
LOUISIANA REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REGION 2

Workforce Investment Opportunity Act Requirements, State Directives, And Vision

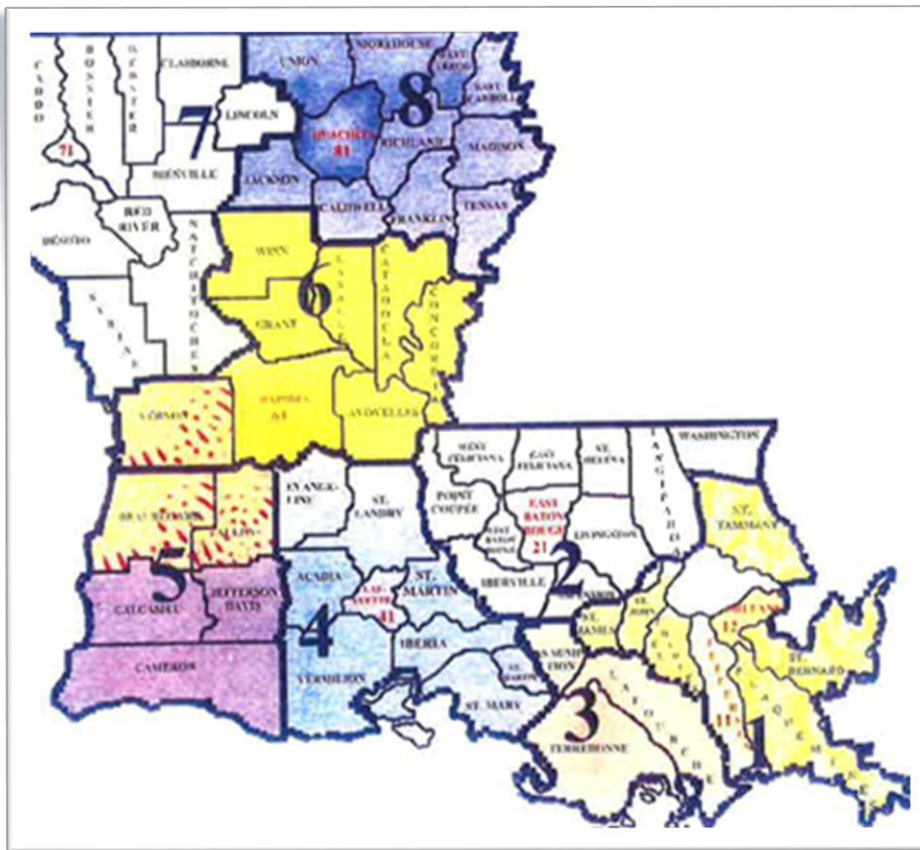


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WORKFORCE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) REQUIREMENTS, STATE DIRECTIVES, AND VISION

Economic Conditions Including Existing And Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors And Occupations

Based on the guidance provided in the Louisiana State Plan, each local workforce development area in Louisiana will submit a plan that includes the 1) *regional planning components* (developed by the regional planning team) and 2) *local planning components* (developed by the LWDA) as required by the US Departments of Labor and Education. For purposes of regional and local plan compliance, it is expected that regional and local plans will follow the format of the Planning Guide beginning with the chapter headings and address each item of required content.

The WIOA requires the state, regional and local workforce plans to be developed in concert with the core and required partners and stakeholders. Louisiana’s planning process begins with the state’s vision and guiding principles as approved by the Local Workforce Development Board comprised of business, workforce, education, and state agency officials.

State Vision

“We, the people of Louisiana, envision a workforce system that will provide pathways for all Louisianans, including individuals who are receiving public assistance, the unemployed or underemployed, those who are deficient in basic skills, as well as persons with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and others who have significant barriers to employment. All will have access to education, training and supportive services needed to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.”

REGIONAL OVERVIEW: KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF REGION 2

Region Local Metropolitan Area 2 (Region 2) of Louisiana sits in the southern portion of the state, west of New Orleans, comprised of 11 parishes: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana. The region hosts a diversity of rural and urban geographies and is home to approximately 494,000 individuals who participate in the Civilian Labor force.

Working civilians in Region 2 earn weekly wages that range from \$309.00 (Accommodations and Food Service) to \$2,372.00 (Utilities) with households enjoying average household incomes that range from \$34,985.00 (Washington Parish) to \$76,589.00 (Ascension Parish), source: US Census Community Survey. Region 2 had 3,509 unemployment insurance claims (Q4, 2019).

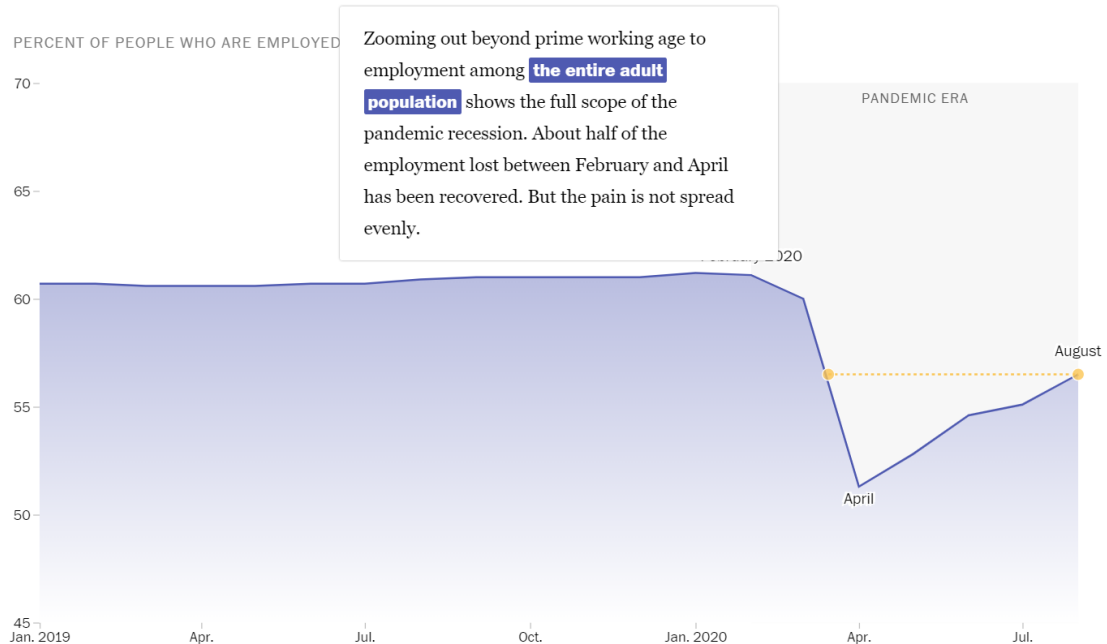
The future job growth of Region 2 projects an anticipated 10.1% growth through 2026. Three industries that anticipate the most growth are: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (20.2% projected increase); Administrative and Waste Services (16.7% projected increase); and Accommodation and Food Services (14.8% projected increase).

In short, Region 2 is an economically and demographically diverse region that has enjoyed relatively low unemployment rates at 5.6% (pre-COVID). Region 2 also has a promising job growth forecast (8.2%) on par with anticipated population growth for the region and is above the expected national job growth at 6.6%.

CHAPTER 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – REGIONAL COMPONENT

Preamble

It is difficult to write a current plan without the acknowledgement of the historic (and, uncharted) economic implications of the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. Like the other states in the Union, Louisiana's economic landscape has been altered.

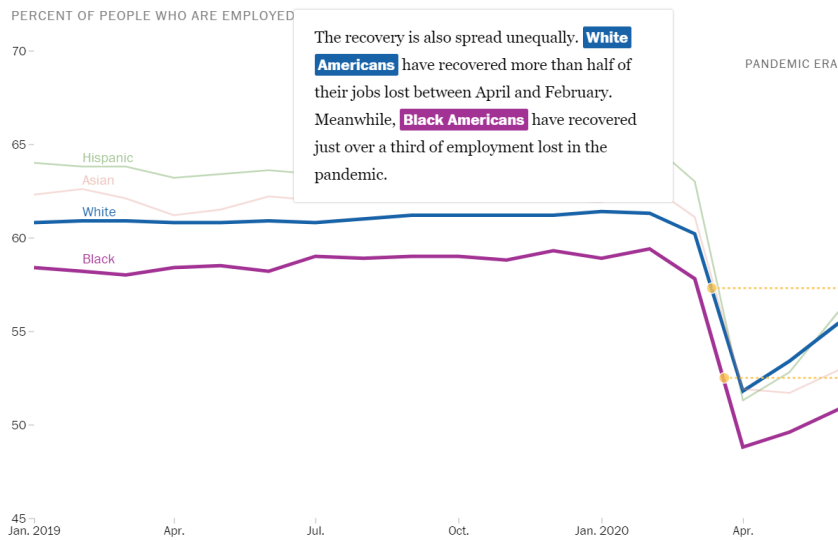


Source: Washington Post

According to the US Department of Labor, in the months preceding the stay at home order issued by Governor Edwards on March 22, 2020, Region 2 had an unemployment rate that hovered between 3% - 5%. By April, the unemployment rate in Region 2 was 13%; since then, we have seen monthly gains; lowering the unemployment rate to 9.6%

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and companies continue to find their way into the new economy, workers will re-enter the workforce and the unemployment rate is expected to drop. That said, economists are not expecting the economy to completely rebound. As such, it is reasonable to anticipate an increased demand from unemployed, long-term unemployed and displaced workers looking to find their livelihood in a changed economic landscape. Additionally, it is expected that overall demand for youth services will increase since there are fewer entry-level jobs available in Retail and Accommodations sectors. For further insights into the scope and unequal impact of this economic downturn, consideration of the national economy is warranted. The Washington Post observes that: “this economic collapse has been the most unequal recession in modern history; delivering a mild setback for those at or near the top and a depression-like blow for those at the bottom”. Meaning an already vulnerable population has been placed in even more dire straits when it comes to their economic outlook. Recessions often hit poorer households harder, but this one is doing so at a scale that is the worst in generations. While the nation overall has regained nearly half of the lost jobs, several key demographic groups have recovered more slowly, including mothers of school-age children, Black men, Black women, Hispanic men, Asian Americans, younger Americans (ages 25 to 34) and people without college degrees. With these challenges and unique implications in mind, Region 2 will respond in real-time to the needs of industry and workforce. Data will be used to drive strategy and investment that help move people into jobs and help to grow the economy.

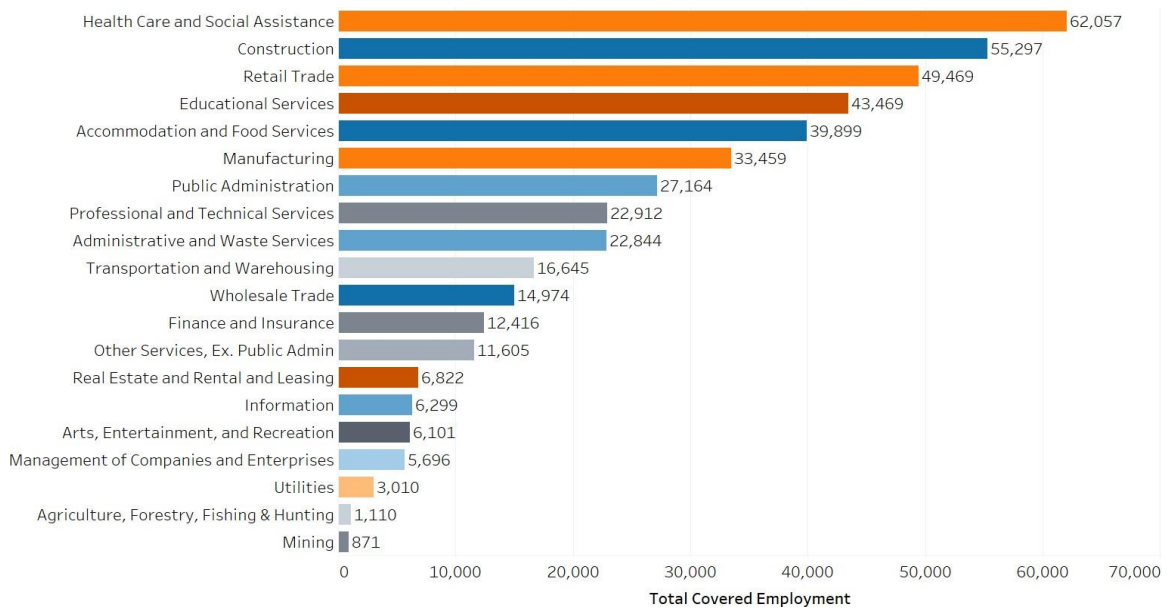
2020 - 2024



Source: Washington Post

Section 1A: Targeted Industries, High-Impact Industry Clusters, And In-Demand Occupations In The Region

Distribution of Employment by Industry in 2019, First Quarter

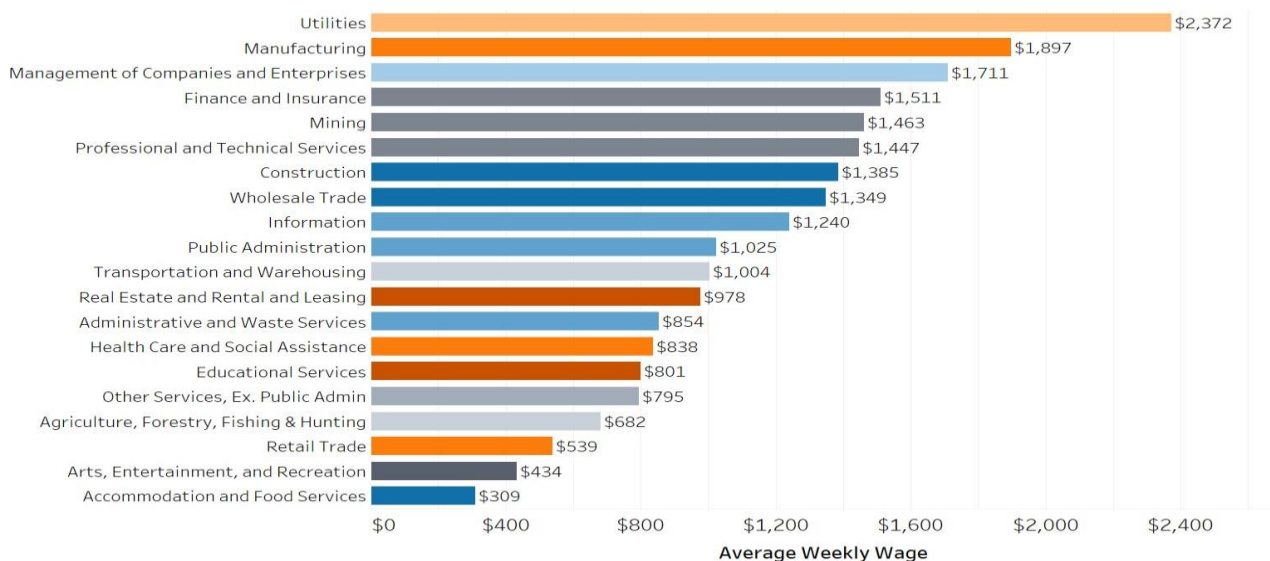


Above: This chart shows employment by industry in the first quarter of 2019. The largest sector in the region is **Health Care and Social Assistance** followed by **Construction** and **Retail Trade**.

Below: This chart shows which industries paid the highest average weekly wages in the first quarter of 2019.

Construction is one of the most important employment-driving industries in this region, offering the second most jobs in the region and the seventh highest average weekly wage, \$1,385.

Distribution of Average Weekly Wage by Industry in 2019, First Quarter



Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Analysis

In the first quarter of 2019, the top 5 existing largest industry clusters for Region 2 are: Health Care and Social Assistance with 62,057 jobs; Construction with 55,297 jobs; Retail Trade with

49,469 jobs; Educational Services with 43,469 jobs; and Accommodation and Food Services with 39,899 jobs. The average weekly wages for the five top industries are: Manufacturing at \$1,897; Construction at \$1,385; Healthcare & Social Services at \$838; Educational Services at \$801; Retail Trade at \$503; and Accommodation and Food Service at \$309.

Three emerging in-demand sectors for Region 2 are: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (20.2% projected increase) with average weekly wages of \$1,447.00; Administrative and Waste Services (16.7% projected increase) with average weekly wages of \$854.00; and Accommodation and Food Services (14.8% projected increase) with average weekly wages of \$309.00.

In summary, using the data presented above – including wage data- the in-demand industry sectors for Region 2 are: Healthcare and Social Assistance; Construction; Educational Services; and Administrative and Waste Services. While the Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Service clusters offer a significant number of jobs, the jobs in these clusters are primarily entry-level, lower-wage jobs that do not offer career advancement.

Several observable factors have positively influenced the viability of Region 2's chosen focus industry clusters. Specifically, as the approximately 72 million Baby boomers continue to age (and live longer), their healthcare and personal needs will continue to grow demand in the healthcare/ social services sector and generate thousands of in-demand occupations (with an average wage of \$838 weekly wage). Despite the continued expected long-term growth of this sector, it is important to note that there has been a (temporary) loss of nursing jobs in the region

due to the restrictions on elective procedures as a result of COVID- related policies. As these regulations are eased, it is anticipated that nursing and other healthcare jobs will recoup losses. This understanding provides a sense of confidence that the healthcare sector will continue to provide a large quantity of in-demand occupations.

Closely related to the success of the healthcare sector is another in-demand sector, Educational Services, ranked #4 in the region with an average weekly wage of \$804. Part of the demand in the education services sector is driven by Americans looking for career pathways that were once provided by middle-skill jobs. As those once, good-paying careers continue to produce fewer job openings, Americans are pursuing post-secondary education as a path to employment and the American Dream, but this is not a straight-forward solution. Complicating the analysis of this sector are declining enrollment rates (2014 – 2019; the US Department of Education) and the recent increased enrollment at 2-year institutions in the months following the economic slowdown caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

These data points combined with the current job seeker traffic in the Career Centers, point towards more displaced and dislocated workers entering 2-year programs that offer certifications for in-demand occupations like: nursing, heavy-equipment operators, waste water management and allied healthcare occupations.

Consequently, Region 2 has and will continue to pursue partnerships with top-notch education institutions to provide the training that ensures Region 2 has a ready workforce – including those needed to staff the training and education programs needed to pursue in-demand occupations.

While Region 2 has a relatively strong economy, there are areas of concern. Specifically, the labor force members who worked in the approximately 89,000 jobs (Q4, 2019) in the retail and accommodation/food service industries. These low-skill, low-wage jobs are among the hardest hit during 2020; many of these losses were because of COVID-19 – related restrictions. According to the federal government, the national economy loss nearly half of the jobs in the accommodations/ food service industry, but as Louisiana re-opens, some of those jobs are slowly returning. That said the region does not anticipate either of these industries returning to pre-COVID levels and prepare to offer training services to job seekers looking to return to work in an in-demand industry. Job seekers will be provided professional career counseling to better understand the opportunities for re-employment in another in-demand occupation.

Sections 1B & 1C

A healthy economy is a two-part equation: employers and talent. To find viable pathways to help unemployed job seekers return to work sooner, the needs of the employers must be considered to determine our regional investment priorities. The two economic variables must be addressed in coordination to ensure the best possible outcome for our community. Coordination takes intentionality and data to drive decisions. Specifically, Region 2 uses the following data sets: regional occupation, training, and skills to shape policy decisions.

Based on the available industry data and the wage data provided in Section A.1, the targeted in-demand (existing and emerging) industry sectors are: 1) Healthcare and Social Services (2,056 job openings); 2) Educational Services; 3) Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (20.2% projected increase); and 4) Administrative and Waste Services (16.7% projected increase). Note: Accommodation and Food Services has been excluded because of the lower

wages (average weekly wages of \$309.00) and Construction has been excluded due to the lack of significant job openings in the current economy. What can be inferred from this data is that Region 2 employers cannot meet their current demand with the existing talent pool. As a consequence, deliberate coordination efforts with employers will help inform the training and sourcing of the regional talent pipeline.

Examples of relevant career pathways for each industry sector listed above, are as follows:

Healthcare and Social Services

- Registered Nurse
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

- Software Developer
- Cyber Security Specialist

Administrative and Waste Services

- Wastewater Treatment Technician
- Water Production Operator
- Water Treatment Operator

*Area Profile for 2nd Regional Labor Market Area, Baton Rouge, LA***Table 1A: Industries by Advertised Jobs**

The table below shows the industries with the highest job openings advertised online in 2nd Regional Labor Market Area, Baton Rouge, LA on September 30, 2020 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Rank	Industry	Job Openings
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,056
2	Retail Trade	1,615
3	Accommodation and Food Services	1,173
4	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	525
5	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	489
6	Educational Services	449
7	Public Administration	394
8	Manufacturing	341
9	Wholesale Trade	275
10	Finance and Insurance	216

Source: Online advertised jobs data

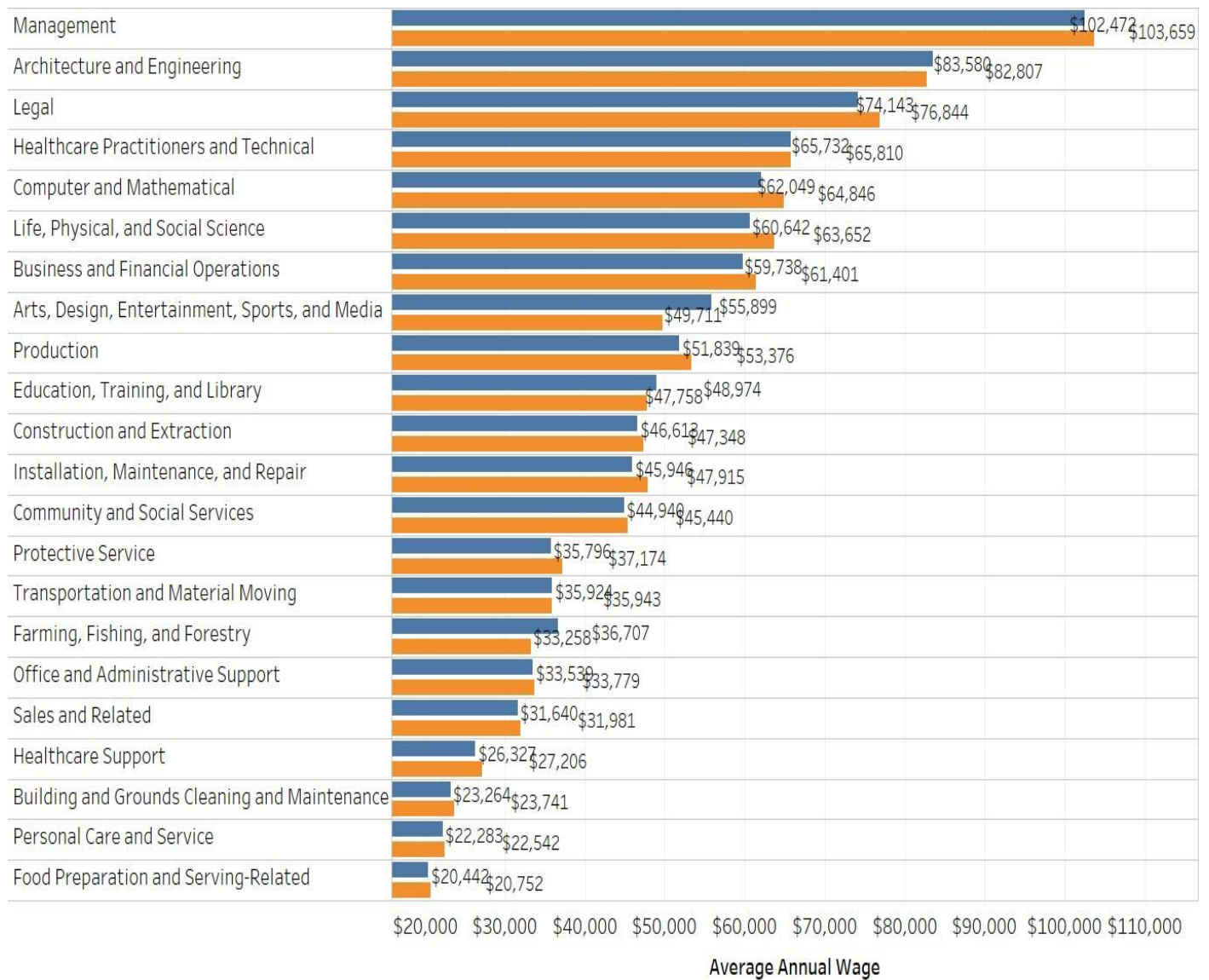
Table 1B: Occupations by Advertised Jobs

The table below shows the occupations with the highest number of job openings advertised online in 2nd Regional Labor Market Area, Baton Rouge, LA (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Rank	Occupation	Job Openings
1	Registered Nurses	496
2	Customer Service Representatives	413
3	Retail Salespersons	331
4	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	313
5	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	259
6	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	238
7	General and Operations Managers	221
8	Driver/Sales Workers	193
9	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	153
10	Nursing Assistants	109

LA Regional Workforce Development Plan – Area 2

2020 - 2024



■ 2017
■ 2018

2020 - 2024

Table 1C: Largest Annual Occupational Openings by Degree Type

Star Rating	Degree Type	Degree	Annual Total Openings	2018 Annual Average Wage
5	Bachelors Degree	General and Operations Managers	670	\$121,473
5	Bachelors Degree	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	400	\$49,452
5	Bachelors Degree	Accountants and Auditors	330	\$64,947
5	Bachelors Degree	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	230	\$52,697
5	Bachelors Degree	Financial Managers	140	\$110,608
5	Bachelors Degree	Construction Managers	130	\$101,628
4	Bachelors Degree	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	130	\$50,025
4	Bachelors Degree	Human Resources Specialists	120	\$54,598
5	Associate's Degree	Registered Nurses	620	\$61,312
4	Associate's Degree	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	530	\$38,359
5	Associate's Degree	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	500	\$50,854
4	Associate's Degree	Chemical Plant and System Operators	240	\$67,451
5	Associate's Degree	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	120	\$49,225
4	Associate's Degree	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	110	\$42,205
5	Associate's Degree	Administrative Services Managers	90	\$85,298
4	Associate's Degree	Chemical Technicians	80	\$73,356
4	Associate's Degree	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	80	\$30,337
3	Post- Secondary Vocational	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	810	\$32,482
4	Post- Secondary Vocational	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	720	\$40,204
3	Post- Secondary Vocational	Customer Service Representatives	720	\$32,482
5	Post- Secondary Vocational	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	720	\$42,375
1	Post- Secondary Vocational	Cooks, Restaurant	620	\$23,986
2	Post- Secondary Vocational	Nursing Assistants	520	\$23,458
5	Post- Secondary Vocational	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	520	\$60,363
5	Post- Secondary Vocational	Welders, Cutters, Soldiers, and Braziers	500	\$63,557
4	Post- Secondary Vocational	Carpenters	470	\$46,903

Table 1D: Advertised Job Skills

The table below shows the top advertised detailed job skills found in job openings advertised online in 2nd Regional Labor Market Area, Baton Rouge, LA in August, 2020.

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	6,959
2	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	1,566
3	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	1,471
4	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	1,414
5	Problem solving	Basic Skills	1,380
6	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	1,198
7	Time management	Basic Skills	1,143
8	Decision making	Basic Skills	937
9	Positive attitude	Interpersonal Skills	882
10	Verbal communication skills	Interpersonal Skills	745

Source: Online advertised jobs data

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In addition to this formal education/ certification requirement, employers indicate that most open jobs also require: “basic skills”, “interpersonal skills” and “customer service skills”.

As discussed in Section A, many of the in-demand sectors require post-secondary training/ certification. Consequently, the region will seek partnerships and programs that help job seekers acquire and hone these skill sets.

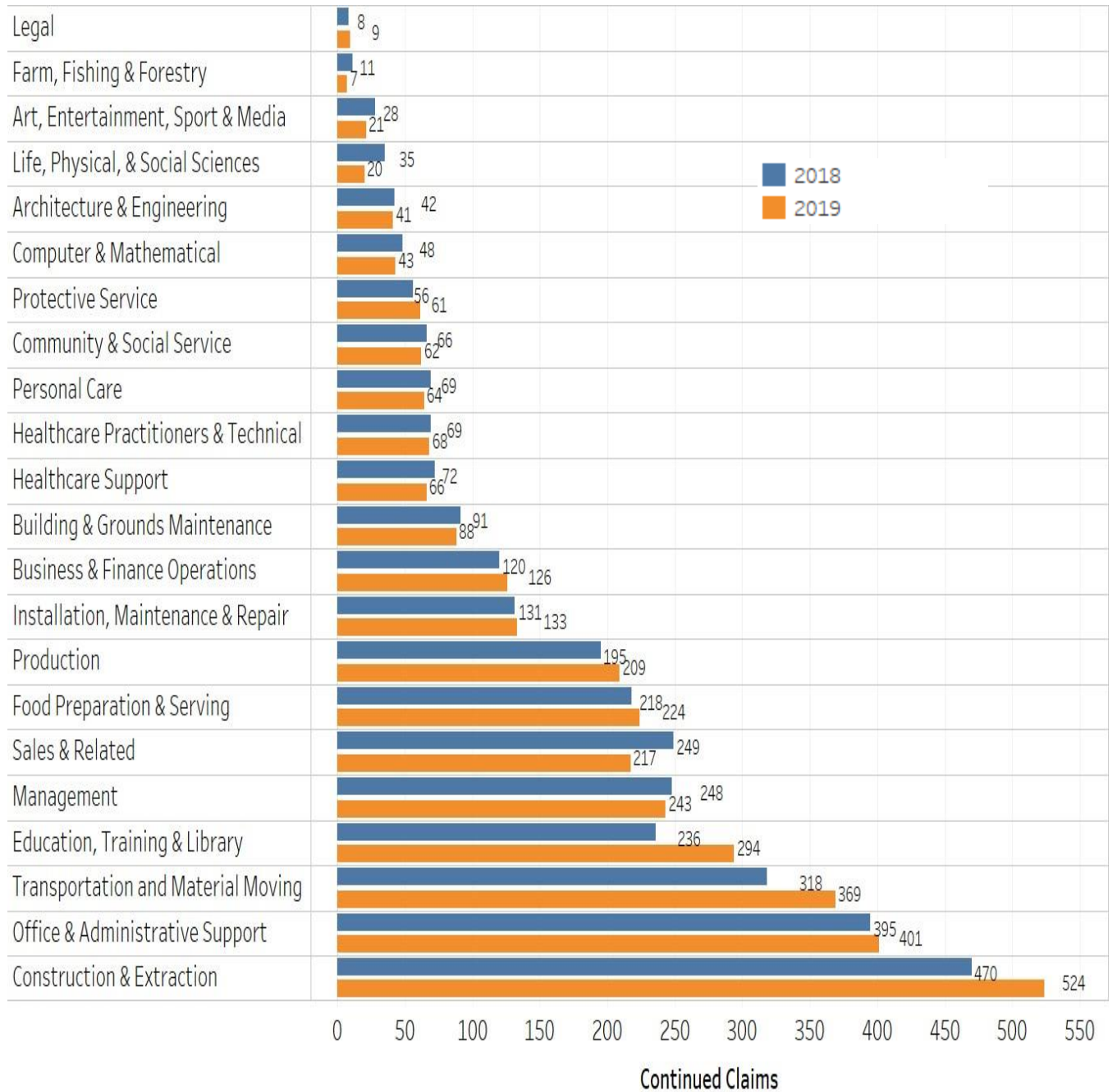
One strategy to meet this end will include the requirement for all training providers to make certain that their programs include instruction in “basic skills”, “interpersonal skills”, and “customer service skills”. Once previously - unemployed jobseekers have the requisite skill sets, they will be expertly matched to opportunities available in the market.

Section 1D

The vast majority of jobseekers entering the public workforce system are currently (or recently) unemployed. The largest contributors to the unemployment numbers are the following sectors: 1) Construction (524 claims); 2) Office and Administrative Support (401 claims); and 3) Transportation & Materials Movement (369 claims). It can be inferred that these unemployed jobseekers (available talent) possess the requisite skills and experience needed to obtain employment in the relevant industry. Comparing the available talent against the job openings list, offers us insight into the skills match or skills gaps in the region.

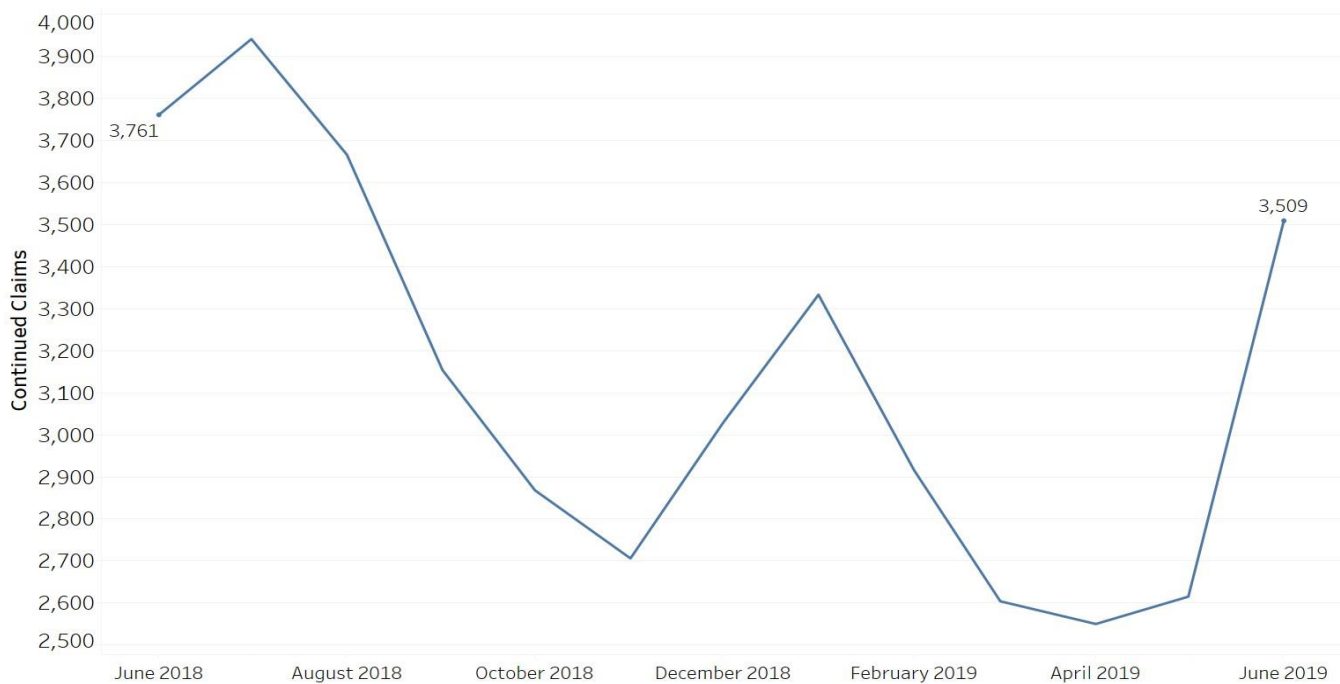
In Region 2, there is a significant skills gap when analyzing the in-demand industries. The market shows a current and projected demand in industries that require specific skills and/ or certifications (e.g. Registered Nurse) that are not currently held by the majority of the available talent, as identified by unemployment claims. Targeted training and apprenticeships will be used to help jobseekers obtain the requisite skills needed to re-enter the workforce.

2020 - 2024



Above: Continued claims, filed for the week containing the 12th of the month, have decreased in the Baton Rouge RLMA over the past year, declining from 3,761 in June 2018 to 3,509 in June 2019.

Below: East Baton Rouge Parish had the most continued claims for the Baton Rouge Region in June 2018, while Tangipahoa Parish had the second-highest number of claims.



Section 1E

Much like the remainder of the country, Louisiana has a shortage of tech talent.

To meet the talent churn in some of our in-demand industry clusters, special sector initiatives have been created. Highlighted below is Region 2's partnership with Apprenti as part of Region 2's Technology sector initiative.

In Region 2, there are persistent needs for cybersecurity and software developer roles, both within the tech sector and in other sectors that heavily rely on technology. Consequently, Region 2 has

partnered with a national organization, Apprenti. Apprenti provides short-term, full-time accelerated technical training with completion of three stackable and portable industry-based certifications directly tied to competencies of the apprenticeable occupational role. Following training, apprentices receive full-time employment with benefits with hiring partners as part of a one-year on-the-job training (OJT) to build the tech workforce for industry. Training is provided for new entrants to the workforce, dislocated workers (DW), and incumbent workers (IW) in these high-wage, high-demand jobs with structured career pathways – with an emphasis on diversity, providing increased opportunities for women, minorities, and veterans.

The Apprenti LA training design is not done in isolation. The organization works directly with industry to determine the scope and scale of its work in the region. Specifically, Tech employers in Louisiana are faced with an increasingly challenging recruiting environment, as demand for talent vastly outweighs the supply of workers. CompTIA's Cyberstates 2020 report cites Louisiana's Innovation Score ranked as 26th (up from 32nd in 2018, and 45th in 2017) and its Net Tech Employment Rank as 32nd with 85,553 Net Tech Employment and 24,556 Tech Job Postings in 2019. With 1,149 degrees earned from Louisiana higher-education (2- and 4-year degree) institutions in 2018, the ratio of tech job postings is more than 21 times the number of tech degree completions, and many of these degree completers are leaving the state for more lucrative markets such as Atlanta, Dallas, Boston, Seattle and Silicon Valley, leaving an even bigger talent tech gap. The discrepancy in posting demands, versus degree completions, shows that the current talent pipeline for tech professionals is simply not robust enough to meet the demand. When employers across all industries are challenged to find people with the right talent and are unable to fill vacant positions through their established pipelines, they resort to poaching talent from others. This

practice, while helpful in the short-term, is simply unsustainable, and tends to disproportionately affect the (homegrown) small and mid-sized tech employers across Louisiana. Apprenti will augment the existing tech talent pipeline using its nationally recognized turn-key designed model of sourcing candidates that have strong aptitudes, attitudes, and an enthusiasm to work in technology.

The Apprenti partnership is ever-more important as ways to safely re-train and re-employ dislocated jobseekers safely. Apprenti LA is headquartered in an Opportunity Zone (OZ) (Tract: 22033001104) in East Baton Rouge Parish. Additionally, Apprenti also acts as a neutral convener with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships within the region. This allows business leaders to come together in a safe space to plan for the current and future needs of the sector.

CHAPTER 2 STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE INTEGRATION – REGIONAL COMPONENT

Section 2A

Region 2 is an eleven (11) parish, diverse and geographically spread region. Region 2 is home to rural and urban communities. Within each of these communities there exists a variety of advantages and challenges. For ease of discussion, the following table lists the strengths and weaknesses of service integration into 2 categories: 1) urban and 2) rural.

	URBAN (> 50,000 PEOPLE)	RURAL (< 50,000 PEOPLE)
STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to providers • Larger number of open jobs • Larger number of varied types of jobs • Higher wage jobs • Access to 2-yr and 4-yr institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close-knit community • Lower cost of living • Access to agricultural jobs
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher cost of living • Higher concentration of poverty • Greater demand for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/ affordable transportation • Availability of jobs • Lower-wage jobs • Fewer service providers for all categories • Few opportunities in, in-demand occupations

Region 2 workforce development and employment services are the responsibility of two Local Area Workforce Development Boards (LWDB): LWDB 20 and LWDB 21 as authorized by the Louisiana Department of Labor. These LWDBs set policy to implement the WIOA funding provided by the Federal Department of Labor. The key stakeholders of both areas will meet quarterly to create and adopt regional strategies that address the combined challenges outlined above. In addition to reducing or eliminating barriers, Area leadership will work with regional

employers to help design training programs, including On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience (WE) – making the process more streamline for jobseekers and employers.

One example of this regional partnership is the use of coordinated OJT and WE Work Site Agreements to allow employers to not have to duplicated paperwork. This allows jobseekers the ability to access pre-approved employer-based training programs. Thus, reducing duplication of effort and streamlining the jobseeker and employer experience.

Region 2 is an economically and demographically diverse region with an expected 10.1% job growth by 2026 – higher than the national average. Region 2 has a number of ready opportunities to expand its economic reach and increase its economic diversity and resiliency. A more diverse economy is a resilient economy. As such, Region 2 will make every effort to strategically support the growth of the following in-demand industry clusters: 1) Healthcare and Social Services (2,056 job openings); 2) Educational Services (3) Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (20.2% projected increase) and; 4) Administrative and Waste Services (16.7% projected increase). By doing so, this helps to ensure the quality and quantity of jobs in the region.

Specifically, the LWDBs in Region 2 work together on the following priorities: 1) ensuring quality services for out-of-school youth in urban and rural communities; 2) creative transportation solutions for jobseekers without access to reliable and affordable transportation; 3) identify large (and, small) regional employers that fit in the identified in-demand industry clusters; and 4) reduce waste by sharing templates and pre-qualified and pre-vetted training and education providers. Including incumbent worker programs, OJT, WE and other customized training programs.

In this rapidly evolving technological world, necessary work skills change quickly and often these skills are acquired outside of a traditional education institution. This is the case with two important

industry clusters: Tech and Construction. Both fields are driven by highly industrious and adaptable employees who are able to continuously expand skillsets in order to keep up with market trends. To keep up with the pace of business, Region 2 will utilize work-based training to introduce a new crop of jobseekers to the Tech and Construction sectors. Working with organizations like Apprenti and the Skilled Crafts Union houses, Region 2 will remain in-step with the sector needs.

CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

Section 3A: Describe the local strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth. Describe how this aligns with the State of Louisiana’s vision and principles.

LWDA 20-Geaux Jobs operates seven Geaux Jobs Centers across 10 parishes in Southeast Louisiana. LWDA 21-EmployBR operates two EmployBR Centers in East Baton Rouge Parish. The strategic vision of Region 2: Geaux Jobs and EmployBR Centers is to advance the economic well-being of our area while supporting the overall regional plan for economic growth. To do this, implementation of partnerships with local businesses to help put qualified, trained, and job-ready individuals to work. Each local center is a proud partner of the American Job Center network. Certified One-Stop Centers provide services and resources for job seekers including access to our (7) Geaux Jobs Centers and (2) EmployBR Centers, career readiness workshops, career assessments and customized hiring events. Our services are provided at no cost and seek to match qualified job seekers with potential job opportunities, online and/or in real-time, by comparing qualifiers such as work experience, skills, abilities, education, and other factors.

Programs at the local level are delivered through coordination and integration of services. The following programs: Title V Older Workers, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, Veterans Services, WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and Rapid Response are staff and/or co-located in the comprehensive Geaux Jobs and EmployBR Centers. This allows for jobseekers and employers to move more seamlessly through the public workforce system. Other required partners are accessible via electronic communication, telephone, and in-person (part-time hours). The programs and services of the partners are integrated in various degrees into the Geaux Jobs and EmployBR Centers and provide accessible and comprehensive information and referral to services. Through collaborative

partnerships, the centers serve as a focal point for workforce development services and program integration. All system partner programs are committed to the One-Stop system concept and have the requisite knowledge and skills required to guide clients.

Input from Local Board members representing Economic Development, Education, Wagner Peyser, Office of Social Services, Rehabilitation Services, Community Based Organizations, Organized Labor and private business are used to coordinate and align the state's workforce programs and to support integrated service delivery.

Currently, Region 2 uses the State's HIRE operating system as the comprehensive platform for providing consumer information; automated job-matching; employment and training components; the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Scorecard; and workforce information including job growth and demand occupation projections. Additionally, the HIRE system provides self-service, electronic access for job seekers and employers. For employers, the HIRE system provides the ability to: manage a company profile, input job vacancies, and search for qualified candidates, as well as access additional employer services and information. Similarly, HIRE provides the electronic platform for job seekers to conduct job search, acquire career information, match workforce information with career tools such as O'NET's Interest Inventory, Skills Analysis and Work Importance Locator. Additionally, O'NET provides a comprehensive body of occupational information that job seekers can use when making career decisions. The state forecasting committee uses LSU's Division of Economic Development Chamber Analysis and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development to identify targeted cluster industries.

Section 3B: Describe the local goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators

Local Workforce Development Board 20-Geaux Jobs and Local Workforce Development Board 21-EmployBR share a strategic vision for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that includes:

1. Focus resources and training on providers that deliver high-quality employer-focused and job seeker programs.
2. Continue to expand networking with the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), along with other high-quality training providers to identify “gaps” in program offerings as identified through labor market research and dialogue with business.
3. Increase implementation of Customized Industry Training program and On-the-Job Training programs.
4. Expand assessment instruments in the local Geaux Jobs and EmployBR Centers to help identify the barriers to employment and provide comprehensive individualized plans to produce the best skilled workers for referral to businesses.
5. Continue emphasis on short-term training and work-based learning in the local area.
6. Expand sector work to identify emerging sectors and to begin offering skills training to meet the projected needs.
7. Continue engagement of businesses, K-12, Community Colleges, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, STEM, and the Universities to develop our workforce from school to lifelong learning.
8. Continue close working relationship with local, regional, and state economic developers.

The benefit of having such an established framework is that it can be implemented to prepare an educated and skilled workforce at any level.

Performance Goals under WIOA for LWDA 20-Geaux Jobs and LWDA 21-EmployBR have been negotiated for Program Year 2020-2021. The Performance Information Coordinator generates reports for the WIOA Adult/DW/Youth participants receiving training services monthly and sends to the WIOA Site Supervisor for review. These reports are reviewed monthly and corrective action performed as needed by the WIOA Counselors/Case Managers and WIOA Follow-Up Specialists. All participants that have completed goals/obtained employment or are not actively receiving services are required to be submitted for exit. Employment and wages are reviewed. After the operator records exit information into the HiRE system the Performance Information/Data Coordinator will review the data to ensure it is recorded correctly. The Operations/Program staff will review the reports monthly from FutureWorks data system to review current program year performance and progress towards meeting performance measures. Programs are monitored by local WIOA Site Supervisors to ensure all services provided are properly recorded.

Section 3C: Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and principles. This must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local areas:

LWDA 20-Geaux Jobs and LWDA 21-EmployBR continue to focus on a demand-driven system that responds quickly to the immediate and long-term needs of the business community with an emphasis on connecting skilled and credentialed job seekers with employers who have job vacancies in demand occupations. To accomplish this goal, Region 2 will utilize occupational

forecasting data and input from businesses to improve existing services and develop new services to meet customer needs. Direct business engagement will be used to align training, education and workforce development activities used to prepare jobseekers for employment. This intentionality alleviates employer challenges in filling vacant positions when they are unable to find qualified applicants.

Geaux Jobs and EmployBR's Business Services sections focus on employer engagement strategies to improve Region 2's ability to employ individuals in in-demand area careers. Involvement in the day-to-day operations of training programs by employees include:

- participating in decisions about who is accepted into the program;
- participating as instructors in training;
- hosting work experience opportunities (apprenticeships, internships, clinical experiences) at the work site;
- providing opportunities for mentorship, job shadowing, or other exposure to the workplace;
- helping students prepare for job search (resume review and mock interviews)

By utilizing the Targeted Industry Sector and the Career Pathways Initiatives to the maximum extent feasible, Geaux Jobs and EmployBR will focus on creating an improved job seeker pool of applicants, who possess the skills employers need and want. To further improve employer services, Geaux Jobs and EmployBR will build partnerships with small businesses and targeted industry sectors to increase overall business utilization rates, reduce employer costs, increase the number of direct posted job vacancies, reduce the time it takes to fill vacancies, and increase the number of employers utilizing employer-based training.

The Louisiana HIRE system, allows LWDA 20/21 to better serve employer customers by offering electronic self-service while still using staff to provide customized experiences. Using the HIRE system, employers are able to post job vacancies, access resumes, find information on training programs, and view real-time labor market data. Additionally, employers are able to access the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program through an automated integrated process.

The Business Service Representatives (BSR) assigned to the region work closely with WIOA Business Staff and employers throughout the area as a point of contact to the employment and training system. BSRs work closely with Economic Development and local Chamber partners to pool resources. BSRs assist employers at the local level with their workforce needs by providing specialized services such as participation in the planning, implementing, and hosting of job fairs/hiring events and other employer related services as needed.

Coordination of workforce development activities within LWDA 20/21 occur primarily through the Regional Business Services team comprised of the Director of Workforce Development/WIOA Chief Administrator, Operations Manager/Program Administrator, the One-Stop Operators, LWC Regional Business Services Staff, Geaux Jobs/EmployBR Site Supervisors and Business Services Staff, local Recruitment and Placement staff, Vocational Rehabilitation staff, TAA staff, and Veteran staff. The members of this team meet with economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and other business organizations and communicate regularly with one another. They also meet at least quarterly to share information and coordinate activities.

Section 3D: Describe regional strategies that will increase apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities

As Region 2 looks toward the short and long-term strategies to re-train unemployed and long-term unemployed jobseekers, the region and local areas will continue to prioritize training, including work-based trainings: apprenticeship, work experience, and on-the-job training opportunities. As highlighted in other sections of this report, a significant increase in the number of low-skilled unemployed workers entering the workforce system as a consequence of the economic downturn is expected. These workers, like other low-skilled, low-experience workers, need skills that are relevant in in-demand occupations. To obtain these skills as quickly as possible, employer driven training programs will be pursued. Coordinated efforts to engage, educate, and enroll large and small employers into employer services. Companies with multiple job openings, in in-demand sectors will be prioritized. These opportunities will be a part of the strategies employed to re-train and place unemployed jobseekers.

Section 3E: Describe initiatives to shorten the time from credential to employment and address how the area will work with the education system to begin putting training opportunities in place to meet this strategy.

LWDA 20-Geaux Jobs and LWDA 21-EmployBR are working jointly with business and industry along with local post-secondary educational providers to shorten the time from credential to employment through customized training initiatives. The customized training initiatives allow for employers to work directly with the training provider to customize training that leads to an industry-based credential and specialized training directed towards employment with the employer. The employers continue the training as an OJT that further enhances necessary skills

to become successful employees. Geaux Jobs worked with BrandSafway, Ochsner and North Oaks Hospital system jointly with the local Community and Technical Colleges recently and plan to continue this model in our local areas. EmployBR has partnered with BrandSafway, Ochsner, and the local Community and Technical Colleges on customized training initiatives.

Section 3F: Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state’s effort to align and integrate education, workforce, and economic developments.

Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 and EmployBR- LWDA 21 will coordinate education, economic and workforce development activities carried out in the local areas with relevant secondary and post-secondary programs to enhance services and avoid duplication through reports and information exchange from the members who represent these program areas in our eleven-parish area. Each local office works directly with the local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development agencies to provide workforce support to employers along with assistance with On-the Job Training and Customized training services. Additionally, coordination is further enhanced through reciprocal referral agreements and partnership agreements with the relevant agencies. At the K-12 level the local area provides support to participation in the JUMP Start initiative through work experience and career/educational job fairs. Region 2 offices work closely with school system dropouts through cooperative referral endeavors to attempt to secure HiSET and employment for students who have been referred from the local school systems and Adult Education programs.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is responsible for developing and maintaining the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). LWC notifies training providers of the opportunity to apply for status as an approved training provider and thus eligible for Individual

Training Accounts (ITAs) under WIOA. The Local Board staff also provides interested training providers with application information on the State's ETPL. All training providers must be on the ETPL in order to provide training services utilizing WIOA funding.

The ETPL/ITA system is LWDA-20 and LWDA-21's primary source for skill training of WIOA eligible participants. Utilizing the ETPL provides participants with an informed choice, considering costs and other factors, of which school they wish to attend using their WIOA ITA and other funding such as Pell Grants.



CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES- LOCAL COMPONENT: EMPLOYBR-LOCAL WORKFORCE AREA 21

Section 4A: Coordination and Planning Requirements:

Currently, Louisiana has eight (8) Workforce Regions. Within these 8 regions are 15 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). Each local area is responsible for developing 4-Year Workforce Plans. Those workforce regions that have two or more local workforce areas are required to submit regional plans, with local plans as part of the regional strategy to address workforce needs in their respective local areas. The primary funding appropriated to the 15 LWDAs comes from the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). There are six core programs funded under WIOA: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser (Employment Services), Vocational Rehabilitation, and Adult Education. With the right leadership, Louisiana is uniquely positioned to do great things in the workforce world funded by

WIOA in that 5 of the 6 core programs funded by WIOA are managed by the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Office of Workforce Development (OWD). Additionally, Louisiana has implemented a Combined State Plan, which means that its plan includes, not only the core programs funded by WIOA, but also other organizations equipped to provide other services and advocacy for people.

The key is to ensure all aspects of the workforce system at the state, regional and local levels are properly aligned to maximize efficiency in order to provide excellent customer service to employers and job seekers. This requires thought leaders to be in the right positions (state and local) to influence change through innovative ideas and approaches to serving workforce customers: employers and job seekers.

Section 4B: Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop deliver system:

EmployBR has an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system (Caseworthy). Through the use of laptops with webcams, EmployBR staff are able to conduct virtual intake, progress, and follow-up interviews with applicants/clients. The Plank Road Office is equipped with several video conferencing offices to conduct virtual orientations/trainings/meetings with applicants, participants, staff, employers, and partners. EmployBR utilizes the IT FrontDesk system to schedule, remind, and track all visitors to our center. EmployBR is in the process of procuring and implementing software to be able to host virtual hiring events. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of technology is required in order to provide efficient and safe services to the residents of East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP).

Section 4C: Describe how the Local Board will support the strategy identified in the Unified State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs:

Louisiana’s workforce system includes various organizations that help perform multiple functions to serve the adults and youth who may need help preparing for and succeeding in the workforce. Broadly, these organizations include government (e.g., LWC, DCFS, LED), Louisiana employers and industry, labor, training providers, educational institutions (e.g., K-12, Board of Regents, LCTCS), and service and advocacy organizations (e.g., CAAs). Each of these organizations are represented on the state’s Workforce Investment Council (WIC). The WIC’s members are appointed by the Governor, and has the chief responsibilities of developing, implementing, and modifying a 4-Year State Plan for Workforce Development; review of statewide policies, programs, and actions that must be taken by the State to align workforce development programs to support a comprehensive and streamlined workforce system; and the development of continuous improvement strategies.

In order to carry out WIOA core programs, LWDB 21-EmployBR are continuously:

1. Reviewing in-demand training opportunities included on the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to be used as WIOA fundable programs;
2. Encouraging all job seekers to consider these programs as career options by offering assessments, opportunities, and materials noting local employment opportunities;
3. Partnering with employers and high schools on career pathway opportunities in employer driven training programs;
4. Considering options to partner with training providers and neighboring local workforce development areas to provide training offered by training providers so that dislocated workers, adults, and disadvantaged youth have an opportunity to train in the high- demand occupation without a delay due to a waiting list;

5. Leveraging assets in order to increase capacity and provide integrated services to increase skill development and educational attainment of area residents.

Education and training services offered include:

- Needs-Based Scholarships for Postsecondary Training
- Transportation Stipends for Postsecondary Training and Work Experience
- On-the-Job Training and Work Experience (Youth and Transitional)
- Apprenticeship Programs

Needs-Based Scholarships issued through Individual Training Account (ITA) for postsecondary training are managed in the Centers by members of the Career Development Services Team. A thorough assessment and verification is completed to ensure the training plan will lead to employability in an in-demand occupation. Staff then obligate funds which is documented in the HIRE System and submitted to Operations team for approval. A priority of service policy is in place to ensure the most in need receive services first.

To maximize services to populations with barriers, agencies serving these populations are targeted for outreach efforts such as distribution of marketing materials, participation in events, and invitations to participate in Jobs Center events and partner meetings. Such agencies may include but not limited to: Adult Education, Community and Technical College, Department of Children and Family Services, Housing Authorities, K-12 Education, Migrant Farm Workers, Youth Build and Re-Entry Programs.

Additionally, the EmployBR Centers display marketing materials for core and community partners and provides materials to be displayed at the partners' sites. Social media accounts are also used to connect with customers and other agencies and inform them of the services available through the Centers.

The Business Services Team conducts rapid response meetings to serve workers dislocated through closures or layoffs. Outreach to unemployment claimants regarding EmployBR Jobs Centers' services is also conducted via email when contact information is available.

The LWDA 21-EmployBR Plan focuses on four key elements:

1. Improving skills and credential attainment by expanding vocation education and workforce development programs;
2. Supporting regional and local economic development strategies;
3. Enhancing services and opportunities for justice involved citizens; and
4. Streamlining the delivery of support services in workforce development by collaborating with key agencies and organizations

The Local Board is committed to working with our core program partners to expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services. Expansion strategies will include, but are not limited to:

1. Improve outreach and awareness efforts to the community, particularly with regard to populations with barriers to employment.
2. Maintain efforts to identify individuals with barriers to employment during intake.

3. Make certain that the participants of all core partners are made aware of the full scope of services that are available to them through the EmployBR system.

Section 4D: Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state, regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities:

EmployBR- LWDA 21 has integrated its services to allow all core and non-core partners to work collaboratively and seamlessly in the delivery of services for all workforce programs. By aligning staff to provide customer delivery and leveraging resources, duplication of services is reduced.

WIOA programs are required by law to provide a priority or preference for a particular group of individuals. All WIOA programs (Adult, DLW, and Youth) are required to provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses of veterans. The Adult program is additionally required to provide priority of service to public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and individuals that are basic skills deficient, when providing individualized and training services.

Per TEGL 19-16, Section 134(c)(3)(E) of WIOA, funding allocated to a local area for Adult employment and training activities, priority must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (BSD) for receipt of Individualized Career Services and Training Services. TEGL 19-16 also states that Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. The EmployBR team works with AJC partners and staff to specifically meet the targeted populations' needs.

This group includes veterans and spouses of veterans, low-income individuals, basic skills deficient persons, Adults and Youth with disabilities, and individuals who are re-entering society following incarceration. Services to eligible WIOA Adult Program participants will be provided in the following order:

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program may make referrals to any AJC partner to meet rehabilitation needs of eligible individuals. Local collaboration between VR and partners will be used to ensure the best of in providing services to customers. Customer referrals are made to post-secondary institutes.

Adult Education and Literacy Program (Title II) Louisiana Adult Education programs provide instruction and student support services to adults who lack a high school credential or secondary level skills, or who are not proficient in English. Adult Education shall refer those receiving their HiSet to EmployBR local office staff for co-enrollment. Once students receive their HiSet, they are eligible to go directly to training and EmployBR will provide tuition assistance (if available) for them to complete the program.

The EmployBR Centers provide direct assistance of the Title I-IV partners, as well as other community-based organizations. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) governs the partnerships between EmployBR and Mandated WIOA Partners. This allows for the leveraging of resources, eliminates duplication of services, and streamlines functions/processes. Through this agreement, funds for career services are shared between the four core partners and others such as but not limited to: TAA, RESEA, NCOA, SCSEP, DVOPs, and LVERs.

Local Referral Process

The One Stop Operator, Program Administrator and Site Supervisors oversee the referral process of customers within EmployBR. The referral process is tied directly to the Partner MOU's mentioned earlier. All core and other program partners have agreed to the referral process, which enhances seamless services to customers and leverages funding and services available to business and job seekers. Referrals to on-site partners will be made using the Caseworthy system. To track the referrals made between partners, a referral form was developed, and all partners are encouraged by the One-Stop Operator to utilize the form. The form may be completed electronically and emailed or faxed to partners who are not available on-site at the AJC, and the receiving agency is asked to complete and return the form.

Referral Tracking

Once a referral is made, a Career Development Specialist will obtain customer feedback about the referral as well as feedback from each agency to which referrals are made. Discussion of next steps can also be discussed during this time. The MOU also establishes how referrals will be tracked.

The Site Supervisor keeps a listing of all co-enrollments and clients who have been referred from partner agencies. This listing is cross-referenced to ensure that clients are receiving appropriate services. This information is reported at all quarterly partner meetings as part of the report.

Reasonable accommodations are provided for all aspects of a customer's experience in the AJCs during referrals as well as during application/registration for, and provision of, aid, benefits, services, and training. Accommodations are made according to the individual's need in order to ensure that he / she receives equal benefits from the program or activity, will be able to compete fairly in educational work settings, and in general, to have an equal opportunity. To ensure that

individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, can access available services the required partners will, as established in the MOU:

1. Ensure compliance with ADA requirements when locating to a new building or when repairs are needed;
2. Maintain the above-named accommodations, or ones similar, and others on an as-needed basis;
3. Offer referrals to provide customers with a comprehensive set of services, including accommodations.
4. Maintain an Equal Opportunity Officer for the LWDA to ensure compliance with all appropriate legislation
5. Provide training to staff on a routine basis.

Partners ensure that services are available to populations with barriers to employment by actively conducting outreach targeting these populations in coordination with one another. The customer will be referred to the most appropriate partner to provide services based on the customer's needs and available services. Targeted populations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Displaced homemakers
- Low-income individuals
- Individuals with disabilities
- Older individuals
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless
- Youth who have aged out of foster care system
- Single parents
- Long-term unemployment individuals

4E: Provide a description of how the local area will provide adult and dislocate worker employment and training activities:

Individualized career services will be provided for adults and dislocated workers who are determined eligible for WIOA and are registered in the program. Individualized services include, but were not limited to, the following:

- A comprehensive and specialized assessment of skills levels, aptitudes, abilities and needs;
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP/ISS);
- Case Management activities;
- Individual career counseling;
- Referral to training services; and
- Out-of-area job search assistance.

The primary means of providing training services for adults and dislocated workers is through the utilization of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and On-the-Job Training (OJT). ITAs are available at both public and private training facilities throughout the state to assist adults and dislocated workers with the cost of books, supplies and tuition associated with the cost of attending for up to two years. LWDA 21-EmployBR targets occupations that are identified as High Growth/High Demand/High Wage and that support the on-going economic development efforts of the state. The OJT program provides reimbursement to employers for the extra costs associated with training WIOA participants. The reimbursement rate and length of training are negotiated and made a part of the OJT contract. Reimbursement is established at fifty percent (50%) of the participant's hourly wage rate for up to 1040 hours.

Rapid Response activities are provided by the Business Services Team. A lead staff person receives WARN notification, contacts the employer to collect information and with partner collaboration puts together a team of appropriate staff and resources for a Rapid Response meeting. Rapid Response services are provided jointly with the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

4F: Provide a description of how the local area will provide youth activities:

EmployBR has established and strengthened partnerships with youth services providers within EBRP. A strategy of pairing HiSET or post-secondary preparation activities alongside career exploration and work-based learning/work experiences is a primary focus for youth services. Partnerships with LWC, East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS), Baker School District (BSD), and Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) play a key role in expanding services to these individuals facing barriers to employment, housing, and transportation.

Through partnerships, a Youth Round Table Discussion has been established and will convene, at a minimum, quarterly to collaborate with youth service providers in EBR to increase awareness, collaboration, and participant enrollment in WIOA services for in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school (OSY), ranging between the ages of 14- 24. Round Table partners include LWC, Performance Partnership Pilot (P3), Career and Technical Education, Juvenile Services, Youth Build, TRUCE and other non-profit, faith-based, and/or community organizations. EmployBR Youth services focuses recruitment efforts on OSY and community partners that serve this population. EmployBR Youth Services has developed a host of educational, skills-based learning opportunities and work support services for EBRP youth. These include efforts to help youth obtain their HiSET, access to scholarships, postsecondary learning preparation, and opportunities to develop their skills through employer-based internships.

The planning process begins with determining youth's needs to include: An initial assessment for determining eligibility, leading to developing an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) created by both the youth and case manager. Eligible youth are enrolled and benefit from the array of services available through the joint collaboration of the service provider and youth services staff. Youth remain engaged in follow-up services for one year following program completion. Youth determined ineligible for services are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

EmployBR works with its contracted youth providers to ensure an appropriate referral network for youth program participants, which makes workforce and supportive services available for program participants throughout the parish. To avoid service duplication and to provide for the best match between program and participant, youth programs are encouraged to work together. Further, to assist with the sharing of best practices, EmployBR hosts a training and technical assistance meeting for youth providers.

LWDB 21's Youth Committee's role is to provide information and assistance in carrying out activities within WIOA law and other issues related to the provision of services to youth. The Committee is chaired by a member of LWDB 21 and includes other members of the Board and community partners such as Adult and Basic Education (ABE), EBRPSS, and Career and Technical Education representative and other appropriate agencies, businesses, and community organizations.

EmployBR's leadership continues to meet with partner leadership to identify ways to expand and strengthen collaborations to better refer and serve youth participants.

4G: Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment:

EmployBR Centers regularly serve individuals with multiple barriers to employment - specifically, low-income individuals, basic skills deficient individuals and veterans are typical customers in the Center. A coordinated response is developed for them and other groups that often face multiple barriers to employment like: dropouts and migrant and seasonal farm workers to assure their personal and professional goals are met.

Basic skills deficiencies are determined by an objective, valid and reliable assessment such as the Test of Basic Education (TABE) or Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems. If the priority of service will also be based on basic skills deficient criteria, then the participants file must contain academic tests. As stated in TEGL 19-16, Individuals who are English language learners meet the criteria for “basic skills deficient” and must be included in the priority populations for Title I Adult program. When participants are basic skills deficient as determined by an assessment or assessments, the staff will refer the participant for learning support in order to achieve the appropriate level basic skills for postsecondary training. Self Sufficiency is another criterion to identify priority populations. Career Service staff utilize wage records to calculate the individual’s earnings during eligibility of the individual.

Recipients of Public Assistance includes individuals who receive, or in the past six months have received or are a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months received, assistance through one or more of the following: SNAP, TANF, SSI, or state or local income based public assistance.

Training services for priority populations are used to connect participants to in-demand occupations that need to be filled by employers within the local area. EmployBR’s goal is to

collect customer data and continuously look at ways to assist those with barriers in order for them to become self-sufficient, while continuing to meet the State and Local Performance Measures.

Describe how the LWDB will focus efforts on priority populations to help meet the negotiated State and Local Performance Measures (Key Performance Indicators).

Priority Populations

I. First, to Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are:

1. Recipients of public assistance
2. Low-income, or
3. Basic skills deficient

II. Second, to individuals who are not Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans but are:

1. Recipients of public assistance
2. Low-income, or
3. Basic skills deficient

III. Third, to Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are not:

1. Recipients of public assistance
2. Low-income, or
3. Basic skills deficient

IV. Fourth, groups established by the Governor and/or Local Board. The following populations experiencing barriers to employment are specifically targeted for services and must be provided priority for training activities per TDLWD Workforce Services Guidance/MOU/IFA:

1. Individuals with significant barriers to employment
2. Displaced homemakers
3. Individuals with no high school diploma
4. Individuals who are homeless
5. Unemployed individuals, including long-term unemployed individuals who have low literacy levels
6. English language learner individuals

7. Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
8. Eligible migrant and seasonal individuals
9. Individuals re-entering the workforce
10. Older individuals
11. Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)
12. Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians
13. Veterans
14. Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system
15. Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
16. Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act 13

Section 4H Training Policies: Provide a description of the training policies and activities in the local area:

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LA Department of Labor) is responsible for developing and maintaining the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). LWC notifies training providers of the opportunity to apply for status as an approved training provider and thus eligible for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) under WIOA. The Local Board staff also provides interested training providers with application information on the State's ETPL. All training providers must be on the ETPL in order to provide training services utilizing WIOA funding.

The ETPL/ITA system is LWDA-21's primary source for skill training of WIOA eligible participants. Utilizing the ETPL provides participants with an informed choice, considering costs and other factors, of which school they wish to attend using their WIOA ITA and other funding such as Pell Grants. Only those programs that are approved/listed on the State's ETPL are eligible for referral and enrollment of a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participant.

Individualized Training Provider policies identify the processes for determining eligible training providers for WIOA and for publicly disseminating the list of these providers with relevant information about their programs. WIOA emphasizes informed consumer choices, job-driven training, provider performance, and continuous improvement.

In administering the eligible training provider process, LWC works to ensure that qualified providers, offering a wide variety of job-driven training programs, are available. The ETPLs are made publicly available online through the HiRE System and its searchable database. The LWC ETPL list is easily available in an electronic format that identifies relevant performance and cost information that is presented in a manner that is easily understood. This EPTL process and electronic access maximizes informed customer choice and serve all significant populations groups. The final career decision is up to the individual applicant, and through case management guidance and analysis of ETPL programs, the individual can make informed decisions.

4I: Describe if the local board will authorize the transfer of WIOA Title 1B workforce funds including the maximum dollar amount and /or percentage that is authorize to be transferee on an annual basis:

LWDB 21-EmployBR will authorize the transfer of funds between adult and dislocated worker to the maximum allowed on an annual case-by-case basis as determined by the needs of training and expenditures.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION

5A: Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO to be used to measure performance.

LWDA 21-EmployBR negotiated performance with the Louisiana Workforce Commission-representing the Governor's office. The negotiated levels do not factor into consideration the current COVID-19 pandemic:

**Negotiated Performance Levels for WIOA and WP/ES Programs
East Baton Rouge Parish Consortium (LWDA 21)**

	PY 2020	PY 2021
WIOA Title I Adult		
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	67.0%	67.0%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter after exit	69.0%	69.0%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$6,100	\$6,100
Credential Attainment Rate	68.0%	68.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	60.0%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	68.0%	68.0%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter after exit	60.0%	60.0%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$7,100	\$7,100
Credential Attainment Rate	71.0%	71.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	60.0%
WIOA Title I Youth		
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 2 nd quarter after exit	60.0%	60.0%
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 4 th quarter after exit	67.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$1,800	\$1,800
Credential Attainment Rate	49.0%	49.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0%	35.0%
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services		
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	60.0%	60.0%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter after exit	65.0%	65.0%
Median Earnings in the 2 nd quarter after exit	\$5,200	\$5,200

5B: Provide a Description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be providing to the local board and program administrators.

LWDA 21-EmployBR's Program Planning Analyst is responsible for monitoring and auditing annually EmployBR's contracted training providers. These audits help determine if a training provider is in compliance, according to the negotiated contract with EmployBR, and whether the contract will be renewed for another program year. Results of the training provider audits are presented to EmployBR Program Administrator and LWDB 21. Below is an example of the auditing criteria:



Points Description

- * Each YES response = 10 points
- * Cannot determine at time of review = 5 points
- * Each NO response = 0 points

	<i>50 is the maximum number of points that can be earned!</i>	10 YES	5 Cannot be determined	0 NO
	The training provider has COVID-19 Policies and Procedures in place.			
	The graduation/completion rate per the audit period is at least 80%.			
	70% of students have secured employment in the field of their training within 90 days of graduating.			
	The training provider has additional resources available to help students successfully complete program, i.e. tutoring.			
	The training provider adheres to Employ BR's invoicing procedures.			

TOTAL: _____

LWDA 21-EmployBR has established internal monitoring and auditing processes to evaluate its American Job Centers for compliance with reporting, eligibility, case noting, and expenditures. Each monitoring evaluation is shared with the WIOA Chief Administrator, EmployBR Program Administrator, and site supervision.