

Development and Use of Demand-Driven and High Growth Occupation and Demand Skills Listing Policies

Purpose: The WPWDB will provide WIOA funded-training services in support of demand-driven and high-growth occupations and skills in a manner that fully complies with the WIOA law and regulations.

Demand-Driven and High Growth Occupations Lists

WPWDB staff will be responsible for developing and maintaining a list of demand-driven and high growth occupations.

Definitions: Demand-driven occupations are in demand in the West Piedmont region; and high growth occupations will consist of occupations determined to be in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand and/or growth in the West Piedmont region.

Policy Statement #1: Priority will be given to fund training programs that are determined to be in demand-driven and/or high growth occupational areas. Priority will also be given to those programs that are used to support the current¹ and future needs² of the West Piedmont region employers.

Procedures for Developing the Demand-Driven and High Growth Occupations Lists

In determining demand-driven and high growth occupations, WPWDB staff will work closely with the Business Services Team³ to do the following:

- **Examine Labor Market Information**

Consideration will be given to the supply and demand for occupational skills in a variety of career clusters.⁴ Occupational demand will not be measured merely in terms of the annual number of job openings for a particular job title. Other factors that will be considered are:

- (1) The minimum skills required to perform the job; and
- (2) The average wage for an entry-level position in the occupation. In examining supply and demand, staff should use published or unpublished labor force data from the VEC, Weldon-Cooper Center, Chambers of Commerce in the region or any other public or private-sector agency or WPWDB approved organization. Published “job vacancy” listings in newspapers and on VOS may be used as a source of data for determining occupations in demand in the region.

- **Identify targeted business sectors with high potential for sustained growth**

¹ Current needs support the definition of “demand-driven.”

² Future needs support the definition of “high growth.”

³ The Business Services Team’s core members consist of representatives from the Workforce Career Center, VEC, community college, Chamber of Commerce and economic development office/agency.

⁴ Career Clusters are an organizational tool that link education with business and industry through 16 broad career areas. The 16 clusters have been adopted by the U.S. Department of Education as a mechanism to revitalize career and technical education by integrating rigorous academics with relevant technical content. Career Clusters enable students to explore several career options within a field of interest.

With input and guidance from area Chambers of Commerce and other economic development offices/departments serving the region, staff will identify business sectors with high potential for sustained growth. Labor market data for these sectors shall be presented to the WPWDB for consideration, including employment projections (as available).

Based on staff's recommendation, the WPWDB will make a determination of which sectors of the local economy have a high potential for sustained demand or growth.

Lists of targeted business sectors and/or demand occupations may be presented to the WPWDB for approval on an as needed basis. The list will be reviewed regularly by the WPWDB staff and if needed will be presented to the WPWDB for adjustments. WPWDB is responsible for disseminating revised lists to One Stop Operators and Youth Service Providers. For monitoring purposes, adjustments will be presented to the WPWDB's Program Planning & Development Committee.

As required by law, the eligible training provider program list will continue be reviewed annually by the WPWDB and will be updated to support targeted industry clusters and demand occupations. The WPWDB's Program Planning & Development Committee may recommend to the WPWDB to remove training provider programs from the WPWDB's Training Provider List if such programs do not support in-demand occupation.

All occupations not listed as in-demand will not be approved for subsidized training and/or supportive services. If a One Stop Operator or Youth Service Provider would like to make exceptions, these exceptions will have to come before the WPWDB's Program Planning & Development Committee for consideration. If needed special meetings may be called.

Demand Skills List

WPWDB staff will establish a list of demand skills. These skills must:

- Support economic development priorities
- Focus on industry sectors and clusters, whether present or emerging
- Address industry-specific or general shortages
- Enhance basic workplace skills

Policy Statement #2: Priority will be given to fund skill areas determined to be in demand and/or high growth in the West Piedmont region. Priority also will be given to support the current and future needs of West Piedmont regional employers.

Procedures for Developing a Demand Skills List:

In determining demand skills for the region, staff will seek input and guidance from the WPWDB, Business Services Team, One-Stop Operators, Youth Service Providers, elected officials and other stakeholders in the workforce investment system.

The WPWDB believes demand skills contribute to business productivity. These skills are useful to advance a worker's career and professional aspirations. Examples of demand skills include, but are not limited to: problem solving, human relations, STEM-related, information management, business management, English language proficiency, interpersonal and teamwork abilities, quality assurance, basic people skills, etc. It also includes entrepreneur programs that lead to a credential. The WPWDB believes that gaining entrepreneur skills and competencies is necessary for the region's future economic development.

The WPWDB's Demand Skills List will include skills and competencies that are considered necessary to the region's future economic development. It also may include skills and competencies that are specific to targeted industries.

After the staff has made a determination of "demand skills" for the region, the list of demand skills may be presented to the WPWDB for an ongoing approval. If there are adjustments, the WPWDB's Program Planning & Development Committee will review. As with the procedures for developing the Demand-Driven and High Growth Occupations Lists, eligible training provider program lists will continue to be updated, reviewed and approved annually by the WPWDB to include support demand skills list.

All adjustments will be presented to the WPWDB as needed.

Approval Signature:

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Revision Date: June, 2017