

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA
AREA 9
WIOA UNIFIED
LOCAL/REGIONAL AREA PLAN
Submitted
September 30, 2016
Revised and Approved March 3, 2017
*Revised October 29, 2018
Revisions noted in Bold and Italics***

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Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure:

1. **Identification of the Fiscal Agent** – Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official.

The Fiscal Entity is: Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, James R. Dove, Executive Director, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605, (706) 369-5650

2. **Description of Strategic Planning Elements** – Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.

- a. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

Information in this section was gathered from the Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis, and Labor Insight/Burning Glass. Information was also gathered through discussions with Chambers of Commerce, Economic Developers, Human Resource Managers and Workforce Development Board members particularly the private sectors representatives, labor union representatives and economic development sectors. Additionally, through the last 2 years of working with Caterpillar with the OJT program and follow-up with Businesses hiring persons completing the Workplace Fundamentals courses and the non-credit credentialed CNA nurses aid training program a wealth of information has been gathered on workforce/training preparation needs. Super Sectors are Information with a growth of 24% from 2015 to 2016, Construction with a growth of 9.5% from 2015-2016, Leisure and Hospitality with a growth of 6.9% , Trade, Transportation and Utilities with a growth of 10.3% from 2015 to 2016 with the largest growth in the unclassified category with a growth of 29% from 2015 to 2016. This unclassified category provides an opportunity for the local area to research this over the next two years to determine if there is a large enough mass to warrant workforce strategies or if this is a conglomeration of a multiple of small industries which is the current belief. While Manufacturing has a growth of 1.2% from 2015 to 2016, that does represent 293 positions with new announcements being made every day as well as feedback being received from the manufacturing employers through the Manufacturing employer groups from Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Newton, Barrow, and Jackson Counties as to openings they are unable to fill. From the Burning Glass job postings Labor Insights Report for the period June 2015-May 2106, there were 5411 Tractor Trailer Truck Driver positions posted, 2455 registered nurses positions posted, 2900 retail sales/customer services positions posted. The list of in-demand occupations is attached. This was compiled utilizing data from the GDOL website: <https://explorer.gdol.ga.gov>, Georgia Labor Market Explorer Information, sorted by Occupational Outlooks for the Northeast Georgia LWDA. Staff utilized the process outlined by GDOL Workforce and Statistics and Economic Research Staff. Staff utilized the data grid for Area 9's Occupational Projections. A comparison was made of the "annual growth rate", "annual Openings from Growth and "education" columns to compile the in-demand occupation list for NEGA.

Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Area In-Demand Occupation List

Management Occupations

Chief Executives
General and Operations Managers
Sales, Administrative Services
Computer & Information Systems Managers
Financial, Construction, Education
Medical & Health Managers
Property, Real Estate

Business and Financial Operations Occupations

Wholesale & Retail Buyers
Purchasing Agents, Cost Estimators
Labor Relations Specialist
Logisticians
Marketing Specialists
Business Operations Specialists
Accountants, Auditors, Credit Analysts
Financial Specialists

Architecture and Engineering Occupations

Cartographers & Photogrammetrists
Civil Engineers, Computer Hardware Engineers
Electronics Engineers

Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations

Physical Scientists
Clinical, Counseling and School Psychologists
Agricultural and Food Science Technicians
Environmental Science

Community and Social Service Occupations

Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors
Educational, Guidance, School, Vocational, Mental
Health, Rehabilitation Counselors
Social Workers, Social Service Assistants
Community Health Workers

Legal Occupations

Paralegals and Legal Assistants

Education, Training and Library Occupations

Teachers, postsecondary
Vocational Teachers
Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers
Elementary, Middle, High School, Special Education,
Substitute, and GED Teachers
Teacher Assistants
Librarians and Technicians

Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media Occupations

Fine Arts, Graphic Designers
Producers and Directors
Coaches and Scouts
Public Relations Specialists
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians
Camera Operators, Video and Motion Picture

Collectors

Farming, Fishing and Forestry

Logging Equipment Operators

Computer and Mathematical Occupations(1)

Computer Systems Analysts
Information Security Analysts
Computer Programmers
Software Developers, Applications, Systems
Web Developers
Database Administrators
Network & Computer systems Administrators
Computer User Support, Network Support
Operations Research Analysts

Healthcare and Technical Occupations(2)

Occupational Therapists
Physical Therapists
Registered Nurses
LPN
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians
Dental Hygienists
Cardiovascular Technicians
Medical Sonographers
Radiologic Technologists
MRI Technologists
EMT and Paramedics
Pharmacy Technicians
Respiratory Therapy Technicians
Surgical Technicians
Veterinary Technician
Health Information Technicians

Healthcare Support Occupations(2)

Nursing Assistants (CNA, PCT)
Physical Therapist Assistants
Medical Assistants
Veterinary Assistants
Phlebotomists

Protective Services

Firefighters
Security Guards

Food Preparation and Serving Occupations

Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria

Building, Grounds, Maintenance Occupations

Housekeeping and Janitorial Supervisors
Janitors
Landscaping and Grounds Keeping Workers

Sales and Related Occupations

Retail Sales, Supervisor, Salesperson
Customer Service Representatives, Parts Salesperson
Advertising Agents
Telemarketers

Office and Administrative Support Occupations

Clerical Supervisors
Bookkeeping, Accounting, Auditing, Bill and Account

Payroll, Tellers
Office Clerks
Receptionists and Information Clerks, Dispatchers
Shipping, Receiving, and Stock Clerks

Construction and Extraction Occupations

Construction Supervisors
Carpenters, Tile, Cement Masons
Paving, Surfacing Equipment Operators
Drywall and Insulation Workers
Electricians, Painters, Plumbers, Pipefitters

Installation, Maintenance and Repair Occupations

Electrical, Electronic Installers and Repairers
Automotive Body Repairers
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
Heavy Equipment Mechanics
HVAC Mechanics and Installers
Industrial Machinery Mechanics, Millwrights
Installation, Maintenance and Repair Workers
Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers

Transportation and Material Moving Occupations(3)

Bus Drivers
Driver/Sales Workers
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
Light and Delivery Truck Drivers
Crane and Tower Operators
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators
Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers
Machine Feeders
Packers
Recyclable Material Collectors

Production Occupations

Production Supervisors
Assemblers
Bakers
CNC Machine Tool Operators and Programmers
Welders, Cutters, Soldering and Brazing Machine Setters
Metal, Plastic, Sawing, Woodworking Machine Operators
Grinding, Polishing, Cutters and Trimmer Operators
Inspectors, Testers Samplers, and Painters
Molders
Production Workers

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Workforce Development Division provides occupational skills training in Demand Occupations for industries that are stable or growing. Skills training will not be provided in declining industries. At present, occupational training is only provided for jobs and careers where hourly rates and salaries are paid. Training is not provided for careers or jobs with commissions and fees (this includes real estate, cosmetology, massage therapy and nail technicians). Additional sources of financial aid may be available through the school's Financial Aid Office.

This listing serves as a guide, and is not meant to be all-inclusive. There may be additional occupations in which demand occurs based on the job market or specific opportunities within the broad spectrum of occupations. The NEGRC WDD may provide training for a job where demand is limited, but current openings exist. Bona fide job offers, letters of pre-hire and/or three employment posted ads for that occupation may be required for training in limited demand areas.

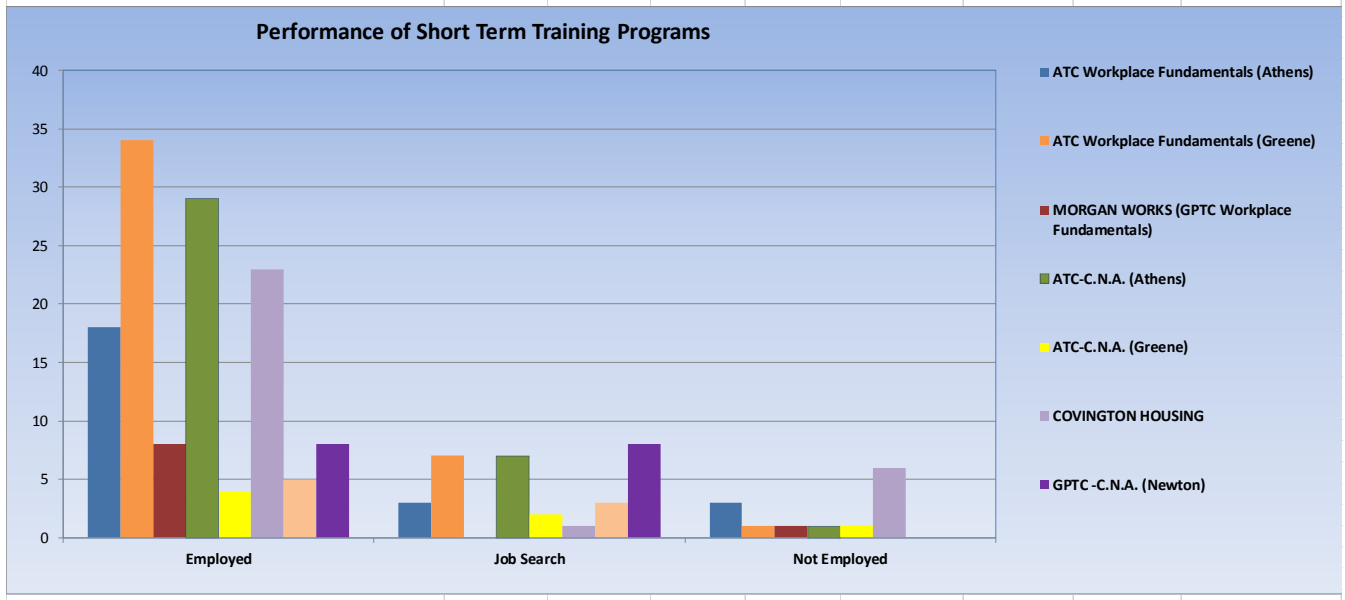
- (1) Intermediate or higher level IT training requires previous IT related work experience.
- (2) Healthcare occupations will be considered upon completion of core classes and/or prerequisites and acceptance into the occupational specific program of study.
- (3) Requires background and Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) check.
- (4) Six Sigma and Project Management Certifications will be considered on a case-by-case basis determined by the applicants work experience and industry.

- b. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The overwhelming response from all employers (from the groups listed above) is that the vast majority of their employee candidates lack the “soft skills” including punctuality and attendance, basic life problem solving and awareness of appropriate work behaviors and how to get along with supervisors and co-workers. This deficiency re-occurs throughout all the various in-demand occupations. In response to this, the local area, over the last 3 years, has worked with three of the four local technical colleges to develop and offer the Workplace Fundamentals 5 week course which has a foundation of soft skills both instruction but more importantly daily practice and demonstration of mastery. Additionally, the local area continues to work with the CNA training providers to incorporate skills identified by employers hiring CNA trainees as needed and necessary including “soft skills” and computer literacy skills.

The following chart indicates the numbers of WPF and CNA programs operated and associated outcomes. This chart indicates a placement/employed rate of 88.9% for WPF exited trainees and 95.3% placement/employed rate for the CNA trainees.

WIOA NORTHEAST GEORGIA SHORT-TERM TRAINING OVERVIEW									
	% Employed	Employed	Job Search	Not Employed	TOTAL class completers	# Currently In Class	OVERALL TOTAL	Cycles Complete	
ATC Workplace Fundamentals (Athens)	75.0%	18	3	3	24	0	24	4	
ATC Workplace Fundamentals (Greene)	81.0%	34	7	1	42	0	42	6	
ATC Workplace Fundamentals (Elbert)	62.5%	5	3	0	8	0	8	1	
MORGAN WORKS (GPTC Workplace Fundamentals)	88.9%	8		1	9	0	9	2	
COVINGTON HOUSING	76.7%	23	1	6	30	0	30	6	
Overall performance of WPF courses	77.9%	88	14	11	113		113	19	
Overall performance of WPF courses w/o job search	88.9%								
ATC-C.N.A. (Athens)	78.4%	29	7	1	37	0	37	7	
ATC-C.N.A. (Greene)	57.1%	4	2	1	7	0	7	2	
GPTC -C.N.A. (Newton)	50.0%	8	8	0	16	0	16	2	
Overall performance of C.N.A. programs	68.3%	41	17	2	60	0	60	11	
Overall performance of C.N.A. programs w/o job search	95.3%								
OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF ALL PROGRAMS	74.6%								
OVERALL PERFORMANCE ALL PROGRAMS w/o job sea.	90.8%								

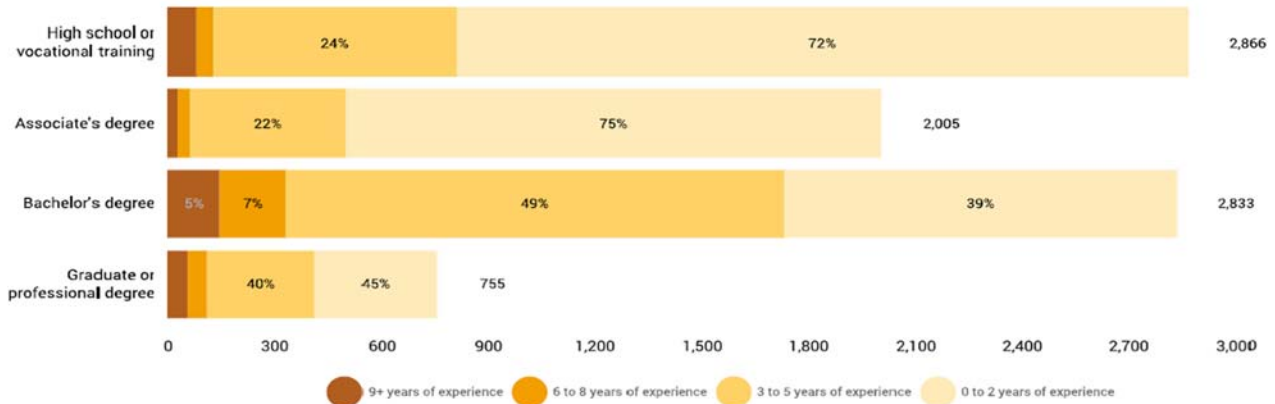


The following charts provide information on the demand occupation job postings for both the skills required and the education levels for those same job postings for:
 1) January 1, 2015-December 31, 2015 and 2) January 1, 2018 – March 30, 2018.
 Data Source Burning Glass database

January 1, 2015-December 31, 2018:

Education and Experience

Note: 77% of records have been excluded because they do not include both a degree level and experience requirements. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.



Update October 2018: Chart for period January 1, 2018 – March 30, 2018:

Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies)

Education and Experience

Note: 72% of records have been excluded because they do not include both a degree level and experience requirements. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

This report provides information on both the preferred and minimum/required education levels listed in job postings. For this reason, a job posting may be counted in more than one of the educational categories shown below.

Jan. 01, 2018 - Mar. 31, 2018

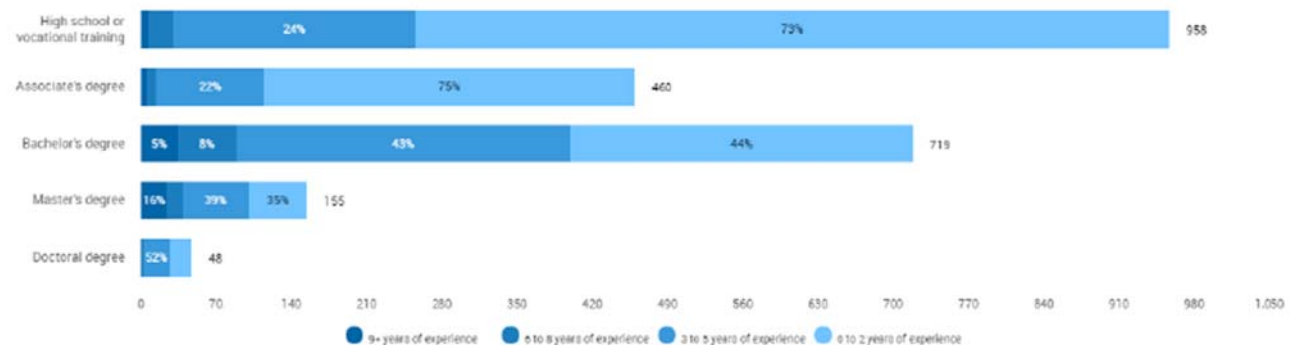
There are 6,581 postings available with the current filters applied.

There are 4,742 unspecified or unclassified postings.

Rectangular Snip

Active Selections

Jan. 1, 2018 - Mar. 31, 2018 AND (County : Barrow, GA OR County : Clarke, GA OR County : Elbert, GA OR County : Greene, GA OR County : Jackson, GA OR County : Jasper, GA OR County : Madison, GA OR County : Morgan, GA OR County : Newton, GA OR County : Ooonee, GA OR County : Oglethorpe, GA OR County : Walton, GA)

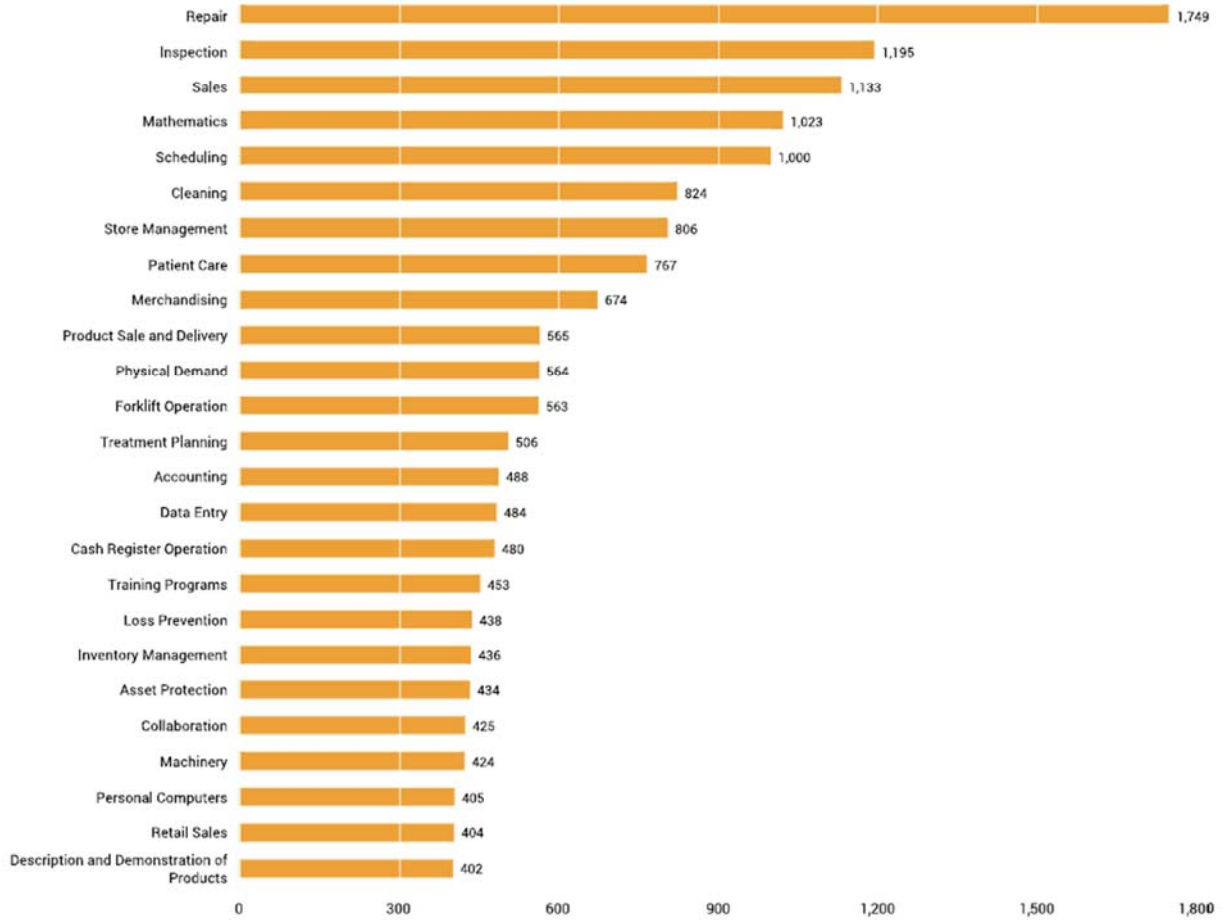


January 1, 2015-December 31, 2015

Top Skills

Note: 49% of records have been excluded because they do not include a skill. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.
 Jan. 01, 2015 - Dec. 31, 2015 (Data not available after Jan. 11, 2016)
 There are 28,158 postings available with the current filters applied.
 There are 13,799 unspecified or unclassified postings.

Specialized Skills ▾ Numbers ▾



Update October 2018: Chart for period January 1, 2018 – March 30, 2018:

Sources: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies)

Top Skills (Specialized Skills)

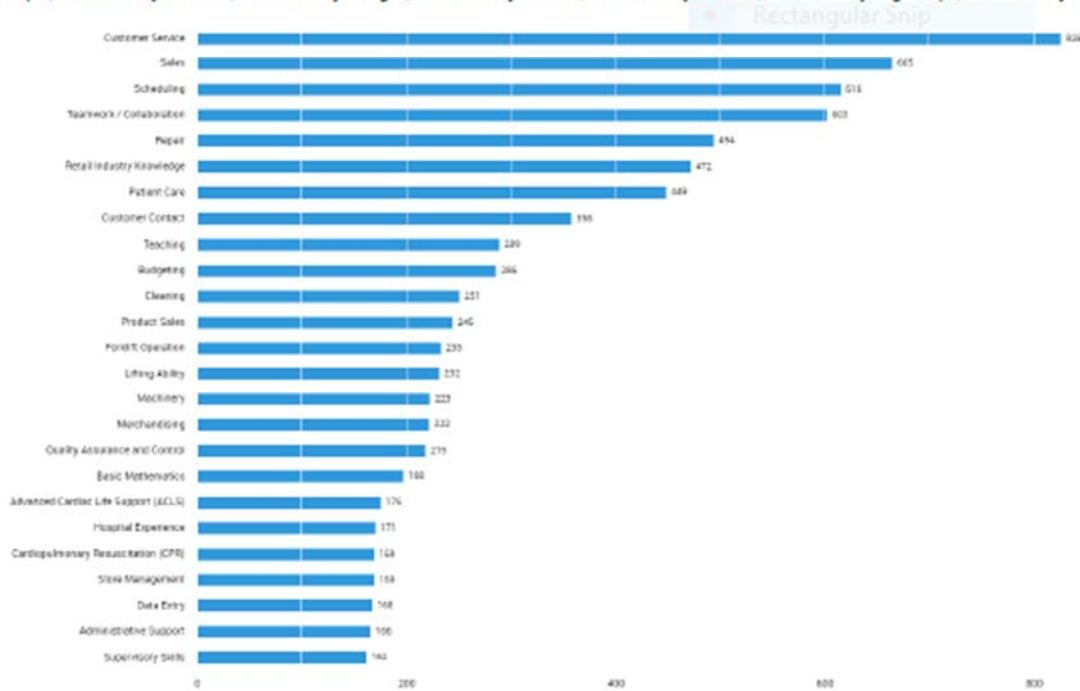
Jan. 01, 2018 - Mar. 31, 2018

There are 6,581 postings available with the current filters applied.

There are 2,292 unspecified or unclassified postings.

Active Selections

Jan. 1, 2018 - Mar. 31, 2018 AND (County : Barrow, GA OR County : Clarke, GA OR County : Elbert, GA OR County : Greene, GA OR County : Jackson, GA OR County : Jasper, GA OR County : Madison, GA OR County : Morgan, GA OR County : Newton, GA OR County : Oconee, GA OR County : Oglethorpe, GA OR County : Walton, GA)



- c. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.

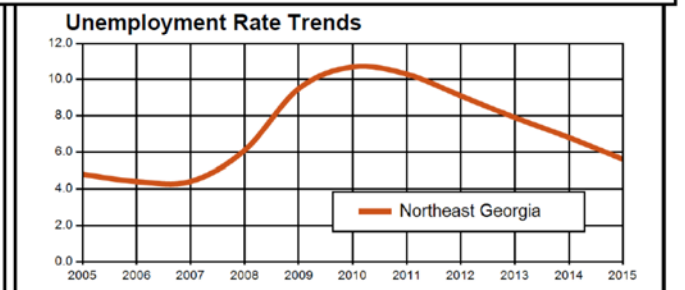
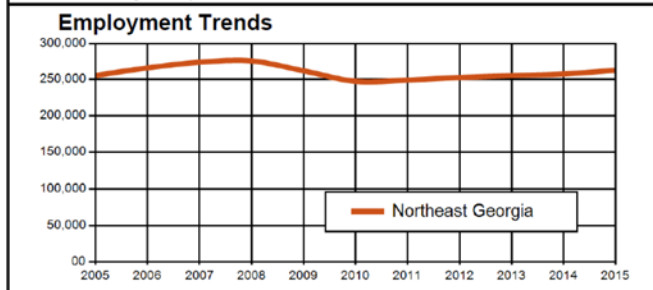
The 2010 population of the 12-county region, according to the 2010 Census, was 574,047 with a 2015 Census estimate of 603,546 for an overall projected population growth of 5.1%. Projected population growth for 2025 is a 59.5% growth to a population of 915,593. The source for the population numbers was the US Census Bureau, Population Division. The number in the labor force in 2014 was 276,436 and in 2015 was 278,440 an increase of .7%. The number of employed persons in 2014 was 257,681 and 262,819 in 2015 an increase of 2%. The unemployment rate for the region was 5.6% in 2015 compared to 6.8% in 2014. The source of the labor force, employment and unemployment numbers was the Georgia Department of Labor and US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The 12 county public school systems graduated 5727 students in 2015 per Governor’s Office of Student Achievement of Georgia. The 2010 Decennial Census of the US Census Bureau indicates that 32.3% of the 18-65+ workers have at least a high school diploma, 23.5% have some college, 5.6% two-year college graduate and 12.2% 4 year college graduate. There are 18.8% of the 18-65+ labor force who do not possess a GED/ High School diploma or higher.

The following chart summarizes the data reflected above as it relates to the labor force, # of employed and unemployed persons as well as the unemployment rate and the change in those numbers from 2014-2015.

Labor Force Activity												
ANNUAL AVERAGES												
	Labor Force			Employed			Unemployed			Rate		
	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change	2014	2015	% Change
Barrow	35,192	35,577	1.1%	32,987	33,744	2.3%	2,205	1,833	-16.9%	6.3%	5.2%	-17.5%
Clarke	56,224	56,558	0.6%	52,340	53,241	1.7%	3,884	3,317	-14.6%	6.9%	5.9%	-14.5%
Elbert	8,068	7,613	-5.6%	7,374	7,047	-4.4%	694	566	-18.4%	8.6%	7.4%	-14.0%
Greene	6,426	6,362	-1.0%	5,901	5,917	0.3%	525	445	-15.2%	8.2%	7.0%	-14.6%
Jackson	29,826	30,402	1.9%	28,079	28,953	3.1%	1,747	1,449	-17.1%	5.9%	4.8%	-18.6%
Jasper	6,353	6,431	1.2%	5,931	6,083	2.6%	422	348	-17.5%	6.6%	5.4%	-18.2%
Madison	12,698	12,752	0.4%	11,861	12,066	1.7%	837	686	-18.0%	6.6%	5.4%	-18.2%
Morgan	8,362	8,486	1.5%	7,813	8,031	2.8%	549	455	-17.1%	6.6%	5.4%	-18.2%
Newton	47,954	48,245	0.6%	44,025	45,045	2.3%	3,929	3,200	-18.6%	8.2%	6.6%	-19.5%
Oconee	17,265	17,430	1.0%	16,391	16,674	1.7%	874	756	-13.5%	5.1%	4.3%	-15.7%
Oglethorpe	6,656	6,731	1.1%	6,221	6,371	2.4%	435	360	-17.2%	6.5%	5.3%	-18.5%
Walton	41,412	41,853	1.1%	38,758	39,647	2.3%	2,654	2,206	-16.9%	6.4%	5.3%	-17.2%
Northeast Georgia	276,436	278,440	0.7%	257,681	262,819	2.0%	18,755	15,621	-16.7%	6.8%	5.6%	-17.6%
Georgia	4,756,708	4,770,873	0.3%	4,414,343	4,490,931	1.7%	342,365	279,942	-18.2%	7.2%	5.9%	-18.1%
United States	155,922,000	157,129,917	0.8%	146,305,000	148,833,417	1.7%	9,617,000	8,296,333	-13.7%	6.2%	5.3%	-14.5%

Note: This series reflects the latest information available. Labor Force includes residents of the county who are employed or actively seeking employment.
Source: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



- d. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

There are a number of local initiatives throughout the 12 counties working somewhat independently to address workforce needs. Each of the local technical colleges have employer program of study advisory committees to provide input on employer needs to assist them in developing programs. A number of Chambers of Commerce in the region

have a workforce/education committee. The Georgia Department of Labor has Employer Committees for each office which provide information on workforce needs. The public school systems have employers engaged in the development of their course offerings particularly in the area of occupational specific course offerings. Great Promise Partnership working with “at-risk” youth is active in 4 of the counties in the region with plans to expand. There are currently 4 Career Academies in the region with plans for at least 2 additional ones underway. The greatest weakness of the workforce development activities in the region is that there is no single point of awareness of what each entity is doing. The strength of the system is that typically when awareness occurs, there is a great likelihood for those to work together: Great Promise Partnership, Athens Land Trust, Clarke County School District and the LWDA. The weakness of the system is that with all of these “separate” but “well-intentioned” efforts it is possible that there could be, without intent, duplication of effort. Reliance on the traditional education and workforce preparation system might not position the local area to be as responsive to employers employment needs. However, working with non-traditional systems including the non-credit instructional programming or charter school systems is proving to be a part of a solution to address employer needs at various levels of need and employee qualifications.

- e. Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The local board’s goals are:

- Create a unified workforce system connecting the services and opportunities available through a multitude of partners in the region
- Assisting employers in meeting their employment needs
- Expand the number of employer and job seekers utilizing services of the public workforce development system

The local workforce area has a history of meeting and exceeding the performance accountability measures under both the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The local area will continue its efforts to that end including the continuation of its follow-up services strategy which entails each WIOA training funded participant being contacted via phone, text or email within the 1st 2 weeks after they exit the program. This allows time for targeted job search assistance to be provided in the event they indicate they are not employed. In an effort to assist our core program partners, the local area will share our follow-up strategies as well as other strategies to assist them in transitioning to this type of performance accountability measurement.

The LWDA currently tracks WIOA measures that show increases in employment, retention and earnings of participants in the attainment of recognized post-secondary credentials by participants. These goals will also provide direction for the system’s

development and management supporting regional growth and individual's economic self-sufficiency.

- f. Taking into account the analyses described in sections "2. a-e" (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The local area will continue its MEGA meetings which provides a structured setting to discuss issues of concern both at the overall program level as well as the individual client level. One of the lessons learned is that behind and at the foundation of every system are individual people. Some of the efforts may be most impactful at the system level, but some may be most impactful at the individual level.

The local area will continue its follow-up services strategy which entails each WIOA training funded participant being contacted via phone, text or email within the 1st 2 weeks after they exit the program. This allows time for targeted job search assistance to be provided in the event they indicate they are not employed. In an effort to assist our core program partners, the local area will share our follow-up strategies as well as other strategies to assist them in transitioning to this type of performance accountability measurement.

The local area will continue to look for ways to put in place data connectivity, whether it be an integrated data system or at the very least the ability for partners to have look-up capability to create greater efficiency in providing customer services.

3. **Description of Strategies and Services** – Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.
 - a. How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?

The local area works with the Georgia Department of Labor's Employer Committees in Athens and Covington receiving input from those groups as to areas of demand sectors and occupations as well as input into the training needed for persons to be job ready. There are 12 private sector representatives (one from each county) on the board and they provide input on employment needs both in their communities as well as their sector. The local area also works with representatives from the technical colleges from the credit instructional divisions, the economic development divisions and the adult education divisions in the area incorporating input from the employer advisory committees for the various programs of study offered at the colleges, into the development of programs and curricula. This is particularly true in the development of credential offering non-credit programs offered through the technical colleges which allows more flexibility in the training start date than the traditional semester credit training programs.

The local area participates in a number of the Chamber of Commerce meetings as well as the above stated GDOL Employer Committee meetings. Presentations are routinely made to community, civic (Rotary) and employer specific HR and Manager level

meetings. Local events and job fairs are used to inform employers of training opportunities available as well as recent graduates.

The manufacturing sector employer groups have been targeted as the initial occupational area, however healthcare and logistics/transportation will be added as specific strategies are developed.

- b. How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area's workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.

A key workforce training module of Georgia WorkSmart is Registered Apprenticeship. Through a partnership between the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship, the Technical College System of Georgia and other education and state agency partners, Georgia WorkSmart helps organizations create apprenticeship that include curriculum and classroom instruction development. The Northeast Georgia area is working with both Lanier Technical College and Athens Technical College as a part of the USDOL Apprenticeship Grant that Georgia Department of Economic Development received.

The local area is instituting work-based learning opportunities to assist recent graduates of occupational skills training which will match them with employers who have a need for hires who have both the classroom instruction as well as the internship/work experience that work-based learning can provide.

As a part of the LWDB meetings, there is typically a time provided for all members (business and organized labor representatives) to provide information on events and new companies locating in and expansions taking place in their communities. This feedback resulted in the development and offering of the Workplace Fundamentals five-week course which couples instruction in "soft skills" with the occupational area of manufacturing. Additionally, graduates of this course, after being hired may choose to continue their education through HOPE Grant or HOPE Scholarship programming.

Update: October 29, 2018: The Workplace Fundamentals course above evolved into an expanded program – now termed "ManufactuREADY"- that couples occupational training, soft skills and a simulated manufacturing work environment. Upon completion of the six-week course, graduates are given a preferred hiring status with several local manufacturers. The course is currently offered through one technical college in three locations, Greene, Walton and Clarke Counties and serves approximately 120 participants a year; however, we are looking to expand service delivery and add additional vendors in the coming year.

The LWDA coordinates and participates in any employer activities offered through our Wagner Peyser partner, Georgia Department of Labor Athens Career Center and Covington Career Centers. Business services provided to employers include:

- Provide space for employers to interview candidates
 - Screen job postings for qualified candidates
 - Conduct workshops for interviewing and resume preparation (Caterpillar workshop) to prepare candidates to better align with employer expectations
 - Conduct job and career fairs
 - Provide Labor Market Information to assist employers in recruiting and retaining employees
 - Customized Recruitment – Provide employers with information on readily available labor pool as well as training programs in the area to augment readily available labor pool.
 - Provide businesses with information on TOPPSTEP (The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program) job candidates and the federal bonding program for job candidates.
 - Provide businesses with information on the WOTC tax credit program.
- c. How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies.

The local area staff are involved with multiple chambers of commerce either as chamber members, chamber workforce committee members, members of career academy advisory boards, members of joint development authorities, members of technical college advisory committees, county interagency committees which include economic development representatives and related groups. The local staff will continue this involvement and ensure that the various economic development partners are aware of training options that are available in the local area.

There are also chamber executives serving on the workforce development board. Through these connections, members of economic development organizations provide input into the types of training needed and what that training needs to include as well as when hiring cycles will occur for both newly recruited businesses as well as existing businesses.

- d. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

The local workforce area has a long standing relationship with the local Department of Labor Career Center staff which has been fostered through the local

area's MEGA Meetings, comprised of the area's one stop partners, which have been held typically at least quarterly since 2003. This include representatives from GDOL including those with oversight of unemployment insurance programs, DFCS, Vocational Rehabilitation, Athens Technical College providing information from the credit, adult education and economic development divisions, ACTION Inc, the CSBG organization, Athens Housing Authority and the WIA/WIOA Title 1. As a part of this effort, LWDA staff have access to staff operating the UI system on an accessible basis. There is a very open line of communication at multiple staff levels not just at the director levels. Presentations on services available both through the OneStop system and unemployment insurance programs are made at various times throughout the year.

Key components in strengthening the link between the one stop system and UI programs are driven by workforce development, GDOL Business Services unit and the Rapid Response team and Employ Georgia Career Explorer. GDOL Employment Services staff are currently cross trained in both employment services and unemployment services programs. This enables customers to receive seamless services will allows customers to return to employment as expediently as possible.

4. **Regional Service Delivery** – (Only applies to regions that encompass two or more local areas) Describe how the region will address the items listed below.

Single Area Region so this section does not apply to NEGA Area 9 plan.

- a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements (if applicable).
 - b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs (if applicable).
5. **Sector Strategy Development** – Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.
 - a. Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

Participants in initial sector strategy training:

- i. Carol Cofer – Workforce Development Director, NEGRC
- ii. Stephanie Benson – V.P for Adult Education, Athens Technical College
- iii. LeeRoy Martin – Training Manager, Caterpillar, Athens GA
- iv. Rosa Turner – Special Projects Coordinator, Goodwill Industries
- v. Lori Chafin – Career Center Manager, GA Dept. of Labor, Athens GA
- vi. Dixie Morris – Rehabilitation Unit Manager, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Athens GA
- vii. Lisa Ransom Gautreaux – Chief Executive Officer, Action Inc., Athens GA

***Update: October 2018, Convener:
Susan Boatwright – Special Projects Consultant***

- b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.
- i. Tony Thompson, initial convener, conducted one-on-one meetings with the individuals listed in the previous section in order to understand the types of services provided by their areas. These individuals are committed to providing their services in support of the sector strategy being developed and implemented in Region 5.
 - ii. Meetings will be scheduled with industry leaders in Region 5 to provide them with an understanding of sector strategy development opportunities and to foster their interest and program participation in strategy development.
 - iii. Periodic meetings are planned with an Industry Network which will serve as an advisory group for the sector. The purpose of the meetings will be to identify changes in the educational or preparation needs of job seekers, identify gaps in skill development resources in the region, and make recommendations and plans to address identified gaps in order to better serve the region's manufacturing needs.
 - iv. ***Update October 2018: Earlier this year:***
 - ***Multiple one-on-one interviews were conducted with leading representatives in manufacturing from all 12 counties.***
 - ***A request to participate in a survey to assess the availability of a workforce to fill high-demand job openings was shared with all Human Resources representatives who work for a leading manufacturer.***
 - ***Participating with the bi-monthly manufacturing executive roundtable and solicited their feedback.***
 - ***Convened an advisory group to make recommendations and provide insight regarding the information collected.***
- c. Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.

Research data reviewed included the following:

- i. Data provided by Examination Management Services, Inc. (EMSI) Q4 2015 Data Set
- ii. Current industry overview data provided by the Georgia Department of Economic Development
- iii. Georgia Area Labor Profile for 2015 - Region 5

The information was used to identify the percentages of persons in Region 5 employed in each job sector. The following three sectors were chosen for sector development. These areas represent almost 40 percent of all of the regional sector areas and should provide the most impact for the region.

1. **Manufacturing**: 25,159 persons employed or 13.3% of total employment
2. **Transportation**: 24,684 persons employed or 13.0% of total employment
3. **Health Care**: 19,795 persons employed or 10.4% of total employment

Manufacturing has been identified as the initial sector to be addressed by the LWDA in consultation with the above entities.

- d. Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:

Plans are to initially communicate, gather support, and involve the region's larger manufacturing employers.

Manufacturing Sector Strategy

- 1) Identify the primary manufacturers across all counties in Region 5
- 2) Communicate the purpose and benefits of sector development to the manufacturers
- 3) Engage manufacturers and gather their support
- 4) Establish an Industry Network to serve as an advisory group for Region 5 sector development
- 5) Jointly identify current gaps in the skills and education of job seekers who are applying for manufacturing jobs in Region 5
- 6) Utilize current educational resources and/or develop programs as needed to fill education and skill gaps

- i. Participating employers;

The following companies have been identified as potential manufacturing partners in the NEGRC service area. They represent a wide range of manufactured products. NEGRC will communicate with these companies during August 2016 to gain their interest and commitment to participating in the **Manufacturing Sector** strategy development and resulting educational activities.

County	Company	City
Barrow	Chateau Elan	Braselton
Barrow	Manville Johns Corp	Winder
Clarke	Baldor Electric Co.	Athens
Clarke	Bensons	Bogart
Clarke	Burton & Burton	Bogart
Clarke	Carrier Transicold	Athens
Clarke	Caterpillar	Bogart
Clarke	CertainTeed	Athens
Clarke	Evergreen Packaging	Athens
Clarke	Illinois ToolWorks	Bogart
Clarke	Merial Limited	Athens
Clarke	Power Partners	Athens
Elbert	Pilgrim's Pride	Elberton
Greene	Standridge Color Corp.	Greensboro
Jackson	Gruma Corporation	Pendergrass
Jackson	Shiloh Industries	Pendergrass
Jackson	TD Automotive 1000	Pendergrass
Jasper	Nicolon Corp	Pendergrass

County	Company	City
Jasper	Royal TenCate	Pendergrass
Morgan	Flambeau Inc.	Madison
Morgan	Georgia Pacific LLC	Madison
Newton	Clarion Metals Corp.	Covington
Newton	CR Bard	Covington
Newton	Fibervisions Mfg. Corp.	Covington
Newton	Guardian Automotive	Covington
Newton	Nisshinbo	Covington
Newton	Pactikv LLC.	Covington
Newton	SGD North America	Covington
Newton	SKC Inc. 1000	Covington
Newton	SPG International	Covington
Walton	Elite Storage Solutions	Monroe
Walton	Hitachi	Monroe
Walton	Solo Cup	Social Circle
Walton	Standridge Color Corp	Social Circle
Walton	Tomco2 Systems	Loganville

ii. Target occupations;

Region 5 manufacturing companies cover a broad spectrum of industry types. The following is a listing of the major manufacturing occupations represented by the companies identified as potential partners.

- Transportation equipment and Machinery manufacturing
- Electrical equipment manufacturing
- Metal Fabrication
- Chemical manufacturing
- Paper Products manufacturing
- Food manufacturing

iii. Training programs

The Region’s Industry Network will be established and meet periodically with the focus of determining industry needs. New and/or enhanced training programs that are needed to fill current gaps will be determined by the Industry Network and participating employers. Needed programs will be prioritized and developed utilizing available educational resources.

Some of the training programs currently available in Region 5 which are supportive of the **Manufacturing Sector** include:

- GED Preparation
- Technical College Certification Programs
 - Machine Tool/CNC Machinist
 - Welding
 - Electrical
 - Electronics
- Workforce Fundamentals Program - NEGRC

- “Bridge to Success” – Athens Technical College
- Accelerating Opportunity Program – Athens Technical College
 - iv. Target Populations.
Adult & Dislocated Workers
Out of School Youth (16-24)

e. Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

Region 5 plans to develop and support initial strategies in the area of **Manufacturing**. Analysis of data shows that the two subsequent areas that should be pursued are the **Transportation/Logistics** and **Health Care** sectors. The development of these sectors will follow a plan similar to what has been outlined for **Manufacturing**.

Update October 2018: Earlier this year:

- ***Multiple one-on-one interviews were conducted with leading representatives in manufacturing from all 12 counties.***
- ***A request to participate in a survey to assess the availability of a workforce to fill high-demand job openings was shared with all Human Resources representatives who work for a leading manufacturer.***
- ***Participating with the bi-monthly manufacturing executive roundtable and solicited their feedback.***
- ***Convened an advisory group to make recommendations and provide insight regarding the information collected.***

6. **Description of the One-Stop Delivery System** – Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

- a. Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

The LWDA is continuously reviewing placement outcomes of the training providers. If a provider wishes to begin training new trainees, they must have at least a 50% placement rate of previous trainees placed before new trainees may begin. This ensures that immediate placement outcomes are being reviewed rather than waiting until the subsequent eligibility process takes place at the state level on an annual basis.

- b. Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

The local area utilizes the 2 computer mobile units to provide access where needed or appropriate. In most instances, arrangements are made with technical

colleges (Elbert, Barrow, Jackson, Morgan) for access to space so that access to services is available. Additionally, customers have access in the Covington DOL Career Center, Greene County Athens Technical College satellite campus. With this access, it limits a customer's drive to a maximum drive of approximately 25 miles. This availability to access to the one-stop system, is actually greater than the access to actual training available in the region through providers on the ETPL.

- c. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The regional office of the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency is located in the local area's comprehensive one-stop facility located in Athens Ga. This facility meets all of the physical accessibility requirements of Section 188. Additionally, the local area is one of two pilots in the USDOL Disability Employment Initiative Grant. Participation in this grant enhances the local area's access to persons with disabilities as well as strengthens the already existing relationship between the local area staff and vocational rehabilitation staff. The local area has completed the Section 188 self-assessment tool to identify and address any items which would present a barrier to persons with disabilities.

- d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

- Georgia Department of Labor Athens Career Center is the host physical location of the one stop. They provide access to all the Wagner Peyser funded services both job seeker and employer, all UI services, labor market information, TOPPSTEP (ex-offender services) and veterans services. They have approximately 15 staff located in the facility. As persons enter the one-stop facility Wagner Peyser staff refer customers to WIOA funded training services if such referral is deemed appropriate.
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency- The one stop center is the physical location of the 15 vocational rehabilitation staff assigned to the Northeast Georgia service area. These staff provide access to all services available to persons with disabilities who are seeking employment.
- Job Corps Recruitment staff are located at the one-stop full-time.
- WIOA Title I-Adult and Dislocated Worker Services- Staff are at the comprehensive one-stop on a scheduled basis. There are 2-4 staff there on a rotating basis utilizing space designated for them.
- CSBG, ACTION, Inc. is not physically located at the one-stop. Access is available through electronic and telephonic means.

- Title V Senior Adult is linked in two ways. There is an Experience Works staff person housed at the one-stop who provides information to senior adults on services available. The local area also has an MOU with the Title V provider for the region Athens Community Council on Aging which provides for sharing of information and cross referral.
 - HUD Employment and Training Program Provider-Athens Housing Authority. Access to services provided through the Athens Housing Authority are provided through electronic and telephonic means. The Director of Housing Authority's Resident Services is an ex-officio member of the Workforce Development Board and a member of the WDB's Youth Committee.
 - Athens Technical College-Access to information on all training programs is provided via telephonic and electronic means. This involves all aspects of programming at the technical college, credit, non-credit and GED.
- e. Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.

The current operator is a consortium comprised of Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Georgia Department of Family and Children Services Region V, Athens Technical College and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission in its role as the WIA/WIOA Title I Grant Recipient. The physical operator is the Georgia Department of Labor Athens Career Center. This location is large and updated, several meeting rooms of varying sizes, sufficient parking, on the bus line.

Based on discussions which took place in accordance with guidance provided by GDEcD WFD, 4 of the current members of the consortium indicated that they were not intending to bid seeking designation as the area's one stop operator. The Georgia Department of Labor indicated that it was considering bidding to serve as the one-stop operator.

The planning for the competitive bid for the one-stop operator will begin in October-November with RFP development. This process will be conducted utilizing the process and information provided by GDEcD WFD. Plans are to issue an RPF by January 2017, with review and selection completed by May 2017.

Through the above competitive procurement for one-stop operator, the Georgia Department of Labor was selected to serve as the One-Stop Operator. Activities are underway with the one-stop partners to identify what specific activities related to one-stop partner staff development and education are needed.

7. **Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts** – Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.

The local area has comprehensive Procurement Policies which have been reviewed as part of the annual Program Review Process. A summarization of the process is that the Board receives recommendations from the appropriate committee regarding the issuance of an RFP in keeping with the program design strategy. Responses to proposals are reviewed by staff and the appropriate WDB committee. The WDB Committee completes the proposal rating sheets and presents recommendations to the full youth Committee for funding consideration. The Youth Committee's recommendations are presented to the WDB for final funding consideration and action.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) package is the competitive bid solicitation document and it is written by the staff and approved for distribution by for Board. While providing fair and open competition, the process will facilitate open and objective actions by all persons in the procurement process and prohibit any arbitrary action in the procurement process. Organizational conflicts of interest on the part of WIOA staff and WDB members in the evaluation of bids and selection of contracts is prohibited. Any potential conflict on the part of a board member is to be identified in the meeting where such discussion will take place. The affected board member will not participate in any discussion or vote. This action will be noted in the Board minutes.

To ensure the RFP package provides the necessary information for proposers to develop a responsive proposal and become knowledgeable of bid requirements, the following information is included in the RFP package:

1. Submission requirements including due date and number of copies to be mailed to Northeast Georgia Regional Commission.
2. A general description of the subgrant program including applicable federal and state laws and regulations with which proposers must comply. The RFP must reference Public Law 105-22, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as amended; USDOL Regulations 20 CFR Part 652 and Parts 660-671, 20 CFR Part 37, OMB Circulars A-87, A-21, A-102, A-11.
3. The population to be served, numbers to be served, type of training or service, funding parameters, performance goals, method of payment and invoicing, coordination requirements, review criteria used to determine responsiveness and competitiveness, the appeal process, equal opportunity provisions, monitoring and reporting requirements, and all standard federal state and local assurances.

The Staff publicizes and advertises the availability of RFPs at least six weeks prior to the proposal due date. The staff maintains a list of organizations, agencies and individuals who have expressed an interest in providing services in Region

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After RFP's are issued a bidder's conference will be held. When proposals are received, they must be logged in and the proposer must be given a receipt. WIOA Staff will review all proposals for responsiveness. A Review Committee will be chosen at the discretion of the WIOA Director and/or Board Chair. Review criteria will be evaluated. Other criteria may be established specific to the type of proposal requested. The WDB will vote on proposals and approve proposals for funding and the contingency list pending contract negotiation.

A failed procurement occurs when no proposal, or only one proposal is received. Staff, once authorized by the WDB to do so, may begin contract negotiations with the proposer. Contracts are not considered fully executed until all parties have signed the contract.

The procurement process in compliance with the requirements set forth in 2 C.F.R. 200.

8. **EEO and Grievance Procedures** – Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

GENERAL POLICY

Individuals applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program paid for by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) and/or the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board (NEGWIB) will be treated fairly. If any individual, group, or organization has a complaint, the problem should first be discussed informally between those involved before a grievance is filed. Grievances/complaints should be filed in accordance with the written procedures established by the Workforce Development Division of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission. **If you believe you have been harmed by the violation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, you have the right to file a grievance.**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

NEGRC adheres to the following United States law: "No individual shall be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any such program because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation, belief or citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States." References include: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 P. L. 113-128; USDOL Regulations Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014; Final rule (29 CFR Part 38.36); USDOL, Employment and Training Division, Workforce Innovation and opportunity Act; Final Rules (20CFR Part 652 et al.).

COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

The NEGRC is prohibited from, and does not engage in, discriminating against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sex, disability, political affiliation, or belief and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity.

The complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process by an attorney or other representative. If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WOIA funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with the **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer, Workforce Development Division, 305 Research Drive, Athens, Ga. 30605, (706) 369-5703, TDD: 1-800-255-0056. OR**

Complaints may also be filed with the **David Dietrichs, Deputy Counsel, Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), Workforce Division, 75 Fifth Street, NW, Suite 845, Atlanta, GA 30308, 404-962-4140, TDD: 1-800-255-0056. OR**

A complaint may be filed directly with the **Director, Civil Rights Center (DCR) U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW. Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210.** Furthermore, the USDOL Civil Rights Center provides a complaint form which should be utilized, if sending a discrimination-based complaint, and can be found at this website: <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/exchange-enforc-complaints.htm>.

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If the complainant chooses to file the discrimination complaint with NEGRC or GDEcD, then the NEGRC or GDEcD has 90 days to resolve the complaint and issue a written Notice of Final Action. Options for resolving the complaint must include alternative dispute resolution, at the complainant's choice. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of his/her complaint at NEGRC or the State level, the complainant may file a new complaint with the Civil Rights Center (CRC) within 30 days on which the complainant receives the Notice of Final Action. If GDEcD or NEGRC fail to issue the Notice within 90 days of the date on which the complaint was filed, the complainant may file a new complaint with NEGRC within 30 days of the expiration of the 90-day period. NEGRC will offer full cooperation with any local, state or federal investigation in accordance with the aforementioned proceedings, or with any criminal investigation.

COMPLAINTS OF FRAUD, ABUSE OR OTHER ALLEGED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: In cases of suspected fraud, abuse or other alleged criminal activity, you should direct your concerns to the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, at 1-866-435-7644. There is no charge for this call.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST PUBLIC SCHOOLS: If the complaint is not resolved and it involves public schools of the State of Georgia, the grievance procedure will comply with both WIOA and OCGA 20-2-1160.

ALL OTHER COMPLAINTS (VIOLATIONS OF THE ACT OR REGULATIONS): All other complaints must be filed within twelve (12) months after the act in question by submitting a written request for a hearing to: Work Force Development Division, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30606, ATTN: WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer.

Complaints filed with NEGRC must contain the following:

1. The full name, telephone number (if any), and address of the person making the complaint
2. The full name and address of the person or organization against whom the complaint is made
3. A clear but brief statement of the facts including the date(s) that the alleged violation occurred
4. Relief requested
5. Complainant's signature and date.

A complaint will be considered to have been filed when NEGRC receives from the complainant a written statement, including information specified above which contains sufficient facts and arguments to evaluate the complaint.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the NEGRC WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer will initiate efforts with the complainant and others involved to bringing resolution as soon as possible. This will include a meeting of all parties with the hope of reaching a mutually satisfactory resolution. If the complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant within thirty (30) days, the NEGRC WIAO Equal Opportunity Officer will arrange appointment of a hearing officer to conduct a hearing for settlement of the complaint to be held within 60 days of grievance filing.

In the event NEGRC arranges a hearing for settlement of the complaint, the complainant(s) will be given a written notice of the date, hour, place of the hearing, a statement of the authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held, a reference to the particular section of the Act, regulations, subgrant or other contract under the act involved, a notice to all parties of the specific charges involved, a statement of the right of both parties to be represented by legal counsel, an indication of the right of each party to present evidence both written and through witness and a statement of the right of each party to cross-examination. Hearing officers who are independent of the NEGRC and who have been approved by all concerned parties will be responsible for conducting the hearing.

Hearings on any grievance/complaint filed shall be conducted within thirty (30) days of failed informal resolution. Written decisions shall be rendered not later than sixty (60) days after the filing. Attempts at informal resolution may proceed during the 30-day period between the filing and hearing of the grievance/complaint and prior to the rendering of a decision on the grievance/complaint.

If the complainant(s) does not receive a written decision from the Hearing Officer within sixty (60) days of the filing of the grievance/complaint, or receives a decision unsatisfactory to the complainant(s), the complainant(s) then has/have a right to request a review by the state using the WIOA complaint information Form found at <http://www.georgia.org/competitive-advantage/workforce-division/technical-assistant/>.

David Dietrichs, Deputy Counsel
Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division
75 Fifth Street, NW Suite 845
Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: 404-962-4005
Fax: 404-876-1181

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The Deputy Commissioner shall act as the Governor's authorized representative. Either an information resolution or a hearing will take place within 60 calendar days of the filing. If the State does not respond within 60 days, or either party wants to appeal the decision, WIOA allows for a formal appeal to be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested to **Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210. Attention: ASET – (202) 693-3015.** A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the appropriate ETA Regional Administrator and the opposing party.

The request for review shall be filed within ten (10) days of receipt of the adverse decision or fifteen (15) days from the date on which the complainant(s) shall have received a decision. The Governor will conduct a review of the grievance and issue a written decision within thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the review request. The decision rendered by the Governor will be final.

Federal appeals must be made within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the local or State decision. Department of Labor will make a final decision no later than 120 days after receiving a formal appeal. Department of Labor will only investigate grievances and complaints arising through the established procedures. WIOA does not allow for federal intervention until and unless the proper, formal procedure has been followed.

No applicant, participant, employee, service provider or training provider will be intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against because they have made a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

The following version reflects the revised version:

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT SERVICES
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

GENERAL POLICY

Individuals applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program paid for by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) and/or the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board (NEGWIB) will be treated fairly and equally. If any individual, group, or organization has a complaint, the problem should first be discussed informally between those involved before a grievance is filed. Grievances/complaints should be filed in accordance with the written procedures established by the Workforce Development Division of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission. If you believe you have been harmed by a violation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or regulations of this program, you have the right to file a grievance/complaint as well as request information and assistance with filing a complaint.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

NEGRC adheres to the following United States law: "No individual shall be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any such program because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, gender identify), national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. References include WIOA Title 1, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 or Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and 29 CFR 38.25.

COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

The NEGRC is prohibited from, and does not engage in, discriminating against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. The complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process by an attorney or other representative.

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer, Rhonda Keeter, Workforce Development Division, 305 Research Drive, Athens, Ga. 30605, (706) 369-5703, TDD: 1-800-255-0056. OR

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Complaints may also be filed with the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division, David Dietrichs, WIOA Title I Equal Opportunity Officer, 75 Fifth Street, NW, Suite 845, Atlanta, GA 30308, 404-962-4140, TDD: 1-800-255-0056. OR

A complaint may be filed directly with the Director, Civil Rights Center (DCR) U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW. Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210. Furthermore, the USDOL Civil Rights Center provides a complaint form which should be utilized, if sending a discrimination-based complaint, and can be found at this website: <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/exchange-enforc-complaints.htm>.

If the complainant chooses to file the discrimination complaint with Northeast Regional Commission or Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division, (GDEcD,WD) then GDEcD,WD, or the NEGRC has 90 days to resolve the complaint and issue a written Notice of Final Action. Options for resolving the complaint must include alternative dispute resolution, at the complainant's election.

If the complaint is dissatisfied with the resolution of his/her complaint at NEGRC or the State level, the complainant may file a new complaint with the Civil Rights Center (CRC) within 30 days on which the complainant receives the Notice of Final Action.

If GDEcD,WD or NEGRC fails to issue the Notice within 90 days of the date on which the complaint was filed, the complainant may file a new complaint with CRC within 30 days of the expiration of the 90-day period (in other words, within 120 days of the date on which the original complaint was filed). NEGRC will offer full cooperation with any local, state, or federal investigation in accordance with the aforementioned proceedings, or with any criminal investigation.

COMPLAINTS OF FRAUD, ABUSE OR OTHER ALLEGED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

In cases of suspected fraud, abuse or other alleged criminal activity, you should direct your concerns to the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, at 1-866-435-7644. There is no charge for this call.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST PUBLIC SCHOOLS

If the complaint is not resolved informally and it involves public schools of the State of Georgia, the grievance procedure will comply with both WIOA and OCGA 20-2-1160.

ALL OTHER COMPLAINTS (VIOLATIONS OF THE ACT OR REGULATIONS):

All other complaints must be filed within one-hundred eighty (180) days after the act in question by first submitting a written request for a resolution to:

WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer Rhonda Keeter
Workforce Division
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
305 Research Drive
Athens, GA 30606

Complaints filed with NEGRC must contain the following:

1. The full name, telephone number, email (if any), and address of the person making the complaint.
2. The full name, address and email of the person or organization against whom the complaint is made.
3. A clear but brief statement of the facts including the date(s) that the alleged violation occurred, including the identification of all relevant parties.
4. Relief requested.
5. Complainant's signature and date.

A complaint will be considered to have been filed when NEGRC receives from the complainant a written statement, including information specified above which contains sufficient facts and arguments to evaluate the complaint.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the NEGRC WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer will initiate efforts with the complainant and others involved to bring resolution as soon as possible. This will include a meeting of all parties with the hope of reaching a mutually satisfactory resolution. If the complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant within thirty (30) days, the NEGRC WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer will arrange appointment of a hearing officer to conduct a hearing for settlement of the complaint to be held within 60 days of grievance filing. Every complaint shall have the opportunity to request a hearing in writing for any complaint that is filed.

In the event NEGRC arranges a hearing for settlement of the complaint, the complainant(s) will be given a written notice of the date, hour, place of the hearing, a statement of the authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held, a reference to the particular section of the Act, regulations, subgrant or other contract under the act involved, a notice to all parties of the specific charges involved, a statement of the right of both parties to be represented by legal

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counsel, an indication of the right of each party to present evidence both written and through witness and a statement of the right of each party to cross-examination. NEGRC will select an impartial hearing officer.

Hearings on any grievance/complaint filed shall be conducted within thirty (30) days of failed informal resolution or within 60 days of the date the complaint was filed. Written decisions shall be rendered not later than sixty (60) days after the filing.

If the complainant(s) does not receive a written decision from the Hearing Officer within sixty (60) days of the filing of the grievance/complaint, or receives a decision unsatisfactory to the complainant(s), the complainant(s) then has/have a right to request a review by the state using the WIOA complaint information Form found at <http://www.georgia.org/competitive-advantage/workforce-division/technical-assistant/>.

**David Dietrichs, Deputy Counsel
Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division
75 Fifth Street, NW Suite 845
Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: 404-962-4005
Fax: 404-876-1181**

The Deputy Counsel shall act as the Governor's authorized representative. Once WFD has received the Complaint form and the local resolution, WFD shall issue its own resolution on the issue being appealed within sixty (60) days. If the state does not respond within 60 days, or either party wants to appeal the decision, WIOA allows for a formal appeal by certified mail, return receipt requested to Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210. Attention: ASET – (202) 693-3015. A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the appropriate ETA Regional Administrator and the opposing party. For complaints made against WFD, complainant may request a hearing in writing within 60 days of the date complaint was filed.

Federal appeals must be made within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the local or State decision. DOL will make a final decision no later than 120 days after receiving a formal appeal. DOL will only investigate grievances and complaints arising through the established procedures. WIOA does not allow for federal intervention until and unless the proper, formal procedure has been followed. No applicant, participant, employee, service provider or training provider will be intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against because they have made a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

October 2018 The following version reflects the revised version:

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
OFFICE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (WIOA)**

Effective: November 2017
Revised: September 2018

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Types of complaints:

1. A Complaint that involves suspected fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, or other wrongdoing, in a WIOA-funded program.
2. A General Complaint alleging a programmatic violation of WIOA.
3. A Complaint which alleges discrimination.

A General Complaint (#2) must first be filed at the local level using local Complaint procedures. However, Complaints alleging fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, other wrongdoing (#1) or discrimination (#3), MAY BE, but are not required to be, immediately filed with the appropriate Federal Agencies.

If you believe you have been harmed by a violation of any policies or regulations surrounding the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program, you have the right to file a complaint and request a hearing. Complaints should be filed in accordance with the following procedures established by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Workforce Development Area (Local Area).

1. **A Complaint that involves suspected fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, or other wrongdoing, in a WIOA-funded program may be filed first locally or by immediately contacting one of the following agencies:**

TCSG-WFD	Georgia OIG	USDOL OIG
Technical College System of Georgia,	Georgia Office of Inspector General	United States Department of Labor,

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Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Team 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, GA 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371 wioacompliance@tcsgeorgia.gov	2 MLK Jr. Drive, SW 1102 West Tower Atlanta, GA 30334 Phone: 866-435-7644 Form: http://oig.georgia.gov/file-complaint	Office of Inspector General Attn: Hotline, Office of Inspector General US Department of Labor 200 Constitution Ave, NW Room S-5506 Washington, DC 20210 Phone: 202-693-6999 Form: http://www.oig.dol.gov/hotlinecontact.htm
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2. A General Complaint alleging a programmatic violation of WIOA.

Any entity within the Georgia Workforce System, including but not limited to, customers, participants, recipients, subrecipients, contactors and service providers may file a complaint. Any complainant has the right to receive technical assistance in filing such complaint. General Complaints must be filed within one hundred twenty (120) days from the date of the action which gave rise to the complaint. The complainant may file a complaint using the Local Area's complaint form, available upon request. The complainant also has the right to make a written request for a hearing with such hearing occurring within sixty (60) days of the filing of the Complaint. The Local Area shall issue a written resolution for each Complaint received no later than sixty (60) days from the date the complaint is filed. As to General Complaints, the complainant must first file at the Local Area Level. If the Local Area does not respond within the 60 days, the Complainant may file a complaint with WFD. If the Complainant is not satisfied with the Local Area resolution an appeal may be filed with WFD within sixty (60) days of the Local Area's resolution. WFD shall not have jurisdiction over General Complaints until the Local Area has issued a written resolution on the Complaint or the Local Area has not responded within the sixty (60) day timeframe. Any resolution reached by WFD may be appealed to the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration within sixty (60) from the receipt of the written resolution from WFD. A Complainant may withdraw the Complaint at any time prior to resolution.

If a written request of a hearing is submitted as indicated above, the complainant(s) will be given a written notice of the hearing within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Complainant's written request. The notice will include:

- a) The date of the notice.
- b) The name of the Complainant and the name of the Respondent.
- c) A statement that the Complainant may be represented by legal counsel.
- d) The date, time, and place of the hearing along with the name of the hearing officer.
- e) A statement of the alleged violation.
- f) A copy of any policies or procedures for the hearing or the identification of where such policies can be found.
- g) The name, address, and phone number of the contact person issuing the notice.

Local Area	TCSG-WFD	USDOL
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Workforce Division (WIOA) EO Officer: Rhonda Keeter 305 Research Drive Athens, GA 30606 Phone: 706-369-5703	Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Team 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, GA 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371	United States Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave, NW Room N-4123 Washington, DC 20210 Phone: 866-487-2365

3) A Complaint alleging discrimination

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

Equal Opportunity Is the Law

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas: Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity. Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that

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communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities.

What To Do If You Believe You Have Experienced Discrimination

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either:

- a) The recipient's Equal Opportunity Officer (or the person whom the recipient has designated for this purpose); or
- b) The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210 or electronically as directed on the CRC Web site at www.dol.gov/crc.
- c) If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).

If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you may file a complaint with CRC before receiving that Notice. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient).

If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

In providing any aid, benefit, service, or training under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, a recipient must not directly or through contractual, licensing, or other arrangements, discriminate on the basis of citizenship status. Individuals protected under this section include citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, and other immigrants authorized by the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary's designee to work in the United States. Citizenship discrimination occurs when a recipient maintains and enforces policies and procedures that have the purpose or effect of discriminating against individual beneficiaries, applicants, and participants, on the basis of their status as citizens or nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, or other immigrants authorized by the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary's designee to work in the United States.

Any customer, applicant, employee or interested party has the right to file a Complaint of discrimination. All discrimination based Complaints and ADR must be filed within one hundred and eighty days (180) of the alleged discrimination. The Complainant may submit their discrimination Complaint to either the Local Area, WFD or the U.S. DOL, Civil Rights Center (CRC). If the Complainant chooses to file their complaint with the Local Area or WFD, a Notice of Final action response shall be issued within ninety (90) days of the Complaint's filing. Options for filing the Complaint shall include alternative dispute resolution. The Complainant has the right to be represented in the Complaint by an attorney or other representative.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):

- a) The procedures that a recipient adopts and publishes for processing complaints permitted under this part and WIOA Section 188 must state that the recipient will issue a written Notice of Final Action on complaints within 90 days of the date on which the complaint is filed.
- b) At a minimum, the procedures must include the following elements:
 1. Initial, written notice to the complainant that contains the following information:
 - i. An acknowledgment that the recipient has received the complaint; and
 - ii. Notice that the complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process;
 - iii. Notice of rights contained in §38.35; and
 - iv. Notice that the complainant has the right to request and receive, at no cost, auxiliary aids and services, language assistance services, and that this notice will be translated into the non-English languages as required in §§38.4(h) and (i), 38.34, and 38.36.
 2. A written statement of the issue(s), provided to the complainant, that includes the following information:
 - i. A list of the issues raised in the complaint; and
 - ii. For each such issue, a statement whether the recipient will accept the issue for investigation or reject the issue, and the reasons for each rejection.
 3. A period for fact-finding or investigation of the circumstances underlying the complaint.
 4. A period during which the recipient attempts to resolve the complaint. The methods available to resolve the complaint must include alternative dispute resolution (ADR), as described in paragraph (c) of this section.
 5. A written Notice of Final Action, provided to the complainant within 90 days of the date on which the complaint was filed, that contains the following information:
 - i. For each issue raised in the complaint, a statement of either:
 - The recipient's decision on the issue and an explanation of the reasons underlying the decision; or
 - A description of the way the parties resolved the issue; and
 - ii. Notice that the complainant has a right to file a complaint with CRC within 30 days of the date on which the Notice of Final Action is received if the complainant is dissatisfied with the recipient's final action on the complaint.

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- c) The procedures the recipient adopts must provide for alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The recipient's ADR procedures must provide that:
 - 1) The complainant may attempt ADR at any time after the complainant has filed a written complaint with the recipient, but before a Notice of Final Action has been issued.
- 2) The choice whether to use ADR or the customary process rests with the complainant.
- 3) A party to any agreement reached under ADR may notify the Director in the event the agreement is breached. In such circumstances, the following rules will apply:
 - i. The non-breaching party may notify with the Director within 30 days of the date on which the non-breaching party learns of the alleged breach; and
 - ii. The Director must evaluate the circumstances to determine whether the agreement has been breached. If the Director determines that the agreement has been breached, the complaint will be reinstated and processed in accordance with the recipient's procedures.
- 4) If the parties do not reach an agreement under ADR, the complainant may file a complaint with the Director as described in §§38.69 through 38.71.

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of his/her Complaint by the Local Area or WFD, the Complainant may file a new Complaint with the CRC within thirty (30) days of the date on which the Complainant receive the Notice of Final Action. If the Local Area or WFD does not respond within the 90 days, the Complainant may file a new Complaint with the CRC within thirty (30) days from receiving the Notice of Final Action or one hundred and twenty days (120) from the date on which the original Complaint was filed.

Local Area	TSCG-WFD	USDOL OIG
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Workforce Division (WIOA) EO Officer: Rhonda Keeter 305 Research Drive Athens, GA 30606 Phone: 706-369-5703 rkeeter@negrc.org	Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Team 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, GA 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371 wioacompliance@tcsq.edu	United States Department of Labor, Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC) 200 Constitution Ave, NW Room N-4123 Washington, DC 20210 Form: http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc

All complaints filed with the Local Area must contain the following:

- a) The full name, telephone number (if any), address of the person making the complaint.
- b) The full name and address of the person or organization against whom the complaint is made.
- c) A brief, clear statement of the facts including the date(s) that the alleged violation occurred.
- d) May include attached documents.
- e) The relief requested including whether or not a formal hearing is requested (or the complainant's representative)
- f) A SIGNED written statement that the information included in the Complaint is true and correct.

A Complaint Form will be provided to the Complainant upon request

A Complaint may be amended to correct any technical deficiency at any time up until the date of the resolution OR the date of a hearing, if a hearing is requested. In the event the Complaint does not contain enough information to enable a resolution, the Local Area shall make reasonable efforts to contact the Complainant to gather additional, necessary information. In the event the Local Area lacks jurisdiction; the Local Area shall issue a written notice within 5 business days to the Complainant informing him/her of the lack of jurisdiction.

The Complaint Processing Procedures are as follows:

- 1) Initial, written notice to the complainant;
- 2) A written statement of the issue(s), provided by the complainant;
- 3) A period of fact-finding or investigation of the circumstances underlying the complaint;
- 4) A period during which recipient attempts to resolve the complaint, with an option of ADR; and
- 5) A written Notice of Final Action, provided to the complainant within ninety (90) days of the date on which the complaint was filed.

Complaints Against Public Schools

If the complaint is not resolved informally and it involves public schools of the State of Georgia, the grievance procedure will comply with both WIOA and OCGA 20-2-1160.

Local Boards and Plan Development:

1. **Local Boards** – Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.

- a. Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g))

Private sector member nominations are solicited from the general purpose business organization in the location that will be represented. These nominations are forwarded to the Local Elected Official representing that jurisdiction for concurrence. Upon concurrence, the nomination is forwarded to the CLEO for consideration for appointment to the Board. Nominations were solicited for organized labor representatives with representatives in the region. Nominations received were forwarded to the CLEO for consideration for appointment to the Board. The local area had 2 representatives who also operated apprenticeship programs.

Where there is more than one local area provider of adult education and literacy activities under title II, the provider which serves four or more counties of the 12-county service area will be the representative on the WDB. This representative will consult with the other providers in the region at least 2 times per year to bring issues and concerns to the WDB. This nomination will be concurred by the CLEO.

- b. Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.

The local area has an orientation power point that it provides to new members. Additionally, typically every other year, there is a board retreat where additional information is shared with Board members.

- c. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).

The mission of the LWDB is to provide services and resources to new and existing businesses to supply a globally competitive and sustainable workforce. This will be accomplished by addressing the staffing and training needs of businesses and individuals by partnering with educational systems, economic development and other agencies. These services and resources will be provided to the region's businesses and individuals in an effective and efficient manner through a one-stop delivery system in the 12 county area.

As mentioned in other sections of this plan, the local area has implemented Workplace Fundamentals (WPF) in response to concerns raised by both employers and economic development professionals. This 5-6 week 5 day per week training program, provides instruction in soft skills as well as related job specific skills in the manufacturing sector. Depending the needs of the specific

employer(s), the course can be tailored to meet the evolving needs of those employers. This course is offered through the ITA ETPL system which provides broad access both to training providers and locations which meets the needs both the job seekers and the businesses.

In addition to WPF, the local area also utilizes its computerized mobile learning units to assist employers in their hiring needs both by participating in job/career fairs as well as utilizing the units for mobile instruction as requests are identified.

The local area has a relationship with the Georgia Department of Labor's Regional Coordinator and that position is invited to participate in the local area's MEGA meetings which take place quarterly. The local area, through its MEGA meeting, provides interaction and a two way interaction with the Georgia Department of Labor's Business Services Unit facilitating the flow of employer needs both ways. The local area director is an associate member of the Joint Development Authority of Northeast Georgia as is the GDEcD's Regional Coordinator and workforce development will be coordinated via that position as well.

d. Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.

The board meets 5-6 times per year, January, March, May, August, October. Information regarding the meeting notices, minutes of the meeting, other training opportunities (i.e. SETA or NAWB) are communicated either at a board meeting or through electronic method. Board members receive the monthly NEGRC newsletter which provides information on all programs of the NEGRC including workforce development activities. Board members also are afforded an opportunity as a part of the Board meeting to share information of workforce development related activities in their community.

2. **Local Board Committees** – Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

Executive Committee- Acts on behalf of the board if action is needed between board meetings or if a quorum is not present at the WDB meeting. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and Chair of the Youth Committee comprise the Executive Committee.

Youth Committee-Provides input to the WDB regarding youth programming and program design, youth RPF and youth funding recommendations. The Youth Committee is comprised of 2 members of the WDB, and representatives from youth serving entities/organizations including School District, Juvenile Justice, Boys and Girls Club, vocational rehabilitation.

AdHoc Committees-Established by the Chair as Needed.

3. **Plan Development** – Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a

30 day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representative of education and input into the development of the local plan.

The transition to WIOA and its associated unified plan development was discussed at the MEGA meetings throughout 2015 and 2016. Core partners and other one stop partners were a part of these briefings and discussions. The plan format was distributed to the core partners in April 2016 upon receipt by the LWDA from GDEcD WFD. Core partners met in June 2016 to review the plan format and determine who would write which sections. The local workforce board was briefed beginning at meetings in 2015 and continued in 2016 on the transition as well as the requirements for the development of a unified plan of the core partners. The plan format was distributed to the WDB at its August meeting.

The plan was posted on the NEGRC website 30 days prior to submission to GDEcD WFD as well as a public notice being posted in the legal organ of Athens-Clarke County notifying the public of the plan being posted on the website as well as its availability for review during regular office hours during the 30 day comment period.

Service Delivery and Training:

1. **Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals** – Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry-recognized.

The local area has been working with the core programs extensively for over 20 years. This has been reinforced by the local area's MEGA meetings, of the one-stop partners including the core programs of Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education with WIOA Title I (adult, youth and dislocated worker), which have been taking place in an official capacity since 2003. The local area has a history of working with persons with barriers and co-enrolling persons. The local area's practice of working with the core programs of Adult Education, Department of Labor and Vocational Rehabilitation has resulted in the local area serving through WIA/WIOA funding approximately 7% persons with disabilities, 7% offenders and 7% veterans. The local area is a pilot for the USDOL Disability Employment Initiative grant serving persons with disabilities. It is anticipated that participation in this initiative will increase the number of persons with barriers/disabilities that are served as well as co-enrollment. At a minimum, it will ensure that persons will receive a more integrated and well-rounded array of services.

The local area instituted, as a part of its eligibility process, service to underemployed persons. The local area selected the 200% of the poverty guidelines as its income threshold.

The local area received a grant from GDEcD to provide services to Ex-Offenders/Returning Citizens. This grant is partnering with a local community based organization and the Athens Diversion Center and the Athens Day Reporting Center. Services provided will be assessment, case management, soft skills instruction, GED preparation, occupational skills training in targeted high demand occupations as well as job placement and follow-up.

October 2018

As a follow-up to the above grant, the local area released a Request for Proposal in the Spring of 2018 for services for 4 target groups: offenders/ex-offenders, TANF and SNAP recipients, older workers age 55 and older and veterans and their spouses. Three contractors were selected to deliver the services. It is anticipated that these contractors will provide wraparound services to the targeted groups servicing approximately 150 persons.

The area's mobile **computer** units have been used and will continue to be used in conjunction with the area's adult literacy providers to better prepare job seekers in need of adult literacy services to meet employer needs. The mobile units are also being used in conjunction with the Athens Regional Library system to enhance the digital literacy skills of persons in the region. As digital literacy has become a core skill in any occupation, this collaboration will enhance the marketability of these potential job seekers. Additionally, both digital literacy and adult literacy access is delivered through a collaboration with the Athens Diversion Center and the Athens Day Reporting Center. This collaboration will continue and expand. This collaboration will better prepare the ex-offender/returning citizens for job preparedness. ***The units are also being used in collaboration with 4-6 senior adult service centers in the area providing basic digital literacy to seniors in the area.***

One of the efforts that has been underway to increase the number of recognized credentials is to work with training providers to review their program design and build in incremental industry related credential attainment versus waiting until the attainment of the ultimate credential, i.e. diploma or associate degree. This effort will be continued and expanded. The local area will work with the core programs to increase the career pathway options and co-enrollments into occupational training programs that will meet the needs of the needs of area's employers.

Update October 2018: Two 50-foot mobile occupational skills training trailers were purchased for the purpose of expanding the training and manufacturing experience opportunities to local participants. One trailer includes an eight-bay welding mobile classroom, the other includes multiple stations designed to allow students to learn a variety of skills related to Industrial Mechanics. They include: electrical, hydraulic, and pneumatic mechanics training bays as well as programmable logic control (PLC) technology.

The trailers are available to the local technical colleges, industry and other entities who offer certified training to students interested in a career in manufacturing.



2. **Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers** – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The local area has provided an array of services for the adult and dislocated worker customers including:

- Basic Labor Market Information
- Information on types of training and availability of that training in the region or elsewhere.
- Admission Requirements for that training
- Referral to the specific training provider
- Intake, Assessment and Eligibility Determination for WIOA funded services
- Assistance with training primarily through the Individual Training Account (ITA)
- Referral to other services as needed

- Assistance with Support Services (Day Care and Transportation) while in training
- Assistance with Preparation for the Job Search by providing access to interviewing and resume preparation activities
- Follow-up assistance

The local area has ITA agreements with 9 technical colleges, 15 colleges and universities and 20 proprietary schools in an effort to maximize customer choice for the adult and dislocated worker. The local area continues to develop new agreements with qualified training providers who provide training in demand occupations in an effort to meet customer choice as well as employer need.

The local board and the core programs and one-stop partners in the local area continue to work towards the common goal of providing the most effective service delivery possible to the area's adult and dislocated worker population.

Adult and Dislocated Worker services are provided in, or through, the Athens Career Center (comprehensive One-Stop) in collaboration with the local workforce development staff and partners and include, but are not limited to, the following: job search and job placement assistance, testing, Rapid Response activities as requested by the local workforce area, filing of UI claims, service coordination, career guidance and counseling, referrals to partner agencies, various workshops (i.e., resume preparation, interviewing preparation, financial planning, and others), utilization of Employ Georgia, federal bonding, and Work Opportunity Tax Credits.

a. Career Services

There is no sequence requirement for these services. These services can be provided in any order to provide flexibility in targeting services to the needs of the customer.

Career services must be made available and may include from the following services:

- Determination of eligibility to receive assistance
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to the information and other services
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and support service needs
- Job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling
- Provision of employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas including job vacancy listings in such labor market areas, information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs, and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for such occupations
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services provided by programs and eligible providers of adult education, providers of post-secondary occupational training education activities and occupational training activities available to school dropouts under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act and providers of vocational rehabilitation program activities.

- Provision of information with respect to the Career Resource Center delivery system in the local area
- Provision of accurate information relating to the availability of supportive services, including child care and transportation, available in the local area, and referral to such services as appropriate
- Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA and are available in the local area.
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include interviewing, evaluating, diagnostic testing, and use of other assessment tools to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals
- Group workshops which may include development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality and attendance.
- Individual counseling and career planning
- Case management for participants seeking training services
- Financial literacy services

Career services may be provided in coordination with core partners or other agencies in the area, or through contracts with service providers, which may include contracts with public, private-for-profit and private-non-profit service providers approved by the Northeast Georgia WDB.

Training Services

Training Services may include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment
- Training programs operated by the private sector

Training services shall be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services.

Training services shall be provided to eligible adults and dislocated workers through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), through which a customer chooses among qualified training providers. The services will be provided in accordance with state and local procedures.

Qualification requirements include:

Through an interview, evaluation, assessment, or case management process, customers may be determined to be in need of training services and having the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services. However, provisions of WIOA funding for training shall be coordinated with other grant assistance for such services, including Federal Pell Grants, HOPE scholarships or for persons who require assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs.

The list of approved eligible training providers (EPL) is made available through via the Internet to individuals seeking training information with access from any computer. The EPL includes eligible program descriptions and information identifying training providers.

- 3. Description of Rapid Response Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The local area has designated Kim Meadows, Career Advisor Program Manager, to serve as the designated point of contact for Rapid Response activities. Ms. Meadows interacts with the designated representative from GDEcD WFD upon notification of an event. She coordinates activities with both the impacted employer/employees as well as the appropriate partner agencies including the Georgia Department of Labor as well as other appropriate partners. Activities include meeting with the employer to determine the scope of the event, providing the employer with the array of services available to impacted employees including filing for unemployment, working with GDOL to have job fair(s) for impacted employees, as well as retraining assistance available for impacted employees.

- 4. Description of Youth Services** – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

The local area has a long history in providing quality youth services. This is an array of in-school youth services with these being available in each of the 12 counties focusing on the 10 elements of WIA and now the 14 elements of WIOA. There is 1 competitively bid provider, ACTION, Inc. the area's CSBG provider, who delivers this throughout the 12 counties. At one time, this program served over 250 young people each year. However, due to the federal funding shift to at least 75% of youth funds being spent on out of school youth, these numbers have been reduced to 125-150 youth. Work-based learning in the form of post high school career interest summer work experience is an integral part of the in-school program. Outcomes from this activity have typically been an 80%-88% high school graduation rate.

The out-of-school youth served have historically been in 2 activities. The first is GED preparation for the high school dropout. Paxen, Inc. has served as the competitively bid provider for over 6 years and was the sole reason the local area has met and exceeded the Literacy/Numeracy Performance measure. With the transition to WIOA, there were 3 additional providers who responded to the most recently issued Request for Proposals and were selected for funding by the WDB. Athens Technical College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College and ACTION, Inc. providing service to Lanier Technical College students as well as Foothills Charter High School a non-traditional high school diploma preparation program. The foundation of the Athens Technical College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College and ACTION, Inc.'s Lanier Technical

College programming is GED preparation and enrollment in a Technical Certificate of Credit occupational area concurrently. Through these 4 providers, the local area anticipates serving approximately 210 students.

The 2nd out of school youth activity is targeted at those youth already possessing their GED/High School diploma. These students are served through out-of-school youth funded ITAs. The expansion of the age for out of school youth to serve 18-24 year olds has contributed to the local area's increase in number served. In the past approximately 30 youth were served through ITAs and projections for 2016 are between 60 and 100 youth.

The local area's youth providers utilize the Individual Service Strategy ISS document to reflect the provision of the 14 youth elements. The document identifies the element, the need, if applicable for that student, for the delivery of that element/service, as well as the actual delivery of that service/element and which entity delivered the service. Each youth provider is monitored throughout the year to ensure that documentation of the provision of services related to the 14 elements is conducted.

5. **Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives** – Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.

The local area has always had work-based learning through work experience as a service for in-school youth programming. The out-of-school youth providers have begun incorporating both work experience and on-the-job training into their planned program activities. Any work-based learning offered will meet any and all requirements established by the GDEcD WFD as outlined in their Policies and Procedures Manual. These requirements are reviewed with the entity offering the activity to ensure adherence to established rules.

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In an effort to expand the work-based learning activity, the local area is reviews the occupational areas that ITA students are enrolled in and contacts Program Deans to determine which of those programs require a clinical or internship component. For those programs which it is permissible, the local area provides work experience/internship funds to support those hours in the clinical/internship component. In some cases based on the structure of the academic requirements for the program, this may be structured as a stipend as opposed to an hourly wage.

As career pathways are developed, if it is determined that work-based learning is the appropriate method to deliver/enhance training in that sector, then it will be considered for incorporation into the adult and dislocated worker training strategy.

For those students who complete ITA training, who are unable to secure employment, work-based learning as an additional support is an option. The local area is implementing work-based learning internship/work experience for those students who have completed their ITA academic but are having difficulty in obtaining employment. This will provide those students with an opportunity to participate in a work based learning activity in the field that they received academic instruction. It is anticipated that this will provide one of two outcomes. Either a placement at the employer location that they receive work experience occurs or that they will have training related work experience which will enhance their resume and demonstrate to potential employers their enhanced preparation and qualifications.

The local area maintains contact business intermediaries in the form of the Regional Liaisons/Coordinators from the Georgia Department of Labor, the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the Department of Community Affairs. These persons provide information on business/employer needs and will provide an opportunity to connect employers with a trained workforce utilizing work-based learning strategies.

A key workforce training module of Georgia WorkSmart is Registered Apprenticeship. Through a partnership between the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship, the Technical College System of Georgia and other education and state agency partners, Georgia WorkSmart helps organizations create apprenticeship that include curriculum and classroom instruction development. The Northeast Georgia area is working with both Lanier Technical College and Athens Technical College as a part of the USDOL Apprenticeship Grant that Georgia Department of Economic Development received.

The local area has adopted the Workplace Fundamentals Program incorporating softskills instruction with manufacturing basics. This 5-6 week course is currently operated in the region in 5 counties by 2 technical colleges with plans to expand to 3 additional counties and add an additional technical college as a provider. The course operates on a training schedule similar to a work schedule, Monday –Friday, 9-4. Persons completing the course exit with OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, Forklift and WorkKeys Certifications. The local area has been operating this model since February 2015 and has had over 100 graduates with an 88.8% placement rate. When an employer considers hiring a graduate of this course, they have verifiable information on work habits that person has demonstrated on a consistent basis for the preceding 5-6 weeks. This is actually verifiable by the person's demonstrated activities versus in an OJT setting where the employer has to rely on what the person tells them they can demonstrate and many times the employer may find that what they have been told doesn't match with what the person demonstrates in the first 5-6 weeks of employment. For that reason the local workforce area utilizes WPF as the tool to prepare employees to be the best fit for employers and to provide employers with verifiable information as to demonstrated behaviors and work ethic.

6. **Provision of ITAs** – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs and how

the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

The local area utilizes ITAs as its primary training tool for adults and dislocated workers. The Workplace Fundamentals course reference in an earlier section is an example of a short term ITA. While the use of the Workplace Fundamentals course as a short-term non-credit delivered course culminating in the obtainment of an industry recognized credential is increasing in the region, the majority of the ITAs are in programs at technical colleges yielding a technical certificate of credit, diploma or associate degree. Additionally, the local area does have ITA agreements in place with 20 proprietary training institutions which provide training primarily in truck driver preparation (approximately 125-175 person per year), associated medical training (CNA, medical assistants), and an array of computer related training. All ITA training providers are on the state ETPL and are providing training in an occupational area that meets the local area's in-demand occupation policy. The local area does not use contracts for the training services delivered through ITAs.

7. **Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services** – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The local area will coordinate with local providers including the East Athens Development Corporation and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) located at the University of Georgia to promote both entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Both EADC and the SBDC offer training and courses specific to entrepreneurial and microbusiness enterprises. Staff and service providers are involved in and attend regularly Chamber of Commerce, Employer Committees and community meetings to stay informed of entrepreneurial activities and services in the community.

8. **Coordination with Education Programs** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

The local area's in-school youth program design provides a natural linkage to each and every public school system in the region. There is at least 1 person in each county who has a connection to the LWDA through the ACTION, Inc. contract. Additionally, local area staff are engaged with the **6** career academies in Barrow, Clarke, Madison, **Morgan, Greene** and Newton counties currently operating in the region. As additional career academies are added in the region, staff will engage with them as well. At this time, Career Academies are planned for **Jackson County**. **Local area youth staff contact appropriate staff in each county in the spring of each year to re-orient them on the services available for graduating seniors who do not currently have high school plans and/or those graduating seniors who plan to attend technical college. This contact reminds both students and**

high school staff of the financial assistance available through WIOA. This contact enables the partners to ensure that there is not a duplication of services.

Local area staff are on advisory committees of the 4 technical colleges providing services in the region. Two different technical colleges are represented on the local workforce board. There are direct service providers through 3 of the 4 technical colleges which provides awareness of services being provided in an array of activities. As a part of the local area's ETPL process, the local area has agreements in place with over ***41 training vendors. As additional training vendors indicate an interest in providing education/training occupational services,*** local area staff will provide them the ETPL application for them to submit for consideration.

Since the local area has long standing agreements in place with 9 technical colleges and 15 colleges and universities, there is a point of contact in those institutions which enhances the collaboration.

Additionally, the local area is in strong collaboration with Great Promise Partnership in 4 counties in the region.

- 9. Description of Supportive Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

The local area will make available transportation, childcare services and emergency assistance to adults, dislocated workers, and youth participants that qualify for these supportive services. The local area will coordinate supportive services with all federal, state, and local agencies including Pell, HOPE, DFCS, UI and any other funding resources available to the participant.

Supportive Services Policy: The Georgia Workforce Investment Board approved new supportive services guidelines and expenditure caps which become effective July 1, 2016. The NEGRC WIOA has developed a process by which participants are determined eligible and in need of supportive services to participate in WIOA activities. Federal Law states that supportive service costs should be NECESSARY to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title 1. Eligibility and determination of need for supportive services should be conducted by a case manager, on a case-by-case basis.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division has developed a limit on total supportive service expenditures of 35% for of each LWIOA's funding streams, (i.e. adult, dislocated worker, youth), program year total allocation. Waivers for this policy will be issued by the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division on a case by case basis.

The following policies apply for out-of-school participants enrolled in adult, youth or dislocated worker programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) which include ITA-based type training, and which are served by NEGRC WIOA. Support Services Policies for youth service programs which do not include ITA-based training are under the Youth Program Support Services Section of the Support Policy, and are for youth served by NEGWIOA youth service providers. These NEGWIOA youth service providers include both in-school and out-of-school youth.

Documentation of Eligibility and Determination of Need for Supportive Services

Supportive services are available only for WIOA eligible participants actively enrolled in ITA based training activities. Documentation of eligibility will be determined at a maximum level of 150% above the poverty level for adults and youth (NEGWIOA's priority of service plan.) Eligibility of income will be determined by completing the Family Unit Form, page 1 and the 6 Month Calculation Worksheet For Employed Persons In The Family Unit, page 2. Determination of need information will be determined by completing the Request for Supportive Services Form and the Projected Cost of Training Form. This information will be entered into the participant's case file.

Dislocated Workers will be **EXEMPT** from the maximum level of 150% above the poverty level. Income earned in the 6 month period prior to dislocation could disqualify them from receiving supportive services when the dislocated worker is no longer employed due to no fault of their own.

Determination of Need

Financial/Physical Need: There must be documentation in the participant's case file that participants are incapable of providing these services for themselves. Documentation may consist of:

- Self-attestation
- Low income verification
- Receipt of federal or state public assistance
- Receipt of UI benefits
- Lack of employment or underemployment (UI records or separation notice)
- Documentation of skill upgrading that would lead to employment in a local or state in-demand occupation
- Birth certificates of children receiving childcare
- Documentation of transportation distance to attend training (for transportation assistance, if available)

Resource Coordination: There must be documentation that supportive services are not available from other state or federal grant programs. There must be analysis of all federal/state/local resources available and how they are being coordinated. For example, an NEGWIOA analysis of need form will document the total basis of need considering UI, Pell, Hope etc., or other instances of federal/state/local resources available, to determine how resources are being coordinated.

Provision of Supportive Services

NEGWIOA will provide transportation, childcare services and emergency assistance to adult, dislocated workers, and youth participants that qualify for these supportive services.

Support Service Request Form: Each participant requesting supportive services will complete a request for support service form. The WIOA career advisor will determine the basis of need and sign off on the justification for the amount of support that is necessary and reasonable to complete WIOA activities. This justification will include a projection of the total amount anticipated of support services requested. This documentation should be collected and included in the participant's case file, VOS/Tracksource system. NEGWIOA finance will maintain records to monitor the yearly cap limitations. Yearly transportation and child care cost must be projected before training services begin.

Payments will be made directly to participants by NEGRC in the form of a check. Payments are based on class attendance and childcare forms submitted by the participant. Payments will be made bi-weekly and will depend on timely receipt of the above documentation.

Case Managers must enter in the VOS/TrackSource system the estimated **approved** supportive service cost at the beginning of a participant's service or when supportive services have been deemed necessary. Any substantial change to a participant's supportive service dollar amount, and/or the addition of a different type of supportive service will need to be updated in the VOS/TrackSource system. These costs will be approved by the Senior Planner. (Routine fluctuation in a participant's supportive services, such as training absences, holidays and/or inclement weather is exempt from this process.)

All support documentation will be maintained in the participant's physical case file (participant time sheets, etc.).

Additionally, documentation for the WIOA activity for which support is being provided must be included in the case file. Documentation should include time sheets signed by the instructor/supervisor, proving participation in training services.

Transportation

- 1) Eligible participants will receive \$8.00 per day for meals/transportation.
- 2) Participants must attend 50% of their scheduled classes each day in order to receive the \$8.00 per day support amount. If less than 50% of their scheduled classes are attended, the meals/transportation support will not be issued for that day.
- 3) To receive the meals/transportation support, a "Participants Attendance Report" form must be completed bi-weekly. This form must contain the following information:
 - Name, school attending and the training program in which they are enrolled.
 - Dates (month, day and year) must be filled in correctly in the space provided.
 - Hours scheduled and hours attended verified by the instructor(s).
 - Signature of instructor(s) verifying attendance.
 - Signature and date of the customer

Dependent Care

If dependent care is not otherwise available from DFCS, or other funding sources, NEGWIOA may assist with the cost of care for dependent children under age 5 or adult dependents with documented care needs. This is available while the participant is enrolled in ITA training activities, (excluding core and intensive services). Assistance is available when the individual is scheduled and/or commuting to training activities. Assistance may also be available for children ages 6 through 12 for after school care or during times when school is not in session. Funds from other sources, such as TANF, may be combined with WIOA funds. In those instances, WIOA funds may only be used for those expenses not covered by the other funding source. For

participants receiving TANF benefits, it must be documented that the participant is not receiving dependent care benefits from TANF before providing dependent care assistance through WIOA.

- 1) For children 5 years and under - Eligible participants will receive \$10.00 per day per child for full-time care. This would include children up to age 12 during school breaks, i.e., summer or extended breaks throughout the year.
- 2) For children 6 years and older - Eligible participants will receive \$5.00 per day per child for after school care up through age 12.
- 3) For childcare assistance to be reimbursed, the childcare form must be accompanied by a "Participant Attendance Report."
- 4) Childcare will be paid only for those days attending school. The customer will be responsible for payment of childcare expenses when they are not in school.
- 5) Childcare will not be paid when breaks between quarters occur i.e., Spring break, Christmas break.
- 6) Childcare assistance will not be made for children over the age of twelve unless extenuating situations exist. A written request must be made to NEGRC explaining the circumstances.
- 7) Childcare assistance will not be paid to providers that reside at the same address as the WIA customer.
- 8) To receive childcare assistance the participant must complete a "Childcare Provider Verification Form." This form must contain the following information:
 - Name of the childcare provider, childcare providers address and phone number, customers name, school attending and effective date.
 - Name of the child(ren), their age, hours to be kept, weekly rate and daily rate.
 - Person(s) who are authorized to sign the childcare forms must print and sign their name.
 - This form will only be completed when a new childcare provider will be used.
 - This form must be submitted to the NEGRC before any childcare payments can be issued.
- 9) To receive the childcare support, a "Childcare Invoice" must be completed bi-weekly. This form must contain the following:
 - Customers name, childcare providers name, name and age of child(ren).
 - Dates (month, day and year) must be filled in correctly in the space provided.
 - Initials of the childcare provider for each child and each day that childcare were provided, for each child.
 - Amounts charged for days attended.
 - Signature and date of participant.
 - Signature and date of childcare provider.
- 10) Falsification of childcare or attendance forms may result in being terminated from the WIOA program.

Participants are encouraged to use licensed dependent care providers whenever possible. If not licensed, the service must be provided by a dependent care provider who cares for children outside of the participant's home. Payments will be made directly to participants, based on receipts from dependent care provider.

Waivers

If necessary, NEGWIOA will submit a waiver to the Grants Administrator if any of the current program years total supportive services allocation exceeds 35% in any one funding stream.

Emergency Assistance

Emergency assistance up to \$250 per individual one-time assistance for special needs (i.e., housing assistance, dental/medical care, clothing, car repairs, mental health, etc.) may be provided on an individual basis. This request must be for assistance necessary to successfully continue training activities or to enable the individual to accept employment. The requests are made in writing to NEGWIOA. This assistance counts toward the \$3,000 cap on support.

Support Services are not allowed for the following:

- Rent deposits or housing deposits
- Mortgage payments
- Car payments
- Purchase of vehicles
- Fines
- Out-of-Area Job Search Assistance
- Relocation Assistance
- Needs-based payments
- On-the-Job Training Plans

Other Requirements and Policies

1. A participant continues to be eligible for support services only as long as he/she is active in the program. Failure to participate fully, without good cause, will result in termination of assistance.
2. During the assessment period individual needs are identified and a plan is developed and documented in the participant employment development plan for support provided by NEGWIOA, DFCS or other programs. To maximize the support available, NEGWIOA will actively promote coordination with organizations to provide supportive services at no cost to the program or the participant. These services could include assistance in housing, legal problems, financial planning, dental/medical care, mental health, and other areas.
3. Customers in certificate, diploma or associate degree programs, at a minimum, must be enrolled fulltime (12 credit hours) per semester in order to be eligible for support services. If the customer takes less than 12 credit hours and continues to be eligible for supportive services the case manager must indicate the reason for the less than 12 credit hours and document this in the customer's case notes section in Tracksource. NEGRC will review the reason for the less than 12 credit hours and either approve/deny the support service.
4. No white out is to be used on support forms. For corrections, draw one line through the error, initial it, and have the appropriate person (instructor or childcare provider) initial the change.
5. Any forms that are not completed correctly and completely will be returned to the customer for correction.
6. Support forms must be submitted to the NEGRC office no later than Tuesday's mail of support processing weeks. (Customers will receive a yearly chart indicating support processing weeks.) If forms are received after Tuesday's mail, they will not be processed until the next cycle. All forms should be mailed directly to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, Workforce Development, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605.

Youth Program Support Services

Support Services

Because most NEGWIOA youth service programs are not ITA-based training, (though they may include it), support services have been and will be provided on an individual case-by-case or program-by-program basis, to include different kinds and different levels of support from that of ITA-based training. The eligibility and need will be established and documented by a program career advisor.

While projected program support for individuals may be customized for a youth service provider program or separate programs (typically during contract negotiations at the beginning of the year), with prior NEGWIOA approval, each instance must meet the individual participant eligibility and need requirement noted above.

Incentives

Incentives are allowable for WIOA Youth activities. Incentives should be tied to program outcomes and may include cash payments, gas cards, education and/or employment-related materials, participation, test or eligibility fees paid, uniforms or work clothing, etc. They may be provided by youth service providers with prior NEGWIOA approval.

Youth support services must be determined, tracked and documented in a similar manner as those described above with documentation in the VOS /TrackSource system (if applicable) as described in the “Documentation of Eligibility and Determination of Need for Supportive Services” section.

Coordination with Core Partners:

1. **Description of the Workforce System** – Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

The local area will continue work with:

- Georgia Department of Labor to ensure that full array of Wagner Peyser services from labor market information, job preparation workshops, job referral, Unemployment Insurance, veterans services are available. The local area will also encourage to the fullest extent possible that all job seekers utilize the resources of the Employ GA system.
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to ensure that the full array of services from supported employment to job coaching to specialized assessment is utilized and that co-enrollment of customers with disabilities be facilitated where such is the appropriate action.
- Adult Learning Divisions at 4 technical colleges physically located in the region. This effort will continue the linkage between Accelerated Opportunity efforts at Athens Technical College and expand as appropriate at Lanier Technical College and Georgia Piedmont Technical College.
- Technical Colleges Economic Development Departments to ensure that division’s expertise in quickly developing and delivering training to meet employers needs are met. This is ongoing with Athens Technical College and Georgia Piedmont Technical College and under development with Lanier Technical College.
- Technical Colleges Credit Programming to ensure that the high quality ITA programming which has been the trade mark of the region providing

over 278 different employers with trained employees in Program Year 2014.

- Department of Family and Children Services providing linkages on support services to ensure non-duplication of services
- CSBG entity ACTION, Inc. providing additional supports to customers to assist in removing barriers that may prevent them from completing their training
- Athens Housing Authority as well as other housing authorities in the region serving as an information access point for their residents providing them access to training services as well as the resources of the mobile learning units.

2. **Coordination with Wagner-Peyser** – Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

The Athens Career Center provides an array of services to a diverse population of job seekers including veterans, unemployment claimants, persons with disabilities, youth, and individuals with limited English proficiency among others. The Athens Career Center provides a seamless access point for delivering information and resources upon entering the career center or customer contact via telephone, fax, or email.

Services routinely provided to employment services job seeker customers (including UI claimants) include:

- Job search assistance, job referrals and job developments
- Automated job referral assistance
- Access to computers, job search software, Jobs TV
- Workshops on a variety of employment related topics (e.g. effective job search, online applications, resume development, interviewing skills, networking)
- Labor market information for career exploration, high demand fields, average salaries
- Access to career advisors, vocational assessments, training and education resources, financial aid options
- Self-service resources such as Employ Georgia labor exchange services, unemployment claims application, books, videos, flyers
- Individualized assistance for customers with unique needs including setting a customer service plan, scheduling one-on-one visits and workshops to develop job seeker, reviewing and modifying customer service plan as needed
- Specialized assistance for veterans including case management, job search counseling, WOTC, OJT and apprenticeships
- Specialized assistance for ex-offenders including strategic workshops, federal bonding, and WOTC
- Specialized assistance for long term unemployed and customers with employment barriers including case management, job search counseling, and WOTC

Career Center staff offer services off site to TOPPSTEP (The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program) eligible customers. Workshops are conducted weekly at the Athens Diversion Center, Clarke County Correctional Facility and bi-monthly at the Elbert County Probation Office. Career Center staff work closely with the case managers in these facilities to develop job search and employability skills to increase secured employment.

The Career Center provides two established off-site locations to reach individuals in the rural counties served by the Career Center. A location on the Athens Technical College campus in Greensboro is staffed by one full time individual Monday through Friday. All employment and unemployment services are delivered to customers at this location. There are frequent employer hiring events scheduled at this location as well. An itinerant point is also established at the Elbert County Library. Career Center staff are housed at this location twice monthly to provide employment related services to customers. The Athens Career Center houses partner agency staff on a routine basis to enhance service delivery and avoid duplicating services. The staff with dedicated use of space at the Athens Career Center include staff with: WIOA, Job Corps, GVRA, Advantage Behavioral, the Fatherhood Initiative, Athens Technical College, Jobs for Georgia Graduates.

The Career Center LVER (Local Veterans Employment Representative) the GDOL Business Services Unit's BSR (Business Services Recruiter) work closely with local Chamber offices, area employers, civic organizations, WIOA and other governing agencies and businesses to promote hiring opportunities. These business service related relationships are aimed towards the streamlining of candidate searches and recruitment processes. The Athens Career Center staff actively participate in the coordination and implementation of large hiring events, annual career fairs and in-house recruitments held at the Career Center.

The Athens Career Center has an established plan for assisting customers with limited English proficiency. The career center can utilize an agency multi lingual directory to locate GDOL staff speaking a variety language that can serve as interpreters. Interpreter resources are also available through the University of Georgia.

- 3. Coordination with Adult Education** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of the WIOA Law, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

Our primary goal at the One-Stop is the facilitation of access to services that result in participants reaching educational and/or career goals. Connecting individuals with Adult Education services will be accomplished through the use of technology and/or physical presence (scheduled by appointment and/or rotation basis). Kiosks are available in the One-Stop that will connect individuals with area Adult Education programs in the region including: Athens Technical College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Lanier Technical College and Southern Crescent Technical College.

Kiosk are self-service devices that allow clients to:

- Chat online/interact with Adult Education representatives from the four Adult Education programs in their region (provides flexibility)
- Submit their name, address, email address, phone number, etc. to schedule for GED testing, Adult Education classes, ELL classes, Bridge to Success (Out-of-School-Youth Services) program, etc. (increases seamless communication)
- Apply for orientation/schedule TABE testing date/location
- More discreetly provide information they may view as sensitive
- Check in for scheduled Webex appointments with Adult Education staff (ex. Transition Specialist for Workforce and post-secondary transitioning support)
- Check in to virtual classes on one of our college campuses (based on class schedule)
- Kiosk can also be utilized to access Adult Education distance education programs
- Printer access will be available

Adult Education classes are offered at over 20 sites in the service area. Classes are offered mornings, afternoons, and through distance education to provide after-hours access to participants that may not be available during traditional hours.

Information Resources-

Relationships will be strengthened through data sharing. Systems should be integrated for intake and outcome documentation. We will develop deeper connections through this transparency and be better equipped to support cross-program wrap around services.

Coordination with Adult Education and workforce Development activities-

Current relationships have been well established with core partners. Members of the core partners cross serve on various local interagency advisory boards and are committed to building community awareness that support common goals for community employment. Each mission of the core partners center on workforce development and we look forward to continuing our inclusive yet flexible practices to enhance partnerships for the benefit of the region.

Continuous improvement of services

Adult Education goal toward continuous improvement involves reducing the time it takes for the students to secure work placement. One way we plan to accomplish our goal is to widen access and tailor services to more work-based learning opportunities. Athens Technical College is engaged in the establishment of local apprenticeship program(s) for students in the Bridge to Success out-of-School youth program. Efforts related to this goal include: exploring how apprenticeship can meet the local area needs for a skilled workforce, partnering with businesses to build program and register through the National Registry, preparing to launch the apprenticeship by marketing and outreach efforts that will result in long term employment.

Roles and resource contributions of partners-

- In-kind facilities
- Customer service and support efforts
- Data Analysis/ Career exploration services (EMSI/ Optimal Resume Access, Career Coordinator)
- Technology and infrastructural costs (computer, internet, phone,)
- Outreach and Marketing efforts
- Connecting Contacts
- Employer Engagement
- Retention and Transition efforts
- Staff Professional Development Cross-Training Opportunities

Expanding service to eligible individuals-

The target population for FY16 Adult Education services is 1,700 local residents age 16 and over, without a high school diplomas or its equivalency or a lack of English proficiency, and who have experienced barriers to education and/or employment. Adult Education services include access to free Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, English Language Acquisition, Corrections Re-entry Education, Literacy, Test Preparation, Workforce Preparation and Out-of-School Youth workforce development training programs.

Referral processes are in place with area community-based organizations, the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, Local School Boards, and area employers to provide services that assist Adult Education students in reaching their educational and career goals. Activities are aligned, and co-enrollment provides students with wrap around services that improve retention and acquisition of certification and credentials.

Basic Skills Services-

Basic and literacy classes/ remedial activities will be provided by adult education instructors and students have access to distance education programs. Classes are offered mornings, afternoons, and through distance education to provide after-hours access to participants that may not be available during traditional hours.

Individualized student educational plans are developed to help students reach their goals. Services are tailored to the individual and Adult Education instructors, volunteers, and Transition Specialist are available for ongoing guidance and support. Intake forms and TABE testing are part of the initial application process. Students are tested after 40 hours of instruction to determine educational functioning gain(s). TABE tests assess mathematics and reading comprehension and analytic reports identify areas of strength and weakness that inform individualized plans for students seeking their GED.

Youth Services

Regrettably, Georgia ranks 42nd in the nation for teens not in school and lacking a high school diploma.¹ Athens-Clarke County (ACC), with a population of 116,000, has 18,212

¹ “Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being,” *Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014*, pp 48

residents who do not possess a high school diploma (see chart below). In 2014, approximately 43 percent of students in ACC public high schools did not graduate.² This means that the county is more likely to face ongoing poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.³ These statistics are not limited to Athens proper; surrounding counties continually endure low high school graduation rates and an uneducated, unemployed youth population with no opportunities for financial interdependence. For example, in Walton County, 19.6 percent of the population has no high school diploma or equivalent (see chart below).

County	Population	% without a High School Diploma or GED
Clarke	116,000	15.7%
Walton	84,000	19.6%

In traditional Adult Basic Education programs, students must earn a GED before entering the college to enroll in courses that lead to a credential. Three of the Technical Colleges in our region (Athens, Georgia Piedmont, and Lanier) were selected as pilot Accelerated Opportunity programs. The Accelerated Opportunity program allows students to enter the college and work on their GED preparation, and college credit classes simultaneously reducing the time it takes to earn a credential and secure employment. Students in the AO programs also qualify for Ability to Benefit funding and other support services (including transportation and childcare reimbursement) that can potentially be an obstacle to student success.

Sample pathways for our out- of -school youth programs, which combine accelerated career training and job placement with personalized educational support, are aligned with the Manufacturing Sector strategy. Sample program pathways include: Manufacturing Operations, Welding Technology, Machine Tool Technology, Commercial Truck Driving. These short-term programs incorporate team teaching and work ethic training. Our program model is based around education being offered currently with, and in the same context as, workforce preparation. Participants in Bridge to Success in Athens must attend classes eight hours each weekday, mirroring a typical work schedule. Career Pathways were selected to meet regional demand. Programs were selected by number of jobs and anticipated % increase utilizing data from Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI) and all programs have a sustainable wage of over \$13.00/per hour average starting wage. See chart below:

Occupation	Number of jobs 2020 (ATC service area)	% increase 2016-2020 (ATC service area)
Commercial Truck Drivers	1,554 jobs	4.3%
Machinists	481 jobs	4.6%
Manufacturing Technician	1,681 jobs	3.8%

² “Georgia’s High School Graduation Rate Increases Again,” *Georgia Department of Education, October 2014*, <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx>

³ "Education," *Community Health Needs Assessment, Athens-Clarke County, June 2013*, http://www.stmarysathens.org/pdfs/about-us/2013_CHNA_StMarys.pdf

Welding Technician	639 jobs	4.8%
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Additionally, each of the pathway programs have advisory boards made up of representatives from business and industries to align our programs to meet area workforce needs. This partnership with employers also increases the programs participants to secure employment after the completion of a paid internship. These internships will facilitate on-the-job training to build needed occupational skills and provide students with meaningful work experiences. All of the 14 WIOA program elements are embedded in the Bridge to Success program including follow up services for 12 months following program completion. Optimal Resume is currently used by the Adult Education Career Coordinators to connect over 265 employers with ATC program participants. This program allows us to create direct pipelines from job seekers to employers and address job seeker soft skill and technical skill gaps.

GA BEST-

All regional Adult Education programs have incorporated the Georgia BEST (Business Ethics Student Training) into their curriculum. Although each model varies, every program is designed to address soft skill gaps that employers in Georgia are looking for in competitive applicants. These skills include: Professional Image, Attendance/Punctuality, Attitude and Respect, Social Media Ethics, Discipline and Character, Oral and Written Communication Skills, Productivity and Academic Performance, Responsibility and Organization, Self-Management and Time Management, and Teamwork and Work Habits. Upon completion, students receive certification from the Georgia Department of Labor. This curriculum is designed to “prepare tomorrow’s workforce today”.

Performance Measures-

Ongoing assessment methods will be utilized to ensure performance measures are continuously met. Annual employer surveys will be distributed to all Youth Services employers to rate and compare the entry participant’s skills with that of other entry level employees. Program advisory committees, made up of industry business representatives, will be utilized to seek out new internship/employment opportunities for participants. Technical Colleges also have a warranty for all graduates. If employers find that a student does not demonstrate skills needed that were covered in the program, we will retrain the program for free.

Federal/ State/local level benchmarks-

Adult Education utilizes GALIS (a web-based real time data system) that is used for data entry, collection, and reporting of program activity and outcomes. A program can track the status on established federal benchmarks and compare local, regional and state current and historical progress to meet or exceed annual benchmarks. The Office of Adult Education also engages in continuous monitoring procedures including on-site visits observations. Additionally, programs partnering to provide WIOA services must meet or exceed project goals for performance including: percentage in employment/education/training, retention in employment/education/training, earnings, credential rate, in program skills gain, etc.

- 4. Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation** – Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

The local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) has had a long and mutually supportive relationship with the local office of Workforce Development and the other local workforce development partners in providing services to promote the self-sufficiency and independence of Georgians with disabilities. GVRA staff is co-located in the regional one-stop along with staff from the Department of Labor, Veteran's services, Job Corp, Jobs for Georgia Graduates, and Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, along with other area employment and service providers who are frequently present and accessible for information and referrals.

In addition, long-standing, mutually beneficial relationships with other strategic partners such as Advantage Behavioral Health Services, Viewpoint, Action, Inc., the Department of Family and Children's Services, the Department of Education, multiple local colleges and universities, community rehabilitation programs and other providers of soft and specific employment skills training as well as the local independent living center. These collaborative relationships will continue to be nourished and new ones developed to better meet the growing needs of employers and job seekers with disabilities.

GVRA representatives serve on the local Workforce Development Board and its Youth Committee and are actively engaged with various community organizations such as Family Connection, Employer Committees and other county and regional organizations aimed toward meeting workforce needs and improving community economics and the well-being of community members.

In addition, memoranda of understandings have been developed between GVRA and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Department of Education and various pilot projects are underway including ones with the Department of Juvenile Justice, one local housing authority and some selected local employers to provide information, training and employment services to persons with disabilities who want to work. Other MOUs and innovative projects are being developed to expand and better coordinate services to youth and out of school youth to prepare them for careers in high demand occupations in their local economies.

In addition, the local workforce area has been awarded a USDOL grant to pilot a Disability Employment Initiative process in which GVRA staff and Workforce Development staff work in conjunction to maximize access to core and intensive services and to ensure collaboration and the identification of resources and braiding of funds to better meet the needs of the individual striving to prepare for work and the businesses striving to meet its workforce needs.

GVRA offers and seeks cross training of staff whenever possible, with staff assisting in the planning of and/or participating in training offered by many local partners as well as by informal communication and sharing of information at community events, interagency meetings, symposiums, and resource fairs. These efforts will continue and

be increased as we collectively plan and implement new processes and procedures to maximize collaboration among partners.

GVRA will also be increasing communication with and services to employers by reorganizing and expanding its Employment Management Department and its operations to better collaborate with other partners and workforce professionals and to optimize industry specific training and employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities. GVRA clients will prepare for available job opportunities by engaging in training in a chosen career pathway with a concentration on soft skills as well as the career specific knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their chosen field. This will be done in collaboration with local school systems, technical colleges, community rehabilitation programs, workforce development staff and area businesses to provide a continuum of services so that job candidates are better prepared for success on the job when hired.

Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology:

1. **Description of Performance Measures** – (*WFD will issue instructions for the completion of local area performance negotiations upon receipt of federal guidance.*) Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.
See Attachment 1

2. **One-Stop System Performance and Assessment** – Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

With the transition to WIOA and the new one stop requirements, this portion of the system is under development. In the past, the workforce board received periodic reports from the one-stop operator on the array of services provided to customers accessing services at the comprehensive one-stop site.

3. **ETPL System** – Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.
 - a. Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

Applications will be accepted by the local WDB at any time during the program year. Applications will be evaluated and reviewed by WIOA Director and WIOA Program Director. The local board for NEGA WIOA utilizes a regional approach for the ETPL system. NEGA WIOA solicits bids through a public invitation process by posting a training provider application on its website. It also ensures that the WFD website directs interested applicants to this site. Applications will be accepted by the local WFD board at any time during the program year.

b. Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

The LWDB approved the local area ETPL provider minimum performance criteria/standards at its May 2016 meeting. Applications requesting placement on the ETPL by the local area are reviewed by staff against the criteria approved by the LWDB to determine if the program meets the standards and should be forwarded to the state for consideration for inclusion on the state ETPL.

Non-responsive providers will be notified in writing that their application was non-responsive and the reason(s) for the determination.

c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

Appeal procedures are established to provide recourse who think their proposal did not receive proper consideration. These procedures are in keeping the standards set forth by GDEcD WFD.

On a regional basis, there is no formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers. NEGRC WIOA will make every effort (both formally and informally) to resolve any issue at the local level. However, if it remains unresolved, then the provider may make a formal appeal to the State.

As described in section 4.4 of the State Workforce Policies and Procedures located at <http://www.georgia.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Workforce-Policies-and-procedures-12/8/16.pdf>, the provider must make the state-level appeal in writing and submit it with 45 days of the local decision. It must be signed by an authorized individual from the training provider and should include the following:

1. Name of the training provider
2. Address and phone number of the training provider
3. The specific program which was denied (if applicable)
4. A copy of the Local Board's decision
5. An explanation of why an appeal is being filed, and
6. If applicable, documentation of any specific factor (e.g., conflict of interest, nepotism, procedural non-adherence, etc.) which put the aggrieved training program at a competitive disadvantage.

The State will review the appeal and may choose to hold a hearing to gather additional information as it determines necessary. It will issue its decision based on its findings.

d. Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).

The LWDA is accustomed to generating regular provider outcomes reports. These reports are shared with the LWDA staff. These reports use customer placement information, credential information and follow-up information to determine if the training area, or program is still feasible to maintain on the ETPL. If not, the data will be updated on the ETPL.

As part of a regional approach, NEGRC WIOA has adopted the State's performance standards as described in section 4.4 of the State Workforce Policies and Procedures located at <http://www.georgia.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Workforce-Policies-and-prodecures-12/8/16.pdf>.

Initial enrollments for a new eligible provider will be limited to five (5) participants. Additional enrollments will only be approved once NEGRC WIOA has evaluated the providers training program and has determined that the provider is in full compliance with the minimum performance standards set by the State and adopted by NEGRC WIOA.

Performance reviews will be conducted yearly for each provider/program utilizing the minimum performance standards set by the State. If the goals are met, the training provider continues without interruption.

However, if the required levels are not met, then the provider/program is placed on a 6 month "Hold" status. During this "Hold" status, the provider may develop and submit corrective action plans and verifiable information regarding performance. Depending on the results and outcomes during the "Hold" status of participants that were still in training at the time the "Hold" was placed, the "Hold" may be lifted or it may continue until performance requirements are met.

If the provider's status has changed, i.e., moved location, termination of business, etc. NEGRC will immediately notify WFD.

Submittal of program changes, additional programs and price increases are reviewed by the WIOA Director and WIOA Program Director. If approved, they are transmitted to the WFD.

- e. Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.

The local area has an ITA training policy as outlined below in "g".

- f. Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.

Reports are provided monthly to program staff which include customers who are in an ITA, customers who are currently active, customers who are in job search, customers who have completed and customers who are receiving follow-up services. Performance outcomes are also provided on a quarterly basis.

- g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).

ITA customers can only be enrolled in an approved training provider programs that are on the approved statewide Eligible Training Provider List.

1. Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIOA Plan as growth occupations or documentation of employment prospects for areas not listed in the plan should be provided. (see attached list of demand occupations)
2. Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance.
3. Training must be at least 12-semester hours per week to accommodate existing Unemployment Insurance requirements. Exceptions to this policy may be approved, in writing, on a case-by-case basis.
4. Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (two years). Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis and requests should include evidence that financial support is available during extended training periods.
5. In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the WIOA local area that may include out-of-the-area and out-of-state training institutions. Out-of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIOA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States.
6. All applicants must apply for the Pell Grant and/or HOPE Scholarship program, if eligible. Depending on the need and availability of WIOA funding, Pell funds may be combined with WIOA funds to cover total expenses.
7. WIOA funding may be provided for college level and post baccalaureate instruction only if all of the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The customer must be accepted into a certificate or diploma program, and the course of study must be occupation-specific (i.e., radiologic technician, accounting, teacher certification). No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. General Studies, Bachelors of Business Administration, Bachelors of Art, etc.).
 - b. Total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and be a certificate or degree program.
 - c. The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training.
- 8 Continuing Education and other similar courses will be approved if the following conditions apply:
 - (a) The customer must have a specific occupational goal.
 - (b) The customer must have a work history or educational background that relates to the occupational goal.
 - (c) The customer must present evidence describing how the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability.
- 9 ITAs may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for training entrance, etc.
- 10 Customers accepted into a program of study on a provisional basis may receive assistance on a case-by-case basis.
- 11 ITAs will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties.
- 12 Training funding limitations are as follows:
 - a. Up to **\$4000** in training costs, excluding support may be expended for each participant for the first year of training.

- b. For training that extends beyond one year, total training costs may not exceed **\$6000**, excluding support.

If the cost of training exceeds funds limitation guidelines, career advisors should assist in developing a financial plan to cover total costs of training. Customers shall not be required to apply for or access student loans, or incur personal debt as a condition of participation.

- h. Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.

Any Registered Apprenticeship program within the LWDA which are not currently on the ETPL, will be reported to the WFD for inclusion on the ETPL. Registered apprenticeship programs are exempt from initial eligibility procedures and will remain on, or be placed on the list as long as the program remains registered.

4. **Implementation of Technology** – Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

The local area will utilize the Georgia Department of Labor's Employ Georgia site as part of its effort to enhance the business experience. As with any transition, there have been some challenges with the migration to this system, but it is the belief that it can ultimately position the local area to better serve the businesses' needs. Local area staff have received training on the Employ GA site and continue to work to learn the system and how it can best meet businesses' needs. The local area utilizes the internet with job seekers encouraging them to connect with various resources/training providers electronically rather than actually expending resources to drive for their initial research of what training they may be interested in. Job seeker customers are also encouraged to utilize all of the internet based tools available via the USDOL website related to career interests as well as all of the job postings available via Indeed, Monster, Career Builder, etc. Job seekers are also encouraged to utilize the Employ GA site to assist them in their resume preparation and posting their resume for employer searches and matches.

State Initiatives and Vision:

1. **State Branding** – Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

Update October 2018: After receiving the state brand document in mid-August 2016, the local area has adopted the branding criteria to include the appropriate WorkSource logo and other elements with signage and other and materials. All information produced by the local area includes the state brand WorkSource Georgia, Connecting Talent with Opportunity. This includes the wraps for the two mobile occupational skills training trailers. This may prove to be the "largest" and most visible piece of the rebranding for the local area as the 2 units are in use throughout the 12- county region.

- 2. State Initiatives** – Describe how the area will coordinate with WFD state initiatives, including: Go Build Georgia, Operation: Workforce, WorkSmart Georgia and the High Demand Career Initiative.

The local area will coordinate with all of WFD state initiatives as they relate to the local area.

Go Build Georgia

As Go Build Georgia efforts are identified in the region, the local area will coordinate with any events taking place and can even be present (as scheduling permits) to share information on training resources available to persons who choose to pursue training in these career fields.

WorkSmart Georgia

The local area has attended two briefings on the Apprenticeship Grant that GDECD WFD received. The local area is positioned to assist however is needed with that grant, both as it relates to Athens Technical College and Lanier Technical College, the two technical colleges in the area that are a part of that initiative. Additionally, the local area staff has participated in discussions with the Regional Apprenticeship Coordinator associated with that grant and are prepared to assist as called upon. The local area is also positioned to provide funding for WIOA eligible students for occupational areas incorporated into Apprenticeships where those courses are a part of the state ETPL.

High Demand Career Initiative

The local area participated in the original round of High Demand Career Initiative briefings. The local area also participated in a focus group providing input into the development of the upcoming HDCI sector strategy meetings and grants. The local area is already involved in the planning of the upcoming HDCI sector strategy meeting.

Disability Employment Initiative

The local area is one of two pilots in the state for the Disability Employment Initiative. As a part of that pilot the local area has hired a Disability Resource Coordinator. The purpose of this grant is to increase access of persons with disabilities to the services available through the one stop system. This is a 3 year grant.

- 3. Special Populations** – Describe how the area will provide services to the special populations specified in the state plan, to include ex-offenders, veterans, at-risk youth, long-term unemployed, adult learners and individuals with disabilities. If the region has identified additional target groups, please list.

The local area has a long standing relationship with the DVOPs and LVERs in the region participating in veterans workshops and job fairs and co-enrolling customers as appropriate. The local area received a state grant to serve ex-offenders and will be working through ACTION, Inc. a community based organization and the Athens

Diversion Center. It is anticipated that this initiative to prepare ex-offenders to re-enter the workforce will expand. The local area was one of 8 pilots in the state for the Accelerated Opportunities for the adult learners through Athens Technical College coupling GED instruction with occupational skills instruction with the end goal resulting in GED obtain and at a minimum, attainment of a Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC). This effort continues. As stated in number 2, local area is a pilot in the Disability Employment Initiative which seeks to provide greater access to one-stop services to persons with disabilities. Additionally, the local area has a long standing history of working for Vocational Rehabilitation to serve persons with disabilities to complete training and go to work. The local area's Business Services Consultant is also affiliated with the GVRA's High School High Tech Initiative which provides us with an opportunity for greater coordination of services. The services outlined in the Service Delivery and Training -Youth Services indicates the level of services in place for at-risk youth.

4. **Priority of Service** – Describe how the region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to one's specified by state and federal policy.

The local area will follow the state's priority of service policy ensuring that persons who are public assistance recipients and low-income adults receive priority, as well as veterans receiving priority of service as well as referral to other appropriate services. The local area has no other target populations in addition to the ones identified by state and federal policy.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing *October 2018*

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Ronnie Boggs	Owner	Lexington Antiques	Oglethorpe Co. Private Sector
David Cagle	Marketing Representative	Plumbers, Pipefitters & Service Tech., Local Union 72	Organized Labor
Paul Chambers	NEGA Reg. Director/External Affairs	AT&T	Oconee Co. Private Sector
Andrea Daniel	President	Athens Technical College	TCSG Educational/Regional
Tony Hoyle	Welding Director	Mechanical Trades Institute – UA 72	Organized Labor
Bob Hughes	CEO/Executive Director	Madison/Morgan Chamber of Commerce	Economic Development/Regional
Lori Iski	Senior Director	ACTION, Inc.	Community Based Organization
Shari Kaplan	Service Area Manager	GA VOC REHAB	Rehabilitation Services/Regional
Chris Kubas	Executive Vice President	Elberton Granite Association	Elbert Co. Private Sector
Brenda Lazarus	Senior V. P. - Human Resources	Reynolds Plantation	Greene Co. Private Sector
Howard Ledford	Dean	Lanier Technical College	Education/Regional
Javier Montalvo	V.P. Human Resources	Hitachi Automative Systems America, Inc.	Walton Co. Private Sector
Zack Taylor	Local Manager	Georgia Power	Jasper Co. Private Sector
Joe Vogt	Plant Manager	Solvay, Inc.	Barrow Co. Private Sector
Dave Ward	CEO	Medlink Georgia	Madison Co. Private Sector
Jeffery Wearing	President/Owner	Ready Rentall	Newton Co. Private Sector
Carol Williams	Realtor	Coldwell Banker	At-Large Private Sector
Reginald Woods	Human Resources Senior Manager	University of Georgia	Education/Clarke Co. Private Sector
Keith Johnson	VP Human Resources	Jackson EMC	Jackson Co. Private Sector
Winston Heard	CEO/Executive Director	East Athens Development Corporation	Community Based Organization Reg.
		In process	Georgia Development of Labor
Bobby Hildreth	Area Manager	Georgia Power Company	Morgan County
Geraldine Clarke	Director of Resident Services	Athens Housing Authority	Ex-officio
James R. Dove	Executive Director	NEGRC, Title V Aging & WIOA Title I	Ex-officio`

Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance *October 2018*

Performance Target (LWDA 9)

ADULT	PY 18 GOAL	PY 19 GOAL
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	78%	78.5%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	70%	75%
Q2 Median Earnings	\$5,500	\$5,800
Credential Attainment Rate	65%	66%

DISLOCATED WORKER		
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	73%	77%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	75%	76%
Q2 Median Earnings	\$5,500	\$5,800
Credential Attainment Rate	65%	67%

YOUTH		
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	73%	74%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	78%	79%
Credential Attainment Rate	82%	82.5%

Attachment 3: Comments that Express Disagreement- No comments were received during the 30 day comment period.

Comment 1
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment 2
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment 3
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment 4
Originating Entity:
Comment: