

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA
AREA 9
WIOA UNIFIED
LOCAL/REGIONAL AREA PLAN
Submitted
Draft May 1, 2020**

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Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure:

1. **Identification of the Fiscal Agent** – Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursal 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, Burke Walker, 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.

The information provided is the most current information available – which was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent reports have indicated a significant increase in the unemployment rate and joblessness rate; however, we do not anticipate a significant change to the top demand job openings and careers listed in this section. We do anticipate needing to significantly increase the training and certification options for these careers – specifically short-term trainings - so that dislocated workers can gain the skills and training needed to obtain a job in one of these sectors.

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, Industry Feedback, labor union representatives, and Workforce

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
Order Fillers
Administrative Assistants, Medical Secretaries

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 need for soft-skills training continues to be one of the most requested trainings as industry reports new employees, specifically those under 30, do not have an understanding of the importance of these in the workplace. The needed skills include: punctuality and attendance, problem solving, awareness of appropriate work behaviors, how to get along with supervisors and co-workers, the importance of producing quality work, and financial literacy. This deficiency re-occurs throughout all the various in-demand occupations. These skills are taught as part of the GeorgiaBEST training from DOL and is now also embedded into all k-12 pathways offered at Career Academies. The skills taught are in response to feedback given by local industry.

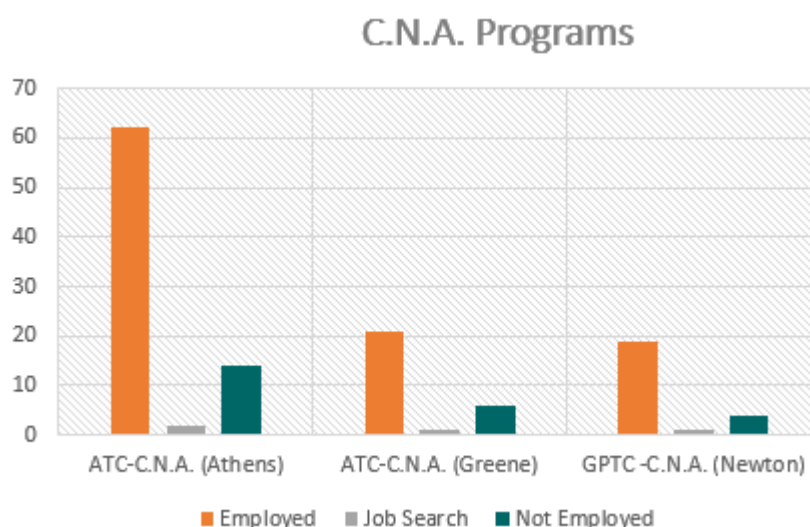
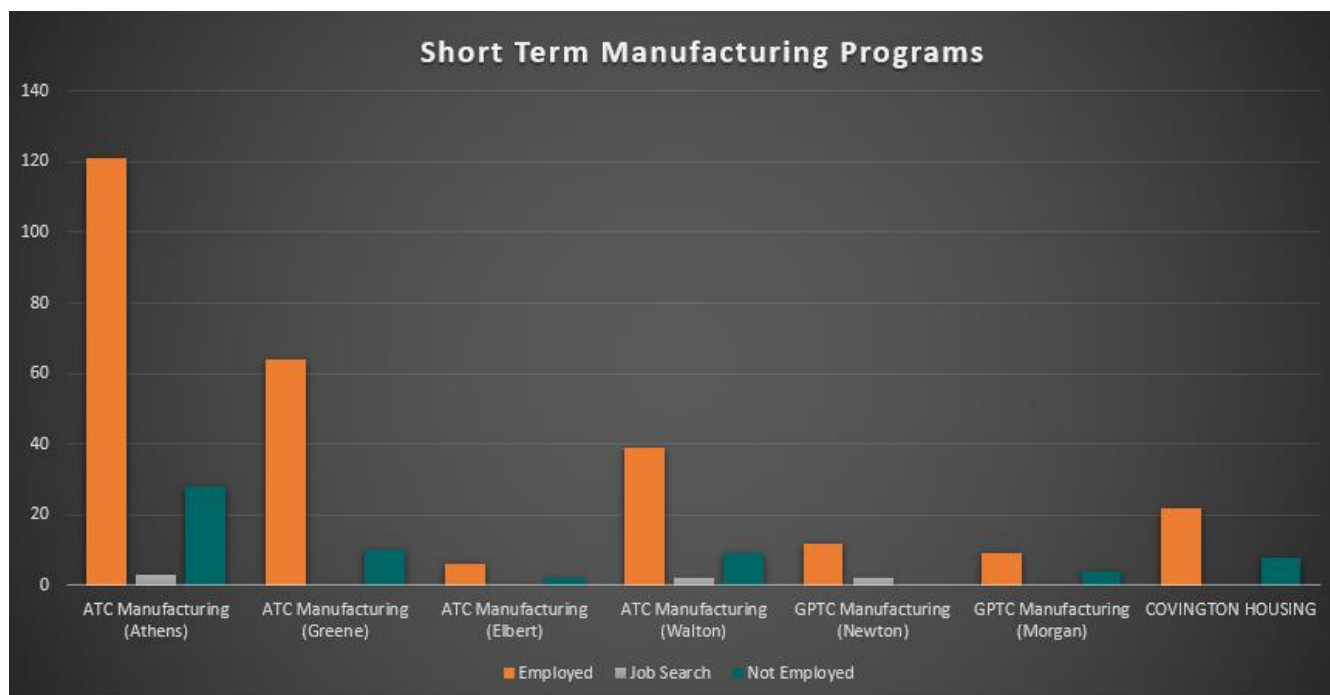
In direct response to the manufacturing industry needs in the NEGA region, a six-week course called ManufactuREADY was developed and has been in place for the last several years. ManufactuREADY couples occupational training, soft skills and a simulated manufacturing work environment. Upon completion of the six-week course, graduates are given a preferred hiring status with several local manufacturers. The course serves over 100 participants each year and is currently offered through two technical colleges in five locations: Clarke, Greene, Newton, and Walton. Elbert County will soon be added as well.

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 ManufactuREADY (cited as WPF) and CNA programs operated and associated outcomes. This chart indicates a placement/employed rate of 80.1% for WPF exited trainees and 79.6% placement/employed rate for the CNA trainees. The following charts indicate employment rates per county that offers the short-term training.

WIOA NORTHEAST GEORGIA SHORT-TERM TRAINING OVERVIEW

	% Employed	Employed	Job Search	Not Employed	TOTAL class completers	# Currently In Class	OVERALL TOTAL	Cycles Complete
ATC Manufacturing (Athens)	79.6%	121	3	28	152	0	152	18
ATC Manufacturing (Greene)	86.5%	64	0	10	74	0	74	12
ATC Manufacturing (Elbert)	75.0%	6	0	2	8	0	8	1
ATC Manufacturing (Walton)	78.0%	39	2	9	50	0	50	8
GPTC Manufacturing (Newton)	85.7%	12	2	0	14	0	14	4
GPTC Manufacturing (Morgan)	69.2%	9	0	4	13	0	13	3
COVINGTON HOUSING	73.3%	22	0	8	30	0	30	6
Overall performance of WPF courses	80.1%	273	7	61	341		341	52
Overall performance of WPF courses w/o job search	81.7%							
ATC-C.N.A. (Athens)	79.5%	62	1	15	78	1	79	15
ATC-C.N.A. (Greene)	75.0%	21	1	6	28	0	34	6
GPTC-C.N.A. (Newton)	79.2%	19	1	4	24	0	24	3
Overall performance of C.N.A. programs	78.5%	102	4	24	130	0	137	24
Overall performance of C.N.A. programs w/o job search	81.0%							
OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF ALL PROGRAMS	79.6%							
OVERALL PERFORMANCE ALL PROGRAMS w/o job search	81.5%							



The following charts provide information on the demand occupation job postings for:

- education levels for: January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019
 - experience requirements for January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019
 - Top Skills Clusters in Demand: January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019
- Data Source Burning Glass database*

Educational Qualifications: January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019:

Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies)

All Advertised Educational Qualifications

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.

Note: 49% of records have been excluded because they do not include a degree level. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

Jan. 01, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019

There are 40,231 postings available with the current filters applied.

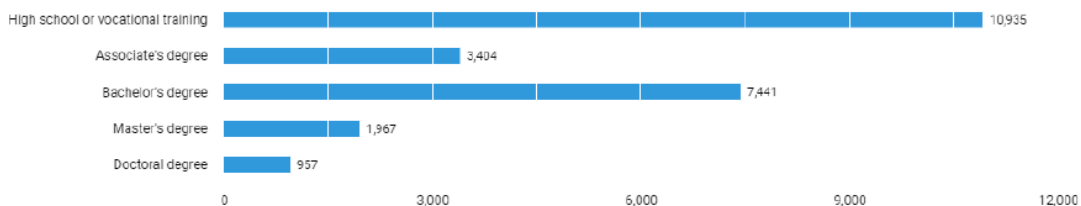
There are 19,871 unspecified postings.

Included Postings

New postings

Active Selections

Full year 2019 (Jan. 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019) 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)



Experience Requirements: January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019:

Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies)

Distribution of Experience Requirements for a Skill or Credential

Note: 57% of records have been excluded because they do not include an experience level. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

Jan. 01, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019

There are 40,231 postings available with the current filters applied.

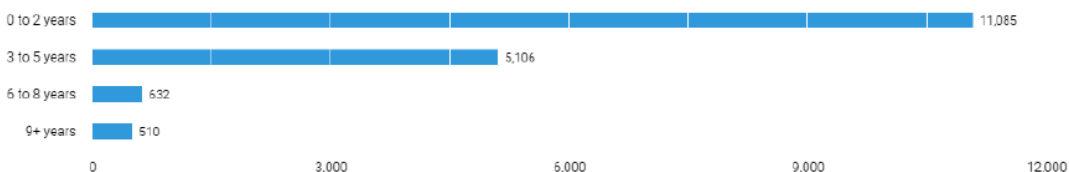
There are 22,898 unspecified postings.

Included Postings

New postings

Active Selections

Full year 2019 (Jan. 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019) 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)



Skill Clusters in Demand: January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019

Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies)

Skill Clusters In Demand

For skill clusters, unspecified postings are those that have fewer than three skill clusters listed.

Jan. 01, 2020 - Mar. 31, 2020

There are 13,340 postings available with the current filters applied.

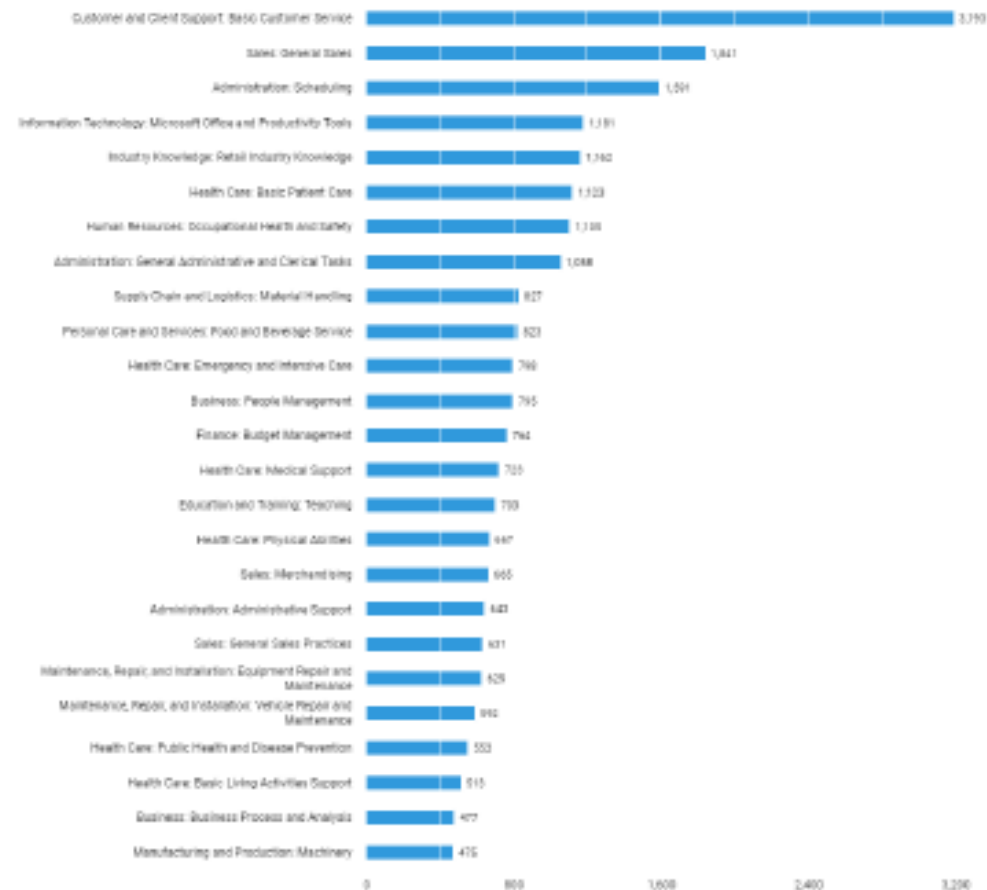
There are 5,298 unspecified postings.

Included Postings

New postings

Active Selections

Custom range (Jan. 1, 2020 - Mar. 31, 2020) AND (County : Barrow, GA OR County : Clarissa, 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)



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- 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 2019 Census estimate of 647,317 for an overall projected population growth of 12.8%. Projected population growth for 2025 is a 22.6% growth to a population of 703,354. The source for the population numbers was the US Census Bureau, Population Division. The number in the labor force in 2018 was 305,227 and in 2019 the number was 304,775 – a decrease of .1% , The number of employed persons in 2018 was 293,913 and 294,950 in 2019 an increase of .4%. The unemployment rate for the region was 3.7% in 2018 compared to 3.2% in 2019. The source of the labor force, employment and unemployment numbers was the Georgia Department of Labor and US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

12 county public school systems graduated 6234 students in 2018 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 2018-2019.

Labor Force Activity

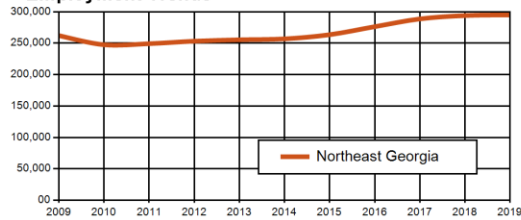
ANNUAL AVERAGES

	Labor Force			Employed			Unemployed			Rate		
	2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change
Barrow	39,906	40,385	1.2%	38,596	39,247	1.7%	1,310	1,138	-13.1%	3.3%	2.8%	-15.2%
Clarke	60,535	59,096	-2.4%	58,132	56,997	-2.0%	2,403	2,099	-12.7%	4.0%	3.6%	-10.0%
Elbert	7,790	7,658	-1.7%	7,417	7,352	-0.9%	373	306	-18.0%	4.8%	4.0%	-16.7%
Greene	7,001	7,010	0.1%	6,703	6,740	0.6%	298	270	-9.4%	4.3%	3.9%	-9.3%
Jackson	36,179	36,518	0.9%	35,069	35,550	1.4%	1,110	968	-12.8%	3.1%	2.7%	-12.9%
Jasper	6,858	6,939	1.2%	6,618	6,726	1.6%	240	213	-11.3%	3.5%	3.1%	-11.4%
Madison	13,609	13,282	-2.4%	13,130	12,877	-1.9%	479	405	-15.4%	3.5%	3.0%	-14.3%
Morgan	9,142	9,240	1.1%	8,816	8,953	1.6%	326	287	-12.0%	3.6%	3.1%	-13.9%
Newton	51,666	52,197	1.0%	49,358	50,187	1.7%	2,308	2,010	-12.9%	4.5%	3.9%	-13.3%
Oconee	19,976	19,510	-2.3%	19,387	19,014	-1.9%	589	496	-15.8%	2.9%	2.5%	-13.8%
Oglethorpe	7,086	6,929	-2.2%	6,825	6,706	-1.7%	261	223	-14.6%	3.7%	3.2%	-13.5%
Walton	45,479	46,011	1.2%	43,862	44,601	1.7%	1,617	1,410	-12.8%	3.6%	3.1%	-13.9%
Northeast Georgia Local Workforce Development Area	305,227	304,775	-0.1%	293,913	294,950	0.4%	11,314	9,825	-13.2%	3.7%	3.2%	-13.5%
Georgia	5,107,656	5,110,318	0.1%	4,906,411	4,935,310	0.6%	201,245	175,008	-13.0%	3.9%	3.4%	-12.8%
United States	162,075,000	163,539,000	0.9%	155,761,000	157,538,000	1.1%	6,314,000	6,001,000	-5.0%	3.9%	3.7%	-5.1%

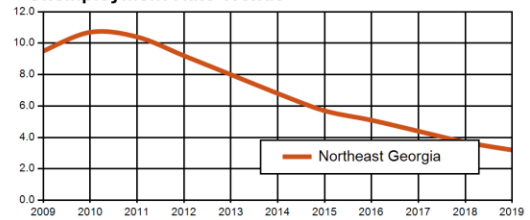
Note: This series reflects the latest information available. Labor Force includes residents of the county who are employed or actively seeking employment.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

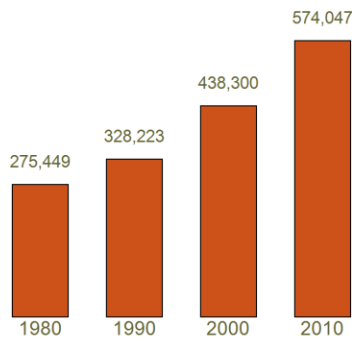
Employment Trends



Unemployment Rate Trends



Population Estimates



Population

	2010 Census	2019 Rank	2019 Estimate	% Change 2010-2019	2025 Projected*	% Change 2010-2025
Barrow	69,367		83,240	20.0	100,036	44.2
Clarke	116,714		128,331	10.0	134,588	15.3
Elbert	20,166		19,194	-4.8	19,066	-5.5
Greene	15,994		18,324	14.6	16,784	4.9
Jackson	60,485		72,977	20.7	76,414	26.3
Jasper	13,900		14,219	2.3	14,489	4.2
Madison	28,120		29,880	6.3	30,269	7.6
Morgan	17,868		19,276	7.9	19,734	10.4
Newton	99,958		111,744	11.8	128,095	28.1
Oconee	32,808		40,280	22.8	42,056	28.2
Oglethorpe	14,899		15,259	2.4	14,817	-0.6
Walton	83,768		94,593	12.9	107,206	28.0
Northeast Georgia	574,047		647,317	12.8	703,554	22.6

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, *Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

- 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.

The 12-county region has a number of local, independent initiatives as well as a unified sector strategy in place to address workforce needs. They include:

- four separate technical colleges, all of which have advisory committees made up of local partners and industry who advise the colleges on the programs needed in the area to develop the talent needed there.
- The K-12 educational entities – particularly those with career academies – have advisory councils that include local industry to help determine the pathways to be offered. There are currently eight Career Academies in the region.
- A number of Chambers of Commerce in the region have a workforce/education committee. In Athens the Chamber hosts an executive manufacturers roundtable meeting each month that includes representation from approximately 10 of the largest manufacturers, representatives from K-12, TCSG, and the University System of Georgia, and the local Economic Development representatives.
- The Georgia Department of Labor has Employer Committees for each office which provide information on workforce needs.
- Great Promise Partnership working with “at-risk” youth is active in six of the counties in the region with plans to expand.

The biggest challenge for the region is to develop a comprehensive service delivery that addresses multiple needs and incorporates the many training resources available including four separate technical colleges and the program as well as several non-credit instructional training programs who offer shorter-term, basic skills training intended for persons who need a job quickly and are not able to complete the traditional TCSG certification coursework. The strength of the system is that innovative, best practices are being developed in each area and can be shared with others. WorkSource NEGA has spent time in the past year creating a pipeline that incorporates the available resources of all partners and identifies activities, training programs, and practices for building a workforce starting with elementary school through graduation and beyond.

- 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.

WorkSource NEGA is connected with multiple initiatives in the region to support and foster workforce development efforts. They include:

- Serving in leadership roles on each of the Employment Relations committees sponsored by DOL
- Convening a subcommittee comprised of local industry to connect them with K-12 partners, DOL, TCSG, and other partners.
- Actively participating with local Chamber of Commerce events and initiatives as well as Economic Development entities of government and TCSG.
- Participation with Family Connection and Career Academy community events.

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.

Through our sector strategy, we participate in an Executive manufacturers roundtable comprised of executives from local manufacturing industries, chamber of commerce leadership, K-12, TCSG, and University System of Georgia representatives. Additionally, WorkSource NEGA facilitates a subcommittee from this roundtable group that is comprised of human services representatives, supervisors, and other key staff who report to the executives participating in the roundtable meeting. The purpose of the subcommittee is to connect the 'boots on the ground' staff so that industry needs are shared first-hand, internship and apprenticeship placements can be developed, and job availability is shared in real time with entities working to move students and unemployed adults through the pipeline.

- 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.

The local area is instituting a fully-executed workforce development pipeline that begins in 8th grade and continues post graduation. This work is a direct response to the feedback received from industries regarding the need to market modern manufacturing jobs to K-12 students, teachers, and parents. It includes the implementation of pathways, internships, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, summer working

opportunities, teacher externships, industry tours, industry speaker bureaus, and post-secondary education. The pipeline has been developed with input from K-12 systems, specifically those in work-based learning roles, DOL, TCSG, TCSG Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, GVRA, Development Authorities, and the input of the workforce development board.

Additionally, two of the technical colleges offer a five to six week short-term certification program called “ManufactuREADY” that couples occupational training, soft skills and a simulated manufacturing work environment. Upon completion of the course, graduates are given a preferred hiring status with several local manufacturers. The course is currently offered through two technical colleges in four locations, Greene, Walton, Newton, and Clarke Counties and serves approximately 100 participants a year; however, we are looking to expand service delivery to Elbert County in 2020 and expand similar offerings from Eligible Training Providers to ramp up the number of participants who have the opportunity to complete the training.

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 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 WIOA tax credit program.

As part of the future, further development of the pipeline, we plan to further explore the creation of internships, pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships through a partnership between the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship, the Technical College System of Georgia and other education and state agency partners

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

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.

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/One Stop 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.

The main focus of the sector strategy has been in Athens where the largest number of manufacturing jobs are available. The sector strategy is aligned with the work of the local and regional workforce development efforts as well as input from local industry. The core participants of the sector strategy include:

Partner Type	Organization Name	Point of Contact Title	Point of Contact (First Name)	Point of Contact (Last Name)
Industry	Georgia Power/Southern Company	Area Manager	Ferguson	Anthony (Tony)
Industry	ABB/Baldour	HR Manager	Segrest	Neill
Industry	RAI-USA	Business Development Mgr	Lowery	Harris
Industry	Carrier	HR Manager	Michelbach	Emily
Industry	Accurus Aerospace	HR Manager	Goodson	Sheila
Industry	Caterpillar	Logistics Manager	Martin	Brandon
Technical College System of GA	Athens Technical College	VP of Economic Development	Walker	Kelsie
University of GA	Fanning Institute	Public Service Faculty	Meyers	David
Department of Labor	Region 5 GDOL	Regional Coordinator	Lookofsky	Kathryn
GVRA	Region 5 GVRA	Regional Manager	Kaplan	Shari
Chamber of Commerce	Athens-Clarke Co Chamber of Commerce	CEO/President	Bradley	David
Georgia EC Dev Rep	Georgia Department of Economic Development	Project Manager	Daniel	Dobbins
K-12	Athens Community Career Academy	CEO	Lawrence	Harris
K-12	Athens Community Career Academy	Workforce Development Coordinator	Wesley	Mellina
Local Government	Athens-Clarke Co Economic Development	Manufacturing Sector Rep	Ryan	Thornton

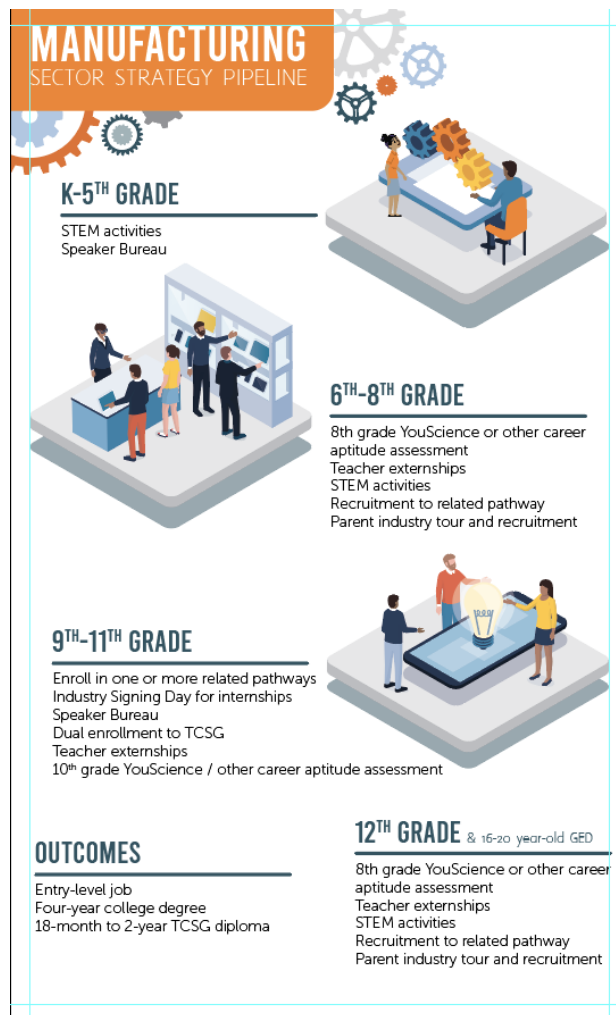
- b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.

The core sector strategy group meets once a month. Additionally, a subcommittee of that group meets bi-monthly and other related meetings with various partners occur as needed, but generally monthly at a minimum.

Northeast GA has multiple sector strategy partnerships; however, the main effort is with the Executive Manufacturers Roundtable meeting convened by Tony Ferguson with Georgia Power and David Bradley, Athens-Clarke County Chamber President. The subcommittee of this meeting is led by a special project consultant for WorkSource NEGA.

Additionally, work has just begun to duplicate the sector strategy plans that originated in Athens-Clarke County to Barrow, Jackson, Madison, Walton, Jasper, Morgan, Greene, and Newton Counties.

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic monthly meetings were occurring with the executive roundtable group; bi-monthly meetings with the subcommittee from that group; and quarterly meetings with the other counties to begin implementation of the proposed pipeline activities – see pipeline graphic below:




The goal of the sector strategy is to develop a clear pathway for young adults (starting with 8th graders) to become gainfully employed in a well-paying job in the field of manufacturing upon graduation. The pathway includes the integration of apprenticeships, internships, and an awareness of the continued education available to increase skill level and career options. This continued education can be with TCSG or the University; the information provided to students will include tuition assistance that is available through WIOA and local industry for scholarships. As part of the pathway development, teacher and counselor externships were coordinated, but will likely not occur due to the pandemic. We will continue to push to host these externships in 2021 so that students with an aptitude for engineering and manufacturing can be identified early on by teachers and guided toward an appropriate pathway.

Also, the sector strategy efforts have been expanded to support a short-term training pilot hosted at Foothills Academy, the non-traditional high school that has a presence in several counties in the region. The goal is to have students who are approaching graduation (or who have recently graduated) complete the training with the skills necessary to obtain an entry-level job in Advanced

Manufacturing as well as completion of several soft skills modules. Students who successfully complete this training will be connected with one of the leading manufacturers in the area and placed in a job, either part-time or full-time, depending on their future educational goals. The majority of the local industries offer scholarships to continue their education and also will work with the students on their work schedules so that they can attend classes.

WorkSource NEGA is in the process of exploring the expansion of this short-term training to be the sector strategy priority in the coming months. \$15,000 is earmarked in the budget to pay for teacher externships for June 2020; however, it is unlikely the externships will be able to occur due to the indefinite restrictions industry has in place regarding non-employees on site. To ensure we are continuing to move forward with our sector strategy goals, discussions are underway to discuss how we can utilize this funding to move students into the pipeline of needed jobs over the next six to nine months to other counties. To facilitate the hands-on portion of the training, the recently-purchased welding and industrial maintenance training trailers are used as part of the training. See flyer below:



Learn the skills you need for a job in
**INDUSTRIAL MECHANICS
OR WELDING!**

Check out the Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board's training trailers that teach manufacturing skills to those interested in a modern manufacturing career.

The trailers are available for use to:

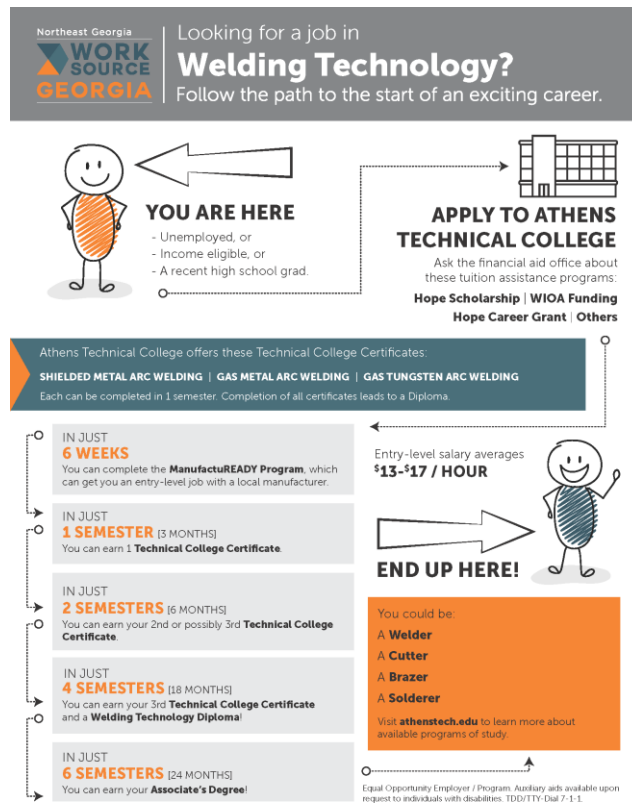
- Partner with local industry and other organizations to host short-term training courses to fill entry-level jobs
- Upskill current employees
- Prepare the emerging (k-12) workforce for high-demand jobs in modern manufacturing during camps and school breaks
- Participate in job fairs and other career awareness events

The trailers are handicap accessible and solve the workforce needs of local manufacturers by offering mobile training labs for organizations to recruit, train and retain skilled employees. To reserve the trailers for your event, or to learn more about them, contact WorkSource NEGA at crayburn@negrc.org.

Equal Opportunity Employer / Program. Auxiliary aids available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD/TTY: Dial 711.

Furthermore, the sector strategy includes a marketing campaign that promotes training and careers in modern manufacturing pathways. An example of the

materials developed include flyers explaining the path to a diploma in a manufacturing-related field.



- 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 2018 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. At the point of the sector selection, the following data was used to determine the initial sector

1. **Manufacturing:** 25,820 persons employed or 13.3% of total employment
2. **Transportation:** 24,684 persons employed or 13.0% of total employment
3. **Health Care:** 24,132 persons employed or 10.4% of total employment

Manufacturing was identified as the initial and subsequent 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:

i. Participating employers;

The following companies are actively participating with the sector strategy efforts.

They represent a wide range of manufactured products and available career options:

Barrow	Johns Manville Corp
Barrow	Progress Container & Display
Barrow	Shuetz Container
Clarke	ABB
Clarke	Carrier Transicold
Clarke	Caterpillar
Clarke	Accurus
Clarke	Johnson & Johnson
Clarke	RAI
Greene	Horizon Growers
Greene	NIBCO
Greene	Novellis
Jackson	Kubota
Madison	Georgia Metals Inc
Morgan	Antico-Mannington
Morgan	Flambeau Inc.
Morgan	Mannington
Newton	Beaver Manufacturing
Newton	Bridgestone Sports
Newton	CR Bard
Newton	Nisshinbo Automotive Mfg.
Newton	Old Castle Building Envelope
Newton	Pactikv LLC
Newton	SGD North America (Verescence)
Newton	SKC Inc.
Newton	SPG International
Newton	West Rock
Walton	Elite Storage Solutions
Walton	Hitachi Automotive Systems Americas
Walton	Leggett and Platt
Walton	Shire

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
- Welding (Tig/Mig)
- Electrical equipment manufacturing
- Metal Fabrication
- Chemical manufacturing
- Paper Products manufacturing
- Food manufacturing
- Distribution-related careers (forklift, robotics)

iii. Training programs

Training is provided by four different technical school systems as well as approved Eligible Training Providers. The curriculum is developed and taught based on feedback from employers obtained directly from the sector strategy meetings and TCSG Advisory groups.

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 Systems
 - Industrial Maintenance
 - Electronics
 - ManufactuREADY – NEGRC /Athens Technical College and Georgia Piedmont Technical College's Economic Development Divisions
 - “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 continue the support of the manufacturing sector through 2021 with efforts continuing on the development and implementation of workforce pipeline strategies. 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**.

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 two 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 these multiple access options, customers have access to many options in their local community and are subject to a maximum drive of approximately 25 miles for some specific trainings and resources. The local area also collaborates with the local library system as well as the senior adult centers providing access to resources including basic digital literacy.

- 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. The local area converted its USDOL Disability Employment Initiative Grant to a partner in the American Disability Employment Network. Participation in this initiative 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 region's comprehensive 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 at the One-Stop center on a scheduled basis.
 - WIOA Title I-Adult and Dislocated Worker Services- Staff are at the comprehensive one-stop on a scheduled basis. There are 2 staff there on a rotating basis utilizing space designated for them.
 - CSBG, ACTION, Inc. is physically located at the one-stop on a part-time basis. Access is available through electronic and telephonic means the rest of the time.
 - 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 however they do not receive education and training funds and are not a required partner. 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, selected through a competitive bid process, is Georgia Department of Labor. 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. A four year RFP for selection of a onestop operator was issued in March 2020 with anticipated selection in May 2020. A review of the contract expenses was conducted to complete a cost and

price analysis . This will be for the July 1, 2020-June 1, 2024 period pending consideration for annual renewal.

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 113-138, and applicable federal regulations (20 CFR 652 et al.), revisions/amendments to such Act and Regulations, Uniform Administrative Guidance 2 CFR Part 200 and DOL's exceptions: 2 CRF Part 900, and State and local manuals which may be made available for review.
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

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.

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT SERVICES**

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY
FOR APPLICANTS AND PARTICIPANTS**

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, Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Officer 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, GA 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371 wioacompliance@tcsq.edu	Georgia Office of Inspector General 2 MLK Jr. Drive, SW 1102 West Tower Atlanta, GA 30334 Phone: 866-435-7644 Form: http://oig.georgia.gov/file-Complaint	United States Department of Labor, 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

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	Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development Attn: Compliance Officer	United States Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave, NW Room N-4123

305 Research Drive Athens, GA 30606 Phone: 706-369-5703	1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150 Atlanta, GA 30345-4304 Phone: 404-679-1371	Washington, DC 20210 Phone: 866-487-2365
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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 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.
- 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 Officer 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 are solicited for organized labor representatives with representatives in the region. Nominations received are forwarded to the CLEO for consideration for appointment to the Board. The local area has 2 representatives who are affiliated with 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 ManufactuREADY in response to concerns raised by both employers and economic development professionals. This five to six week, five days 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 OneStop/MEGA meetings which take place quarterly. The local area, through its OneStop/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 TCSG 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.

Through the OneStop quarterly meetings, sector strategy meetings and WDB meetings throughout the year, input on workforce needs are gathered throughout the year. The information gathered has been used to develop the plan. The WDB was provided a draft for review and input.

The draft plan was posted on the NEGRC website 30 days prior to submission to TCSG OWD 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 a long-standing relationship with workforce entities in each county including the Chambers of Commerce/Economic Development/Local Workforce Development organizations, K-12 School Systems, DOL, GVRA, TCSG's, and local industries. We have been working toward common goals for 25 years. Our efforts are synthesized, and practices are shared through our one-stop partners and the one-stop coordinator who is funded through WIOA. The member of our workforce board are also closely aligned with these organizations and are leaders in their respective workforce development fields. Adult, youth and dislocated worker programs have been in 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 GVRA have resulted in the local area serving through WIOA funding approximately 7% persons with disabilities, 7% offenders and 7% veterans. Upon completion of the USDOL Disability Employment Initiative grant, the local area transitioned to the Employment Network through the American Disability Employment Network. It is anticipated that

participation in this network will expand 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.

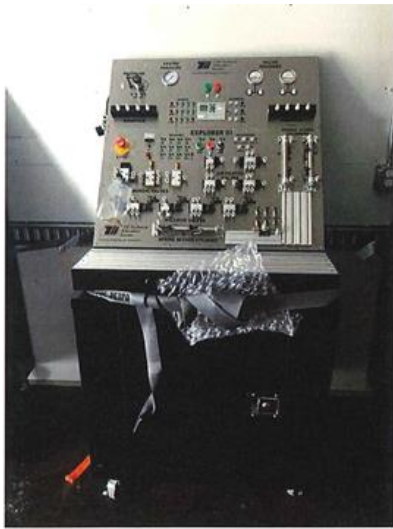
In 2017 as the unemployment rate declined, the local area instituted, as a part of its eligibility process, service to underemployed persons. The local area selected the 200% of the poverty guidelines as its income threshold. In 2019 this was changed to 150% as the economic conditions changed. The above actions are indicators of how the local area is continually responding to the changing economic and workforce environment.

In 2018, as a follow-up to previous GDEcD 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. They are contracted to serve 150 persons per contract period.

Additionally, 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.

Also in 2018, two 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. Once delivered, these trailers have been in use by Goodwill, K-12 systems, Local workforce entities, and several community partners to promote or offer certified training to students interested in a career in manufacturing.

The goal has been to increase the number of recognized credentials by working 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. Participants in need of a job quickly can obtain an entry-level job after 6 weeks of short-term training vs 18 – 24 months of a full certification program. The hope is that once the participant is employed, he/she will continue through the full certification pathway and move into a middle sector job rather than remain at the entry level. 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.



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.

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 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 as well as the work being done with the sector strategy. The area is planning to fully build out a K-12 Workforce pipeline that includes internships, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, teacher externships, student tours of industry and job placement coordination between the sector strategy group and the CTAE/WBL educational partners. 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 met and exceeded the Literacy/Numeracy Performance measure. There were 2 additional providers selected in the most recently issued Request for Proposals and were selected for funding by the WDB. Athens Technical College, and ACTION, Inc. providing service to Lanier Technical College students. The foundation of the Athens 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 3 providers, the local area anticipates serving approximately 125 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 2020 50 youth. This number is decreasing from the 2018 service level of between 60 and 100 youth due to youth allocation reductions.

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.

In an effort to expand the work-based learning activity, the local area 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.

The local area has adopted the ManufactuREADY Program incorporating softskills instruction with manufacturing basics. This 5-6 week course is currently operated in the region in 5 counties by two technical colleges. 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 averages around 100 graduates each year 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 ManufactuREADY 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 ManufactuREADY 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 used 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 continue to 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 sector strategy described above in addition to the local area's in-school youth program design provide a natural linkage to each and every public school system in the region. There is at least one person in each county who has a connection to the LWDA through the sector strategy or the ACTION, Inc. contract. Additionally, local area staff are engaged with the seven career academies in Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, 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. The sector strategy aims to inform teachers of the jobs available in manufacturing and connect youth to those pathways starting in 8th grade. Additionally, 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 35 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 6 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, 2018. 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 following policies apply for out-of-school participants enrolled in adult, youth or dislocated worker programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity 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 \$10.00 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 \$15.00 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 \$8.00 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. NEGRRC 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 NEGRRC 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.

The State of Emergency/Disaster Declaration Support Services Provision approved March 30, 2020 is stated below:

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC)
Office of Workforce Development (OWD)

Effective Date: March 14, 2020

Approved by WDB Executive Committee: March 30, 2020

STATE OF EMERGENCY AND/OR DISASTER DECLARATION

SUPPORT POLICY

Adults, Dislocated Worker & Youth

Special Waiver

Exceptions to traditional supportive services for Transportation and Childcare will be allowed in the event of extenuating circumstances, including, but not limited to, the issuance of a “State of Emergency” for counties in the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA), State of Georgia, or United States as a whole.

In the event of a declared “State of Emergency” and/or Disaster Declaration, and the WIOA participant’s training changes from attending an on-site institution, to receiving the training via on-line virtual learning, (excluding core and intensive services), the following policies will be in force.

Once the “State of Emergency” and/or Disaster Declaration are lifted, NEGRC OWD’s previous existing Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth supportive services policy will resume.

Policy

The following support policies apply for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth participants currently enrolled in WIOA.

1. Participants will be required to submit Attendance and Childcare Forms.
2. Since the NEGRC OWD in Athens is temporarily closed to the public, the NEGRC OWD will accept all participant Attendance and Childcare Forms utilizing one of the three methods below:
 - a) Support forms can be emailed to supportforms@negrc.org
 - b) Support forms may be placed in a dropbox located at NEGRC, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605 (main entrance)
 - c) Support forms may be mailed to NEGRC, Workforce Division, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605
3. Payments will be mailed directly to participants bi-weekly by NEGRC OWD in the form of a check to the address NEGRC OWD has on file. (If a participants address changes, it is the

responsibility of the participant to notify the NEGRC OWD office at supportforms@negrc.org)

4. Payments will depend on timely receipt of the Attendance and Childcare Forms. Support Forms must be received by 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday based on the current support payment chart. Support forms submitted after that date will be processed during the next two week cycle.
5. NEGRC OWD may conduct a random sample of participant Attendance Forms. The participant may be requested to provide their training institution's on-line class schedule to NEGRC OWD.
6. Falsification of childcare or attendance forms may result in being terminated from the NEGRC OWD program. The participant must make arrangements with NEGRC OWD to reimburse any funds received due to the falsification of information.
7. 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.

Transportation

1. Payments will be based on the **same class schedule** that the participant had in place before the declared disaster on March 14, 2020.
 - Example: participant was currently attending class three days a week at an institution prior to the declared disaster, the participant is now receiving training on-line. The participant will only receive \$10 per day for three days of on-line training.
2. To receive the meals/transportation support, a "Participant's Attendance Report" form must be completed bi-weekly and submitted utilizing one of the three methods below:
 - a) Support forms can be emailed to supportforms@negrc.org
 - b) Support forms may be placed in a dropbox located at NEGRC, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605 (main entrance)
 - c) Support forms may be mailed to NEGRC, Workforce Division, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605
3. The Attendance Form must contain the following information:
 - Participant's Name, school attending and the training program in which they are enrolled.
 - Last five numbers of participants SSN
 - Dates (month, day and year) must be filled in correctly in the space provided.
 - Hours scheduled and hours attended.
 - Signature and date of the participant.
 - Signature of instructor(s) verifying attendance **WILL NOT** be required during this time.
4. Meals/transportation assistance will not be paid when breaks between quarters occur i.e., Spring break, Christmas break.

5. Any forms that are not completed correctly and completely will be returned to the participant for correction.

Dependent Care

1. Eligible participants will continue to receive childcare payments, per day per child, in the same manner as before the declared disaster on March 14, 2020.
2. Childcare payments will be based on the **same class schedule** that the participant had in place before the declared disaster on March 14, 2020.
 - Example: participant was currently attending class three days a week at an institution prior to the declared disaster, the participant is now receiving training on-line. The participant will only receive childcare for three days of on-line training.
3. To receive the childcare support, a "Childcare Invoice" must be completed bi-weekly and submitted utilizing one of the three methods below:
 - a) Support forms can be emailed to supportforms@negrc.org
 - b) Support forms may be placed in a dropbox located at NEGRRC, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605 (main entrance)
 - c) Support forms may be mailed to NEGRRC, Workforce Division, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605
 - Participant's name, childcare providers name, name and age of child(ren).
 - Dates (month, day and year) must be filled in correctly in the space provided.
 - Amounts charged for days attended.
 - Signature and date of participant.
 - If the child is still attending daycare, the daycare provider must sign and date of Childcare Invoice.
4. If the child is not attending daycare due to the "State of Emergency" and/or Disaster Declaration, the childcare provider will need to provide a statement to confirm that in order to maintain the child's slot during this time, payment will be required.
 - A Childcare Invoice will need to be completed with the attached statement from the childcare provider.
 - Signature of childcare provider **WILL NOT** be required
5. Childcare will not be paid when breaks between quarters occur i.e., Spring break, Christmas break.
6. Any forms that are not completed correctly and completely will be returned to the participant for correction.

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

Other Requirements and Policies

Support forms must be received at the NEGRC OWD no later than 12:00 pm on Tuesday of the support processing week. (Participants will utilize the support pay chart indicating support processing weeks). If forms are received after the 12:00 noon deadline on Tuesday, they will not be processed until the next two week cycle.

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.
- 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 325 different employers with trained employees in Program Year 2018.
- 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 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. 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, Athens Technical College. As needed, additional partners may schedule to use space.

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 is 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 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 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:

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

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

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%
Welding Technician	639 jobs	4.8%

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 served as a USDOL pilot site a Disability Employment Initiative grant in which GVRA staff and Workforce Development staff worked 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.

To be inserted upon receipt from TCSG OWD

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.

The workforce board receives quarterly reports from the one-stop operator on the array of services provided to customers accessing services at the comprehensive one-stop site as well as the number of customers receiving services from which partner via the comprehensive one stop site. The one stop operator worked with the one stop partners in PY19 to develop a referral process for the partners to use. Adjustments are being made to this process. Reports will be provided to the workforce development on the information gathered from this process.

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 TCSG OWD.

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-prodecures-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 \$4500 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 \$7500, 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 TCSG OWD 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.

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 materials. Earlier this year the DOL/One-Stop Signage was installed.

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. (See photo above) 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. **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.

EFFECTIVE 10/16/19

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires Priority of Service be given to “public benefits recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient” when providing career and training services using WIOA Title I adult funds. WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E)

Priority of Service Must be Provided in the Following Order:

1. Veterans and Eligible Spouses WIOA § 3 (63)(A), TEGL 3-15, TEGL 10-09
2. Low Income Individuals
 - SNAP or TANF recipient (current or within last six months)
 - Supplemental Social Security (SSI) recipient
 - Homeless individual
 - Receives free or reduced-price lunch
 - Is a foster youth
 - Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets WIOA’s income requirements, even if the individual’s family income does not
 - Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family size, is at or below 150% of the current Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) and Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines (whichever is higher) See chart attached
3. Basic skills deficient

Additional Restrictions

1. Individuals applying for training services and who already have one of the following will be considered for retraining on a case by case basis.
 - an attainment of a recognized public technical college or private proprietary school certificate/credential
 - an attainment of a recognized public technical college diploma
 - an attainment of a recognized public technical college associate degree
 - bachelor’s degree
2. Individuals who currently have a master’s degree or any higher advanced degree will not be eligible for retraining.
3. An individual who has had WIOA funded training but did not complete the training will not be considered for additional training unless information provided to the WIOA office can substantiate the extenuating circumstances on why the individual did not complete training.
4. Training assistance for individuals seeking a four-year college and advanced degrees will only be approved for funding in areas that are occupational specific, and are in current demand areas, **and can be** completed within the time limits set by WIOA.

When Services or WIOA Resources are Limited:

In accordance with 20 CFR Section 663.600, and WIOA Section 134(d)(4)(E), if limited funding has been declared in the local area, priority of service must be provided in the following order: WIOA § 3 (63)(A), TEGL 3-15, TEGL 10-09

1. Veterans and Eligible Spouses WIOA § 3 (63)(A), TEGL 3-15, TEGL 10-09
2. Low Income Individuals
 - SNAP or TANF recipient (current or within last six months)
 - Supplemental Social Security (SSI) recipient
 - Homeless individual
 - Receives free or reduced-price lunch
 - Is a foster youth
 - Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets WIOA's income requirements, even if the individual's family income does not
 - Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family size, is not in excess of the current Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) and Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines (whichever is higher) See chart attached
3. Basic skills deficient

Additional Restrictions

1. Individuals applying for training services and who already have one of the following will be considered for retraining on a case by case basis.
 - an attainment of a recognized public technical college or private proprietary school certificate/credential
 - an attainment of a recognized public technical college diploma
 - an attainment of a recognized public technical college associate degree
 - bachelor's degree
2. Individuals who currently have a master's degree or any higher advanced degree will not be eligible for retraining.
3. An individual who has had WIOA funded training but did not complete the training will not be considered for additional training.
4. Training assistance for individuals seeking a four-year college and advanced degrees will only be approved for funding in areas that are occupational specific, and are in current demand areas, **and can be** completed within the time limits set by WIOA.

The region will add the following target populations as specified by state and federal policy: In 2018 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. They are contracted to serve 150 persons per contract period.

3. **Alignment with State Goals** – Describe how the area/region will align with each of the goals listed in the State Unified Plan.
 - a. Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.
The development of the k-12 workforce pipeline is a collaborative effort of k-12 systems, local government and industry, and state partners. All are aligned and in agreement of the sector strategy goal of beginning the workforce pipeline in high

school through engagement with students, parents, and educators and continuing it through post-grad for those who are unemployed and recently graduated.

- b. Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.
WorkSource NEGA works through its collaborative network to ensure streamlined services and non-duplication, except where the demand for services warrants multiple, similar efforts as with the need for short-term training vs. full diploma or degreed certifications.
- c. Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities.
The two training trailers available for teaching students (and adults) are available for teaching applied and soft skills anywhere in the region. A process has been developed to request use of the trailers. The curriculum can be taught by industry or a provider selected by the local community based on the needs of that community. These training trailers combined with the mobile units that can be used for resume writing and job interviewing skills allow for the majority of the essential core services to be offered anywhere, anytime based on the needs of the community.
- d. Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels.
Significant work has been done over the past two years to connect with the education system in the region and to align workforce efforts. This is the central focus of the sector strategy – see the sector strategy description above.
- e. Alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system.
We are anticipating significant changes in the labor market post-COVID-19. Prior to the pandemic, unemployment was exceptionally low, but will likely be much higher as we enter into a likely recession. Regardless, our strategy has been to both build a workforce to enter high-demand jobs in modern manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, and other sectors while working with the technical colleges and short-term training providers to offer opportunities to obtain both the minimal skills needed to obtain an entry-level job and/or the full certification diploma and work experience needed to begin a career in one of the higher demand fields.

Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing: Please make note if there are any current vacancies and what category that vacancy is in. If you do have vacancies, state the amount to time that the seat has been vacant and /or provide the waiver from OWD.

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Area: Northeast Georgia

<u>Name</u>	<u>Represented Category</u>	<u>Organization & Affiliation</u>	<u>Title</u>
Ronnie Boggs	Oglethorpe Private Sector	Lexington Antiques	Owner
David Cagle	Organized Labor	Plumbers, Pipefitters & HVAC Service Technicians, Local Union 72	Marketing Representative
Kathryn Lookofsky	Department of Labor/Regional	Department of Labor	Regional Coordinator, Region 5
Javier Montalvo	Walton Private Sector	Hitachi Automotive Systems Americas, Inc.	V. P. Human Resources
Andrea Daniel	TCSG Education/Regional	Athens Technical College	President
Bobby Hildreth	Morgan Private Sector	Georgia Power Company	Area Manager
Paul Chambers	Oconee Private Sector	AT & T	NE GA. Regional Director of External Affairs

Kay Keller	Community Based Organization/Regional	United Way of Northeast Georgia	President/CEO
Bob Hughes	Economic Development/ Regional	Madison/Morgan County Chamber of Commerce	President & Economic Development Director
Gina Mixon	Jackson Private Sector	Jackson EMC	Director, Benefits and Employee Development
Chris Kubas	Elbert Private Sector	Elberton Granite Association	Executive Vice President
Brenda Lazarus	Greene Private Sector	Reynolds Lake Oconee	Senior Vice President Human Resources
Howard Ledford	Education/ Regional	Lanier Technical College	Dean
Zack Taylor	Jasper Private Sector	Georgia Power Company	Local Manager
Tony Hoyle	Organized Labor	Mechanical Trades Institute – UA 72	Welding Director

Shari Kaplan	Rehabilitation Services/ Regional	Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency	Service Area Manager
Jeffery Wearing	Newton Private Sector	Ready Rentall	President/Owner
Dave Ward	Madison Private Sector	Medlink Georgia	CEO
Laurie Iski	Community Based Organization	ACTION, INC.	Senior Director of Education and Community Programs
Joe Vogt	Barrow Private Sector	Solvay, Inc.	Plant Manager
Carol Williams	Clarke Private Sector	Coldwell Banker	Realtor
Penny S. Benton	Education	University of Georgia	Human Resources Senior Manager

Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance PY20

To Be Submitted Upon Negotiation with TCSG OWD

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:

Attachment 4: Signature Page

The undersigned hereby agree to adhere to all applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and policies in performing any duty associated with the funds made available to under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Name: **Carol Rayburn Cofer**

Title: **Local Workforce Area Director**

Entity Representing: **Northeast Georgia Regional Commission**

Signature: _____

Name: **Kevin Little**

Title: **Chief Local Elected Official**

Entity Representing: **Walton County Commissioners**

Signature: _____

Name: **Joe Vogt**

Title: **Local Workforce Development Board Chair**

Entity Representing: **Barrow County Private Sector**

Signature: _____