of WIOA sec. 101(b)(2)

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Name	Affiliation	Title
Senator Sine Kerr	AZ Senate	State Senate Member
Representative Justin Wilmeth	AZ House of Representatives	State Representative

Representatives of Business; Majority meeting the requirements of WIOA sec. 101(b)(3)(i)

Name	Affiliation	Title
Larry Hofer	Cox Communication	Regional Vice President
Gregory (Greg) Anderson	Summit Healthcare Services	Chief Executive Officer
Mark Gaspers Board Chair	Boeing	Senior Manager, Government Operations
Todd Graver	Freeport McMoRan	Vice President, Human Resources
Alexander (Alex) Horvath	Tucson Medical Center	Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer
Bobbi McCormack	CP North America	Director, Human Resources
Willard (Will) James	Centene	Executive Corporation Strategy
Brian Rice	Honor Health	Organizational Development Consultant
Karla Moran	Salt River Project	Senior Project Manager
John Walters Vice Chair	Liberty Mutual Comparion Insurance Agency	Sales Director
Audrey Bohanan Second Vice Chair	Adelante Healthcare	Chief People Officer
Randall (Randy) Garrison	FenTek Industries	Vice President
Danny Seiden	Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry	President and CEO
Scott Holman	TSMC	Head of Human Resources
Michelle Bolton	Intel	Director, Government Affairs
Jenna Rowell	Local First Arizona	Director of Rural Development
Stephen Richer	Maricopa County	County Recorder
Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Vacant	Vacant	Vacant

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Representatives of the Workforce; No less than 20% meeting the requirements of WIOA sec. 101(b)(3)(ii)

Name	Affiliation	Title
Dennis Anthony	Arizona Public Service	Manager, Public Service
David Martin	Arizona General Contractors	President
Thomas Winkel	Arizona Coalition for Military Families	Founder and Director
Jackie Elliott, Ed.D.	Central Arizona College	President and CEO
Debra Margraf	National Electrical Contractors Association	Executive Director
Shawn Hutchinson	Phoenix Electrical JATC	Training Director
Bill Ruiz	Southwest Mountain States Carpenters Local Union 1912	Business Representative
Josh DeSpain	IBEW Local 570	Business Manager
Heather Carter	Maricopa County Community College District	Senior Vice Chancellor

Balance of Membership; Meeting the requirements of WIOA sec. 101(b)(3)(iii)

Name	Affiliation	Title
Angie Rodgers	Core Program - Title I and III (ADES)	Executive Deputy Director
Beverly Wilson	Core Program - Title II (ADE)	State Director, Adult Education
Kristen Mackey	Core Program - Title IV (Rehabilitation Services Administration)	Program Administrator
Sandra Watson	Arizona Commerce Authority	President and CEO
Mayor Regina Romero	Pima County	Mayor
Jeff McClure	Pinal County	Pinal County Supervisor, District 4 Vice Chairman

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS.

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. Describe how other one-stop

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delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

The Council will assess the ARIZONA@WORK system for accountability through the federal and identified state performance measures. The federal measures are displayed (by quarter and annually) publicly on the ARIZONA@WORK website statewide and by LWDA, in addition to including available labor market information by LWDA.

ADE and ADES use their respective data systems to regularly assess their respective programs based on performance measures.

- ADE's core program uses the NRS, which is the performance accountability system for the federally funded, State-administered adult education programs. The required data for adult education reporting within the NRS includes the percentage of program participants who: achieve Measurable Skill Gains (MSG); are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter and/or the fourth quarter after exit; receive a secondary diploma during participation or within one year after exit and enter postsecondary education, training or employment within one year after exit; receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation or within one year after exit.

ADE evaluates adult education providers for programmatic and fiscal compliance with federal and state requirements. Desk monitoring of all funded providers is conducted throughout the PY and includes an analysis of local performance data, professional learning plan, technology integration status, and annual programmatic and fiscal reporting. Technical assistance is provided as necessary. In addition, each provider's status regarding collaboration with other ARIZONA@WORK partners and alignment with the LWDB Plan is reviewed. A risk assessment tool is used to select providers annually for a comprehensive compliance review using an intensive process that includes onsite monitoring, observation of program operations, interviewing of staff and physical auditing of records.

- ADES uses its data systems of record to review federal performance data on a quarterly and annual basis. In addition, ADES uses monthly scorecards at the Division and Administration level with lead measures of the processes impacting the federal performance measures. The scorecards indicate the status of the measures using a red, yellow, and green notation based on targets set to focus on continuous improvement. When a measure does not meet its target, a team works together to identify the root cause(s) of the problem and implements countermeasures to move the metric back to meeting the target. The scorecards are discussed monthly at Administration and Division leadership meetings. Implementation of the AMS has also supported more frequent reviews of lead measures at regional and local levels through focused team meetings and will continue through expansion of the AMS during the next Workforce Planning cycle.

ADES meets monthly with program and support units to assess monitoring and performance results to identify trends and needed technical assistance for the LWDBs and their service providers.

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Arizona uses a Local Area Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM) to establish predicted and adjusted levels of performance, based on pre- and post-PY datasets for the Title I and III core programs. For PYs 2020 and 2021, the State's formal assessment of local area Title I core program performance was consistent with the assessment of the State by the U.S. DOL, as outlined in Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 14-21[35]. LWDBs were not assessed individually for the core programs under Title II, III, and IV, which are administered by the ADES and ADE at the State level.

In accordance with 20 CFR 677.220, the following individual indicators were assessed for each of the Title I core programs:

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment (or postsecondary education for Youth program participants) during the second quarter after exit from the program
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit: The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

The results of this formal assessment informed the 2023 LWDB recertification process, specifically in accordance with the criterion from section 107(c)(2)(B) of WIOA, "The extent to which the local board has ensured that local area activities have enabled the local area to meet performance accountability measures." All LWDBs met or exceeded the required standards relating to WIOA performance accountability measures and were recertified in this cycle.

In addition to this formal assessment, the following indicators for which SAM adjustments were not applied were also assessed, relative to the LWDB's negotiated levels of performance:

- Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment (or postsecondary education for Youth program participants) during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
- Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in OJT and customized training) who attained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program.
- The percentage of participants who are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

For PYs 2020 and 2021, no local area failed to achieve the adjusted or negotiated level of performance for the same indicator in consecutive years.

Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs

LWDAs, through their LWDBs and CEOs, will assess and evaluate the local ARIZONA@WORK system at Board and committee meetings overseeing implementation of the local plans, and monitoring federal and locally set performance measures. Each LWDB has representation from

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Title II, III, and IV to incorporate individual program process assessment with that of the ARIZONA@WORK system as a whole.

The ARIZONA@WORK Job Center Certification process, including the assessment tools, ensure that job centers have access to all program partners through one of the following methods: A program staff member is physically present at the site, a staff member from a different partner program is physically present and appropriately cross-trained to provide information to customers about the partner program, or use a direct linkage by phone or through real-time web-based communication to a program staff member who provides meaningful information or services to customers within a reasonable time.

LWDBs will assess ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers using the job center certification tool every two years and implement a continuous improvement plan to include the LWDB's assessment of how well the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers support the achievement of the negotiated levels of performance. LWDBs are charged with regular oversight of continuous improvement through tracking and improving measures.

Title II local adult education providers are assessed by ADE through a comprehensive monitoring process that includes monthly desk monitoring of student-level data entered into the data management system, data analysis, narrative reports and onsite monitoring visits. Title II providers are required to provide access to Title II services via the one-stop system and are also assessed on the number of students co-enrolled in partner programs. Data showing Title II enrollment, attendance and MSG outcomes are shared with the LWDBs quarterly.

Title IV will use a series of standard monthly reports, ad hoc reports, and quarterly dashboard information from the federal Department of Education to analyze data, assess progress, and implement corrective measures as necessary. Title IV acquired access to the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) 911 checker data verification service that will audit the data entered by field team members against our desired edit checks. This automatic edit check will reduce manual edit checking prior to submitting quarterly reports. DARE will also be used to identify trends across the state and reported data can be analyzed by caseload, office, region, or supervisor.

[35]<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/training-and-employment-notice-no-14-21>

B. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

For each four-year state plan and state plan modification, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle), in accordance with methods described in 4(A). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

During the last two years of the Plan, PY 2021 and PY 2022, state and local performance was assessed and reviewed as discussed in Section(4)(A).

Strategies to achieve the State's vision and goals, identified in section II.c of this plan, will be informed by performance assessment results. Two specific strategies for which assessment results will provide crucial insights are Strategy 3.3 (Facilitate data sharing, reporting, and

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performance analysis across WIOA partners to improve workforce system performance and outcomes.) and 3.4 (Implement a state-wide technical assistance model to deliver training and facilitate best-practice sharing as aligned to the training needs of workforce system staff.) Assessment results will be utilized to:

- Identify areas of performance improvement needs,
- Provide regular updates to state and local partners on trends in performance data,
- Deliver technical assistance to state and local partners on performance accountability measurement and reporting, and
- Review internal policies and procedures to ensure data quality and accuracy in reporting.

Assessment of the effectiveness of core programs and other one-stop partner programs will also contribute to the strategies identified in the Workforce Arizona Council’s 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. For example, one goal identified in the Strategic Plan is the enhancement of work-based learning opportunities and achievement of favorable outcomes for participants, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary for in-demand industries and occupations. To achieve this goal, the Plan identifies a strategy of ensuring that training providers on the ETPL are aligned with industry standards and meet the needs of local employers, preparing students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success. Tools developed by OEO utilize statistically-adjusted performance data to identify high-performing training providers and programs and offer valuable insights to the Council, local WDBs, and other partners in the workforce development system.

Tables 25 - 32 display negotiated, adjusted, and actual levels of performance for the WIOA Core Programs (PY21 and PY22). In addition, they contain columns with metrics indicating the “% Met of Negotiated Performance Level” (Actual Performance Level / Negotiated Performance Level), and “% Met of Adjusted Performance Level” (Actual Performance Level / Adjusted Performance Level), where applicable. These metrics assist in measuring program effectiveness and identifying success for each indicator, regardless of whether they were formally assessed by the Departments of Labor and Education.

Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs

Table 25: Title I PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022)

Reported Information	Funding Category	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	Adult	71.4%	74.2%	68.5%	95.9%	92.2%
Employment 4th Quarter	Adult	67.5%	Not Available	62.0%	91.9%	Not Available

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Reported Information	Funding Category	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
after Exit						
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	Adult	\$6,500	\$6,222	\$7,990	122.9%	128.4%
Credential attainment rate	Adult	74.8%	Not Available	71.8%	96.0%	Not Available
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Adult	59.2%	Not Available	68.3%	115.4%	Not Available
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	DW	78.0%	86.5%	75.6%	96.9%	87.4%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	DW	73.2%	Not Available	72.8%	99.5%	Not Available
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	DW	\$8,646	\$8,828	\$9,205	106.5%	104.2%
Credential attainment rate	DW	72.8%	Not Available	75.2%	103.3%	Not Available
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	DW	50.0%	Not Available	72.5%	145.0%	Not Available
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	Youth	75.0%	65.2%	56.5%	75.3%	86.6%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	Youth	67.0%	Not Available	71.6%	106.9%	Not Available

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Reported Information	Funding Category	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	Youth	\$4,500	\$5,984	\$6,216	138.1%	103.8%
Credential attainment rate	Youth	54.0%	Not Available	60.0%	111.1%	Not Available
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Youth	52.8%	Not Available	64.0%	121.2%	Not Available

Table 26: Title I PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

Reported Information	Funding Category	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	Adult	69.9%	75.9%	72.1%	103.1%	94.9%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	Adult	67.5%	73.7%	66.5%	98.5%	90.2%
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	Adult	\$6,785	\$7,655	\$8,681	127.9%	113.3%
Credential attainment rate	Adult	78.0%	74.6%	71.3%	91.4%	95.5%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Adult	65.0%	Not Available	74.9%	115.2%	Not Available
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	DW	78.0%	79.9%	75.9%	97.3%	95.0%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	DW	75.0%	77.3%	71.3%	95.1%	92.2%
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	DW	\$8,646	\$10,157	\$9,099	105.2%	89.5%

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Reported Information	Funding Category	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Credential attainment rate	DW	74.5%	74.7%	71.8%	96.4%	96.2%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	DW	69.0%	Not Available	82.3%	119.3%	Not Available
Employment//Education 2nd Quarter after Exit	Youth	74.0%	79.8%	76.0%	102.7%	95.2%
Employment/Education 4th Quarter after Exit	Youth	70.0%	77.0%	74.5%	106.4%	96.6%
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	Youth	\$5,044	\$5,356	\$6,278	124.5%	117.2%
Credential attainment rate	Youth	61.0%	59.8%	58.7%	96.2%	98.1%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Youth	62.0%	Not Available	66.9%	107.9%	Not Available

Title II - Adult Education and Literacy

Table 27: Title II Adult Education and Literacy PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022)

Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	80.0%	Not Available	49.0%	61.3%	Not Available
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	56.0%	Not Available	48.8%	87.1%	Not Available
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$5,700	Not Available	\$7,246	127.1%	Not Available
Credential	33.0%	Not Available	15.6%	47.3%	Not Available

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Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
attainment rate					
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	50.8%	Not Available	35.1%	69.1%	Not Available

Table 28: Title II Adult Education and Literacy PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	50.0%	Not Available	45.3%	90.6%	Not Available
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	30.5%	Not Available	47.2%	154.8%	Not Available
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$6,620	Not Available	\$8,248	124.6%	Not Available
Credential attainment rate	29.0%	Not Available	16.5%	56.9%	Not Available
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	42.0%	Not Available	40.4%	96.2%	Not Available

Title III - Employment Service

Table 29: Title III ES PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022)

Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter	67.5%	65.2%	56.5%	83.7%	86.7%

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Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
after Exit					
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	63.0%	Not Available	53.9%	85.6%	Not Available
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$5,450	\$5,984	\$6,216	114.1%	103.9%

Table 30: Title III ES PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	68.0%	70.5%	61.3%	90.1%	86.9%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	63.0%	62.4%	54.5%	86.5%	87.3%
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$5,900	\$7,969	\$7,854	133.1%	98.5%

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Table 31: Title IV VR PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022)

Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter	Baseline	Not Available	44.4%	Not Available	Not Available

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Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
after Exit					
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	Baseline	Not Available	41.7%	Not Available	Not Available
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	Baseline	Not Available	\$4,352	Not Available	Not Available
Credential attainment rate	Baseline	Not Available	20.7%	Not Available	Not Available
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	20.0%	Not Available	38.6%	193.0%	Not Available

Table 32: Title IV VR PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

Reported Information	Negotiated Performance Level	Adjusted Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	% Met of Negotiated Performance Level	% Met of Adjusted Performance Level
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	35.0%	38.7%	47.1%	134.6%	121.5%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	36.5%	38.5%	40.5%	111.0%	105.1%
Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$3,940	\$5,068	\$4,978	126.3%	98.2%
Credential attainment rate	21.0%	24.2%	24.8%	118.1%	102.7%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	49.5%	Not Available	23.4%	47.3%	Not Available

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Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects of activities carried out in the State under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA (WIOA Section 116(e)).

Recognizing that program research and evaluation are key components to the strengthening of the ARIZONA@WORK system, Arizona's WIOA Partners are committed to working with appropriate organizations to design and coordinate projects that inform system improvements that can improve the capacity to meet shared customer needs. This includes exploring additional Research and Evaluation projects to support those strategies outlined in this Unified Plan connected to refining the customer experience across ARIZONA@WORK system partners and that state's job centers (e.g. 1.3 and 1.4).

Currently the state of Arizona is developing a training program evaluation model to help determine the effectiveness of workforce training programs provided by ETPs within the Title I Adult program. It attempts to assist workforce policy makers adopt training program strategies that align with the goals of the ARIZONA@WORK system: promoting resources that lead participants to meaningful employment with livable wages. The study identified training programs that resulted in participant employment and wage outcomes that exceeded, met or underperformed expectations given the unique participant population that they served. The study also identified training subjects that resulted in participant employment and wage outcomes that exceeded, met or underperformed employment and wage outcomes of participants who did not start or did not complete a training program. This was done to illustrate the differences in effectiveness of the varying training program subjects, regardless of the provider of the training. The analysis will help state and local area policy makers develop procedures and allocate resources to support training programs that consistently produce participant employment and wage outcomes that exceed expectations. In addition, it will help job seekers make more informed decisions when choosing a training program. Currently, OEO has developed and tested the model that predicts employment and wage outcomes for participants who completed a training program. OEO has also developed and tested the model that estimates the employment and wage effects of the different training subjects offered by ARIZONA@WORK training providers. OEO is working on communicating the methodology and results of the study to local workforce directors, board members and ETPL coordinators to determine what type of analysis will benefit the ARIZONA@WORK system most. Three tools will be created in fiscal year 2024 to assist job seekers, job seeker staff, or workforce board members understand and utilize the analysis.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

Provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

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I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

In September 2023, the WAC developed and approved the Funding Allocations Policy for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), local subrecipients and fiscal agents, ADES staff, Arizona OEO staff, WIOA Title Operators, WIOA Title I Program manager(s), WIOA fiscal agents, and the State Workforce Board ("Council").

This policy defines the approach Arizona uses for equitably allocating WIOA resources across the State's 12 local workforce areas for WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth Programs.

The WAC follows US DOL guidelines to determine the State, regional, and local economic issues to focus on for WIOA funding. The OEO staff will annually calculate the options for WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth funding and apply the formula for the factors selected based on the identified economic issues for each LWDA.

All LWDBs will receive their annual WIOA formula funding for the Adult and DW Programs in two separate allotments. A portion of the funds will be distributed on or after July 1st, with the remainder of the funds to be distributed on or after October 1st, pending approval of the US DOL's fiscal year budget. The October allocations for the Adult and DW programs are subject to change should the U.S. DOL's approved budget modify the formula allocations.

Allocation Formula

The state follows WIOA sections 128 and 133 in the development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults and youth workforce investment activities. The state utilizes the:

1. Adult and Youth discretionary formulas:
 - a. 70 percent of the funds according to the allocation formula
 - i. Relative number of unemployed individuals in Areas of Substantial Unemployment in each local area
 - ii. Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area
 - iii. Relative number of disadvantaged adults/youth
 - b. 30 percent on the basis of a formula that incorporates additional factors related to:
 - i. Excess poverty in urban, rural, and suburban areas, and
 - ii. Excess unemployment above the State average in urban, rural, and suburban local areas.
2. Governor prescribed formula for DW Programs which involves a percentage of the following factors:
 - a. Insured unemployment data;
 - b. Unemployment concentrations;
 - c. Declining industries data;

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- d. Plant closing and mass layoff data;
- e. Farmer-rancher economic hardship data; and
- f. Long-term unemployment data.

Arizona assigns zero weight to plant closing and mass layoff data; and farmer-rancher economic hardship data.

1. RR Funding:

- a. 25 percent of the total WIOA DW funding at the beginning of each year.
- b. The Council shall vote annually whether to hold RR funding at the State level or return some or all of the funding to the LWDBs. The Council has the authority to determine the percentages for disbursement.

Funds allocated by a State to a LWDB under WIOA sections 128(b) and 133(b), for any PY are available for expenditure only during that PY and the succeeding PY.

- For Youth and Adult Programs, 85 percent of the funding is directly allocated to the LWDBs; and
- For the DW Program, 60 percent is directly allocated to the LWDBs and 25 percent is held for statewide RR and other allowable activities.

For both the Youth and the Adult allocations, a hold harmless provision is applied, which states that a LWDB cannot receive less than 90 percent of its relative share based on the average relative share of the total LWDB's allocation from the previous two funding years. Arizona takes an average of the last two years' funding to level out sizable fluctuations that can happen in funding from year to year.

Of the 25 percent held for statewide RR, predetermined amounts of first year RR funding is directly allocated to the LWDBs to meet the 80 percent obligation threshold for the DW Program. The remaining funding is held first for additional RR requests from local area partners, second for the statewide RR team, and third for other allowable activities after the first year of the period of performance. Should a LWDB require funding in addition to the predetermined amount, they may submit their request for review and approval by the State RR Coordinator and the Fiscal Compliance Manager.

Funds which are not expended by a LWDB in the two-year period must be returned to the State. WIOA Title I funding must be expended using the first-in, first-out accounting method. In accordance with WIOA sections 128(c) and 133(c), LWDBs must ensure that a minimum of 80 percent of each of their WIOA formula funding allocations are obligated by June 30th of the PY the funds were awarded. LWDBs with obligations below the required 80 percent threshold are subject to the recapture of funds.

Allowable funding for transitional jobs is limited to ten percent of the combined allocations for the Adult and DW Programs. LWDBs may reserve up to 20 percent of the combined allocations for the Adult and DW Programs to fund allowable incumbent worker training.

Per WIOA section 129(c)(4), LWDBs must spend a minimum of 20 percent of their Youth funds on paid and unpaid work experiences as defined in WIOA section 129(c)(2)(C).

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With the State's written approval, a LWDB may transfer up to 100 percent of a PY allocation for adult employment and training activities, and up to 100 percent of a PY allocation for DW employment and training activities between the two programs. LWDBs may not transfer funds to or from the youth program. Allowable funding for local administration is limited to 10 percent of the allocation for each program.

Statewide Administration/Allowable Statewide Activities

WIOA permits the State to hold up to 15 percent of each program's funding, prior to allocation to the LWDA. Of the 15 percent, the State can use up to 5 percent for allowable administrative costs; the remaining 10 percent is set aside for required and other allowable statewide activities.

In July 2023, ADES established a new process to obligate funding to the LWDA, in which the funding allocations for each LWDA are shared externally as an Alert and posted on the ADES Website[36]. This process was implemented in order to overcome the lengthy and cumbersome contract amendment process and ensure expediency in distributing the funding. The previous process to obligate funding to the LWDA took approximately two months for the contract amendment to be executed. The Alerts process significantly reduces this timeframe by allocating the funding to the LWDA within a matter of days.

[36]<https://des.az.gov/WIOATitle1FundsAllocation>

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

In September 2023, the WAC developed and approved the Funding Allocations Policy for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), local subrecipients and fiscal agents, ADES staff, Arizona OEO staff, WIOA Title Operators, WIOA Title I Program manager(s), WIOA fiscal agents, and the State Workforce Board ("Council").

This policy defines the approach Arizona uses for equitably allocating WIOA resources across the State's 12 local workforce areas for WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth Programs.

The WAC follows US DOL guidelines to determine the State, regional, and local economic issues to focus on for WIOA funding. The OEO staff will annually calculate the options for WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth funding and apply the formula for the factors selected based on the identified economic issues for each LWDA.

All LWDBs will receive their annual WIOA formula funding for the Adult and DW Programs in two separate allotments. A portion of the funds will be distributed on or after July 1st, with the remainder of the funds to be distributed on or after October 1st, pending approval of the US DOL's fiscal year budget. The October allocations for the Adult and DW programs are subject to change should the U.S. DOL's approved budget modify the formula allocations.

Allocation Formula

The state follows WIOA sections 128 and 133 in the development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults and youth workforce investment activities. The state utilizes the:

1. Adult and Youth discretionary formulas:

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- a. 70 percent of the funds according to the allocation formula
 - i. Relative number of unemployed individuals in Areas of Substantial Unemployment in each local area
 - ii. Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area
 - iii. Relative number of disadvantaged adults/youth
 - b. 30 percent on the basis of a formula that incorporates additional factors related to:
 - i. Excess poverty in urban, rural, and suburban areas, and
 - ii. Excess unemployment above the State average in urban, rural, and suburban local areas.
2. Governor prescribed formula for DW Programs which involves a percentage of the following factors:
- a. Insured unemployment data;
 - b. Unemployment concentrations;
 - c. Declining industries data;
 - d. Plant closing and mass layoff data;
 - e. Farmer-rancher economic hardship data; and
 - f. Long-term unemployment data.

Arizona assigns zero weight to plant closing and mass layoff data; and farmer-rancher economic hardship data.

1. RR Funding:
 - a. 25 percent of the total WIOA DW funding at the beginning of each year.
 - b. The Council shall vote annually whether to hold RR funding at the State level or return some or all of the funding to the LWDBs. The Council has the authority to determine the percentages for disbursement.

Funds allocated by a State to a LWDB under WIOA sections 128(b) and 133(b), for any PY are available for expenditure only during that PY and the succeeding PY.

- For Youth and Adult Programs, 85 percent of the funding is directly allocated to the LWDA's; and
- For the DW Program, 60 percent is directly allocated to the LWDA's and 25 percent is held for statewide RR and other allowable activities.

For both the Youth and the Adult allocations, a hold harmless provision is applied, which states that a LWDA cannot receive less than 90 percent of its relative share based on the average relative share of the total LWDA's allocation from the previous two funding years. Arizona takes

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an average of the last two years' funding to level out sizable fluctuations that can happen in funding from year to year.

Of the 25 percent held for statewide RR, predetermined amounts of first year RR funding is directly allocated to the LWDA's to meet the 80 percent obligation threshold for the DW Program. The remaining funding is held first for additional RR requests from local area partners, second for the statewide RR team, and third for other allowable activities after the first year of the period of performance. Should a LWDA require funding in addition to the predetermined amount, they may submit their request for review and approval by the State RR Coordinator and the Fiscal Compliance Manager.

Funds which are not expended by a LWDB in the two-year period must be returned to the State. WIOA Title I funding must be expended using the first-in, first-out accounting method. In accordance with WIOA sections 128(c) and 133(c), LWDBs must ensure that a minimum of 80 percent of each of their WIOA formula funding allocations are obligated by June 30th of the PY the funds were awarded. LWDBs with obligations below the required 80 percent threshold are subject to the recapture of funds.

Allowable funding for transitional jobs is limited to ten percent of the combined allocations for the Adult and DW Programs. LWDBs may reserve up to 20 percent of the combined allocations for the Adult and DW Programs to fund allowable incumbent worker training.

Per WIOA section 129(c)(4), LWDBs must spend a minimum of 20 percent of their Youth funds on paid and unpaid work experiences as defined in WIOA section 129(c)(2)(C).

With the State's written approval, a LWDB may transfer up to 100 percent of a PY allocation for adult employment and training activities, and up to 100 percent of a PY allocation for DW employment and training activities between the two programs. LWDBs may not transfer funds to or from the youth program. Allowable funding for local administration is limited to 10 percent of the allocation for each program.

Statewide Administration/Allowable Statewide Activities

WIOA permits the State to hold up to 15 percent of each program's funding, prior to allocation to the LWDA's. Of the 15 percent, the State can use up to 5 percent for allowable administrative costs; the remaining 10 percent is set aside for required and other allowable statewide activities.

In July 2023, ADES established a new process to obligate funding to the LWDA's, in which the funding allocations for each LWDA are shared externally as an Alert and posted on the ADES Website[36]. This process was implemented in order to overcome the lengthy and cumbersome contract amendment process and ensure expediency in distributing the funding. The previous process to obligate funding to the LWDA's took approximately two months for the contract amendment to be executed. The Alerts process significantly reduces this timeframe by allocating the funding to the LWDA's within a matter of days.

[36]<https://des.az.gov/WIOATitle1FundsAllocation>

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

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In September 2023, the WAC developed and approved the Funding Allocations Policy for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), local subrecipients and fiscal agents, ADES staff, Arizona OEO staff, WIOA Title Operators, WIOA Title I Program manager(s), WIOA fiscal agents, and the State Workforce Board (“Council”).

This policy defines the approach Arizona uses for equitably allocating WIOA resources across the State’s 12 local workforce areas for WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth Programs.

The WAC follows US DOL guidelines to determine the State, regional, and local economic issues to focus on for WIOA funding. The OEO staff will annually calculate the options for WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth funding and apply the formula for the factors selected based on the identified economic issues for each LWDA.

All LWDBs will receive their annual WIOA formula funding for the Adult and DW Programs in two separate allotments. A portion of the funds will be distributed on or after July 1st, with the remainder of the funds to be distributed on or after October 1st, pending approval of the US DOL’s fiscal year budget. The October allocations for the Adult and DW programs are subject to change should the U.S. DOL’s approved budget modify the formula allocations.

Allocation Formula

The state follows WIOA sections 128 and 133 in the development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults and youth workforce investment activities. The state utilizes the:

1. Adult and Youth discretionary formulas:
 - a. 70 percent of the funds according to the allocation formula
 - i. Relative number of unemployed individuals in Areas of Substantial Unemployment in each local area
 - ii. Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area
 - iii. Relative number of disadvantaged adults/youth
 - b. 30 percent on the basis of a formula that incorporates additional factors related to:
 - i. Excess poverty in urban, rural, and suburban areas, and
 - ii. Excess unemployment above the State average in urban, rural, and suburban local areas.
2. Governor prescribed formula for DW Programs which involves a percentage of the following factors:
 - a. Insured unemployment data;
 - b. Unemployment concentrations;
 - c. Declining industries data;
 - d. Plant closing and mass layoff data;

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- e. Farmer-rancher economic hardship data; and
- f. Long-term unemployment data.

Arizona assigns zero weight to plant closing and mass layoff data; and farmer-rancher economic hardship data.

1. RR Funding:
 - a. 25 percent of the total WIOA DW funding at the beginning of each year.
 - b. The Council shall vote annually whether to hold RR funding at the State level or return some or all of the funding to the LWDBs. The Council has the authority to determine the percentages for disbursement.

Funds allocated by a State to a LWDB under WIOA sections 128(b) and 133(b), for any PY are available for expenditure only during that PY and the succeeding PY.

- For Youth and Adult Programs, 85 percent of the funding is directly allocated to the LWDBs; and
- For the DW Program, 60 percent is directly allocated to the LWDBs and 25 percent is held for statewide RR and other allowable activities.

For both the Youth and the Adult allocations, a hold harmless provision is applied, which states that a LWDB cannot receive less than 90 percent of its relative share based on the average relative share of the total LWDB's allocation from the previous two funding years. Arizona takes an average of the last two years' funding to level out sizable fluctuations that can happen in funding from year to year.

Of the 25 percent held for statewide RR, predetermined amounts of first year RR funding is directly allocated to the LWDBs to meet the 80 percent obligation threshold for the DW Program. The remaining funding is held first for additional RR requests from local area partners, second for the statewide RR team, and third for other allowable activities after the first year of the period of performance. Should a LWDB require funding in addition to the predetermined amount, they may submit their request for review and approval by the State RR Coordinator and the Fiscal Compliance Manager.

Funds which are not expended by a LWDB in the two-year period must be returned to the State. WIOA Title I funding must be expended using the first-in, first-out accounting method. In accordance with WIOA sections 128(c) and 133(c), LWDBs must ensure that a minimum of 80 percent of each of their WIOA formula funding allocations are obligated by June 30th of the PY the funds were awarded. LWDBs with obligations below the required 80 percent threshold are subject to the recapture of funds.

Allowable funding for transitional jobs is limited to ten percent of the combined allocations for the Adult and DW Programs. LWDBs may reserve up to 20 percent of the combined allocations for the Adult and DW Programs to fund allowable incumbent worker training.

Per WIOA section 129(c)(4), LWDBs must spend a minimum of 20 percent of their Youth funds on paid and unpaid work experiences as defined in WIOA section 129(c)(2)(C).

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With the State's written approval, a LWDB may transfer up to 100 percent of a PY allocation for adult employment and training activities, and up to 100 percent of a PY allocation for DW employment and training activities between the two programs. LWDBs may not transfer funds to or from the youth program. Allowable funding for local administration is limited to 10 percent of the allocation for each program.

Statewide Administration/Allowable Statewide Activities

WIOA permits the State to hold up to 15 percent of each program's funding, prior to allocation to the LWDAs. Of the 15 percent, the State can use up to 5 percent for allowable administrative costs; the remaining 10 percent is set aside for required and other allowable statewide activities.

In July 2023, ADES established a new process to obligate funding to the LWDAs, in which the funding allocations for each LWDA are shared externally as an Alert and posted on the ADES Website[36]. This process was implemented in order to overcome the lengthy and cumbersome contract amendment process and ensure expediency in distributing the funding. The previous process to obligate funding to the LWDAs took approximately two months for the contract amendment to be executed. The Alerts process significantly reduces this timeframe by allocating the funding to the LWDAs within a matter of days.

[36]<https://des.az.gov/WIOATitle1FundsAllocation>

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE THE METHODS AND FACTORS THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL USE TO DISTRIBUTE TITLE II FUNDS.

Authorization and Funding

The Arizona Department of Education is soliciting grant applications for the 2024-2028 Arizona Adult Education Grant Awards. Providers from entities eligible to receive Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II funds are encouraged to apply.

All funding is pending availability of projected Federal and State grant allocations and the Arizona State Board of Education (AZ SBE) approval.

Federal – Per Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law on July 22, 2014,

states must coordinate workforce development services across agencies as follows:

- Title I- Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs
- Title II- Adult Education and Literacy Program (AEFLA)
- Title III- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service
- Title IV- Vocational Rehabilitation Program

State - Arizona Revised Statutes, §15-232 and §15-234

Arizona state law (A.R.S. §§ 15-232, 15-234) establishes adult education as a division within the

Arizona Department of Education (ADE). ADE Adult Education Services (AES) serves as the administrative entity for WIOA Title II-AEFLA, for the purpose of establishing and maintaining adult education programs to provide adult education services, as prescribed by Federal and State

laws.

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Successful applicants shall provide a minimum of 25% local match, as cash and/or in-kind contributions, for the approved total grant funding allocation (State requirement). The required 25% local match may not come from:

- Federal funds, from any source.
- Earned income, such as fees collected.

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100% of earned income generated by this grant award must be used for adult education services as outlined in this grant, WIOA, and A.R.S. §§15-232, 15-234.

Direct and Equitable Access

The Arizona Department of Education is committed to conducting a competitive grant process that

ensures direct and equitable access to all eligible applicants for Arizona Adult Education grant contracts. Information regarding the RFGA and process is available broadly to potential applicants

via the ADE-AES public website. The application timeline can be found below.

The RFGA process is designed to ensure that organizations, who have not previously received Arizona

Adult Education grant funds, are provided a fair and equitable opportunity to address the requirements of this application. All applicants will be evaluated using the same criteria and process in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Purpose of Adult Education

ADE-AES is committed to providing effective and high-quality adult education services in each local

workforce area that provides Arizonans with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for employment, next level careers, and post-secondary education and training to:

1. Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills needed for employment and

economic self-sufficiency.

2. Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that...

a) are necessary to becoming full partners in the educational development of their children; and

b) lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family.

3. Assist adults in the attainment of an Arizona High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma and in the

transition to postsecondary education and training through career pathways.

4. Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners to

a) improve reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English;

b) improve mathematics skills; and

c) acquire an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedoms, and the

responsibilities of citizenship.

Target Population (Eligible Individuals)

Grant funds awarded to local providers under this grant contract are to be used to establish and operate programs that provide adult education and literacy services to learners aligned to the

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statutory definition of an “eligible individual” as defined in WIOA and state statute. An “eligible individual” means an individual who:

- o Has attained 16 years of age.
- o Is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under Arizona State Law (A.R.S. § 15-802).
- o Meets Arizona eligibility requirements under A.R.S. § 15-232(B); AND
 - Is basic skills deficient OR
 - Does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education, OR
 - Is an English language learner.

Allowable Activities

Funding made available to Arizona under WIOA Title II-Section 222(a)(1) and awarded to local providers under this grant contract are to be used to establish and operate adult education programs to provide the following educational services and activities:

Adult Basic Education (ABE) instruction is provided for eligible individuals with Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) ABE 1-4. Instruction is aligned to the Arizona Adult Education Content

Standards and includes concurrent Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) that leads to ASE instruction and the attainment of a secondary diploma or HSE Diploma and transition to postsecondary education/training and/or employment.

Adult Secondary Education (ASE) instruction is provided for eligible individuals with Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) ABE 5-6. Instruction is aligned to the Arizona Adult Education Content

Standards and includes concurrent Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) that leads to the attainment of a secondary diploma or HSE Diploma and transition to postsecondary education/training and/or employment.

Secondary Diploma or a High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma activities leading to a diploma to include:

- Counseling with an adult learner to determine which of the three pathways would be the most appropriate.
 - o GED Testing Pathway
 - o AZ College Credit Pathway
 - o AZ High School Equivalency PLUS Career Readiness Pathway
- ABE and/or ASE instruction
- Other activities involved in assisting an adult learner to earn a diploma and transition to postsecondary education/training and/or employment.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is English language instruction for eligible English

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Language Learners (ELLs) to achieve proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension that leads to attainment of a secondary diploma or HSE diploma, and transition to postsecondary/training, or employment. The ESOL instruction must: 1) align to the Arizona Adult Education English Language Proficiency Standards, 2) offer college/career counseling services, and include 3) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) activities (as described below).

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) are educational services provided to English Language Learners to achieve proficiency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens. Services must include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, aligned to the Arizona Adult Education Literacy through Social Studies Standards. Services may include workforce preparation and workforce training.

Workforce Preparation is instruction, provided concurrently with ABE, ASE, or ESOL/IELCE activities, and is designed to help eligible individuals acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and employability skills. Participation in workforce preparation activities must lead to the development of competencies to apply resources and information, work with others, and understand systems to successfully transition to and complete postsecondary education/training and employment.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach to providing adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Required IET components are: 1) adult education and literacy, 2) workforce preparation activities, and 3) workforce training. Instruction is based on occupationally relevant resources and materials for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Participation is intended for eligible individuals at all skill levels, including adults with low academic skills.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education PLUS Training (IELCE + T; WIOA Section 243[c]) combines the IELCE components of English language and literacy instruction, civics education, and workforce preparation activities and training. IELCE + T is designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for placement in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries

and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program. Students enrolled in IELCE+T services will receive language acquisition instruction (as described in the ESOL/IELCE section) and job training (as described the IET section) concurrently, rather than sequentially. Please note that the provision of services for English language learners not including the incorporation of IET must be provided using funds awarded under Section 231.

Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals (Section 225). Up to 20%

of funding made available to Arizona under WIOA Title II Section 222(a)(1) may be used to fund programs for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals as described in WIOA Title II Section 225. ADE will award funds under Section 225 using the same process and timeline as described in this grant application. Priority will be given to programs serving individuals who are likely to be released from the correctional institution within five years. Applicants applying to provide services under WIOA Title II Section 225 must include this information in the submitted application (Part II) and responses to narrative questions must address the provision of services to incarcerated individuals.

WIOA Title II Performance Requirements

WIOA Title II (29 USC §3141) states that programs receiving WIOA Title II funding will be measured for effectiveness and student achievement in the following areas:

1. Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) rate
2. Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Gain by
 - a. Moving from one EFL to a higher EFL as measured on an NRS-approved initial assessment and one or more progress assessments.
 - b. Exiting the program and entering postsecondary education and/or training programs in the same program year.
3. Earning a secondary diploma or high school equivalency diploma.
4. Earning secondary or postsecondary credits while enrolled in an IET program.
5. Meeting employer-indicated milestones while enrolled in a workplace literacy program.
6. Passing an occupational exam.
7. Credential attainment.
8. Employment rate.
9. Median earnings.

The above performance accountability measures are used by the Department of Education-

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Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to assess Arizona's effectiveness in achieving positive outcomes for learners. In addition, ADE-AES uses these performance requirements to assess the performance of individual WIOA Arizona Title II funded programs. OCTAE uses past performance, as measured by the above performance measures, and continuous improvement requirements to negotiate performance accountability targets with ADE-AES on an annual basis. Funded applicants will be responsible for the same established performance measures throughout the grant contract period.

Program Accountability and Data Measures of Performance

The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for the federally funded, state-administered adult education program. ADE-AES utilizes a secure, web-based Adult Education Data Management System (AAEDMS) that funded programs are required to use. AAEDMS collects student demographic, participation, and outcome measures, including performance results as identified in the National Reporting System (NRS) for the following measures:

- o Percentage of program participants who achieve Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) through one of the performance areas listed above.
- o Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- o Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
- o Median earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- o Percentage of program participants who receive a secondary school diploma or high school equivalency diploma during participation or within one year after exit; receipt of secondary diploma is only counted if the participant also enters postsecondary education or training, or employment within one year after exit.
- o Percentage of program participants who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation or within one year after exit.

2024-2028 Arizona WIOA Title II Adult Education Grant Terms and Conditions Grant Award Process and Cycle

Eligible local providers are awarded funding through this competitive Request for Grant Application (RFGA) process via multi-year grant contracts. The four-year grant contract cycle for this

competition will be:

- Year One - July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025
- Year Two - July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026
- Year Three - July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027
- Year Four - July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028

Funding Availability and Considerations Information - Determined by Census and Demographic Data for each County/Local Workforce Area

A. WIOA Title II Service Area Local Workforce Areas

There are twelve Local Workforce Areas in Arizona. Eleven of the twelve are geographic-based, and

one is a Tribal Workforce Region. Proposed assistance funding will be distributed across the state

by Local Workforce Area.

Nineteen Tribal Nations: *Applicants seeking this additional funding must also apply to provide Title II services in one or more of the other eleven Local Workforce Areas and then specifically identify strategies in the submitted application for expanding services to Native American adult learners in the applicable Tribal Area(s) of this region. The submitted application must also align with the NTN Local Workforce Development Plan, and it will be submitted to the NTN Board for review*

and comment following the same process described in this Section under Alignment with Local Workforce Plan.

B. Estimated Total Assistance Available Under Section 231

The Estimated Total Assistance under Section 231 for each WIOA Title II Service Area was determined

by demographic data and a needs analyses pertaining to the target populations of adult learners.

Factors used to determine this estimation include:

- number of people in the target population
- educational attainment levels
- English language needs
- geographic density of each region (i.e., service delivery in rural, less dense regions may be more expensive)

C. Estimated Funding by Allowable Activity Under Section 231

The Estimated Funding Breakdown by Allowable Activity for each Local Workforce Area was determined

by demographic data pertaining to the need for services. ABE/ASE and ESOL/IELCE funding estimates

are based on data from the U.S. Census pertaining to the number of adults in the area who lack a secondary diploma compared to the number who speak English less than very well. The Integrated

Education and Training (IET) estimate of this breakdown is designated specifically to award funding

to applicants to provide services that meet the IET requirements as described in WIOA Final Rules §463.35 – §463.38 for participants in both ABE/ASE and ESOL/IELCE programs. (See

Allowable

Activities for details on delivering IET services)

D. IELCE + T (Section 243)

The Estimated Funding Assistance for IELCE + T under Section 243 for each Local Workforce Area was

determined by demographic data and analyses pertaining to English language needs. Section 243 funds

are allocated and accounted for in a separate funding stream in the AZ GME System and must be applied for through submission of additional application responses that are specific to Section 243 requirements for delivering IELCE + T services.

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.

ADE is committed to conducting a competitive RFGA process that ensures direct and equitable access to all eligible providers competing for Title II grant contracts. Information regarding the application and process will be made available broadly via a public website and through email to a comprehensive email list of adult education entities throughout the state. An adequate amount of time to complete the application will be allowed, based on best practices as determined by ADE's grants management department. Submission of applications will be done using the Grants Management Enterprise System, a manner that allows equitable access to all individuals, including those with disabilities.

Award amounts will be determined by area demographic and needs analyses to ensure that addressing the purpose of WIOA is the basis for funding decisions. All eligible applicants go through the same application and review process and have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for Title II grants contracts, including WIOA Sections 225 (Corrections), 231 (Grants) and 243 (IELCE).

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Statement: Each applicant requesting funds is required to include a description of the steps taken to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. Section 427 GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, applicants determine whether these or other barriers may prevent participation in the program or activities, and the steps to be taken to overcome identified barriers must be included in the application.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are

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blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

Not applicable.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

Describe data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including the State's process to collect and report data on co-enrollment, and for those present in the one-stop centers.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The ARIZONA@WORK system, will continue efforts through cross-functional teams to identify technological tools for linking datasets in order to maximize efficiency and the exchange of information to support assessment and evaluation in support of the strategies outlined in the Unified Plan (e.g. 1.3, 2.3, and 3.3) Arizona will research innovative solutions used by other States to expand and integrate its information systems used within the ARIZONA@WORK system. In addition, technological solutions identified and/or implemented by LWDBs will provide insight into successful data integration strategies that can be implemented across ARIZONA@WORK partner programs. Arizona aims to improve, across the core and other partner programs, the ability to exchange common data elements and expand data reporting and analysis to enable data-driven decisions that support continuous improvement through regular assessment and evaluation. Arizona currently is able to track participation in Title I, III, JVSG, UI, TAA, and MSFW through one data system, and will seek solutions to track additional program customers. ADE has also developed a process through the MOU/IFA process to track Title II students referred for adult education and literacy services, which is being rolled out throughout the State.

The State continues to identify and implement system modernization projects that provide the ARIZONA@WORK ecosystem an interoperable experience, resulting in expedited and enhanced delivery of services to Arizona job seekers and employers. ADES has deployed a system modernization initiative for the UI Benefits Program, replacing the decades-old system with new technology to improve system functionality and overall client experience. The UI Benefits project "go live" is scheduled for Fall 2024. The solution procured is a software as a service product from Geographic Solutions. The UI benefits project has been deployed simultaneously with a system modernization initiative for the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) programs including VR, Older Individuals who are Blind, and Business Enterprise Program. The new RSA system will increase the program's ability to provide timely and quality services to

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clients and vendors, including improved data reporting and analytics. The RSA project “go live” is scheduled for Fall 2024. The solution procured is a Software as a Service product from CMSuite.

While the UI Benefits and RSA modernization projects are the current priority, we intend to advance two remaining significant modernization projects involving Unemployment Insurance Tax (UI Tax) and a Workforce Technology System, modernizing components that build efficiency and eliminate duplicative work amongst system partners resulting in an integrated approach. Arizona is poised to implement an agile system to move the State to a modernized process and system to meet the needs of ARIZONA@WORK and results in a better client experience overall.

In the fall of 2023, ADES hired a senior advisor as the product manager for the ARIZONA@WORK Workforce modernization project. ADES and the OEO (representing the WAC) together, visited all 12 LWDA's, representatives of the Titles II, III and IV core partner programs, and the other ADES workforce programs to learn about customer journeys, how success is measured, future system and data desires, and the biggest current roadblocks.

The next steps in the Workforce Modernization project will include the continued gathering of information from the entire ARIZONA@WORK ecosystem, including Finance and Budget, Human Resources, IT, Quality Assurance, and Policy units. The identification of the latest technological tools used by HR professionals, local area partners, other state agencies, and other States who have modernized their workforce systems will help to develop and implement a plan that establishes the requirements and qualities of an agile system. All of the research and data gathering currently underway will ensure we can move quickly to establish the foundational elements and timeline for the implementation of a complete Workforce System modernization project.

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN

Arizona will work with state and local partners to improve processes for individuals using the ARIZONA@WORK system through national research, identifying grant options, and capitalizing on the successful strategies from LWDBs to streamline intake and service delivery and allow cross-program tracking. Local plans and MOUs developed by LWDBs with ARIZONA@WORK partners will facilitate collaboration across the local system and provide the structure for a seamless delivery of service provision for ARIZONA@WORK customers.

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS (INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.) AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

The WAC continues to collaborate and participate in efforts to address technology and data system alignment and streamlining services to individuals. The WAC is on the Workforce IT Modernization Advisory Committee and leads the identification of workforce development technology requirements through the National Governors Association Workforce Innovation Network Grant. In partnership with ADES, the WAC is currently working on a technology

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modernization initiative that involves gathering input from ARIZONA@WORK partners to identify technology needs and support effective intake and service provision. This initiative will be a phased approach and will encompass UI, Workforce Systems, and Unemployment Tax.

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 41-5303 and § 41-5404, the OEO is overseeing the development and operations of the Integrated Data System (IDS). The IDS links administrative data from educational institutions and workforce programs for statistical purposes. By combining data between state agencies, the IDS can be leveraged to measure the impact of government programs and interventions. The system allows stakeholders to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how state agencies intersect with and influence the lives of Arizonans, enabling the enhancement initiatives aimed at improving economic outcomes. The IDS currently contains and links records between two community college districts, and four state government systems.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S DATA SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES TO PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2)).

Arizona's core programs ensure the performance accountability systems meet WIOA requirements while continuously seeking opportunities for improved processes to better improve performance outcomes for the customers served.

Titles I and III:

Uses AJC, hosted by AJLA, to support a consortium of state workforce agencies. The AJC system manages all aspects of case management, data recording, and performance reporting for Titles I and III. AJLA Technical Support creates a PIRL file used for the Quarterly (ETA-9173) and Annual (ETA-9169) Reports. The file is compiled and reported through the WIPS to the U.S. DOL Employment and Training Administration (U.S. DOL/ETA). Using the WIPS ensures both the accuracy and uniformity of the reported data in compliance with U.S. DOL/ETA reporting requirements. To ensure data completeness and integrity, the ADES Workforce IT Section/Workforce Development Unit works with the LWDBs and its service providers to correct data that is missing or causing an error when the WIPS process identifies data errors during the submission of the PIRL file.

ADES evaluates its performance through:

- Quarterly review of fiscal data;
- Monthly review of lead measures on scorecards, implementing problem solving when measures do not meet targets which can be discussed during monthly ARIZONA@WORK meetings as needed; and
- Regular quality assurance meetings where data from fiscal, programmatic, and Equal Opportunity (EO) monitoring is reviewed to identify trends for targeted technical assistance.

Title II:

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Uses the Advansys system from Benchmark, branded as the Arizona Adult Education Data Management System (AAEDMS), to enter student demographic, performance, class, and postexit data as required for Federal reporting. AAEDMS is a secure, web-based data management system that collects required data, including performance results as identified in the NRS. Along with entering student demographic data, AAEDMS tracks student progress and generates federal reports for Title II.

ADE's adult education providers are evaluated on fiscal, instructional, and programmatic areas to identify areas of strength as well as those in need of improvement as part of the performance accountability system. The model incorporates the following factors:

- A cyclical system for risk assessment and monitoring;
- Monthly desk-monitoring, including data analysis and areas in need of technical assistance; and
- Evidence of high-quality, data-driven and research-based instruction that is aligned to content standards and professional learning standards, and that incorporates the standards for both digital literacy and transferable employability skills.

Title IV:

Uses Libera, System 7 Case Management System to input and store program, fiscal, and contract data. The Libera system supports case management, vendor, procurement, and financial management for Title IV. System users enter client specific data each quarter and a system module creates the quarterly RSA-911 report. Replicated dictionary tables allow use of Access databases to write specialized queries. Specialized queries are used to provide the required data for federal reports, as well as the raw datasets used to create the monthly program management reports and weekly and monthly scorecards.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

Arizona uses the Federal performance measures required in WIOA as its statewide measures. For all core partner programs, Arizona assesses participants' post-program employment outcomes through collection of wage data from UI or other sources. For Titles I, II, and IV, credential attainment during and after exit is also assessed. For youth participants, success may be measured by placement in postsecondary education after exit.

These measures are publicly available on the ARIZONA@WORK Workforce Performance Dashboard and will be used by the Council, core programs, and LWDBs to assess participant progress and identify areas needing technical assistance. The dashboard provides a statewide and local area view of the effectiveness of workforce training programs using federal performance measures. The dashboard consolidates data on local labor market conditions, economic indicators, and local workforce system performance.

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Using the current data systems of the core programs and identifying opportunities to improve reporting and expansion of the data systems through this Plan's strategies, Arizona will seek to decrease duplication and/or extraneous data gathering to better assess the progress of participants engaged in the ARIZONA@WORK system. Case management at the local level includes the delivery of follow-up services, varying in scope across core partners. These services can help to maintain post-program connection with the participant, addressing needs as they arise and offering support to help ensure successful outcomes.

To gather feedback on the impact to customers, Arizona conducts customer satisfaction surveys to capture business and job seekers experience and discover successes and challenges providing opportunities for sharing best practices and improvement. Local adult education providers also conduct follow-up surveys on exited participants that did not provide a social security number at intake.

In addition, assessing the current data sharing agreements to identify opportunities to expand data sharing will improve the ability of the State to coordinate and track across programs and minimize duplication of efforts for both customers and ARIZONA@WORK staff. Arizona currently has a data sharing agreement with ADE (Title II) to support data sharing between the agencies allowing employment results of Title II participants to be tracked.

Title II collects post-exit employment data primarily through the UI data match in cooperation with ADES and with the National Student Clearinghouse, with over 80 percent of Title II participants agreeing to this method. For those participants who do not agree to data match or do not have Social Security numbers, funded adult education providers must conduct surveys by phone with as many exited participants as possible.

Title IV staff have received training regarding the need to report all of the post-exit data elements. A Measurable Skills Gain and Credential Attainment Reporting policy was initially implemented in January 2021 and subsequently revised January 2022. The policy provides guidelines on how to identify, record and report Measurable Skills Gain (MSG) and Credential Attainment as required by WIOA for the purpose of tracking the client's progression in obtaining and achieving the employment goal as listed in the most current and approved IPE. Staff training and tipsheets for all of the post-exit data are archived and available on demand to enhance staff understanding of requirements to assess participant progress and completion after exit.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

All core programs conduct quarterly and annual data matches with ADES' UI system, the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) to calculate the employment-based performance measures for WIOA-required quarterly and annual reports. These wages are also applied to the other partner programs tracked in AJC, including JVSG and TAA. ADE also conducts an annual data match with the National Student Clearinghouse to capture entry into postsecondary outcomes for exited participants.

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In 2019, Arizona completed the new SWIS agreement with DOL, identifying ADE (Title II) and VR (Title IV) as Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agencies (PACIAs), along with the current PACIA for Titles I and III, ensuring all four of the core programs can access interstate wage information for WIOA performance reporting.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

Arizona has privacy safeguards in place to protect confidential information contained in its workforce development systems, which includes safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act and other applicable state and federal laws. These safeguards include State and local requirements, such as:

- Annual security training for individuals accessing confidential WIOA information;
- Personal confidentiality statements/user affirmation agreements to be signed by individuals accessing WIOA information;
- Maintaining medical documentation needed for eligibility determinations in a sealed confidential envelope separate from the files of eligible applicants, registrants, and participants, and;
- Local confidentiality policies and procedures.

Privacy safeguards are monitored as part of the State's monitoring system, as set out for the specific core or partner program. Arizona seeks to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all information for customers of WIOA, with a heightened focus on protecting social security information, according to federal laws and regulations (and state laws), including the following:

- 29 U.S. Code § 2935 (reports, recordkeeping, and investigations);
- 29 U.S. Code § 2871(f)(3) (confidentiality);
- 20 CFR § Part 603 (Unemployment Compensation);
- 42 U.S. Code § 503 (UI operations);
- 20 CFR § 617.57(b) (Trade Act);
- 29 U.S. Code § 491-2(a)(2) (Wagner-Peyser Act);
- The Privacy Act (5 U.S. Code § 552);
- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S. Code § 1232g) (Title II and other programs in receipt of educational records);
- 34 CFR § 361.38 (VR);
- 20 CFR § 683.220 (internal control requirements for WIOA Title I and Title III); and
- 2 CFR § 200.303 (internal controls for Federal awards).

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7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT THE PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR COVERED PERSONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT, CODIFIED AT SECTION 4215 OF 38 U.S.C., WHICH APPLIES TO ALL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MONITOR PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR VETERANS.

C. DESCRIBE THE TRIAGE AND REFERRAL PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND OTHER POPULATIONS DETERMINED ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM THE JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS (JVSG) PROGRAM'S DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALIST/CONSOLIDATED POSITION.

(A) Describe how the State will implement the priority of service provisions for covered persons in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor.

In accordance with 20 CFR § 1010 [37], veterans and eligible spouses, also referred to as “covered persons,” will continue to receive priority for DOL-funded ARIZONA@WORK programs or services for workforce preparation, development, or delivery. For the purpose of applying priority of service, a “veteran” means a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, as specified in 38 U.S.C. 101(2) [38]. Active service includes full-time duty within the National Guard or Reserve, outside of full-time duty for training purposes. An “eligible spouse” refers to any of the following:

- The spouse of any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
- The spouse of any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who is listed, at the time application, for a total of more than 90 days as missing in action, captured in the line of duty, or forcibly detained;
- The spouse of any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
- The spouse of any veteran who died while a total disability, as described above, was in existence.

Priority of service for covered persons means that program-eligible covered persons are entitled to take precedence over non-covered persons in obtaining services 20 CFR § 1010.200[b][39]. Arizona has established the following policies that provide the framework for complying with priority of service requirements:

- WIOA Title I-B Veterans' Priority of Service Policy [40] – outlines the priority levels for Title I-B programs and takes into account the coordination between the Adult Program statutory priority and the priority of service for covered persons. It also requires local

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areas to describe priority of service implementation in their local area plans and to develop pertinent policies for their areas.

- Employment Service Policy Manual [41] - highlights the requirement to apply priority of service for covered persons in Employment Service activities.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program Policy Manual [42] –identifies being a covered person as a characteristic that entitles a program-eligible individual to priority in participation — among other priority characteristics, such as being 65 years or older, having a disability, or being an English-language learner. The policy further expands on the SCSEP order of priority as follows:
 - First priority: covered persons who possess at least one of the other priority characteristics
 - Second: covered persons who do not possess any other priority characteristics
 - Third: non-covered persons who possess at least one of the other priority characteristics

The ARIZONA@WORK system has established and will continue to refine processes that align with State policies and facilitate the effective implementation of priority of service. The following are current and planned activities that identify covered persons at the point of entry; notify them of their entitlement to priority of service; and provide information on employment, training, and placement services for which they are entitled to receive priority:

- ARIZONA@WORK job center staff at physical locations or virtual offices identify covered persons at the point of entry by directly inquiring of their status. An individual who self-identifies as a covered person is asked to voluntarily complete the Veterans' Priority of Service Assessment Form (ESA-1193A) [43], which establishes an individual's status as a veteran or an eligible spouse.
- Each ARIZONA@WORK job center is required to display, and staff are to provide to covered persons, the Veterans Priority of Service flyer (ESA-1184A). The flyer describes priority of service and applicable employment and training services available through ARIZONA@WORK.
- Priority of service information is made available on the State workforce agency website, and job seekers registering in the management information system Arizona Job Connection (AJC) are identified as covered persons via the registration questionnaire.

(B) Describe how the State will monitor priority of service provisions for veterans.

ADES annually monitors the LWDB's service providers to ensure priority of service requirements are being implemented in accordance with WIOA and State policy and procedures. Monitoring activities include desk reviews of files, review of AJC case information and the LWDB's policy. At the end of a monitoring review, a monitoring report is completed and sent to the LWDB within ten business days from the desk review to include findings and observations, and a response to the findings is due within 20 business days from receipt. Cross-functional monthly meetings are held to review monitoring activities and identify needed areas for technical assistance.

(C) Describe the triage and referral process for eligible veterans and other populations determined eligible to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist/Consolidated Position.

ARIZONA@WORK staff who interact with job seekers at the point of entry, both physical and virtual, facilitate the voluntary completion of the Veterans' Priority of Service Assessment Form (ESA-1193A) [43] for those who self-identify as a veteran or eligible spouse. In addition to establishing an individual's status as a veteran or an eligible spouse, the form allows covered persons to identify and attest to the presence of significant barriers to employment.

Significant barriers to employment, as described in Veterans' Program Letter (VPL) 03-1444 [44] and VPL 03-14, Change 145, [45] render covered persons eligible for DVOP specialist services. Point-of-entry staff refer covered persons with significant barriers to employment as well as other eligible individuals identified in VPL 03-1946 [46] to DVOP specialists. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and, as appropriate, make referrals to programs within the ARIZONA@WORK system, and beyond, for other career, supportive, and training services. DVOP specialists provide further priority for their targeted services to special disabled and disabled veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.

[37] <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-20/part-1010>

[38] <https://www.govinfo.gov/link/uscode/38/101>

[39] [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-20/part-1010#p-1010.200\(b\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-20/part-1010#p-1010.200(b))

[40]

https://des.az.gov/sites/default/files/media/wioa_veternas_priority_of_service_policy_section_1100.pdf?time=1701895993321

[41]

https://des.az.gov/sites/default/files/media/es_policy_manual_3_13_2018.pdf?time=1702051584228

[42] <https://des.az.gov/sites/default/files/media/SCSEP-Permanent-Policy-Manual.pdf?time=1702334519316>

[43] <https://des.az.gov/documents-center/ESA-1193A>

[44] <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/VETS/legacy/files/VPL-03-14.pdf>

[45] <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/VETS/legacy/files/VPL-03-14-Change-1.pdf>

[46] <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/VETS/legacy/files/veterans-program-letter-03-19.pdf>

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.)

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regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

The following publicly posted State policies describe the requirements for ensuring compliance with section 188 of WIOA and provisions of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including required physical and programmatic access to individuals with disabilities, the annual assessment of physical and programmatic accessibility at all ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers in the LWDA, and the ARIZONA@WORK Job Center certification requirements:

- WIOA Local Board Governance Policy;
- Certification of ARIZONA@WORK Job Center Policy;
- ARIZONA@WORK Job Center Structure of One Stop Delivery System Policy; and
- Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy.

LWDBs assess ARIZONA@WORK comprehensive, affiliate, and specialized centers annually for programmatic and physical accessibility. The assessment includes (i) physical accessibility measures to ensure facilities are designed, constructed, or altered so they are accessible and usable to all individuals, including those with disabilities; (ii) programmatic accessibility measures to ensure access to programs, services, and activities during regular business days; and (iii) measures to ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities defined in Section 188 of WIOA.

The State-level Equal Opportunity (EO) officer conducts an annual compliance monitoring process of each of its ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers (comprehensive, affiliate, and specialized), which consists of an on-site review to ensure that programmatic services are accessible for individuals with disabilities. This review includes an assessment of the assistive technology equipment available to ensure programmatic accessibility for individuals with vision, hearing, and physical limitations. If assistive technology equipment is not available, guidance and resources are provided to the site and an observation is made with a suggestion to have assistive technology equipment available in the future and a plan to get the equipment is required. The EO officer sends the LWDB representative "finding letters" with required actions to correct any compliance findings. The LWDBs are responsible for ensuring compliance with physical and programmatic accessibility in the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers through implementation and oversight of State and local policies. The State-level Equal Opportunity (EO) officer completed the most recent on-site review of all ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers (comprehensive, affiliate, and specialized) in July 2023.

Each LWDA identifies a local/tribal EO officer to ensure equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in the administration and operation of programs, activities, and services within the ARIZONA@WORK system. The State-level EO officer provides annual training each February, most recently in February 2024, to the local/tribal EO officers and State-level staff, including ES, VR, DVOP, and LVER staff, to facilitate appropriate provision of services to persons with disabilities. Local/tribal EO officers provide training and support to local area

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ARIZONA@WORK staff, service providers, and local partners to support addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

See Nondiscrimination Plan at <https://des.az.gov/sites/default/files/media/Arizona-Non-Discrimination-Plan-2021-2022.pdf?time=1702576503509>

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials. Describe how English language learners will be made aware of the opportunity to enroll and/or co-enroll in all the core programs for which they are eligible.

ADE, ADES, and the LWDBs have policies and procedures to ensure individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to ARIZONA@WORK services. In accordance with 29 CFR § 38.9 and the State of Arizona Nondiscrimination Plan (NDP), the procedures include the development and implementation of processes that use and provide upon request Language Line services, interpreters, or translators, so individuals with LEP receive equitable communication of information as English-speaking individuals.

The State-level EO officer reviews for approval of LWDB policy and procedures during the annual monitoring. ADE and ADES policy and procedures are in compliance with 29 CFR § 38.9.

Support is required for languages spoken by a significant number or portion of the population seeking services through ARIZONA@WORK. LWDB service providers must translate vital information in written materials into these languages and make the translations readily available in hard copy, upon request, or electronically such as on a website. The vital information these materials contain can be provided to LEP participants by oral interpretation or summarization. For other languages not spoken as frequently in the area, information will be supplied as the need arises or upon request. The NDP requires either the local EO officer or the State-level EO officer to conduct, at minimum, annual ARIZONA@WORK staff training. Generally, the State-level EO officer facilitates the training via an annual Technical Assistance Conference, which ensures all EO officers are up-to-date on the changes or new procedures available to them.

The LWDA EO officer is responsible for ensuring that ARIZONA@WORK staff are aware of the requirements to assist a client in filing a discrimination complaint and that it is done properly. LWDA's further ensure that job seekers and participants with LEP are effectively informed about and/or able to participate in the program or activity by, providing workshops in Spanish, referring customers to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes through Title II programs or in the community, or instruction in Vocational English as a Second Language.

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ADE's grant-funded Title II adult education providers in all LWDAs offer English-language instruction designed to help eligible learners (i) achieve proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening; (ii) attain a secondary diploma or its equivalent as needed; and (iii) transition to postsecondary education/training, or employment. In addition, Title II Programs utilize funding under WIOA section 243 to provide English-language learners with English literacy and civics education, in combination with IET activities.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

Planning and coordination for the development of this Unified Plan began in May 2023 with the dissemination of a WIOA Stakeholder survey to collect input from Arizona's stakeholders, including representatives across the State Workforce Development Board, partner state agencies, LWDAs, and community-based partners on the state's future vision, mission, and the types of goals that should inform opportunities for new strategies. The survey was disseminated to approximately 230 potential respondents and closed in June 2023 with an average response rate of 44 percent.

Results were analyzed and summarized into a report that was shared with ARIZONA@WORK system stakeholders. The report captured a summary of responses collected across survey participants and highlighted respondent demographics pertinent to the voices captured. The information supported drawing WIOA State Plan narrative inputs and established a foundation for continued stakeholder engagement in the continued development of state plan elements.

Following the close of the State Plan survey, a total of three virtual sessions were facilitated in early September 2023 to engage stakeholders in the review of survey data and to contribute to the finalization of this Unified Plan's Vision and Mission. Over 130 stakeholders participated in these sessions, working together in small groups to review, edit, and refine the Vision and Mission. The collaborative statements that resulted were posted on the ARIZONA@WORK website for public comment from October 16 - 30, 2023 and results reviewed by ADES staff to confirm finalization.

To support the data-informed development of the goals and strategies outlined in this Unified Plan, three regional sessions were held across the state (Central, Northern, and Southern Arizona) to engage ARIZONA@WORK system stakeholders in the review of the state's economic and workforce conditions; the review of the state's workforce development activities; and assess performance data across the system and among priority populations. Over 130 state and local leaders of the workforce system participated in these sessions and a list of participating organizations is found in Appendix 2.

Throughout the state plan development process, updates were regularly provided at each WAC Executive Committee and full Council meetings to ensure state leadership was informed of progress and alignment to the WAC's strategic plan. The Unified Plan was also posted for public comment from January 16-30, 2024. A total of three public comment submissions were received which totaled in 89 stakeholder inputs. All public comment submissions were reviewed, responded to, and used to inform needed edits. Appendix 9 provides a summary of received

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public comments and was also presented to the WAC during its February Executive Committee and full Council meetings as part of the state board’s approval process.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board,	Yes

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The State Plan must include	Include
including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or	Yes

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The State Plan must include	Include
delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

Some content in this area is under revision.

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

Arizona’s Governor designated twelve LWDAs, which also serve as its regions:

- ARIZONA@WORK Coconino County
- ARIZONA@WORK Maricopa County
- ARIZONA@WORK Mohave and La Paz Counties
- ARIZONA@WORK Nineteen Tribal Nations (13 Tribes)
 - Cocopah Indian Tribe
 - Gila River Indian Community
 - Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
 - Hopi Tribe
 - Quechan Indian Tribe
 - Colorado River Indian Tribes
 - Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
 - Hualapai Tribe, San Carlos Apache Tribe
 - Tohono O'odham Nation
 - Yavapai-Apache Nation
 - White Mountain Apache Tribe
 - Pascua Yaqui Tribe

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- ARIZONA@WORK Northeastern Arizona (Navajo, Apache, and Gila counties)
- ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix
- ARIZONA@WORK Pima County
- ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County
- ARIZONA@WORK Santa Cruz County
- ARIZONA@WORK Southeastern Arizona (Graham, Greenlee, and Cochise counties)
- ARIZONA@WORK Yavapai County
- ARIZONA@WORK Yuma County

All LWDAs serve the geographical region designated for the area, but do not provide services on the Navajo Nation, which receives separate WIOA funding from DOL, or tribal land of the 13 tribes of the Nineteen Tribal Nations. Individuals may apply for services at any ARIZONA@WORK Job Center in Arizona.

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND POLICY USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR “PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY” AND “SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY” IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS

WAC Policy #14 (Designation of Local Workforce Development Areas Policy) [47] describes the requirements for initial designation of local areas and the process for submitting a request for designation.

WIOA requires that existing federally recognized workforce areas are designated during the first two PYs of WIOA, which is referred to as Initial Designation, and again after the first two PYs, which is referred to as Subsequent Designation. Local Areas within Arizona have been previously designated within this timeframe. Units of local government that desire to become a new local workforce area should follow the New Area designation requirements outlined below.

WIOA Designation For New Areas:

Any unit of general local government may request designation as a LWDA under WIOA. In Arizona, new local area designations will only become effective on July 1st of the next PY. In order for designation to be approved for the start of the next PY, the following steps and timeline must be met.

A statement of intent to request designation must be submitted to the WAC. The full request for designation as a LWDA (“local area”) must include the following components and steps:

1. Submit the request in writing to the WAC.
2. This request must clearly state the circumstances for the request of designation.

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3. The request must also address and explain how the following criteria are met:
 - a. Consistency with natural labor market areas;
 - b. Consistency with regional economic development areas;
 - c. Existence of education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and CTE schools in the area;
 - d. Submission of a service delivery plan that includes a description of resources that would be available to the area to provide services;
 - e. Coordination of multiple resources within areas that are based on labor markets and natural travel patterns of local residents;
 - f. Local support of the implementation strategies to provide quality services to employers and individuals by county commissioners, municipal elected officials including mayors and/or city council members where appropriate, and business or community leaders within the area as demonstrated by letters of support or a vote of support by a city council or other applicable board;
 - g. Local ownership, exhibited by strong involvement of local elected officials and community leaders on the Local Workforce Development Board, Local capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds;
 - h. Evidence that the area, in the two PYs for which data is available prior to the request, met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for primary indicators of performance and was not subject to the sanctions process resulting from missing the same measure two years in a row, if applicable; and
 - i. Assurance that during the two PYs prior to the request, the United States Secretary of Labor, or the State in place of the Secretary, has not made a formal determination that the grant recipient or administrative entity for the local area has mis-expended funds due to willful disregard, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration, if applicable.
4. The request must address how the proposed new area designation will impact those other workforce areas from which it is withdrawing. It should be understood by any county, city or combination of such seeking designation, that the new area will only secure the formula allocated funds for each WIOA funding stream based on the formula factors as defined by WIOA.
5. If opposition to the request is voiced by municipalities or counties within the area seeking designation, then the requesting county, city or combination of such will address their request at a public hearing. If a hearing is necessary, it will be held within 45 calendar days of receipt of the request.
6. The WAC will take the request and comments from the public hearing and make a recommendation to the full WAC within 25 calendar days of the public hearing.

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7. The WAC will submit its recommendation to the Governor within five (5) business days of the Council vote.
8. The final decision rests with the Governor and shall be made prior to May 29th, four weeks prior to the beginning of the fiscal and PY (July 1st).

Procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “performed successfully.”

To meet the criteria for “performed successfully,” local areas must meet agreed upon adjusted levels of performance for two consecutive PYs, using a consistent definition for performance failure applied to states by DOL which is as follows:

1. If any single individual indicator score falls below 50 percent;
2. If any overall local Title I program score falls below 90 percent for that single core program; and
3. In any overall local Title I indicator score falls below 90 percent for that single measure.

For these three calculations, the results will not be rounded.

Procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “sustained fiscal integrity”

To meet the criteria for “sustained fiscal integrity,” local areas must comply with all fiscal requirements with WIOA, the uniform guidance, and other federal regulations. This is evaluated through fiscal annual onsite monitors for each local area, annual risk assessments, and the evaluation of the Single Audit Report conducted on an annual basis for any entity spending more than \$750,000 of federal funds. Corrective Action is immediately required for any internal controls or fiscal integrity failure found during any of the required monitors, audits, or risk assessments.

[47] <https://arizonaatwork.com/sites/default/files/2023-09/14%20Designation%20of%20Local%20Workforce%20Development%20Areas.pdf>

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

Workforce Arizona Council Policy #14 (Designation of Local Workforce Development Areas Policy) [48] describes the requirements for the appeals process.

Appeals Process:

An area(s) seeking to be designated as a new LWDA that has had its request denied may appeal the decision to the WAC through the following:

1. An appeal must be in writing and filed with the Council within 14 business days after notification of the decision.
2. The appeal must contain a specific statement of the grounds upon which the appeal is sought.

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3. The WAC will have 60 business days to review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Governor.
4. The final decision rests with the Governor.
5. If the decision of the appeal reverses the decision, it will become effective July 1st of the following year.
6. If a decision on the appeal is not rendered in a timely manner or if the appeal does not result in designation, the entity may request review by the Secretary of Labor, under the procedures set forth at 20 § CFR 667.640(a).

[48] <https://arizonaatwork.com/sites/default/files/2023-09/14%20Designation%20of%20Local%20Workforce%20Development%20Areas.pdf>

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

In accordance with Section 121(h)(2)(E) of the WIOA and 20 CFR § 678.750, the Council has established an appeals process for ARIZONA@WORK partners to address determinations related to infrastructure funding.

In the event that core partners are unable to reach an agreement on infrastructure funding, the process established by the Governor will be employed. If an ARIZONA@WORK partner wishes to appeal the Governor's determination concerning the allocation of funds for one-stop infrastructure costs, they may do so by submitting a written appeal to the Council within 30 days of the Governor's decision.

The grounds for appeal are limited to situations where the Governor's determination is believed to be inconsistent with proportionate share requirements (as outlined in 678.735(a)), the cost contribution limitations (678.735(b)), or the cost contribution caps (678.735(c)). The appealing entity must provide a clear explanation of why they believe the determination is contrary to the provisions of WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(E). No other reasons for appeal will be entertained.

The Council is committed to promptly addressing these appeals and will consider and respond in writing within 30 days.

It's important to note that the ARIZONA@WORK Job Center MOU and Infrastructure Costs Policy, which includes the details of the infrastructure funding appeal process, can be found in Sections II and V of the document. This policy was revised and approved by the WAC in February 2023.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

Arizona's fiscal and programmatic policies for Title I are publicly posted and provide the requirements for implementation and use of WIOA funding for Title I-B, RR, and ETPL. In addition, statewide policies on Local Governance, implementation of the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers and one stop delivery system, monitoring, conflict of interest, and ARIZONA@WORK Job

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Center certification, are publicly posted. TEGs are also posted publicly for additional guidance for LWDBs and ARIZONA@WORK staff.

For more information see the following webpages:

- <https://des.az.gov/services/employment/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa/wioa-policy-and-procedure-manual> [49]
- <https://arizonaatwork.com/about/workforce-arizona-council/policies-reports> [50]

The Governor's set-aside funding is used to fund the following WIOA operational activities:

- AJLA hosting of AJC system;
- Arizona Registered Apprenticeship Program activities;
- Innovative workforce development pilot programs that enhance wraparound services
- Statewide ETPL Program activities;
- Statewide RR Program activities;
- Statewide Reentry Initiative; and
- Activities and resources required to meet the fiscal, contractual, procurement, IT, programmatic, equal opportunity, and policy requirements in WIOA.

In addition, the set-aside funding is used to fund initiatives regarding workforce and economic development.

The State reserve of RR is used to fund the required and allowable statewide and local RR activities which are described in the publicly posted WIOA policy, Chapter 2, Section 900. State-level RR activities are managed by the State RR Coordinator who is responsible for the entry of WARN into the state system of record, following up with employers to make sure all required details are included, assigning a team member to co-lead RR activities with the affected local area(s), notifying the appropriate local RR Coordinator, assisting in the coordination of Trade Adjustment Act (if applicable) and UI information, communicating and elevating the impact to necessary and targeted programs, and actively assisting in the coordination of layoffs, plant closings, and layoff aversion strategies.

Each local area is required to identify a local RR Coordinator who, with a member of the State team, coordinates activities, to include an ES, UI and, if appropriate, a TAA representative. Arizona Job Connection (AJC) is used for program management, recording of services, and evaluation of RR activities. RR activities demonstrate steadfast commitment to connecting and meeting with the employer to: (i) develop a plan and schedule with the employer, (ii) gather background information, (iii) determine assistance needs and reemployment prospects of the affected workers, and (iv) share available resources to meet short-term and long-term assistance needs of the employer and affected workers. Technical assistance is provided to ARIZONA@WORK staff to assist in meeting the requirements, sharing best practices, and assisting to remove barriers for successful implementation to meet the needs of employers and individuals affected by layoffs, closings, and/or to avert layoffs.

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The ADES WIOA Policy Manual, Chapter 2 Section 900, describes the required actions for the State RR Coordinator, in collaboration with the local RR Coordinator(s), to respond to a mass job dislocation resulting from a natural or other disaster. The intent of the RR activities is for the team to aid workers and help them transition to new employment as quickly as possible. In addition, the policy includes information on the National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG), and how to apply for the DWG and for the coordination of services through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Also provided is information that the State or LWDBs should include in their DWG application to assist them with the application process. In the event of a natural disaster, the State Coordinator and the local RR Coordinator(s) will work together on the Emergency DWG application to ensure that there is coordination of areas and resources affected and the policy is followed.

ADES WIOA Policy Manual, Chapter 2 Section 900, RR describes how the RR team provides early intervention to a group of workers on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed. RR funds are used for these activities. The TAA Policy Manual, describes the required activities to provide adversely affected workers with opportunities to get the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to return to suitable employment as quickly as possible.

The TAA Coordinator shares information with the RR Coordinator regarding the TAA petition. The coordination between TAA and RR should take place as soon as the petition is filed on behalf of or by two or more workers from the same employer. RR teams consist of TAA, WIOA Title I–B and Wagner–Peyser ES representatives, who as a team conduct on–site presentations at the employer location (whenever permissible). Every effort is made to provide information sessions prior to the commencement of the layoffs/closures. These presentations consist of overviews of the benefits and services that can be expected from each of the partner groups with an emphasis on how TAA, WIOA Title I–B and Wagner Peyser staff will be working together as a team to offer the customer individualized comprehensive re–employment benefits and services.

[49] <https://des.az.gov/services/employment/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa/wioa-policy-and-procedure-manual>

[50] <https://arizonaatwork.com/about/workforce-arizona-council/policies-reports>

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR’S SET ASIDE FUNDING FOR MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HOW THE STATE WILL CONDUCT EVALUATIONS OF TITLE I ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES.

The State will continue to use the Governor’s set-aside funds to support initiatives, such as those described below, that promote effective business strategies, facilitate economic growth for all Arizonans, and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the Title I Adult, DW, and Youth activities.

Arizona Western College Broadband Project

The Arizona Western College Broadband Project is a \$300,000 project that implements a broadband fiber optics training program at Arizona Western College, with a focus on related in-demand jobs in Yuma County. The program includes Fiber Optic Certification tuition assistance, paid work-based training, job-placement assistance, and supportive services. The project serves

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local employers such as Arizona Public Service, Spectrum, ALLO Fiber Internet, Century Line and others.

Future48 Advanced Manufacturing Marketing Campaign

Future48 is a \$300,000 marketing campaign through Ideas Collide to change perceptions in the advanced manufacturing trades industry as a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) 4-based career pathway. The campaign's objective is to reach and attract a diverse and emerging workforce through a variety of digital, print, and other forms of media, which will guide interested individuals to a website with additional information on advanced manufacturing.

ElevateEdAZ

OEO and ACA are funding a \$5,000,000 project for the Phoenix Chamber Foundation to expand its ElevateEdAZ Program. The program focuses on aligning education with "workforce learning pathways" and the needs of leading industries in the State. ElevateEdAZ partners with schools and districts to support students in completing industry recognized credentials, attaining early postsecondary credit, and participating in work-based learning experiences such as internships and job shadowing. In addition, ElevateEdAZ supports educator professional development through externship experiences for teachers and counselors.

Maricopa County Community College District Semiconductor Technician Quick Start Program

Maricopa County Community College District received \$2.5 million to develop a training program for semiconductor manufacturing technician jobs. The short-term training program is a collaboration with semiconductor companies in the area and is intended to qualify individuals for a career and full-time employment as semiconductor manufacturing technicians.

CTE Programs

West-MEC, an Adult Education partner, received \$580,000 to create two new high school CTE Programs in the semiconductor and electric vehicle technology industries. The majority of the funds will be used to purchase equipment, supplies and materials at three different campuses in the West Valley.

Jobpath Inc. Student Support Services

Jobpath Inc. received \$210,000 to support the success of 547 low-income students pursuing short-term degrees or credentials throughout southeastern Arizona.

SciTech EcoSystem Hubs Project

Arizona SciTech received \$142,000 to grow a network of regional STEM communities of practice or "hubs" in the State. The hubs allow workforce organizations, educators, government leaders, and community organizers in their regions to connect, share best practices, build partnerships, and develop communication strategies to increase their impact.

The hubs' aim is to develop a diverse pipeline of skilled and knowledgeable Arizonans entering the workforce by connecting with youth and untapped or underrepresented populations, such as rural residents, veterans, and others.

WIOA Governor's Discretionary Fund

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The Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF) has awarded approximately \$5.9 million in grant funding to 16 organizations throughout Arizona. Funding will support programs in Arizona's urban, rural, and tribal communities that serve the following target populations: currently and formerly incarcerated individuals; individuals involved or previously involved with the foster care system; disconnected youth; veterans; high school students preparing for college or a career; individuals unemployed and underemployed; individuals with disabilities; and individuals who have experienced trauma. In administering the grant award, the organizations listed below will implement best practices that address workforce needs while enhancing collaboration among local, regional, and statewide entities that support this work.

Awardees:

- Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc.;
- Arizona Career Development Center;
- Arizona Youth Partnership;
- Arouet Foundation;
- Community Bridges, Inc.;
- First Place Arizona;
- Foundation for Blind Children;
- Grand Canyon University;
- Jewish Family & Children's Service;
- Jobs for Arizona's Graduates;
- Maricopa County Human Services;
- Northern Arizona University;
- Per Scholas, Inc.;
- Pima County Community College District;
- Sun Life Health; and
- Televerde Foundation, Inc.

Funding for Research and Evaluation

In accordance with WIOA section 116(e), the Governor's set-aside funds will continue to support the evaluation of Title I Adult, DW, and Youth activities. The OEO leads the current evaluation project, which focuses on the effectiveness of training programs on participant employment and wage outcomes. The impact study uses two methods to estimate the employment and wage effects of training programs. The first, referred to as the training subject effect, estimates the effect training programs had on employment and wage outcomes based on the educational subject of the training program completed. The second method, referred to as the training program effect, estimates the effect training programs had on employment and

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wage outcomes. This method also identified differences in effectiveness for similar training programs offered by multiple training providers.

Section III(b)(4)(C) has the full description and results of this evaluation project.

Future research and evaluation projects will be designed in conjunction with the WAC (State board), ADES, ADE, and local boards. Potential areas to be evaluated include the efficacy of Arizona's one-stop system, taking into account an analysis of feedback from the system's customers.

C. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS.

Arizona's RR activities include making resources available to proactively support employers and workers to avert closures and layoffs or mitigate their effect through working with ARIZONA@WORK business services on the early identification of employers at risk of closures and layoffs; assessment of the needs of and options for at-risk employers and the delivery of services to address these needs; continuing engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with businesses in the community; and connecting employers and workers to work-based learning.

RR funds enable required and allowable activities described in the publicly posted WIOA policy, Chapter 2, Section 900. State-level RR activities are managed by the State RR coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for the oversight of statewide activities, including entering into the state system of record any advance notices of plant closings and layoffs under the WARN Act; extending the notification and coordinating services with the appropriate partners and stakeholders; and actively assisting in the coordination and service delivery of RR.

The RR process includes communication and coordination with the local area RR coordinators, OEO, and appropriate partner programs and services to deploy resources within the affected LWDAs.

Each local area is required to identify a local RR coordinator who, with a member of the State team, coordinates activities with the local BST, including an ES, UI, and, if appropriate, a TAA representative. The state system of record, Arizona Job Connection, is used for program management, recording of RR activities and related services, and data evaluation. Local RR activities include a connecting and meeting with the employer to (i) develop a plan and schedule with the employer, (ii) gather background information, (iii) determine assistance needs and reemployment prospects of the affected workers, and (iv) share available resources to meet short-term and long-term assistance needs of the employer and affected workers.

Layoff Aversion

RR includes supporting layoff aversion activities. This support includes confidential consulting services to businesses to develop an Individualized action plan to access local capital, remain in the County, avoid laying off employees, and ultimately prevent business closure. The program connects businesses with relevant partners who can help them overcome their challenges.

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Work-based learning activities, such as incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and customized training, are among the strategies to help businesses avoid layoffs and/or minimize the impact of layoffs on workers. Partners meet with employers to establish open communication to help determine what jobs are in demand in the local area, the types of training and credentials that individuals need to be qualified for these positions, the development of career pathways, and the identification of sector strategies, leading to a job-driven workforce system. When these collaborative environments are developed, strengthened, and aligned, they enhance services and matching effectiveness. When employers become more familiar with the services, their interest in providing opportunities for job seekers expands into participation in work-based learning models, such as on-the-job training, customized training, and apprenticeship opportunities. Employers are also made aware of programs designed to prevent layoffs such as the Shared Work Program which provides an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in force by allowing businesses to divide available work or hours among affected employees in lieu of layoffs. The program allows the employees to receive a portion of UI benefits while working reduced hours.

D. DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

The WIOA RR Policy (revised July 2022) includes coordination with FEMA and other entities in cases of natural disasters. In addition, the revised policy describes the responsibilities of the State RR Program.

RR serves businesses and workers during layoffs and dislocations, including mass job dislocations resulting from natural disasters, in accordance with 20 CFR 682.302(c). The services include reemployment resources and assistance to affected individuals through coordination and collaboration with core partners and community partners to bring affected individuals services for temporary needs such as rental/housing, utilities, and nutrition assistance.

The State RR team monitors the potential occurrence of natural disasters, including the most common ones in the state, fire and flood, to anticipate and prepare for necessary RR services. In the event of a disaster, ADES and the RR team would coordinate or work to establish a temporary/transition center (RR Policy 907.01) for community resources and services, including reemployment services, WIOA training opportunities, and UI. In response to natural disasters where entities such as FEMA bring in or lead support services to the community, the State RR coordinator and other appropriate ADES and local area representatives will work with those entities to coordinate and support local area efforts.

E. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) AND ENSURES THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED.

(SECTION 134(A)(2)(A) AND TAA SECTION 221(A)(2)(A) .) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING

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OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION AND HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICE TO WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE PETITION (TAA SEC. 221(A)(2)(A)).NOTE: UNTIL THE TAA PROGRAM IS REAUTHORIZED, THE REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSE AND APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A PETITION HAS BEEN FILED IS NOT APPLICABLE.

The State RR Policy, Chapter 2 Section 900, describes how the RR team provides early intervention to groups of workers on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed. RR funds are used for these activities. The TAA Policy Manual describes the required activities to provide adversely affected workers with opportunities to get the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to return to suitable employment as quickly as possible. The TAA coordinator shares information with the RR coordinator regarding the TAA petition.

The TAA and RR coordination occurs as soon as the petition is filed on behalf of or by two or more workers from the same employer. RR teams consist of TAA, WIOA Title I-B, and Wagner-Peyser ES representatives, who conduct onsite presentations at the employer location (whenever permissible). Every effort is made to provide information sessions before the commencement of the layoffs/closures. These presentations consist of overviews of the benefits and services that can be expected from each of the partner groups with an emphasis on how TAA, WIOA Title I-B, and Wagner Peyser staff will be working together as a team to offer the customer individualized comprehensive reemployment benefits and services. As soon as a petition is certified, the TAA coordinator works with the employer to get a list with contact information of each worker known to be covered by the certification when the worker becomes partially or totally separated or as soon as possible after the certification is issued if the worker is already partially or totally separated. Once an application is received, the Determination of Eligibility is completed and sent to the individual, along with the contact information for the TAA counselors. DOL mandates co-enrollment of TAA participants into the WIOA DW Program. As a result, TAA Program staff have worked with the staff from the local areas and developed processes to follow.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

The State utilizes work-based training to effectively serve job seekers, workers, and employers. Arizona's BST takes the lead in promoting the training model through its business outreach and engagement, wherein the reciprocal benefits of work-based training are highlighted: reduction

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in training costs, development or enhancement of workers' requisite skills, improved job satisfaction and productivity, or layoff aversion.

Specific information on work-based training is provided as follows:

- On-the-job-training (OJT): Provides participants work experience and new transferable skills of the training program, which are ideal for individuals with barriers. LWDBs may reimburse employers up to 50 percent of the worker's wages, and employers that provide OJT are required to hire participants that successfully complete training. LWDBs also have the flexibility to increase the reimbursement to 75 percent when factors, as described in TEGL 19-16, are met and documented.
- Incumbent worker training: Averts layoffs by transitioning employees to other positions that will not be eliminated and create backfill opportunities for less-skilled employees. RR Coordinators work with employers who have notified the state and LWDBs of imminent layoffs. This program provides an option of training employees in new skills to transition the employee into other positions and avert layoffs. 20 percent of the LWDB's total Adult and DW funds may be used for incumbent worker training. LWDBs may reimburse according to the following schedule: (1) employers with <50 employees: grant reimburses 90 percent and employer matches 10 percent; (2) employers with 51-100 employees: grant reimburses 75 percent and employer matches 25 percent; (3) employers with >101 employees: grant reimburses 50 percent and employer matches 50 percent.
- Customized training: Assists employers in training current employees and participants referred to the employer for both pre-vocational and/or incumbent training. Customized training may cover topics such as the introduction of new technologies, new production or service procedures, as well as upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills. Customized training will also be used as an incentive to attract businesses to relocate to Arizona and required to pay for a significant portion of the training costs based on the number of employees participating, the wage, and other factors. Customized training requires a commitment from the employer to hire the participants after successful completion of the training program.

In addition to business outreach and engagement, the following strategies help ensure high-quality training for employers, workers, and job seekers:

- Prioritization of work-based training that is related to in-demand occupations, aligned with career pathways and industry sectors, and results in a recognized postsecondary credential;
- Collection and analysis of performance data on work-based training programs;
- Policy that prohibits work-based training contracts with employers who fail to provide participants with long term employment opportunities, with wages, benefits, and working conditions comparable to other employees who have worked a similar amount of time and who are doing the same type of work;
- Monitoring of onsite work-based training to ensure training, wages, hours, benefits, and working conditions are provided in accordance with the contract; and

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- Tracking and monitoring of training participants' performance and progress to determine supportive service needs, the appropriateness of the training activity, whether placement in unsubsidized employment has occurred.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., outreach to sponsors and prospective sponsors, identifying potential participants and connecting them to apprenticeship opportunities).

The AAO will continue collaborating with Local Workforce Development Boards and the ARIZONA@WORK Business Service Teams to engage with industry and business communities to enhance program awareness and increase participation. The opportunities, facilitated by employers or sponsors through Registered Apprenticeship, offer structured learning and on-the-job training, with apprentices earning a progressively increasing paycheck and a nationally recognized certificate upon completion.

The AAO will continue to partner with education providers, community colleges, and postsecondary institutions to offer related technical instruction for Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP). They can also act as intermediary sponsors for apprenticeship programs, expanding opportunities for employers and industries to engage in RAPs.

All Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) receive automatic approval to be included on the ETPL. This inclusion enables successfully registered participants to qualify for funding to alleviate costs associated with related technical instruction, including expenses for books, materials, tools, and more.

The AAO will also continue collaborating with various CTE districts to create pre-apprenticeships, seeking to align specific CTE programs with the work schedules of existing Registered Apprenticeship Programs. This strategic coordination ensures a smooth transition from education to apprenticeship while also generating opportunities to sustain workforce pipelines.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

Arizona's ETPL includes approved Training Providers who are eligible to receive WIOA Title I-B funds to train eligible adults, DWs, In-School Youth (pursuant to the waiver approved by the U.S. DOL) and Out-of-School Youth Program participants in accordance with the WIOA of 2014, and 20 CFR § 680, 683 Subpart F, and 685.140, TEGL 3-18, TEGL 8-19, TEGL 8-19, change 1, TEGL 10-16, Change 1. Records are maintained on Arizona Job Connection (AJC), the State's labor exchange system, allowing training providers to complete an application on the AJC website.

All approved programs are available to the public and to all ARIZONA@WORK partners to view on AJC. ADES and LWDBs share the responsibility of managing the ETPL, including approving programs for initial and continued eligibility, reviewing the quality of training services,

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verifying that the approved programs lead to industry recognized postsecondary credentials, ensuring training provider compliance and accuracy of information, removing training providers or programs, and monitoring of training providers.

The ETPL policy ensures Registered Apprenticeship programs are informed of their eligibility and advises the program sponsor on the option to opt into the ETPL. The policy also states that Registered Apprenticeship programs are identified as eligible providers and are not subject to the requirements to initial and continued eligibility requirements in this policy. If a Registered Apprenticeship Program is registered with the AAO or the U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship, the program is available to be an ETP. Apprenticeship programs that are not registered with the AAO or the U.S. DOL, Office of Apprenticeship are not excluded from the ETPL but do need to be evaluated and meet criteria for initial and continued eligibility to be added to the ETPL and to remain on the list. The ETPL team is working with the Arizona Apprenticeship Program to identify any barriers or misconceptions that prevent RAPs from opting into the ETPL.

ADES approves training providers after ensuring they meet the training provider eligibility requirements listed in the WIOA and State policy. Training providers must maintain licenses from appropriate federal, state or professional licensing authorities, as required by law, have a written student grievance policy and refund policy, and also maintain liability insurance.

As part of the ETPL policy, under Licensing and Business Requirements, in-state and out-of-state postsecondary institutions must be authorized by a State governing body to operate in the State of Arizona, or the state where they have operations if applicable. This does not apply to RAPs. Training providers must also:

- Be a legal entity, registered to do business in Arizona.
- Licensed through Arizona Private Postsecondary Education unless exempt under state law.
- Current license from appropriate Arizona or a state licensing authority.
- Comply with non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of all Federal and State applicable laws.
- Provide training that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities.
- Comply with all requirements from WIOA, federal regulations, federal guidance, and State policies.

Training providers that have been debarred by any State or the Federal government are not eligible to be included on the ETPL during the debarment period.

LWDBs are required to establish Local ETPL policies. The State ETPL policy requires LWDBs to ensure access to training services throughout the state including rural areas, by approving programs that use technology-based learning and meet all state and local requirements. LWDB staff assume the responsibilities for the training provider program eligibility process and must work with ADES to ensure there are a sufficient number and types of training services, including ETPs with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities and eligible providers with

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expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities and serving the local area.

LWDBs must maximize customer choice using a comprehensive process to ensure that a significant number of ETPs are available to all job seekers in the local area. The state ETPL policy allows LWDBs to require additional criteria, except for Registered Apprenticeship Programs, and additional information from local providers to become eligible and remain eligible as a local provider in the LWDA. When reviewing provider applications for inclusion on the state's ETPL, the policy requires LWDBs to use only the state's requirements and not the LWDB's additional local criteria.

Under the policy, LWDB staff must require the training provider to supply information regarding the training provider's partnerships with a business. The information may include whether the training program is offered or was designed as a result of the partnership and must also include a list of employers that have committed to hiring graduates from the training program. After approval, each training program is evaluated individually by the ETPL coordinator in the local area where the training provider is located to determine if the training programs meet state and local ETPL requirements, including initial performance data standards, resulting in a federally or locally recognized credential and being related to an in-demand industry or occupation in Arizona.

The local ETPL coordinator reviews the following: a detailed description of the program, the total cost of the program, including the cost of tuition, books, and any fees, credential information, and labor market information for the related occupation, including the minimum entry-level wage and demand for the occupation in the local area, and initial performance data. Arizona uses the training program's credential attainment rate as the performance factor for initial eligibility. Programs that are approved at the local level are reviewed for accuracy and completeness by the State ETPL program manager and placed on the statewide ETPL for a one-year initial eligibility period.

LWDBs target training programs that support in-demand industries and occupations and prepare participants for jobs in identified career pathways. Using Labor Market Information (LMI), ARIZONA@WORK staff also determine higher-paying jobs, in-demand industry sectors, and occupations in the local area and work with local employers to determine the minimum requirements for these jobs and the types of training and certification requirements for these positions. Using this information, ARIZONA@WORK staff will reach out to local training providers to encourage them to add their training program to the ETPL.

All training programs listed on the ETPL, except Registered Apprenticeship Programs, are reviewed bi-annually for continued eligibility in accordance with WIOA and State policy for the ETPL. Arizona consults with LWDBs, community colleges, and other training providers, and holds regular statewide calls to discuss the requirements for tracking performance and gathering performance data, identifying barriers, and developing strategies for collecting the required information in a timely manner. Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to performance requirements.

The LWDB and the State ETPL Program manager will review the training provider's program performance based on the performance accountability measures, using data on all WIOA Title I-B participants who participated in the training program during the performance period. The

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LWDB and State ETPL Program manager also determines whether the training provider submitted the eligible training performance report timely and accurately. Each program's performance will be evaluated against state performance standards to determine whether the program will remain on the list. Training providers must submit the following performance data annually for all programs listed on the ETPL, and data must include all students (WIOA and non-WIOA) who participated in each training program:

- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized credential or a secondary school diploma or its equivalent during participation or within a year after exit (A secondary school diploma or its equivalent is only counted in this measure if the participants has retained or obtained employment or are in a postsecondary education or training program leading to a recognized credential within one year after exit).

This includes collecting performance and cost information and any other required information related to programs from training providers.

Removal of Program and Training Providers

Failure to meet performance requirements can result in punitive action to include written warnings, suspension, or removal of a training provider program from the ETPL. The State ETPL Manager must notify the training provider when a provider application or a training program has been denied or removed from the State ETPL. The LWDB must notify the State ETPL Manager and the training provider when a training program is denied or removed from the local ETPL, or if the LWDB is recommending removal from the State ETPL. Both, the State ETPL Manager and the LWDB must communicate the decision to deny an application and/or the intent to deny eligibility or remove a provider or program to the other party before taking written action.

Training Providers must be removed if:

- All the training providers programs have been removed.
- The training provider has not maintained licenses or insurance.
- The training provider violates WIOA, Federal and State regulations, Federal and State policies, and Federal and State Laws.
- They make false claims to participants and/or the State Board and LWDBs. In addition to performance, programs must be removed if they no longer result in a credential.

Training Providers may be removed if:

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- No WIOA participant has used this provider from the last two years of their renewal date.

Training providers eligibility will also be terminated if the training provider is determined to have committed a substantial violation. A substantial violation is identified when at least one of these types of violations has occurred:

1. Fails to meet the State's procedure for timely and accurately submitting required information for annual ETP performance reporting.
2. Fails to meet the State's procedure for timely and accurately submitting all required information for initial or continued eligibility.
3. Violates any provision of WIOA Title I or its regulations, including the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions.
4. DES or the LWDB determines that the institution intentionally supplied inaccurate information within the state system of record (AJC).
5. The institution, over a period of five years, has had three separate complaints filed against it under 29 CFR part 38 of the WIOA nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions that have resulted in final determinations finding one or more violation(s).
6. The institution is found to have not complied with the corrective or remedial actions identified to end and/or redress the violation(s) stemming from a single complaint under 29 CFR part 38.
7. There is an order against the institution under 29 CFR § 38.113 suspending, terminating, denying, or discontinuing WIOA Title I financial assistance to the institution.

DES will consider exceptional circumstances beyond the institution's control (e.g., natural disasters, unexpected personnel transitions, and unexpected technology-related issues) when determining if an institution committed a substantial violation for failing to timely and accurately submit required information. If it is determined that an institution committed a substantial violation, the institution is prohibited from having its programs on the published ETPL for a minimum of two years and it is liable to repay any WIOA Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Program funds to the LWDB received during the period of noncompliance, and the timeframe is subject to local area policy.

If DES receives a WIOA participant complaint alleging these types of substantial violations, the complaint will be referred to the appropriate State or Federal investigative body for a determination. If a LWDB receives the complaint, it must notify DES. The process for removing an ETP from the ETPL is detailed in the DES Standard Work document.

Appeals

Training providers have a right to appeal any DES or LWDB decision or action that has an adverse effect on the training provider's organization. Appeals regarding the eligibility of a training provider or program for the local ETPL must be filed with the LWDB within 45 days. LWDBs appeal policy for training providers must include an informal resolution process and an opportunity for a hearing. Appeals regarding the eligibility of a training provider or program for

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the State ETPL by DES must be filed with DES. All State-level appeals that are not resolved using the informal resolution process must be heard by the DES Office of Appeals.

A WAC workgroup is developing an updated ETPL Policy to be approved by the Council in its meeting in May 2024. At this time, the weblink to the updated policy is not available yet as it is anticipated to be approved by May 30, 2024 and posted online after its approval.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FOR THE ADULT PRIORITY OF SERVICE REQUIREMENT IN WIOA SECTION 134 (C)(3)(E) THAT REQUIRES AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF, WHEN USING WIOA ADULT PROGRAM FUNDS TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES, TO GIVE PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO RECIPIENTS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT (INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS).

Arizona implements the Adult priority of service through its Adult and DW Program Registration, Eligibility, Enrollment, and Tracking Policy. Consistent with WIOA section 134 (c)(3)(E), the policy requires that priority be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic-skills deficient when using Adult funds to provide individualized career and training services. The policy also requires LWDBs to establish their own priority of service policy that is consistent with State policy.

ADES verifies and reinforces local area compliance with the Adult priority of service through monitoring and technical assistance:

- Sharing DOL's Quarterly Report Analysis with local areas and exploring ways to meet the Adult priority goal.
- Technical assistance related to the Adult priority of service report, which is generated through the data visualization platform Tableau. The Tableau report allows local areas to track individualized career and training services to individuals who meet the statutory criteria and determine whether they meet the 50.1 percent threshold and/or the 75 percent goal.
- Annual monitoring of the Adult program, which includes the implementation of priority of service, in accordance with WIOA and State policy and procedures. Monitoring involves a review of LWDB policies, participant files, and case information in the Arizona Job Connection system. A monitoring report is sent to the LWDB within ten business days from the desk review. The report identifies findings and observations, and it prompts LWDBs to respond to the findings within 20 business days from the receipt of the report. Cross-functional monthly meetings are held to review monitoring activities and identify areas where technical assistance is needed.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

The ADES Transfer of Funds Policy, in accordance with WIOA section 133, allows the transfer of up to 100 percent of allocated funds, between the adult and DW Programs. The policy

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establishes the criteria for LWDBs to request such transfer and, specifically, requires that the LWDB, after conferring with the chief elected official(s), complete the Transfer of Funds Request Form (WIO-1075A). The form prompts the LWDB to justify the transfer request by describing:

- The situation that necessitates the local area's need to transfer funds. The description must include labor market information and other economic conditions that contributed to the need for the transfer.
- How the transfer of funds will impact the participant levels in both the adult and DW Programs:
 - If requesting to transfer 100 percent of the local area DW funds to the adult program (or the reverse), the local area must provide a detailed explanation of how it plans to ensure that career and training services are available to eligible DWs (or adults) in the area. The local area must take into account that individuals who may be eligible for DW services include not just individuals who were laid off or terminated, but also displaced homemakers, certain spouses of active-duty members of the Armed Forces, previously unemployed individuals who are unemployed due to economic conditions in the area or natural disasters, etc.
 - The local area must provide an estimate of the number of adults and DWs expected to be served if the transfer is granted.
- The effect of the transfer on the current provider of training and other services, including the impact on jointly-funded employment and training programs in the local ARIZONA@WORK Job Center.
- The expected change in WIOA performance outcomes (for instance, an increase in the employment rate) for both programs if funding is better aligned with participant and local area needs.

The DERS fiscal and program oversight units review each local area request and approve or deny the request within 30 days.

6. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S POLICY ON WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLMENT AND WHETHER AND HOW OFTEN THIS POLICY IS DISSEMINATED TO THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNERS. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.325, 20 CFR 618.824(A)(3)(I).

The Title I Adult and DW Policy on Program Registration, Eligibility, Enrollment and Tracking instructs Title I service providers to co-enroll participants with other workforce partners and work closely to address the needs of co-enrolled customers and ensure services are made available to eligible individuals who are referred by partner programs based on priority of service criteria. This policy was last updated in November 2021.

For participants enrolled under the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), all members of a certified worker group must be co-enrolled in the Title I DW Program unless one of the following exceptions apply to an individual worker:

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- A member of a certified worker group who does not meet the individual eligibility requirements under the WIOA DW Program, including but not limited to the Selective Service registration requirements; or
- An individual member of a certified worker group who declines to be co-enrolled. Any member of a certified worker group who declines to be co-enrolled in the DW program will not be denied benefits and services under the TAA program at ADES if otherwise eligible.

The LWDB service provider will provide timely access to appropriate ES, benefits, training, supportive services, and supplemental assistance to trade-affected workers who are co-enrolled in the DW Program.

LWDB service providers will coordinate with the TAA program at ADES when a DW is likely to be eligible for benefits and services available under the TAA program as follows:

- The TAA Program at ADES will assist the LWDB service provider in determining who is considered likely to be eligible and provide guidance on the TAA petition filing process; and
- The TAA Program at ADES will ensure that RR assistance and appropriate career services are made available to a group of workers after a TAA petition is filed in coordination with LWDB service provider.

Under certain circumstances, including but not limited to, a general announcement of a closure, a partially separated worker and adversely affected incumbent worker (AAIW) are required to be co-enrolled when they meet the eligibility criteria as defined under WIOA section 3(15) for a DW.

- A partially separated worker means an individual including an employer, who has not experienced a total separation due to a lack of work.
- For the purpose of filing a TAA petition to DOL, a partially separated worker for an employer is any worker with hours and wages that have been reduced to anything under 80 percent of the average weekly hours and wages during a period which is subject to the DOL petition investigation.
- For the purpose of providing TAA benefits and services to a worker group covered under a TAA Certification issued by DOL, a partially separated worker will be any worker with hours and wages that have been reduced to anything under 80 percent of the average weekly hours and wages during a certification period.

All Title I policies are posted on the ADES website. ADES notifies all stakeholders when policies are revised.

7. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S FORMAL STRATEGY TO ENSURE THAT WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLED PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE NECESSARY FUNDED BENEFITS AND SERVICES. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.816(C)

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TAA and WIOA Policy reinforce the collaboration between TAA staff and WIOA Title I-B staff to assist in the reemployment of adversely affected workers as soon as possible. The State's strategy for partnership is ongoing communication between the TAA and WIOA program staff done through the Arizona Job Connection (AJC) shared case management system, email, telephone, or video calls to discuss participant statuses and agree on action steps to best assist the participant with funded benefits and services. The AJC system allows for the ease of sharing case notes, Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), assessment results, services provided, and the status of such services. To leverage funds, training approved through WIOA is allowed as a TAA approved training option, while TAA approved training is often accepted as WIOA-approved training. The programs' collaboration allows one program to provide benefits or services that are not allowed through the other program and fills any gaps an individual may encounter if co-enrollment were not an option.

8. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PROCESS FOR FAMILIARIZING ONE-STOP STAFF WITH THE TAA PROGRAM. 20 CFR 618.804(J), 20 CFR 618.305

TAA staff attend monthly meetings organized by the various one-stop operators, during which TAA program information is shared with all partners. TAA staff are available to provide virtual presentations to one-stop staff on program information including eligibility requirements and the benefits and services available to participants. Contact information is also given to one-stop staff for inquiries or to refer WIOA participants to a TAA representative for assistance.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA, States should describe their strategies that will support the implementation of youth activities under WIOA. State's must-

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA.¹¹ FURTHER, INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL AREAS IN DETERMINING WHETHER TO CONTRACT FOR SERVICES OR TO PROVIDE SOME OR ALL OF THE PROGRAM ELEMENTS DIRECTLY.

¹¹ Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

When selecting a youth provider, LWDBs must take the following into consideration for the service provider:

- Financial stability;
- Experience in successfully providing services to disconnected youth and youth with barriers to employment, including youth with disabilities;

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- Demonstrated success in serving youth, specifically youth with barriers and out-of-school youth;
- Length of time in business;
- Available network of business and community partners; and
- Ability to meet performance accountability measures based on performance indicators for youth.

To ensure quality, job-driven training programs are available for youth, LWDBs are required to include criteria to be used in procuring youth training programs in their local plans, taking into consideration: (1) if the training program is related to an in-demand occupation, or career pathways identified in the state and local plans; and (2) if the training program results in a recognized credential.

LWDBs must also include youth service provider procurement criteria in their local plans. To guide the LWDBs in determining whether to competitively procure for services or to provide some or all of the program elements directly, the State:

- Describes in its youth policy the requirements for program design and service delivery;
- Highlights that LWDBs have the flexibility to provide WIOA Title I-B youth program elements directly based on whether they can most efficiently and cost-effectively provide the 14 elements and the services that are part of the program design.

If the LWDB does not provide youth services directly, it must award grants or contracts on a competitive basis according to federal procurement guidelines in the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200 and 2900 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

2. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN ACHIEVING EQUITABLE RESULTS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND IN-SCHOOL YOUTH. DESCRIBE PROMISING PRACTICES OR PARTNERSHIP MODELS THAT LOCAL AREAS ARE IMPLEMENTING AND THE STATE'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING AND SCALING THOSE MODELS WITHIN THE STATE FOR BOTH IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.

The statewide waiver on individual training accounts for in-school youth continues to be a tool for LWDBs to facilitate equitable results for out-of-school and in-school youth. As noted in section VI(e) of the State Plan, the statewide waiver allows universal youth access to training programs on the ETPL, which have been vetted for quality and alignment with the State's and the local area's in-demand industries and occupations.

In addition, LWDBs and local area youth providers work with relevant State entities, educational institutions, and community organizations to enhance program efficacy and advance equitable results for youth. To illustrate, local areas:

- Collaborate with agencies that administer core and other partner programs to facilitate and streamline referrals and coordination of services.

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- Engage entities such as juvenile corrections and foster care programs to extend and coordinate appropriate services to eligible youth with barriers to employment.
- Implement targeted outreach campaigns and collaborations with community-based organizations to connect with youth with specific barriers to employment. Such organizations include New Freedom Recovery Center, an organization providing a restorative environment for individuals recently released from incarceration, and United Methodist Outreach Ministries (UMOM), an organization providing crisis shelter and affordable housing.
- Cultivate partnerships with the public school system, including alternative schools that serve specific populations of at-risk students, to identify and connect with youth who may benefit from ARIZONA@WORK services.

The State supports LWDBs and youth service providers by helping build their capacity to foster strategic partnerships as well as develop and implement innovative services. Such support encompasses:

- Policies that inform the framework for local area initiatives, including policies that require or encourage co-enrollment between relevant programs, such as those described in Section III (b) of the State Plan.
- Guidance and technical assistance that help clarify and operationalize policies as well as explore promising practices. Technical assistance takes the form of statewide webinars, one-on-one technical assistance sessions, and programmatic resources and guides.
- Platforms, such as the monthly ARIZONA@WORK meetings, that allow local areas to share their successes and best practices and learn about other workforce and human service programs that serve the same client populations and impact the larger workforce ecosystem.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR DELIVERING YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EFFECTIVE WAYS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS CAN MAKE AVAILABLE THE 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2); AND EXPLAIN HOW LOCAL AREAS CAN ENSURE WORK EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, IS PRIORITIZED AS A KEY ELEMENT WITHIN A BROADER CAREER PATHWAYS STRATEGY.

In addition to promoting equitable results for youth and supporting local area strategic partnerships, the State's policies, operational and programmatic guidance, and technical assistance, as previously described, also reinforce each local area's effective delivery of the 14 program elements. Local area youth program design and delivery models include:

- Provider contracts with community colleges, established through competitive procurement. This facilitates the local area's link to a segment of the youth population and streamlines the connection between education, occupational skills training, and other relevant program elements.
- Partnership with CTE Programs, promoting the inclusion of various CTE programs on the ETPL, to which in-school and out-of-school youth have access. CTE programs

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essentially align with various youth program elements, including occupational skills training.

- Operation of a youth center, providing a hub for potential and enrolled youth participants. The youth center promotes a targeted approach to the provision and/or ensuring access to the 14 program elements.
- The use of referral platforms that complement the State's system of record, Arizona Job Connection, and enhance the referral process within the ARIZONA@WORK workforce development system.

To ensure that local areas prioritize work experience as a key element within a broader career pathways strategy, the State emphasizes in its Youth program policy ^[1] and technical assistance ^[2] the 20 percent expenditure requirement for work experience.

[1] <https://des.az.gov/services/employment/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa/title-i-b-policy-and-procedure>

[2] <https://des.az.gov/services/employment-workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act/wioa-resources>

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

The State recognizes the diverse needs of its youth, influenced by geographic, cultural, and demographic variables. Because of this diversity, local areas are deemed better positioned to set their own parameters for identifying in-school or out-of-school youth who require additional assistance to enter/complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

While the State youth policy does not define a youth who "requires additional assistance," it requires the LWDB to:

- Define in its local plan and policies a youth who requires additional assistance to enter/complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.
- Establish a definition that is reasonable, quantifiable, objective, and based on evidence.

The State reviews local plans every two years and verifies the inclusion of the LWDB's definition and eligibility documentation for in-school and out-of-school youth who require additional assistance to enter or complete an education program or to secure and hold employment.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

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1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

Not Applicable

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

Not Applicable

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

Not Applicable

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

Not Applicable

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

Not Applicable

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Not Applicable

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

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2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;
3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;
4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:
 - A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
 - B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
 - C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
 - D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
 - E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.
5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND
6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:
 - A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
 - B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
 - C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
 - D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
 - E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.
7. THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE REGARDING THE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES OBSERVED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING WAIVER, IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.

For PY 2024 to 2027, Arizona requests the following waivers:

- Use of individual training account (ITA) for in-school youth
- Lowering the out-of-school youth expenditure requirement (out-of-school priority)

Both waivers are intended to support the State's vision of economic growth and opportunity for all Arizonans and, specifically, its strategic goal of preparing Arizona's youth for workforce success. To realize this goal, Arizona's workforce system seeks to promote equitable access to services, by connecting with both in-school and out-of-school youth, and to link youth with training programs in high-growth industries.

Individual Training Account for In-School Youth

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Regulatory Requirement to be Waived. Arizona requests to renew the waiver to establish an individual training account (ITA) for in-school youth. Under 20 CFR § 681.550, DOL allows ITA for out-of-school youth, ages 16 to 24, using WIOA Youth funds. As the regulation specifically applies to out-of-school youth but not to in-school youth, Arizona has requested the waiver to allow ITA for in-school youth as well. DOL approved the waiver initially on November 14, 2019, and approved subsequent renewal requests, effective until June 30, 2024.

Barriers to Requesting the Waiver. Neither State nor local policies present any barriers to requesting the waiver.

Goals and Programmatic Outcomes. The strategic goal of preparing Arizona's youth for workforce success applies to all youth: out-of-school as well as in-school. The ITA for in-school youth waiver will continue to facilitate for all youth access to training programs that lead to workforce success. Through an ITA, and similar to their out-of-school youth counterparts, in-school youth will have the opportunity to choose from training programs on the ETPL, which have been vetted for quality and alignment with the State's and the local area's in-demand industries and occupations.

The waiver is expected to continue to positively impact youth participants. Specifically, for each PY that the waiver is in place, the State projects:

- At least 75 in-school youth will use an ITA to fund occupational skills training on the ETPL;
- The employment rate for in-school youth with an ITA will be at least five percent higher than the overall employment rate for in-school youth;
- The credential attainment rate for in-school youth with an ITA will be at least 30 percent higher than the overall credential attainment rate for in-school youth; and
- The measurable skill gains rate for in-school youth with an ITA will be at least ten percent higher than the overall measurable skill gains rate for in-school youth.

Outcomes through Waiver Implementation. In the State Plan modification for PY 2022 and 2023, the State projected that 50 youth would achieve positive outcomes in PY 2022 as a result of the waiver.

In the PY 2022 reporting period, 53 in-school youth out of 66 (80.3 percent) who received occupational skills training through an ITA were employed in the second quarter after exit; 18 out of 20 (90 percent) attained a credential; and 39 of 52 (75 percent) achieved at least one measurable skill gain.

Of those in-school youth included in the PY 2022 WIOA performance indicators, in-school youth who had an ITA were more likely to have successful placement in the second quarter after exit, attained a credential, and achieved a measurable skill gain:

- Overall in-school youth second quarter after exit employment rate: 74.1 percent (compared to 80.3 percent for in-school youth with ITA)
- Overall in-school youth credential attainment rate: 56.2 percent (compared to 90 percent for in-school youth with ITA)

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- Overall in-school youth measurable skill gains rate: 63.6 percent (compared to 75 percent for in-school youth with ITA)

As noted in the State's annual report narrative for PY 2022, 81 in-school youth received 89 training services funded by an ITA. The total number of in-school youth receiving training services has increased every year that the waiver has been in place, from 112 to 167 to 175 in PY 2020, PY 2021, and PY 2022, respectively.

The impacts of the ITA for in-school youth will continue to become clearer in future PYs as the cohort sample sizes increase.

Alignment with U.S. DOL's Policy Priorities. The ITA for in-school youth supports DOL's focus on improving job and career results. As previously described, the PY 2022 performance indicators show stronger employment and credential outcomes for in-school youth with an ITA, compared to in-school youth without an ITA.

Moreover, extending ITA to in-school youth aligns with WIOA's purpose of increasing access to and opportunities for employment, education, and training, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment. Individuals who are low-income are a population considered to have a barrier to employment, and in-school youth are statutorily required to be low-income to be eligible for youth program services.

Individuals Affected by the Waiver. The waiver is expected to continue to benefit in-school youth by allowing training funds through an ITA:

- To support their transition from secondary education into a postsecondary training program on the ETPL.
- To help those enrolled in a training program on the ETPL complete their program.

Notably, the waiver will continue to assist those who were enrolled in the youth program as in-school youth but have subsequently dropped out or left school during program participation. Because such youth continue to be categorized as in-school youth, they would not have access to an ITA and its advantages without the waiver. Thus, the waiver fosters reengagement of "in-school youth" in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential.

Monitoring Progress in Implementing the Waiver. ADES will continue to monitor the progress in implementing the waiver through:

- Verifying the use of ITA to exclusively fund training programs on the ETPL for all participants, including in-school youth, as part of its annual programmatic monitoring.
- Periodic meeting with LWDB directors to review each local area's implementation of the waiver and provide technical assistance, as appropriate.
- Data collection and performance outcomes analysis related to in-school youth with ITA, which will continue to be reported in the WIOA Annual Performance Report Narrative for Titles I and III.

Local Board and Public Comment on the Waiver. The waiver request is applicable statewide and is being submitted to DOL as part of Arizona's Unified State Plan, which was available for public review and comment from January 16, 2024 to January 30, 2024. Prior to the public

comment period, the State notified all local boards, via email to local board directors, of the intent to renew the waiver for ITA for in-school youth.

Out-of-School Priority

Regulatory Requirement to be Waived. Arizona requests a waiver on the out-of-school priority under WIOA section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR § 681.410, which requires that at least 75 percent of statewide funds spent on direct services to youth and local area youth funds, excluding administrative costs, be used for out-of-school youth.

Arizona requests to lower the out-of-school youth expenditure requirement from 75 percent to 50 percent of statewide and local area funds.

Barriers to Requesting the Waiver. Neither State nor local policies present any barriers to requesting the waiver.

Goals and Programmatic Outcomes. A waiver that lowers the out-of-school youth expenditure requirement from 75 percent to 50 percent aligns with the State's goal of preparing Arizona's youth, both in-school and out-of-school, for workforce success. It also aligns with the State's current waiver that allows the use of ITAs for in-school youth, as previously described.

The waiver will facilitate continued support for statewide initiatives, such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Challenge and the Jobs for Arizona Graduate (JAG) Programs. Both programs promote successful transition to postsecondary education and underscore the impact of postsecondary education on earnings, which increase as educational attainment rises ^[1]. In coordination with the Arizona College Campaign program, the FAFSA Challenge's goal is 60 percent postsecondary education attainment statewide by 2030. The JAG Program provides targeted support to high school students before and after graduation. It has notably served youth belonging to priority populations under WIOA, including low-income youth.

In addition, the waiver will extend the flexibility for local areas to enroll more in-school youth, when warranted by the local area's demographic composition, and deliver appropriate services that are based on the youth's needs and goals, rather than the youth's school status at program enrollment.

Three local workforce development boards have submitted support letters for the out-of-school priority waiver and highlighted the following to reinforce the request (see also Appendix 8):

- Data on school attendance: School attendance is a criterion for eligibility as an in-school youth in the Title I-B Youth program, and two local areas noted a higher proportion of youth who are attending school than those who are not. One local area has an in-school youth population of 11,643 (16-18 years old), compared to 10,388 out-of-school youth (19-24 years old). Its overall dropout rate is at 4.8 percent. Another local area reported a graduation rate of 88.6 percent to illustrate, in part, that a significant portion of area youth who are potentially eligible for services are in school.
- Targeted support for priority populations: Another local area seeks to leverage the waiver to promote equitable outcomes for in-school youth. Local area data shows that certain students who are considered to be individuals with barriers to employment under WIOA are less likely to graduate from high school within four years, compared to

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the overall local area rate of 78.3 percent. For instance, 52.6 percent of students in foster care graduate within four years, while 58.1 percent of homeless students graduate within four years.

The State projects that approximately 500 more in-school youth will be served, using both local area and statewide funds, as a result of the waiver.

Alignment with U.S. DOL's Policy Priorities. The waiver aligns with WIOA's purpose of increasing access to and opportunities for employment, education, and training, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment. Individuals who are low-income are a population considered to have a barrier to employment, and in-school youth are statutorily required to be low-income to be eligible for youth program services.

Individuals Affected by the Waiver. The waiver is expected to benefit in-school youth, including those who left or dropped out of school during program participation, by allowing the use of more program funds to provide them with appropriate and necessary career and training services.

The waiver is not intended to decrease out-of-school youth participation nor diminish their services. Rather, and as noted earlier, it will allow programs to provide services based on need instead of school status [2].

The waiver will not preclude out-of-school youth expenditure of more than 50 percent, or even up to 100 percent, if warranted by the needs of the youth population each program serves.

Monitoring Progress in Implementing the Waiver. ADES will monitor the progress in implementing the waiver through:

- Periodic meetings with LWDB directors to review each local area's implementation of the waiver and provide technical assistance, as appropriate.
- Data collection and performance outcomes analysis, which will continue to be reported in the WIOA Annual Performance Report Narrative for Titles I and III.

Local Board and Public Comment on the Waiver. The waiver request is applicable statewide and is being submitted to DOL as part Arizona's Unified State Plan. The State Plan was available for public review and comment from January 16, 2024 to January 30, 2024. Prior to the public comment period, the State notified local boards by email of the intent to submit the waiver request and the justification for doing so.

[1] <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2023/data-on-display/education-pays.htm>

[2] Once the school status of a youth is determined, that school status remains the same throughout the youth's participation in the WIOA youth program. This distinction is drawn for purposes of reporting against the OSY expenditure requirement (TEGL 21-16).

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the	Yes

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The State Plan must include	Include
delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period	Yes

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The State Plan must include	Include
covered by this plan;	
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available

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to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers

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indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	72.9%	72.9%	73.9%	73.9%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	68.5%	68.0%	68.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$9,100	\$9,100	\$9,328	\$9,328
Credential Attainment Rate	73.0%	73.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	74.0%	74.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction

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with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

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- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.0%	77.5%	78.0%	78.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	73.0%	73.5%	74.0%	74.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$9,500	\$9,600	\$9,738	\$9,738
Credential Attainment Rate	74.0%	74.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Measurable Skill	80.0%	75.0%	81.0%	76.0%

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Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a

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reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

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Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	75.0%	76.0%	76.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0%	73.0%	73.0%	74.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,750	\$6,188	\$5,894	\$6,188
Credential Attainment Rate	61.0%	61.0%	62.0%	62.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%	65.0%	66.0%	66.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM
(EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)**

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Arizona continued to utilize state merit staff, and anticipates minimal changes will be needed to comply with the requirements as outlined in the U.S. DOL published Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Final Rule (88 FR 82658, November 24, 2023) that requires states to use state merit staff to provide ES services.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

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The professional development provided to new ES staff working with job seekers and employers consists of New Employee Orientation, Onboarding Basic Skills Training, and periodic continuing education classes, on an as-needed basis. To ensure that staff are prepared and able to provide high-quality services to both job seekers and employers, weekly reflection meetings are conducted to address and review metrics, program concerns, problem solving techniques, and discuss best practices. In addition, regular monitoring of staff performance by managers/supervisors, will be conducted for the development of additional classroom training activities, webinars, and individualized training.

ES training objectives include an introduction to ARIZONA@WORK partner programs, Career Exploration, How to Conduct a Job Search, and Customer Service. In addition, an in-depth Computer Based Training (CBT) on the Arizona Job Connection records data system training that covers; Getting Started, Systems Search, Adding Information, and Enrollments. Targeted training is also offered to staff, to obtain nationally recognized Workforce Development Certifications. Supervisors and managers are required to complete: Benefits and Challenges of Remote Work, Effective Leadership Practices, Communication Best Practices for Leaders, and Effective Performance Management. All staff members are offered opportunities for education and career enhancement and personal development, through the incorporation of workforce development related LinkedIn Learning courses. This training through LinkedIn Learning focuses on areas of professional development that enhance their ability to provide better services to job seekers. Additional courses that have been established include; Remote Work Basics, Successful Communications and Teamwork in a Remote Environment, Ergonomics and Safety in the Home Office, and Security Concerns in a Remote Work Environment.

Additionally, ES staff have the following opportunities to discuss subjects, including career pathways, labor market information, current industry needs and employer projects, and other items relevant to the current economy through: (i) weekly ARIZONA@WORK Statewide Business Services virtual meetings to encourage best practices, employer programs, and employer projects to be shared with the entire team; (ii) trainings to keep the team prepared with the most current employer program information or initiatives for employers from executive leadership or the Governor's Office; (iii) provide assistance to all business service teams throughout ARIZONA@WORK partners to work together and prevent duplication; and (iv) the opportunity to attend training to learn about the value of hiring veterans, individuals with disabilities or who are justice-involved.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

UI information and changes are provided to ES staff, which enables ES staff to provide UI program information to claimants by utilizing the UI Standard Responses. UI Call Center staff are able to refer and educate claimants on the ARIZONA@WORK system to assist UI claimants with their job search activities.

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B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

All components needed for filing an unemployment compensation claim, including a status check and updates for existing claims, is facilitated through the state's web-based portal, <https://uiclaims.azdes.gov/> [57].

To ensure that customers are receiving meaningful and efficient assistance, all ES staff are provided a working standard response document for unemployment application questions. Also, ES will reference the ADES UI section: Unemployment Insurance Benefits | Arizona Department of Economic Security [58]. In addition, ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers are equipped with resource rooms that are equipped with telephones and computers that are readily available for the customers use. Individuals without access to a telephone, computer, or requiring additional assistance, can utilize these resources and are provided assistance at any comprehensive ARIZONA@WORK Job Center or ARIZONA@WORK affiliate office. At the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers customers are able to use the resources available to perform job searches, submit UI claims and contact the UI Call Center for additional information and assistance.

[57] <https://uiclaims.azdes.gov/>

[58] <https://des.az.gov/services/employment/unemployment-individual>

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Through the automated interface between the unemployment benefits system and Arizona Job Connection (AJC), all UI claimants are registered as job seekers in the Title I and III records data system within 24 hours of filing for unemployment benefits. A basic registration is created for new reemployment assistance claimants, through information that is sent to AJC daily. This registration includes the clients email address, (if provided) demographics, and basic work history.

The RESEA Program services are provided to selected UI claimants throughout the state of Arizona. The collaboration between the UI Benefits Program and the RESEA Program allows the RESEA staff to provide more efficient service to RESEA participants: UI claimants profiled as most likely to exhaust their UI benefits. The RESEA Program is conducted 100 percent virtually, providing coverage to all the workforce development areas statewide. The RESEA Program strategies include reducing the "no show" rate of scheduled RESEA appointments and evaluating service delivery processes by analyzing key performance indicators such as the number of individuals who complete the RESEA appointments and who return to work prior to the exhaustion of their UI benefits. This collaboration ensures that claimants receive educational information in their UI packet about reemployment services through

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ARIZONA@WORK and receive targeted email notices promoting job opportunities and hiring events in their area.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

ES staff are equipped to respond to the needs of UI claimants efficiently and effectively with services available through ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers and/or through virtual methods statewide. ES staff provides a variety of labor exchange services to prepare UI claimants in all aspects of job readiness, such as job matching, job referrals, and placement assistance.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

ARIZONA@WORK requires AJC registration and enrollment into ES for all approved UI claimants, based on information provided during initial filing of the UI claim. When registration cannot be completed in AJC, a notice is sent to the claimant with instructions on how to complete and activate the AJC profile to prevent delayed or denied UI benefits due to failure to register in AJC for ES.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

An account is created for each UI claimant in the Arizona Labor Exchange System - Arizona Job Connection (AJC) to provide these job seekers with access to self-serve or staff assisted ES such as resume creation, job search, training and education programs, and information on hiring events across the state. Staff can view job seeker resumes and work history and make job referrals based on the claimants' interests, skills, and abilities.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

The ARIZONA@WORK system includes comprehensive job centers across the state where ES staff are co-located with WIOA Titles I-B and IV staff. ES staff administers services both virtually and in person which includes job readiness assessments for job seekers and referrals for training and education to other ARIZONA@WORK and local partners. An internal referral process for training and education programs and resources are fulfilled at all ARIZONA@WORK comprehensive job centers. Additionally, the AJC referral process is utilized at ARIZONA@WORK affiliate job centers.

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E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

Arizona's Agricultural Outreach Plan includes a variety of strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services, delivered through the ARIZONA@WORK system, are accessible and meet the needs of MSFWs. The MSFW program, within Arizona's State Workforce Agency (SWA) - DES, will provide services through commonly branded ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers to assist MSFWs and English Language Learners (ELL) individuals to make career and labor market decisions, receive support service referrals to local providers, and identify opportunities to improve their lives. WIOA principles will be utilized to enhance service delivery to the MSFW population statewide through the ability to tailor services in the LWDA with partners who are able to provide services and meet the needs of this population. Service delivery to MSFWs will be consistent with 20 CFR § 653.107, WIOA Title I final regulations, and applicable WIOA workforce development strategies. Program performance will be monitored continuously to ensure that outreach and program services are conducted in accordance with Federal program mandates for services to MSFWs that are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to other categories of workers. LWDBs will develop local plans to include how MSFWs will be served to ensure their needs are being met.

The SWA recognizes that farmworkers possess specific needs and face certain barriers that result from cultural, educational, linguistic, scheduling, logistic, and other dynamics that are inherent to that population. Farmworker needs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Timely labor market information to facilitate planning for continuous employment;
- Occupational guidance and training to maintain a job or transition into a different occupation or industry;
- Transportation to seek employment or supportive services;
- Affordable and adequate housing;
- Information from various jurisdictions on labor laws and worker rights, protections, and responsibilities;
- Supportive services to enable MSFWs to obtain and maintain employment;
- Fair and equitable conditions and supervision from trained and committed field foreman, supervisors and farm labor contractors;

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- Fair and equitable pay that includes health benefits; this is a necessity for the laborers, as well as for the safety of our nation's food supply and reducing health and public assistance cost; and
- Pesticide and heat stress prevention training.

Barriers that confront farm workers include, but are not limited to the following:

- Decreased demand for a farmworker labor force due to innovations in automated farming, agricultural technology, and application of chemical herbicides;
- Urban sprawl resulting in farmworker job displacement without corresponding assistance for reemployment;
- Lack of timely, reliable data and information pertinent to intrastate and interstate job openings and supportive services;
- Provider service delivery hours of operation that conflict with MSFWs work schedules;
- Lack of transportation, limiting access to jobs and supportive services;
- Limited employment opportunities in rural areas, and increased competition for entry-level jobs;
- Underemployment or unemployment due to limited literacy education, LEP skills, and lack of non-agricultural job experience;
- Limited participation in support programs due to lack of understanding of eligibility and other factors, such as impact on immigration status for having utilized certain services;
- Lack of full-time, year-round work, combined with low wages, that relegates MSFWs to living below the poverty line;
- Competition from undocumented workers who work for less pay and substandard living and working conditions;
- Competition from intrastate and interstate farm labor contractors who follow migrant streams accompanied by their own farmworker crews;
- Limited educational opportunities for MSFWs and English Language Learner individuals;
- Lack of knowledge with respect to automation (phones and computers), resulting in increasing challenges to access information, services, and benefits;
- Stigma associated with working/living a seasonal lifestyle in conjunction with crop seasons (Non-Agricultural employers expect seasonal farmworkers to quit when the season starts again, and are, therefore, reluctant to hire them);
- Limited job search techniques/skills for finding jobs outside of agriculture; and
- Lack of understanding on the benefits of having a full-time, year-round job with benefits versus a seasonal job that may pay a higher per hour wage.

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2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

The top five labor-intensive crops in Arizona include broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, celery, and cabbage. Typically crop harvest or peak season and the ability to grow certain crops varies on the climate. The months of heavy activity are November through March in the Southwest part of Arizona. Northern Arizona has a colder climate than Southern Arizona. January through March is the peak crop harvest season for broccoli, cabbage, carrots, and celery in both regions. April to June is characterized by sweet corn, cantaloupe, and tomatoes in the North and squash, onions, cucumbers, and apricots in the South. July to September is peak season for melons, sweet corn in the North and apples, and dates in the South. Yuma County, in the Southwestern part of the state, is built around agriculture, and lettuce and most other vegetables are primarily harvested here during the last quarter of the CY. The "Guide to Arizona Agriculture" [59] by the Arizona Department of Agriculture was used to reference the peak harvest months.

Growers share concerns over the effect that water shortages in Arizona have had on crops, as well as a noticeable trend of migrant seasonal workers not returning to work the following season. Concerns related to the water shortage in Arizona include lawmakers regulating the usage of water. Employers are using technology such as aquapods and drip system irrigation to control and reduce water usage. The agriculture industry in Arizona has also faced changes in the irrigation system, resulting from the latest impact of the E.coli outbreak in 2018. Farms in Arizona worked closely with the University of Arizona and together, they established systems to treat open water sources for their irrigation systems. This impact has also caused farmers to take measures in having to discard crops due to contamination.

[59] https://agriculture.az.gov/sites/default/files/AZDA_GuideToAZAg_2018.pdf

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

Data indicates that migrant farmworkers in Arizona are primarily from Mexico, Peru,

Guatemala, and El Salvador. The primary languages spoken by migrant farmworkers include various dialects derived from Mesoamerican languages spoken in southern Mexico and Central

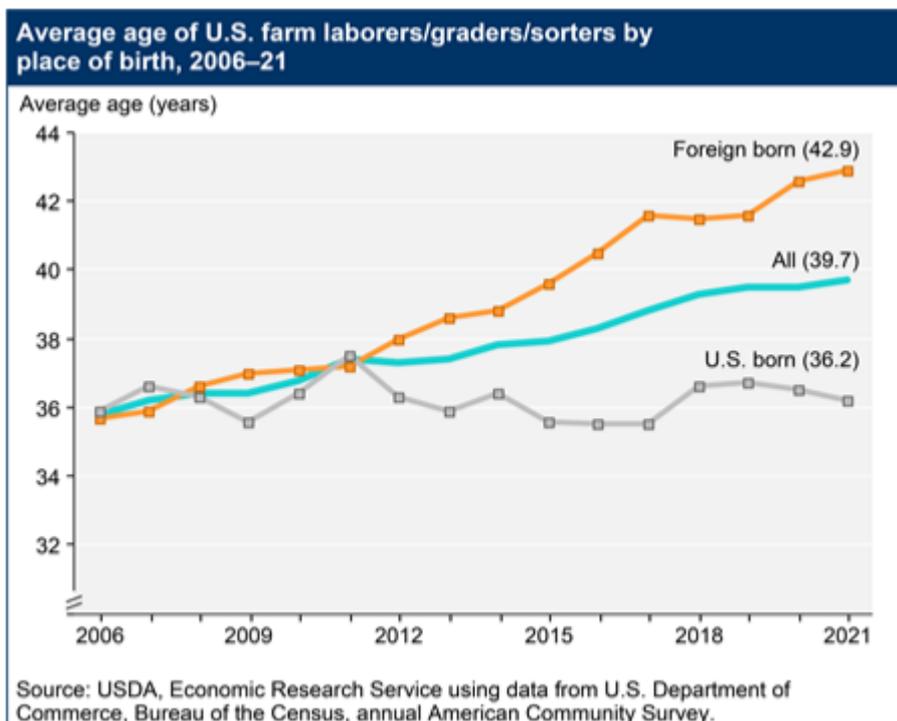
America, Spanish, and English. The dialects most commonly used by farmworkers in Arizona are Arawakan (Peru), Nahuatl (Central Mexico), Mixtec, and Zapotec (Southern Mexico and Oaxaca). The estimated population of MSFWs in Arizona is approximately 75,950, including dependents, and is based on the most recent “Agricultural Profile of Arizona” [60] released by the National Center for Farmworker Health in 2017. Arizona farm labor estimates indicate 45,670 total workers, broken down into sub- groups as follows:

- 8,338 migrant workers;
- 30,977 seasonal workers; and
- 6,355 livestock workers (Note:data from 2014).

These data numbers are the most current available. The next census will be completed in 2024.

The Hired Farm Workforce Is Aging

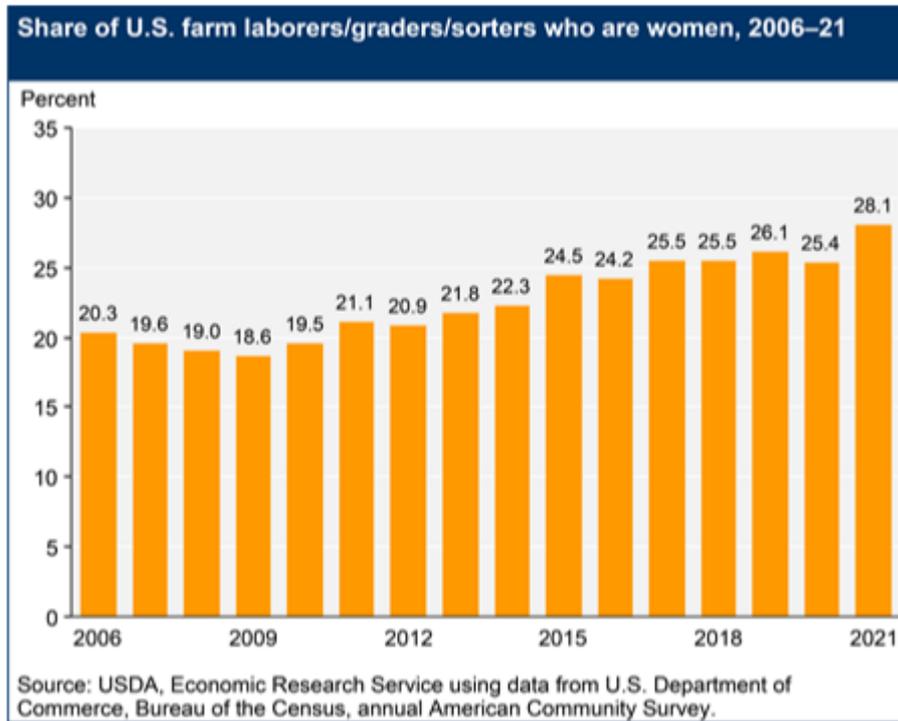
As fewer young immigrants are entering agriculture, the average age of foreign-born farmworkers has risen, pulling up the average for the farm workforce as a whole. The average age of immigrant farmworkers rose by seven years between 2006 and 2021. In contrast, the average age for U.S. born farmworkers has remained roughly constant over this period.



Women Are an Increasing Share of the Hired Farm Workforce

The share of farmworkers who are women declined in 2006–09, from 20.3 percent to 18.6 percent, but has since climbed to 28.1 percent (in 2021). The fact that the female share fell during the Great Recession and has risen during the recovery is consistent with men moving into agriculture as employment in the nonfarm economy declines, and out of agriculture as nonfarm job prospects improve. The rising female share is also consistent with the fact that, as labor costs rise, some growers are adopting mechanical aids (such as hydraulic platforms that replace ladders in tree-fruit harvesting, and mobile conveyor belts that reduce the distance

heavy loads must be carried) which facilitate more women and older workers in performing tasks that traditionally have been performed by younger men.



This population estimate reflects input received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, DOL, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Reference USDA. Many organizations and government agencies that work with the MSFW population use such enumeration report data in providing services, planning, policy setting, health care support, regulatory assistance, identification of underserved areas, agricultural production, determining whether resources are appropriate to the need, and many other areas. The National Center for Farmworker Health report is used by several agencies to estimate and plan for services to the farmworker population in Arizona. To ensure the most current population data is considered, the SWA will collaborate with other MSFW service providers and partner entities in a coordinated effort to continue to capture current information to track this population. Study updates will include information on individuals engaged in field and orchard agriculture, food processing, and horticultural specialties, and will assess the make-up of animal agriculture. This data is the most current available.

Seasonal and migrant farmworkers are identified, coded, tracked and referenced in service reports for the purpose of meeting compliance with Federal program requirements. Farm Labor Contractors and Farm Labor Contractor Employees, i.e., crew leaders and field foremen/supervisors, employed seasonally by more than one agricultural producer, will be coded as migrant and/or seasonal farmworkers, and services provided to them will contribute to the attainment of program indicators of compliance. The SWA will focus its efforts to identify and provide services to migrant farmworkers and agricultural employers. Migrant farmworkers have a greater need for support services when they migrate to areas where they are not familiar with potential services and resources, while agricultural employers face concern over scarcity of farmworkers due to lack of U.S. domestic applicants, need for immigration policy change, and

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immediate improvement to legislation and regulations impacting the agricultural industry. Arizona engages MSFW service providers to identify and address needs, explore solutions, and collaborate to remove barriers to improve living and working conditions.

[60] <https://www.ncfh.org/number-of-ag-workers.html>

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Many Farmworkers throughout the state are not aware of the services that are available to them through State programs and partner agencies outside of UI and SNAP. If they do visit the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, it's to file for UI benefits or to report a situation that has occurred in their work environment. Arizona ensures that the same services that are available to the general public are also available to the MSFW population. To facilitate this, Outreach Workers and the SWA are committed to meeting with them wherever they meet and/or congregate.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

The MSFW team has increased the number of outreach workers and has strategically added new team members in the Maricopa County area. This new team is located in the central part of Arizona which will allow the program as a whole to reduce travel time and allow the team to conduct more outreach. This will allow the Yuma County team to better cover Yuma and La Paz Counties and the Maricopa team to cover the rest of the state.

This will result in reaching more farmworkers and employers in new areas where there has been very little activity in the past. MSFW outreach staff will emphasize providing useful information to agricultural employers, ELL individuals, and MSFWs to enable them to exercise informed choices on accessing services through multiple physical and/or electronic entry-points. Outreach policy will afford staff the flexibility, time, tools, and training necessary to participate in joint ventures to identify and address dynamics that affect living and working conditions within farmworker communities:

- A MOU with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) Partner with Portable Practical Educational Preparation, (PPEP) to maximize and co-coordinate outreach efforts throughout Arizona;
- Conducting H-2A worker orientations at the beginning of the season to provide information on workers' rights, ES Complaint System,
- ES, training assistance, and local support services;
- Attending the Migrant Farmworker Programs offered in some school systems to support the migrant population;

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- Attending health and local community activities that draw farm workers;
- Collaborating with other organizations that serve the farm worker population;
- Posting informational flyers in laundromats, churches and stores where workers are known to congregate after work, and where farm worker family's shop;
- Setting up information tables at stores and events, when farm workers are waiting for pick-up or drop-off during workdays;
- Attending job fairs and recruiting events;
- Coordinating with LWDBs to create recruiting events for agricultural companies to help create a domestic workforce;
- Expand the partnership with the Mexican Consulate in various locations throughout the state to include Nogales, Douglas, Yuma and Phoenix. This will include co-outreaches and sharing knowledge of services available to MSFW clients;
- Collaborate with the Department of Education's Migrant Education Program to conduct co-outreaches and provide resources for MSFWs and their families; and
- Partner with the Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers. This network allows the MSFW staff to conduct co-outreaches with these teams, provide basic healthcare needs to workers, and provide beneficial information to the farmworkers. The team has also been able to connect employers to this network to provide health fairs for their employees. The Arizona MSFW Program will continue to leverage this partnership in Yuma, Maricopa, La Paz, and Pima Counties.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Increased collaboration between the SWA and other organizations, such as the U.S. DOL Wage and Hour Division has provided training on the Migrant Seasonal Protection Act, field visits, and housing inspections. The Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA) and the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), have provided increased opportunities to offer technical assistance to outreach staff, such as training, conferences, and additional resources like the Arizona Interagency Farmworker Coalition (AIFC) Conference; and various trainings, including:

- Sexual Harassment in the Fields;

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- Discrimination;
- OSHA Compliance;
- Apparent Violations;
- Human Trafficking;
- Food Safety; and
- Pesticides.

Employment Services and Employment-Related Law Complaint System

In Arizona, ES staff, MSFW outreach representatives, ES Complaint Representatives, Title 1B, NFJP Grantee Staff, and the State Monitor Advocate work in conjunction to train staff representatives to recognize MSFW complaint related issues to ensure a seamless referral and warm handoff to each other. Partner agencies dedicated to serving the MSFW population play a major part in the collaboration to assist this population. As barriers are identified, cross-referrals are made between agencies to meet the farm workers' needs. On a quarterly basis, partner agencies are reporting approximately 1,600 MSFWs contacted during outreach activities.

Outreach activities from partner agency connections include:

- Healthcare agencies;
- Health and career fairs;
- Training opportunities;
- Community events;
- Job Fairs and recruiting events; and
- Seminars.

The SWA provides a wide variety of professional development training to staff and outreach workers designed to strengthen how staff obtain, retain, and apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

- **Customer Service Excellence:** Provides individuals with basic principles of customer service and demonstrates techniques and best practices to improve relationships among internal and external customers and stakeholders.
- **Dealing with Difficult Situations:** Prepares participants to utilize listening and communication skills when working with individuals who tend to be argumentative, passive, inconvenient and/or contradictory in the work environment.
- **De-Escalating Conflict:** Prepares participants to use skills and strategies to develop positive and meaningful relationships, identify their unique perspective and style of handling conflict, and explore practical ways to reduce and de-escalate work-place conflict.

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- **Critical Thinking and Decision Making:** Helps participants improve their critical thinking and decision-making skills. The decision-making process, decision-making styles, ethical decision-making and problem-solving will be examined.
- **Bridging the Communication Gap:** Teaches participants to learn how to improve communication with team members through knowledge of perception, simple techniques for clear expectations, how to help others to produce quality work, and to de-escalate volatile situations.
- **Leadership Foundation:** Designed to give new and aspiring leaders the foundation to build confidence, productivity, and the ability to get things done through other people. At the conclusion of this course, leaders will gain more insight into developing and mentoring their team, creating an engaging workplace, and developing their own leadership savvy.
- **Strengthening Communication Strategies:** Designed to improve communication skills, teamwork and customer satisfaction while decreasing interoffice conflicts.

The seven courses listed above along with a wide variety of other professional development curricula and a Personal Development Plan helps the SWA promote and implement the Arizona Management System principles and practices to develop people, establish and communicate accountability, and promote problem-solving throughout DERS and ARIZONA@WORK.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

4) Outreach Activities. *The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for*

(1) Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the ES offices.

Many Farmworkers throughout the state are not aware of the services that are available to them through State programs and partner agencies outside of UI and SNAP. If they do visit the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, it's to file for UI benefits or to report a situation that has occurred in their work environment. Arizona ensures that the same services that are available to the general public are also available to the MSFW population. To facilitate this, Outreach Workers and the SWA are committed to meeting with them wherever they meet and/or congregate. The MSFW team has increased the number of outreach workers and has strategically added new team members in the Maricopa County area. This new team is located in the central part of Arizona which will allow the program as a whole to reduce travel time and allow the team to conduct more outreach. This will allow the Yuma County team to better cover Yuma and La Paz Counties and the Maricopa team to cover the rest of the state.

This will result in reaching more farmworkers and employers in new areas where there has been very little activity in the past. MSFW outreach staff will emphasize providing useful information to agricultural employers, ELL individuals, and MSFWs to enable them to exercise

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informed choices on accessing services through multiple physical and/or electronic entry-points. Outreach policy will afford staff the flexibility, time, tools, and training necessary to participate in joint ventures to identify and address dynamics that affect living and working conditions within farmworker communities:

- A MOU with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) Partner with Portable Practical Educational Preparation, (PPEP) to maximize and co-coordinate outreach efforts throughout Arizona;
- Conducting H-2A worker orientations at the beginning of the season to provide information on workers' rights, ES Complaint System,
- ES, training assistance, and local support services;
- Attending the Migrant Farmworker Programs offered in some school systems to support the migrant population;
- Attending health and local community activities that draw farm workers;
- Collaborating with other organizations that serve the farm worker population;
- Posting informational flyers in laundromats, churches and stores where workers are known to congregate after work, and where farm worker family's shop;
- Setting up information tables at stores and events, when farm workers are waiting for pick-up or drop-off during workdays;
- Attending job fairs and recruiting events;
- Coordinating with LWDBs to create recruiting events for agricultural companies to help create a domestic workforce;
- Expand the partnership with the Mexican Consulate in various locations throughout the state to include Nogales, Douglas, Yuma and Phoenix. This will include co-outreaches and sharing knowledge of services available to MSFW clients;
- Collaborate with the Department of Education's Migrant Education Program to conduct co-outreaches and provide resources for MSFWs and their families; and
- Partner with the Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers. This network allows the MSFW staff to conduct co-outreaches with these teams, provide basic healthcare needs to workers, and provide beneficial information to the farmworkers. The team has also been able to connect employers to this network to provide health fairs for their employees. The Arizona MSFW Program will continue to leverage this partnership in Yuma, Maricopa, La Paz, and Pima Counties.

(2) Providing technical assistance to outreach staff. *Technical assistance must include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the ES and Employment-Related Law Complaint System ("Complaint System" described at 20 CFR 658 Subpart*

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E), information on the other organizations serving MSFWs in the area, and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

Increased collaboration between the SWA and other organizations, such as the U.S. DOL Wage and Hour Division has provided training on the Migrant Seasonal Protection Act, field Visits, and housing inspections. The Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA) and the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), have provided increased opportunities to offer technical assistance to outreach staff, such as training, conferences, and additional resources like the Arizona Interagency Farmworker Coalition (AIFC) Conference; and various trainings, including:

- Sexual Harassment in the Fields;
- Discrimination;
- OSHA Compliance;
- Apparent Violations;
- Human Trafficking;
- Food Safety; and
- Pesticides.

(3) Increasing outreach staff training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance Program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues.

The State Agency will provide training of core programs by the representatives of those core programs such as Family Assistance Administration and Unemployment Insurance Program on a yearly basis minimum to all outreach staff. Throughout the year, The State Agency will partner with these programs to have them conduct meetings with the outreach staff twice a year to inform them of any changes that can help or impact outreach. In addition, the contact information for these agencies will be incorporated in the outreach materials given to the farmworkers. The State Agency will assign the outreach staff any training conducted by the Department of Labor NMA System, Monthly SWA meetings, SWA Conferences, and Workforce GPS Events to help increase awareness of these services.

(4) Providing outreach staff professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

In Arizona, ES staff, MSFW outreach Staff, ES Complaint Representatives, Title 1B, NFJP Grantee Staff, and the State Monitor Advocate work in conjunction to train staff representatives to recognize MSFW complaint related issues to ensure a seamless referral and warm handoff to each other. Partner agencies dedicated to serving the MSFW population play a major part in the collaboration to assist this population. As barriers are identified, cross-referrals are made between agencies to meet the farm workers' needs. On a quarterly basis, partner agencies are reporting approximately 1,600 MSFWs contacted during outreach activities.

Outreach activities from partner agency connections include:

- Healthcare agencies;

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- Health and career fairs;
- Training opportunities;
- Community events;
- Job Fairs and recruiting events; and
- Seminars.

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- **Customer Service Excellence:** Provides individuals with basic principles of customer service and demonstrates techniques and best practices to improve relationships among internal and external customers and stakeholders.
- **Dealing with Difficult Situations:** Prepares participants to utilize listening and communication skills when working with individuals who tend to be argumentative, passive, inconvenient and/or contradictory in the work environment.
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- **Critical Thinking and Decision Making:** Helps participants improve their critical thinking and decision-making skills. The decision-making process, decision-making styles, ethical decision-making and problem-solving will be examined.
- **Bridging the Communication Gap:** Teaches participants to learn how to improve communication with team members through knowledge of perception, simple techniques for clear expectations, how to help others to produce quality work, and to de-escalate volatile situations.
- **Leadership Foundation:** Designed to give new and aspiring leaders the foundation to build confidence, productivity, and the ability to get things done through other people. At the conclusion of this course, leaders will gain more insight into developing and mentoring their team, creating an engaging workplace, and developing their own leadership savvy.
- **Strengthening Communication Strategies:** Designed to improve communication skills, teamwork and customer satisfaction while decreasing interoffice conflicts.

The seven courses listed above along with a wide variety of other professional development curricula and a Personal Development Plan helps the SWA promote and implement the Arizona Management System principles and practices to develop people, establish and communicate accountability, and promote problem-solving throughout DERS and ARIZONA@WORK.

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D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

The SWA provides a wide variety of professional development training to staff and outreach workers designed to strengthen how staff obtain, retain, and apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

- **Customer Service Excellence:** Provides individuals with basic principles of customer service and demonstrates techniques and best practices to improve relationships among internal and external customers and stakeholders.
- **Dealing with Difficult Situations:** Prepares participants to utilize listening and communication skills when working with individuals who tend to be argumentative, passive, inconvenient and/or contradictory in the work environment.
- **De-Escalating Conflict:** Prepares participants to use skills and strategies to develop positive and meaningful relationships, identify their unique perspective and style of handling conflict, and explore practical ways to reduce and de-escalate work-place conflict.
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- **Leadership Foundation:** Designed to give new and aspiring leaders the foundation to build confidence, productivity, and the ability to get things done through other people. At the conclusion of this course, leaders will gain more insight into developing and mentoring their team, creating an engaging workplace, and developing their own leadership savvy.
- **Strengthening Communication Strategies:** Designed to improve communication skills, teamwork and customer satisfaction while decreasing interoffice conflicts.

The seven courses listed above along with a wide variety of other professional development curricula and a Personal Development Plan helps the SWA promote and implement the Arizona Management System principles and practices to develop people, establish and communicate accountability, and promote problem-solving throughout DERS and ARIZONA@WORK.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

ES progressive plan for service delivery to MSFWs is consistent with the U.S. DOL ETA program equity and minimum service delivery indicators of compliance requirements. The Unified State Plan places emphasis on strategies to collaborate and work with partners to ensure a seamless delivery of services for an improved and integrated ARIZONA@WORK system. The SWA works

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with NFJP partner PPEP, Inc. via an MOU to leverage our shared resources and enhance opportunities for MSFWs through a non-discriminatory mode of service delivery that is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to non- MSFWs:

- PPEP, Inc.;
- Adelante;
- Arizona Department of Agriculture;
- Arizona Department of Transportation;
- Cochise Private Industry Council;
- Campesinos Sin Fronteras;
- Chicanos Por La Causa;
- Census 2020;
- City of Phoenix;
- City of Yuma;
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission;
- Housing Authority of Yuma County;
- Mexican Consulate;
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration;
- Regional Center for Border Health;
- Sunset Community Health Center;
- U.S. DOL Wage and Hour Division; and
- Yuma Private Industry Council.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWs THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

(i) How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers; and

(ii) How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

ES staff in partnership with ARIZONA@WORK statewide, will strive to meet or exceed federal program requirements with respect to MSFW Program equity and minimum service level indicators of compliance. The ES mission includes assisting agricultural and non-agricultural employers in recruitment efforts and in attaining and maintaining compliance with laws and regulations impacting terms and conditions of employment in their business operations. ES will focus on flexibility, customer choice, universal access and continuous improvement in developing services in commonly branded ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers to allow for self-service and staff-assisted services to MSFWs. ADES/DERS will continue to develop strategic partnerships that will promote employer job orders, applicant talents, employment and training opportunities, and timely resolution of complaints, apparent violations, and other labor-related issues. Elements covered on an equitable and nondiscriminatory basis will include, but will not be limited to, MSFW benefits and protections, career guidance, vocational counseling, testing, job development, and job referral services. The SWA will adhere to guiding principles that ensure a system of service delivery that:

- Is individual and family driven;
- Is effectively integrated and coordinated;
- Protects the rights of families and individuals;
- Allows smooth transition between programs;
- Builds community capacity to serve families and individuals;
- Emphasizes prevention and early intervention;
- Respects clients, partners, and fellow employees;
- Is evaluated for outcomes;
- Is accessible, accountable, and comprehensive;
- Is culturally and linguistically appropriate and respectful; and
- Is strength-based and delivered in the least intrusive manner.

i. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers:

ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers in areas of need are fully multilingual and provide MSFW and ELL individuals with services including, but not limited to, assistance with the following:

- Full range of ES, benefits, and protections;
- Utilizing job order information effectively;

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- Staff-assisted activities and/or as requested or necessary when accessing self-assisted services via electronic technologies;
- Referrals to agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, training, and support services, as well as available testing, counseling, and other job development services;
- Basic information on labor rights, protections, and responsibilities with respect to terms and conditions of employment;
- Preparation and resolution of complaints on acts and/or omissions by ES or other U.S. DOL funded programs;
- Preparation, acceptance, resolution, and/or referral of labor-related complaints and apparent violations in accordance with established policies and procedures;
- Referral of individual or family members to supportive services for which they may be eligible;
- Making appointments for individuals and families;
- Contact to follow-up as necessary and appropriate to provide supportive service and information to the maximum extent possible;
- Information on services available in local offices, and contact information on the nearest commonly branded ARIZONA@WORK Job Center, including PPEP/NFJP WIOA Section 167 program, or affiliated offices throughout the national ES network;
- Resume preparation, information on how to post résumés on-line and how to conduct on-line job searches;
- Communicating between ELL individuals referred to jobs and employers;
- Utilization of WOTC, subsidized employment resources, and other employer incentives to promote employment and job upgrades for MSFWs; and
- Connections to local agencies and resources that can assist with services needed, such as housing, medical, legal, emergency food boxes, immigration, etc.

ES progressive plan for service delivery to MSFWs is consistent with the U.S. DOL ETA program equity and minimum service delivery indicators of compliance requirements. The Unified State Plan places emphasis on strategies to collaborate and work with partners to ensure a seamless delivery of services for an improved and integrated ARIZONA@WORK system. The SWA works with NFJP partner PPEP, Inc. via an MOU to leverage our shared resources and enhance opportunities for MSFWs through a non-discriminatory mode of service delivery that is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to non- MSFWs:

- PPEP, Inc.;
- Adelante;
- Arizona Department of Agriculture;
- Arizona Department of Transportation;

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- Cochise Private Industry Council;
- Campesinos Sin Fronteras;
- Chicanos Por La Causa;
- Census 2020;
- City of Phoenix;
- City of Yuma;
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission;
- Housing Authority of Yuma County;
- Mexican Consulate;
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration;
- Regional Center for Border Health;
- Sunset Community Health Center;
- U.S. DOL Wage and Hour Division; and
- Yuma Private Industry Council.

ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

In addition to an updated service delivery plan for farmworkers, Arizona intends to improve services to agricultural employers by working on recruitment strategies that will assist employers in the hiring process and enhancement of recall procedures for seasonal workers by:

- Making employers aware of services available to them through seminars, meetings, outreach, pamphlets, and conferences;
- Explain and utilize the Agricultural Recruitment system to recruit a domestic workforce;
- Increase employer roundtables via a virtual method to share best practices and resources for employers;
- Increase the number of in person Employer Roundtables in strategic locations throughout Arizona;
- Explaining the benefits of using the recall system to employers;
- Attempting to obtain a recall list of workers at an earlier date/time; and
- Participating in the Annual Farmworker Health, Information, and Service Fair.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

The State Monitor Advocate and outreach representatives have successfully provided workshops and seminars in collaboration with state and federal enforcement agencies designed

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to increase the number of agricultural employers utilizing the one-stop system. Our bi-annual employment seminars bring in 40 to 60 companies. The MSFW team intends to continue using workshops and seminars to provide training to agricultural supervisors, field forepersons, and farm labor contractors to help them excel in the crucial role they play in attaining and retaining a viable workforce.

Topics that are intended to be provided to agricultural employers and farmworkers through workshops and seminars include, but are not limited to:

- Overviews of the MSFW Protection Act (MSPA) enforced by the DOL Wage & Hour Division;
- Field sanitation regulations by OSHA;
- Occupational Safety and Health monitoring by the Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health (ADOSH); and
- Employment equality enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The ES Complaint System is promoted to farmworkers and farmworker advocacy groups such as PPEP, EQUUS, ARIZONA@WORK One Stop Centers, and the Department of Education Migrant Education Program, and is provided verbally and in writing through orientations, seminars, conferences, printed material handed out at special events, such as Día Del Campesino, employer health fairs, and outreach efforts provided by outreach specialists. In addition, outreach representatives prepare and provide packets to farmworkers containing information regarding the ES Complaint System, services available to farmworkers through ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, farmworker rights, and contact information for different agencies and organizations that service the farmworker population when they conduct outreach and field visits. In addition, each ARIZONA@WORK Job Center also displays required posters informing the public of the ES Complaint System in English and Spanish. Partner organizations and advocacy groups are being encouraged to attend complaint system training led by the SWA's training department.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

As part of a publicity improvement effort, the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) will be marketed to agricultural employers through informational presentations, detailed explanations, and question-and-answer opportunities at a variety of events, including, but not limited to:

- Annual California/Arizona (CA/AZ) Agricultural Employer seminar;
- AIFC-AZ Interagency Farmworkers seminar;
- Bi-annual employer round table meetings; and
- Various employer associations; such as Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association (YFVA) and Western Growers Association (WGA).

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

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A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

(5) Other Requirements.

The State Monitor Advocate and outreach specialists will continue to develop and perform lead roles in coalitions based in agriculturally active areas to leverage resources and share knowledge of solutions in a coordinated fashion. Collaborative efforts will continue with the AIFC, a community-based non-profit corporation with a membership of approximately 30 partners including public, private, federal, and state enforcement and non-enforcement agencies, farmworkers, agricultural employers, and advocacy groups. The State Monitor Advocate and outreach specialists will continue to support coalitions and objectives to create a better understanding of issues affecting the farmworker community and will collaborate in creating forums and seminars to address issues and concerns of interest within the farmworker community.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

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As part of the development of the Arizona Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) State Plan, the document was sent out for public comment on December 19, 2023 and remained open until January 19, 2024. The following organizations received notification of the public comment period:

- National Farmworker Jobs Program Board Member/Arizona Interagency Farm Workers Coalition, Inc., Tucson, AZ 85713
- Identification & Recruitment Coordinator Migrant Education Program Arizona Department of Education, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Arizona Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study, Phoenix, AZ 85006
- Portable Practical Education Preparation (PPEP) NFJP/WIOA 617, Tucson, AZ 85713
- Queen Creek Family Resource Center-Migrant Program, Queen Creek, AZ 85142
- University of Arizona, Arizona College of Public Health, Tucson, AZ 85724

No public comments were received.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

(C) Data Assessment. Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser Act data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

Over the last four years, the State has met 9 out of 12 total indicators. While all were not met, the State considers this a success still. The reason for this success is due to the State Monitor Advocate training provided by the SWA throughout this four year period to ensure the SWA understand their role is in providing quantitatively and qualitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. This has been an ongoing effort and continues to be a priority for the Monitor Advocate.

In order to meet the three indicators that were not met, The Monitor Advocate will increase and continue to provide support and technical assistance throughout the state as needed. Desk reviews of all offices will be conducted on a frequent basis to ensure all MSFWs are provided with quality services and have access to as many equitable opportunities as possible. Reviews will also ensure that staff is accurately identifying MSFW clients so that the system can accurately reflect individuals in program metrics. This will be accomplished by visiting local offices in person and leveraging virtual meetings to increase technical assistance statewide.

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D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

(D) Assessment of progress. *The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.*

Over the last four years, the SWA has made progress and achievements to effectively reach farmworkers throughout the State of Arizona.

Achieved:

Increase significant offices: (Sites increased from 2 to 6)

- 610 North Morley (NOGALES);
- 820 East Cottonwood Lane (CASA GRANDE);
- 700 West Beale Street (KINGMAN);
- 3826 West 16th St (YUMA);
- 4635 South Central (PHOENIX); and
- 3406 North 51st Ave (PHOENIX).

Increase staffing levels of outreach program: went from four to ten with teams based in Yuma and Phoenix to further reach more MSFW clients. The addition of the Phoenix teams were strategically added as this is located in the central part of Arizona.

Exceeded

Outreach contacts per week: The team constantly exceeded the weekly contact of MSFW outreach with an average of 400 percent quarterly.

Outreach with partners:

- Arizona Alliance for Community Healthcare Centers;
- Portable, Practical Educational Preparation (PPEP);
- National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP);
- ADE Migrant Education Program;
- Farmer Coalition;
- Mexican Consulate;
- Chicanos Por La Causa; and
- Campesinos Sin Fronteras.

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The SWA met or surpassed the following qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services for MSFW's over the previous four year plan:

Indicators met:

- Received basic career services (staff-assisted);
- Staff-assisted career guidance services;
- Staff-assisted job search activities;
- Employment;
- Federal training;
- Other Federal/State assistance;
- Individualized career service; and
- Individuals placed in a job.

Some of the indicators were not met. The strategies to close gaps are mentioned in the previous section.

Not Achieved:

- UI Claim Assistance;
- Median earnings of individuals in unsubsidized employment; and
- Individuals placed long term in non-agricultural jobs.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

(E) State Monitor Advocate. *The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.*

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA), is involved in the research, composition, review, and approval of the Agricultural Outreach Plan. Additionally, the SMA reviewed all sections of the unified State Plan related to service delivery to MSFWs.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes

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The State Plan must include	Include
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	Yes
5. The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance (20 CFR 658.601).	Yes

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction

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with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

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- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	61.5%	63.0%	62.5%	63.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	55.0%	57.8%	56.0%	57.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,175	\$8,175	\$8,379	\$8,379
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

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Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Arizona Adult Education has multiple grant contract requirements and assurances in place that require Title II adult education providers to align instruction and curricular resources to the Arizona Adult Education Content Standards. The State office actively supports the implementation of standards-based instruction through on-going professional learning for program administrators, instructional leaders, and teachers.

Arizona Adult Education has a long history of developing and implementing content standards, beginning in 1998 to 1999. In 2016 to 2017, teams of adult educators and

content area experts revised the AZ Adult Education Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and the AZ Adult Education Standards in Mathematics and aligned the standards to the AZ K-12 Standards in ELA and mathematics, as required by Title II-WIOA. The AZ Adult Education ELA and math standards were tagged with the AZ Employability Skills and the International Society of Technology Education (ISTE) Standards to integrate these standards intentionally through instruction.

Most recently, Arizona Title II Adult Education completed the revisions of two sets of content standards in collaboration with teams of adult educators, content experts, and state office staff. The Arizona Adult Education Literacy Through Social Studies Standards were finalized and professional learning was provided to adult educators. These standards were aligned to the Arizona Adult Education English Language Arts Standards and the Arizona Social Studies Standards for grades 7 through 12.

The second set of standards to be finalized were the Arizona Adult Education English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP), adapted from the Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards,

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developed by AIR, and aligned to the Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards for K-12. These standards were also tagged with the ISTE Standards to integrate the digital literacy skills that are essential for Title II participants. The ELP standards were introduced and rolled out through a series of professional learning sessions. The 2022-2023 blended learning series was held regionally for 120 educators and instructional leaders around the state.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
 1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

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Need for Adult Education in Arizona: The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2021) includes the following demographic data for Arizona:

- Approximately 660,000 adults aged 18 and older lack a secondary diploma.
- Over 412,000 adults aged 18 and older speak English "less than very well."

Arizona state law designates adult education as a department within the ADE, which acts as the administrative body for Adult Education Services according to A.R.S. 15-232, 15-233, and 15-234. Under WIOA, ADE is the Eligible Agency with sole responsibility for administering and supervising policy for adult education and literacy activities in the state.

The purpose of Adult Education in Arizona under WIOA is to enable local adult education providers, as core partners of Arizona's workforce system, to develop, implement and improve adult education and literacy services throughout the state to further the vision and goals as outlined in the Arizona Unified Workforce Development Plan and WIOA, in order to:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills needed for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills needed to participate successfully in the educational development of their children and improve the economic opportunities of the family;
- Assist adults in the attainment of high school equivalency diplomas and in the transition to postsecondary education and training through career pathways; and
- Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English Language Learners in improving their reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills in English; improving their math skills; and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

The following three Arizona Adult Education Goals are the basis of a strategic plan that addresses and operationalizes the WIOA requirements for Title II as described in this Plan:

- **System Goal:** The Arizona Adult Education System is an integral component of Arizona's educational pipeline leading to postsecondary education and career pathways.
- **Profession Goal:** Arizona Adult Educators empower adult learners to transition to postsecondary education and livable-wage employment.
- **Instruction Goal:** Arizona Adult Education Instruction prepares adult learners for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. **Competitive Funding Process:** ADE conducts a competitive Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) process to award funding under section 231 and section 243 to eligible organizations to establish and operate local programs for the provision of adult education and literacy activities in Arizona. Organizations may include:
 - A local education agency;
 - A community-based organization or faith-based organization;
 - A volunteer literacy organization;

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- An institution of higher learning;
- A public or private non-profit agency;
- A library;
- A public housing authority;
- A non-profit institution that is not described above and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals as described in WIOA;
- A consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and
- A partnership between an employer and an entity described above.
- To be considered eligible for consideration of an award, an applicant must be an organization with demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities. To demonstrate effectiveness, the organization must provide, as part of the application process, performance data showing improvement in the skills of eligible individuals, in particular individuals who are basic-skills deficient, in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services identified in the RFGA. The applicant must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent), and transition to postsecondary education and training. The competitive RFGA process ensures that the following components are incorporated:
 - **Direct and Equitable Access:** ADE is committed to conducting a competitive RFGA process that ensures direct and equitable access to all eligible providers competing for Title II grant contracts. Information regarding the application and process is made available broadly via a public website email distribution to a wide variety of literacy and CTE providers. An adequate amount of time to complete the application is allowed, based on best practices as determined by ADE's Grants Management Department. Submittal of applications is done using the Grants Management Enterprise system in a manner that allows equitable access to all individuals, including those with disabilities.
 - **Fair and Equitable Evaluation:** Applications are evaluated based on a scoring rubric as described in the application and based on the required WIOA evaluation considerations and other factors as determined by ADE. The evaluation team members consist of a variety of diverse professionals, including members unaffiliated with Arizona's Adult Education system. Award amounts are determined by evaluation results and area demographic and needs analyses to ensure that addressing the purpose of WIOA is the basis for funding decisions.
 - **Coordination with Local Boards:** A procedure is included in the RFGA process to ensure that the applicable LWDB reviews the application(s) and provides comments and/or recommendations regarding the application's alignment to the strategies and goals of the local plan under section 108 of WIOA. Comments and recommendations provided by LWDBs are considered as part of the evaluation process.

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- **General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Statement:** Each applicant requesting funds is required to include a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. Section 427 GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender; race; national origin; color; disability; or age. Based on local circumstances, applicants must determine whether these or other barriers may prevent participation in the program or activities, and the steps to be taken to overcome identified barriers must be included in the application.
- **Eligible Individual:** An “eligible individual” for Adult Education services means an individual who:
 - Has attained 16 years of age; *and*
- Is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under Arizona State Law (A.R.S. § 15-802); *and*
- Meets Arizona state eligibility requirements under A.R.S. § 15-232 B; *and*
 - Is basic skills deficient; *or*
 - Does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; *or*
 - Is an English language learner.
- **Allowable Activities:** In Arizona, adult education providers funded under Section 222(a)(1) are contracted to establish and operate programs that provide the following services and activities to eligible individuals as defined below:
- **Adult Basic Education (ABE):** Literacy instruction aligned to Arizona Adult Education Content Standards provided to eligible individuals with educational functioning levels (EFLs) ABE 1, 2, 3, or 4 as defined by the National Reporting System (NRS). Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) are provided concurrently with ABE instruction. *WIOA Final Rules Subpart D, § 463.30.*
- **Adult Secondary Education (ASE):** Literacy instruction aligned to Arizona Adult Education Content Standards to eligible individuals ABE 5 or 6, as defined by the NRS. ASE activities are also designed to lead to the attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent) and transition to postsecondary education, training, or employment. Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) are provided concurrently with ASE instruction. *WIOA Final Rules Subpart D, § 463.30.*
- **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL):** Literacy instruction aligned to Arizona Adult Education English Language Proficiency Standards to help eligible learners achieve proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension of the English language. ESOL instruction should also lead to attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent), transition to postsecondary/training, or employment. *WIOA Final Rules Subpart D, § 463.31 and § 463.32.*
- **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE):** Education services provided to English language learners to achieve competence in the English language

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and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens. Services must include:

- 1) instruction in literacy and English language acquisition: and
 - 2) instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.
- Services may include workforce preparation and workforce training. *WIOA Final Rules Subpart D, § 463.33.*
 - **Workforce Preparation:** Instruction provided concurrently with ABE, ASE, or ESOL/IELCE activities that is designed to help eligible individuals acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. Workforce preparation activities are designed to increase employability skills and the development of competencies in using resources and information, working with others, and understanding systems to successfully transition to and complete postsecondary education, training, and employment. *WIOA Final Rules Subpart D, § 463.34.*
 - **Integrated Education and Training:** A service approach to providing adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training in a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Required IET components are:
 - 1) adult education and literacy,
 - 2) workforce preparation activities, and 3) workforce training. Instruction is based on occupationally relevant materials for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Participation is intended for eligible individuals at all skill levels, including adults with low academic skills. *WIOA Final Rules Subpart D, §§ 463.35 through 463.38.***Special Rule.** Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

Arizona Adult Education will award grants or contracts in compliance with 34 CFR part 463, Subpart C to include the following:

From grant funds made available under section 222(a)(1) of the Act, each eligible agency must award competitive multiyear grants or contracts to eligible providers within the State or outlying area to enable the eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State or outlying area.

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(b) The eligible agency must require that each eligible provider receiving a grant or contract use the funding to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently.

(c) In conducting the competitive grant process, the eligible agency must ensure that—

(1) All eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts;

(2) The same grant or contract announcement and application processes are used for all eligible providers in the State or outlying area; and

(3) In awarding grants or contracts to eligible providers for adult education and literacy activities, funds shall not be used for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not eligible individuals as defined in the Act, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. Prior to providing family literacy activities for individuals who are not eligible individuals, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that do not receive funding under this title.

(d) In awarding grants or contracts for adult education and literacy activities to eligible providers, the eligible agency must consider the following:

(1) The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to—

(i) Regional needs as identified in the local workforce development plan; and

(ii) Serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who—

(A) Have low levels of literacy skills; or

(B) Are English language learners;

(2) The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;

(3) The past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, and the degree to which those improvements contribute to the eligible agency meeting its State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in § 677.155;

(4) The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108 of the Act, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners;

(5) Whether the eligible provider's program—

(i) Is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and

(ii) Uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;

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(6) Whether the eligible provider's activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;

(7) Whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services and delivery systems, including distance education, in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning, and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;

(8) Whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

(9) Whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high-quality professional development, including through electronic means;

(10) Whether the eligible provider coordinates with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, Local WDBs, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, in the development of career pathways;

(11) Whether the eligible provider's activities offer the flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

(12) Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section § 666.100) and to monitor program performance; and

(13) Whether the local area in which the eligible provider is located has a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

(Authority: 29 U.S.C. 3321)

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;

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- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

ADE awards Section 225 grant funds for corrections education and education of institutionalized individuals using the same RFGA process and timeline described for Section 231 funds. The grants are awarded on a multi-year cycle, and all providers are subject to the same funding cycle. The review of applications includes evaluation based on the 13 considerations outlined in Title II of WIOA. All applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. Special consideration is given to eligible applicants indicating priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Arizona Adult Education ensures that not more than 20 percent of funds allocated to local providers with grant contracts under section 231 are used to carry out services under Section 225. And, as part of the grant contract, funded providers are required to ensure that if WIOA funds are used to provide educational services to individuals in a correctional or other institution as described in Section 225, priority must be given to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

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Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Arizona has a long history of providing English language acquisition activities and civics education, first under WIA, and then under WIOA since its passage in 2014. The State has built on its past success in providing instruction to English language learners to meet the requirements under WIOA Section 243. The provision of educational services to English Language Learners under Section 243 are referred to in Arizona as Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education PLUS Training (IELCE + T) programs. IELCE + T programs must include the IELCE educational services (described above in Allowable Activities and in WIOA § 463.33) and must be delivered in combination with IET activities (described above in Allowable Activities and in WIOA § 463.36).

Local providers are awarded funds under Section 243 to deliver IELCE + T programs for the purpose of preparing adults who are English language learners for, and placing such adults in, unsubsidized employment in In-Demand industries and occupations leading to economic self-sufficiency. The adult education component of an IELCE + T program must include:

- Integration of civics engagement skills into career pathways and workforce preparation activities targeted to English language learners, including professionals who hold degrees or credentials in other countries;
- Integration of educational technology and Blended Learning models into civics educational activities, including the use of technology and social media to increase learner opportunities for responsible civic engagement;
- Training and technical assistance on research and evidence-based instructional strategies that promote deeper learning, including the incorporation of experiential civics learning opportunities and digital storytelling;
- Collaborative agreements and formal partnerships with local area workforce system entities, including ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, libraries, postsecondary institutions and employers; and
- Dissemination and replication of evidence-based resources and promising practices.

ADE awards Section 243 grant funds for IELCE + T programs using the same Request for Grant Application (RFGA) competitive process and timeline described above in (b) Local Activities. The same criteria used to determine eligibility of an applicant for Section 231 funding is used for Section 243 funding, and successful applicants are subject to the same funding cycle. Applicants applying to provide services under Section 243 must also address narrative questions and provide information that is specific to the provision of an IELCE + T programming and requirements.

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The review of all applications, including those with proposed IELCE + T programs, includes evaluation based on the 13 federal considerations as outlined in Title II of WIOA and four state considerations. All applications are evaluated based on the same rubric and scoring criteria for federal and state considerations. All applicants must provide narrative details and information to demonstrate how they will meet the requirements.

The distribution of IELCE + T funds across the state is based on demographic data and needs analyses pertaining specifically to the geographic distribution of eligible individuals with language barriers in each workforce area. Section 243 funds are allocated and accounted for in a separate stream in the Arizona Grants Management Enterprise system.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

Arizona utilizes funds available under Section 223 to provide State Leadership activities to further develop and enhance the adult education system throughout the state as described in the Purpose and Goals identified above under Local Activities.

ADE/AES will use State Leadership funds to carry out **required** activities under Section 223 by using the prior PYs' qualitative and statistical trend data to identify technical assistance and professional development needs for local providers. Training and other events are developed and/or facilitated by ADE/AES staff to further develop and support local Title II providers, and most initiatives meet the criteria for multiple required and permissible activities.

(1) Align adult education services with other core programs and ARIZONA@WORK partners to implement the strategies in this plan:

- Strengthen the formal collaborative agreements created between local Title II providers with partners, especially Title I-B, to ensure that all eligible job seekers have access to information and services that will lead to positive employment outcomes.
- Improve the alignment of programmatic and operational services, such as common intake, orientation, assessment, and data sharing, among all partners statewide to promote co-enrollment and ensure a customer-centric approach with consistent and coordinated access to services.
- Identify and articulate career pathways with entry points for adult learners who have barriers such as disabilities, low basic skills, lack of secondary diplomas, and/or lack of English language skills.
- Promote workplace literacy programs to meet the basic skills needs, including digital literacy, of employee cohorts to meet the needs of local employers.
- Provide training on the planning and development and implementation of IETs which requires being aligned with local employment needs.
- Provide digital curricular resources that implement workforce preparation, career pathways, and contextualized units of study.

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- Strengthen implementation of Pipeline AZ in coordination with ADE's CTE division to connect learners across Arizona with career exploration, tools, and opportunities for employment with participating employers.

(2) Establish or operate high-quality professional development programs to improve adult education instruction:

- Maintain grant contract requirements to assist local adult education providers with the planning and implementation of high-quality Professional Learning (PL) for instructional staff, including:
 - Local providers must expend a minimum of ten percent of adult education grant funds for state-approved PL activities.
 - Local providers must submit annual plans for PL implementation based on needs analysis that identifies areas for improvement.
 - Local providers must submit final reports detailing the PL goals, interventions, and strategies that were implemented in that PY, based on the plans noted above, and including performance outcome data.
 - Local providers must address the AZ Adult Education Teacher Standards in Mathematics, English Language Arts, and English Language Proficiency Standards, along with *Learning Forward's Professional Learning Standards*, to help determine PL goals that focus on improving teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.
- Provide training and technical assistance on evidence- and research-based strategies that accelerate learning and promote readiness for postsecondary education and employment, including
 - Annual Arizona Adult Education Institute
 - Annual Teachers 'n' Technology
 - Regular training on teaching to the Arizona Adult Education Content Standards;
 - Teaching Skills That Matter training series;
 - Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) training; and
 - Using standardized assessments, such as TABE 11&12 and CLAS-E, to drive instruction.
 - Technology integration and digital literacy;
 - Blended learning models and practices;
 - ESL Pro initiative for ELLs;
 - Assistive technology and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies;
 - Becoming a Learning Team series;
 - Teaching and Learning webinar series;

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- Building Literacy Skills through Civic Engagement series;
- Math Institute, “Curriculum for Adults Learning Math”; and
- Online curricula training
- Leadership development:
 - Annual Arizona Adult Education Institute;
 - Annual Administrator Orientation and Refresher; and
 - Leadership Excellence and Development (LEAD) Institute, which will provide tools for leadership development in the context of WIOA.

(3) Provide technical assistance to local providers of adult education:

- Provide technical assistance in multiple ways, including onsite visits, regular and ad hoc virtual meetings, facilitated asynchronous courses, workshops, webinars, phone calls, email, and the Annual Business Meeting.
- Identify the need for technical assistance through monthly data reviews and check-ins with program administrators, report reviews, monitoring visits, or when requested by a program.
- WIOA Title II Local Provider Technical Assistance Guide.
- Provide training and targeted technical assistance on the three pathways to the high school equivalency (HSE) diploma.
 - GED® Testing
 - College Credit
 - HSE + Career Readiness
- Provide training and targeted technical assistance on planning and implementing IET programming that meets local workforce area needs.

(4) Monitoring and evaluating the quality of, and improvement in, adult education and disseminate information about promising practices within Arizona:

- Assess the quality of the implementation of State Leadership activities and initiatives through the use of:
 - Analysis of evaluation surveys after training and PL events to determine satisfaction and ascertain if learning objectives were met;
 - Analysis of final reports and project summaries provided by local providers to assess the implementation of initiatives;
 - Analysis of applicable outcome data of participating providers to determine the impact to learners as a result of initiatives;
 - Site visits and classroom observations to document implementation of strategies learned; and

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- Teacher reflections to determine and identify implementation successes and challenges.
- Conduct the evaluation and monitoring of local providers as described below in Assessing Quality;
- Utilize information obtained during quality assessment, evaluation processes, and monitoring activities to identify promising practices; and
- Disseminate information about promising practices to local providers using a variety of strategies, including face-to-face and virtual training sessions, webinars, online courses, technical assistance, and written guidance.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

ADE/AES will use State Leadership funds to carry out *permissible* activities under Section 223 by using the prior PYs' qualitative and statistical trend data to identify areas of technical assistance and professional development for local providers. Training and other events are developed and/or facilitated by ADE/AES staff to further develop and support local Title II providers, and most initiatives meet the criteria for multiple required and permissible activities.

The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.

- Provide local programs with access to online curricula;
- WIOA Title II Local Provider Technical Assistance Guide and Arizona Shop Talk webinar series;
- Administrator Orientation and Refresher series;
- Annual Business Meeting;
- Online Assessment Coordinator course; and
- Online TABE proctor certification course.

The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.

- Digital Literacy Framework;
- Creating Effective IETs Training Series;
- Arizona Adult Education Institute, a three-day conference for Arizona Adult Education administrators, teachers, and support staff;
- Training sessions on implementing digital tools and increasing digital literacy; and
- Teachers 'n' Technology institute.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II. Describe how the eligible agency will take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA. Describe how the eligible agency will use evaluations, data analysis, program monitoring, or other methods to improve the quality of adult education activities in the State.

Arizona adult education providers are evaluated on both fiscal and programmatic areas based on a model incorporating these factors:

- A cyclical system for risk assessment and monitoring;
- Monthly desk-monitoring, including data analysis and technical assistance; and
- Evidence of high-quality, data-driven and research-based instruction that is aligned to content standards and professional learning standards, and that incorporates the standards for both digital literacy and employability skills.

Comprehensive case reviews are conducted on all funded providers. The case review includes an analysis of each local provider's prior-year performance data, applicable monitoring results and findings, professional learning plan, technology integration status, annual programmatic and fiscal reporting, and risk assessment. In addition, each provider's status regarding collaboration with WIOA core partners and IET implementation is reviewed. Local providers that do not meet the state performance measure targets, or who have been identified as having serious programmatic issues are placed on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Providers on CAPs work throughout the year with the Program Improvement Team to plan and implement improvement efforts. This team approach has been valuable in providing comprehensive targeted technical assistance to local providers. Additionally, it allows AES staff to gain a broader view of the dynamics of each local provider and deliver consistent messages regarding program improvement.

Monitoring for compliance with federal and state requirements is a critical part of the Arizona Adult Education Program Improvement model. Desk monitoring is conducted on all programs throughout the year, and on-site monitoring is conducted based on risk assessment results and/or issues identified during the case review process.

- **Desk Monitoring:** Monthly review and analysis of data management, submitted reports (both programmatic and fiscal), and ongoing teacher certification verification.
- **On-site Monitoring:** Field-based fiscal audits, A.R.S. § 15-232b mandated verification of eligibility for services, and complete programmatic monitoring annually based on an agency-developed risk assessment.
- **Monitoring Tool:** A monitoring tool aligned to grant assurances and requirements is utilized to ensure comprehensive monitoring of all funded providers. Results are shared with local providers to facilitate technical assistance and internal program improvement processes.

Program Reporting is part of the annual program improvement model. Each local program completes a comprehensive set of final reports on program operations, performance,

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professional learning, technology integration, and collaboration with core and required WIOA partners. As programs are completing their final reports, they are also developing the foundation for the upcoming PY's plan.

Data Management

The Arizona Adult Education Performance Accountability System is comprised of the following components to assess the effectiveness of local providers:

- A secure, web-based data management system that collects student demographic, participation, and outcome measures, including performance results as identified in the NRS;
- A cyclical system for technical assistance, monitoring, and compliance (as described above);
- Ongoing desk-monitoring and interventions for programs not demonstrating continuous achievement in student outcome measures; and
- Corrective Action Plan process to address program deficiencies in meeting outcome measures at the state's target levels.
 - Performance outcome measures consist of the following indicators:
 - Percentage of program participants who achieve at least one Measurable Skill Gain through
 - Educational Functioning Level gain;
 - Attainment of the HSE diploma;
 - 12 or more post-secondary credits;
 - Meeting employer established milestones in a workplace literacy program; or
 - Passing a knowledge-based exam for an industry recognized credential.
 - Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
 - Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
 - Median earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
 - Percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary credential; and
 - Percentage of program participants who, during a PY, are in education or training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials or

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employment, and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward credentials or employment.

Snapshot data are captured monthly by state staff through desk monitoring of each provider and are compared to previous month and year snapshots to determine performance trends and identify potential issues. Additionally, analyses of data at the state, program, site, and classroom level are used to inform technical assistance and training efforts.

Data Sharing

A data sharing agreement with ADES's UI Wage system for data matching for employment outcomes is in place, and the matching report is requested quarterly. This agreement is critical to supporting Arizona Adult Education's ability to report employment outcomes for individuals enrolled in Title II programs, and Arizona has a high rate of participants eligible for and in agreement to data sharing, allowing for minimal implementation of surveys for employment and wage information.

In addition to state UI information, ADE is a participant in the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) and with the National Student Clearinghouse for data matching for postsecondary outcomes. ADE-AES uses the service to support federally required follow-up measures in order to determine postsecondary achievements of students enrolled in Adult Education classes.

Evaluating Quality of Professional Development

ADE uses a variety of methods to assess the quality of its professional learning and technical assistance efforts, including: 1) Conducting evaluation surveys after training and professional development events to determine their effectiveness; 2) Requiring submission of final reports by local providers that are analyzed by ADE to assess the quality of implementation of initiatives, including implementation of professional learning and technology integration; 3) Analyzing applicable outcome data of participating providers to determine if there was an impact on learners as a result of an initiative; and 4) Conducting site visits and classroom observations to observe implementation of strategies learned.

Planning and implementing high-quality professional learning for adult educators is an integral component of an effective adult education program. It is also part of the Federal law and state grant requirements.

- The Title II: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires *the establishment or operation of high-quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b)*.
- The Arizona Department of Education – Adult Education Grant contract requires a minimum of 10% of the grant funds awarded to adult education providers, as well as earned income, to be expended for professional learning for adult educators that align and support the: *Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning*; the *Arizona Adult Education Teacher Standards*; and the *Arizona Adult Education Content Standards*. Additional information on the teaching and learning requirements and grant assurances are provided in the most recent **Arizona Adult Education Grant Contract**.
- The *AES Adult Education Professional Learning Implementation Plan* is to be considered a living document. The PL process is iterative and may need to be revised as new teachers

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are hired, program priorities change, or based on student outcomes data. Each of the steps in this planning guide will include a task to be completed and added to the *Professional Learning Implementation Plan*.

- Programs are required to develop, plan, and implement a bi-annual *Professional Learning Implementation Plan*. The proposed plan/s is submitted in the fall to the ADE-AES PL staff for review and feedback; and the final PL report is submitted in August, with the AES final reports.

Arizona reviews and evaluates the programs' Professional Learning Implementation plans and narrative reports and multiple measures of data, along with the state leadership priorities to inform the state office on the planned state leadership activities for the upcoming program year.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

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The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any

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Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant's Organization	Arizona Department of Education

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PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Beverly
Last Name	Wilson
Title	Deputy Associate Superintendent/State Director Adult Education
Email	Beverly.Wilson@azed.gov

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question,

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applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

GEPA Section 427 Instructions to State Applicants for their Subrecipient Applicants

The State grantee provides a subrecipient applicant seeking Federal assistance instructions and guidance for how it must comply with the GEPA Section 427 requirement. The State grantee determines the form and content of the information a subrecipient applicant must include in its application regarding the steps it proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, its local-level project or activity. For example:

- The State grantee may require its subrecipient applicant to use and submit the GEPA Section 427 form that it is required to submit to the Department; or
- The State grantee may use a State-developed form that is sufficient to meet the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- The State grantee maintains the subrecipient applicants' responses in the State office.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

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Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Non-Discrimination Policy: The ADE is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, the ADE commits itself to a policy of Non-Discrimination.

- ADE has developed this policy to ensure that all its employees can work in an environment free from harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.
- ADE will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all concerned are familiar with this policy and aware that any complaint of violation of such policies will be investigated and resolved appropriately.
- ADE will post the EO Policy Statement at the following locations:
 - Public website- <https://www.azed.gov/hr/>
 - ADE Internal website for employees
 - Employee bulletin boards at the four worksites (1535 West Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ; 3300 North Central, Phoenix, AZ; 1701 North Fourth Street., Flagstaff, AZ; 400 West Congress Street, Tucson, AZ)
- All employment announcements shall include the phrase, "The Arizona Department of Education is an EOE/ADA Reasonable Accommodation Employer."

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

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The ADE/AES Unit allocates and administers grant funds and provides program and performance oversight to grantees under WIOA Title II and A.R.S. § 15-232 and 5-234. ADE/AES is committed to equal access to eliminate barriers for all employees, students and the general public by all entities funded under these grant funds. The provisions and strategies below will help to ensure that the principles of equal access and non-discrimination are applied and implemented:

- Grantee is required to submit a GEPA Statement as part of the grant application process.
- Grantee signed assurances that ensure compliance with the Civil Rights Act, American Disabilities Act, GEPA, Uniform Guidance & Code of Federal Regulations, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- Annual training and state leadership activities are provided to grantees on program processes to support equal access and non-discrimination such as intake/orientation processes, providing accommodations and adaptations, utilizing assistive technology and implementing universal design strategies in the classroom.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

ADE-AES will monitor local providers to ensure equitable access and participation for program staff and adult learners. Technical assistance will be provided to remediate identified barriers to equitable access and participation.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have

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equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

The ADE-AES monitoring tool will be revised by July 1, 2024 to include Section 427 GEPA. Monitoring and technical assistance will be provided on an on-going basis.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

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The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each

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of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	50.0%	51.0%	51.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	50.0%	51.0%	51.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,600	\$8,600	\$8,815	\$8,815
Credential Attainment Rate	26.0%	26.0%	27.0%	27.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	45.0%	43.0%	46.0%	45.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
(COMBINED OR GENERAL)**

Some content in this area is under revision.

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

A. STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL.

Some content in this area is under revision.

1. ALL VR AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSION, MUST HAVE A STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (COUNCIL OR SRC) THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA IN SECTION 105 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPLICABLE, HAS:

Select A or B:

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(A) is an independent State commission

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSURANCE (A)(1)(B), IF SELECTED, PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVE TYPE, INCLUDING THE TERM NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE, AS APPLICABLE, AND ANY VACANCIES, AS WELL AS THE BEGINNING DATES OF EACH REPRESENTATIVE'S TERM.

Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

The narrative content below is under revision.

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	1	10/2023
Parent Training and Information Center	1	10/2024
Client Assistance Program	VACANT	
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	VACANT	
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	VACANT	
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	10/2025
Business, Industry, and Labor	VACANT	
Business, Industry, and Labor	VACANT	
Business, Industry, and Labor	VACANT	
Disability Advocacy Groups	3	10/2023,10/2023,10/2024

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Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services	VACANT	
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	1	10/2025
State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	1	10/2023
State Workforce Development Board	VACANT	
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	1	10/2022

3. IF THE SRC IS NOT MEETING THE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 105(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND/OR IS NOT MEETING QUARTERLY AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 105(F) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, PROVIDE THE STEPS THAT THE VR AGENCY IS TAKING TO ENSURE IT MEETS THOSE REQUIREMENTS.

The narrative content below is under revision.

Twelve individuals are pending appointment to the SRC. Four individuals have applied to fill the roles of Business/Industry Representative, five individuals have applied to fill the roles of Disability Advocacy and Specific Disability Representatives, one individual has applied to fill the role of Client Assistance Program Representative, one individual has applied to fill the VR Counselor Representative role, and one individual has applied to fill the Current or Former Recipient of VR services role. Current members are allowed to maintain their positions while awaiting reappointment or replacement.

The SRC is one of 220 boards and commissions whose vacancies are filled through the Governor’s Office of Boards and Commissions application and interview process. All vacancies are listed on the Boards and Commissions website, Vacancies and Appointment Report, and interested individuals are encouraged to submit an application. Applications specific to the SRC’s the Client Assistance Program, Community Rehabilitation Provider, VR Counselor, Business and Industry Representatives and other Disability Advocacy representative vacancies have been submitted to the Office of Boards and Commissions. The length of time to fill vacancies on the SRC is dependent on the capacity of the Office of Boards and Commissions.

Arizona VR staff liaison to the SRC regularly checks via phone and email with the Boards and

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Commissions office to check the status of pending appointments. The VR staff liaison recently visited the Boards and Commissions office physically to reiterate that the SRC has many pending appointments and representation is vital for the coordination and delivery of Vocational Rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities across the State.

4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 101(A)(21)(A)(II)(III) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, INCLUDE A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT (INCLUDING HOW IT WAS OBTAINED) INTO THE STATE PLAN AND ANY STATE PLAN REVISIONS, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORTS, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS.

The SRC receives program updates from the VR Administrator and other program staff on a quarterly basis. Updates include information and statistics regarding VR performance measures, appeals, federal and state funding, spending strategies, strategic initiatives for VR as well as the Department of Economic Security (designated state agency), Client Satisfaction survey results, and the comprehensive statewide needs assessment. SRC is knowledgeable of the spending challenges faced by Arizona VR, as well as many other VR programs in recent years. The council is aware that at this time, additional funding is not necessarily of benefit to the program as Title I funding is sufficient to cover VR and Supported Employment expenditures for the foreseeable future. The decision to decline Title VI funds was included in this State Plan and made available for public comment in January 2024. In preparation for developing the current state plan, the SRC reviewed previous state plan recommendations, goals, and priorities as well as proposed initiatives for the current plan. SRC provided VR with feedback and recommendations for the goals, priorities and strategies identified in this plan via the SRC Council Liaison. SRC continues to recommend that VR:

- Continue collaborative efforts through WIOA for the purpose of increasing equitable access to services for individuals with disabilities, specifically students and transition-aged youth, and improving local education agency awareness of, and referrals to VR.
- Continue efforts to increase awareness and provide outreach regarding VR services to individuals with disabilities (including a broad spectrum of disability populations). Utilize low-cost outreach modes including social media, public service announcements, guest appearances on local television programs, announcements at professional sporting events, etc. in order to preserve funds for direct services provision.
- Continue efforts to identify and alleviate VR service provision barriers in Arizona.
- Continue to strive to meet performance indicators and update the SRC on strategies being implemented.
- Maintain partnerships with current Project 121 American Indian VR programs in Arizona and continue to identify opportunities and strategies to partner with tribes that do not have existing Project 121 programs

5. PROVIDE THE VR AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION FOR THE REJECTION OF ANY INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

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List each recommendation/input followed by the VR agency response

VR agrees with all recommendations provided by the SRC. The agreed upon goals, priorities and strategies outlined in section (c) of this plan address all recommendations. The SRC's recommendations and feedback, including the declination of Title VI funds noted in section (e), was included in the State Plan that was made available for public comment in January 2024. SRC was notified of the opportunity to review and submit additional comments during the public comment period.

SRC Recommendation 1: Continue collaborative efforts through WIOA for the purpose of increasing equitable access to services for individuals with disabilities, specifically students and transition-aged youth, and improving local education agency awareness of, and referrals to VR.

VR Response: VR agrees with the recommendation and continues to connect with schools regarding the development of Transition from School to Work agreements that benefit students with disabilities. VR's dedicated Transition team is partnering with the Arizona Department of Education to better understand how VR can support students with disabilities during participation in Career and Technical Education programs and working with Project Search programs to increase enrollment and opportunities for students. Expanding Pre-ETS continues to be a focus and the team is in the process of finalizing a new agreement that will expand work-Based learning opportunities in Pima County.

SRC Recommendation 2: Continue efforts to increase awareness and provide outreach regarding VR services to individuals with disabilities (including a broad spectrum of disability populations). Utilize low-cost outreach modes including social media, public service announcements, guest appearances on local television programs, announcements at professional sporting events, etc. in order to preserve funds for direct services provision.

VR Response: VR agrees with the recommendation and continues to work with the internal Public Information Office to manage VR's public facing website and promote VR client success stories and other disability awareness activities through social media. VR has engaged a contractor to assist in developing a comprehensive outreach strategy and social media campaign that will increase awareness of RSA programs within specific populations (e.g. general, youth, medical providers, K-12 and post-secondary schools, potential business partners, early intervention groups, etc.), as well as the broader community.

SRC Recommendation 3: Continue efforts to identify and alleviate VR service provision barriers in Arizona.

VR Response: VR agrees with the recommendation and continues to offer virtual, in-office, and community-based services in order to better meet the needs of both clients and partners. VR has developed new vision and value statements that reflect the agency's increased focus on the delivery of high-quality vocational rehabilitation and excellent customer service. VR will be reviewing agency data, policies, and practices with the goal of identifying and removing unnecessary barriers to application, eligibility, IPE development and service provision.

SRC Recommendation 4: Continue to strive to meet performance indicators and update the SRC on strategies being implemented.

VR Response: VR agrees with the recommendation and is continuing to partner with the VRTAC-QM (federal technical assistance center) as well as internal data staff to review program

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performance data, identify barriers to successful achievement of negotiated performance measures, and train staff. The VR Administrator will continue to provide the SRC with updates on program performance and progress toward achievement of the negotiated measures.

SRC Recommendation 5: Maintain partnerships with current Project 121 American Indian VR Programs in Arizona and continue to identify opportunities and strategies to partner with tribes that do not have existing Project 121 Programs.

VR Response: VR agrees with the recommendation and maintains Memorandum of Understandings with the Navajo, White Mountain Apache, Hopi, Salt River Pima, and Tohono O'odham 121 programs. The MOU's maximize funds and resources of both the State and Tribal VR programs to co-serve American Indians with disabilities who reside within the state of Arizona. Each entity maintains sole responsibility to abide by all mandates set forth within the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Service collaboration, transition planning, and sharing of resources and training opportunities between the entities are hallmarks of these agreements.

VR currently is working collaboratively with the Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) to develop and implement unique opportunities to braid funding in order to support students with disabilities on Tribal lands. VR, Sonoran UCEDD, and Baboquivari High School successfully partnered to provide students on Tohono O'odham with transition services. VR, Sonoran UCEDD, and Navajo Nation are currently developing opportunities to jointly provide pre-employment transition services on the Navajo Nation.

B. COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CSNA).

Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

1. THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, INCLUDING:

A. INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT;

The following findings and recurring themes pertaining to individuals with the most significant disabilities and their need for Supported Employment emerged from Arizona's 2023 CSNA:

- Training in Supported Employment and Customized Employment is needed for all staff, community rehabilitation providers, and partners.
- Fear of benefit loss continues to impact the return-to-work behavior of SSA beneficiaries. There is a need for benefits planning for consumers and their families.
- Access to available, accessible and affordable transportation to work and appointments remains a significant need, especially in the rural areas.
- Work experience, assistive technology, soft skills, job search and placement assistance and job coaching were cited repeatedly as important rehabilitation needs. Individuals

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who experience mental health issues need access to more behavioral health services to support employment success.

- Individuals are in need of training in self-advocacy, as well as Financial literacy and empowerment training.
- Lack of job skills and work experience, as well as employer perceptions about employing people with disabilities are significant barriers to employment.
- Counseling staff need training in how to effectively meet the needs of individuals with multiple disabilities and intersecting needs.
- Assistive Technology (AT) is an important and needed service. Recipients need training in how to use the AT/ aids/devices prior to starting postsecondary education or job.

B. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from Arizona's 2023 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA):

- The rehabilitation needs of minorities or individuals from different ethnic groups did not differ significantly from other populations served by VR except for the need for language translators or bilingual staff working with them at VR or at service providers. Language barriers remain a challenge for non-English speakers with disabilities.
- Training in cultural awareness and how different cultural beliefs and practices impact individuals is needed for service providers and VR staff.
- Individuals with sensory impairments, especially Blind individuals and Deaf individuals, were cited as potentially undeserved because of staff shortages in these specialty units. In addition, there are not many providers that are fluent in American Sign Language or have experience working with blind individuals, which limits the availability and speed of service delivery.
- Individuals who are blind need more mobility training options and other adjustment to blindness training skills.

C. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from Arizona's 2023 CSNA:

- Individuals with disabilities who access the ARIZONA@WORK centers often find that there is no sign language interpreter available or up to date or working assistive technology. When an individual comes into an ARIZONA@WORK Center with a physical disability, or identifies as having a disability, the Center staff refer directly to VR without making an effort to work with the individual.
- VR leadership and ARIZONA@WORK leadership have a very good working relationship at the State and many local levels, and they were moving beyond a referral relationship prior to COVID, but the pandemic set back the progress made. Although consumers are

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referred to ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers, these are primarily for employment preparation workshops and not shared funding of cases or training.

- Community Rehabilitation Provider staff have little or no knowledge of how the ARIZONA@WORK Job Centers or WIOA partners work in their State.
- VR staff recognize that there is great benefit to being co-located at the job center and that this leads to collaborations and a higher likelihood that individuals with disabilities who access the Job Centers will receive services matched to their needs.
- It appears to VR staff that the Job Centers don't have a good working knowledge of working with people with disabilities and that they are not aware of the breadth and scope of VR services and the processes to make referrals. Cross-training remains a significant and ongoing need.

D. YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER IDEA.

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from Arizona's 2023 CSNA:

- The rehabilitation needs of youth and students with disabilities are similar to adults except they need more work experience and pre-employment transition services. The primary needs of transportation, work experience, work skills, soft skills, mental health concerns, assistive technology, and employers willing to give them a chance are the same as adults.
- VR has developed some innovative and impactful pre-employment transition services work-based learning programs, including Project SEARCH programs in partnership with the tribal 121 VR programs. These are commendable programs that provide rich learning experiences for students with disabilities.
- Youth and students with disabilities need more opportunities to participate in work preparation at the school level.
- More providers of pre-employment transition services are needed across the State.
- VR needs to be present at Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings in order to help with the transition process. The lack of staff, or turnover, at both VR and the schools during the pandemic, adversely impacted VR's presence at IEPs. It is important that VR be visible in these settings so that students, youth and their families understand the breadth of VR services available.
- Peer mentoring is a need for youth and students with disabilities as they need to have strong role models that show them what is possible for their future.
- Young people experiencing homelessness or who are in foster care (or aging out) are not as likely to have employment success because of the potential lack of family involvement.

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- Youth transitioning to postsecondary education settings are not getting connected with their needed accommodations in a timely manner because they do not have an identified person assisting them in this process like they did in secondary school.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from Arizona's 2023 CSNA:

- There is a need for more providers for all VR services in the rural areas of the State. In many places, there are simply no providers, especially for job coaching and Supported Employment.
- There is a significant need for Customized Employment providers. There are very few active in the State.
- Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) agencies appear to be in a staffing crisis since the pandemic. Staff turnover at CRPs has been significant and this affects wait times for services for all individuals referred.
- There is a need for more pre-employment transition services providers.
- There is a recurring concern that the quality of vendor services was weak, job placements are in low paying, high-turnover jobs, and it appears that CRPs need better training and incentives to develop higher quality placements.
- State imposed insurance requirements for vendors are expensive and difficult to obtain and may deter new vendors from applying.
- There is a need to streamline processes related to authorizing and paying for purchased services.

C. GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND STRATEGIES

Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of Section 116 of WIOA; and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE SRC AND THE VR AGENCY JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES AND ANY REVISIONS; AND

The SRC and VR agency engage in collaborative discussions regarding VR program performance, goals and priorities throughout the year. During every quarterly meeting, the council receives programmatic information and updates from the VR Administrator or other program staff on topics such as VR performance measures, appeals, federal and state funding, strategic initiatives, and Client Satisfaction survey results. Between August and December of 2023, VR staff and the SRC members began reviewing previous state plan recommendations, goals, strategies, and

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CSNA results in preparation for drafting the 2024 State Plan. Proposed goals and strategies included in this state plan were discussed during council meetings and council recommendations were submitted to VR, by the SRC, in December 2023. The SRC's recommendations and feedback were included in the State Plan that was made available for public comment in January 2024. SRC was notified of the opportunity to review and submit additional comments during the public comment period.

2. IDENTIFY MEASURABLE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND THE BASIS FOR SELECTING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES (E.G., CSNA, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, SRC RECOMMENDATIONS, MONITORING, OTHER INFORMATION). AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 101(A)(15)(D), (18), AND (23), DESCRIBE UNDER EACH GOAL OR PRIORITY, THE STRATEGIES OR METHODS USED TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OR PRIORITY, INCLUDING AS APPLICABLE, DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIES OR METHODS THAT—

- A. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES;
- B. OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ACCESSING VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;
- C. IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES); AND
- D. IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority

Goal 1: Reduce the percentage of participant attrition prior to IPE, thus increasing the percentage of individuals working toward achievement of an employment outcome.

Strategies:

- Conduct additional analysis to identify and address potential trends in closures without an employment outcome, specifically closures after eligibility but prior to signed IPE, and closures after implementation of the IPE but without employment.
- Utilize guidance from TAC-23-03 and TAC-24-01 to further identify and address unnecessary barriers and streamline processes for application, eligibility, IPE development and service provision.

This goal was based on program data from the RSA Data Dashboards, results and recommendations from the 2023 CSNA, and results from the SRC's Client Satisfaction Survey. Progress will be monitored through review of the RSA Data Dashboard metrics and Client Satisfaction survey results. If proposed strategies are successful, VR expects to see a decrease in the percentage of individuals existing prior to IPE. VR also anticipates an increase in timeliness

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of eligibility and IPE, as well as increase in client satisfaction as measured through the SRC's Client Satisfaction survey.

Goal 2: Improve access to services and support for individuals with disabilities across Arizona.

Strategies

- Develop and implement an annual marketing and outreach plan that includes targeted outreach to underserved populations and communities, students with disabilities, schools, partner agencies, and employers. Explore methods for tracking effectiveness of materials and activities.
- Expand Statewide Transition and Pre-ETS teams in order to provide targeted outreach to students with disabilities and technical assistance to Pre-ETS contracted providers.
- Continue partnering with Sonoran UCEDD to develop, implement, and sustain unique opportunities to braid funding in order to support students with disabilities on Tribal lands.
- Educate staff on partner agencies and community resources that individuals may be referred to for assistance with unmet needs (e.g. food, housing, childcare) while participating in the VR program.
- Re-establish VR staff position that will assist with addressing community rehabilitation provider needs, training, and communications.
- Develop and implement Customized Employment and enhanced Supported Employment services, as well as associated training for staff and vendors. Educate staff and vendors on utilization of these services as an alternative to Trial Work experiences.
- Continue providing Innovation and Expansion funds to Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) to assist with coordination of services for individuals with disabilities such as Youth Leadership Forum(s) and conference.

This goal was based on results and recommendations from the 2023 CSNA, ongoing staff/vendor feedback, and program data from the RSA Data Dashboards. Progress will be monitored through review of RSA Data Dashboard metrics, program management reports, and agency scorecards (weekly/monthly metric trackers). If proposed strategies are successful, VR expects to see an increase in the number of VR applicants and students with disabilities receiving Pre-ETS. Other indicators of success would include statewide implementation of Customized Employment and enhanced Supported Employment services, increase in collaborative projects with Tribal VR programs, and positive feedback from staff and vendors regarding contracted services.

Goal 3: Meet or exceed negotiated WIOA Performance Measures.

Strategies:

- Utilize technical assistance and training available through VRTAQ-QM to further educate staff on WIOA performance measures and reporting requirements.

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- Simplify and streamline required data collection, reporting of performance measures, and methods for obtaining supporting documentation through implementation of a modernized case management system.
- Review current policy, procedures, and best practices and address any unnecessary barriers to services and supports that assist individuals in preparing for quality employment outcomes and contribute to achievement of negotiated performance measures.

This goal is based on program data from the RSA Data Dashboards. Progress will be monitored through review of RSA Data Dashboard Performance metrics (in comparison to negotiated performance measures), program management reports, and agency scorecards (weekly/monthly metric trackers). If proposed strategies are successful, VR expects to meet or exceed negotiated performance measures.

D. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

For the most recently completed program year, provide an evaluation and report of progress for the goals or priorities, including progress on the strategies under each goal or priority, applicable to that program year. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe—

1. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED FOR THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS;

List the goals/priorities and discuss the progress or completion of each goal/priority and related strategies

Goal 1: Increase employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Overall Progress: Program data shows that individuals with the most significant disabilities have made up approximately 88% of closures with employment since the start of the pandemic.

Strategies:

- Capitalize on Arizona's Employment First Executive Order (2017-08) to educate and inform stakeholders, job seekers, staff, and employers about the services and supports available to support individuals with disabilities in employment.
 - Progress: VR continues to fund Arizona's Employment First Program Manager position through a cooperative agreement with Sonoran UCEDD. The Program Manager is employed by Sonoran UCEDD and engages with all stakeholders involved in improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Program Manager provides indirect services and is responsible for leading the Employment First Advisory Committee, convening stakeholders, increasing awareness of Employment First through provision of training and informational events, driving system/process changes, and addressing challenges impacting the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities. Deliverables such as maintaining an Employment First website, provision of resource material, conducting training and focus groups, responding to technical assistance

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requests are reported each quarter. During PY 2022, Employment First launched a new, updated website, inclusive FAQ's, short video vignettes, and other resources. VR and Sonoran UCEDD partnered to launch a monthly webinar series focusing on changing perceptions and promoting Employment First throughout the state. Twelve "Monday Mindset" webinars were provided to job developers, CRP staff, VR staff, and other interested stakeholders. Twenty to thirty individuals regularly participated in the Monday Mindset webinars. A working group of members from across various stakeholders formed an Employment First Action Committee focusing on Employment First messaging, training, community engagement, systems organization, and employment.

- Partner with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to increase staff knowledge regarding employment services available to individuals with significant disabilities and how to refer individuals to the VR Program.
 - Progress: VR continues to support two positions that are dedicated solely to enhancing the partnership between VR and the DDD Employment Services team, increasing DDD referrals to VR for Competitive Integrated Employment, and improving employment services to individuals served by both programs. The dedicated VR staff partner with DDD's Employment Services team to coordinate referrals, host quarterly education/information sessions for VR and DDD agency staff, provide consultation, and develop shared outreach materials and website content. Between PY 2021 and PY 2022, referrals from DDD to VR increased by more than 40%. The number of DDD clients determined eligible for VR increased by 28%, and the number of mutual clients placed in competitive integrated employment increased by 27%.
- Continue to research, pilot, and implement customized and supported employment best practices across the state.
 - Progress: During PY 2022, VR engaged in an extensive review of Customized Employment best practices and policies from other state VR agencies and leaders in Customized Employment. VR completed an internal assessment of current contracts and policies regarding Supported Employment services and partnered with Sonoran UCEDD to finalize a scope of work for the Customized Employment pilot. Pilot activities are currently underway and will continue through PY 2024.

Goal 2: Increase the satisfaction of individuals engaging with the VR Program.

Overall Progress: Results of the CSNA as well as SRC's Client Satisfaction Survey show that some progress has been made in this area. This goal remains important to VR and will continue to be pursued however will not be included as a stand-alone goal in the 2024 state plan.

Strategies:

- Ensure all staff complete internal 'Customer Service Excellence' training.

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- Progress: A full-day, interactive Customer Service training course is required to be completed by all staff within six months of hire. The course is taught and updated as needed by the DSA training department.
- Engage professional development organizations to assist VR in evaluating the agency's customer service needs and establishing agency-wide expectations for the delivery of customer service to individuals in the VR program, vendors, staff, employers, etc.
 - Progress: VR engaged Boston Massachusetts Institute for Community Inclusion for assistance with the development of agency vision and values statements, as well as training in the Tripartite model for supervision. ICI completed seven (7) training/development sessions with Arizona VR and trained 45 supervisors in the Tripartite model.
 - Partner with the State Rehabilitation Council to revise existing Client Satisfaction survey questions and explore new methods for data collection.
 - Progress: Updated survey was developed in partnership with the SRC and implemented in PY 2020. In PY 2022, a total of 1,889 surveys were sent and 164 responses were received, for a total response rate of 8.5%.
 - Open cases (132 responses):
 - 91% agree or strongly agree that they are treated with courtesy and respect by VR staff.
 - 76% agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the amount of contact they have with their VR counselor
 - 80% agree or strongly agree that their counselor provides them with assistance relevant to their situation.
 - 74% agree or strongly agree that they receive services in a timely manner.
 - 77% agree or strongly agree that they would recommend the VR program to another person.
 - Closed cases (32 responses):
 - 84% agree or strongly agree that they were treated with courtesy and respect by VR staff.
 - 71% agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the amount of contact they had with their VR counselor
 - 71% agree or strongly agree that their counselor provided them with assistance relevant to their situation.
 - 75% agree or strongly agree that they received services in a timely manner.

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- 76% agree or strongly agree that they would recommend the VR program to another person.
- Explore opportunities to recognize and reinforce the provision of excellent customer service.
 - Progress: The DSA has established a Department-wide Employee Engagement team and robust staff recognition program which is utilized by VR to celebrate and reward staff accomplishments.

Goal 3: Increase knowledge and abilities of ARIZONA@WORK Job Center staff to ensure all programs are accessible for individuals with disabilities.

Overall Progress: Results of the CSNA, SRC's Client Satisfaction Surveys, and verbal feedback from staff/stakeholders show that progress in this area is lacking.

Strategies:

- Provide consultation on appropriate assistive technology equipment and software and connect ARIZONA@WORK job center staff to disability resources.
 - Progress: Consultation and training services declined during the pandemic due to changes in service delivery and staffing shortages. In April 2023, VR developed and implemented a new contract to provide ARIZONA@WORK job centers with access to disability awareness training, on-site evaluation of assistive technology and subsequent recommendations for equipment and staff training, staff training on how to assist job seekers in using assistive technology available at the job center, and development of resources related to disability and assistive technology. Marketing of the available services was just getting underway at the end of PY 2022.
- Utilization of Business Outreach Representatives and internal Employment Specialists to further educate employers about the benefits of workforce diversification.
 - Progress: Business Outreach Representatives hosted many activities throughout the year to promote employment of individuals with disabilities. 'Employer Outreach' is a monthly meeting for employers on how to connect with job seekers, especially those who have disabilities to fill their employment needs and foster a diverse workforce. 'Third Thursdays at Three' is a monthly meeting for VR staff where a specific employer shares information about their company, current job openings, and interview process. These activities have fostered partnerships with Amazon, Walgreens and several other smaller employers. Business Outreach Representatives partner with other entities to host multiple job fairs throughout the year, including events specifically for youth in transition. Employment Specialists have also provided training and support to ARIZONA@WORK partners regarding various disability/employment related topics.

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2. PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR, REFLECTING ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE. EXPLAIN ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS; AND

Factors contributing to the failure to meet negotiated levels for Measurable Skill Gains include agency misunderstanding of data fields that contribute to the addition or removal of participants from the denominator count of participants. Staff workshops were conducted throughout PY2022 and materials are available to staff at any time. Staff inability to obtain supporting documentation such as transcript or diploma after the participant has completed the MSG has also been cited as a barrier to successfully claiming an MSG. VR continues to work with the IT support administration and VRTAC-QM to fully understand the data requirements and better analyze data submitted to improve performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY2022 Actual
Employment (second quarter after exit)	35%	47.1%
Employment (fourth quarter after exit)	36.5%	40.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after exit)	\$3,940	\$4,978
Credential Attainment Rate	21%	24.8%
Measurable Skills Gains	49.5%	23.4%

3. THE USE OF FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES (SECTIONS 101(A)(18) AND 101(A)(23) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT) (E.G., SRC, SILC).

Innovation and Expansion funds were provided to the Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council (AZSILC) to assist in the provision of allowable activities for Independent Living. In PY 2022, VR provided \$224,917 to the AZSILC to support the development of the Resource Plan and implementing activities. The AZSILC has a robust State Plan for Independent Living through collaboration with five Centers for Independent Living serving all 15 counties. The AZSILC has four ambitious goals and 21 objectives to educate individuals with disabilities on the Independent Living philosophy; collaborate with other entities and agencies to mitigate healthcare, housing, transportation, and employment barriers; develop Youth Leaders through the provision of Youth Leadership Forums, Youth Engagement Academies, and Youth Leadership Initiatives; and develop responsive and innovative practices specifically related to Emergency Preparedness and access to healthcare.

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E. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS, AND ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF TITLE VI FUNDS:

(B) VR agency does NOT elect to receive title VI funds and understands that supported employment services must still be provided

2. IF THE VR AGENCY HAS ELECTED TO RECEIVE TITLE VI FUNDS, SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRES VR AGENCIES TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. DESCRIBE THE USE OF TITLE VI FUNDS AND HOW THEY WILL BE USED IN MEETING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

Not Applicable

3. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MAY BE PROVIDED WITH TITLE 1 OR TITLE VI FUNDS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(22) AND SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, DESCRIBE THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES; AND THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

Quality

VR provides Supported Employment services to eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities. Supported Employment services are planned and authorized by VR staff and provided through contracted providers. Upon contract award, providers receive training on the scope of work and service requirements from VR's Managed Service Provider and VR staff. As of May 2024, 62 vendor agencies are contracted to provide supported employment job coaching and extended services (for youth with the most significant disabilities). Services and providers are available in every county across the state. Job coaching providers working directly with individuals are required to have at minimum, a high school diploma and several years of experience working with individuals with disabilities. VR utilizes a contract monitoring unit who conduct annual desk and site audits in order to ensure compliance with contract requirements.

For individuals in need of Supported Employment, VR staff, the individual (and guardian, if necessary), and provider work together to develop an agreed upon plan for delivery of services. Providers are required to report activity to VR staff on a monthly basis. VR staff are responsible to review the monthly activity and approve the service costs or request a meeting to revise the service plan goals and objectives. During PY 2022, 338 individuals in Supported Employment plans exited the VR program with competitive integrated employment.

Expanding and improving Supported and Customized Employment services remains a priority for VR and a new Customized Employment scope of work is currently being piloted through

Sonoran UCEDD. VR has also begun an internal review of service-related policies and data with the goal of reducing barriers and enhancing data integrity.

Scope

VR utilizes a consistent process of eligibility and Order of Selection determination for all individuals. An individual with the most significant disability who needs intensive VR services in order to obtain and maintain competitive and integrated employment is considered to be in need of Supported Employment services. Individuals who are determined to need Supported Employment services have access to the full scope of VR services. Individuals and staff will work to identify a financial or natural resource to provide ongoing support services as needed once VR services have concluded.

Financial resources include long term extended support services provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) or Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). Additional sources such as a Plan to Achieve Self-Sufficiency or Impairment Work Related Expense plan is available to individuals who receive Social Security award monies. VR holds agreements with six Employment Networks who may support individuals in employment after case closure from VR. Natural support in an employment setting can be developed while the individual is receiving VR supported employment services. VR staff may also provide training to managers, supervisors, and coworkers in order to develop natural support within the competitive and integrated employment setting.

Extent

VR recognizes Supported Employment as a viable employment option as long as the employment outcome meets the criteria of providing competitive wages in an integrated setting. Supported Employment services may be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities by VR for up to 24 months or longer, if necessary and agreed upon by the individual and VR staff.

Timing of Transition to Extended Services

During development of the Individualized Plan for Employment, VR works with an individual to assess the need for Supported Employment and extended services. If Supported Employment and extended services are determined to be necessary, VR and the individual explore potential sources of extended services which may include alternative funding sources such as AHCCCS, DDD and natural supports. Once the individual obtains employment, Supported Employment services are provided for up to 24 months (or longer if necessary and an exception is approved) to assist the individual in achieving stable employment prior to transitioning to extended services. During the provision of supported employment services, the individual is provided with job training, coaching, observation, and/or follow-up services to reinforce and stabilize the employment through on-worksite monitoring or off-site meetings between the individual and VR staff or vendor. The individual is considered stable in their employment when a reduction in support services has occurred and a continuing level of support has been identified and the individual has achieved the highest level of independence on the job, as determined by the individual, job coach, and Staff.

Once an individual is determined to be stable in their employment, a meeting is held with the individual, VR staff, and the extended service provider. If all parties are in agreement that the

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individual is stable in their employment and can be transitioned to extended services, responsibility for the funding for job coaching and extended services is transferred to the extended service provider. If the individual is a youth with a disability and no other source of extended services is available, VR will provide extended services for up to four years or until the youth reaches the age of 25, whichever happens first. If the individual is transitioned to non VR funded extended services, VR staff monitor the individual's progress and job stability over the next 90 days. At the conclusion of the 90 day period, if the individual remains stable in the job and the team agrees, the case will be closed as meeting an employment outcome.

4. SECTIONS 101(A)(22) AND 606(B)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRE THE VR AGENCY TO DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND ARRANGE, INCLUDING ENTERING INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. THE DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE EXTENDED SERVICES, AS APPLICABLE, TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 363.4(A) AND 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(C)(19)(V).

Individuals eligible for Supported Employment services must have a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits three or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in the context of an employment outcome; and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time (6 months or longer). If an individual meets this criterion, they may receive Supported Employment services available through VR for up to 24 months, or longer, if an extension of time is necessary and agreed upon by VR and the individual. The individual may also receive Extended Services funded through another source such as the Arizona Healthcare Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) or, if the individual is not younger than 14 and not older than 24, they may also receive extended services provided by VR for up to four years or until the age of 25.

During development of the Individualized Plan for Employment, VR works with an individual to assess the need for Supported Employment and extended services. If Supported Employment and extended services are determined to be necessary, VR and the individual explore potential sources of extended services which may include alternative funding sources such as AHCCCS (which funds extended services provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (behavioral health clinics), and natural supports such as family, friends, an employer, etc. VR, DDD, and behavioral health clinics encourage contracted providers to contract with all partner agencies in order to ensure consistent service delivery and a seamless transition from supported employment to extended services for the individual. Extended services typically consist of a minimal but consistent amount of job coaching per month for as long as the individual needs to maintain employment.

Community Rehabilitation Program providers state contracts

VR contracts with Community Rehabilitation Program providers to ensure supported employment services are available to individuals with disabilities across the state. As of May 2024, 62 contracted providers offer supported employment job coaching and extended services

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(for youth) to individuals with the most significant disabilities. Services are available in every county in the state. Additional collaboration to identify resources for individuals with significant disabilities, including youth with significant disabilities, continues to be explored within the Arizona Department of Economic Security, with other state agencies, and within the individual's own support network.

Collaboration with AHCCCS (Arizona's Medicaid Agency)

VR has an Interagency Service Agreement with AHCCCS that details the coordination of services, including the provision of supported employment and extended services, to individuals designated with a Serious Mental Illness. VR has a Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator and Specialist who are responsible for implementation of the agreement between VR and AHCCCS. This team provides guidance and technical assistance to staff from both VR and behavioral health to ensure referrals and service delivery are streamlined and effective for the identified population. Designated VR staff are assigned to behavioral health clinical teams in every county throughout the state in order to enhance service delivery, customer satisfaction, and successful outcomes through the provision of vocational rehabilitation and supported employment services.

The Interagency Service Agreement with AHCCCS includes the provision of funding for extended services by the designated behavioral health provider. Extended services funded through behavioral health are available in every county. The assigned VR staff coordinate the extended services with the behavioral health clinical team in order to ensure the services continue to be provided once the individual exits the VR program. The individual will receive extended services funded by AHCCCS for the duration of their participation in behavioral health services.

Collaboration with the Arizona Department of Developmental Disabilities

A Memorandum of Understanding between VR and the Arizona DDD describes the cooperation and coordination from referral through supported employment and extended services for individuals with developmental disabilities. VR has a Statewide Developmental Disabilities Coordinator and Specialist dedicated to the oversight and implementation of the agreement between VR and DDD. These positions work closely with the DDD Employment Services team to provide guidance and technical assistance to staff from both VR and DDD to ensure referrals and service delivery are streamlined and effective for the identified population. Direct service staff in each local VR office have been identified to serve individuals referred from DDD.

The memorandum between VR and DDD includes provision of DDD funded extended services for individuals who are eligible for Arizona Long term Care System (ALTCS). Extended services funded by DDD are available in every county. The transition from supported employment to extended services is coordinated with DDD in order to ensure continuation of services after closure from VR.

Collaboration with Employment Networks

VR has six Memorandum of Understandings with local providers for the provision of ongoing Partnership Plus services. Dedicated VR staff continue to encourage provider agencies to become Employment Networks through the Social Security Ticket to Work program. Provider agencies will then provide extended support following the successful conclusion of VR services to individuals who are Ticket to Work participants.

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F. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

1. ESTIMATES FOR NEXT FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR—

A. VR PROGRAM; AND

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
1	11947	11947	\$34,506,427	0
2	1617	1617	\$3,470,205	0
3	190	190	\$366,883	0
Totals:	13,754	13,754	\$38,343,515	0

B. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
1	970	970	\$5,969,710	0

G. ORDER OF SELECTION

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1. PURSUANT TO SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, THIS DESCRIPTION MUST BE AMENDED WHEN THE VR AGENCY DETERMINES, BASED ON THE ANNUAL ESTIMATES DESCRIBED IN DESCRIPTION (F), THAT VR SERVICES CANNOT BE PROVIDED TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR AND ARE DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

The VR agency is not implementing an order of selection and all eligible individuals will be served.

2. FOR VR AGENCIES THAT HAVE DEFINED PRIORITY CATEGORIES DESCRIBE—

A. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

Arizona VR maintains an order of selection as state appropriations have remained consistent since 2009. All priority categories have been open since March 2020 and no order of selection is being implemented at this time.

B. THE ORDER (PRIORITY CATEGORIES) TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

AZ VR has three Priority Categories within the Order of Selection:

- Priority Category 1: Eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities.
 - An individual with a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits three or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in the context of an employment outcome; and whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time (6 months or longer).
- Priority Category 2: Individuals with significant disabilities
 - An individual with a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time (6 months or longer). Note: An individual who has been determined eligible for Social Security benefits under title II or title XVI of the Social Security Act is considered an individual with a significant disability.
- Priority Category 3: All other eligible individuals with disabilities
 - An individual with a physical or mental impairment that seriously limits at least one functional capacity in terms of an employment outcome; whose VR can be expected to require at least one VR service.

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C. THE VR AGENCY'S GOALS FOR SERVING INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, INCLUDING HOW THE AGENCY WILL ASSIST ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED TO CLOSED PRIORITY CATEGORIES WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRAL, THE METHOD IN WHICH THE VR AGENCY WILL MANAGE WAITING LISTS, AND THE PROJECTED TIMELINES FOR OPENING PRIORITY CATEGORIES. NOTE: PRIORITY CATEGORIES ARE CONSIDERED OPEN WHEN ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE PRIORITY CATEGORY MAY BE SERVED.

As of March 2020, all individuals who are determined eligible begin to receive services immediately. Fiscal forecasts for FFY 2024 and FFY 2025 show that VR will have sufficient funds to continue serving all eligible individuals without implementation of the order of selection. VR's goals for FFY 2024 and 2025 are to increase the number of potentially eligible and eligible individuals receiving services under the VR program.

3. HAS THE VR AGENCY ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE OF THE ORDER OF SELECTION WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT?

No

H. WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS.

The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive compliance with this requirement in accordance with Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of statewideness or has a previously approved waiver of statewideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of statewideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of statewideness, please indicate "not applicable."

VR is requesting a waiver of state wideness. VR has entered into 32 Interagency Transfer Agreements (ITAs) with Public Education Agencies in Arizona to facilitate a seamless transition of students with disabilities from high school to employment (also known as Transition School to Work or TSW). Each agreement has an associated budget and the agreed upon non-federal funds are transferred from the Public Education Agency to VR on a quarterly basis.

All requirements as listed in the VR services portion of the Unified State Plan, as well as all VR eligibility and order of selection criteria will apply to the individuals and services provided under the Interagency Transfer Agreements (ITAs) for Transition School to Work (TSW). Services outlined in the ITA/TSW agreements will not be provided to an individual unless that individual is eligible for VR and in an Order of Selection priority category that is open for services.

The TSW programs operated through the ITAs serve high school students with disabilities who are eligible for VR and not on an Order of Selection waitlist (pre-employment transition services for potentially eligible students with disabilities who are enrolled in educational programs are provided outside of these specific TSW programs). The enhanced TSW services provided by the participating high schools are structured and goal oriented vocational-educational services and assist the students in developing work readiness skills, selecting their vocational goals, and

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preparing them for a successful transition from school to work. All services are approved by VR prior to provision and individualized VR services are provided as described on an approved Individualized Plan for Employment. Students in the TSW programs receive services that lead to the acquisition of knowledge/skills in the following areas:

- Self-assessment (interest inventories, learning styles, aptitudes, strengths), disability awareness and personal accommodations for disability, self-determination skills, career exploration;
- Disability awareness and building skills in self-determination, identification of career goals, including a complete labor market research, initial development of job readiness skills;
- Identification of post-secondary education/training opportunities, including training and funding options, career tracks, development of résumé/cover letter writing skills, practice in mock interviews, and familiarity with filling out job applications;
- Knowledge of how to apply to training institutions, how to apply for scholarships and Pell Grants, how to obtain accommodations for their disabilities, how to perform job searches (for either paid employment or community service);
- Development of a portfolio to record the skill building process with an end goal of self-actualization and successful career planning. The content of the portfolio will meet individual student needs; each portfolio will contain individualized information similar to the following:
 - Self-Awareness (Orientation and Adjustment to Disability) content including but not limited to: student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), assessment results, abilities, interests, and independent living skills addressed; transportation;
 - Career Exploration including but not limited to: career path research, informational interview reports, financial planning, student's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE);
 - Job Readiness including but not limited to: Job Applications, information regarding post-secondary school choices, Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and other financial aid information, resume, interview skills, IPE amendments (if applicable);
 - Work Experience including but not limited to: campus and/or community work experience, career planning, issue resolution, job shadowing, volunteer experiences, IPE amendments (if applicable);
 - Post High School Plan including but not limited to: Contact information for VR counselor, Community Career Center and Disability Support Services, Supported Education at Post Secondary School (if applicable).

TSW school districts provide 42.6%, non-federal funds, of the agreed upon TSW Budget. TSW budgets can be amended at any time.

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School	Number of Students	Budget SFY 2024	Non Federal-Match SFY 2024	Total Federal Funds - ITA School Budget funds + RSA Administrative funds
Agua Fria Union High School District #216	45	\$160,349.82	\$68,309.02	\$126,195.30
Arizona State School for the Deaf and Blind: Phoenix Day School for the Deaf	30	\$629,696.86	\$268,250.86	\$495,571.43
Benson Unified School District #9	13	\$103,822.62	\$41,928.04	\$81,708.40
Blue Ridge Union School District #32	20	\$92,228.00	\$39,289.13	\$72,583.44
Buckeye Union High School District #201	72	\$516,004.05	\$198,517.72	\$406,095.19
Catalina Foothills Unified School District #16	40	\$221,713.26	\$94,449.85	\$174,488.34
County of Maricopa -Cave Creek Unified School District	40	\$136,074.59	\$57,967.78	\$107,090.70
Chino Valley Unified School District #51	30	\$203,735.84	\$86,791.47	\$160,340.11
County of Maricopa -Deer Valley Unified School District #97	400	\$1,234,006.40	\$525,686.73	\$971,163.04
Flagstaff Unified School District	215	\$912,020.70	\$347,085.03	\$717,760.29

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School	Number of Students	Budget SFY 2024	Non Federal-Match SFY 2024	Total Federal Funds - ITA School Budget funds + RSA Administrative funds
#1				
Flowing Wells Unified School District #8	40	\$171,889.85	\$73,225.08	\$135,277.31
Pinal County Schools- Florence Unified School District #1	68	\$288,086.06	\$122,724.06	\$226,723.73
Glendale Union High School District	120	\$969,949.56	\$413,198.51	\$763,350.30
Higley School District #60	20	\$225,945.00	\$85,602.57	\$177,818.72
County of Yavapai-Humboldt Unified School District	30	\$268,432.12	\$114,352.08	\$211,256.08
Mesa Unified School District #4	216	\$1,145,154.71	\$486,131.91	\$901,236.76
County of Gila, Miami Unified School District #40	15	\$76,835.88	\$32,732.08	\$60,469.84
Nogales Unified School District #1	40	\$188,402.37	\$80,259.41	\$148,272.67
Peoria Unified School District #11	352	\$1,026,084.58	\$414,481.43	\$807,528.56
Prescott Unified School District #1	40	\$101,738.83	\$43,340.74	\$80,068.46

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School	Number of Students	Budget SFY 2024	Non Federal-Match SFY 2024	Total Federal Funds - ITA School Budget funds + RSA Administrative funds
Scottsdale Unified School District #48	100	\$513,758.04	\$218,860.92	\$404,327.58
Snowflake Unified School District #5	12	\$73,294.06	\$31,223.27	\$57,682.43
Sunnyside Unified School District # 12	150	\$666,304.45	\$280,778.50	\$524,381.60
St. David Unified School District #21	14	\$108,159.83	\$46,076.09	\$85,121.79
County of Maricopa-Tempe Unified School District #213	200	\$1,072,666.44	\$454,825.90	\$844,188.49
Tombstone Unified School District #1	15	\$75,865.19	\$30,018.17	\$59,705.90
Tucson Unified School District #1	300	\$2,200,000.04	\$937,200.02	\$1,731,400.03
Arizona State School For The Deaf and Blind (Tucson ASDB)	61	\$822,501.16	\$350,385.49	\$647,308.41
Vail Unified School District #20	200	\$847,883.57	\$361,198.40	\$667,284.37
Valley Union High School District #22	20	\$30,551.67	\$13,015.01	\$24,044.16
Wilcox Unified School District	30	\$56,356.90	\$24,008.04	\$44,352.88

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School	Number of Students	Budget SFY 2024	Non Federal-Match SFY 2024	Total Federal Funds - ITA School Budget funds + RSA Administrative funds
Totals	2948	\$14,851,783.66	\$6,219,340.85	\$11,688,353.74

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency’s comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the State VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

1. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PERSONNEL AND PROJECTED PERSONNEL NEEDS INCLUDING—

A. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

B. THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF PERSONNEL THAT ARE EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING RATIOS OF QUALIFIED VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS;

C. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

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Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
VR Counselor	176	212	235
Program Supervisor	32	32	37
Rehabilitation Service Technician	42	56	66

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Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years

D. RATIO OF QUALIFIED VR COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS:

Approximately 1:78

E. PROJECTED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED IN 5 YEARS:

VR anticipates serving approximately 13,780 individuals during PY 2028.

2. DATA AND INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

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Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
University of Arizona	Rehabilitation Studies and Services BS	64	20
University of Arizona	Counseling-Rehabilitation and Mental Health MA	4	27
University of Arizona	Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	27	0
University of Arizona	Counselor Education & Supervision Ph.D.	12	2

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Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
University of Arizona	Special Education and Rehabilitation minor	0	0

B. THE VR AGENCY'S PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, WHICH ADDRESSES THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL; AND THE COORDINATION AND FACILITATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO RECRUIT, PREPARE, AND RETAIN PERSONNEL WHO ARE QUALIFIED, INCLUDING PERSONNEL FROM MINORITY BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONNEL WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

VR established and implemented promotional tiers for VR counseling staff several years ago and continues to explore ways to attract and retain current and future employees. VR advertises job openings on state and public-facing job boards as well as the CRCC website. VR plans to begin using the Payback Information Management System (PIMS) to post job openings and recruit graduates of rehabilitation programs across the county.

VR works closely with the University of Arizona to provide internship opportunities for students in the rehabilitation counseling degree programs. VR hires interns whenever possible and seeks to continue using the internships to recruit qualified personnel.

VR seeks to attract and retain a diverse workforce by offering remote and hybrid work options, Infant at Work programs, generous vacation and sick leave, tuition reimbursement, rideshare and public transit subsidies, stipends for qualified bilingual staff, and accommodations for disability related needs. VR regularly informs members of various councils (SRC, SILC, Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment) of vacant positions. VR continues to actively work with the DSA human resources departments to ensure job boards, position announcements, and position requirements are fully accessible and do not pose additional barriers to employment. The VR program represents the highest number of staff with disabilities of all of the units within the DSA.

C. DESCRIPTION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY RECEIVE APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS:

I. PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

II. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO VR AGENCY PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS AND FOR PROVIDING TRAINING REGARDING THE AMENDMENTS TO

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THE REHABILITATION ACT MADE BY THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

Upon hire, VR ensures all rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals develop the skills and abilities necessary to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment in the evolving labor force by training staff in the following topic areas:

- Referral, Application, and Intake
- Informed Choice and Vocational Counseling
- Eligibility and Order of Selection
- VR Services
- IPE Planning and Development;
- Job Readiness
- Managing the Electronic Case File
- Voter Registration
- Disability Awareness
- Ticket to Work
- Assessments
- Case Closure
- WIOA Law and Regulations
- Strengthening Communications
- Customer Service Excellence
- WIOA Partners and Programs
- Exploring Career Pathways
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Limited English Proficiency
- Fair Labor Standards
- Diversity
- Records Management

In addition to new hire training, VR maintains a long standing Interagency Service Agreement with the University of Arizona to provide graduate level coursework for VR staff seeking to meet requirements to sit for the national Certified Rehabilitation Counselor exam. The agreement includes the provision of quarterly workshops for all VR staff regarding relevant rehabilitation topics such as motivational interviewing, counseling techniques, and medical aspects of

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disability. Continuing education credits for the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification are available for workshop participants.

VR maintains a contract with the Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI) to provide staff with training and resources in the areas of disability awareness and assistive technology. Staff attend the annual Assistive Technology conference, a collaboration between VR and Arizona Technology Access Program to learn about assistive technology through hands-on/virtual experiences. Additional conferences are available throughout the year to educate staff on specific disability populations, cultural awareness, and transition aged youth.

To further assist in the understanding of employer needs, current labor market trends, and on the job accommodations, the Employer Outreach Representatives host conference calls with employers once per month. During these calls, VR staff and employers exchange information regarding employer needs, how to best prepare individuals with disabilities to meet those needs, available accommodations, and training opportunities.

VR staff have always been encouraged to participate in internal and external professional development opportunities. In PY 2020, VR purchased the YesLearning Management System (YesLMS) system in order to provide VR specific, virtual training opportunities for staff. Participation is tracked through the YesLMS system. In PY 2022, the VR Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) partnered with YesLMS to share a number of courses in Ethics and Supervision, RSA Data, Pre-ETS, Performance Management and Rapid Engagement.

Information, training announcements, and resources are regularly sent to all staff through a weekly email from agency leadership. Local offices and other units host weekly huddles (short meetings) to ensure all staff are aware of important information and updates. VR staff specializing in services to transition aged youth, behavioral health, and intellectual/developmental disabilities host monthly meetings where staff learn best practices, problem-solve challenging situations, and share resources. VR is also planning an agency wide staff conference to occur in 2024.

3. DESCRIPTION OF VR AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B) TO ENSURE THAT VR AGENCY PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND PREPARED, INCLUDING—

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

VR considers it a priority to hire and retain personnel who meet national standards for rehabilitation counseling. The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor certification is the

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standard VR utilizes to set the highest level of qualified staff standard for VR rehabilitation professionals. VR staff positions are structured to align with the WIOA Comprehensive System of Personnel Development standards and are strategically tiered to offer a career ladder for individuals interested in obtaining additional education and certification. This structure allows the agency to maintain and attract Certified Rehabilitation Counselors as well as entry and mid level staff who satisfy the minimum WIOA education and experience requirements.

VR seeks to ensure all VR staff have an appropriate understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities, through the maintenance of education and experience personnel requirements, as well as requirements for ongoing training and professional development. These personnel requirements are outlined in the agency's job descriptions and annual performance appraisals, verified throughout the hiring process and during the annual review cycle, and are reinforced and expanded upon through additional training, policies and procedures.

Basic education requirements for VR staff include:

- Entry VR Staff: Bachelor's degree in a field of study reasonably related to rehabilitation counseling or another field that reasonably prepares individuals to work with individuals with disabilities and employers and two years of experience working with individuals with disabilities.
- Intermediate VR Staff: Master's degree in a field of study closely related to rehabilitation counseling and one year of experience working with individuals with disabilities.
- Senior VR Staff: Meets Intermediate credential requirements and has a current CRC certification.

Requirements related to the knowledge, skills and abilities for all levels of VR staff include:

- Knowledge of Federal and State laws, statutes, rules, regulations pertaining to VR services; At least one year of case management experience; Experience working with individuals with disabilities; Broad knowledge of physical, mental, and cognitive disabilities; Familiar with referral and community resources; Understands computer access technology and assistive aids & devices; Knowledge of occupational opportunities and labor market trends; Ability to motivate individuals in achieving goals; Effective oral and written communication; Strong time management skills; Resourceful and problem solver; and Excellent interpersonal skills.

4. METHOD(S) THE VR AGENCY USES TO ENSURE THAT PERSONNEL ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE IN APPROPRIATE MODES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OR IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS OR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY.

VR utilizes several mechanisms in order to best serve applicants who use alternate modes of communication or have limited English proficiency. The Arizona state personnel system facilitates the recruitment of qualified bilingual and American Sign Language certified staff and a stipend is available for those who qualify. These efforts continue to increase the number of employees who communicate in multiple languages in offices across the State. All staff are trained to serve individuals with limited English proficiency and have received supplemental

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instruction specific to VR limited English proficiency policies and procedures. Staff who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing or who are serving individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing have access to video phones as well as laptops and cell phones outfitted with the software necessary to successfully engage with others. Staff are provided with computers, video phones, cell phones, accessibility-related software, note takers, and other devices as needed.

VR contracts with multiple vendors who can assist in face to face and virtual translation, Video Remote Interpreting (VRI), language phone line translation/interpretation and written translation of critical documents.

Video phones are available in local offices to provide Video Relay Services (VRS) for phone calls and teleconference meetings. All VR materials can be made available in alternative formats and are consistently made available in large print and Spanish. Each district has access to Braille materials and the ability to provide print material in alternative languages and formats per individual and staff request.

In addition to offering accessible training via virtual platforms such as ZOOM (CART/ASL are provided by VR for VR training) and YES LMS, VR maintains in person training sites throughout the state. Each training site is equipped with computers, accessibility related software and other devices as needed for accommodation purposes. Assistive listening and visual aid devices and other equipment and software are provided at all training sessions upon request from training participants.

5. AS APPROPRIATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

VR works closely with the ADE Exceptional Student Services to provide opportunities to remain current in transition policies and procedures. An Interagency Service Agreement exists that outlines cross training opportunities between partners. VR and ADE collaborate annually to provide a transition conference which serves to bring the community of providers together to learn about national policies, trends and best practices in serving youth with disabilities. Additionally, VR partners with ADE in providing training throughout the year on how VR services can contribute to Secondary Transition IEP Requirements and Post School Outcomes.

J. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act—

1. DESCRIBE PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATION OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THAT ARE DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM THE RECEIPT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES.

VR is part of a multi-agency Interagency Service Agreement that encourages and facilitates the cooperation and collaboration between VR, DDD, and the Public Education Agencies (PEAs), represented by the ADE. The vision for the agreement is to facilitate a seamless transition of high school students with disabilities from secondary school to employment with the intent of maximizing their employability and integration into the workforce and community. The current

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agreement between VR, DDD, and ADE was executed on June 27, 2022. The Interagency Service Agreement serves to establish a statewide, interagency system of transition services in order to facilitate service provision in the following areas:

- Technical assistance and consultation;
- Outreach and identification of students;
- Referral of individuals;
- Joint planning; and
- Scope of individualized services.

Under the umbrella of the agreement, VR provides coordinated transition services to all secondary schools throughout the state. VR has dedicated staff assigned to every school district statewide and these staff work collaboratively with students and school staff to coordinate on and off campus delivery of Pre- ETS, VR orientations, eligibility determinations, IPE planning, and VR service provision. VR works to engage students as early as possible within their high school experience for the purpose of providing Pre- ETS (Pre-ETS) to potentially eligible and eligible students with disabilities. VR's eligibility and order of selection criteria are applied to transition youth in the same manner as they are to all other individuals who apply for VR services. VR staff work with school staff to identify the transition services being provided by the school to avoid duplication of services.

Students who are eligible to receive VR services are assisted in developing an IPE as soon as possible during the transition planning process, but at the latest, before exiting high school. To assist in the identification of an employment goal and completion of the IPE prior to exiting high school, VR coordinates with school staff to engage students with disabilities in Pre-ETS and other VR services as appropriate to explore interests and abilities, learn about career pathways, increase self-determination knowledge and skills, identify educational resources, and develop an understanding of work in order to make an informed career choice.

All students with disabilities between the ages of 14-22 may receive Pre-ETS and eligible transition aged youth ages 14-24 have access to the full array of VR services to assist with the transition from school to work. Provision of Pre-ETS, as well as all other VR services are the responsibility of VR. Public Education Agencies (PEAs) are responsible for ensuring the provision of transition services required under IDEA. PEAs assist any student interested in Pre-ETS with the completion of the Pre-ETS Request Form, including verification that the individual is a student with a disability. The Pre-ETS Request Form is utilized by the student, to identify in which of the five required Pre-ETS the student wants to participate. Pre-ETS options include job exploration counseling, work-based learning, work readiness training, counseling on post-secondary opportunities and instruction in self-advocacy.

VR partners with ADE every year to host an annual Transition Conference. This conference provides opportunity to conduct outreach and educate VR staff, education staff, students, and families on Pre-ETS and transition services available through VR and the schools. Additional outreach efforts to inform students with disabilities, their families, and schools about Pre-ETS and other VR services include sharing brochures, flyers or informational letters, scheduling

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individual and group VR orientation presentations, attending IEP meetings, and encouraging referral to VR during the provision of Pre-ETS to potentially eligible students. Pre-ETS providers are also responsible for conducting outreach to local schools to ensure staff and students are aware of available services. VR has observed a 60 percent increase in requests for Pre-ETS during SFY 2022. VR, DDD, and ADE frequently partner during conferences, transition fairs, and webinars to share information on coordination of services and joint processes that support students in transition/employment.

VR has 32 Interagency Transfer Agreements (ITAs) with PEAs statewide to provide enhanced transition services. The ITAs are commonly known as Transition from School to Work (TSW) programs. The PEAs that have TSW programs provide non-federal dollars to VR to generate funds for the purpose of funding VR personnel, PEA personnel and other costs for the provision of vocational services agreed upon by both parties in ITAs.

2. DESCRIBE THE CURRENT STATUS AND SCOPE OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO 34 C.F.R. § 361.22(B), PROVIDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGREEMENT:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH MAY BE PROVIDED USING ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR MEETING PARTICIPATION (SUCH AS VIDEO CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE CALLS), TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES AND OTHER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES;

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PERSONNEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) UNDER SECTION 614(D) OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT;

C. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES;

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. OUTREACH TO THESE STUDENTS SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE DURING THE TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS AND MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, A DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION PROCEDURES, AND SCOPE OF SERVICES THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS;

E. COORDINATION NECESSARY TO SATISFY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN 34 C.F.R. PART 397 REGARDING STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE SEEKING SUBMINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT; AND

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F. ASSURANCE THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 397.31, NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WILL ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENT WITH AN ENTITY, AS DEFINED IN 34 C.F.R. § 397.5(D), FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING A PROGRAM UNDER WHICH YOUTH WITH A DISABILITY IS ENGAGED IN WORK COMPENSATED AT A SUBMINIMUM WAGE.

The current Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) between VR, DDD, and ADE was executed on June 27, 2022.

VR provides technical assistance and consultation using various formats of communication which include video conference, in person meetings, and other electronic communications throughout the transition process in order to identify appropriate school to post school activities and services as outlined in the ISA and in the following manner:

- Provide state and regional guidance and training to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of personnel involved in providing transition services;
- Participate in Individualized Education Plan meetings, when invited, to provide vocational guidance;
- Disseminate VR service information and other resources that are available; and
- Attend transition fairs and other outreach events.

VR has a statewide Transition team responsible for providing training and technical assistance to all VR and PEA staff in the state regarding how to assist with transitioning students with disabilities to post-school activities, including VR services. This team frequently engages with the ADE as well as each school district and local area. The team partners in professional development opportunities with the ADE Secondary Transition team to increase PEA knowledge of available VR services and how they support students with disabilities in transitioning from school to work. VR also has dedicated staff (VR Counselors and support staff) assigned to each PEA to ensure local support is available to the schools and students with disabilities. These staff outreach to their assigned PEA to provide information on how to connect and collaborate with VR, contact information for local VR offices, availability of Pre-ETS, etc.

Coordinated transition planning occurs between PEAs and VR staff. VR staff are available to provide group and individual presentations to parents and students who are identified by the PEA staff. PEA staff are encouraged to invite VR staff to students' Individualized Education Planning meetings to provide information on the VR program and discuss postsecondary and employment opportunities. Transition services are planned in the Individualized Education Plan by age 16 or earlier as appropriate. VR staff assist in identifying the VR services and community supports available to assist with transition planning. This coordinated service planning assists the student and parents in focusing on the student's needs for continued education, employment, and independent living services after graduation from high school.

Staff from the PEA and VR jointly identify students who will require and benefit from involvement in the VR program in order to meet post-secondary education and employment goals. Staff of the local PEA and VR coordinate the development of the Individualized Education

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Plan and IPE and involve other community resources such as the DDD and the Arizona Healthcare Cost Containment System as appropriate.

Services and activities mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are provided by the local PEA staff; services and support are not duplicated by VR. PEA staff develop a plan for transition services as mandated by IDEA and are encouraged to invite VR staff to participate in transition planning activities. VR staff participate in individual student planning sessions when available and provide program information as well as technical assistance with regard to services and community resources on an ongoing basis. VR is responsible for the provision of Pre-ETS for students with disabilities who are between the ages of 14-22. VR staff provide informational presentations and materials to PEAs, parents and students regarding Pre-ETS and other services available through the VR program. Eligibility and Order of Selection determinations are made by qualified VR staff, but the planning and development of the IPE occurs in conjunction with the student, the student's guardians, and PEA staff. The IPE is developed and implemented by VR staff prior to the student exiting from high school if possible.

Within the scope of the ISA with the ADE regarding the transition activities, VR is responsible for the following outreach activities:

- Provision of brochures, flyers, informational letters and/or VR orientation videos to explain the VR program and the role the VR program plays in transition planning and Individualized Education Plan development;
- Explanation of VR referral, application, eligibility and order of selection criteria and process, as well as the potential services that may be available through VR;
- Scheduling individual information meetings with students and their parents/legal guardians at the school or local VR office;
- Scheduling and conducting group orientation and individual intake appointments at the school;
- Conducting presentations of the VR program and services to school staff;
- Working closely with ADE and other agencies such as DDD to ensure referrals are coordinated between the programs.

PEAs are considered the lead agency for the provision of transition services; however, ongoing support from partner agencies is necessary for success. PEAs are also responsible for providing VR with documentation of the completion or refusal of transition services (in accordance with 34 CFR Part 397) for youth with disabilities interested in seeking subminimum wage employment. VR is responsible for assisting the youth to complete all other requirements of 34 CFR Part 397 as necessary, and for providing the youth with documentation of their completion or refusal of all required activities, including transition activities, within the federally required timeframes. VR and ADE Exceptional Student Services have a formal data sharing agreement which allows the agencies to identify areas of need for students, including the need for Pre-ETS for students with disabilities between the ages of 14-22.

Youth seeking subminimum wage employment are referred to VR to complete the required activities as described in Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR coordinates with the student's Local Educational Agency to verify completion of transition services or if necessary,

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arrange for the provision of Pre-ETS. Documentation verifying the completion (or refusal) of transition services is completed by the school and provided to VR staff. VR staff provide a copy of this document to the youth and maintain a copy in the VR case file. Documentation verifying completion or refusal of all other required activities (e.g. Pre-ETS, Career Counseling, VR application and eligibility determination, IPE development and case closure) is completed by VR staff and copies are provided to the student (via hand, email, or mail) as each activity is completed or refused. Fillable templates for each required activity are available in the VR case management system. Use of templates ensures all required information is completed and provided to the youth for each activity. When all required activities have been completed or refused, VR staff provide the youth with a cover sheet itemizing all documents they have received. The youth is responsible for providing these documents to the subminimum wage provider/employer. VR has developed a short video as well as several documents to help youth, families, and subminimum wage providers understand the process and requirements.

The ISA includes assurances that PEA/LEAs will not enter into a contract or other arrangement with holders of special wage certificates (14c) for the purpose of operating a program under which youth with disabilities are paid subminimum wage.

K. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe how the VR agency will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services; and transition services for youth and students with disabilities, including pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

VR has two Employer Outreach Representatives who focus on building strategic relationships with Arizona businesses and who promote the employment of individuals with disabilities. The Employer Outreach Representatives utilize in demand industries, career pathways and training programs informed by current trends and industry needs; in synchronization with current labor market information to strengthen these business relationships. They work in partnership with ES staff housed in ARIZONA@WORK job centers to support job seekers with disabilities and educate employers on the benefits of hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities. Through this partnership, the State Labor Exchange portal currently has 260 employers who have been identified as actively recruiting people with disabilities.

The Employer Outreach Representatives are the integral connection between Arizona employers, VR staff, contracted vendors and individuals with disabilities. They facilitate webinars, teleconferences, workshops, employer panels and networking events. These staff members maintain contact with Arizona employers to ensure awareness of labor market trends, current employer needs and to maintain a pulse on Arizona's growing industry partners. Each year, the Employer Outreach Representatives facilitate multiple job fairs and job preparation events. Arizona pioneered and continues to host sensory friendly job fairs for individuals with autism and other disabilities. They co-facilitate and lead community partners in hosting the DREAM fair, the largest job fair for individuals with disabilities in Arizona. This event occurs twice per year and consistently has over 200 job seekers and 40 employers. They hold monthly employer outreach networking events, where employers discuss their current job openings, how to apply and the desired skill set of prospective employees. In addition, this provides a networking opportunity for employers, vendors, VR staff, community partners, workforce staff

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and VR individuals with disabilities. They facilitate monthly in depth employer presentations where employers present information on job openings, compensation, application processes and how to request accommodations to VR staff. Participation in apprenticeship programs by individuals with disabilities has increased over 100 percent in the last three years. Some of this success is attributed to the monthly apprenticeship calls for VR staff, educating them on the benefits of apprenticeship programs.

Currently, the team is building a resource that will support VR staff in having on demand access to business partners, resources and current job opportunities in the field. This includes the identification of employers who are background and disability friendly, as well as those employers who are actively recruiting and seeing individuals who are neurodiverse.

Within the next two years, VR plans to grow the Employer Liaison team. This will include Employer Outreach Representatives who will be assigned to various counties across the state in alignment with the local workforce area designation. This will ensure an accurate pulse on the current job market and employment opportunities within each of the unique regions across the state. This will also provide for local connections with job seekers and employers.

In addition to the Employer Outreach Representatives, VR has two ES that provide job development and placement for individuals in the VR program. VR is in process of expanding the number of ES in order to serve more individuals under this model. Interested individuals attend a JRT workshop to prepare them for the job search which includes interview skills, resume writing, and accommodations. Once an individual completes the JRT, they can choose to work with the VR ES, or they can select a vendor. The VR ES works with the individual to find employment opportunities based on the individual's identified vocational goal including opportunities to participate in mock interview events with employers. The ES coordinates with Employer Outreach Representatives to connect the job seekers with employers who are hiring in the local area.

Transition

VR ensures that Pre-ETS are available statewide, to all students with disabilities between the ages of 14-22. VR works with local schools and other organizations to assist students in requesting Pre-ETS. Thus, ensuring access to career planning and job readiness skills, as addressed through the five required service areas, while still enrolled in school. This service assists students in identifying their interests, preferences and strengths, leading to viable employment goals and outcomes. In addition, our VR ES also work closely with the transition team to provide services to youth with disabilities, focusing on employability skills such as resume building, soft skill development, adjustment to disability related needs and self-advocacy skills to assist with obtaining employment. These youth also have access to a full range of VR services, should they choose to apply and are determined eligible for VR, aside from the Pre-ETS services.

Employer Outreach Representatives work in partnership with VR transition staff to provide information on career pathways including Registered Apprenticeships, college and university disability resource and career centers, and internships. This partnership helps staff and educators obtain the accommodations and career services that students need to prepare for and obtain employment, both prior to and after post-secondary education/training. In the next two years, we plan to grow our Employer Outreach Representative partnership with high school

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transition programs, VR transition staff, and other program administrators to facilitate mock interviews and pre employment workshops for youth with disabilities. Employer Outreach Representatives will also work alongside Joint Technical Education Districts to connect individuals in the VR program with industry professionals, fostering employment opportunities. In addition, Employer Outreach Representatives offer innovative reverse job fairs. These events provide an opportunity to showcase the skills developed through pre-employment and high school transition services. This capstone experience allows students to professionally present themselves to employers who are seeking employees.

VR has developed an agreement with the Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) with the intent of partnering with local schools to assist with the development of community based Work-Based Learning experiences for students with disabilities. Sonoran UCEDD staff, in conjunction with VR, will coordinate with local businesses to develop summer work programs and job opportunities at specific work sites. School staff will be trained to support students at the worksite thus enabling students to gain real work experience and job readiness skills while having access to necessary support. VR and the Sonoran UCEDD also work collaboratively to establish and maintain Project SEARCH sites. Current sites include youth internship opportunities in hospital, distribution logistics, and hospitality industries. Additional Project SEARCH sites in hospital settings are being developed and coordinated with specific school districts and private schools.

L. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(C) and (K), describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system to develop opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings, to the greatest extent practicable for the following:

1. STATE PROGRAMS (DESIGNATE LEAD AGENCY(IES) AND IMPLEMENTING ENTITY(IES)) CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

VR utilizes Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) when needed, to assist in meeting the assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities. VR staff refer individuals to AzTAP when their needs or requests are beyond the scope of VR. VR vendors utilize AzTAP's loan library to trial equipment prior to recommending its purchase. VR also partners with AzTAP and the ADE Exceptional Student Services to present an annual conference that allows staff to learn about AT devices, resources, and implementation strategies, as well as increase assistive technology expertise and obtain hands-on experience with devices through participation in interactive sessions.

2. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

VR does not have any formal agreements with programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Arizona. Connections facilitated by VR's involvement on the Workforce Arizona Council have led to an exchange of information and opportunity to engage in conversation if there should be intersections between Title IV and USDA Rural Development opportunities to enhance the employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

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3. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH;

VR does not have any agreements specific to serving out-of-school youth, but all agreements mentioned throughout this plan serve populations that include out-of-school youth. VR's agreements specific to behavioral health and developmental disabilities translate into increased opportunities for out-of-school youth with significant disabilities to be referred to VR. VR's strong collaborative partnerships with lead agencies as well as participation in local communities of practices, workgroups, and outreach activities help with increasing community awareness of the VR program.

VR continues to partner with Diverse Ability Inc. to provide Youth Leadership Forums around the state. These forums provide an opportunity for youth to learn self advocacy and leadership skills as well as explore career opportunities. Forums are available to youth (under age 30) with disabilities who have completed at least one year of high school.

As appropriate, VR staff refer individuals to out of school youth programs available through workforce and community partners such as the Pima County and Workforce Development Summer Work Program. VR staff utilize local community of practices to establish and maintain informal partnerships and referral connections with other entities that serve out of school youth, such as Arizona State University Opportunity Youth Re Engagement Centers, Job Corps and Goodwill. Information and opportunities available through these partners is routinely shared with VR staff.

4. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS;

Arizona statute allows any state governmental unit or public procurement unit to directly contract with any Certified Non-Profit Agency that Serve Individuals with Disabilities (CNAID) for any good or service the CNAID provides without needing to conduct a competitive effort. The VR program directly contracts with the Arizona Industries for the Blind for document imaging services utilizing the state use contracting mechanism. The DSA utilizes several of the state use contracting programs for purchase of printer toner and confidential document destruction.

5. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT (42 U.S.C. 1396 ET SEQ.);

VR continues to have a strong relationship with Arizona's Medicaid System, known as the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), and is a committed member of various partnerships dedicated to furthering employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Arizona, such as the Employment First Steering Committee, the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) rules implementation workgroup, and the Association of People Supporting Employment First.

VR maintains a close partnership with AHCCCS via the Interagency Service Agreement related to the provision of VR services to individuals designated Serious Mental Illness as discussed in various sections of this plan. VR and AHCCCS work closely to coordinate VR services, including supported ES for individuals with the most significant disabilities and extended services (provided by AHCCCS; or, for individuals who do not qualify for AHCCCS supports and are youth with the most significant disabilities, provided by VR) for individuals in the behavioral health and developmental disabilities systems. This collaboration provides a streamlined process for which individuals with behavioral and developmental disabilities get referred to VR and engage

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in services in an expedited manner with the goal of achieving and maintaining competitive integrated employment.

VR has a Statewide Behavioral Health team who are responsible for implementation of the agreement between VR and AHCCCS. This team provides guidance and technical assistance to staff from both VR and behavioral health to ensure referrals and service delivery are streamlined and effective for the identified population. Dedicated staff and counselors from each partner agency ensure individuals are referred for VR services when appropriate and these staff continue to work together to support individuals throughout the VR process by encouraging participation, providing services as comparable benefits (transportation, counseling, etc.), ensuring a seamless transition to extended services as appropriate, etc.

6. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES;

VR has a longstanding partnership with the Arizona DDD. A MOU outlines the processes to be followed for new referrals, exchange of information, and coordination of services. The MOU also ensures individuals who are involved in both DDD, and the foster care system have streamlined access to the VR program. Both VR and DDD have developed standardized processes that provide detailed instructions on how staff must collaborate together to ensure individuals are served efficiently and effectively.

VR maintains two positions dedicated to the oversight and implementation of the agreement between VR and DDD. These positions work closely with the DDD ES team to provide guidance and technical assistance to staff from both VR and DDD to ensure referrals and service delivery are streamlined and effective for the identified population. Direct service staff in each local VR office have been identified to serve individuals referred from DDD. VR and DDD are focused on increasing referrals and the employment outcomes of individuals with developmental disabilities. Data on referrals, services, and employment outcomes is tracked and analyzed each month.

7. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND

As mentioned above, VR has maintained an Interagency Service Agreement with Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), Arizona's Medicaid system, to provide enhanced VR services to individuals with a designation of Serious Mental Illness (SMI) since 1992. VR works with AHCCCS to review and modify the agreement on an annual basis to ensure a strong partnership and up to date services for individuals determined SMI are being realized. Each Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) health plan contracted with AHCCCS uses the Interagency Service Agreement statewide collaborative protocols to establish specific service delivery responsibilities and outline the roles and responsibilities for VR and RBHA behavioral health clinic staff. VR staff, behavioral health clinic staff and mutual vendors collaborate to provide ES that are integrated with the individual's behavioral health services and fully support the individual's employment and disability related needs. VR meetings are held at the behavioral health clinical site to encourage collaboration with all agencies, increase access to services, and reduce barriers for individuals with disabilities. All Interagency Service Agreement participating agencies partake in continuous training and process improvement through quarterly and biannual meetings.

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8. OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

A Memoranda of Understanding between VR and the American Indian VR programs of the Navajo, Tohono O’odham, White Mountain Apache, Fort Mojave, Hopi, and Salt River Pima nations exists for the purpose of coordinating services to American Indians with disabilities that reside both on and off the reservation as well as providing technical assistance in areas of mutual interest.

Secondary Students with Disabilities: VR has an Interagency Service Agreement with the ADE and DDD regarding the provision of transition services to high school students with disabilities.

Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: VR has MOUs with several community colleges within the state and is actively seeking to establish new agreements with the remaining colleges and universities. These agreements address the provision of disability-related accommodations to individuals with disabilities served by VR and the colleges. VR currently has agreements with the Maricopa County Community College District (ten colleges), Cochise County Community College, and Pima County Community College.

9. OTHER PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

Non-profit status of providers or referral sources is not tracked but VR develops contracts and agreements with all providers, including private non-profit organizations, in accordance with the Arizona Procurement Code (Chapter 23 of the Arizona Revised Statutes) to meet the needs and objectives of the VR program and assist individuals with disabilities in preparing for, obtaining, and maintaining employment.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner, that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The VR agency must select the “Edit” button to review and agree to the VR State plan Assurances.

The State Plan must include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by

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The State Plan must include
sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a Unified State plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:
3.a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.b. either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
3.e. as applicable, the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.f. as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.g. statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.h. the requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities as set forth in section 101(a)(18)(A).
3.m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated

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The State Plan must include
State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:
4.a. comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.b. impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.c. provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services or, if implementing an order of selection, in accordance with criteria established by the State for the order of selection as set out in section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.d. determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.e. comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
4.g. provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.h. comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by sections 101(a)(14) and 511 of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.i. meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs.
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
4.j.i. has developed and will implement,
4.j.i.A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and
4.j.i.B. strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and
4.j.ii. has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25) and 113).
4.j.iii. shall reserve not less than 15 percent of the allocated funds for the provision of pre-

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The State Plan must include
employment transition services; such funds shall not be used to pay for the administrative costs of providing pre-employment transition services.
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(H) and (I) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:
7.a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.
7.b. The designated State agency assures that the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(7)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

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Do you attest that these assurances will be met?

Yes

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY TITLE IV OF WIOA[1], AND ITS STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT;

[1] Public Law 113-128.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration

2. IN THE EVENT THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY IS NOT PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH VOCATIONAL AND OTHER REHABILITATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT FOR THE VR PROGRAM (SECTION 101(A)(2)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT). AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT)[2] AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[3], THE REHABILITATION ACT, 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C), AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[4], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO STATES UNDER SECTION 111(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services

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3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY, OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN^[5], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS^[6], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

^[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

^[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT OR, IF NOT APPLICABLE, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C);

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Kristen Mackey

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Kristen Mackey

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] Public Law 113-128.

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

To review and complete the Certification section of the VR portion of the State plan, please select the "Edit" button.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Kristen Mackey
Title of Signatory	Administrator
Date Signed	2/26/2024

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the

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first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan’s approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	49.0%	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	42.7%	42.7%	43.7%	43.7%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,200	\$5,200	\$5,330	\$5,330
Credential Attainment Rate	26.3%	30.0%	27.3%	31.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	37.0%	37.0%	38.0%	38.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.
- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

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1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

The mission of the Arizona Vocational Rehabilitation program is to work with persons with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment and independence. All employees of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) are required to abide by the most current Code of Ethics of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counseling. This high standard for all staff is intended to assure the public that the rehabilitation counseling profession accepts its responsibilities to provide caring services, inclusive of equitable access and opportunities to participate, to individuals with disabilities. VR program policies reinforce the provision of informed choice throughout the VR process to support applicants or clients by providing information to assist them in choosing their services and service providers.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

The program's efforts to continuously improve and enhance service provision to Individuals with disabilities has uncovered several barriers to equitable access. Individuals with disabilities may have barriers such as geographic location reducing availability of providers, lack of

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transportation to access services, and inconsistent coordination between multiple state agencies.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

The Arizona Vocational Rehabilitation program has embraced the power and potential of virtual service provision. Both VR program staff and community rehabilitation providers are able to provide services, as appropriate and desired by the individual with a disability, virtually. Additionally, the VR program incentivizes service providers to travel to rural counties by offering a higher rate of compensation. Virtual service delivery and higher payment for services in rural areas are mechanisms implemented to reduce barriers related to geographic location and lack of transportation. The VR program also offers several mechanisms such as bus passes, taxi, and mileage reimbursement to reduce the burden of transportation for clients. We have working agreements with multiple state agencies, programs, and local area schools to enhance the working relationships between agencies serving mutual clients. Each agreement defines roles, responsibilities, and expectations. The VR program has staff members dedicated to working with these agencies and we continue to refine the agreements and enhance our collaborative working relationships to reduce barriers that individuals with disabilities face when working with multiple state systems and/or transitioning between provider agencies.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

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What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

The VR program plans to reevaluate and adjust payment structures for service providers on an annual basis. The ability to maintain reimbursement rates commensurate with the cost of conducting business with VR is essential ensuring service providers provide services in rural communities. Many VR service contracts are continuously open for new providers to join or for existing providers to expand their service offering. We plan to continue allowing VR service providers to expand virtual service delivery options. Connecting individuals via virtual mechanisms has proven to reduce transportation and geographic barriers. Agreements with other partner entities are reviewed every year at a minimum. When this review is conducted, the parties meet to determine if adjustments to the roles, responsibilities, and deliverables are necessary.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the

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information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Not applicable

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

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Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Not applicable

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Not applicable

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Not applicable

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or

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application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available

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to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers

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indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	72.9%	72.9%	73.9%	73.9%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	68.5%	68.0%	68.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$9,100	\$9,100	\$9,328	\$9,328
Credential Attainment Rate	73.0%	73.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	74.0%	74.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

**ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - DISLOCATED PROGRAM
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered

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by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

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- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.0%	77.5%	78.0%	78.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	73.0%	73.5%	74.0%	74.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$9,500	\$9,600	\$9,738	\$9,738
Credential Attainment Rate	74.0%	74.0%	75.0%	75.0%

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Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Measurable Skill Gains	80.0%	75.0%	81.0%	76.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

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The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each

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of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	75.0%	76.0%	76.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0%	73.0%	73.0%	74.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,750	\$6,188	\$5,894	\$6,188
Credential Attainment Rate	61.0%	61.0%	62.0%	62.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%	65.0%	66.0%	66.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT - WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as

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“baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	61.5%	63.0%	62.5%	63.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	55.0%	57.8%	56.0%	57.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,175	\$8,175	\$8,379	\$8,379
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM - ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

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For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	50.0%	51.0%	51.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	50.0%	51.0%	51.0%

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Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,600	\$8,600	\$8,815	\$8,815
Credential Attainment Rate	26.0%	26.0%	27.0%	27.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	45.0%	43.0%	46.0%	45.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (COMBINED OR GENERAL) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan's approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	49.0%	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	42.7%	42.7%	43.7%	43.7%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,200	\$5,200	\$5,330	\$5,330
Credential Attainment Rate	26.3%	30.0%	27.3%	31.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	37.0%	37.0%	38.0%	38.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (BLIND) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan’s approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Additional Indicators of Performance
Not applicable.

OTHER APPENDICES

Appendix 2: Core In-Demand Occupations

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
13-1051	Cost Estimators	4,906	\$70,817	4.5%	Bachelor's degree	Construction
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	10,741	\$50,424	5.7%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Construction
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	18,051	\$71,147	5.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2021	Brickmasons and Blockmasons	1,094	\$48,742	5.5%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-	Carpenters	21,000	\$47,916	6.0%	High school diploma or	Construction

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SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
2031					equivalent	
47-2071	Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators	1,061	\$49,164	4.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	9,007	\$51,432	3.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2111	Electricians	14,945	\$51,296	6.2%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2121	Glaziers	2,664	\$41,929	5.5%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2132	Insulation Workers, Mechanical	410	\$52,353	5.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	10,684	\$55,471	5.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2211	Sheet Metal Workers	3,004	\$49,132	5.0%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2221	Structural Iron and Steel Workers	1,882	\$51,315	5.5%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2231	Solar Photovoltaic Installers	212	\$46,274	8.4%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-4021	Elevator Installers and Repairers	402	\$85,548	5.9%	High school diploma or	Construction

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
					equivalent	
49-9011	Mechanical Door Repairers	461	\$48,195	5.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
49-9098	Helpers— Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	2,120	\$35,113	4.3%	High school diploma or equivalent	Construction
47-2044	Tile and Marble Setters	1,894	\$45,373	7.1%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	7,480	\$47,375	5.0%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2061	Construction Laborers	29,207	\$40,204	6.2%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2081	Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	4,523	\$47,959	6.2%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	8,541	\$42,336	6.9%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2151	Pipelayers	1,321	\$48,583	3.3%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2161	Plasterers and Stucco Masons	2,382	\$45,633	6.3%	No formal educational credential	Construction
47-2181	Roofers	3,397	\$47,448	6.4%	No formal educational credential	Construction

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
47-4031	Fence Erectors	764	\$40,902	5.7%	No formal educational credential	Construction
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	10,729	\$67,139	4.0%	Bachelor's degree	Finance and insurance
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	5,331	\$92,181	4.6%	Bachelor's degree	Finance and insurance
13-2061	Financial Examiners	2,731	\$76,992	4.9%	Bachelor's degree	Finance and insurance
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	4,305	\$108,643	5.9%	Bachelor's degree	Finance and insurance
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	1,917	\$78,335	5.2%	Bachelor's degree	Finance and insurance
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	10,788	\$63,870	3.6%	Bachelor's degree	Finance and insurance
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	13,184	\$59,025	4.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Finance and insurance
41-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	6,246	\$71,858	4.3%	High school diploma or equivalent	Finance and insurance
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	9,019	\$61,599	6.2%	High school diploma or equivalent	Finance and insurance
43-9041	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	6,414	\$41,409	4.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Finance and insurance
29-1011	Chiropractors	995	\$71,895	5.9%	Doctoral or professional	Health care and social

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
					degree	assistance
29-1021	Dentists, General	2,678	\$175,034	4.8%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1022	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons	86	\$346,555	4.5%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1023	Orthodontists	109	\$214,566	4.9%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1041	Optometrists	893	\$119,857	4.5%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1081	Podiatrists	290	\$151,171	4.2%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1123	Physical Therapists	4,246	\$94,696	5.2%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1211	Anesthesiologists	1,022	\$318,089	3.6%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1215	Family Medicine Physicians	3,353	\$224,215	3.7%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1216	General Internal Medicine Physicians	576	\$283,032	3.3%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1218	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	519	\$324,277	3.1%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
29-	Pediatricians,	960	\$200,349	3.3%	Doctoral or professional	Health care and social

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
1221	General				degree	assistance
29-1223	Psychiatrists	501	\$293,810	4.6%	Doctoral or professional degree	Health care and social assistance
21-1013	Marriage and Family Therapists	1,063	\$58,357	5.9%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	3,754	\$60,792	4.4%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
21-1023	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	3,309	\$43,718	4.7%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1071	Physician Assistants	2,649	\$121,494	6.1%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	2,332	\$90,524	4.7%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	2,825	\$84,062	5.5%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1151	Nurse Anesthetists	121	\$142,254	4.1%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	5,202	\$119,913	8.3%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-2091	Orthotists and Prosthetists	386	\$68,243	4.9%	Master's degree	Health care and social assistance
21-	Child, Family, and School Social	6,347	\$43,660	3.9%	Bachelor's	Health care and social

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
1021	Workers				degree	assistance
29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	1,631	\$62,723	4.3%	Bachelor's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1128	Exercise Physiologists	321	\$57,004	7.9%	Bachelor's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1129	Therapists, All Other	406	\$65,335	8.8%	Bachelor's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1141	Registered Nurses	58,638	\$81,595	3.7%	Bachelor's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-9091	Athletic Trainers	641	\$55,994	5.5%	Bachelor's degree	Health care and social assistance
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	8,291	\$32,929	5.8%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	3,599	\$64,443	5.1%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	3,836	\$83,296	4.2%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,831	\$86,306	4.9%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists	5,232	\$66,600	3.9%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-	Magnetic Resonance Imaging	1,302	\$79,655	4.1%	Associate's	Health care and social

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
2035	Technologists				degree	assistance
31-2011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	1,159	\$59,712	6.2%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	3,334	\$53,685	5.2%	Associate's degree	Health care and social assistance
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	2,461	\$55,613	3.8%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Health care and social assistance
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	7,381	\$57,800	4.1%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Health care and social assistance
31-9091	Dental Assistants	7,954	\$41,950	4.2%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Health care and social assistance
31-9092	Medical Assistants	20,641	\$37,793	4.8%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Health care and social assistance
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	7,858	\$39,457	4.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
21-1094	Community Health Workers	1,258	\$44,247	4.0%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
39-9011	Childcare Workers	13,452	\$30,251	5.3%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
39-9041	Residential Advisors	1,178	\$33,472	5.1%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
43-	Billing and Posting	12,659	\$41,369	3.5%	High school diploma or	Health care and social

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
3021	Clerks				equivalent	assistance
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	17,823	\$39,007	4.2%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	50,375	\$41,634	2.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	1,068	\$99,592	3.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Health care and social assistance
35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	7,569	\$33,024	4.4%	No formal educational credential	Health care and social assistance
35-3041	Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	5,157	\$32,226	7.3%	No formal educational credential	Health care and social assistance
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	4,089	\$118,807	3.6%	Bachelor's degree	IT
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	4,305	\$108,643	5.9%	Bachelor's degree	IT
17-2061	Computer Hardware Engineers	2,056	\$121,905	5.3%	Bachelor's degree	IT
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	7,087	\$84,029	4.4%	Bachelor's degree	IT
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	12,398	\$98,469	3.6%	Bachelor's degree	IT
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	7,231	\$87,906	3.5%	Bachelor's degree	IT
27-2012	Producers and Directors	1,584	\$60,492	6.7%	Bachelor's degree	IT

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	4,208	\$62,541	2.9%	Associate's degree	IT
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	4,627	\$60,743	1.2%	Postsecondary non-degree award	IT
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	19,974	\$55,194	3.6%	Some college, no degree	IT
13-1081	Logisticians	3,646	\$72,547	6.3%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2011	Aerospace Engineers	2,046	\$140,429	4.4%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2061	Computer Hardware Engineers	2,056	\$121,905	5.3%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	6,147	\$99,832	3.3%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	3,708	\$120,753	4.3%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	6,367	\$100,802	5.7%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	5,648	\$100,007	4.0%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-2199	Engineers, All Other	2,224	\$117,478	3.6%	Bachelor's degree	Manufacturing
17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	3,304	\$68,571	3.4%	Associate's degree	Manufacturing
17-3026	Industrial Engineering	1,433	\$68,178	4.2%	Associate's degree	Manufacturing

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SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
	Technicians					
17-3027	Mechanical Engineering Technicians	1,011	\$61,973	3.6%	Associate's degree	Manufacturing
49-2091	Avionics Technicians	662	\$63,760	4.6%	Associate's degree	Manufacturing
51-9162	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers	338	\$64,344	5.2%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Manufacturing
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	8,423	\$50,821	4.4%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	12,455	\$36,851	3.5%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	4,272	\$56,329	4.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery	1,159	\$56,389	5.3%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	7,800	\$66,786	3.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-4041	Machinists	4,531	\$50,125	3.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	6,070	\$48,525	4.2%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing

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SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
51-7011	Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	1,712	\$38,320	6.0%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9011	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	720	\$42,538	4.4%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9023	Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	1,345	\$40,823	4.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	8,827	\$47,712	2.3%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9082	Medical Appliance Technicians	576	\$45,361	4.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	3,732	\$34,393	4.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9141	Semiconductor Processors	3,425	\$57,871	5.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9161	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators	1,688	\$45,089	2.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
51-9195	Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastic	952	\$40,280	6.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Manufacturing
29-1051	Pharmacists	8,597	\$120,883	2.1%	Doctoral or professional degree	Retail trade

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	16,758	\$46,903	4.0%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Retail trade
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	9,590	\$39,235	2.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	27,501	\$44,243	2.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	33,470	\$59,195	2.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
43-5111	Weighers, Measurers, Checkers, and Samplers, Recordkeeping	682	\$43,042	6.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	11,470	\$67,547	3.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
49-2092	Electric Motor, Power Tool, and Related Repairers	1,068	\$41,871	4.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
49-3053	Outdoor Power Equipment and Other Small Engine Mechanics	553	\$40,764	6.2%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
49-3092	Recreational Vehicle Service Technicians	863	\$42,440	4.8%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
49-	Tire Repairers and	2,362	\$34,055	4.4%	High school	Retail trade

CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PLAN - UNDER REVISION

SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
3093	Changers				diploma or equivalent	
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	56,255	\$33,643	5.5%	High school diploma or equivalent	Retail trade
41-2022	Parts Salespersons	5,008	\$37,985	4.5%	No formal educational credential	Retail trade
51-3011	Bakers	3,317	\$32,447	4.7%	No formal educational credential	Retail trade
53-6021	Parking Lot Attendants	4,801	\$29,543	4.9%	No formal educational credential	Retail trade
53-2011	Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	1,707	\$195,584	2.4%	Bachelor's degree	Transportation and warehousing
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	4,312	\$68,620	4.3%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Transportation and warehousing
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	36,413	\$49,430	5.5%	Postsecondary non-degree award	Transportation and warehousing
43-5011	Cargo and Freight Agents	1,749	\$45,301	4.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
43-5032	Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance	4,436	\$42,378	4.5%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	4,813	\$51,643	4.1%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing

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SOC Code	SOC Title	Estimated Occupational Employment (2022 Q1)	Average Annual Wages (2022 Q1)	Annualized Projected Employment Percent Change (2021-2023)	Minimum Education Level	Core Industry
53-1041	Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	213	\$63,474	6.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
53-2031	Flight Attendants	3,423	\$64,417	3.9%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	20,317	\$44,213	5.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	4,437	\$48,526	7.6%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
53-7021	Crane and Tower Operators	963	\$64,426	4.7%	High school diploma or equivalent	Transportation and warehousing
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	13,070	\$41,435	9.4%	No formal educational credential	Transportation and warehousing
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	61,745	\$34,774	5.3%	No formal educational credential	Transportation and warehousing

Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity

Appendix 3: List of WIOA State Plan Development Session Participants

The engagement of diverse stakeholders in the development of the ARIZONA@WORK State Plan is a testament to Arizona's commitment to fostering collaboration within its public workforce system. A total of three WIOA State Plan development sessions were conducted, bringing together over 130 state and local leaders from various organizations. This collaborative effort ensures that the ARIZONA@WORK system remains customer-centric and aligned with the needs of businesses and job seekers.

List of Participants:

1. AARP
2. Accord Healthcare Institute

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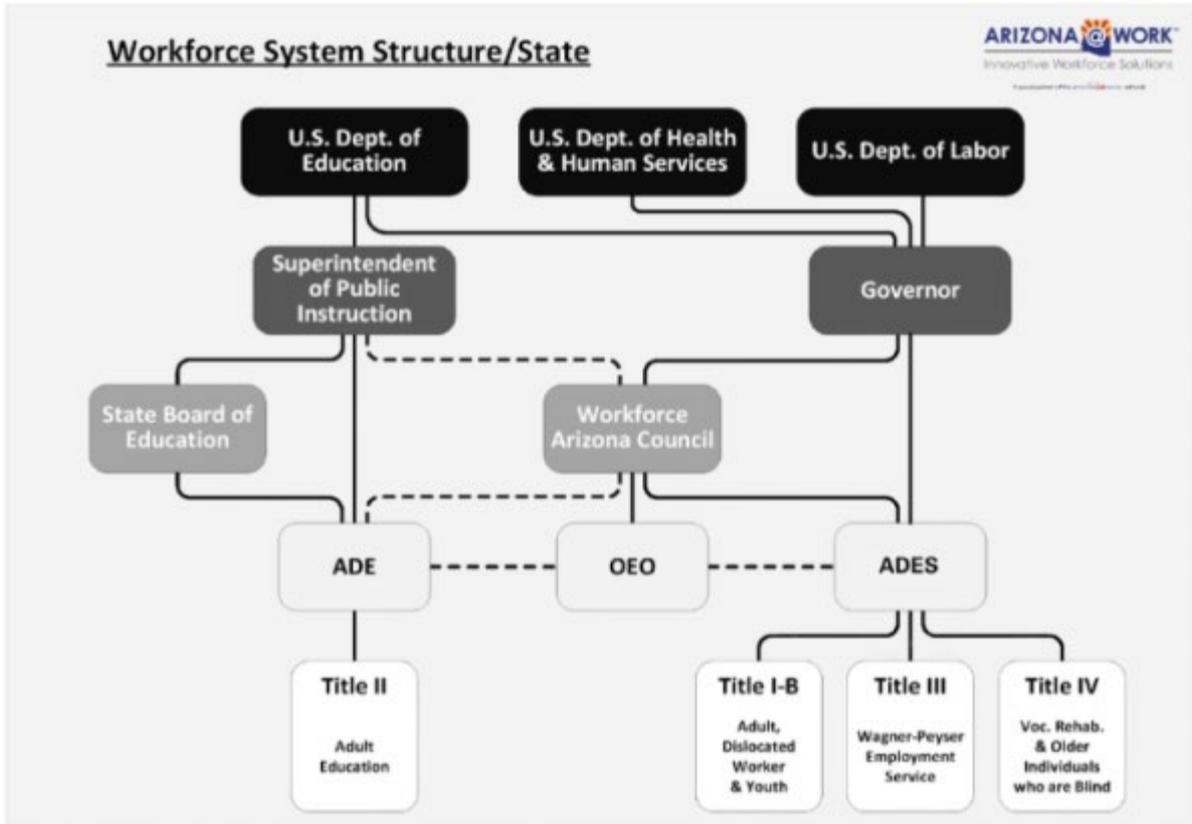
3. ACYR
4. AAO
5. Arizona Coalition for Military Families (ACMF)
6. Arizona Department of Education (ADE)
7. Arizona Western Entrepreneurial College
8. ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix
9. ARIZONA@WORK Coconino County
10. ARIZONA@WORK Maricopa County
11. ARIZONA@WORK Mohave/LaPaz Counties
12. ARIZONA@WORK Nineteen Tribal Nations (NTN)
13. ARIZONA@WORK Northeastern Arizona
14. ARIZONA@WORK Pima County
15. ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County
16. ARIZONA@WORK Santa Cruz
17. ARIZONA@WORK Southeastern Arizona
18. ARIZONA@WORK Yuma
19. ASU-AZ Next Program
20. AVNET
21. Boys and Girls Club of the Valley
22. Center for the Future of Arizona
23. Coconino Community College
24. Coconino County Health and Human Services
25. ADES Office of Tribal Relations
26. DOL VETS
27. Equus Workforce Solutions
28. Friendly House
29. International Rescue Committee (IRC)
30. Junior Achievement
31. Justa Center for Seniors
32. JVSG

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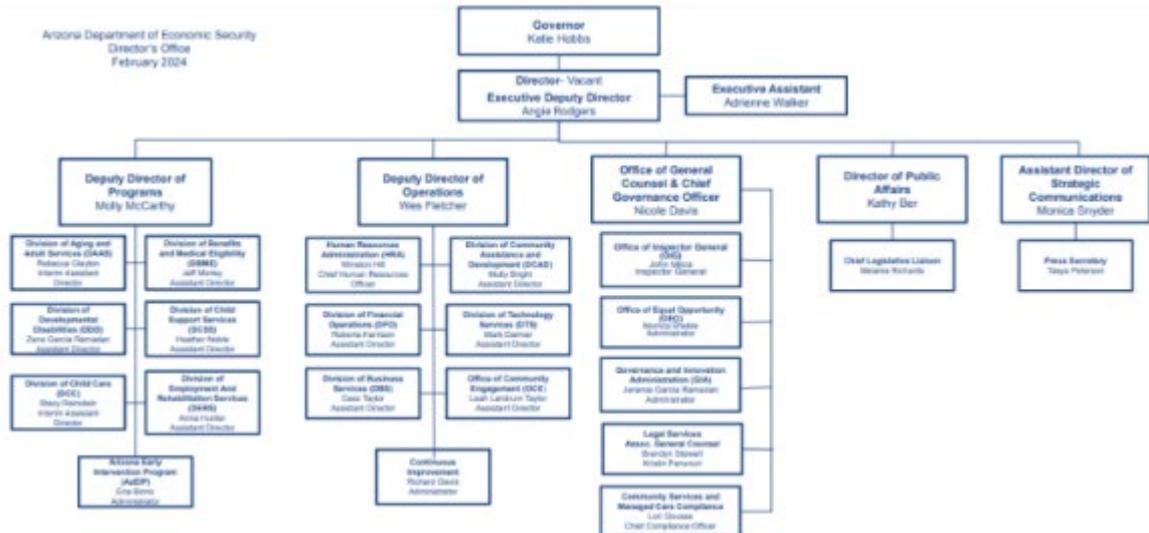
33. Literacy Volunteers of Maricopa County
34. Maricopa Community Colleges
35. Maricopa County Smart Justice Program
36. National Electrical Contractors Association - Arizona Chapter
37. OEO
38. Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board, PBWDB
39. Phoenix Rescue Mission
40. Pipeline Arizona
41. Queen Creek School District
42. Rio Salado College
43. Title I-B Adult, DW, and Youth
44. Title II, Adult Education
45. Title III, ES
46. Title IV, VR
47. Title V, Older Americans Act, Senior Community Services Employment Program
48. Tucson Refugee Ministry
49. Statewide RR Services
50. UI
51. USAA
52. Women's Foundation for the State of Arizona
53. WAC
54. Yuma Private Industry Council, Inc.

The active involvement of these organizations enriches and contributes to the success of the ARIZONA@WORK system.

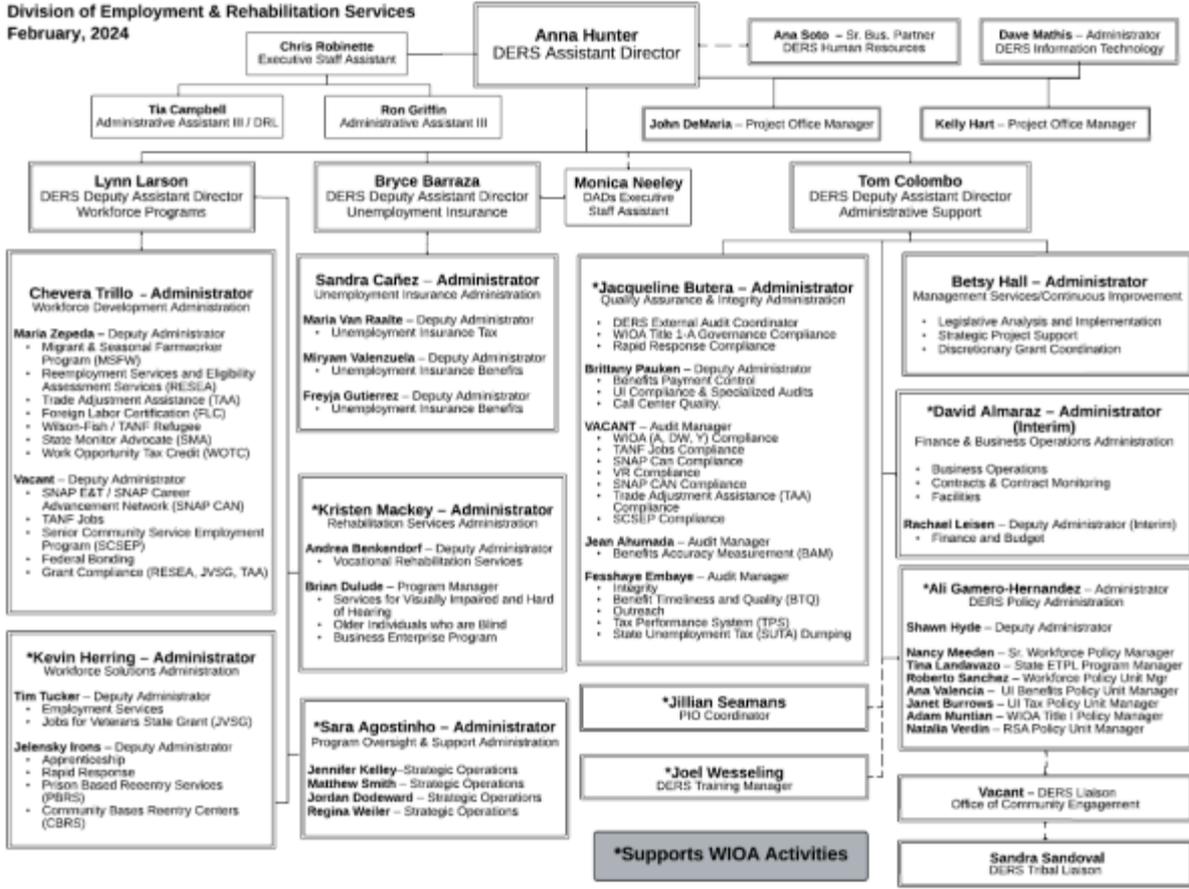
Appendix 4: ARIZONA@WORK System Chart



Appendix 5: ADES Organizational Charts



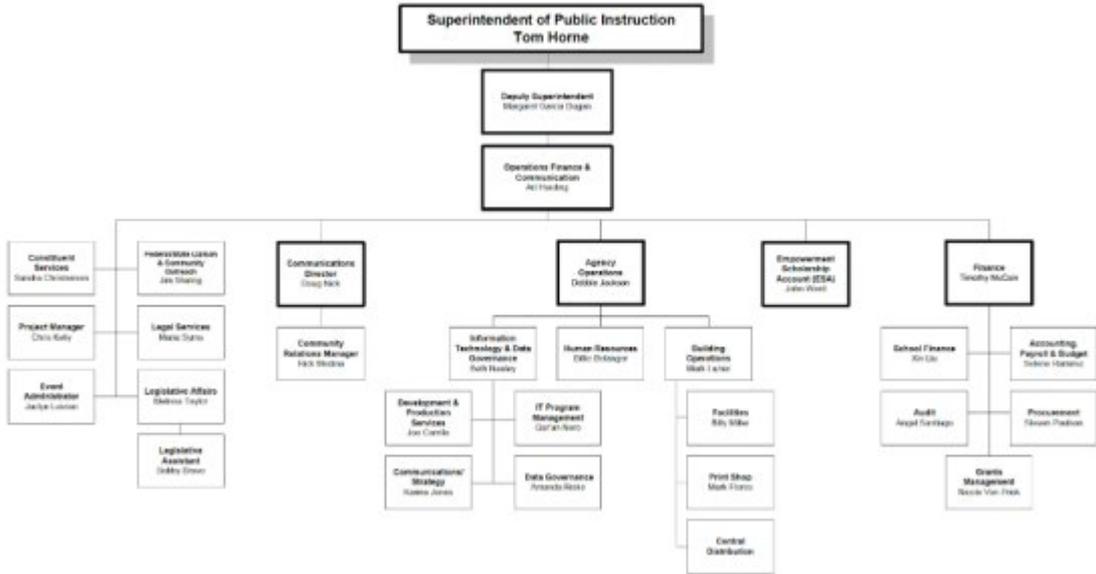
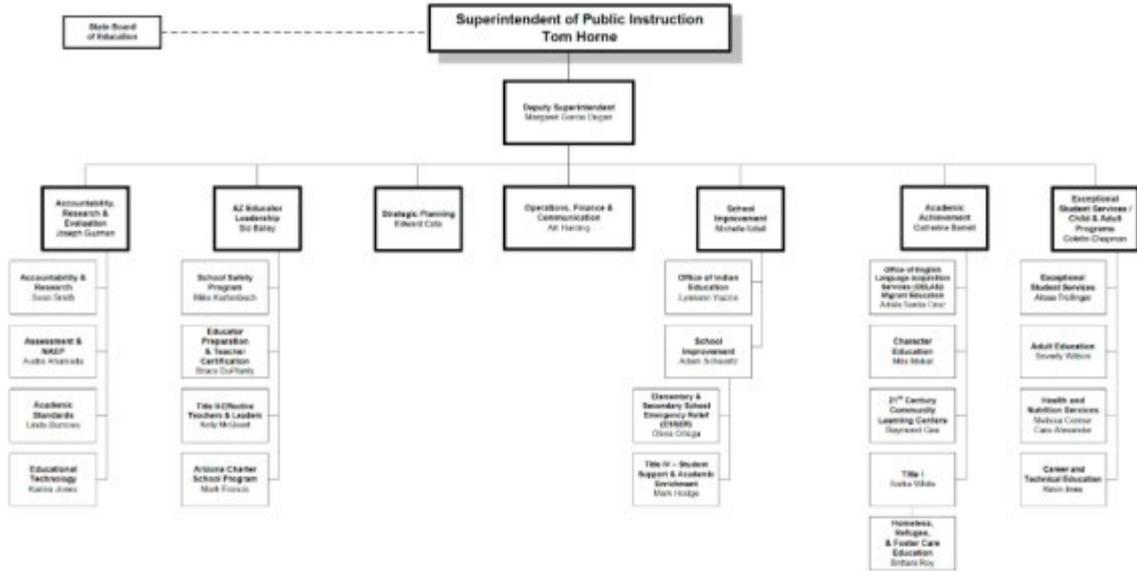
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Updated: 02/01/2024

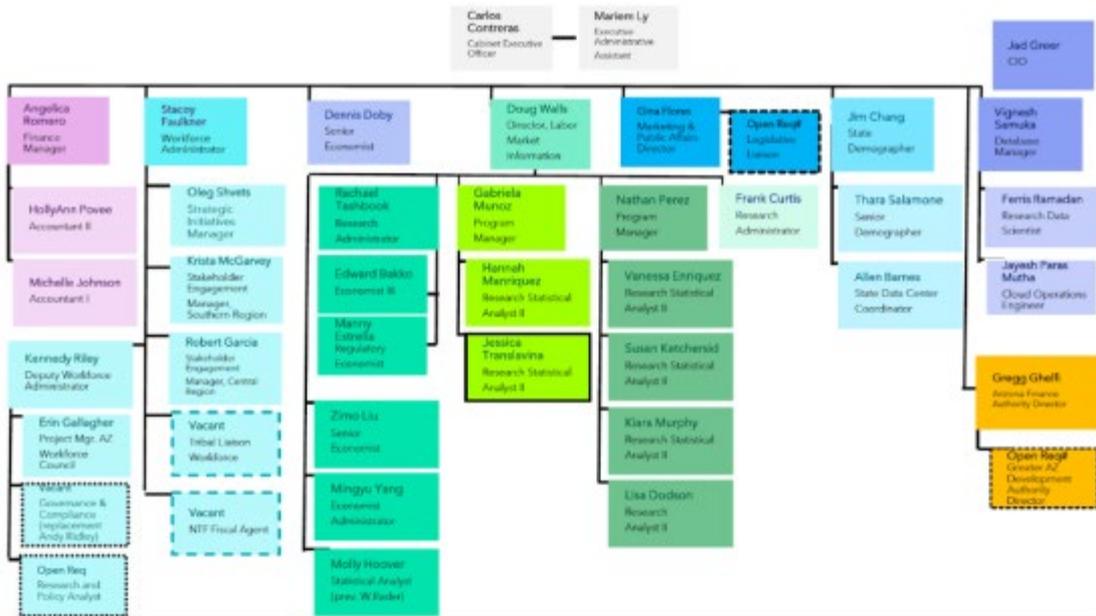
Appendix 6: ADE Organizational Charts

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Appendix 7: OEO Organizational Chart

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Appendix 8: OSY Waiver - Local Area Support Letters



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THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, HEREBY:

Requests a waiver to lower the 75% out-of-school youth ("OSY") requirement to be replaced with a 50% OSY and 50% In-School Youth ("ISY") standard which would be more appropriate for our Local Area's unique circumstances as a lower-income rural border community that nonetheless boasts higher than average school attendance and completion rates.

GENERAL BARRIERS TO MEETING THE EXISTING REQUIREMENT

The barriers faced in meeting the 75% threshold for OSY are less of a statutory or regulatory matter but rather more of a demographic and sociological nature, both positive and negative. These factors include:

- **Border Population:** A significant segment of the out-of-school youth we aim to assist maintain ties with Mexico, frequently transitioning back and forth seasonally or upon completing their studies.
- **High Transiency/Local Employers:** Our post-high school OSY often relocate for college or skilled employment opportunities, both of which are limited in our region.
- **Local Industry:** In Santa Cruz County, the main industry revolves around the produce business, marked by seasonal employment. Consequently, OSY frequently encounters difficulties in securing stable, year-round employment opportunities.
- **Trade School/Training:** Access to authorized training providers is a challenge for OSY in Santa Cruz County. Not having an array of providers results in an absence of local training options that don't meet the needs that local employers demand. Many OSY relocate after high school due to limited choices. Addressing this gap is vital not only for retaining local talent but it is imperative for aligning our educational offerings with the skills sought by employers, thereby bolstering the economic vitality of our community.
- **Limited Childcare/High Pre-School Age Population:** The ratio of pre-school to total population is the fourth highest in the State of Arizona. Factors include income below the median income levels in rural areas, lack of transportation, expansive geographic space, and inaccessible or affordable preschool and childcare options.

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- **High Graduation Rate:** Santa Cruz County boasts an 88.6% graduation rate versus the state average of 75.7%. As a result, the qualifying population that is out-of-school is proportionately less, compared to the population in-school, in our Local Area.
- **Program Transition:** Prior to WIOA, the WIA focused more on targeting ISY with an emphasis on placing students in work experiences in-county. With the change from WIA to WIOA, more focus was placed on OSY. The pandemic limited outreach to additional area employers to better suit an OSY cohort.

To implement the shift, a Business Services position has been created to target local employers that aim to create opportunities for Work Experiences, On-the-Job Training (OJT), and potential apprenticeships. Thus, the Local Area is catching up with OSY focused efforts but needs the waiver to allow the necessary time for this adjustment without reducing services.

- **Lack of a Youth/Juvenile Center:** The absence of a dedicated youth center in our community, with the Boys and Girls Club being one of only a few options, is a significant challenge in identifying and engaging OSY participants. Currently, a considerable number of OSY in our program enter through connections with local schools, and while some are referred to us by the criminal justice system, only a few have spent time within a correctional facility.

Issues such as limited public transportation options and substantial geographic distances between available services and programs become significant barriers, particularly for those without school support. Establishing a more comprehensive network, including a youth center, is crucial to addressing these challenges, ensuring a broader and more effective outreach to OSY in our community.

- **Active Superintendent/Schools:** Due to successful outreach and career development efforts by the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office with a stronger emphasis on work experience for students, has resulted in a large number of ISY connecting with our office expressing a more defined interest. While this is positive, it skews the proportion of potential ISY participants even higher.

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ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS

The listed factors are impacted by statutory or regulatory barriers and have a derivative, albeit not direct (none of the applicable statutes or regulations prohibit us, for example), impact on our efforts:

- **Youth Center:** Our office is actively reviewing the possibility, with County leadership, of developing a youth center. This will provide a major venue for OSY and we will be able to recruit and incorporate them into our programmatic efforts.
- **(Early) Youth Diversion/Courts:** Our office is considering the possibility of identifying and incorporating additional OSY from existing or developmental court and juvenile diversion programs to better access this potential cohort.
- **Expanding Pre-School Offerings:** In Sonoita-Elgin, the County and the School District renovated a building for a preschool that utilized federal funding.

*For clarity, the above efforts require support from partners, some require separate approval by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, and some may be revised. No binding legal action is intended to be taken on behalf of the County regarding ongoing, potential, or developmental efforts.

LOCAL AREA STRATEGIC GOAL(S) AND RELATION TO LOCAL AND STATE PLANS

Our strategic goal is to continue to expand our outreach to OSY and enhance our WIOA services to both cohorts (OSY and ISY) that align with the unique demographics, challenges, and demand within Santa Cruz County. This goal is an integral component of our Local and State Plans, both plans emphasize the need for equitable access to workforce development resources.

PROJECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES RESULTING FROM THE WAIVER

The requested waiver will enable us to tailor programs to address challenges faced by our youth. This includes a lack of local trade education and limited local job opportunities. By adapting to these circumstances, we anticipate improved engagement and outcomes for our participants. With this waiver, we can better address both our ISY and OSY, ensuring programs are inclusive and responsive to community needs. This will also allow us additional time to continue expanding our OSY targeted outreach efforts – both to participants and employers – without an interim reduction in services.

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ALIGNMENT WITH DOL POLICY PRIORITIES

This waiver aligns with the Department of Labor's policy priorities by acknowledging the unique challenges faced by lower-income rural and border communities like ours. By providing flexibility in meeting distribution requirements, we can better address the barriers impacting successful workforce development in Santa Cruz County.

INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, OR POPULATIONS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER

The waiver will directly benefit disadvantaged populations and persons with barriers to employment within Santa Cruz County. Our community faces challenges such as limited employer engagement, inadequate transportation, lack of major employers, limited broadband access, significant post-education transiency, and significant reliance on seasonal industry. Further, issues like extended commute times, a limited number of essential service providers, and minimal childcare options for a significant population of young parents further adversely impact overall OSY participation.

LOCAL AREA PLANS FOR MONITORING WAIVER IMPLEMENTATION

We are committed to closely monitoring the implementation of this waiver to ensure that our programs remain effective and aligned with the unique needs of our community. Our plans include ongoing assessments of program outcomes, participant feedback, and continuous dialogue with stakeholders to adapt and refine our strategies as needed. Notwithstanding the waiver, we will amplify our efforts to expand our OSY outreach to bring OSY/ISY proportions in-line, or closer, to pre-waiver requirements.

(SIGNATURE PAGE TO FOLLOW)

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By signing below, the undersigned duly authorized authorities express their formal approval of and authorize to be submitted, this local area WIOA waiver request to lower the 75% out-of-school youth expenditure requirement for State set-aside and local formula youth funds.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD


Dina Sanchez, Board Chair

2/2/2024
Date

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, ARIZONA (In Support)


Manuel Ruiz, Chair

02/01/2024
Date


Bruce Bracker, Vice Chair

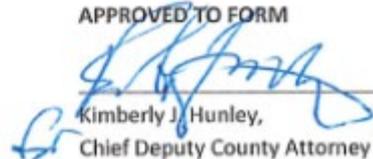
02/01/2024
Date


Rudy Molera, Member

02/01/2024
Date

ATTEST

Alma Schultz, Clerk of Board

APPROVED TO FORM

Kimberly J. Hunley,
Chief Deputy County Attorney



Anita Payne, Chairman

Teri Drew, Executive Director

January 17, 2024

Aaron Johnson
Fiscal Compliance Manager
DERS – Finance and Budget Unit
Department of Economic Security

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am writing on behalf of the Yavapai County Workforce Development Board (WDB) to formally request a waiver for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Out of School Youth enrollment threshold.

The Yavapai County WDB believes that adjusting the current 75% Out of School Youth requirement to 50% Out of School Youth and 50% In School Youth, would better suit the unique needs of our local area, allowing us to effectively serve youth while addressing the challenges specific to our community.

Current Yavapai County Demographics:

According to the US Census, Yavapai County has a significant population of In School Youth aged 16-18, totaling 11,643 individuals. The Out of School Youth aged 19-24 population totals 10,388. (<https://www.census.gov/>)

Challenges in Serving 75% Out of School Youth:

- Youth migration to other states/urban communities.
- High cost of living leading to population outsourcing.
- Larger population of In School Youth within Yavapai County.
- Many job opportunities are available without eligibility requirements.
- Overall dropout rate in Yavapai County at 4.8% (Arizona Department of Education).
- Closure of Headstart offices and limited childcare options for parenting youth.
- Challenges in securing referrals from partner youth agencies and aged-out foster care services.

Yavapai County Strategic Goals:

Aligned with local and state plans, Yavapai County aims to expand outreach to Out of School Youth while enhancing the distribution of WIOA services to both In School Youth and Out of School Youth. This approach aligns with current demographics and in-demand industries, ensuring equitable access to innovative workforce solutions.

Expected Outcomes from the Waiver:

If accepted, this waiver will enable our programs to address the current youth demographics in Yavapai County. We believe that a 50% enrollment requirement is crucial for ensuring equitable access to the program and alleviating financial constraints opening more career opportunities for In School Youth to

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gain credentials that prepare them for life after high school, including higher education and job placement.

Thank you for considering this request. The WDB looks forward to the opportunity to discuss this matter further if needed. Your support in adapting the enrollment requirements will contribute significantly to the success of our youth programs in Yavapai County.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teri Drew". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Teri Drew
Executive Director
Yavapai County Workforce Development Board

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January 29, 2024

Nancy Meeden
Senior Workforce Policy Manager
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services
Policy Administration
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Ms. Meeden,

On behalf the Pinal County Workforce Development Board (PCWDB), the following request is submitted for consideration:

Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth. We request a reduction of this requirement to 50% with the understanding that this waiver will not preclude out-of-school youth expenditures of more than 50 percent, or even up to 100 percent, if warranted by the needs of the youth population in Pinal County.

This waiver is requested for the entire period that we are authorized to spend funds for Program Years 2022 and 2023 (Citations: WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410). In addition to this local request, we fully support the State preparing to submit such a statewide waiver request included in the 2024-2027 Arizona WIOA State Plan. Such a waiver is currently approved for 24 states and territories.¹

Flexibility in serving the WIOA eligible youth population is paramount in the development of customized strategic planning as part of the four-year ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County Workforce Development Plan. Such a waiver will allow the PCWDB and ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County Youth Program to focus on strategic areas of need, unique to Pinal County for this population. The basis for this request is supported by the following:

Labor Force Participation Rate: As depicted in the table below, 16-19 year olds in Pinal County participate in the labor force less often (39.2%) than the overall population (52.6%) because they are in school. However, one cannot conclude that they will be prepared to enter the workforce once they have completed school. We want to be proactive to make sure they have the skills they will need to enter the workforce once they are ready.

¹ Approved WIOA Waivers by Waiver Type Updated September 30, 2023
(https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/Approved_Waivers-by-State_as_of_September_30-2023.pdf)

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	Pinal County	Arizona	United States
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	52.6%	60.5%	63.5%
16- to 19-year-olds	39.2%	39.7%	39.3%
Enrolled in school	30.6%*	33.3%	34.2%
Not enrolled in school	65.2%**	67.0%	66.6%
High school graduate (includes GED)	75.3%**	74.3%	72.9%
Less than high school graduate	44.5%**	50.6%*	47.8%

*Estimates may not be reliable due to sampling error.
 **Due to the large amount of sampling error relative to the size of the estimate, the estimate is not considered reliable.
 Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates.

Unemployment Rate: Regardless of school status, 16-19 year olds in Pinal County seeking employment have a much more difficult time finding a job than the overall population as shown by the 13.3% unemployment rate for 16-19 year olds compared to 6.4% overall. Although the American Community Survey sampling may contain a large sampling error, our current experience with the out-of-school youth population proves the data true.

Regardless of school status, a vast majority of the youth eligible cohort face challenges in securing and retaining employment. Those who are eligible for services and are out-of-school, potentially face additional challenges due to their circumstances, warranting the ability to focus on this cohort to maximize their potential and provide access to services that may exist for those who are in school. However, the flexibility afforded by this waiver will allow a balanced mix to be maintained as we continuously evaluate the needs of the out-of-school and in-school youth population, resources available to each in Pinal County and create a service delivery approach to allow the maximum support possible where the need is determined.

	Pinal County	Arizona	United States
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.4%	5.4%	5.3%
16- to 19-year-olds	13.3%	16.5%	14.8%
Enrolled in school	14.8%**	16.3%	13.8%
Not enrolled in school	11.1%**	16.7%	17.0%
High school graduate (includes GED)	11.1%**	13.9%*	15.7%
Less than high school graduate	11.1%**	25.8%*	23.3%

*Estimates may not be reliable due to sampling error.
 **Due to the large amount of sampling error relative to the size of the estimate, the estimate is not considered reliable.
 Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates.

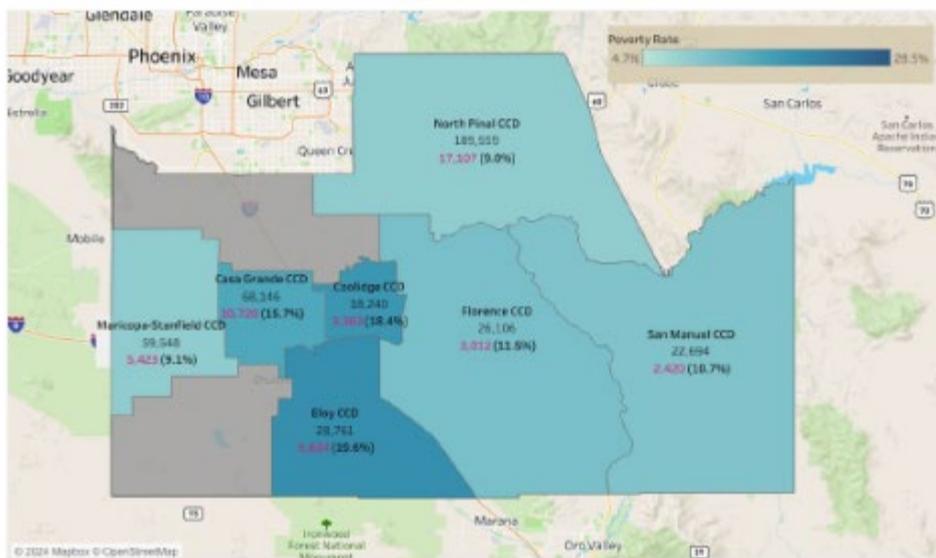
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Poverty Rate: As shown in the map and dataset below, Pinal County covers a vast territory – mainly wide areas of sparsely populated territory punctuated by population centers in each geographic region. Each of these regions presents its own unique economy as well as challenges for the populations who reside there. One common element in each region is the fact that the age 16-25 cohort makes up a majority of those living in poverty. Granted that individual in this cohort may be part of a poverty-stricken household, the fact that for WIOA eligibility purposes, this cohort exists and needs services. A number of these targeted individuals, although living in poverty, are both in-school and out-of-school. This waiver will allow a balanced service mix to be offered as we continuously evaluate the needs of the out-of-school and in-school youth populations, resources available to each in Pinal County, and create a service delivery approach to allow the maximum support possible where the need is determined.

ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County includes the definition of “youth who require additional assistance” in its policy manual (<https://www.pinal.gov/DocumentCenter/View/12795/Exhibit-500A---Definition-of-Additional-Assistance-PDF>). Not more than five percent of all In-school enrolled in the program each year are eligible only based on the “requires additional assistance” criterion. (Note: All In-School/Out-of-school Youth must be low income unless included in the 5% low-income exception). Flexibility afforded by this waiver will allow for a focus on in-school youth who qualify as low-income, without a degradation of services provided to out-of-school youth.



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Graduation Rates: Although Pinal County exceeds the Arizona percentage of four-year high school graduates, there are still sub-cohorts of the population who could benefit from WIOA Youth Program services. As depicted below, Native American or Alaskan Native students graduate at a rate over 16 percent less than the overall county population rate. Students who are in foster care, or are homeless face additional challenges to either remain in a formal education setting or have access to the services provided by the WIOA Youth Program to assist them in regaining a pathway toward high school graduation or equivalent. This is a major component of our overall service strategy to assist both in-school youth and out-of-school youth attain this credential and become a

Cohort Year	Graduation Rate Type	County	Subgroup	Number in Cohort	Number Graduated	% Graduated in 4 Years
2023	4 Year	Pinal	All	3,755	2,940	78.3%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	American Indian or Alaska Native	164	102	62.2%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Asian	*	*	93.2%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Black/African American	280	223	79.6%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	English Learners	109	86	78.9%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	ELFEP14	121	96	79.3%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Female	1,776	1,474	83.0%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Foster Care	36	19	52.8%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Hispanic or Latino	1,679	1,338	79.7%

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Cohort Year	Graduation Rate Type	County	Subgroup	Number in Cohort	Number Graduated	% Graduated in 4 Years
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Homeless	31	18	58.1%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Income Eligibility 1 & 2	1,460	1,179	80.8%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Male	1,979	1,466	74.1%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Migrant	*	*	91.7%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Military	*	*	92.9%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Multiple Races	175	142	81.1%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	*	*	84.2%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	Special Education	448	345	77.0%
2023	4 Year	Pinal	White	1,285	1,041	81.0%

Source: Arizona Department of Education, <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data>

Cohort Year	State	Graduation Rate Type	Subgroup	# in Cohort	# Graduated	Percent Graduated in 4 Years
2023	Arizona	4 Year	All	93,430	72,415	77.5%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	American Indian or Alaska Native	4,186	2,838	67.8%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Asian	2,744	2,547	92.8%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Black/African American	5,361	3,861	72.0%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	English Learners	3,516	2,606	74.1%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	ELFEP14	4,482	3,355	74.9%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Female	46,449	37,164	80.0%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Foster Care	597	260	43.6%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Hispanic or Latino	42,981	32,052	74.6%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Homeless	1,538	912	59.3%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Income Eligibility 1 & 2	34,381	26,415	76.8%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Male	46,980	35,251	75.0%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Migrant	626	525	83.9%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Military	697	576	82.6%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Multiple Races	2951	2403	81.4%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	357	276	77.3%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	Special Education	8509	6230	73.2%
2023	Arizona	4 Year	White	33631	28187	83.8%

Source: Arizona Department of Education, <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data>

In addition to the above factors, we will ensure that tracking of the in-school and out-of-school expenditures is conducted in accordance with fiscal policy.

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Appendix 9: WIOA Unified State Plan Public Comment Summary

Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic	The sentence on the Finance & Insurance	When the WAC decided the list of in-demand industries for the state, they used '21-'23 short-term projections	No Revision	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Analysis	<p>industry's 2021-2023 growth projections is repeated twice in the F&I section: as the second sentence and as the last sentence on page 11. Also, this section is confusing because the table on page 9 shows a decline in this sector for '22-'24 while we use '21-'23 data in the narrative to describe growth. The decline in the table should be addressed in the narrative or an obvious question is how and why this sector remains an in-demand one for the '24-'27 period this plan covers if it is on a decline once '24 data is included.</p>	<p>because that's what was most up-to-date at the time. We made the decision to include these estimates into the report during our first draft so it was apparent while each industry was chosen. Later drafts saw the introduction of '22-'24 projections when they became the most up-to-date estimates; however, some of the in-demand industries' projections saw declines here. Updates can be expected in the 2-year state plan modification.</p>		
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	<p>For most sector descriptions, the '21-'23 period is described/framed as a projection, which dates the plan given that is already the past. While at the time of drafting, full-year '23 info was not known, can it be before the plan</p>	<p>This feedback can be shared with the state plan coordinator next cycle to assist with determining project timelines. Realistically because of how large this project is, there will always be some lag, but work can be done to minimize as possible.</p>	No Revision	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	<p>is publicized so that data can be captured/reported as actuals vs. projections? If not, we should still acknowledge or change this framing so the plan is not deemed out of date before the "ink dries."</p>			
<p>Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:</p>	<p>ARIZONA@WORK is the only entity cited doing career pathways work that will be considered in the effort to provide more research and info on in-demand credentials and licenses. Later (page 42) A@W is explained as a network that "bridges partnerships" and includes community-based programs, but since this is an early reference to A@W on page 15, I suggest adding more of a description of A&W here so the plan isn't seen as taking too narrow a view of who is doing this pathways and credential/licensin</p>	<p>Added descriptor of ARIZONA@WORK system: "ARIZONA@WORK serves as the comprehensive statewide network for workforce development, aiding employers of various sizes and industries in recruiting, nurturing, and retaining top-notch talent. The system extends a diverse array of resources and services to assist job seekers throughout the entire state in securing high-quality employment opportunities. As a collaborative effort between public and private entities, ARIZONA@WORK operates seamlessly across 12 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) areas and 73 local offices under a unified mission: Develop a customer-driven, integrated workforce system that delivers business, education, and training services to ensure equitable access to high-quality jobs that meet the diverse needs of employers and job seekers. Supported by federal funding, services are provided free of charge, ensuring accessibility to all."</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	g mapping work throughout the state.			
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	This might apply earlier in the doc but started to notice it here; we're quite inconsistent on using % or spelling out "percent" -- we should stick to one or the other in narrative sections.	Document changed to reflect the use of "%" after numbers and the use of "percent" otherwise.	Revised	Completed
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	The last sentence of the first paragraph is a parenthetical that needs to read "per 100,000" instead of "per thousand" as that implies almost half the AZ population and 1/3 of the U.S. population is incarcerated.	Revised accepted	Revised	Completed
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	The plan suddenly uses the term "super sectors" which has not been previously referenced or defined. Only "in demand" has been used previously. Also, do we have more data/context to include in this Industry Employment section? What about outside of	Supersectors is a term used by the Bureau of Labor Statics to refer to the largest groupings of industries in their classification system. It does not signify great importance or value, it just helps economist track performance for all industries. More information can be found here: https://www.bls.gov/sae/additional-resources/naics-supersectors-forces-program.htm . Footnote added.	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	"super sectors" -- what is the story there?			
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	Covid 19 Impact section: Douglas is misspelled. It only has one "s"	Spelling corrected	Revised	Completed
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	At the top of the page the first two lines are in a larger font than intended.	Font size corrected	Revised	Completed
Section II. (a)(1)(A): Economic Analysis:	Table 15: expand the width of the third column so the "t" isn't stranded on its own line	Formatting corrected	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	So as not to confuse ADES with the ADE, spell out ADE on first reference, which is in the first sentence of the third paragraph.	Both acronyms are spelled out earlier in the section	No Revision	Completed
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Can we be broader and more innovative in what we consider in-scope of Services to Employers? Outside of A@W BST teams there are "players" in the workforce system who are doing a ton of work with employers related to attracting, developing and retaining talent, creating safe and desirable work	The ARIZONA@WORK Business Services teams play a crucial role in fostering collaboration with various stakeholders within the workforce system, particularly those dedicated to economic development. Through strategic partnerships, these teams create a dynamic synergy that enhances the overall workforce ecosystem. By working closely with economic development entities, they facilitate a seamless exchange of information and resources, allowing employers to gain a comprehensive understanding of available workforce services. This collaboration enables businesses to access a pool of skilled workers more effectively, fostering a	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	places, etc. How does that work get tracked, especially if it is funded via WIOA money that is not allocated directly by LWDBs?	mutually beneficial relationship where the right talents are matched with suitable employment opportunities. The concerted efforts of ARIZONA@WORK and its partners exemplify a holistic approach to workforce development, driving economic growth and prosperity in the region.		
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Services to Employers - Why is "service provider" called out here? Service providers are included in the Business Services teams. Why is there a distinction?	Removed "service providers."	Revised	Completed
Section II(a)(2)(A): The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Last paragraph, end of third line: a figure is missing from the Program Year reference (it now reads 202)	changed to PY 2022	Revised	Completed
Section II(a)(2)(A): The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	third sentence: the year indicates 202.	changed to PY 2022	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - change "result in certification or accreditation" to result in a "recognized credential".	Changed to "recognized credential."	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - Locally recognized credentials should be removed. We have not used this term in many years. All programs should result in credentials as defined in TEG 10-16, Change 2. The term "industry recognized" may be better than "federally" recognized in this section as what is important is that they recognized by employers.	Remove "locally recognized credentials" and replaced with "industry recognized credential."	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - We agree with using the credential attainment rate for required initial performance data. This is not included in the current WAC policy. Initial and Continued Eligibility factors are being discussed as the WAC policy is revised and the ETPL Procedures are being developed. We agree with using the credential attainment rate as	Arizona requires that one or more of the WIOA indicators of performance for all students is provided by the training provider: employment 2nd & 4th Quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, or credential attainment for the last four quarters.	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	the measure to looks, as it does not require that the training provider have access to employment wage data.			
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Jobpath Inc. Student Support Services - Include information about Jobpath Inc, services in other LWDAs. JobPath serves Pinal County	The following clarification was added to the state plan "A workforce development support and advocacy agency, Jobpath Inc. Student Support Services in Pima and Pinal Counties, collaborating with community colleges and job-training facilities to empower under-represented adults in pursuing vocational degrees and certificates, particularly in IT, industrial trades, and healthcare for high-wage, in-demand careers."	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(B) The Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development Activities	B Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development - A "no wrong door approach" should be a requirement, it should not be something that is adopted by a local area or optional. This is in the opening paragraph and a bullet point. If this is not happening, it sounds like a weakness.	Shifted language to emphasize the "no wrong door approach" intents for the state. Remove bullet from strength.	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(B) The Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development	B Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development - What are the "rigid diploma or HSE	The requirement of high school diploma or its equivalent may not always be necessary for the opportunity at hand. We recommend making a determination about this requirement on a case-by-case	No Revision	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Activities	mandates?	instance.		
II(a)(2)(B) The Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development Activities	<p>B Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development - I would just remove page 62 entirely. Bullets cover the weaknesses on page 63 and 64. Consider clarifying this statement: "The awareness of workforce programs like ARIZONA@WORK is uneven, and the use of job fairs as an incentive in schools may not sufficiently address these disparities. 1. ARIZONA@WORK is not a Program. 2. We agree awareness about ARIZONA@WORK needs to be worked on; 3. Unclear about the example of using job fairs at schools as incentives, we promote our system using many methods, and approaches.</p>	<p>Added clarifying language. Page 62 was kept.</p>	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(B) The Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development	<p>Cross Border Collaboration -- Is the reference to Yuma as a city or to Yuma County? And</p>	<p>Add in "County" after Yuma. The detail was sourced via State Plan Development Sessions.</p>	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Activities	what about other border areas like Douglas and Cochise County? Are there other cross-border connections that should be cited?			
II(a)(2)(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities Analysis	Add a definition under the table for Employer Retention Rate. Does this mean the % of employers who are retained as "clients" by BSTs for some amount of time or ... ?	Added definitions. "Employer penetration rate: Arizona employers using program services & Employer retention rate: Percentage of participants retaining employment"	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	LWDB section: Can we include instructions on where to find the local plans that were developed in 2023?	They can be found on each local area's AZ@WORK website page.	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	Here and in following sections Capacity Metrics seems a misnomer. We are giving the #'s served without a comparison to what the CAPACITY is of the system to serve: are these actual numbers served putting the system at capacity, are we operating under/over capacity? It seems they are # served	Change "Capacity Metrics" to "Performance Metrics"	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	metrics without that added data piece.			
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	Title : Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth - Make "Dislocated Workers" singular. It the Dislocated Worker Program.	Corrected	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	ARIZONA@WORK Business Services - The plan states that Business Services at the state level within DES collaborate with LWDA business service teams - implying that there are two teams - DES and local area. Note that WIOA places employment engagement with the local boards - not with individual partners regardless if they are administered by DES. Business Services should be a local board function. From WIOA Sec. 107(d)(4):(4) EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT.— The local board shall lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of	Description revised with additional information	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	<p>employers and with entities in the region involved— (A) to promote business representation (particularly representatives with optimal policymaking or hiring authority from employers whose employment opportunities reflect existing and emerging employment opportunities in the region) on the local board; (B) to develop effective linkages (including the use of intermediaries) with employers in the region to support employer utilization of the local workforce development system and to support local workforce investment activities; (C) to ensure that workforce investment activities meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in the region, by enhancing</p>			

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	<p>communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, economic development entities, and service providers; and (D) to develop and implement proven or promising strategies for meeting the employment and skill needs of workers and employers (such as the establishment of industry and sector partnerships), that provide the skilled workforce needed by employers in the region, and that expand employment and career advancement opportunities for workforce development system participants in indemand industry sectors or occupations.</p>			
<p>II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity</p>	<p>Title : Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth - Inadequate description of Adult, Dislocated</p>	<p>Description revised to add additional information</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	Worker, and Youth Programs. Other ARIZONA@WORK programs include services that are provided, and do not solely focus on WIOA performance measures.			
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	Title III section: a layman won't know what the term "covered persons" means	Foonote added to p. 77 to address definition of "covered persons."	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - Change "result in certification or accreditation" to result in a "recognized credential".	Change to recognized credential	Revised	Completed
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - We agree with using the credential attainment rate for required initial performance data. This is not included in the current WAC policy. Initial and Continued Eligibility factors are being discussed as the WAC policy is revised and the ETPL Procedures are being developed. We agree with using	Arizona requires that one or more of the WIOA indicators of performance for all students is provided by the training provider: employment 2nd & 4th Quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, or credential attainment for the last four quarters.	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	the credential attainment rate as the measure to look, as it does not require that the training provider have access to employment wage data.			
II(a)(2)(C) State Workforce Development Capacity	Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) - Locally recognized credentials should be removed. We have not used this term in many years. All programs should result in credentials as defined in TEG 10-16, Change 2. The term "industry-recognized" may be better than "federally" recognized in this section as what is important is that they be recognized by employers.	Change to "industry recognized credential"	Revised	Completed
II(b)(1) Vision	Below the bulleted list of the Governor's priorities, we should not cite the second one as "primarily" the way long-term prosperity will be achieved. Those priorities are a	Removed "primarily"	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	"set" for a reason and ALL contribute heavily to the state's prosperity. People have to have water and shelter before they can do much else, for example.			
II(b)(1) Vision	Goals and Strategies should be at the beginning of the plan - page 2 or 3 (the first item of the TOC)	The WIOA State Plan followed the structure and parameters outlined by DOL Guidance. Executive Summary was added to summarize Goals & Strategies earlier in the plan.	No Revision	Completed
II(b)(2)Goals	The goal aims to be employer focused. But it is still focused on workforce services. It should be focused on engagement with employers to inform workforce services to ensure the workforce's skills meet the needs of diverse employers.	The goals and strategies reflected in this Unified Plan were designed based on multiple stakeholder engagement opportunities, including workshop sessions and survey feedback. Efforts to implement this goal will include engagement with employers.	No Revision	Completed
II(b)(2)Goals	Define "Older" in "Older Individuals"	Footnote was added to define "older individuals."	Revised	Completed
II(b)(4) Assessment	SAM is such a lagging indicator one could argue that it is a good tool to reflect on but almost useless to gauge the current state of a local area for performance	The content in this section that refers to the Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM) is intended to align with guidance from the Department of Labor regarding assessment of WIOA performance indicators in alignment with TEGL 11-19, Change 1. Other content in this section is intended to provide an alternative framework for assessing the effectiveness of the	No Revision	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	purposes	workforce development system.		
II(c)(1) Strategies State will implement as required by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D)	Strategy 2.4 -- Should partners' work with employers be mentioned as well, given their capacity greatly adds to workforce system capacity to reach and support employers? For example, the Phoenix Chamber has done extensive Talent Pipeline Management work, community colleges are engaged with employers, etc.	The goals and strategies reflected in this Unified Plan were designed based on multiple stakeholder engagement opportunities, including workshop sessions and survey feedback. The activities outlined for each strategy are a sample of efforts that will support implementation. Additional efforts will include activities aligned to the example provided.	No Revision	Completed
II(c)(1) Strategies State will implement as required by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D)	The Summit was convened in partnership between the WAC and Maricopa County, City of Phoenix and Pinal County Workforce Development Boards	Added clarifying language: Moreover, the inaugural Arizona Workforce Summit in June 2023, was convened in partnership between The Council and Maricopa County, City of Phoenix and Pinal Workforce Development Boards. This major event connected over 330 attendees from workforce development, economic development, and education.	Revised	Completed
II(c)(1) Strategies State will implement as required by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D)	Check number of apprenticeships listed on the ETPL. On 1/25/2023 I was able to find 46 registered apprenticeship programs. Based on a search for programs that result in an apprenticeship	Added in the timeframe for the Apprenticeship Program data. Pursuant to TEG 8-19 change 1, Registered Apprenticeship programs must "opt in" to be included on the State ETPL.	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	<p>certificate, I found only 9 apprenticeship programs. A goal should be set to increase the number of the apprenticeships on the ETPL. 23 percent is too low. Data on the ETPL regarding registered apprenticeship programs needs to be updated regularly to ensure accuracy and completeness. Also, if there are 63 programs on the ETPL currently, they are not easy to find using the Arizona Job Connection system.</p>			
<p>II(c)(1) Strategies State will implement as required by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D)</p>	<p>Page 84 AZ Registered Apprenticeship Program Why are only 23% of RAPs on the ETPL - aren't all RAPs automatically entered into the ETPL? Page 103 (B) Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan WIOA funding mechanisms can provide financial assistance for related technical</p>	<p>Added in the timeframe for the Apprenticeship Program data.</p> <p>Pursuant to TEGL 8-19 change 1, Registered Apprenticeship programs must "opt in" to be included on the State ETPL.</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	<p>assistance only if the Registered Apprenticeship is listed on the ETPL. There is a gap in expectations here for LWDBs to support apprentices. Work needs to be done to promote the benefits of being listed on the ETPL to Registered Apprenticeships. - The plan references a 43% increase in apprenticeship enrollments representing an increase from the previous year but there is no mention of what year is being measured/compared</p>			
<p>II(c)(1) Strategies State will implement as required by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D)</p>	<p>AZ Registered Apprenticeship Program - Why are only 23% of RAPs on the ETPL - aren't all RAPs automatically entered into the ETPL?</p>	<p>Added in the timeframe for the Apprenticeship Program data.</p> <p>Pursuant to TEGL 8-19 change 1, Registered Apprenticeship programs must "opt in" to be included on the State ETPL.</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>II(c)(2) Strategies State will use to align partner programs</p>	<p>The third bullet point is missing something or worded incorrectly</p>	<p>Changed to "Monthly via ARIZONA@WORK Meeting, as needed"</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
II(c)(2) Strategies State will use to align partner programs	Strategy 1.4 - "Twitter (also known as X)" - "X (formerly known as Twitter)	Changed to read "X (formerly known as Twitter)"	Revised	Complete d
Section III. (a)(2) Implementatio n of State Strategy	Is it missing information after the description of?	Remove "This must include a description of - " from the end of the prompt	Revised	Complete d
III(a)(2) Implementatio n of State Strategy	(applies to page 79 too) Strategy 2.4 is MAJOR but the activities center on creating awareness of services. What about establishing "closed loops" and stronger support services for EMPLOYERS who hire people with employment barriers to know and learn from their experiences, support their challenges with training or retaining such job seekers and striving to continuously improve employers' success with tapping and cultivating priority populations as a talent pipeline?	The goals and strategies reflected in this Unified Plan were designed based on multiple stakeholder engagement opportunities, including workshop sessions and survey feedback. The activities outlined for each strategy are a sample of efforts that will support implementation. Additional efforts will include activities aligned to the example provided.	No Revision	Complete d
III(a)(2) Implementatio n of State	Can 3.2 and 3.3 be further integrated by not limiting the	The goals and strategies reflected in this Unified Plan were designed based on multiple stakeholder engagement	No Revision	Complete d

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Strategy	<p>data sharing work solely to "WIOA partners," which some in the system might define solely as those with direct WIOA funding? 3.2 is about maximizing diverse funding streams to expand the impact of WIOA dollars, so organizations doing important workforce development work might be funded other ways but still be important partners to include in data sharing, reporting, etc. In short, don't limit 3.3 solely to WIOA-funded partners. (This applies to the top of page 109 too)</p>	<p>opportunities, including workshop sessions and survey feedback. Efforts will be made to expand funding and data sharing beyond WIOA-funded partners.</p>		
III(a)(2)(A) Implementation of State Strategy - Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy	<p>Are we assuming a certain level of WIOA and "rules" familiarity in the audience for this plan? We don't explain "required partners" but use that reference where it might be unclear who requires them and why, and begs the question of who they are. That</p>	<p>There is only one instance of "required partners," on page 120, and examples are listed.</p>	<p>No Revision</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	might warrant a little explanation for context.			
III(a)(2)(A) Implementation of State Strategy - Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy	Bullet 1.2 has an asterisk as if there is a footnote, but there isn't. Also, the state's digital equity and inclusion plan was out for public input at the same time and is a BEAD requirement. Should that plan get a mention here as it includes a digital literacy/training component? This would apply to bullet 1.2 on page 107 as well. (The digital equity plan gets a nod on page 122)	Asterisk removed	Completed	Completed
III(a)(2)(A) Implementation of State Strategy - Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy	RESEA is not a required "partner".	Remove "required" from the sentence.	Revised	Completed
III(a)(2)(B) Implementation of State Strategy - Alignment with Activities Outside the	(B) Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan - WIOA funding mechanisms can provide financial assistance for related technical	Reviewed and noted.	No Revision	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Plan	assistance only if the Registered Apprenticeship is listed on the ETPL. There is a gap in expectations here for LWDBs to support apprentices. Work needs to be done to promote the benefits of being listed on the ETPL to Registered Apprenticeships.			
III(a)(2)(C) Implementation of State Strategy - Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals	second to last bullet point: Have we previously defined "partner programs?" Does this mean title partners like the Title II providers listed on page 45 or is it broader or different than that?	The implementation of this Unified Plan aims to expand a broader reach beyond Core Partner partners. The reference is to a broader reach inclusive of core, required, and additional partner opportunities.	No Revision	Completed
III(a)(2)(C) Implementation of State Strategy - Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals	2nd bullet point: This unintentionally over-simplifies and under-represents what I think we want to convey. Parolees having a QR code that gets them onto a spreadsheet someone tracks doesn't sound like any direct or meaningful benefit to them as a job seeker/client.	Replace existing text with, "The Re-entry program has leveraged technology and developed a QR code for Parole Officers in the field to expedite referrals of clients who are being paroled to receive employment services and other support as they reenter the workforce. From the QR code, the Parole Officer can fill out the brief questionnaire with the client. The answers are generated to a spreadsheet that is maintained on a daily basis by a designated Employment Counselor in their area."	Revised	Completed

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	<p>Suggest rewording that intake has been automated and the customer experience now involves the ease of a QR code accessible (when? at the point they are transitioning from incarceration to parole? with what? Do they have a smart phone at whatever point this is or does someone provide one for this step if not?) to start the intake that will connect parolees to services and resources.</p>			
<p>III(a)(2)(C) Implementation of State Strategy - Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals</p>	<p>(C) Coordination, Alignment, and Provisions to services to Individuals - Business Service Reps are not only DES employees. This is DES focused. . Business services are locally driven.</p>	<p>The referenced section is specific to "...Services to individuals" but the comment provided speaks to services to "employers" which has been reworked.</p>	<p>No Revision</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>III(a)(2)(D) Implementation of State Strategy - Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to</p>	<p>It doesn't have to be a standalone strategy, but perhaps in the first bulleted list here we can include an effort to identify and utilize</p>	<p>The example provided is reflective of the best practices that will be emphasized in alignment with this strategy.</p>	<p>No Revision</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Employers	employers' preferred channels for engaging with their local communities and industry sectors in order to cultivate those channels as referral pipelines into A@W and workforce system services. Many employers are entirely unaware of what A@W is, offers or how to tap into it. In a rural community, for example, if the local Chamber has a strong member base and robust programming as a preferred partner to employers in that community, then keeping the Chamber informed of services and helping it be an effective referral point is an important step.			
III(a)(2)(D) Implementation of State Strategy - Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers	RR is expanded on quite a lot, but we don't acknowledge big barriers to fostering talent pipelines for employers such as lack of accessible housing in this section. Can we include something	Added, "The services include reemployment resources and assistance to affected individuals through coordination and collaboration with core partners and community partners to bring affected individuals services for temporary needs such as rental/housing, utilities, and nutrition assistance."	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
	<p>on wraparound services and how employers are made aware of what's available for their staff and when/how to tap into such services along their paths to recruiting, hiring and retaining talent?</p>			
<p>III(a)(2)(D) Implementation of State Strategy - Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers</p>	<p>LWDAs are not ARIZONA@WORK partner programs. The State RR team connects interested in work-based learning to ARIZONA@WORK partners, including the Adult, Dislocated Worker Program, and Youth Program and ES... Remove LWDAs from this statement and replace with the names of the programs.</p>	<p>Remove "including LWDAs and ES,"</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>III(a)(2)(E) Implementation of State Strategy - Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions and other Education and Training</p>	<p>Earlier in the plan there is reference to accelerators, but is that not a focused strategy: to develop curriculum that accelerates credential attainment and fast tracks people into paying jobs even</p>	<p>Review and noted</p>	<p>No Revision</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Providers	while they continue to upskill or earn qualifications toward a next-level credential?			
III(a)(2)(E) Implementation of State Strategy - Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions and other Education and Training Providers	Remove "locally recognized credentials" The PB allowing locally recognized has not been in place since WIA.	Change to "industry recognized credential"	Revised	Completed
III(a)(2)(E) Implementation of State Strategy - Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions and other Education and Training Providers	Support using the Credential Attainment Rate for initial ETPL eligibility	Arizona requires that one or more of the WIOA indicators of performance for all students is provided by the training provider: employment 2nd & 4th Quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, or credential attainment for the last four quarters.	Revised	Completed
III(a)(2)(F) Implementation of State Strategy -- Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials	Registered Apprenticeships (RAPs) receive automatic approval for the ETPL, but a low percentage of the programs are actually listed on the ETPL. This plan needs to address this discrepancy	The ETPL team is working with the Arizona Office of Apprenticeship to identify any barriers or misconceptions that prevent Registered Apprenticeship Programs from opting into the ETPL to increase the number of Registered Apprenticeship Programs on the ETPL	Revised	Completed

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	and create a plan for increasing the number of RAPs on the ETPL.			
Section III(a)(2)(E)	Last paragraph: A@W should go beyond working only with "business partners" to consulting and engaging community-based organizations focused on talent pipeline and career pathways development as there is a pretty significant network of private sector activity here that can be built from or at least consulted and factored into strategies. (Strategy 2.1 language might even be expanded to include community-based and economic development organizations) This change would be consistent with the first paragraph on page 118 re: OEO work	Review and noted.	No Revision	Completed
Section III(a)(2)(G) Implementation of State	Should the Northern Arizona Good Jobs Network grant awarded by	Following language was added: The Northern Arizona Good Jobs Network (NAGJN) is a three-phase project focused on developing regional	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Strategy - Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies	the Governor be included somewhere? This is a \$9.5M grant for a three-phase, four-year project aligned to the NACOG CEDS, and the network includes the four N Az community colleges and spans a five-county area. I have an overview or could provide a synopsis to include if it's a fit.	training-to-employment models for the healthcare & social assistance, construction, manufacturing & transportation, and retail & hospitality sectors across five Northern Arizona counties. Modeled after the federal Economic Development Administration's Good Jobs Challenge, NAGJN aims to build and strengthen systems and partnerships that bring together employers who have hiring needs with public- and private-sector entities to train workers with in-demand skills that lead to good jobs. The effort is designed to increase and enhance community and regional growth by augmenting resources at work in rural Arizona for historically underserved populations and those facing labor market barriers. The NAGJN includes four community colleges, local government, economic development organizations, community-based organizations, and Local First Arizona in its role as the state's Rural Development Council.		
III(b)(1) State Operating Systems that support coordinated implementation	Title IV Libera: Regarding the AJC Data team making Tablaeu reports available to all partners, will reports be available for partner programs that do not use the AJC system?	Title IV data will not be made available via Tableau. System modernization efforts are in place to identify modalities for sharing Core Partner data more broadly.	No Revision	Completed
III(b)(2) State Poilcies the support implementation	Policies that will support the implementation state strategies (for example-co-enrollment...The	Added in language to emphasize the WAC Policies are applicable to all Core Partner Programs.	Revised	Completed

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	list of policies includes Workforce Arizona Council policies, and Title I-B policies. Other policies for ARIZONA@WORK partners should be including including Title II, Title III, Title IV, and other partner programs.			
III(b)(4)(A) Assessment of Core and One-Stop Program Partner Programs	(A) Assessment of Core Partners and other One-Stop Partners - The website should include data on all ARIZONA@WORK partners to ensure equity in oversight and transparency	Reviewed and noted.	No Revision	Completed
III(b)(4)(A) Assessment of Core and One-Stop Program Partner Programs	Assessment of One-Stop Programs- How will Title III be assessed? Only Title I, II, and IV are listed of the core partners, Also, Title II shares info with the LWDBs, information on performance of Title III and IV programs should also be shared with the LWDBs.	Added verbiage: The ARIZONA@WORK Job Center Certification process, including the assessment tools, ensure that job centers have access to all program partners through one of the following methods: A program staff member is physically present at the site, a staff member from a different partner program is physically present and appropriately cross-trained to provide information to customers about the partner program, or use a direct linkage by phone or through real-time web-based communication to a program staff member who provides meaningful information or services to customers within a reasonable time.	Revised	Completed
III(b)(4)(C)	(C) Evaluation- Use correct	Agreed, language updated.	Revised	Completed

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Section	Comment	State Agency Response(s)	Action	Status
Evaluation	ARIZONA@WORK branding guidelines. Always capitalize.			d
III(b)(6)(A)(i-ii, iv) Program Data - Data Alignment and Integration	Title I and III - Add how are issues identified in monthly and bi-monthly performance meetings communicated with the LWDBs.	Changes were made to identify that information can be discussed during ARIZONA@WORK montly meetings.	Revised	Complete d
III(b)(7)(A) Priority of Service for Veterans - Implementation of Provisions	Describe how the State will monitor for Veteran's Priority of services - DVOPs refer to ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County and community partners for services, they do not refer to career, supportive, and training services. These services are determined by the partner program.	Language was revised to clarify that "DVOP specialists provide individualized career services ... and, as appropriate, make referrals to programs within the ARIZONA@WORK system, and beyond, for other career, supportive, and training services"	Revised	Complete d
VI(a)(1)(A) General Requirements - Identify the regions and local workforce development areas	Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs- Remove dashes after ARIZONA@WORK and before local area.	Corrected	Complete d	Complete d
VI(a)(2)(A) Statewide Activities - Policy and	(2) Statewide Activities - The name of the system is the Arizona Job	Corrected to "Arizona Job Connection"	Revised	Complete d

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guidance for workforce investment activities	Connection on Arizona Job Connect.			
VI(a)(2)(C) Statewide Activities - Rapid Response Funds for Layoff Aversion	Layoff Aversion - The plan erroneously states that the "State Rapid Response program connects employers interested in work-based learning with appropriate local area ARIZONA@WORK staff, while job seekers are connected with Employment Services staff". Depending on the local area plan, a local Business Service team will be created to promote local layoff aversion strategies. These strategies may or may not include Employment Service which does not provide work based learning activities.	reworked to highlight the partnership in delivering layoff aversion strategies	Revised	Completed
VI(a)(2)(C) Statewide Activities - Rapid Response Funds for Layoff	Recommend expanding on the Shared Work Program which is a high value layoff aversion strategy.	Replaced language with, "Employers are also made aware of programs designed to prevent layoffs such as the Shared Work program which provides an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in force by allowing businesses to divide available work or	Revised	Completed

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		hours among affected employees in lieu of layoffs. The program allows the employees to receive a portion of Unemployment Insurance benefits while working reduced hours."		
VI(b)(2) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements - Registered Apprenticeship	Registered Apprenticeship Program - If all RAPs receive automatic approval to be included on the ETPL - why are only 23 percent (63 RAPS) included on the ETPL (page 84)	Pursuant to TEGL 8-19 change 1, Registered Apprenticeship programs must "opt in" to be included on the State ETPL	No Revision	Completed
VI(b)(3) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements - Training Provider Eligibility Procedure	(3) Training Providers Eligibility Procedure - Including that RAPs are automatically eligible in policy does not ensure RAP's awareness. The benefits of being listed on the ETPL needs to be actively communicated and promoted to RAPs by staff.	The ETPL team is working with the Arizona Office of Apprenticeship to identify any barriers or misconceptions that prevent Registered Apprenticeship Programs from opting into the ETPL to increase the number of Registered Apprenticeship Programs on the ETPL	Revised	Completed
VI(b)(3) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements - Training Provider Eligibility Procedure	(3) Training Providers Eligibility Procedure - For, "LWDAs must not limit customer choice", this is a general statement, that needs clarification. It is often	Replaced "LWDAs must not limit customer choice" with the following to be consistent with the state policy: "LWDBs must maximize customer choice using a comprehensive process to ensure that a significant number of Eligible Training Providers are available to all job seekers in the local area."	Revised	Completed

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	<p>misinterpreted. LWDBs may create a local ETPL, with local requirements based on local business needs, and only fund those programs. Training services decisions are made by local programs. It is up to the program to determine when training services will be funded with WIOA Title I-B funds based on the viability of the employment plan, eligibility for training services, and labor market information.</p>			
<p>VI(b)(3) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements - Training Provider Eligibility Procedure</p>	<p>(3) Training Providers Eligibility Procedure - Remove all mentions of "Locally Recognized Credential" from this plan.</p>	<p>Changed to "industry recognized credential"</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>VI(e) Waiver Requests</p>	<p>Just flagging the placeholder that more is to come on waivers at the bottom of this page</p>	<p>Yes, waiver language has been finalized for State Plan inclusion.</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>VI(e) Waiver Requests</p>	<p>Only 75 in-school youth STATEWIDE are expected to use an ITA ... over what</p>	<p>The leading statement indicates that the projected outcomes apply to each program year that the waiver is in place (i.e., 2024 to 2027, if approved).</p>	<p>Revised</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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	<p>period? And why is that projection so much lower than recent PYs' actual results cited on page 201 (175 in PY 2022). Is the MyFutureAZ (Pipeline AZ) platform or schools' ECAP system of choice "linked" to ITAs or serving as a referral to them? If not, could that link be established?</p>	<p>The projection of 75 students is based on the numbers from PY 21 (124) and PY 22 (81). Language added which clarifies basis for projection</p>		
<p>VI(e) Waiver Requests</p>	<p>A data-backed case is made for granting the waiver to include in-school youth in ITAs; however, no such data is offered to back the case to waive required spend on out-of-school youth. There are assurances this waiver won't diminish services to the out-of-school population but nothing is offered to validate reach or effectiveness of services for that segment. This stands out on the heels of so much data on in-school youth and ITAs. Can we back the</p>	<p>The State Plan information collection request (ICR) includes the "most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes ... through implementation of the existing waiver"; thus data on the existing ITA for in-school youth waiver was provided. Because the out-of-school priority waiver is a new request and has not been approved or implemented, there are no outcomes data to be included.</p> <p>If the waiver is approved, the requirement to spend at least 50% of local area funds and statewide on out-of-school will stand. The request emphasizes that it would allow flexibility to provide necessary services based on need, rather than school status, and that it would not preclude out-of-school youth expenditure exceeding 50%, based on youth and local area need.</p>	<p>No Revision</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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	claim that lowering the required expenditure to 50% doesn't result in a trade-off and "favoring" of services to in-school youth who are likely easier to reach and perhaps easier to achieve necessary metrics with? Right now it's a bit of a "trust us" with that population.			
(WP) V(a)(2) Employment Service Staff - Professional Development Activities for Employment Service staff	(2) Describe how the state will provide professional development - Staff should be training on all ARIZONA@WORK partner programs not just core programs. They need to understand the whole system.	Changed to "ARIZONA@WORK partner programs"	Revised	Completed
Section(WP) V(e)(3)	Suggest spelling out MSFW on first reference here vs. forcing folks back up to the glossary at the start of the doc	MSFW acronym was spelled out.	Revised	Completed
VII(b)(1)(c)	Need to capitalize ARIZONA@WORK on all references	Corrected	Revised	Completed
VII(d)(1)	Overall progress against Goal 1 says a new goal will be	Reviewed and input shared with Title IV Program Administrator. See section C of this portion of the plan for revised	Revised	Completed

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	set with the state's 2024 plan. Isn't this doc that plan? Same for Goal 2 on page 256	goals. Removed "A revised version of this goal and related strategies will be included in the 2024 state plan" from Goals 1 and 3.		
VR Common Assurances	Item 2: is there any interest in having any formal agreements with USDA Rural Development?	Reviewed and input shared with Title IV Program Administrator.	No Revision	Completed
Appendix 1	Can we provide an outlook for when the negotiated performance levels will be available and how those will be published or added to the plan?	Negotiated levels of performance will be added to this Appendix of the State plan, prior to final approval of the Plan by Department of Labor, after negotiations are finalized	No Revision	Completed
Appendix 1	Why is it N/A to have an effectiveness measure for employers across all core programs? Seems we should provide some context for that so it's not interpreted as just not seeing that as important or relevant	From TEGL 11-19, Change 1 (issued 5/10/2023): "The primary indicator for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers has not yet been defined; therefore, the Departments do not negotiate levels of performance for this indicator with States." From TEGL 04-23 Attachment 1 (Issued 10/31/2023): "During PY 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of the sixth performance indicator, Effectiveness in Serving Employers (ESE) (see Notice of Proposed Rulemaking at 87 FR 56318 (Sept. 14, 2022)). In the spring 2023 Unified Agenda, the Departments announced plans to issue a final rule in November 2023 and will keep the public informed of any changes to this timeline. The Departments are working on finalizing this rule and will issue	No Revision	Completed

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		<p>further guidance on implementing this indicator when the rule is finalized. States are not required to submit expected levels of performance during the State planning process for this indicator for PY 2024 and PY 2025. However, States must continue to report the requisite Effectiveness in Serving Employers data, as required. "</p>		
Appendix 3	<p>List of Participating Organizations - List of "organizations" includes Titles IB - IV (#s 43-46) -who are these "organizations"? These are program names.</p>	<p>Should the list title change to "List of Participants"</p>	Revised	Completed