



VIRGINIA CAREER WORKS

WEST PIEDMONT REGION

PY 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Area, branded as West Piedmont Works by the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board (WPWDB) is a five-locale Local Workforce Development Area including Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania Counties and the independent cities of Danville and Martinsville. The WPWDB is part of the American Job Center National Network.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2015 and become effective July 1, 2015. WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. WIOA is designed to help youth, job seekers, and businesses. It also requires that each Local Workforce Development Area develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive four-year local plan, in partnership with Chief Elected Officials.

In recognition of WIOA and its guiding principles, WPWDB is please to present its local strategic plan for workforce development for the period of Program Year (PY) July 1,2020- PY June 30,2024. This plan identifies and assesses projected employment opportunities, projected workforce needs, and the services that will be required in order to develop a skilled, credentialed workforce to meet regional businesses' needs over the years. An analysis of demographic, economic and workforce trends present in this Region as well as strategic goals and action strategies that have been developed to address the identified issues is also included. Labor market information was provided by the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development (VTOED) using demographic, labor market, and economic data provided by the Virginia Employment Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the U.S. Census Bureau, Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed (ALICE) data provided by the United Way of New Jersey, and proprietary data provided by Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI).

Additionally, an assessment is provided of the current status of the workforce, including current business demands for workers and skills. Local area governance information is provided, including information on the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs), the Workforce Development Board (WDB), and the fiscal responsibilities of the Board. System development of the Virginia Workforce Center is discussed, including services provided by partners, and services available for specific populations. There are two customer bases for receipt of services through the local workforce development system: Businesses and job seekers.

The plan also describes the delivery of workforce development services through Area 17's Virginia Workforce Centers (One-Stops) and affiliate sites, including access to services for the general population, adults and dislocated workers, youth, and businesses. Included by reference or attachment are required WDB policies and certifications. The WPWDB recognizes the need to increase the visibility of the workforce development system and the convening role of the Board in economic development throughout the region. Partnerships, collaborative efforts, increased resources and innovative programming are set forth in the plan to address these overarching needs.

In the preparation of this plan, the Strategic Planning Committee, made up of Board and CLEO members, held an initial meeting to chart the process for its development. Following this, the SWVAWDB

collaborated with the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development (VTOED) to develop and circulated an online survey and conducted three focus group sessions to inform the SWOT analysis. VTOED engaged WDB staff in the refinement of the SWOT, the creation of new goals and strategies, and a review of the Board's existing Mission and Vision statements. VTOED also provided the labor market data for the plan. Through public comment and Board review, all required partners will have a voice in the development of this document. This local plan describes how local workforce development activities will be directed over the next four years to promote effective economic, education, and workforce development partnerships that will help develop and sustain productive workers for business, and thereby assist with the creation of prosperous communities that maintain the quality of life for the area's citizens.

It is the intent of the Board to consistently promote effective, efficient, streamlined services to all citizens and to build quality into processes that will make the system of resources openly available through technology as well as through the Virginia Workforce Centers. The SWVAWDB's PY 2020- PY 2024 Local Strategic Plan is intended to be a "top drawer" plan – not an "in-the-drawer" plan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board would like to thank the following individuals for all of their hard work, dedication, and contribution of time and effort in the planning and development of the 2020-2024 Local Strategic Plan:

Strategic Planning Committee:

Adam Wright, Chair; Shannon Hair, John Parkinson, Rhonda Hodges, Teresa Carter-Fontaine, Brain Wilson (Ex Officio: Debra Buchanan & Jim Daniel).

Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development:

Zach Jackson, Sarah Lyon-Hill

West Piedmont WDB Staff:

Tyler Freeland, Jael Membreno, Robbin Hall

We would also like to thank our wonderful WDB board members, CLEO board members, program operators, workforce staff, and partner agencies for your service and contribution to the success of the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and this region.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
INTRODUCTION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS	1
REGIONAL OVERVIEW	1
INDUSTRY DEMAND ANALYSIS.....	2
WORKFORCE SUPPLY ANALYSIS	19
PROGRAMMATIC SUPPLY ANALYSIS	23
SWOT	29
VISION AND GOALS	33
STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS	34
PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTMENT	35
LOCAL WORKFORCE SYSTEM	35
COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES	37
COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	38
COLLABORATION WITH EDUCATION	38
COLLABORATION WITH ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY	39
SUPPORT SERVICES	39
ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.....	40
BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT	40
PRIORITY OF SERVICES	42
PROGRAM DESIGN AND EVALUATION.....	43
EXPANDING ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	43
CAREER PATHWAYS, CO-ENROLLMENT, AND CREDENTIALS	45
ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.....	47
INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS	51
LINKING TRAINING TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS	51
RAPID RESPONSE.....	52
COMPLIANCE.....	53

OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING	53
SUNSHINE PROVISION OF WIOA.....	53
FISCAL AGENT AND THE TIMELY EXPENDITURE OF WIOA FUNDS.....	54
WIOA FUND LEVERAGING STRATEGY	55
NEUTRAL BROKERAGE OF ADULT, DISOLCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH SERVICES.....	55
NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE LEVELS.....	55
PERFORMANCE & EFFICTIVENESS MEASURES.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PLAN INPUT, DEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC COMMENT	55
WORKFORCE STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	56

DRAFT

STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

This section will present and analyze important regional demographic trends, including, but not limited to population change, households and household income, wages, and poverty.

Poverty & Households

Workforce Region XVII (17) is composed of three counties (Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania) and two independent cities (the City of Danville and the City of Martinsville). The most recent Census data estimates that 184,234 people lived in this area in 2019. This Region has experienced a 4.6% (8,789 person) decrease in population since the 2010 Decennial Census, where 193,023 people were counted. A small increase (0.9 years) in the Region's median age (45.3 in 2019) accompanied negative population change during this period. The 25-29 age cohort was the only cohort under the age of 60 to experience growth from 2010-2019; the remainder saw population decline up to 28.1%. Conversely, each age cohort above 59 years of age experienced some degree of population growth during the same duration.

Region 17 contained 79,065 households in 2019, according to the American Community Survey (ACS). Married-couple households, nonfamily households, and single parent households accounted for 43.5%, 36.6%, and 19.8% of the Region's households, respectively. Region 17 had an average family size of 2.89 for married-couple households and 3.11 for single parent households in 2019. Approximately 28.1% of married-couple households and 47.8% of single parent households included children under 18. Average household income in Region 17 was \$54,287 in 2019. This was lower than average household income for both the State (\$105,091) and Nation (\$92,324).

Wages

Living wages are broadly defined as the lowest wage necessary to meet the minimum standard of living in a community or region. Household dynamics, such as the presence of dependents, and other cost of living factors are factors that influence living wages. OED combined regional household data and cost of living data provided by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Table 1) to generate a weighted average living wage of \$14.37/hr. (approximately \$29,886 annually) for a conventional full-time position in Region 17 for 2019. It is important to note that this average is reflective of all households in Region 17; individual households may require a higher or lower wage. For instance, a married-couple household where both spouses are working and no child is present required a wage of \$8.93/hr. while the Region's average single parent household (one householder, two children) required a wage of \$29.31/hr.

Table 1: Living Wages, Workforce Region 17, 2020

	1 Adult	2 Adults (1 Working)	2 Adults (Both Working)
0 Children	\$10.80	\$17.85	\$8.93
1 Children	\$24.69	\$22.41	\$13.66
2 Children	\$29.31	\$24.89	\$15.95
3 Children	\$35.68	\$27.94	\$18.53

Source: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator

Average weighted wages provide a more realistic understanding of wages in a region in that each occupation is weighted with respect to employment. OED calculated a weighted average wage of \$19.22/hr. (\$39,998/yr.) in Region 17 for 2020. Weighted wages were lower in Region 17 compared to the State (\$27.43/hr. or \$57,054/yr.) and Nation (\$25.84/hr. or \$53,747/yr.). Additionally, many workers in Region I earned below this wage in 2020. Approximately 11.4% of workers earned below \$10/hr.; 39% lived below the Region's weighted average living wage (\$14.37/hr.); and 63.6% of workers earned below the Region's weighted average wage (\$19.22/hr.).

Poverty Status & ALICE

Poverty status is determined for all people except institutionalized people, people living in military quarters, people in college dormitories, and unrelated individuals under 15 years old. Approximately 18% (33,047) of residents for whom poverty status is determined in Region 17 lived below the federal poverty line (FPL) in 2019. This was higher than the poverty rate for the State (10.6%) and Nation (13.7%). Female-headed households with no spouse present saw the highest incidence of poverty in Region 17; 33.2% earned under the FPL in 2019. Furthermore, female headed households accounted for 55.1% of all households under the poverty line in this region for the same year. Residents that received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or some other cash benefit (39% lived under the poverty line), were unemployed (38%), or attained less than a high school education (26%), or were also more likely to live in poverty for the same year. Alternatively, married-couple households were the least likely to live below the FPL (6.5% in 2019).

Data provided by the United Way revealed that 30.7% of households in Region 17 lived above the FPL, however, did not earn enough to satisfy the minimum cost of household essentials, including food, housing, childcare, etc. in 2018. The United Way classifies these households as asset limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE). The ALICE threshold represents the widening gap between the FPL and wages that satisfy the "survival budget," which includes food, housing, transportation, a basic cellular plan, and, if necessary, childcare. For instance, a single, childless worker in Region 17 may earn above the FPL (\$12,400) but still earn below the estimated survival budget for this region (\$22,284). Just under half of the Region's households either lived under the FPL (19.1%) or ALICE threshold (30.7%) in 2018. Region 17 also had a higher proportion of households under the ALICE threshold compared to the State (29.5%). Additionally, a smaller proportion of households in Region 17 lived above the FPL and ALICE threshold compared to the State (60.2% of households).

Similar to poverty, certain groups were more like to live above or below the ALICE threshold. For instance, 18% of female-headed households with children in Region 17 lived above both the FPL and ALICE threshold in 2018. Alternatively, 78.7% of married couple households containing children lived above both the FPL and ALICE threshold. Older householders were also more likely to live under the ALICE threshold; 43.6% of householders aged over 65 in Region 17 lived below the ALICE threshold in 2018.

INDUSTRY DEMAND ANALYSIS

Industry Employment

Region 17 housed 74,142 jobs in 2020, according to Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI). The government sector accounted for the largest share of the Region's employment in 2020 (16%). Manufacturing, health care and social assistance, retail, and accommodation and food services were the

Region's second, third, fourth, and fifth largest sectors by employment, respectively. Combined, these five 2-digit sectors accounted for 67% of the region employment in 2020. Table 2 details employment for the five largest 2-digit sectors by employment in Region 17.

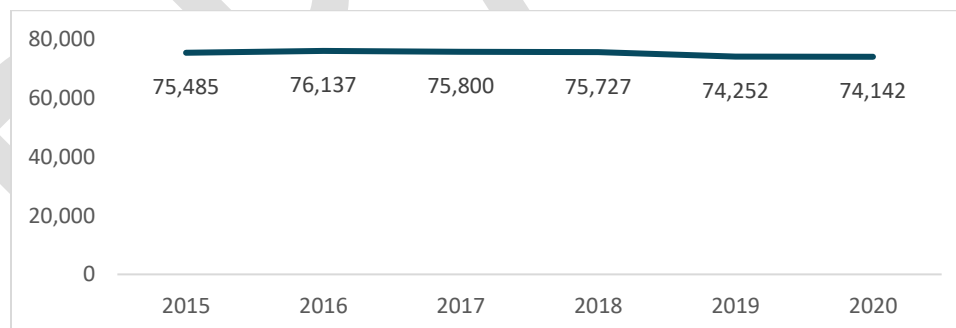
Table 2: Top-5 NAICS 2-Digit Sectors by Employment, Workforce Region 17, 2020

Description	2015 Jobs	2020 Jobs	2015 - 2020 Change	2015 - 2020 % Change	% Regional Employment
Government	12,075	11,868	(207)	(2%)	16.0%
Manufacturing	12,270	11,607	(663)	(5%)	15.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,011	11,147	136	1%	15.0%
Retail Trade	9,503	9,284	(219)	(2%)	12.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	5,335	5,620	284	5%	7.6%

Source: EMSI Developer 2020.4 Datarun

There was a net change of -1,343 jobs (4% decline) in Region 17 from 2015-2020; 1,351 jobs were created and 2,694 jobs were eliminated during this period (Figure 1). Seven 2-digit sectors saw positive employment change. Employment growth in the other services, accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance, and unclassified industry sectors accounted for 93% (1,251 jobs) of all jobs created during this period. Fourteen 2-digit sectors saw some degree of decline. Approximately 1,074 jobs were eliminated across the Region's administrative and support and waste management and remediation services sector. The Region's manufacturing retail, government, and professional, scientific and technical services sectors were also notable areas of decline.

Figure 1: Employment Change, Workforce Region 17, 2015-2020



Source: EMSI Developer 2020.4 Datarun

Gross Regional Product & Location Quotient

Gross regional product (GRP) is a measure of the value of the goods and services produced in a regional economy. Region 17 had a GRP of \$5.24 billion in 2019. The Region's manufacturing sector supplied 23.7% (\$1.2 billion) of the Region's total GRP in 2019. The government, health care and social assistance, retail, and wholesale sectors followed in contribution to the Region's GRP. Combined, these five sectors accounted for approximately 66% of the Region's GRP for that year. It is important to note that only one (health care and social assistance) of the Region's five top contributing sectors saw employment growth from 2015-2020. Table 3 details GRP for the top-five contributing sectors in Region 17.

Table 3: Top-5 NAICS 2-Digit Sectors by GRP, Workforce Region 17, 2019

Description	2019 GRP	% Regional GRP
Manufacturing	\$1,242,620,657	23.7%
Government	\$689,436,865	13.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$567,613,712	10.8%
Retail Trade	\$530,232,765	10.1%
Wholesale Trade	\$405,982,945	7.8%

Source: EMSI Developer 2020.4 Datarun

Location quotient (LQ) is a measure of the concentration of an industry's employment within a region compared to the national average and is important for isolating areas of regional specialization. LQ values of 1.0 suggest that the concentration of an industry is typical of all regions in the United States and indicate that local production meets the local demand for goods or services. LQ values exceeding 1.2 suggest that a region is specialized in a particular industry (net exporter), while LQ values less than 0.8 suggest that a region relies on other regions to meet local demand (net importer). The unclassified industry sector led the Region in LQ, with a value of 2.0 in 2020. Seven other sectors had LQ values over 1.0 and two sectors had values between 0.8-0.99. The remaining 11 sectors had LQ values below 0.8 in 2020. Table 4 lists the top-10 sectors by LQ in Region 17.

Table 4: Top-10 NAICS 2-Digit Sectors by LQ, Workforce Region I, 2020

Description	2020 LQ
Unclassified Industry	2.59
Manufacturing	2.00
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1.41
Retail Trade	1.28
Health Care and Social Assistance	1.17
Government	1.07
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1.02
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1.01
Accommodation and Food Services	0.88
Transportation and Warehousing	0.83

Source: EMSI Developer, 2020.4 Datarun

Target Industries

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board identified five target sectors:

- Manufacturing;
- Health care and life sciences;
- Information technology;
- Transportation and warehousing;
- And business services and management.

OED reviewed the comprehensive economic development strategies of the planning district in Region 17 to ensure that these identified target sectors were congruent with the goals of these documents. Table 5 details important trends related to these seven sectors and clusters.

Table 5: Target Industry Sectors, Workforce Region 17, 2020

Description	2020 Jobs	2015-2020 Change	2015-2020 % Change	2020-2025 Projected Change	2020-2025 Projected % Change	2020 LQ
Healthcare and Life Sciences	12,451	612	5%	1,229	10%	1.17*
Manufacturing	11,607	663	(5%)	-56	0%	2.00
Business Services and Management	4,972	1,373	(22%)	-76	(2%)	-
Transportation and Warehousing	2,360	32	1%	33	1%	0.83
Information Technology and Telecommunications	1,414	68	(5%)	140	10%	-

***Note:** the LQ value for the Healthcare and Life Sciences Cluster only represents healthcare and social assistance sector employment, which accounts for 90% of cluster employment.

Source: EMSI Developer, 2020.4 Datarun

Manufacturing

Approximately 11,607 workers were employed across the regional manufacturing sector in 2020, which accounted for 15.7% of total employment. The Region's manufacturing sector was expected to add 473 jobs from 2015-2020, according to an estimation based on national economic performance and job creation for the national sector. Instead, employment in this sector fell by 663 jobs during this period. This indicates that the regional manufacturing sector was not competitive. EMSI projects less than a 1% change in employment for this sector over the next five-year period (2020-2025). The regional manufacturing sector had a location quotient of 2.00 in 2020, suggesting that employment in this sector was twice as concentrated in Region 17 compared to all regions of the Nation. The manufacturing sector supplied 24% (\$1.2 billion) of the Region's GRP in 2019.

Miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators (4.8% of sector employment), first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (4.7%), and inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (3.5%) were the largest occupations within the Region's manufacturing sector in 2020. Occupations with high annual openings, a measure of new and replacement jobs, and that paid a livable wage (\$11.00/hr.) were considered to be in demand. Miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators was also the most in-demand manufacturing occupation in Region 17 for 2020, with 109 openings and 600 hires. Textile winding, twisting, and drawing out machine setters, operators, and tenders (99 openings), and inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (81 openings) were the following most in-demand manufacturing occupations for the same year. Table 6 details in-demand manufacturing occupations in Region 17.

Table 6: In-Demand Manufacturing Occupations, Workforce Region 17, 2020

5-Digit SOC Occupation	2020 Jobs	2015-2020 % Job Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Med. Hourly Wage	Typical Entry Level Education
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	699	(7%)	109	\$13.03	H.S. Diploma

Textile Winding, Twisting, and Drawing Out Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	257	66%	99	\$14.58	H.S. Diploma
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	523	14%	81	\$15.37	H.S. Diploma
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	615	1%	74	\$25.89	H.S. Diploma
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	404	(5%)	68	\$15.35	H.S. Diploma
Helpers--Production Workers	371	(21%)	66	\$13.86	H.S. Diploma
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	296	(22%)	62	\$13.63	H.S. Diploma
Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	214	14%	46	\$18.74	H.S. Diploma
Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical Assemblers, Except Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	215	45%	45	\$17.32	H.S. Diploma
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	242	30%	44	\$13.10	H.S. Diploma
Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	124	(3%)	44	\$13.64	H.S. Diploma
Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	228	(48%)	43	\$17.14	H.S. Diploma
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	250	38%	42	\$14.45	H.S. Diploma
Machinists	191	(25%)	35	\$19.13	H.S. Diploma
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	200	(30%)	35	\$14.02	H.S. Diploma
Upholsterers	164	72%	32	\$13.33	H.S. Diploma
Tire Builders	27	(88%)	32	\$21.38	H.S. Diploma
Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers	128	181%	32	\$19.34	H.S. Diploma
Furniture Finishers	137	99%	30	\$15.16	H.S. Diploma

Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	126	(22%)	25	\$13.85	H.S. Diploma
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	154	3%	25	\$17.70	H.S. Diploma
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	150	(10%)	25	\$15.95	H.S. Diploma
Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators	101	27%	21	\$19.38	H.S. Diploma
Textile Bleaching and Dyeing Machine Operators and Tenders	67	0%	19	\$14.77	H.S. Diploma
Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other	81	8%	19	\$13.23	H.S. Diploma
Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	132	(29%)	18	\$21.38	H.S. Diploma
Food Cooking Machine Operators and Tenders	69	268%	17	\$11.79	H.S. Diploma
Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	104	(38%)	17	\$18.63	H.S. Diploma
Industrial Engineers	123	59%	16	\$36.80	Bachelor's degree
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	15	(80%)	15	\$20.17	H.S. Diploma
Printing Press Operators	73	(42%)	14	\$14.51	H.S. Diploma
Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	63	56%	14	\$17.75	H.S. Diploma
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	56	(57%)	12	\$16.90	H.S. Diploma
Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	44	Insf. Data	11	\$16.35	H.S. Diploma
Bakers	53	6%	11	\$11.11	None
Furnace, Kiln, Oven, Drier, and Kettle Operators and Tenders	62	(4%)	11	\$16.10	H.S. Diploma
Butchers and Meat Cutters	32	(70%)	10	\$13.69	None
Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	34	(50%)	10	\$11.53	H.S. Diploma

Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	83	(39%)	10	\$19.41	H.S. Diploma
---	----	-------	----	---------	--------------

Source: EMSI Developer Datarun 2020.4

Sector employment was dominated by four clusters: textile manufacturing; chemical manufacturing; wood product manufacturing; and food and beverage manufacturing. Information regarding important economic trends and indicators for each of these clusters can be found below.

Chemical Manufacturing

Approximately 4,229 workers were employed within the Region's chemical manufacturing cluster in 2020, which accounted for 38.5% of total manufacturing sector employment. This cluster saw 7% employment decline (-209 jobs) from 2015-2020. This cluster was expected to add 229 jobs during this period; actual employment change indicates no competitiveness. EMSI projects continued employment decline for this sector at 3% (-148 jobs) over the next five-year period (2020-2025). The regional chemical manufacturing cluster was highly specialized in the following industries in 2020: rubber product manufacturing (23.54 LQ); resin, synthetic rubber, and artificial and synthetic fibers and filaments manufacturing (12.99); glass and glass product manufacturing (8.94); plastics product manufacturing (4.63); and pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing (3.24). This cluster supplied 62% (\$770.9 million) of the regional manufacturing sector's GRP in 2019.

Textile Manufacturing

The textile manufacturing cluster accounted for 22.4% of employment (2,605 jobs) in the Region's manufacturing sector for 2020. This cluster was expected to eliminate 171 jobs from 2015-2020. Instead, 537 jobs were created, marking 26% growth during this period. Employment change for this cluster is indicative of regional competitiveness. EMSI projects continued employment growth at 18% (466 jobs) over the next five-year period. Nonwoven fabric mills (81.32 LQ in 2020); Rope, cordage, twine, tire cord, and tire fabric mills (41.35); artificial and synthetic fibers and filaments manufacturing (35.91); and upholstered household furniture manufacturing (27.27) were areas of considerable specialization within this cluster. Ten additional industries had LQ values ranging from 1.19-9.44. This cluster supplied 15.4% (\$191.3 million) of the regional manufacturing sector's GRP in 2019.

Wood Product Manufacturing

The Region's wood product manufacturing cluster was composed of 3,342 workers in 2020, which accounted for 29% of total manufacturing sector employment. This cluster was expected to see almost no employment change from 2015-2020, due to stagnancy in the national cluster. Instead, 188 jobs were eliminated (5% decline) across this cluster during this period. This indicates that the regional wood product manufacturing cluster was not competitive. EMSI anticipates further decline for this industry over the next five-year period, with 256 jobs expected to be eliminated. This cluster was most specialized in the following industries in 2020: veneer, plywood, and engineered wood product manufacturing (18.91 LQ); household and institutional furniture and kitchen cabinet manufacturing (13.55); and other wood product manufacturing (4.69) in 2020. Additionally, this cluster supplied 30.8% (\$382.7 million) of the regional manufacturing cluster's GRP in 2019.

Food & Beverage Manufacturing

Approximately 825 workers were employed across the Region's food and beverage manufacturing cluster in 2020, which accounted for 7.1% of the larger sector's employment. This cluster was expected to add 34 jobs from 2015-2020. Instead, the regional food and beverage manufacturing cluster saw 33% employment growth (204 jobs) from 2010-2020. This is indicative of regional competitiveness. EMSI projects no significant employment change (4 jobs created) over the next five-year period. Perishable prepared food manufacturing (18.41 LQ in 2020), confectionary manufacturing from purchased chocolate (6.41) and other miscellaneous food manufacturing (6.31) were areas of distinct specialization within this cluster. This cluster generated \$76 million in 2019, which accounted for 6.1% of the regional manufacturing sector's GRP.

Health Care & Life Sciences

Region 17 has a large health care and social assistance sector; 11,147 workers were employed across this sector in 2020, which accounted for 15% of the Region's total employment. This individual sector also accounted for 10.8% (\$567.6 million) of the Region's GRP in 2019. This Region is specialized in industries outside of the health care and social assistance sector, but are nevertheless closely related to this field. OED used a cluster-based approach to ensure that interrelated health care industries were captured in this analysis. Specifically, OED used the Purdue life sciences cluster to group traded-sector industries and the local health care and social services cluster to group local-services based industries. Combined, these two clusters accounted for nearly 17% (12,541) of the Region's employment and 14.5% (\$761.4 million) of the Region's 2019 GRP. Information on each of these clusters can be found below.

Home health and personal care aides (21.4% of sector employment), nursing assistants (8.8%), and nursing assistants (8.2%) were the largest occupations within the Region's healthcare and social assistance sector in 2020. Nursing assistants (133 openings), registered nurses (80), and licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (61) were the most in-demand healthcare occupations for the same year. Table 7 details in-demand health care and social assistance occupations in Region 17.

Table 7: In-Demand Health Care and Social Assistance Occupations, Workforce Region 17, 2020

5-Digit SOC Occupation	2020 Jobs	2015-2020 % Job Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Med. Hourly Wage	Typical Entry Level Education
Nursing Assistants	986	(19%)	133	\$12.13	Postsecondary nondegree award
Registered Nurses	1,117	4%	80	\$28.39	Bachelor's degree
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	671	(13%)	61	\$19.67	Postsecondary nondegree award
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	314	48%	54	\$20.09	Bachelor's degree
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	197	6%	32	\$12.28	None
Medical Assistants	205	13%	31	\$13.83	Postsecondary nondegree award
Social and Human Service Assistants	200	(9%)	30	\$13.63	H.S. Diploma

Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	189	52%	30	\$15.31	Postsecondary nondegree award
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	136	(3%)	25	\$11.43	None
Pharmacy Technicians	236	(14%)	25	\$13.74	H.S. Diploma
Psychiatric Technicians	138	74%	23	\$12.75	Postsecondary nondegree award
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	164	7%	21	\$19.93	Bachelor's degree
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	145	3%	21	\$15.85	H.S. Diploma
Physical Therapists	189	48%	20	\$41.44	Doctoral or professional degree
Dental Assistants	141	(4%)	20	\$15.79	Postsecondary nondegree award
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	122	(1%)	19	\$19.33	Master's degree
Medical and Health Services Managers	157	18%	18	\$42.59	Bachelor's degree
Physical Therapist Assistants	98	37%	17	\$28.47	Associate's degree
Dental Hygienists	119	20%	16	\$35.91	Associate's degree
Nurse Practitioners	127	63%	14	\$50.04	Master's degree
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	124	11%	14	\$17.16	Postsecondary nondegree award
Healthcare Social Workers	74	25%	10	\$21.66	Master's degree
Pharmacists	143	(40%)	10	\$55.52	Doctoral or professional degree

Source: EMSI Developer Datarun 2020.4

Life Sciences

The life sciences cluster spans multiple sectors, including health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and professional, scientific, and technical services. Approximately 6,594 workers were employed across the regional life sciences cluster in 2020. This cluster was expected to create 475 jobs from 2015-2020, according to an estimation based on national economic performance and cluster-specific trends. This cluster exceeded expected job growth by 35 jobs, adding 511 new positions (8% growth) during this period. This suggests that the regional life sciences cluster is performing on par with the national cluster. EMSI projects 8% (543 jobs) employment growth for this cluster over the next five-year period. In-vitro diagnostic substance manufacturing (11.0 LQ), biological product manufacturing

(5.13), and dental laboratories (4.34) were leading areas of specialization within this cluster in 2020. The regional life sciences cluster generated \$445.6 million in 2019, which accounted for 8.5% of the Region's GRP.

Local Health Care and Social Services

The local health care and social services cluster includes health care and social assistance and retail industries, such as offices of physicians, child and youth services, and pharmacies. This cluster was composed of 6,055 people in 2020, which accounted for 8.2% of the Region's total employment. The local health care and social services cluster was expected to create 839 jobs from 2015-2020. Only 101 jobs were created during this period, which indicates no regional competitiveness. EMSI projects 11% employment growth (686 jobs) over the next five-year period. This cluster was most specialized in the following industries in 2020; services for the elderly and persons with disabilities (2.16 LQ), offices of optometrists (1.98), and offices of physical, occupational and speech therapists, and audiologists (1.53). The local health care and social services cluster supplied 6% (\$315.8 million) of the Region's GRP in 2019.

Information Technology & Telecommunications

The information technology and telecommunications cluster spans multiple sectors, including information, professional, scientific, and technical services, manufacturing, and construction. The regional information technology and telecommunications cluster was composed of 1,414 jobs in 2020, which accounted for 1.9% of the total employment. The cluster was expected to create 136 jobs from 2015-2020, according to an estimate based on national economic and sector-specific trends. Instead, 68 jobs were eliminated across this sector, indicating no competitiveness. EMSI projects 10% growth (140 jobs) across this sector for the next five-year period (2020-2025). Other communication and energy wire manufacturing (17.14 LQ in 2020), switchgear and switchboard apparatus manufacturing (10.46), and other management consulting services (4.17) were distinct areas of regional specialization within this cluster. Four additional industries within the regional information technology and communications cluster had LQ values ranging from 1.39-2.95. This cluster generated \$170.2 million in 2019, which accounted for 3.3% of the Region's total GRP.

Electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers (11.4% of cluster employment), electricians (10.9%), telecommunications equipment installers and repairers, except line installers (4%), and customer service representatives (3.8%) were the largest information technology and telecommunications occupations in Region 17 by employment in 2020. These three occupations were also the most in-demand information technology and telecommunications positions, with 45, 51, and 259 job openings in 2020, respectively. Table 8 details in-demand Information Technology occupations in Region 17.

Table 8: In-Demand Information Technology Occupations, Workforce Region 17, 2020

5-Digit SOC Occupation	2020 Jobs	2015-2020 % Job Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Med. Hourly Wage	Typical Entry Level Education
Computer User Support Specialists	177	(23%)	29	\$18.80	Some college, no degree
Software Developers and Software Quality	131	6%	22	\$48.30	Bachelor's degree

Assurance Analysts and Testers					
Graphic Designers	100	10%	17	\$17.39	Bachelor's degree
Computer Systems Analysts	74	(23%)	15	\$31.75	Bachelor's degree
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	83	(37%)	11	\$28.75	Bachelor's degree

Source: EMSI Developer Datarun 2020.4

Transportation and Warehousing

The Region's transportation and warehousing sector was composed of 2,360 workers in 2020, which accounted for 3.2% of the Region's total employment. This sector was expected to see the addition of 490 jobs from 2015-2020, according to an estimation based on national economic performance and national sector performance. Approximately, 32 jobs were actually added across this sector during this period (1% growth), which suggests the cluster was not competitive during this period. EMSI projects 1% employment growth (33 jobs) for the sector over the next five-year period (2020-2025). The transportation and warehousing sector had a location quotient of 0.83 in 2020, suggesting that employment in this sector was less concentrated in Region XVII compared to all regions of the Nation. Furthermore, the transportation and warehousing sector generated \$206.6 million in 2019, accounting for 3.9% of the Region's GRP.

Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (22% of sector employment), laborers and freight, stock, and material movers (16.3%), and industrial truck and tractor operators (8.9%) were the largest occupations within in the regional transportation and warehousing industry. Top in-demand logistics. Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers was the top in-demand transportation and warehousing occupation, with 270 openings and 2,048 hires in 2020. Stockers and order fillers (185 openings) and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (141) were the following most in-demand transportation occupations for the same year. Table 9 details in-demand transportation and warehousing occupations in Region 17.

Table 9: In-Demand Transportation and Warehousing Occupations, Workforce Region 17, 2020

5-Digit SOC Occupation	2020 Jobs	2015-2020 % Job Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Med. Hourly Wage	Typical Entry Level Education
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,648	(9%)	270	\$12.40	None
Stocker and Order Fillers	1,205	11%	185	\$11.59	H.S. Diploma
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,055	(4%)	141	\$19.20	Postsecondary nondegree award
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	612	9%	88	\$17.92	None
Shipping, Receiving, and Inventory Clerks	354	(6%)	43	\$15.64	H.S. Diploma
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except	233	27%	33	\$24.75	H.S. Diploma

Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors					
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	179	26%	32	\$12.39	None
Machine Feeders and Offbearers	143	40%	27	\$15.86	None
Driver/Sales Workers	162	(11%)	23	\$15.44	H.S. Diploma
Aircraft Service Attendants and Transportation Workers, All Other	74	197%	20	\$20.57	H.S. Diploma
Logisticians	58	133%	11	\$33.71	Bachelor's degree

Source: EMSI Developer Datarun 2020.4

Business Services & Management

The business services and management cluster is composed of industries spanning the professional, scientific, and technical services, and administrative and support and waste management and remediation services, management, and real estate, rental, and leasing sectors. This cluster was composed of 4,972 workers in 2020, which accounted for 6.7% of the Region's total employment. The business services cluster was expected to create 255 jobs from 2015-2020. Instead, 1,373 jobs were eliminated during this period, marking a 22% decline in employment. Data suggest that this cluster was not competitive. EMSI projects 2% employment decline (-76 jobs) over the next five-year period. Other management consulting services (4.17 LQ in 2020), telemarketing bureaus and other contact centers (2.61), and document preparation services (2.61) were particular areas of specialization within the regional cluster. Finally, the business services and management cluster generated \$323.9 million in 2019, accounting for 6.1% of the Region's GRP.

Customer service representatives (11.3% of cluster employment), laborers and freight, stock, and material movers (6.5%), general office clerks (3.9%), and bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks (3%) were the largest occupations within the Region's business services and management cluster. Customer service representatives was also the most in-demand business services and management occupation in 2020, with 259 job openings and 1,368 hires. General office clerks (210 openings), secretaries and administrative assistants (127), and bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks (101) were other top in-demand occupations. Table 10 details in-demand business services and management occupations in Region 17.

Table 10: In-Demand Business Services and Management Occupations, Workforce Region 17, 2020

5-Digit SOC Occupation	2020 Jobs	2015-2020 % Job Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Med. Hourly Wage	Typical Entry Level Education
Customer Service Representatives	1,452	(12%)	259	\$11.10	H.S. Diploma
Office Clerks, General	1,511	(22%)	210	\$12.10	H.S. Diploma
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	966	(1%)	127	\$14.80	H.S. Diploma

Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	772	(12%)	101	\$15.35	Some college, no degree
General and Operations Managers	800	6%	86	\$40.25	Bachelor's degree
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	670	(9%)	84	\$21.40	H.S. Diploma
Receptionists and Information Clerks	510	(1%)	83	\$11.39	H.S. Diploma
Tellers	328	8%	55	\$14.04	H.S. Diploma
Accountants and Auditors	343	(5%)	39	\$28.66	Bachelor's degree
Telemarketers	117	(19%)	34	\$12.00	None
Billing and Posting Clerks	215	(8%)	31	\$15.52	H.S. Diploma
Management Analysts	185	45%	29	\$35.04	Bachelor's degree
Human Resources Specialists	206	0%	26	\$23.31	Bachelor's degree
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	158	26%	24	\$23.31	Bachelor's degree
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	169	28%	24	\$29.69	Bachelor's degree
Buyers and Purchasing Agents	138	(7%)	17	\$24.32	Bachelor's degree
Financial Managers	145	26%	17	\$42.19	Bachelor's degree
Training and Development Specialists	103	(2%)	16	\$23.18	Bachelor's degree
Loan Officers	127	2%	15	\$22.52	Bachelor's degree
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	104	(34%)	14	\$22.20	H.S. Diploma
Sales Managers	90	32%	13	\$56.33	Bachelor's degree
Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan	72	(13%)	13	\$14.50	H.S. Diploma
Bill and Account Collectors	58	(46%)	12	\$12.40	H.S. Diploma
Cost Estimators	78	(16%)	10	\$29.54	Bachelor's degree

Source: EMSI Developer Datarun 2020.4

In-Demand Skills and Qualifications

Education Pipeline

Educational Attainment

Education attainment was varied for individuals aged over 25 in Workforce Region 17. Approximately 21% of residents aged over 25 did not have a high school degree; 34% attained a high school degree or equivalent; 31% had some college experience or an associate's degree; and 14% had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2020, according to EMSI. Table 11 compares education attainment in Region I to the State and Nation.

Table 11: Education Attainment, Population Aged 25 Years or More, Workforce Region 17, Virginia, and United States, 2020

	Region 17	Virginia	Nation
Less than 9th Grade	9%	5%	6%
9th-12th Grade	12%	6%	7%
High School Diploma	34%	24%	27%
Some College	22%	19%	21%
Associate's Degree	9%	7%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	9%	21%	19%
Graduate Degree or Higher	5%	16%	12%

Source: EMSI Developer 2020.4 Datarun

Secondary Education

There were 7,742 high school students in Region 17 during the 2019-2020 academic year, according to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). This compares to 8,337 high school students during the 2015-16 academic year. A total of 1,174 high school students (14.6% enrollment) completed a CTE program during the 2017-2018 academic year. Popular programs included: national security (100 completers), information support and services (80), and plant systems (80). Additionally, 1,813 high school students (23.2% of enrollment) were enrolled in a dual-enrollment program with a regional community college during the 2018-2019 academic year.

OED used 2014-2019 cohort data to better understand high school completion trends in Region 17. Cohort data tracks students for four years, from their freshman year to graduation. There were 2,034 students in the 2014-2019 cohort in Region 17; approximately 89.6% of these students graduated on-time and 6.9% dropped out over the course of the four-year observation period. The majority of 2019 high school graduates in Region 17 had plans to continue their education. Table 12 compares regional completion trends to State trends.

Table 12: Secondary Education Completion Trends, Workforce Region 17 and Virginia, 2014-2019

	Region 1	Virginia
Completion Trends		
Cohort Size	2,000	98,482
Completers	1,803	92,084
% Completers	90.2%	93.5%
% On-Time Graduation	89.7%	92.5%

Dropout Rate	5.9%	5.1%
Postsecondary Plans		
Attending 2-Year College	43.5%	25.2%
Attending 4-Year College	29.0%	47.8%
Other Continuing Education Plans	3.1%	4.5%
Military	3.0%	3.4%
Employment	18.9%	12.7%
No Plans	2.6%	6.4%

Source: Virginia Department of Education

Postsecondary Education

There were 1,474 completions for postsecondary academic programs requiring up to two years of study in Region 17 for 2019, according to EMSI. Total completions for these programs fell by 11.0% from 1,637 in 2014. Completions for 1-year academic programs increased by 28.5% from 2014-2019; completions for 1-2-year academic programs decreased by 29.3%; and completions for associate's degree programs decreased by 19.2%. Table 13 details the top-five 1-year, 1-2-year, and 2-year programs by completion in Region 17 for 2019.

Table 13: Top Postsecondary Education Programs by Completion, Workforce Region 17, 2019

6-Digit CIP Program	2019 Completions	% 2019 Completions
1-Year Programs		
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	56	12.4%
Design and Visual Communications, General	45	10.0%
Welding Technology/Welder	43	9.5%
Child Care Provider/Assistant	41	9.1%
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)	28	6.2%
1-2-Year Programs		
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, Other	296	69.0%
Welding Technology/Welder	23	5.4%
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	21	4.9%
Child Care Provider/Assistant	17	4.0%
Electrical, Electronic and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	14	3.3%
2-Year Programs		
Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	308	51.9%
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	72	12.1%
Computer and Information Sciences, General	30	5.1%
Industrial Technology/Technician	28	4.7%
Business Administration, Management and Operations, Other	23	3.9%

Source: EMSI Developer 2020.4 Datarun

There was a disconnect between completions and demand in Region 17. Programs with a greater number of completions tended to be related to occupations with lower openings. Completions exceeded annual job openings for occupations related to healthcare and liberal arts and sciences programs, which were among the Region's most popular. Alternatively, a number of programs with lower or no completions were related to occupations with high annual openings. There tended to be fewer completions in more technical programs, such as welding, electrician, and accounting programs, despite a high number of job openings in related fields. For instance, there were 19 completions for electrician programs in Region 17 in 2019 despite 111 openings for the same year. Similarly, there were four completions for accounting programs despite 103 openings in 2019.

In-Demand Skills, Credentials, and Qualifications

Total Job Postings

Jobs are oftentimes posted across a multitude of webpages, job boards, etc. This creates multiple postings for the same job. For instance, there was 156,839 postings for 39,043 available jobs in Region 17 in 2019. The majority of jobs posted in Region 17 (40%) were located in the City of Danville. Approximately 63% of jobs posted in Region 17 did not list an educational requirement, although this does not guarantee that a certain level of education is not required or expected. Of 2019 job postings that did list an educational requirement: 13.4% called for a high school diploma or equivalent; 5.8% called for an associate's degree; and 18.0% called for a bachelor's degree or higher. Similarly, 68% of jobs posted in Region 17 did not list an experience requirement in 2019, although 27% called for 1-3 years of experience and 5% called for more than four years of experience.

In-demand qualifications tend to be specific to individual industries and occupations; information regarding in-demand qualifications for target sectors can be found below. Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL) and other transportation-specific qualifications were the most sought after by hiring employers in Region XVII, according to job posting data. An array of nursing certifications also appeared frequently in 2019 job postings. Similar to qualifications, hard skills tended to align with specific industries and occupations. Nevertheless, the top-five in-demand hard skills in Region 17 were related to transportation, sales, restaurant operations, and nursing. In-demand soft skills were more universal. For instance, communication, customer service, and management skills appeared in 17%, 15%, and 14% of all 2019 postings.

Manufacturing

There were 5,891 postings for 1,246 available jobs within the Region's manufacturing sector. It is important to note that manufacturing, construction, and mining jobs are not always posted on traditional job boards and this data likely underrepresents the number of available jobs. Therefore, OED used job opening data to better understand in-demand manufacturing qualifications. OED identified 39 in-demand manufacturing occupations in Region 17 for 2020. There were 1,337 job openings across these 39 occupations: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators (109 openings); textile winding, twisting, and drawing out machine setters, operators, and tenders (99); and inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (81) were the most in-demand. There were also a considerable number of openings for machinists, tire builders, woodworkers and upholsters, and various machine and tool operators, setters, and tenders during the same year.

OED analyzed the educational attainment and common knowledge, skills, and abilities for the top-five in-demand manufacturing occupations in Region 17 to better understand the requirements for these

positions. Educational attainment was varied. Lower-skill occupations, such as assemblers and machine operators, were more likely to require a high school diploma, if that. Middle to higher-skill occupations, such as machinists, and supervisors, were more likely to require a postsecondary award or associates degree. The vast majority of workers belonging to these occupations did not possess a bachelor's degree. Workers belonging to these occupations were knowledgeable about mechanics, production, and processing. Additionally, operation, monitoring, coordination, and listening skills as well as comprehension, information ordering, and control precision abilities were also necessary for these manufacturing occupations.

Health Care & Life Sciences

There were 22,891 postings for 4,451 job openings within the Region's health care and life sciences cluster 2019. More than three-fourths of these postings were for jobs located in the cities of Danville and Martinsville. Approximately 52% of 2019 health care postings listed educational requirement; 13.6% called for a high school diploma or equivalent; 16.0% called for an associate's degree; and 22.3% called for a bachelor's degree or higher. Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) certification was the most in-demand qualification. Certified nursing assistant (CNA), bachelor's of science in nursing (BSN) and nurse practitioner certifications were also in demand. Approximately 27% of health care postings called for nursing skills. Basic life support, CPR, rehabilitation, and nursing care skills were also frequently listed hard skills. Communication, leadership, and management skills were the most in-demand soft skills for health care postings.

Information Technology & Communications

There were 11,287 job postings for 2,019 available jobs within the Region's information and professional, scientific, and technical services sectors for 2019. Nearly three-fourths of these postings were for jobs located in the cities of Danville and Martinsville. Approximately 59% of job postings for these two sectors did not list an education requirement, although 17.7% of jobs called for high school diploma or equivalent; 4.0% of jobs called for an associate's degree; and 19.6% called for a bachelor's degree or higher. Product certification, and proprietary certifications from Cisco and Microsoft were frequently demanded qualifications for these positions. Hard skills were more general for these positions. For instance, accounting, marketing research, consumer behavior, auditing, and agile methodology skills were some of the top hard skills listed in 2019 postings. Soft skills were similar, with 30% of postings calling for communication skills, and approximately 18% of postings calling for sales and customer service skills.

Transportation and Warehousing

Job postings for transportation and warehousing positions accounted for the most industry postings in Region 17 for 2019; there were 26,329 postings for 7,838 available jobs. Postings for these jobs were also more evenly distributed throughout the region, although Pittsylvania, Patrick, Henry, and the city of Danville supplied the majority of these postings. Upwards of 96% of postings for transportation and warehousing jobs did not include an education requirement. In-demand qualifications included various CDL certifications and hazard, doubles, and tanker endorsements. Top hard skills included flatbed truck operation, over-the-road driving, dry van truck operation, and truckload shipping. Soft skills included a good driving record and customer service, operations, and loading and unloading skills.

Business Services and Management

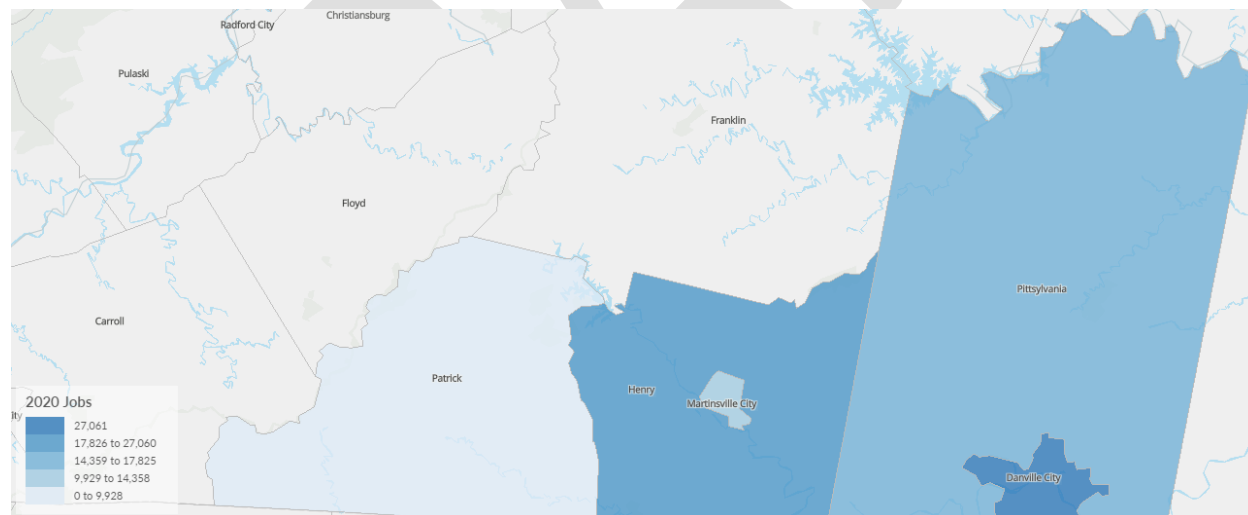
There were 40,171 job postings for 9,208 job openings within the Region's business services and management sector in 2019. Three-quarters of job postings for this sector were for positions located in the cities of Danville and Martinsville. The majority of administrative and support job postings (70%) did not list an education requirement in 2019. Approximately 19% of administrative and support job postings called for a bachelor's degree or higher; a smaller 6% called for a high school diploma or equivalent; and 5% called for an associate's degree. Many of these postings did not call for a specific qualification, although 34% of business services job postings required some experience. Top hard skills were related to call center positions, including cold calling and customer relationship management (CRM). Similarly, top soft skills included communication, teaching, leadership, customer service, and management.

WORKFORCE SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Commuting Patterns

Employment is a measure of the total number of jobs contained within a region. A resident worker is someone who is employed and living in a region, but may work outside of that Region. Region 17 housed 74,142 jobs and 83,266 workers in 2020, according to EMSI. The City Danville and Henry County accounted for a combined 60.5% of regional jobs. Additionally, Danville and Pittsylvania County housed 56.2% of the Region's workers. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of employment across Region 17; darker-colored counties contain more jobs whereas lighter-colored counties contain fewer jobs.

Figure 2: Employment by County, Workforce Region 17, 2020



Source: EMSI Developer 2020.4 Datarun

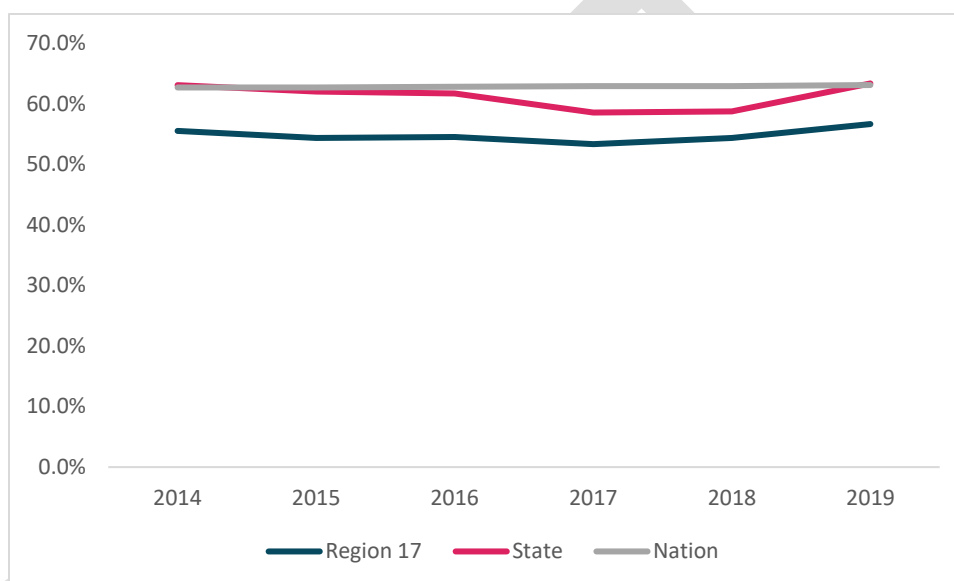
Data suggest that a portion of the Region's resident workers had to travel outside of area for work; there were 9,124 more resident workers than jobs in 2020. Census data suggest that 36.4% of workers living in Region 17 were employed outside of the Region in 2018. Popular destinations for out-commuting workers were Campbell County, VA, Franklin County, VA, and the City of Roanoke, with 8% of resident workers holding jobs in these two counties and city. Resident workers accounted for 70.3% of jobs in Region 17 in 2018; the remaining 29.7% were held by nonresident workers. Nonresident

workers from Franklin County, VA, Rockingham County, NC, and Halifax County, NC held 7% of jobs in Region 17.

Labor Force Participation

Region 17 had a civilian noninstitutionalized population of 151,741 in 2019, according to the American Community Survey (ACS). This number is reflective of the total number of individuals that could participate in the workforce. Region 17 saw a labor force participation rate (LFP) of 56.7% in 2019, according to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). This compares to an LFP of 54.4% in 2015. Despite recent growth, LFP in Region 17 was lower than that of the State (63.1%) and Nation (63.1%) for the same year (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Labor Force Participation Rate, Workforce Region 17, Virginia, and United States, 2014-2019



Source: Virginia Employment Commission & Bureau of Labor Statistics

Approximately 29.5% of individuals aged between 20-64 in Region 17 did not work in 2019. Women (31% did not work) were more likely to not work than men (28%). Region 17 had a proportionally greater number of nonworkers in 2019 compared to the State (20.2%) and Nation (22.4%). The average median age of workforce participants in Region I was 43 years of age in 2019. Workers aged between 45-54 accounted for the largest portion of the Region's labor force (22.6%). Approximately 9% of workers in Region I were approaching retirement age (60-65) and 6.2% of workers were above retirement age. More than 90% of workers aged between 25-64 in Region 17 possessed at least a high school diploma or equivalency in 2019; 30.5% possessed a high school diploma; 39.3% had some college experience or an associate's degree; and 20.8% possessed a bachelor's degree or higher.

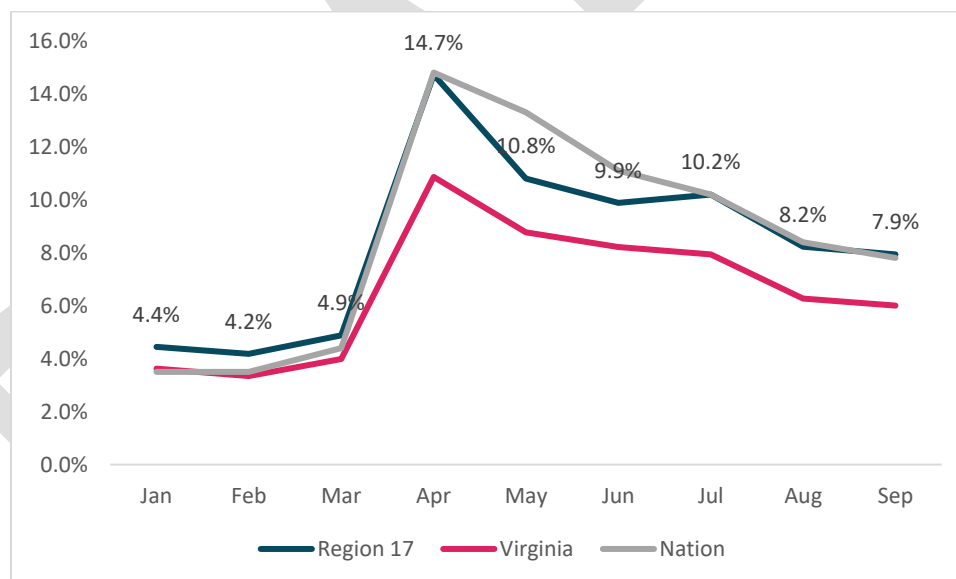
Several factors appeared to be correlated with higher and lower LFP in Region 17, including age, gender, poverty status, disability, and educational attainment. Approximately 76% of people in Region 17 aged between 20-54 participated in the labor force in 2019. Residents aged between 35-44 were the most likely to work, with 79.8% participating in the Region's labor force. LFP was lower for residents aged between 16-19 (30.9%) and residents aged above 55 (37%). Working age men (20-64) were more likely to participate in the Region's labor force (73.3% LFP) compared to working age women (69.4%).

Working-age women with children under 18, however, were among the highest participating groups (75% LFP). Disabled (27.7% LFP) and impoverished residents (41.6%) and residents that did not possess a high school diploma or equivalency (48%) were the least likely to participate in the Region's labor force in 2019. Alternatively, residents living above the FPL were among the most likely to participate in the Region's labor force (79.5%). Furthermore, LFP increased with educational attainment; residents with high school diplomas, associate's degrees, or bachelor's degrees or higher had LFPs of 65.6%, 77.5%, and 85.2%, respectively.

Unemployment & Underemployment

Region 17 saw an annual unemployment rate of 3.9% in 2019, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). This compares to an annual unemployment rate of 6.6% in 2015. Annual unemployment was higher in Region 17 compared to the State (3.2%) Nation (3.7%) in 2019. The economic ramifications of the Coronavirus pandemic have resulted in higher-than-average unemployment for all regions of Virginia. Unemployment in Region 17 averaged 8.4% for the first nine months of 2020, according to the BLS. This was higher compared to Statewide unemployment (6%) for the same duration. Figure 4 compares monthly unemployment for Region 17, Virginia, and the United States for the first nine months of 2020.

Figure 4: Monthly Unemployment, Workforce Region 17, Virginia, and United States, Jan.-Sep. 2020



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics LAU

Similar to labor force participation, several factors appeared to be correlated with higher and lower unemployment in Region 17, including age, race, poverty, and educational attainment. While younger people were among the most likely to participate in the Region's labor force, they were also the most likely to be unemployed; 11.3% of workers aged between 20-34 were unemployed in 2019.

Alternatively, 4.4% of workers aged between 35-64 were unemployed during the same year. Black or African American workers were almost twice as likely to be unemployed (9.6% unemployed in 2019 compared to their white counterparts (5.3%). Additionally, Black or African American residents accounted for 28% of the Region's workforce in 2019 and 39% of all unemployed workers in Region 17

for the same year. Similarly, Hispanic or Latino workers were exactly twice as likely to be unemployed in Region 17 (10.6% unemployed) compared to white workers for the same year. Workers living under the FPL were nearly six times more likely to be unemployed (27.4% unemployed) compared to workers that earned above the FPL (4.6%). Finally, unemployment was higher for groups with lower educational attainment in Region 17. Workers aged between 25-64 that did not have a high school diploma were more likely to be unemployed (9.3% unemployed) than workers that did (5.4%). Workers with high school diplomas (7.1% unemployed) or some college or an associate's degree (7.2%) had similar levels of unemployment, while workers with bachelor's degrees or higher were among the least likely to be unemployed in 2019 (2%).

ACS data estimate that 65.3% of workers aged between 16-64 in Region 17 worked full-time, year-round in 2019. Men were more likely to hold full-time positions (70%) compared to women (60.5%) during the same year. Workers in Region I were less likely to work full time compared to the State (68.5%) and Nation (66.4%). The remaining 34.7% of workers aged between 16-64 in Region 17 worked at some part-time capacity in 2019. This was higher compared to the State (31.5%) and Nation (33.6%).

Underemployment captures workers who are overqualified for their current position and part-time workers that would prefer to work full-time. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership estimated that 6,963 workers in Region 17 were underemployed September 2019. Underemployed workers accounted for 8.2% of the Region's labor force during that year.

Employment Barriers

Access to childcare, transportation, and broadband were three barriers to employment noted in conversations with regional workforce stakeholders. The Center for American Progress (CAP) lists access to childcare as a leading barrier to labor force participation for young families and especially women. Parents of young children must choose to either pay high prices for childcare (or cheaper alternatives) or exit the workforce to become full-time caregivers. The average annual cost of childcare in Virginia was \$14,063 for infant care and \$10,867 for 4-year-old care, according to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI). Costs can quickly double for families with more than one child. The childcare issue is further exacerbated by a low supply of childcare providers, many of which only cater to a traditional work schedule. A CAP study estimated that two million parents made career sacrifices due to childcare complications in 2016.

ACS data estimates that 36,894 children aged under 17 lived in Region 17 in 2019. Furthermore, 11,411 children (31%) were aged under 5 years old. There were 18 child daycare establishments in Region I in 2020, according to EMSI. Data suggest that there were 634 children under the age of 5 for every daycare facility in Region 17, indicating that childcare is largely not available in this region. Furthermore, Henry County did not contain a single daycare establishment. For those parents that have access to childcare in this region, costs can be burdensome. OED used an average of childcare costs for Virginia and North Carolina to calculate childcare costs in that this Region does not carry the same cost of living as Virginia. OED generated an average cost of \$11,952/year for infant care and \$9,490/year for 4-year-old care using EPI data. This figure represents 18.1% of the Region's median household income in 2019 (\$51,824) for infant care and 14.9% for 4-year-old care. The prevalence of single parent households in Region 17 further complicates this issue. These households accounted for 19.8% of all households in Region 17 and were among the most likely to earn below the FPL. For instance, approximately 33.2% of single female-headed households in Region 17 lived below the FPL in 2019. These households experience the greatest

need for childcare, however, widespread poverty and lower-than-average wages make unsubsidized childcare largely unavailable to these parents.

Transportation is another notable barrier in this Region. ACS data suggest that 9% (7,148) of households in Region 17 lacked access to a personal or shared vehicle in 2019. This compares to 6.1% for the State and 8.6% for the Nation for the same year. Approximately 93% of workers in Region 17 used a personal or shared vehicle to commute to work in 2019. Additionally, 3.5% of workers lacked access to a vehicle during the same year. Workers in Region 17 were more likely to own a car and drive to work compared to the State, where 2.7% of workers did not have a car and 85.7% drove to work. It is important to note that Region 17 is largely rural, making vehicle ownership a necessity. Meanwhile, a large proportion of Virginia's households exist in more urban settings. Vehicle ownership is not as necessary in these households due to the presence of public and alternative transportation. For instance, 9.1% of workers in Virginia commuted to work by walking, riding a bicycle or motorcycle, or using a taxicab or public transportation. These options are limited, if at all available in Region 17, where a much smaller 3.8% of workers relied on alternative transportation to commute.

Finally, access to technology and broadband is another notable barrier to employment in Region 17. The Coronavirus Pandemic has placed an increasing importance on the ability to work from home. This is especially true for certain industries and occupations where an on-site presence is not crucial to the responsibilities of a worker. Approximately 2.7% of workers in Region I worked from home in 2019. This was lower compared to the State (5.2% worked from home) and Nation (5.2%) for the same year. Lacking consistent and reliable internet access is a considerable barrier to working from home. ACS data estimate that 71.7% of households in Region 17 had internet service in 2019. This was lower compared to the State (84.3%) and Nation (83%) for the same year. It is important to note that 19% of households with internet service relied on a cellular device to access the internet rather than a traditional broadband or satellite internet connection.

PROGRAMMATIC SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Youth Services

The WPWDB youth services program is designed to help youth access employment, education, training and supportive services to succeed in the workplace and match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

Delivery of Services

Strategies to Ensure Youth Service Availability

Each youth service operator has a contract with the board to administer youth program activities in the region, giving them the flexibility to offer programs unique to each locale. All operators are required to adhere to the 14 program elements and to be creative with outreach and work-ready activities.

Contracts are as follows: Goodwill Industries of the Valleys and Patrick County Public Schools.

The board's youth service plan gives guidance on work readiness and life skills activities and determining youth in need of additional assistance and youth who do not meet income eligibility guidelines and assurances pertaining to compliance of child labor and safety regulations. The West Piedmont WDB completed a re-branding process for youth programs in the region. The new brand was selected in an attempt to make the program more appealing to our youth customers. The West Piedmont WDB collaborates with the Department of Juvenile Justice system to deliver services to customers that are

under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Strategies utilized by the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board contracted providers will include fully embracing the new branding of Youth Employment Services with outreach focusing on self-identification of the youth population, career pathways, assistance with barriers clearly identified in print collateral, face to face outreach, videos, social media and other outreach methods. For example, social media will specifically mention barriers such as criminal background, need to obtain a General Education Diploma (GED), or parenting.

The Test of Adult Education and Literacy (TABE) will be the primary tool for assessing youth basic skill levels and will include the locator test. The Career Scope will be the primary tools for assessing youth interest and aptitude levels. TABE is required for both in and out of school youth.

Process for Identifying and Selecting Successful Providers

West Piedmont Workforce Development Board identifies and selects youth services providers from a competitive procurement process. The West Piedmont WDB follows its Public Procurement Policy (Attachment 4o) when procuring contractors. All fourteen youth program elements are included within the scope of the youth contracts.

Strategies to Ensure all Eligible WIOA Youth Receive Access to Program Elements and Activities

Strategies utilized by the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board contracted providers will include fully embracing the new branding of Youth Employment Services with outreach focusing on self-identification of the youth population, career pathways, assistance with barriers clearly identified in print collateral, face to face outreach, videos, social media and other outreach methods. For example, social media will specifically mention barriers such as criminal background, need to obtain a GED, or parenting. Each youth service operator has a contract with the board to administer youth program activities in the region, giving them the flexibility to offer programs unique to a locale.

All operators are required to adhere to the 14 program elements and to be creative with outreach and work-ready activities. Contractors are monitored on a regular basis, provided technical assistance from WDB staff and collaborate with community partners such as the United Way to utilize shared systems such as Charity Tracker to provide wraparound services to youth customers. Charity Tracker is a community database that allows for easy referrals to local partners that can provide additional services. The service also enables partners to track the benefits and services that each individual receives to ensure they do not receive duplicative support. Contractors also collaborate with organizations that specialize in engaging youth to host outreach events.

Program Elements

Ross Innovative Employment Solutions is the contracted provider for mandated youth-service programs and is therefore responsible for their delivery. The following section details the 14 program elements of WIOA and how they have been incorporated into the local youth program design:

1. *Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies* that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential. These services are offered in collaboration with Adult Education services.

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate - These activities are under the purview of the local school districts. In Area Seventeen, these services are also offered in collaboration with Adult Education.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component are provided through contracted youth provider in collaboration with local employers.

4. Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials aligned with the area's in-demand industry sectors or occupations. Occupational skills training is provided through an individual training account (ITA) or contracted through WDB as need arises. ITAs are made in collaboration with local training providers.

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. These programs are made available via collaboration with the youth services contractor and local training providers/other community-based organizations.

6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors. The opportunities are offered by the program provider in conjunction with community, business, and faith-based partners.

7. Support services are made available to all WDB youth participants. Primarily these services consist of transportation, clothing and employment-related supplies. These services are provided by the youth contractor.

8. Adult mentoring for duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation. The program provider works with community and business partners to offer this service.

9. Follow-up services for not fewer than 12 months after the completion of participation. These services are offered by the contract provider.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual. These services are also provided by the contractor provider in collaboration with regional educational partners.

11. Financial literacy education: is offered by the contracted provider in collaboration with community partners.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training – this type of training is facilitated by the contracted youth provider in collaboration with eligible training providers or contracted by the local board.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the workforce area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. These services are provided by the youth services contractor in collaboration with One-Stop Center partners.

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training. These services are offered by the contracted service provider in collaboration with regional postsecondary education and community partners.

Strategies to Identify, Recruit, and Retain Out-of-School Youth and Ensure that the Required Percent of WIOA Youth Funds are Expended

The WPWDB tracks expenditures for youth services to ensure that at least 75% of funds are expended on out-of-school youth. Youth service providers are responsible for recruitment and deliver this through marketing, job fairs, and collaborations with community and faith-based organizations.

Policy Regarding Serving Youth who do not meet Eligibility Requirements

The board's youth service plan gives guidance on work readiness and life skills activities and determining youth in need of additional assistance and youth who do not meet income eligibility guidelines and assurances pertaining to compliance of child labor and safety regulations. The WPWDB Youth Services Policy will be updated to mirror Virginia Workforce Letter 16-11, which addresses youth in need of additional assistance requirement and the In-School Youth 5% limitation barrier. Specifically, the local policy will be updated to remove the 5% limitation for youth in need of additional assistance for Out-of-School Youth.

Coordination with Job Corps, Youth Opportunity Grants, Apprenticeships, and other Youth Services

West Piedmont Workforce Development Board collaborate with Job Corps to provide an Information Session, twice a month at our One-Stop Center. In the Information Session, Job Corps' representative provide our participants with information that explains how they offer a comprehensive array of career development services to at-risk young women and men, ages 16 to 24, to prepare them for successful careers. Job Corps employs a holistic career development training approach which integrates the teaching of academic, vocational, employability skills and social competencies through a combination of classroom, practical and based learning experiences to prepare youth for stable, long-term, high-paying jobs. In addition, registered apprenticeship programs are offered as a resource for our programs. Providers work closely with the Department of Social Service's foster care programs and parole officers in juvenile court services. There are also agreements with Adult Education and Career Development Centers to provide outreach and services to dropouts and the school systems to offer work-readiness services to youth with disabilities.

Compliance with Applicable Child Labor and Safety Regulations

All youth services providers have copies of the federal regulation on safety and child labor laws, and employers who have youth placed into work experiences and/or internships are given copies of these regulations and laws. Youth case managers have been trained to be well versed in these regulations and laws. Training providers and employers participating in WIOA programs are routinely monitored to ensure compliance.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

Basic Career Services

Basic Career Services will be available to all individuals seeking services. These services include:

1. *Eligibility determination* for services through the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs;
2. *Outreach, intake and orientation to information* and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;

3. Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities and support service needs;

4. Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance;

5. Career counseling and labor market information will be provided on an individual basis, including provision of:

- i. Information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- ii. Information on nontraditional employment;
- iii. Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system using the State's referral portal;
- iv. Workforce and labor market employment statistics; information relating to local, regional and national labor markets; job vacancy listings; skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements and opportunities for advancement for those jobs;
- v. Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services;
- vi. Information on local area performance, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's one stop delivery system;
- vii. Information relating to supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start, the State's Medicaid program, FAMIS, Second Chance and other supportive services provided by agencies throughout the area;
- viii. Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA;
- ix. Information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs.

Individualized Career Services

If One-Stop center staff determines individualized career services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment, these services are made available to the individual through center staff or partners. One-stop staff may use recent previous assessments by partner programs to determine if individualized career services would be appropriate. These services include:

1. Comprehensive assessment of skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include: diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;

2. Development of an individual employment plan to identify employment goals, achievement objectives and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of eligible training providers;

3. Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring;

4. Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. In some instances, pre-apprenticeship programs may be considered as short-term pre-vocational services;

5. Internships and work experience linked to careers;

6. *Financial literacy services;*

7. *Workforce preparation activities* that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, or training, or employment;

8. *Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance.*

9. *English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.*

Follow-up Services

Follow-up services will be made available, as appropriate—including counseling regarding the workplace—for participants in adult or dislocated worker activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of employment.

Self Sufficiency

Area Seventeen categorizes self sufficiency using the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Lower Living Standard Income (LLSIL) Data, which is updated annually. WPWDB uses two standards for self-sufficiency due to the presence of a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in its boundaries. The first standard is determined using metropolitan-specific LLSIL data and the second utilizes non-metropolitan LLSIL data. Information on each standard can be found below:

Table 14: 150% Lower Standard Income Level, Southern Region, Metro & Non-Metro, 2020

Size of Family Unit	150% LLSIL
Metropolitan	
1	\$21,019
2	\$34,440
3	\$47,270
4	\$58,359
5	\$68,878
6	\$80,556
Add \$7,785 for each family member above 6	
Non-Metropolitan	
1	\$20,401
2	\$33,421
3	\$45,871
4	\$56,625
5	\$66,823
6	\$78,147
Add \$7,750 for each family member above 6	

Source: U.S. Department of Labor

Danville MSA:

Metropolitan LLSIL standards are used to evaluate self-sufficiency in the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County.

Employed Adult: 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income representative of family size (see above).

Dislocated Worker: The higher of 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income or 80% of the layoff wage.

Remainder of West Piedmont (LWIA 17)

Non-metropolitan standards are used to evaluate self-sufficiency for the Counties and City outside of the Danville MSA, including Henry County and Patrick County and the City of Martinsville.

Employed Adult: 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income representative of family size (see above).

Dislocated Worker: The higher of 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income or 80% of the layoff wage.

Hard-to-Serve Populations with Additional Barriers to Employment

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board encourages contractors of the adult and youth out of school programs (which in the board's view are the hardest to serve) to be creative with outreach by engaging the faith based community, community service agencies and court systems. As noted in the Educational Attainment chart on page 16 of this Local Plan, there is a significant percentage of the region's Adult population which may have needs for more intensive services as West Piedmont has 21% of its population who have not graduated high school or received a GED with 9% of the population with 9th grade or less. The Local Area's policy requires that customers receiving WIOA are assessed for basic skills.

Wrap around services are then applied to make sure all barriers are eliminated enabling these individuals to be successful. An example of such a program is the Community Recovery Program. WPWDB partners with Piedmont Community Services to offer this program, which attempts to reduce problems caused by drug and alcohol substance abuse in the region. A path toward recovery addresses and offers assistance and support in areas of education, employment, leisure, mental health, sobriety, spirituality, physical health and housing.

SWOT

The SWOT Analysis for the 2021-2024 West Piedmont Strategic Plan occurred in January of 2021. Input for the analysis was broadly acquired through a survey to all workforce system stakeholders, which received 38 responses. Approximately 89% of respondents said they are somewhat or very familiar with the public workforce system. Only three respondents said they are very unfamiliar with the system. In order of most to least number of responses, most responses came from:

- Someone working for one of the One-Stop System Partners (20 responses)
- A member of the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board (11 responses)
- Someone working for a local government within Workforce Region 17 (2 responses)
- Someone who has participated or is currently participating in a workforce program (2 responses)
- A member of the West Piedmont Workforce Development Area Consortium Board (1 response)
- Other (2 responses)

Additional and more in-depth input was received through a facilitated meeting with the workforce development board. Meeting participants were asked to reflect on the state of the region's workforce system, the SWOT analysis from the previous plan, responses from the current SWOT survey, and possible strategies the workforce system should develop in the upcoming plan.

The following is a summary of all SWOT findings, listed in order of most to least responses. Answers shaded in gray are those where at least one-third of respondents agreed with the given response. As a reminder, a SWOT analysis reviews the Strength and Weaknesses of the workforce system and those within the system, as well as the Opportunities and Threats in the outside environment that workforce system partners can take advantage of or account for in their work.



Strengths of the Workforce System

Most respondents (79%) agreed that the greatest strength of the workforce system was workforce staff. Facilitated session participants added that education institutions also serve as a regional strength for workforce. About half of survey respondents noted that business services (58%) and compliance with state and federal guidelines (53%) were also system strengths. However, facilitation participants noted that these strengths were becoming more difficult to achieve due to funding cuts and resulting staff layoffs.

Answer Choice	Respondents	%
Workforce Staff	30	78.9%
Business services and employer relationships	22	57.9%
Compliance with state and federal guidelines	20	52.6%
Good existing policies	12	31.6%
Location	12	31.6%
The commitment of the staff and board to consistency in process	11	28.9%
Adaptability to business needs	11	28.9%
Adequate funding	10	26.3%
Meeting performance measures	10	26.3%
Board Leadership	7	18.4%
Informative reports and presentations at board meetings	5	13.2%
Regional input	4	10.5%
Stakeholder Support	3	7.9%
Board meeting guidance	2	5.3%
Board member communication	2	5.3%

Other (Please Specify)	2	5.3%
------------------------	---	------

Words in **bold were also highlighted during the facilitated meeting*

Weaknesses of The Workforce System

For the total responding groups, the greatest weaknesses of the workforce system in the region are the poor marketing of services to jobseekers (63%) and businesses (42%). More than one-third of survey respondents also cited partner collaboration as a weakness. The members of the workforce development board considered these factors as the top weaknesses in the region. One-Stop System Partners, however, also considered matching job seekers with long-term employment opportunities to be a significant weakness.

In the facilitated meeting, multiple meeting participants echoed the survey results and showed concerns about businesses, particularly small companies having difficulty in finding employees. One participant from Patrick County specifically pointed out the county's low population and location as particularly challenging compared to the larger region. Another participant noted the mismatch between training and business needs; for example, he pointed out that existing workforce development and training programs tend to lead job seekers to positions like welding that are not necessary, while companies seek employees with different skills such as industrial maintenance.

Answer Choice	Respondents	%
Advertising - services offered are not as well-known to jobseekers unless through partner agencies	24	63.2%
Communicating available services to business	16	42.1%
Partner collaboration	13	34.2%
Matching jobseekers with long-term employment opportunities	12	31.6%
Jobseeker recruitment	10	26.3%
Diversifying funding	8	21.1%
Advocacy for policy changes if programs and rules do not work well	5	13.2%
Other (Please Specify)	1	2.6%
None	1	2.6%

Words in **bold were also highlighted during the facilitated meeting*

Opportunities for The Workforce System

Survey responses showed little agreement as to what opportunities existed in the region. The most prevalent response at 58% of respondents was more companies to partner with for jobs. Facilitated meeting participants explained that the region has several businesses with job openings that still seek employees, which posed an opportunity for the workforce system to identify ways of filling those positions.

One-third of survey respondents also cited as opportunities increased partner collaboration and improved working relationships with DSS, DARS, EDC, and VEC. These opportunities directly reflection concerns expressed when discussing system weaknesses. West Piedmont Board members who responded to the survey particularly prioritized increased partner collaboration and additional/increased private sector partnerships as the greatest opportunities.

Related to the weaknesses of the system and top survey opportunities, those in the facilitated session discussed leveraging regional resources and partnerships to better advertise workforce services. Several discussed identifying alternative sources of revenue and organizations like the Danville Regional Foundation as ways of amplifying the services and presence of the workforce system in the region.

Answer Choice	Respondents	%
More companies to partner with for jobs	22	57.9%
Increased partner collaboration	13	34.2%
Improved working relationships with DSS, DARS, EDC, and VEC	13	34.2%
Additional/increased private sector partnerships	11	28.9%
Better understand grant content to take advantage of creativity and innovation	10	26.3%
Alternative sources of revenue	8	21.1%
Harvest Foundation/Danville Regional Foundation	8	21.1%
Revenue-generating services from business services	8	21.1%
New board leadership	6	15.8%
GO Virginia regional collaboration	5	13.2%
Other (Please Specify)	0	0.0%

Words in **bold were also highlighted during the facilitated meeting*

Threats to The Workforce System

Similar to opportunities, survey responses to threats were scattered. About half of respondents agreed that the great threats to the workforce system was the lack of a skilled workforce for high tech jobs. Others highlighted substance abuse, limited motivation to facilitate jobseekers' transition from welfare to low income services, and the slow transition of technological infrastructure in the region.

In the facilitated meeting, participants detailed their concerns about existing threats to the regional workforce system. Multiple meeting participants were concerned about the shortage of jobs with livable, middle-class wages in the region. Other threats considered in the meetings are employment not matched to demographics in the region, policies that inhibit workforce agents from holding workers accountable, and an aging workforce. One participant provided an example of the possible large retirements from the rubber company in Danville.

Answer Choice	Respondents	%
Lack of skilled workforce for high tech jobs	20	52.6%
Substance abuse	16	42.1%
Lack of motivation to help clients to understand the pathway from welfare to low income services	13	34.2%
Pace with which our region is able to participate in technology infrastructure	12	31.6%
Funding cuts	9	23.7%
State Budget	9	23.7%
Welfare system	8	21.1%
Tighter restrictions on funding	8	21.1%
Demographics	6	15.8%

Performance measure goal increases	4	10.5%
Political influence	4	10.5%
Other (Please Specify)	2	5.3%
Globalization	1	2.6%

*Words in **bold** were also highlighted during the facilitated meeting

VISION AND GOALS

NAME	West Piedmont Workforce Development Board
VISION	West Piedmont is a preferred region for job seekers and employers, offering employment opportunities with sustainable wages and high-quality training to ensure a productive and competitive workforce for employers.
MISSION	The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board connects jobseekers to employers through education, training, and partnerships, providing jobseekers opportunities to career pathways and employers access to a skilled workforce.

The West Piedmont WDB has adopted the following goals, based on data and SWOT analysis, to move the area's workforce development system toward the fulfillment of the Mission and Vision and in consonance with the Combined State Plan.

- **Goal 1.** Help individuals gain access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and provide opportunities for career progression by providing equitable and universal service delivery.
- **Goal 2.** Increase business engagement and deliver value to our business customers by filling jobs in high-demand occupations that are strategic to the West Piedmont region.
- **Goal 3.** Develop diverse workforce with the qualified skills, competencies, and credentials that meet the current and anticipated business needs of West Piedmont.
- **Goal 4.** Strengthen outreach and recruitment efforts to make available services more well-known and stimulate career awareness.
- **Goal 5.** Reduce workforce system barriers to improve training and employment outcomes for job-seekers.

In alignment with the state's primary indicators of performance, West Piedmont adopts the following performance accountability measures:

	Workforce Region 17			Virginia		
Performance Measure	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	79%	85%	74.5%	84.4%	86.4%	81.1%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$6,000	\$8,700	\$3,500	\$6,382	\$8,700	\$3,850

Measurable Skill Gains	58%	57%	44%	58.9%	68.4%	67.9%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	85%	90%	62.80%	85%	90%	62.8%
Credential Attainment Rate	74%	70%	70%	74%	70%	70%

STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS

The following strategies will enable West Piedmont WDB to implement its three-year local plan and play its part in diversifying the economy and maintaining the quality of life in Area 17. Highlighted in the strategies are methods of partnering that the workforce board will pursue to achieve these goals and that larger vision for the region.

Goal 1. Help individuals gain access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and provide opportunities for career progression by providing equitable and universal service delivery.

- **Strategy 1.** Grow and improve workforce activities including on-the-job training, incumbent worker training and work-based learning experiences.
- **Strategy 2.** Systematically evaluate workforce activities and monitor improvements using measurable outcomes.
- **Strategy 3.** Assist in identifying career pathways and employment opportunities that pay family sustaining wages. These should include skills/training/credentials required and entry points from any skill level.
- **Strategy 4.** Diversify funding by leveraging local, state and federal partnerships and grant opportunities.

Goal 2. Increase business engagement and deliver value to our business customers by filling jobs in high-demand occupations that are strategic to the West Piedmont region.

- **Strategy 1.** Engage regional employers, education and economic development entities in developing sector strategies and career pathways.
- **Strategy 2.** Develop innovative and sustainable systems for frequent employer outreach to increase employer knowledge of business services and receive greater feedback from employers on what they value and track success in those areas.
- **Strategy 3.** Host virtual and in-person job fairs for adults and school age youth to encourage active employer-worker engagement and career pathway awareness.
- **Strategy 4.** Support programs offering on-the-job training, work-based learning experiences, and other job readiness training.

Goal 3. Develop diverse workforce with the qualified skills, competencies, and credentials that meet the current and anticipated business needs of West Piedmont.

- **Strategy 1.** Develop business engagement activities and programming around sector strategies, in-demand industries and occupations.
- **Strategy 2.** Identify career pathways for the region, including the skills, competencies and credentials necessary and in demand.

- **Strategy 3.** Support and expand available trainings that prepare workers with the skills, competencies, and credentials needed to meet the demands of the employers.
- **Strategy 4.** Work with local school systems to increase youth knowledge of regional careers, desired credentials, and workforce services.

Goal 4. Strengthen outreach and recruitment efforts to make available services more well-known and stimulate career awareness.

- **Strategy 1.** Take a more active role in services outreach utilizing latest technology and social media.
- **Strategy 2.** Actively attend events held in the community to bring awareness of the workforce board and its services. Events could include local and regional planning and economic development sessions, chambers of commerce meetings, business coalition meetings, local school events.
- **Strategy 3.** Participate in community outreach events focused on traditionally underemployed populations.

Goal 5. Reduce workforce system barriers to improve training and employment outcomes for job-seekers.

- **Strategy 1.** Identify and provide frequent outreach to underserved populations in the region.
- **Strategy 2.** Continue and improve partnership efforts to leverage resources and streamline referral processes.
- **Strategy 3.** Support regional activities that improve access to affordable transportation, childcare, housing and technology.

PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTMENT

LOCAL WORKFORCE SYSTEM

Workforce System Partners & Programs

The WPWDB has an extensive partnership network that works collaboratively to identify workforce needs, create and coordinate training opportunities for jobseekers, provide support to economic development efforts and offer unified responses to business needs in LWIA 17.

Services Provided at One-Stop Center	Providing Partner
Title I – WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services	West Piedmont Workforce Development Board
Title II – Adult Basic Education Service: Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education programs at postsecondary level	DOE – West Piedmont Regional Adult and Career Education, Patrick Henry Community College, Danville Community College
Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Service; Unemployment Insurance; Veterans Services; Trade Adjustment Assistance	WPWDB, VEC
Services for the Aging and Disabled	Department of Aging and Rehabilitation, Southern Area Agency on Aging

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Goodwill of the Valleys
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) employment and training activities	Pittsylvania County Community Action, Community Recovery Program
Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) employment and training activities	Pittsylvania County Community Action, Community Recovery Program, STEP Inc
Second Chance Act Programs	STEP Inc, Community Recovery Program
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); SNAP; Medicaid Expansion	Henry-Martinsville Department of Social Services, Danville Division of Social Services, Pittsylvania County Department of Social Services
Job Corps	American Job Corps

Economic Development Partners	
Virginia Economic Development Partnership	Commonwealth
Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority	Commonwealth/Region
West Piedmont Planning District Commission	Planning District I2
County and Municipal Offices of Economic Development	5 Jurisdictions
Industrial and Economic Development Authorities	3 Jurisdictions
Office of Economic Development	Virginia Tech

Community Partners	
Small Business Development Centers	Goodwill of the Valleys
Chambers of Commerce	STEP INC
Friends of Southwest Virginia	Genedge Alliance
VCCS	The Launch Places
Danville Pittsylvania County and Piedmont Community Services	Five Political Jurisdictions

Business Services

Virginia Career Works centers across the region have partnered with the Chambers of Commerce and the government of Patrick County to assist with the delivery of our business services. This partnership provides a variety of services to help businesses with their workforce and human resource needs. WPWDB's goal is to connect employers to employees, saving them time as an employer and reducing their costs. Services include:

- Job registration and pre-employment screening
- Target Recruitment Events
- Adult Internships or Work Experience
- On-the-Job Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Federal Bonding Program
- Customized Training

- Plant Closings/Layoffs
- Resource Lab
- Business Services Videos

One-Stop & Virginia Career Works Centers

Virginia Career Works One-Stop Centers serve as the primary delivery mechanism for WIOA programming and other nonmandated workforce programs. There are two comprehensive One-Stop Centers in West Piedmont (Virginia Career Works Danville & Martinsville-Henry County) and one affiliate One-Stop Center site in Patrick County.

Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs)

Chief Elected Officials (CLEOs) have executed a Consortium Agreement through which Workforce Development Board Members are appointed. As required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), CLEOs designate the local fiscal agent and are liable for any and all misuse of WIOA funds allocated to the West Piedmont Workforce Development Area. The CLEOs approve the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board's budget to carry out its purposes under WIOA. They meet quarterly with WDB staff and the board President. Furthermore, CLEOs are represented on the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and play an essential role in strategic planning and enhancement of the local workforce system.

COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES

Collaborative Programming

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board continues to collaborate with regional partners to increase its resources, which consequently expand its abilities to respond to the growing needs of the Workforce System that fall outside of mandated services and WIOA funding. The following grant initiatives are currently available to the Area as a result of this collaborative spirit:

- **Guided Career Exploration Program:** The Harvest Foundation has partnered with the WPWDB through a \$1,079,727 three-year grant to oversee the Guided Career Exploration Program (GCE). The GCE program is designed to assist young adults (17-24) to meet local workforce needs by providing individual career coaching and work experiences through an intense mentoring approach for those who may be facing barriers to employment or require assistance in developing a career pathway. This twelve-week program requires participants to attend a life skills training course in addition to a workforce experience all while further developing healthy workplace skills.
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families:** The TANF grant provides individualized coaching, paid tuition for short term training (ex: CDL, phlebotomy, pharmacy tech, C.N.A), supportive services (transportation reimbursement, test fees, etc.), financial literacy and a paid work experience. The participant must be a MHC resident, at or below 200% poverty level. Once approved by the Integrated Resources Management Team, the participant must participate in a financial literacy session.

Collaborative Program Support

- **The Harvest Foundation** is a nonprofit organization that seeks to invest in community initiatives that support economic development within Martinsville-Henry County. The Harvest Foundation

is dedicated to making MHC the community of choice by enhancing the opportunities and quality of life for all its citizens. The Harvest Foundation has made it possible for GCE participants to receive paid training and work experience, earning much needed funds while growing their skills.

- **Patrick County Community College** is a comprehensive community college dedicated to enriching the quality of life in its region through academic excellence and student success. PHCC has provided program participants with MRT materials, instructional space and technology to ensure their success. PHCC's vice president of Workforce, Economic and Community Development also serves on the WPWDB as secretary.
- **Martinsville Department of Social Services** promotes the well-being of children and families across the region. The Martinsville Department of Social Services provides for the TANF program as well as for other WIOA services. MHC DSS staff are members of the Integrated Resources Management Team which reviews and approves the TANF applications as well as a part of the Business Services Team. Members of the MHC DSS staff also participate in Virtual Roundtable meetings, which provides a platform hosted by the WPWDB for business and industry professionals to speak openly and share the challenges they are facing. The team then works together to join combine resources to meet these challenges.

COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development is represented on the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and plays an essential role in strategic planning and enhancement of the local workforce system. Economic Development partners will be apprised of the availability of Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, and Customized Training that can assist eligible existing workers and eligible new hires in building the necessary skills and knowledge to benefit the employers and provide a career path for workers. The Integrated Business Services Team includes these initiatives in their outreach and recruitment packages that will be used for business development.

Economic Development representatives continue to be invited to participate in the Partner Convening Group to discuss and formulate strategies to serve business and industry effectively. Economic development partners also play an important advisory role in the development of regional workforce policy.

COLLABORATION WITH EDUCATION

The West Piedmont WDB benefits from a wide variety of educational institutions that deliver training programs for in-demand careers and certifications. These providers include community colleges, other nonprofit educational institutions, and for-profit training providers.

Secondary Education

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board collaborates with regional secondary education through a number of ways. First, WPWDB receives referrals from local high schools regarding potential candidates for the Youth In-School Program. WPWDB also participates in school events to provide resources regarding career exploration and funding for tuition and books. Specifically, a youth career specialist mans a booth at high school events, which includes flyers and outreach materials. Service flyers are also included in senior information packages in Patrick County.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is another area in which the WDB and local high schools collaborate. The director for CTE programs in Patrick County is a member of the Workforce Development Board and chairs the youth committee. Regular updates on CTE are provided to WDB staff by the Board member.

Community Colleges

The majority of the approved training programs in the West Piedmont region are housed at either Danville Community College or Patrick Henry Community College. The local community colleges possess an extremely diverse array of courses and training programs that equip the workforce with a wide variety of skills and certifications. Both colleges play an important role in the development and delivery of career pathways. Additionally, the Board continues to engage both colleges to ensure that current trainings meet employer needs and that the system possesses the resource to adapt to changing or future needs.

In the West Piedmont Workforce Area One Stops, Patrick Henry Community College and Danville Community College are co-located and have a robust relationship with the Workforce Partners. Both community colleges participate in Center Management Team meetings, Business Service Team meetings and work collaboratively with partners during activities such as job fairs or targeted recruitment events, community outreach events and special events such as informational days at Social Services locations within the region. Community colleges also collaborate with other workforce partners to provide wraparound services to both jobseekers and business customers and are an integral service delivery partner.

COLLABORATION WITH ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Coordination of Workforce Investment Activities & Adult Education and Literacy Activities

Adult Education and Literacy is co-located in the Virginia Workforce Centers. Representatives of Adult Education and Literacy, as a Core Program Partner, sit on the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and participate on the Partner Convening Group to align resources and provide seamless service. The West Piedmont WDB offers expanded service hours at each of its comprehensive American Job Centers for Adult Education and Literacy customers. These services are delivered in partnership with Adult Education and Literacy providers. Adult Education and Literacy providers submit their work plan to our Area for review.

SUPPORT SERVICES

West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has a Supportive Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers Policy that is attached to this plan (Attachment 4n). Essentially, the term supportive services means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I-B.

Supportive Services may only be provided to WIOA customers who are participating in a WIOA program and who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs. Youth service providers have a list of resources that can be accessed to assist with supportive services from community-based organizations. In addition, co-enrollments can be considered to leverage resources when appropriate.

ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Coordination of Services & Service Delivery Improvement

Both Comprehensive One Stop Centers are engaged in strategies to maximize coordination, improve service delivery and avoid duplication with Wagner-Peyser. For example, at each One Stop, partners meet weekly to discuss cases, Management Teams meet monthly to discuss opportunities for collaboration and efficiency, and Business Services Teams meet on a regular basis to discuss opportunities to collaborate with regard to businesses. Business Services Teams share and report on business visits to avoid duplication and identify opportunities for further collaboration.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Business Engagement Strategy

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Area will convene an Integrated Business Services Team comprised of Core Program Partners, Educational Institutions, and Economic Development to create a seamless and integrated approach to meeting business needs and expectations. Each of these groups regularly interacts with local employers, identifying current and project needs. These needs are discussed at roundtable meetings involving all partners participating in the Integrated Business Services Team. Programs and services that delivery value to businesses are identified and provided to local employers. By demonstrating value, the employers gain an increased faith and interest in participating in the workforce system.

The LWDA relies on its Business Services teams to engage local employers. The most common way in which this is accomplished is through one-on-one meetings that occur at the employer's office. These meetings provide the Business Services Managers an opportunity to discuss the specific needs of the employer. Once these needs have been identified, the Business Services Managers are able to discuss the different services that are offered by the WPWDB and its partners. For partner services, referrals are made. In the two largest localities served by the WPWDB, the contractor that delivers Business Services are the local Chambers of Commerce. This provides added credibility when conducting outreach to local employers as the Chambers already serve as an advocate for local employers. Partner agencies have other strategies in place that ensure the LWDA is informed of employer needs. Examples include the Business and Industry Leadership Teams convened by Patrick Henry Community College, the Local Veterans Employment Representative, and job orders that are communicated to the Virginia Employment Commission.

Successful workforce systems utilize both job development and business development methods in serving business and industry customers and assisting jobseekers in getting and keeping a job. It is understood that job development and business development are very different outreach and recruitment approaches to working with business and industry. The West Piedmont WDB sees job development as an approach that requires specific funding sources to reach out to small and family-owned businesses with a particular client in mind in an effort to place the individual with known barriers, strengths, and weaknesses in a work-based learning opportunity. Job development will remain the responsibility and role of individual partner programs. Business development, on the other hand, is about outreach and recruitment of business customers to request applicants when openings occur. Typically, business development is conducted at medium size to large businesses. The West Piedmont

Workforce Development Area's Integrated Business Service Team will focus its efforts on business development activities.

Policies and Protocols

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will continue to focus on business as the primary customer. The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will continue to coordinate with the Chambers and contracted business services providers to meet the needs of business. The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has facilitated the development of a Business Services MOU to facilitate stronger relationships between organizations participating in the Integrated Business Services Team. The West Piedmont Workforce Investment Board will continue moving forward with the development and implementation of the MOU and it will be finalized based on guidance received from the state. In addition, an Integrated Business Services Team has been formed.

The integrated business services team works to ensure industry needs are understood and incorporated into the career pathways design for the local area:

- Creating a single point of contact for businesses;
- Establishing a collaborative outreach and recruitment structure;
- Coordinating workforce services and training options;
- Leveraging resources;
- Sharing performance outcomes;
- Creating and managing a talent pipeline in existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations;
- Establishing an inventory of existing training options, particularly those that include a credential or certification in existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations;
- Identifying skill and knowledge gaps between what business needs and expects and what training options are available;
- Working with education to enhance or establish short-term training options for portable or stackable credential/certification opportunities;
- and working with economic development representatives to ensure a dynamic approach to meeting the ever-changing needs of business and industry as the in-demand sector landscape grows or diminishes.

Business Engagement in New Workforce Development Activities

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Area is represented on the Board by businesses that are leaders within the industries that are forecasted to be in demand. The Quality Assurance Committee and the Marketing and Alternative Sources of Revenue Committee plays a key role with tapping into the subject matter expertise of industry leaders to recruit workers, to create program designs that build toward a talent pipeline that meets the needs and expectations of business, and to launch an awareness campaign for business to know the value and benefit of participating with the local workforce system.

In addition, West Piedmont continues to work closely with Chambers who represent businesses in the region by funding a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act business service managers at each Chamber. These business service managers lead the Integrated Business Services Team and work in a collaborative manner with all the core and required partners in West Piedmont.

Activities to Address Employers' Workforce Needs

The WPWDB, partners, and Business Services Representatives works closely with business representatives on the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and establish an integrated and seamless approach to serving employer needs and expectations. This will start with continued and enhanced work on sector partnerships that will drive the program designs for career pathways. The sector partnerships for the West Piedmont Workforce Development Area will engage employers to determine skill requirements for employment and for career progression.

The LWDA funds business services staff in each locality that comprise the local region, enabling employers to develop a close, personal relationship with workforce staff. Business Services Managers are responsible for conducting outreach to local employers, working to identify workforce needs so the LWDA can respond to employer demands at a speed that satisfies their requirements. Business Services Managers regularly meet with employers to identify needs, and Center staff to communicate the expectations and requirements of local employers. Meetings at the Workforce Centers are held at a minimum, monthly, to enable partners to remain apprised of the directions that local employers are moving in. The most common services provided to employers are Incumbent Worker Training and the filling of existing vacancies through a combination of job fairs, the advertisement of available positions, recommendation of individuals receiving services at the Workforce Center, or placement into a subsidized work experience or On-the-Job Training arrangement. Partners are able to contribute to the knowledge and awareness of business needs in a variety of manners. For example, Patrick Henry Community College regularly convenes Business and Industry Leadership Teams composed of local employers to discuss workforce challenges. The Virginia Employment Commission also regularly interacts with local employers through the collection of job orders posted on the state's database. These job orders are communicated on a weekly basis to center partners, and promoted via the LWDB's social media and website.

PRIORITY OF SERVICES

West Piedmont Workforce Development Board's Priority of Service Policy is attached (Attachment 4i). In summary, priority will be given to adult clients receiving public assistance and who are classified as low income in accordance with WIOA definitions. The Poverty Guidelines and the Lower Living Standard Income Level as published by the U.S. Department of Labor annual are to be used in determining low-income status.

Additionally, the Jobs for Veterans Act calls for priority of service for covered persons for DOL-funded programs. A covered person is defined in the attached local policy (Attachment 4i). A covered person includes anyone who is a veteran and spouses of veterans that fall into the categories outlined in the local policy. Thus, the following sequence of services priority will apply:

- First priority will be provided to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area who are covered persons with respect to veterans' priority;
- Second priority will be provided to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area;
- Third priority will be covered persons (these would be covered persons not considered to be recipients of public assistance or low-income) that fall in one of the following categories as approved by the WPWDB which is specific to this region and not required by the state;

- Individuals who are basic skills deficient (English reading, writing, or math skills at or below the eighth grade on a generally accepted standardized test);
- Individuals who are high school drop-outs;
- Individuals who are felons;
- Individuals who are long-term unemployed (unemployed 15 of the last 26 weeks);
- Individuals who have limited English-Speaking Skills;
- Individuals who have a disability who meet the general income requirements for participation in WIOA programs, even though their family income does not meet that requirement (family income is excluded in this calculation);
- And individuals who are not self-sufficient, as defined by WPWDB's self-sufficiency policy.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND EVALUATION

EXPANDING ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will actively promote activities collaboratively with workforce, community and private sector partners. Examples of activities include workforce partner outreach during job fairs or targeted recruitment events, civic organization events, faith-based events and through social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter and cost allocated radio or other media advertisements as agreed upon. We will continue to partner with programs such as:

- Trade Act Assistance (TAA);
- Elevate/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Training, Assessment, Retention and Employment (TARE) program;
- Community Recovery Program;
- Re-entry Council programs;
- and Rural Horseshoe Initiative.

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will continue to emphasize and encourage co-enrollment in the programs. West Piedmont Workforce Development Area will engage in a no-wrong door philosophy for access points.

Jobseekers, youth, and workers may access the workforce system at the comprehensive American Job Center, a satellite American Job Center, Vocational Rehabilitation (DARS), Department of Social Services, or Adult Education and Literacy. A "no-wrong door" provides common steps regardless of the access point. The partners will establish an initial screening tool that is comprised of some basic questions that provide an indication of whether the individual may be a potential candidate for another Core Program Partner. If the initial screening identifies a potential partner referral may be helpful, the referral process negotiated by each partner agency is triggered. Everyone entering each of the access points will then be provided a computer to register in the State's database. The partner-convening group will create a system orientation that will be technology-based and individuals will watch the PowerPoint. The system orientation will provide information on the diverse array of options that may be available to all job seekers, including those with barriers. Next, basic career services may be provided by the Center first accessed or partner agency, or an individual may be referred to an American Job Center to utilize the

resource room if access is somewhere other than an American Job Center. Next, program screening is conducted by the respective partner including assessments, and the individual is given the unique program orientation for the services he or she will be enrolled in. Funding streams provide appropriate program services. The partnering convening group will consider some fundamental concepts to achieve alignment and integration of service delivery including:

- Ensure that ALL jobseeker clients, regardless of where they first access the workforce system, will be registered in the Virginia statewide database.
- Establish initial screening questions to help in identifying potential partner engagement.
- Establish partner lists of typical characteristics for each program in regard to potential eligibility and suitability for enrollment to assist with targeted referrals.
- Use a negotiated referral process that kicks in based on the initial screening findings.
- Create a service map of available basic and individualized career services, training, and supportive services.
- Create a system orientation to be used at all access points in the West Piedmont Workforce Development Area.
- Initiate a primary case management system where an individual maintains his or her case manager at the point of first enrollment to provide a single point of contact regardless of the subsequent funding streams he or she may be co-enrolled in. Subsequent funding streams will serve as a program contact that maintains appropriate recordkeeping to track progress and performance data.
- Establish a tracking form that will be used until such time a statewide electronic tracking is available via an integrated case management system.
- Core Program Partners will meet at least monthly to review referral listings, enrollments, co-enrollments, and exits. These meetings will serve as informational to help partners follow through on referrals, to provide opportunities for pitching co-enrollment possibilities, discuss performance strategies, and to coordinate exits.
- Core Program Partners that have a “job” as a planned outcome will be invited to participate on an integrated business service team including Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- Core Program Partners plus Educational Institutions and Economic Development Representatives will assist in the creation and support of sector partnerships for the identified existing and emerging industries and occupations. The sector partnerships will incorporate career pathways into its responsibilities in terms of creating a flow of the career path options, analysis of the needs and expectations of business customers, analysis of the existing skills and knowledge of the talent pipeline, and work with education representatives to tap into existing training or create new credentialing or certification options. The educational institutions will include Carl Perkins options in the equation to assist with credits for eligible participants.
- Core Program Partners have agreed during the strategic planning session to the existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations that the West Piedmont Workforce Development Area will focus on regarding business development and the building of a talent pipeline to meet business needs and expectations.

CAREER PATHWAYS, CO-ENROLLMENT, AND CREDENTIALS

Career Pathways

Core Program Partners, in collaboration with Educational Institutions and Economic Development representatives, will assist in the creation and support of sector partnerships for the identified existing and emerging industries and occupations. The sector partnerships will incorporate career pathways into its responsibilities in terms of creating a flow of the career path options, analysis of the needs and expectations of business customers, analysis of the existing skills and knowledge of the talent pipeline, and work with education representatives to tap into existing training or create new credentialing or certification options. The educational institutions will include Carl Perkins options in the equation to assist with credits for eligible participants.

Virginia has supported using the career pathways model as a primary vehicle for meeting local and regional business needs for a prepared workforce and for meeting individual needs for job placement and career progression. The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board supports the career pathways model as an effective strategy to help individuals of all skill levels, particularly those who are low-skilled and have barriers, to pursue progress through and complete the education and training they need to attain industry-recognized credentials and secure employment that leads to self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Important tools to achieve success with career pathways will include:

- stackable education and training options;
- contextualized learning;
- accelerated and integrated education and training, industry-recognized credentials;
- and multiple workforce system entry and exit points.

West Piedmont WDB staff meets regularly with the community colleges' career coaches, K-12 guidance counselors, and career and technical education staff and their related advisory groups across the region to help give labor market and WIOA-related resource information, support identified occupations in-demand so that students are put on career paths where credentials are earned, internships are leveraged and barriers eliminated, and share information on pre-apprenticeships. Regarding contextualized learning, the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board supports numerous work-ready programs at the Workforce Centers and within the region's high schools, community colleges and community-based organizations such as STEP, Inc. These work-ready programs include, but are not limited to:

- resume writing;
- mock interviews;
- computer and financial literacy;
- dressing for success;
- and employer-specific work-ready needs.

One example of this is simulating what it is like to work in a food processing and manufacturing environment. The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board also supports job clubs and Chamber of Commerce led high school career days and job shadowing programs and encourage WIOA-funded contractors to use adult internships as a way to make work a central context for learning.

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board supports increasing the capacity of accelerated/integrated education and training programs, such as Middle College that position WIOA-eligible individuals to earn a GED credential and industry recognized credential primarily in advanced manufacturing or healthcare with the goal of getting these individuals employed and eager to progress in their chosen profession. In partnership with a core program partner, Adult Education and Literacy, the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will increase the capacity for individuals to get their GED.

In regard to industry-recognized credentials, the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has a policy that it will only subsidize education and training programs and credentials that are documented as in-demand occupations (Attachment 4u).

Multiple workforce system entry and exit points will be established through the Partner Convening Group with the goal of a no-wrong door approach. In other words, Workforce Centers and partner agencies will establish processes to support multiple entry and exit points.

Co-Enrollment

Core Program Partners will meet at least monthly to review referral listings, enrollments, co-enrollments, and exits. These meetings will serve as informational to help partners follow through on referrals, to provide opportunities or pitching co-enrollment possibilities, discuss performance strategies, and to coordinate exits.

The partners in the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will be promoting co-enrollments when it is advantageous for service options to the client and to leverage resources. Case management will be done by the primary partner, or in other words, the partner that enrolled the individual onto a program first. Subsequent co-enrollments will do secondary case-management and work with the primary case manager during the partner meetings to coordinate efforts. If a client leaves a partner program and is still co-enrolled in another, the partners may choose to transfer the primary case management to the active program.

Improving Access to Credentials

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Area's most recent Workforce Analysis has identified high growth occupation areas. The analysis further reflects that "demand occupations and workforce training needs in the region appear in those occupations that, although linked to postsecondary education training programs, typically only require some form of on-the-job training (OJT) or skills training below the one-year or two-year college certificate level." The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board supports increasing the capacity for the region for individuals who are unemployed or underemployed to have access to contextualized Adult Education and Literacy and partnership with Adult Education and Literacy to attract more individuals into GED attainment programs.

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has a local demand occupation policy that states Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act training funds can only be used for occupations documented as in demand. Contractors adhere to this policy, which details procedures for developing the demand-driven and high growth occupation lists (Attachment 4u). The West Piedmont Workforce Development Area regularly meets or exceeds credential attainment performance measures.

ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Ensuring Continuous Improvement of Training Providers

A goal of the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board is to ensure that the region has a quality workforce prepared to meet the demands of the future. Through the One Stop Memorandums of Understanding and in practice, service providers will continue to engage in activities such as training, workforce development certification and continuous improvement. At each One Stop, Center Management Team members develop and all staff members participate in bimonthly training to provide continuous opportunities to build on skills, communication and understanding of each program including community programs which operate outside of the One Stop environment that are nevertheless important in providing customers with wraparound services.

An Eligible Training Provider List is maintained to identify training opportunities that jobseekers may access with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds when determined an appropriate route. The training programs on this list must meet the application procedures and standards of the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and are then approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Training providers are required to meet annual performance levels to remain on this list. The performance levels are designed to ensure that all training programs meet an acceptable level of quality.

All training providers are required to complete an application and submit information for each program they wish to be considered. Complete applications are reviewed by West Piedmont Workforce Development Board staff and the Board's Quality Assurance Committee. The Quality Assurance Committee will make a recommendation to the full Board. Training provider applications may be reviewed throughout the program year, but must go through the certification process on the Board's Program Year schedule that begins July 1 of each year.

Access to Services

Physical Access

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires each Local Workforce Development Area have at least one comprehensive Workforce Center. West Piedmont Workforce Development Board in coordination with its Chief Elected Officials has created multiple access points across the region to facilitate access to services including:

- Martinsville (Comprehensive Center)
- Danville (Comprehensive Center)
- Stuart (Affiliate Center)

In addition, partner agencies will serve as access points throughout the region and will participate on the aforementioned Partner Convening Group.

Remote Access

The West Piedmont WDB actively uses several programs that enable it to expand its impact beyond the walls of the Workforce Centers. In order to make it easier for jobseekers to search for local employment opportunities, the WPWDB posts the weekly job order list provided by the VEC on its website and social media each week. This enables individuals that have access to a computer and the internet to easily

review local employment opportunities. The West Piedmont WDB also utilizes an additional website, www.WelcomeHomeMHC.com that promotes local employment opportunities.

ADA Compliance

The WPWDB supports and requires compliance as follows:

- Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief. This requires that reasonable accommodations be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities in certain circumstances.
- Virginia Board of Workforce Development Policy No. 600-03 (2017)

All West Piedmont Works partners post required notices to ensure all eligible individuals are aware of the system's obligations to operate programs in a non-discriminatory manner. "Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law" notices will be posted in all partner facilities and will be reviewed with each program participant and documented in each client file. Equal Employment Opportunity language will be placed on all new and reprinted outreach and recruitment documents.

The One-Stop Workforce Centers are ADA compliant, enabling easy access for individuals with physical disabilities. They feature electronic doors, handicap parking spaces, curb ramps and restroom accommodation. Individuals that have mobility related issues are able to easily move around the One Stop Workforce Centers. Customers that have physical disabilities that impair their dexterity and their ability to use their hands and feet are assisted by Workforce Center staff. They will assist customers in whatever way is required to complete paperwork, conduct job searches, create resumes, apply for jobs, or participate in any other program activity for which the individual is eligible to participate. The Workforce Center staff will also rely on professional rehabilitation counselors employed by the Department for Aging and Rehabilitation and co-located at the Workforce Center. Workforce Center staff are able to use translator services on their phone to assist individuals with speech or language difficulties. All staff are provided with I-speak cards that will help a customer identify the language that they speak. The Workforce Centers all have publicly posted EO notices, informing them of their rights. These notices are posted in both English and Spanish. All customers that are enrolled in WIOA programs receive and sign a Notice of EO rights document, outlining their rights and the steps they can take if they feel that their rights have been violated. All outreach materials developed by the West Piedmont WDB contain the appropriate EO language and disclaimers, identifying the availability of alternative aides and services.

When phone numbers are provided, the TDD/TTY relay is also provided. The Workforce Centers utilize the common intake form that effectively screens individuals to identify what services they may require. Center staff are on hand to assist any individual that may have difficulty in completing the forms. The Local Area will also conduct regular trainings to ensure that all Center staff are aware of effective strategies and practices to engage and serve individuals with a wide variety of disabilities. These trainings will involve inviting partners from across the region that have extensive experience in serving individuals with disabilities as well as Center partners that specialize in serving this population.

Through its participation in the Virginia Financial Study Network, the West Piedmont WDB is able to provide extensive financial literacy assistance to customers. This enables the West Piedmont WDB to ensure that individuals that have disabilities are receiving all of the potential benefits for which they are

eligible. The Local Area will regularly evaluate the composition of its customers and their specific needs so that additional investments can be made in resources that enable local WDB customers to succeed regardless of barrier or disability.

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board is also committed to ensuring that its website is accessible to individuals with disabilities. WPWDB has a contracted provider (Momenta) that ensures and monitors the accessibility of the Board's website. The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has an ongoing relationship with DARS to provide training and assistance to West Piedmont Works partner staff regarding serving individuals with disabilities.

Partner Roles and Resource Contributions

Workforce Center Roles and Responsibilities

WIOA services are available to eligible participants at all of the Workforce Centers located in the West Piedmont region. Eligible participants work with case managers to determine a career path, find a job, pay for education or career training, assist with the placement into a work experience such as on-the-job training, earn credentials, provide supportive services that lead to a successful outcome in one of the aforementioned areas, provide additional training and employment preparation that can assist the customer attain and retain employment.

The follow partners present at the Region's One-Stops share the following responsibilities:

- 1. Virginia Employment Commission:* The Virginia Employment Commission works to assist both jobseekers in finding employment and employers in finding suitable candidates for employment. The Virginia Employment Commission also assist customers with making unemployment insurance benefit claims. Jobseekers are able to search for jobs on the Virginia Workforce Connection website. Employers are able to utilize the same website to post job vacancies at their companies. The Virginia Employment Commission is an essential partner at the Workforce Center that makes referrals to other agencies that are best equipped to serve customers and assists with the placement of existing customers into employment opportunities. The Virginia Employment Commission also provides labor market information that is valuable for employers, jobseekers, and staff at the Workforce Centers. The Virginia Employment Commission also administers Trade Adjustment Act activities
- 2. Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS):* The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services has a permanent presence in the two One-Stop Workforce Centers located in the West Piedmont region. DARS helps individuals with any type of disability, providing vocational, counseling, training and job placement services. DARS also works with all Center partners to ensure the Workforce Centers are accessible and capable of providing exemplary services to customers with a disability.
- 3. Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP):* The Senior Community Service Employment program provides work experience based training for eligible individuals 55 years or older. The work experiences are subsidized with the ultimate goal being to help an individual re-enter the workforce.
- 4. Adult Education and Literacy:* Adult Education and Literacy delivers education services primarily geared towards assisting an individual earn their GED.

5. Post-secondary Vocational Education: The West Piedmont Workforce Development region is fortunate to have two different community colleges that are strong participants in workforce development. Patrick Henry Community College and Danville Community College each have a presence at a Comprehensive One-Stop Center. Representatives work to place eligible participants into an approved training program at the local community colleges. The representatives discuss available training programs in in-demand fields that lead to credentials and work with Center partners to identify eligible participants and facilitate their enrollment into the training programs. Community colleges also administer a variety of programs including the Fast Forward and TARE programs at the Workforce Centers.

6. Community Action Agencies: Regional Community Action Agencies provide re-entry services for ex-offenders.

Partner Resource Contributions

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the West Piedmont Local Development Area states:

It is agreed that the program services and activities provided through the Center will be funded by partners of the Center. In addition, a Resource Sharing Agreement will be developed using an agreed upon methodology with the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and will include shared costs for facilities and/or related items among all partners. Shared costs may be offset by negotiated in-kind services on a case-by-case basis.

The West Piedmont workforce development board follows WIOA guidelines for One-Stop MOU and infrastructure agreements (IFA). The IFA is based on the squared footage occupied by the providing partner at the one stop. Partners are invoiced for expenses incurred. Common area calculations are charged according to the percent of direct space costs paid by each partner.

Technology Enabled Case Management System

West Piedmont Workforce Development Area continues to work with the State of Virginia to provide an integrated intake and case management information system that supports core program partner activities. The West Piedmont WDB also utilizes software to improve its service delivery. WPWDB holds monthly meetings with center managers and center partners to ensure that referrals and other necessary information are being shared at a regular interval to support a culture of continuous service improvement. To satisfy WIOA requirement, WPWDB utilizes the Virginia Workforce Connection system (VaWC) to house all information regarding client, services provided, and other case-management information.

One-Stop Locations and Operators and Co-Location Strategy

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board continues to work with all center partners and staff to promote efficiency in processes and excellency in customer service so as to ensure the continued improvement of services offered at One-Stop centers. Training opportunities, service issues, and relevant information regarding referrals, etc. are shared at the aforementioned monthly meetings between center partners and staff. Both One-Stops also explore opportunities to leverage resources for outreach across the boarder community and recruit new community to address new and ongoing issues.

Ross Innovative Employment Solutions is contracted operator for all One-Stop Centers, comprehensive and affiliate, in Area 17. The Workforce Centers are located at the following locations:

Center Type	Name	Street Address	Operator
Comprehensive One-Stop	Martinsville-Henry County One-Stop	233 West Commonwealth Blvd. Martinsville, VA	Ross Innovative Employment Solutions
Comprehensive One-Stop	Danville One-Stop	211 Nor Dan Drive, Suite 1055, Danville, VA	Ross

Virginia Career Works Affiliated Sites

Center Type	Name	Street Address	Operator
Affiliate One-Stop	Virginia Career Works Patrick County	103 West Blue Ridge St. Stuart, VA	Ross

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS

Individual Training Account Policy, Process, and Criteria

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) will be used to contract with educational institutions for training. The Individual Training Account Policy is attached to this plan (Attachment 4f). Other training service opportunities such as on-the-job training, customized training, and work experience requires a contract agreement other than an Individual Training Account. The On-the-Job Training Policy is attached to this plan (Attachment 4g).

Training Contracts

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board uses the Eligible Provider List to issue training contracts for ITA; providers and programs are approved through the Quality Assurance Committee and ratified by the Board. On-the-job (OJT) training contracts are handled by the Business Services Team. Work experiences and incumbent worker trainings are managed by the contracted provider (Ross), which approves and manages trainer contracts and agreements.

Ensuring Informed Customer Choice in Training Program Selection

It is important that jobseekers participating in training have an opportunity for customer choice. In the West Piedmont region, case managers provide information along with having jobseekers research additional information that will help the jobseeker make an informed choice about training. Information is provided to the jobseeker related to success of existing eligible training providers.

LINKING TRAINING TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS

All case management staff are trained in career pathways. Additionally, the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board will facilitate the engagement of businesses, especially those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, through the development and deployment of sector strategies.

The WPWDB has engaged the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development to provide timely updates of LMI data, which has been used to create an in-demand occupation list (Attachment 4(l)). This data is also used to ensure that available training is concurrent with current industry trends and adaptive to expected change.

The Business Services team will also continue to engage businesses in in-demand industry sectors as well as relevant community and economic development, workforce, and education partners to ensure that industry needs are being met. Workforce development partners will continue to collaborate to ensure that resources are leveraged to the maximum extent to better support regional businesses and address workforce needs.

RAPID RESPONSE

As it is critical that Rapid Response teams build relationships with stakeholders and system partners such as businesses, labor organizations, workforce and economic development agencies, training institutions, service providers, and communities, the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board facilitates the Business Services Teams to develop a Business Services Memorandum of Understanding which defines goals and roles and encourages robust relationships which enable Rapid Response providers to effectively respond to business and worker needs, gain intelligence on economic transitions, ensure ownership by all stakeholder groups, and work together to develop solutions. Building a stakeholder network that can be expanded or streamlined depending on the type of dislocation begins with identifying the critical connections that need to be made, making those connections, and maintaining them over time. The Regional Rapid Response Representative will take the lead and will work very closely with the Local Area partners to develop customized rapid response service delivery which meets the needs of individual businesses and Dislocated Workers.

Rapid Response activities are coordinated through the Regional Response Coordinator working collaboratively with Local Workforce Area partners with the direct input from business customers and jobseeker customers in efforts to provide customized service delivery in each instance, meeting the needs of local employers and Dislocated Workers. One Stop Partners support efforts coordinated at the regional level and local level. The West Piedmont WDB coordinates across state lines with nearby Workforce Development Areas to address layoffs that impact customers across state lines.

COMPLIANCE

OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board procures its One-Stop Operator and Continuous Improvement Assistant to plan and ensure that monitoring and oversight of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services and activities are consistent with Federal, State, and Local statutory and regulatory requirements. Monitoring occurs once every program year. WPWDB staff, which is the Continuous Improvement Assistant, is responsible for conducting the monitoring review and will follow a standardized review method that will result in written reports. Written reports will include record findings, any needed corrective actions, and due dates for the accomplishment of corrective action. Prior to on-site review, WDB will notify the One-Stop Operator, in writing, of the local monitoring plan to conduct a review. Together, they will arrange a time to organize the entrance conference, to identify files needed for on-site review, assure the appropriate staff is available for on-site visit, and then schedule the exit conference. To complete monitoring, the Continuous Improvement Assistant will create written reports that will be given to the One-Stop Operator, who will then complete a corrective action plan based on the findings of the report. Lastly, the Continuous Improvement Assistant will conduct a Follow Up review to ensure that findings are resolved. Monitoring updates will be provided to the Quality Assurance Committee, who will identify if additional measures need to be imposed to ensure programmatic integrity.

SUNSHINE PROVISION OF WIOA

West Piedmont Workforce Development supports the State's requirements for the Sunshine Provision. In order to comply with state "sunshine provisions", the Board and any subcommittee authorized to take official action on behalf of the Board must do the following:

- Take official action and engage in deliberations only at meetings open to the public. "Official action" includes making recommendations, establishing policy, making decisions, and/or voting on matters of Board business. "Deliberations" are discussions of Board business necessary in order to reach decisions.
- Ensure that all meetings are held in an accessible location for those with a disability and that all information is provided in accessible and alternate formats.
- Give public notice of meetings in accordance with applicable State Code provisions, including public notice in advance of any special meeting or rescheduled regular meeting. Ensure that votes of Board members be publicly cast and, in the case of roll call votes, recorded.
- Keep written minutes of all public meetings, including date, time and place of the meeting, members present, the substance of all official actions, a record of roll call votes, and the names of any citizens who appeared and gave testimony.

All members of the Board serve a public interest and trust role and have a clear obligation to conduct all affairs in a manner consistent with this concept. All decisions of the Board are to be based on promoting the best interest of the State and the public good. Accordingly, all members of the Board are subject to the provisions of the State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act.

Each Board member files a financial disclosure statement with the Virginia Ethics Commission as a condition of assuming membership and then, annually while serving as a Board member. Any Board member with a potential or actual conflict of interest must disclose that fact to the Board as soon as the potential conflict is discovered and, to the extent possible, before the agenda for the meeting involving the matter at issue is prepared.

FISCAL AGENT AND THE TIMELY EXPENDITURE OF WIOA FUNDS

Fiscal Agent

Pittsylvania County was designated by the Chief Elected Officials to serve as the Fiscal Agent for the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board.

Timely Expenditure of WIOA Funds

As highlighted in the Board's financial policies and procedures (Attachment X) the following drawdown procedures are adhered to:

- Contractors at the very minimum must submit requests for reimbursement once a month (preferable by the fifteenth of each month).
- All requests for reimbursements must be sent to the board office. Upon receipt, which is dated by the person who opens the mail, the Executive Director will review and deliver to the retained accounting firm to process. Once processed, the request is returned to the Executive Director to review and to sign off on. This process does not exceed five working days on any given request.
- The board asks each contractor when submitting requests for reimbursements, the following procedures are adhered to: a signature page is included with the request reflecting the grant administrator has reviewed and signed off on the request; the board-issued budget template accompanies the request reflecting monthly expenditures to budget; and that no staples are used to increase processing speed.
- Once reviewed, reimbursements are sent to the fiscal agent to process. Monthly Income/Expenditure Detail Report and Cash Payment Schedule are prepared by the Executive Director. The Executive Director sends the report and schedule to the state. Reimbursements from the state go directly to the fiscal agent. This report and schedule are reviewed by the finance committee each month.
- Competitive Grant Process – The WPWDB follows its Public Procurement Policy and Procedures (Attachment 4o), which states that it must follow Pittsylvania County's public procurement procedures for all acquisitions of products and services, including "fee for services," and adheres to the expertise of its centralized purchasing operation. Other Funding Sources – In order to leverage other revenue sources at the federal, state, local and philanthropic entities, the WPWDB formed an Alternative Sources of Revenue Committee to reflect the importance of leveraging other sources of funds to advance its strategic priorities. The Committee will set an annual goal for funding from sources other than WIOA funding and will review at the board level. In addition, on an annual basis, the Committee will identify 3 to 5 priorities for which to seek funding which will help advance the goals of the local plan.

WIOA FUND LEVERAGING STRATEGY

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Area works with partner agencies to leverage resources as well as through referrals to community-based organizations. The West Piedmont WDB currently participates in several grant funded initiatives. The Harvest Foundation awarded WPWDB nearly \$1.1 million to provide intensive job training to local youth and provide for paid work experience. Additionally, the Department of Social Services (DSS) awarded WPWDB a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grant, which provides TANF recipients with job readiness training and job placement, as well as access to childcare and transportation. Finally, the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) awarded WPWDB a Wagner-Peyser Grant that has been used to hire additional staff at One-Stop Centers to better provide employment services.

NEUTRAL BROKERAGE OF ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH SERVICES

Brokerage of adult, dislocated worker, and youth services is based on the population and geographic area of each county and city in Area 17. West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has a Public Procurement Policy and Procedures that is attached to this Plan (4o).

NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE LEVELS

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board has been meeting or exceeding its negotiated performance goals for several years. The following table compares the Region's performance levels with the State PY2021 negotiated levels.

Performance Measure	Workforce Region 17			Virginia		
	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	79%	85%	74.5%	84.4%	86.4%	81.1%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$6,000	\$8,700	\$3,500	\$6,382	\$8,700	\$3,850
Measurable Skill Gains	58%	57%	44%	58.9%	68.4%	67.9%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	85%	90%	62.80%	85%	90%	62.8%
Credential Attainment Rate	74%	70%	70%	74%	70%	70%

PLAN INPUT, DEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board conducted much of the planning process virtually, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Two surveys and two focus group sessions were conducted to inform the SWOT Analysis. WPWDB engaged the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development (VTOED) on the creation and deployment of a SWOT survey, which was made available to all workforce partners and the general public. Next, VTOED held two focus group sessions; one with Board members, staff, and various workforce partners and another with core WPWDB operations staff. These sessions validated and contextualized survey findings and help to confirm the Board's mission and vision and craft new strategies and goals. Finally, the draft plan was posted on the WPWDB website for public comment with

a dedicated email for comments to be submitted. VTEOD provided with the data and accompanying narrative for the plan, along with some information from the ALICE report provided by the United Way of New Jersey.

WORKFORCE STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board invests in ongoing training for Board staff and contractors so that they are aware of all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act rules and regulations and are confident in their abilities to not only case manage and/or manage integration of services, but also are equipped to career counsel. The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board also coordinates customer service workshops at the centers so that all center staff is customer-centric at all times and monitors customer satisfaction with electronic comment cards and is working toward adherence to the Virginia Workforce Letter 10-01 where 60 percent of front-line staff in the centers earn professional workforce development certification.

In an effort to collect customer feedback which will be used to measure and improve of the quality of service delivery, each One Stop location and satellite encourage customers to complete a customer satisfaction survey to obtain direct feedback from customers in either written or electronic form. The surveys are distributed in paper form and each computer in the Centers have the electronic link on the desktop of the computer. Handwritten surveys are reviewed by Management Team members and the Center receptionists enters the handwritten surveys so that they are consolidated with any electronic surveys. The Management Team and the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board reviews the consolidated data and discusses areas of opportunity to improve customer service delivery. Business Services contractors are charged with collection similar data from employers for review by the Management Team and the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board to ensure high quality service delivery to business customers.

Staff in the American Job Centers participate in all staff meetings on a monthly or bi-monthly basis to learn more about each other services and bring in community resources to broaden the opportunities to make referrals for customers who have needs in addition to workforce services. Child Supportive Services presentation on their Family Engagement programs is an example of expanding the knowledge of resources. Child Supportive Services has agreed to utilize the American Job Centers in our region to meet with parents so that they may provide their clients with a more seamless handoff to workforce partners. The Board also supports continuous improvement at the board level. It is a member of the National Association of Workforce Board's Workforce Leadership Council and went through a board level assessment. Areas of opportunity are being implemented and managed by either the board's Governance or Marketing and Alternative Sources of Revenue Committee.

The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board adopted a Whistleblower Policy to reflect the network's commitment to uphold the highest standards of honesty and integrity (Attachment 4t).