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Regional Workforce Development Plan – Area 2

2020 - 2024

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**LOUISIANA REGIONAL WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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Regional Workforce Development Plan – Area 2

2020 - 2024

## Region 2



### LWDA 20-

Ascension, East Feliciana, Iberville,  
Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St.  
Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West  
Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana



### LWDA 21-

East Baton Rouge Parish

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**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT 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 Louisiana’s 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, 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 is an anticipated 10.1% growth through 2026. Two industries that anticipate the most growth are: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (20.2% projected increase); and Accommodation and Food Services (14.8% projected increase).

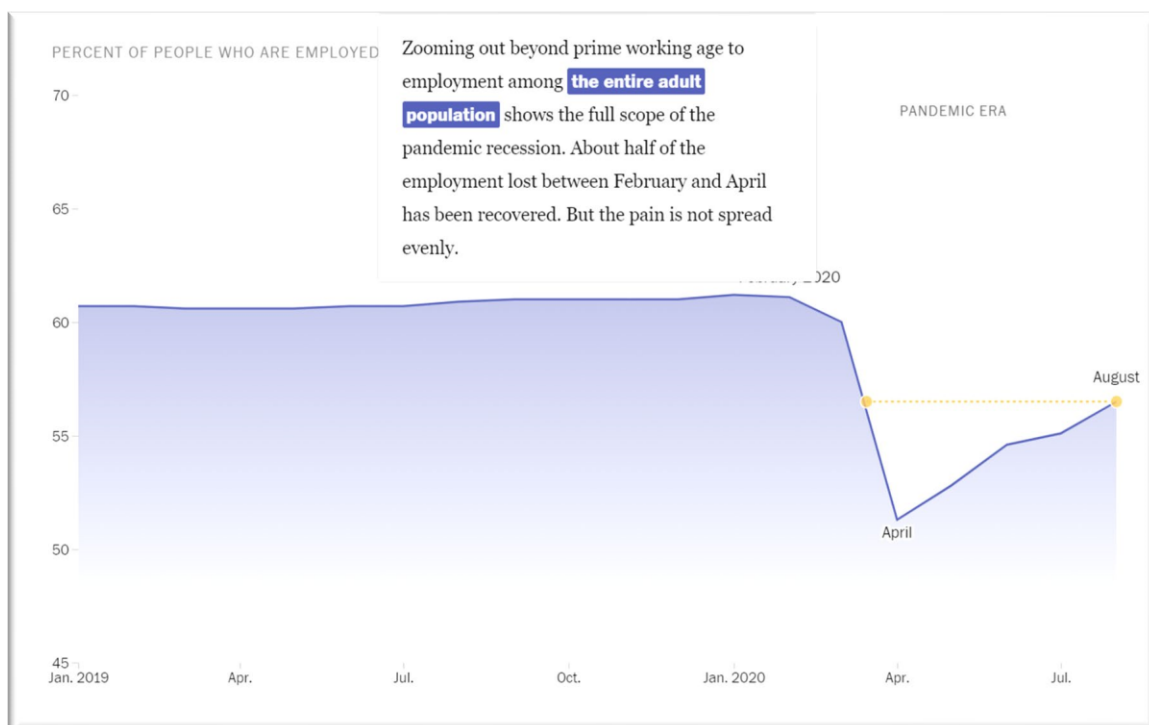
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In short, Region 2 is an economically and demographically diverse region that has enjoyed relatively low unemployment rates at 5.6% (pre-COVID). The region has a promising job growth forecast (8.2%) on par with anticipated population growth for the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

## CHAPTER 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – REGIONAL COMPONENT

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.

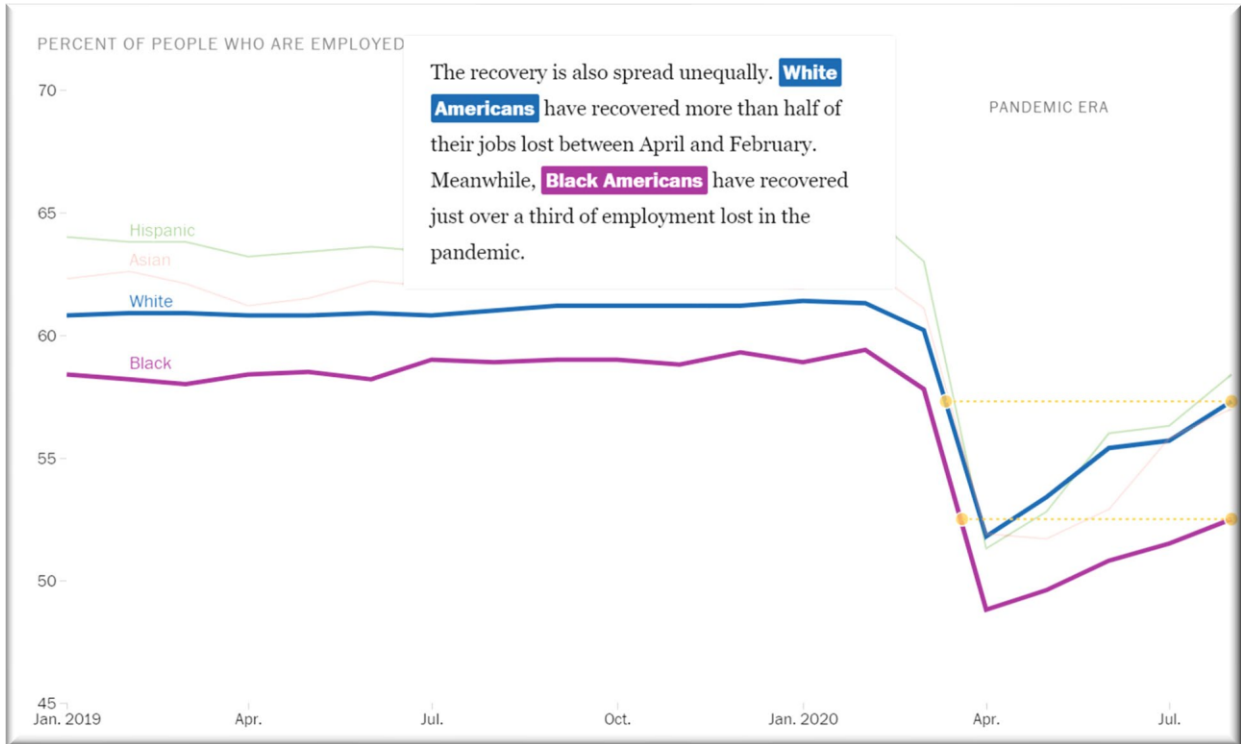


[Source: Washington Post](#)

According to the US Department of Labor, in the months preceding the stay-at-home order issued by Governor Edwards on March 22, 2020, Area 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, let us zoom out the national picture. 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”. This emphasizes that an already vulnerable population has been placed in even more dire straits when it comes to their economic outlook. While the nation overall has regained nearly half of the lost jobs, several key demographic groups have recovered more slowly, including mothers of schoolage children, Black men, Black women, Hispanic men, Asian Americans, younger Americans (ages 25 to 34) and people without college degrees.

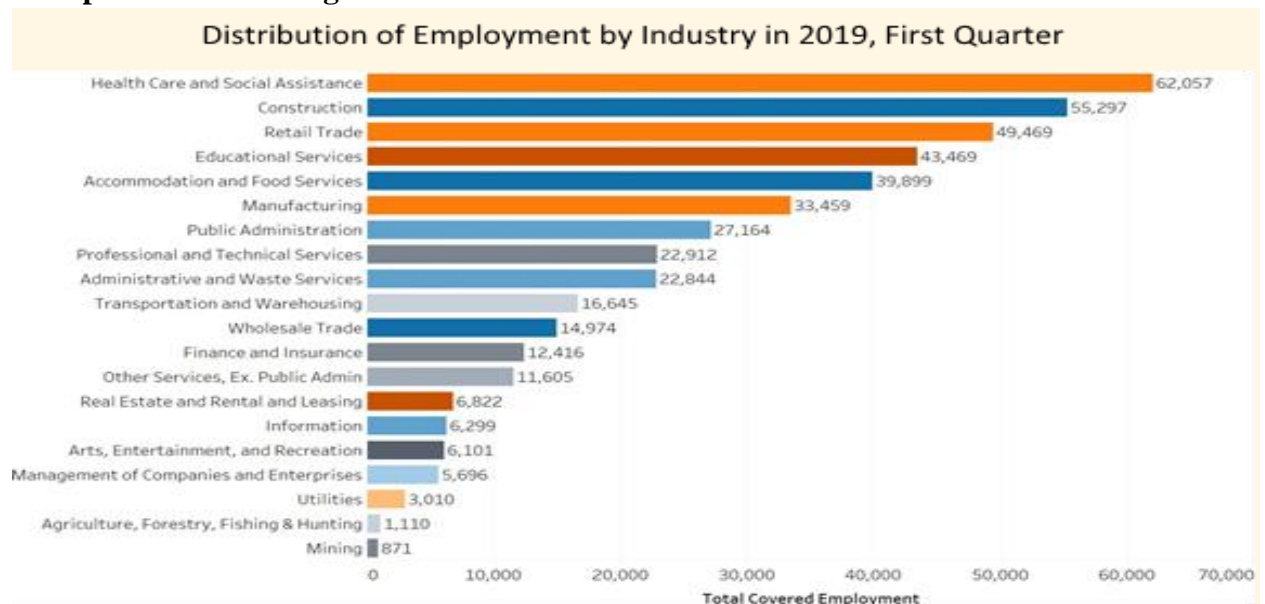
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Source: Washington Post

**Section A1a: Targeted Industries, High-Impact Industry Clusters, And In-Demand Occupations in The Region**





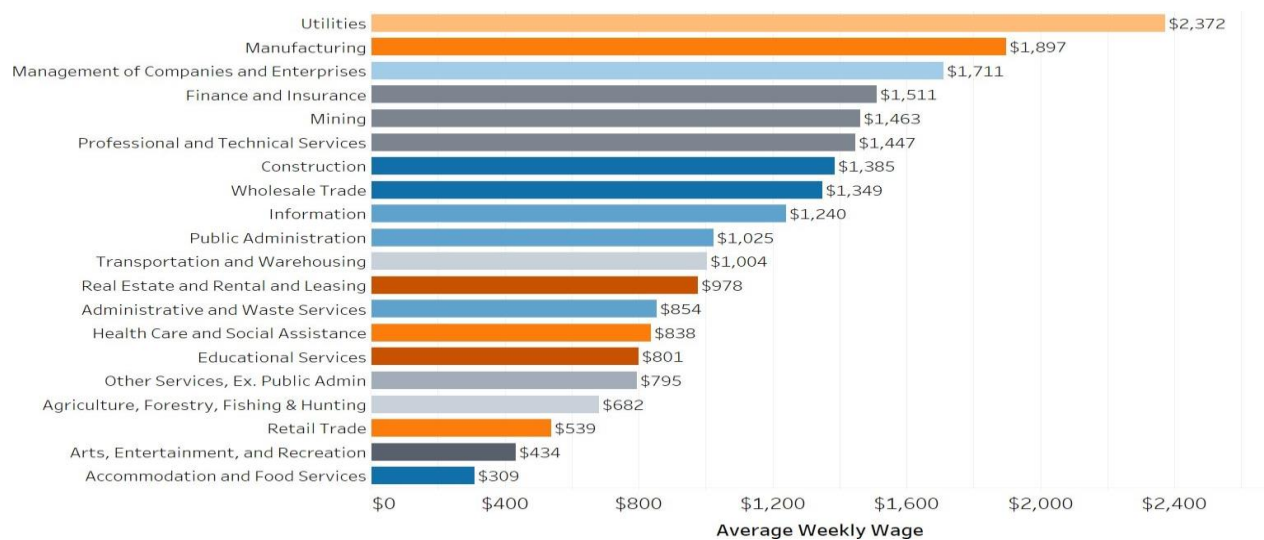
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**Above:** This chart shows employment by industry in the first quarter of 2019. The largest sector in the region is **Health Care and Social Assistance** followed by **Construction** and **Retail Trade**.

**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



### Sections A1b -A1g

#### What industries and occupations have favorable location quotients and have favorable demand projections based on growth?

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. The targeted in-demand (existing and emerging) industry sectors are: 1) Healthcare and Social Services (2,056 job

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openings); 2) Educational Services (3) Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (20.2% projected increase); 4) Transportation and 5) Construction. Accommodation and Food Services has been excluded because of the lower wages (average weekly wages of \$309.00).

**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

Transportation

- CDL

Construction

- Electrician and Plumber

**Section A1d: What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?**

With the need for employees at an all time high due to labor market shortages. The following industries and occupations need staff to fill vacant or replacement positions.

*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

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>
<b>1</b>	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,056
<b>2</b>	Retail Trade	1,615

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<b>3</b>	Accommodation and Food Services	1,173
<b>4</b>	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	525
<b>5</b>	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	489
<b>6</b>	Educational Services	449
<b>7</b>	Public Administration	394
<b>8</b>	Manufacturing	341
<b>9</b>	Wholesale Trade	275
<b>10</b>	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 on 2nd Regional Labor Market Area, Baton Rouge, LA (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>
<b>1</b>	Registered Nurses	496
<b>2</b>	Customer Service Representatives	413
<b>3</b>	Retail Salespersons	331
<b>4</b>	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	313

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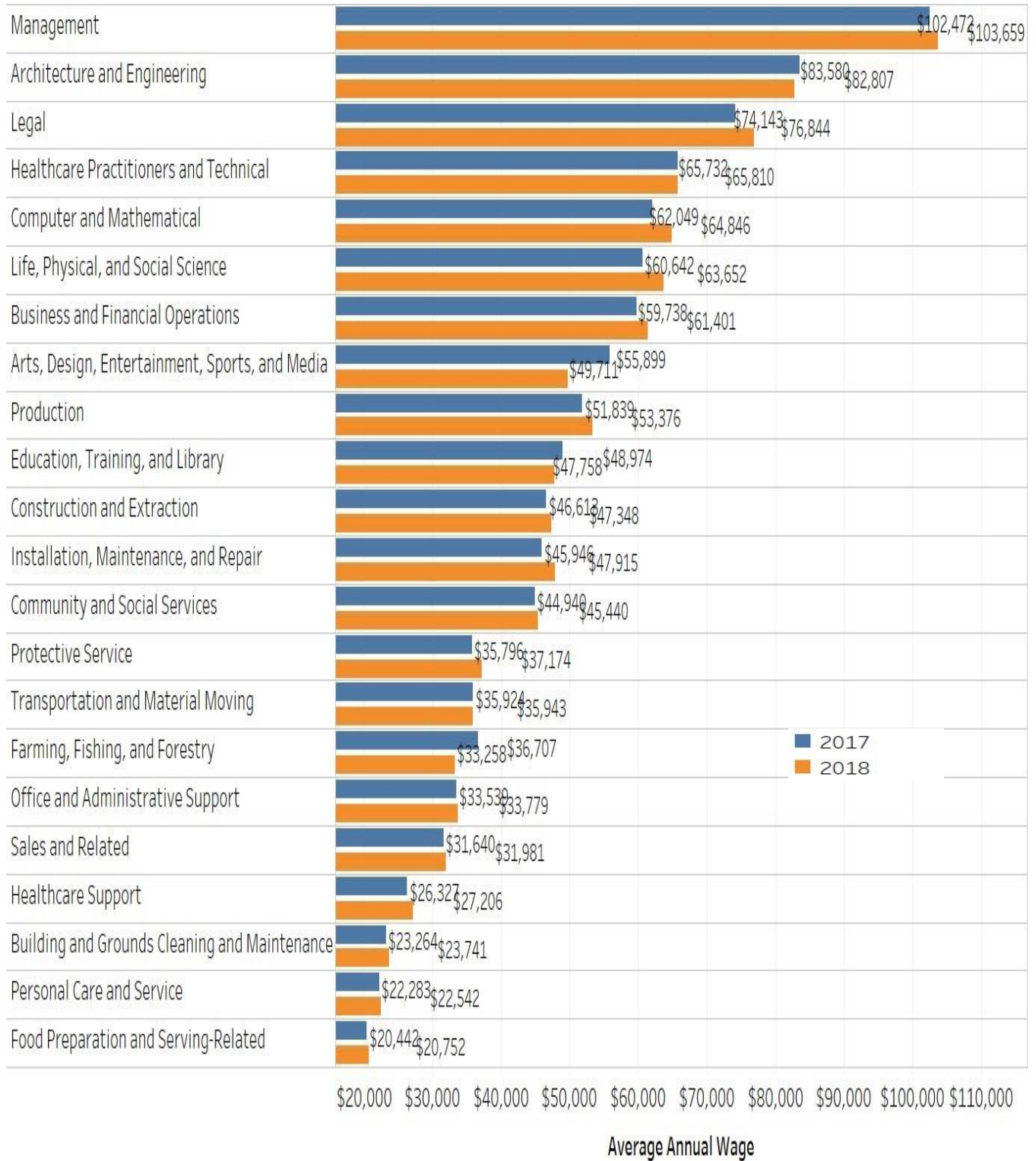
<b>5</b>	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	259
<b>6</b>	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	238
<b>7</b>	General and Operations Managers	221
<b>8</b>	Driver/Sales Workers	193
<b>9</b>	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	153
<b>10</b>	Nursing Assistants	109

**Table 1C: Annualized Salaries for Sectors in Region 2**

The following chart shows annualized salaries for several occupational groups in the region during years 2017 and 2018.

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**Section A3: 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**

Table 1D shows the education and technical needs of employers in the region when it comes to hiring employees.

**Table 1D: Largest Annual Occupational Openings by Degree Type**

Star Rating	Degree Type	Degree	Annual Total Openings	2018 Annual Average Wage
5	Bachelor's Degree	General and Operations Managers	670	\$121,473
5	Bachelor's Degree	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	400	\$49,452
5	Bachelor's Degree	Accountants and Auditors	330	\$64,947
5	Bachelor's Degree	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	230	\$52,697
5	Bachelor's Degree	Financial Managers	140	\$110,608
5	Bachelor's Degree	Construction Managers	130	\$101,628
4	Bachelor's Degree	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	130	\$50,025
4	Bachelor's 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

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**Table 1E: 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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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.

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

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 need for replacement workers is extremely high in all our demand areas due to COVID shutdowns and reopening. 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.

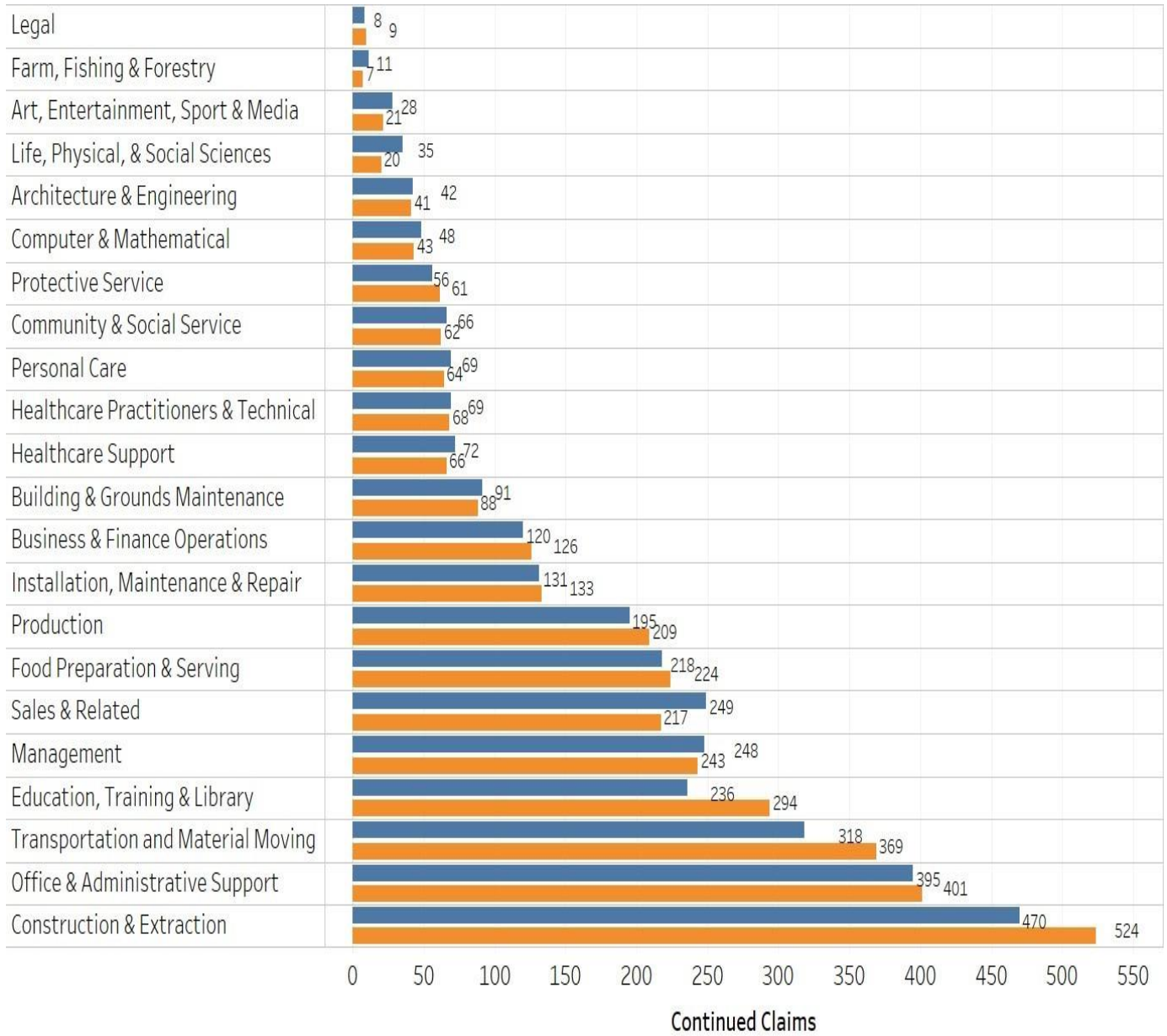


**Table 1F: Unemployment Claims by sector in Region 2 during years 2018 and 2019.**

Table 1F offers a comparative snapshot of the number of unemployment claims in the region divided by sector. When this information is combined with the total number of jobs per sector, we can ascertain the relative stability of the industry/ sector. Ergo, larger sectors will likely produce a higher number of claims.

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2018  
2019

*A2: Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.*

As of first quarter, 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

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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.

Two 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; 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; Transportation/ Manufacturing and Construction. 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. As those once,

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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.

**Table 1H: Demand and Growth Expectations through 2026**

Industry Title	NAIC	2016 Average Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Employment Change Through 2026	Share of Total Growth Through 2026
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	58,884	67,078	8,194	17.3%
Retail Trade	44-45	51,599	57,626	6,027	12.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	39,079	44,868	5,789	12.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	21,974	26,409	4,435	9.3%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	39,595	43,980	4,385	9.2%
Educational Services	61	41,465	45,841	4,376	9.2%
Administrative and Waste Services	56	23,535	27,465	3,930	8.3%
Manufacturing	31-33	32,635	34,108	1,473	3.1%
Construction	23	52,574	53,662	1,088	2.3%
Government	90	36,039	36,730	691	1.5%

**Section A3:** Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employer in the region including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations

Current job seeker traffic in the Career Centers, is anticipated to enter short term to 2-year programs that offer certifications for in-demand occupations like: nursing, heavy-equipment operators, manufacturing and transportation and allied healthcare occupations.

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 required to pursue in-demand occupations. The area currently works with the Louisiana Technical and Community College System, as there are three different systems in the area along with eligible proprietary schools. 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.

To meet the talent churn in some of our in-demand industry clusters, special sector initiatives have been created. For Region 2 who have high demand areas in Healthcare, Construction, Manufacturing and Transportation along with Information Technology. The focus is on industry sectors in Health Care and Industrial Technology for Region 2.

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LWDA 20 and LWDA 21 have industry partnerships with Ochsner Health System and North Oaks Hospital Association to address needed healthcare occupations such as patient care, nursing and medical records shortages. They have also adopted a relationship 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 32nd Net Tech Employment Rank 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

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markets such as Atlanta, Dallas, Boston, Seattle and Silicon Valley, leaving an even bigger talent tech gap. The discrepancy in postings demand, 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 exist in the region. This allows business leaders to come together in a safe space to plan for the current and future needs of the sector.

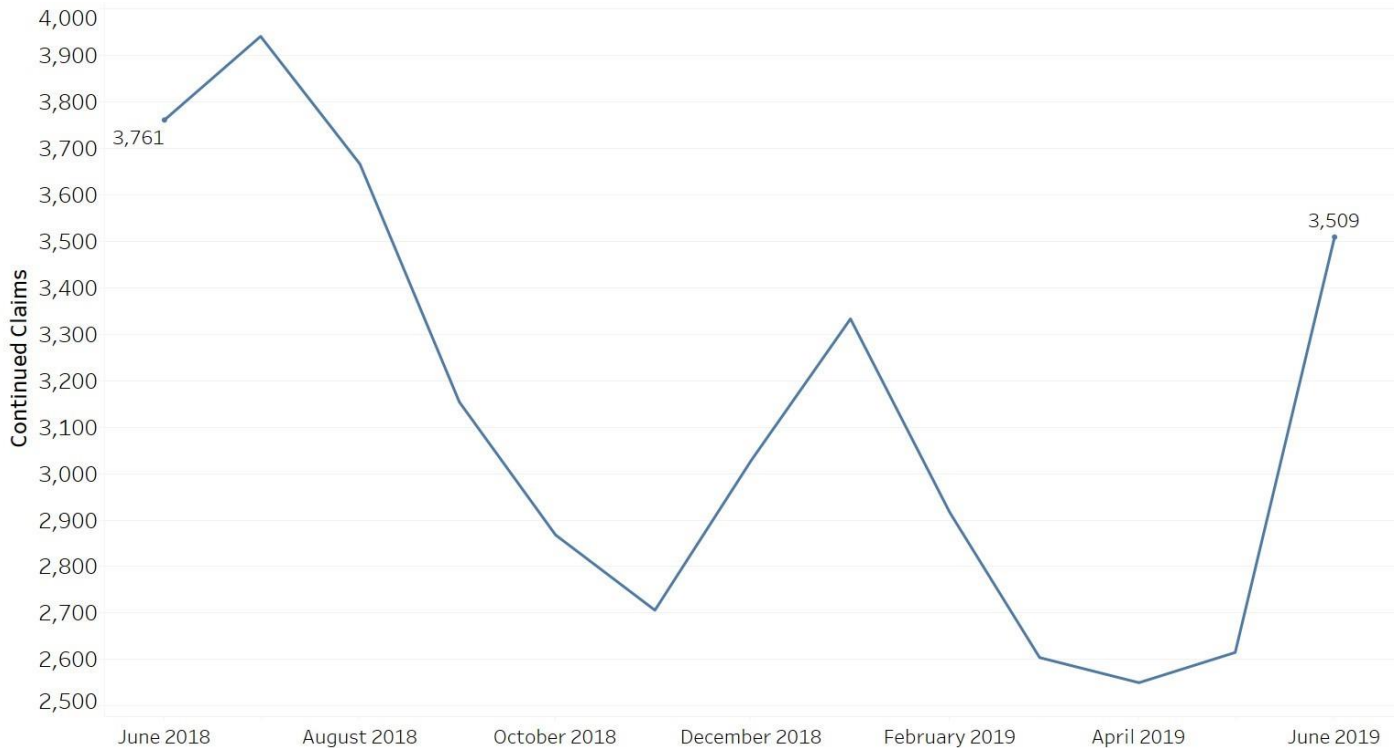
We must address in all our areas the skill gaps Skill Gaps. The National Skills Coalition has surveyed the skills gaps for each State and found that in Louisiana, 56% of the jobs required some -secondary education and skills training, but only 46% of the workforce met that requirement. However, based on past studies, it does appear that there have been gains made to close the gap.

[Section A4: Regional workforce considering current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.](#)

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**Table 1G: Cumulative unemployment claims for Region 2, June 2018 – June 2019**

The graph below illustrates that 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. To meet the talent churn in some of our in-demand industry clusters, special sector initiatives are needed. What follows are two highlights in the region.



The Baton Rouge RLMA has shown an improvement in its unemployment rate since its peak of 9 percent in June 2011. The unemployment rate has decreased to 5.1 percent in June 2019. Since January 2009, the unemployment rate has declined by 1.4 percentage points. The 52,503-person increase in the labor force between January 2009 and June 2019 has led to 55,688 more employed individuals during the same period. Unfortunately, in 2020 with the impact of COVID the number of unemployed reached an all time high. Though the numbers are dropping each new wave of the virus creates another hardship to employers and the industries.



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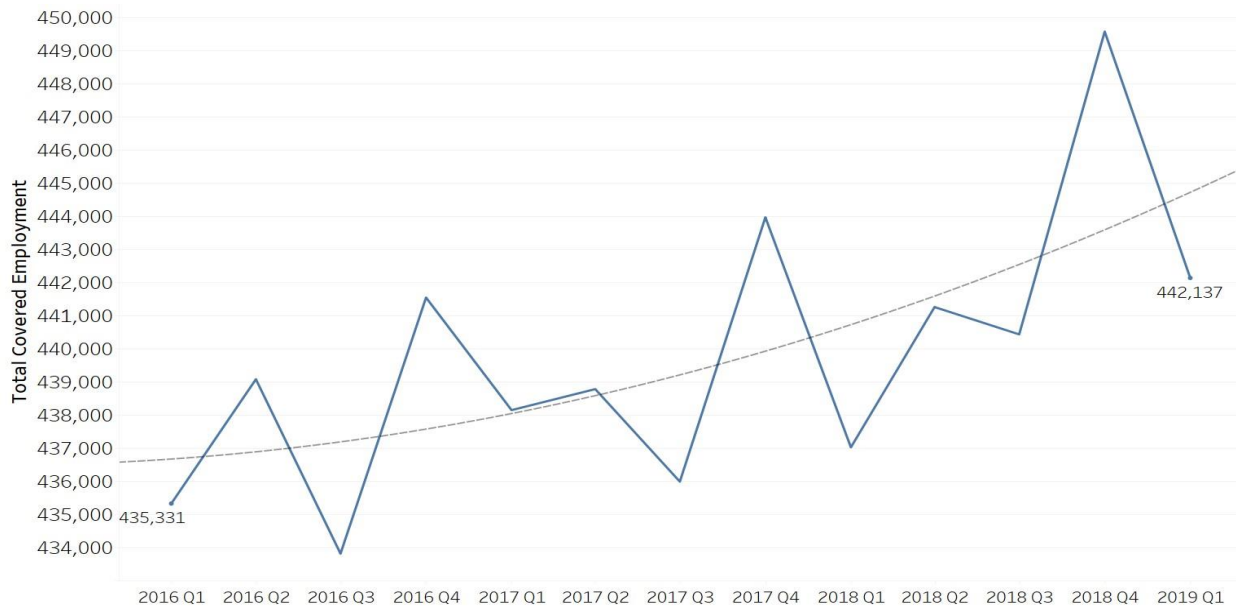
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Labor market information from the Louisiana Workforce Commission for Region 2 in 2019 showed that there were 465,889 persons in the labor force. Of those 295,535 were whites and 170,354 were minorities. Of the breakdowns 237,914 were male and 227,975 were female.

The poverty rate in Region 2 ranges from 10.8% to as high as 24.4% for the 11 parishes. The make up is urban, suburban and rural. The population is highly diverse in age, race, gender and educational level. The largest barriers to employment are educational level and poverty.

Those persons with a high school education range from 75-90 percent with the majority of the lower percentage in the hard-to-reach rural areas.

Between 2016 Q1 and 2019 Q1, employment in the Baton Rouge RLMA grew by 6,806. The largest industries were health care and social assistance, construction, and retail trade. The Baton Rouge RLMA comprised 23.1 percent of the state’s total employment in 2018 Q1.



**Section 1B: Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for**

**indemand industry sector or occupations for the planning region.**

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The region is engaged in specific activities around targeted sector strategies to better identify and address the needs of employers in the region through a series of industry working groups. In the area of

Healthcare, we are fully engaged cross-regionally with a multitude of healthcare initiatives, particularly in customized training and joint endeavors for recruitment and training. Some of our partners include

Ochsner Health System, Baton Rouge General, North Oaks Hospital, Hood Hospital and Our Lady of Angels. The hospitals and healthcare providers in our area have worked with LWDA 20 and LWDA 21 on customized trainings that include the local community and technical colleges and On-the -Job contracts to provide for and industry specific workforce. We provide labor market data analysis and assist with a comprehensive survey of the needs of the major hospital employers. Our partners also include Louisiana Workforce Commission and the industry sector team.

The workforce system, and employers in the field of highly concentrated Information Technology sector emergence have been able to leverage resource and information to further support this young industry. Many of these companies are highly engaged and new training that had not previously existed is now present in the region. Cross-regional collaboration in weekly and bi-weekly team meetings among the Business Service Representatives, and Economic Development Business & Retention to strategize the further development of our jointly aligned industry sectors to inform and shape the sector strategies of the future. Some of our partners include IBM, Amazon, Interlox and Elmer's Candy Company.

The region is fully integrated in Jump Start, a statewide and regionally coordinated dual enrollment program. The Workforce Development Boards continue to provide guidance,

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recommendations and approval for the targeted demand occupations and training programs that would be most effective in filling regional skill gaps. Another example of building upon the partnerships within the region include the start of sharing staff and multiple cooperative endeavor agreements between Economic Development and the Workforce Development Boards. In one example, the partnership results in a neutral convener with additional capacity to help establish sector partnerships. The planning work done by the group is helping to lead opportunities to validate data points to add relevance, create a circle of continuous feedback from industry, identify potential sector initiatives and to grow the economy.

**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.

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

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

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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

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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. Our region has MOU agreements with the WIOA mandated partners through formal MOU's along with cooperative endeavor agreements with other public agencies.

Return on Investment for Region 2 will be based on achievement of overall performance as negotiated with the Louisiana Workforce Commission. These performance measures can be found in Chapters 5 for both Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 and EmployBR – LWDA 21 respectively

#### [Section 2 B: Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinate within the region.](#)

Supportive services are carefully coordinated locally between partners to ensure maximum availability to the community and avoidance of duplication of services. Supportive services that are available from the partners are in accordance with each partner's mandates, regulations, local policies, and funding availability. Examples of supportive services that are available within the region include:

- Transportation assistance
- Housing assistance
- Utilities assistance
- Training assistance: books, supplies, fees, tools, uniforms

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- Needs-related payments
- Other supportive services defined by the individual need to participate in the workforce or in training

Local workforce areas incorporate into their local policies the verification of supportive services that are available in the local area at the time of each individual request for such funded services as they are frequently subject to change due to funding availability.

### Section 2C: Coordination with Economic Development

Region Two works with multiple economic development areas to create relationships that not only ensures a business-driven system, but also leverages resources in the region. Most of the area is covered by relationships with Greater, New Orleans, Inc., Greater Baton Rouge Economic Development Area, and the Regional Planning Commission. Our economic development partners are an integral and active partner in the regular regional business services and sector strategy team meetings. There is regular coordination and input provided to the local and regional priority sector identification and management. There is also cross regional and cross partner “ride-a-longs” to meet with businesses and continued cross training. The workforce development seeks regular guidance from the regional and local economic development entities and also participates in all relevant initiatives. In some local areas, the partnerships have moved to a higher level where there are cooperative endeavor agreements to share staff salaries, outcomes, reporting, and information. Additionally, there is also a formalized local group in place named the Partnership for Industry, Workforce, and Economic Development that cements the regional workforce collaboration with economic development with goals to replicate into other

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areas in the region. Each parish has an economic entity that our business services sections work with to aid employers. No areas have declined to work with our region.



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**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

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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.

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**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 our resources and training on providers that deliver high-quality employer-focused and job seeker programs.
- 2) Continue to expand our networking with Community and Technical College system along with high quality training providers to identify “gaps” in program offerings as identified through labor market research and dialogue with business.
- 3) Increase our implementation of Customized Industry Training program and On-the-Job Training programs.
- 4) Expand our assessment instruments in the local GeauxJobs 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 our emphasis on short-term training and work-based learning in the local area.
- 6) Expand our sector work to identify emerging sectors and to begin offering skills training to meet the projected needs.
- 7) Continue our 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 our close working relationship with local, regional, and state economic developers.

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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

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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.

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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. This team is also used to promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services through the small business services initiatives. They also meet at least quarterly to share information and coordinate activities.

**Section 3D: Describe regional strategies that will increase apprenticeship and other workbased 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

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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 postsecondary 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 K12 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.



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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: GEAUXJOBS- LOCAL WORKFORCE AREA 20****Section 4A: Coordination and Planning Requirements:**

The Local Workforce Development Area 20 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

The Local Workforce Development Area 20 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.1). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

The primary funding appropriated to the 15 LWDA's 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,

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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, statewide/agency-wide, to influence change through innovative ideas and approaches to serving workforce customers: employers and job seekers.

The American way of doing business has been significantly altered because of the 2020 COVID19 pandemic. This will impact the way that we engage jobseekers and employers. As a consequence, in 2021 we will undertake a research project to better understand effective marketing strategies to reach the following key demographics: college students, long-term unemployed, displaced workers, dislocated workers, older workers, formerly incarcerated individuals, jobseekers with health conditions that put them at higher risk of contracting C-19, and students currently co-enrolled at post-secondary institutions.

The One-Stop Operator has worked diligently to update the Memorandum of Understanding with the 16 required partners as mandated by the WIOA Act. In addition GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 is adding additional partners to address needs of the local area.

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

LWDA has an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system. Through the use of web monitors, we are able to do virtual intake interviews with clients. Each of our offices have video conferencing to provide for virtual orientation trainings across offices. Each career center has been upgraded to google boxes networked to copy machines to assist jobseekers with documents and printing. GeauxJobs purchased the Voss Greater system to track all visitors to our center through logging in on I-PADS and showing our service times and who the visitors are coming to the center to see. We have also implemented electronic signature systems and are soliciting vendors to implement virtual hiring events. Additional funding for the acquisition of a more customized software solution is a constant consideration of this board. Now, more than ever, technology is required for efficient (and, safe) services.

**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:**

LWDA 20 Board will support the strategies identified in the Combined State Plan by working with a variety of entities delivering core programs. Specifically, through a competitive bid process, the Operator, Castle of Dreams has been contracted to deliver WIOA program services in the 10-parish service area. Castle of Dreams has created the following program structure. Castles of Dreams has adopted six (6) core values that are the fundamental beliefs of the company. These core values, and examples of what they mean to Castles of Dreams are:

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1. Integrity & Respect- We treat others with respect. Our actions and our words are considerate, honest and ethical.
2. Open Communication- We seek first to understand, we listen. We give and receive meaningful feedback.
3. Accountability- We work on the right things. We do what we say we will do.
4. Teamwork- We play on the larger team; not by ourselves. We collaborate across boundaries.
5. Continuous Improvement- We set high standards and goals using external benchmarks. We are data-driven and self-critical.
6. Adaptability- We welcome and adapt to change.

Demonstrate an understanding of the workforce development system in Louisiana:

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.

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In order to carry out the core programs of WIOA GeauxJobs the following must be implemented:

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 Incumbent Worker Training Grants
- Apprenticeship Programs

Needs-Based Scholarships issued through Individual Training Account (ITA) for postsecondary training, are managed in the GeauxJobs Centers by members of the Career Development Services Team. A thorough assessment and verification is completed to ensure the training plan will lead to

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employability in an in-demand occupation. Staff then obligates funds which is documented in HIRE System and submitted to Operations team for approval to have a clearer picture of funds available and projected expenditures for the program year. A priority of service policy is in place to ensure the most in need receive services first.

While brick-and-mortar GeauxJobs Centers are valued for cost effectiveness, availability of resources to customers, and visibility in the community, GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 also recognizes the need to bring the services to the customers who may not be able to visit the established GeauxJobs Centers given the large service area and transportation barriers. In order to bring the services to the people web based GeauxJobs Centers services such as labor market information, unemployment insurance, and mediated labor exchange information is posted on the LWC website and our local GeauxJobs.org website.

In order 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 GeauxJobs Centers 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.

The GeauxJobs 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 GeauxJobs Centers.

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The Business Services Team conducts rapid response meetings to serve workers dislocated through closures or layoffs. Outreach to unemployment claimants regarding GeauxJobs Centers services is also conducted via email when contact information is available. Industry recognized credentials include apprenticeships. A credential is considered stackable when it is part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help them to move along a career pathway or up a career ladder to different and potentially high paying jobs.

The GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 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
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. Improving our outreach and awareness efforts to the community, particularly regarding populations with barriers to employment.



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2. Promoting the creation of additional effective electronic linkages while maintaining electronic service delivery systems that are user-friendly, effective, and accessible to individuals who reside in remote parts of our area.
3. Maintaining efforts to identify individuals with barriers to employment during intake.
4. Making sure that the participants of all core partners are made aware of the full scope of services that are available to them through the GeauxJobs Centers system.

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

GeauxJobs- LWDA 20 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.

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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. GeauxJobs 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. Specialized training has been developed on assisting individuals of diverse geographic and demographic populations consisting of rural and urban communities' veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic-skills deficient. Services to eligible WIOA Adult Program participants will be provided in the following order:

The Vocational Rehabilitation 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 postsecondary institute.

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 GeauxJobs local office staff for co-enrollment. Once students receive their HiSet they are eligible to go directly to training and WIOA counselors will provide tuition assistance (if available) for them to complete the program.

The GeauxJobs Centers with the direct assistance of the Title I- IV partners as well as other community- based organizations has developed a linked American Job Center system that focuses

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on solid business principles, professional staff and effective partnerships to ensure business and job seekers receive high quality services. Mandated WIOA Partners have entered into a MOU, including programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

This leverages resources, eliminates duplication of services and streamlines functions. 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. The delivery is through an integrated three-team function of the GeauxJobs Center Career Service and Business Service Teams.

Geaux Jobs has secured through competitive bid a One-Stop Operator. The One Stop Operator in Geaux Jobs-LWDA 20 is responsible for the coordination of service delivery of required partners of the local workforce system and other service providers; creation of a single point of entry for customers through a uniformed referral process; serves as a liaison to the community, partner agencies, and employers for the workforce system. A general list of functions the One Stop Operator will perform include:

1. Staff Management and Program Oversight. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Functional support to all Geaux Jobs-LWDA20 center and partner staff
  - Assist with development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Geaux  
Jobs Centers
  - Provide input on staff positions needed

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- Develop continuous improvement activities to achieve high level service quality and exceptional customer service

Working with our partners will include the following processes:

2. **Community Partner Relations.** Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Establish and maintain key relationships with workforce partners
- Coordinate with partners in the implementation of quality and continuous improvement
- Facilitate capacity building within the system and with partner agencies
- Promote workforce programs within the communities concerning the workforce system services
- Work with partners to ensure adaptive technologies are available to support disabled clients and are in good working order and staff are trained in this area
- Convene meetings of the MOU One-Stop Partners

3. **Collaboration and Compliance.** Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Provide leadership, guidance, and technical assistance to Center staff and partners to meet or exceed program performance goals and outcomes
- Assist Board with outreach efforts and event coordination such as job fairs, employer retention visits, and business sector assistance
- Serve as a community liaison to represent the goodwill of the Local One-Stop System

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4. **Facilitating the development and execution of Memoranda of Understand (MOUs) and Infrastructure Agreements (IFAs) as appropriate.** Examples include, but are not

limited to:

- Assist with creating and maintaining MOUs and IFAs as necessary to lead and ensure partners are contributing their share of the costs of center operations and ensure shared costs are transparent to all partners
- Ensure all MOUs and IFAs are maintained on file and updated regularly

Local Referral Process is overseen by the One Stop Operator, Operations Manager and Site Supervisors for customers within the AJC system and is tied directly to the Partner MOU's which are the baseline agreement signed by all partners within the AJC system. 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 a warm hand-off. In order to track the referrals made among the 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 it is always useful to obtain customer feedback about the referral as well as feedback from each agency to which referrals are made. A follow-up call should be made to

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each to ensure the referral was effective. 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, such as 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 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.


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Auxiliary aids are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. 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

Transportation Services: Based on the supportive services policy LWDA 20 will provide transportation services as outlined in the policy. Mileage will be reimbursed based on the federal mileage rate from the persons place of residence to training institution. The mileage will be reimbursed based on actual attendance of the student on a monthly basis. See below the actual full policy.

	Policy Name:  <b>Supportive Services Policy</b>
	Policy Number: <b>200-02</b>
Effective Date: <b>05-18-2005</b>	Revision Date: <b>3-10-2020</b>

The term “Career Planning” means the provision of a client-centered approach in the delivery of services designed to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans such as, service strategies for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services. The term “Supportive Services” means services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA when such supportive services are unobtainable through other programs providing such services.

**Reference:** WIOA Chapter 3 – Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training

Activities; SEC. 134. Use of Funds for Employment and Training Activities. (c) Required Local Employment and Training Activities. (2) Career Services. (A) Services Provided.



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(ix); CFR, Title 20, Chapter V, Part 680, Subpart G, Section 680.940, 680.950 - SEC 681- Youth Supportive Services - 681-570.

**Policy:** All support services will be based on the individual needs of the participant. Due to funding limitations, WIOA support service funding is to be used as the last resort. All other sources of funding must be sought first.

All participants desiring supportive services must complete an application for service. Participants, in spite of the funding stream, must document all valid barriers on the application to be considered for supportive services. As funds dictate. The actual number of barriers needed to be eligible to receive supportive services will be determined biannually. Participants whose family income exceeds the Poverty Guidelines or 70 percent LLSIL are not to receive supportive services unless two (2) or more barriers to employment can be documented.

Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are:

- Actively participating in WIOA career and training services; and
- Are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs who offer such services.

Additionally, supportive services may only be provided when they are proven necessary to enable individuals to participate in WIOA activities. All justification for provision of supportive services must be documented in case notes in the participants file in HIRE.

To ensure successful participation in the appropriate career or training activity, Career Services Team Members will determine the supportive services needs of each individual to be enrolled. Such determination will be based on a comprehensive assessment and is to include documentation of the participant's need to receive supportive services to participate in career and training services.

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Through counseling and assessment, the determination of need and the level of assistance to be provided will be made on an individual basis. Bases for determining need:

1. Must be actively participating in negotiated activities;
2. Must be in compliance with negotiated activities;
3. Necessary to alleviate barriers prohibiting job attainment/retention; and
4. Resources not available from any other source.

All WIOA program applicants and participants will be informed of paid and unpaid supportive services available through the local GeauxJobs Center System. This is to include services provided by the GeauxJobs Center partners and applicable community resources.

Approval of supportive services will be justified in the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS). As a prerequisite for applying for supportive services under WIOA, other related resources in the area (including the GeauxJobs Center partners) must first be explored. Participants will secure documentation of denial from all other available community resources the applicant was referred to by the WIOA Counselor. Such efforts will be documented in the participant's file. To prevent the duplication of costs and efforts, participants first must exhaust all related available services before WIOA services will be authorized.

A plan of action regarding resolution of barrier(s) must be included in the Individual Employment Plan prior to any WIOA activity (HiRE Code 185 or 485).

WIOA Counselor will periodically review (no less than every six (6) months) the need for, and the receipt of, supportive services. Review of supportive service needs are to be reflected in the IEP/ISS and noted in the case notes as appropriate. Sound case management and timely participant

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follow-up are essential to ensuring completion of activities, and in meeting IEP/ISS goals and objectives.

WIOA Counselors are responsible for tracking participant attendance, time keeping (80% attendance rate) and related duties. Educational/training institutions receiving ITA's must perform time keeping, participant activity tracking and related duties via the participant's time and attendance records.

The award of WIOA supportive services to participants is at the discretion of the GeauxJobs Site Supervisor or Operations Manager. WIOA Counselors must ensure each individual service cost:

- Is reasonable – both in cost and the item being purchased
- Is necessary to participate in WIOA, or to obtain or maintain employment
- Is the last resort when utilizing WIOA fund

▷ Participant cannot afford to pay for the expense

▷ No other resources are available (family, community, other agencies)

- Is a required item when assisting with payment of tolls, books, and supplies, etc.
- Is fully documented in the plan or case notes.

Provision of paid WIOA supportive services will be limited to the overall time participation limitation. Two (2) years is the time limit for the provisions of services to Adult/DW participants. If additional time is required to complete the IEP/ISS, a request must be submitted to the Operations Manager for participants that will exceed the 2 – year time limitation. The request must be submitted in writing and approved thirty (30) days prior to the actual extension date. The waiver request must include:

- A description of the circumstances justifying the request;
- The certificate/degree/training plan pursued; • The start date of the two (2) year; and
- The anticipated end date.

All documentation justifying supportive services extensions will be maintained in the participant's file.

In addition to services during the course of the WIOA Youth Programs, supportive services should be provided for all Youth participants in the post exit period up to twelve (12) months after exit.

Each case will have an upper limit of \$5000 per program year. (***Training specific expenses are not included in this limit***). The “other costs including, tools, books, etc.” under Program Costs on the education program's page in HiRE, is the maximum to be allowed for these costs.

The limit may be reached as a result of the participant selecting one or a combination of supportive services funding, including needs-related payments for Adults and/or Dislocated Workers, to be used for the following needs, to be disbursed on an individual-need basis:

### Needs-Related Payments

Needs-related payments provide financial assistance to participants for the purpose of enabling them to participate in training and are a supportive service authorized by WIOA. Unlike other supportive services. In order *to qualify for needs-related payments a participant must be enrolled in training*. GeauxJobs – LWDA 20 will pay a Needs-Related payment in the amount of \$20.00 per day for each day of attendance in the training activity, not to exceed \$400.00 in one month.

The eligibility requirements for adults to receive needs-related payments are:

- a. Be unemployed;
- b. Not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation; and
- c. Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA.

The eligibility requirements for dislocated workers to receive needs-related payments are:

- a. Be unemployed, and:
  1. Have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade read readjustment allowance under TAA; and
  2. Be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> week after the most recent layoff that resulted in a determination of the worker's eligibility as a dislocated worker, or, if later, by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> week after the worker is informed that a short-term layoff will exceed 6 months; or
- b. Be unemployed and did not qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment assistance under TAA and be enrolled in a program of training services under WIOA.

Needs-related payments may be paid while a participant is waiting to start training classes, if the participant has been accepted in a training program that will begin within 30 calendar days.

To receive needs-related payments, individuals must be unemployed and must not qualify for (or have ceased to qualify for) unemployment compensation. While *underemployed individuals are not eligible for needs-related payments* under WIOA, there is no prohibition on providing supportive services to the underemployed, other than needs-related payments.

### Training Specific Expenses

A Student may be granted up to \$5,000 max regardless of SVP Code or time frame towards supportive service costs. Examples: Books, tools, uniforms and/or other items that the student may be responsible for. This will be a reimbursable cost with the student purchasing and GeauxJobs LWDA-20 reimbursing the student upon submission of proof of purchase receipt, updated time sheets, grades and measurable skill gains.

Training provider maximum supportive services reimbursement is per individual

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\$5,000 regardless of SVP Code. Supportive Services must be clearly defined on financial assistance form and request for reimbursement form (invoice). Providers must submit time sheets, grades, and measurable skill gains with reimbursement requests for supportive services.

Three (3) written quotes must be provided on any items which cost \$500 or more and the lowest bid meeting the requirements will be accepted.

### **Travel Expense**

**Reimbursed Travel Allowance:** A reimbursed travel allowance is an allowance which is based on the actual distance travelled for educational purposes. The current mileage rate paid by the Federal Government/GSA Rates will be paid by GeauxJobs – LWDA 20 to a participant who incurred such travel during their daily commute to and from classroom training site.

When the training site is temporarily outside of the classroom (e.g. clinical site, another campus) the reimbursement remains the same as the distance to the original classroom training site.] **The travel allowance is not to exceed \$400.00 a month regardless of the number of miles traveled by a student.**

Travel expense reimbursement for the participant aligns with the actual distance traveled to and from the participant's verified, primary residence to the training site by the most direct route. The distance travelled to the training site will be established and verified at the beginning of the training (for verification, a map printed from MapQuest, Yahoo Maps, Google Maps, etc.) should be attached to the Individual Training Account form.

Travel expense payments will follow the accurate and timely submission of *Monthly Time & Attendance Records*. *Monthly Time & Attendance Records* will be due to the GeauxJobs Center by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Supportive Services:

- WIOA funds may pay for services to cover other expenses associated with participating in WIOA-funded activities upon prior written approval.
- Additional supportive service payments may include, but are not limited to, assistance in obtaining a driver's license, work related licensure or testing, and supplies for work, etc.
- WIOA Counselors will maintain adequate documentation to support other supportive service costs.
- All supportive service documentation will be completed prior to paying for such services.

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

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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;
- 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 with up to \$20,000 available 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. GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 Workforce Board 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 was 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:**

The GeauxJobs Career Service Centers has discretion to determine what specific program services a youth participant receives based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy. It is not required to provide every program service to each participant; the following 14 services are made available to participants:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and dropout prevention services that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential. This includes secondary school dropout prevention strategies that keep a youth in school and engaged in formal learning or training.
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services – Alternative secondary school services assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary school education. Dropout recovery services are aimed at getting youth who have dropped out of secondary education back into a secondary school or alternative secondary school/high school equivalency program.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences:
  - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
  - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
  - Internships and job shadowing;

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- On-the-job training opportunities.

4. Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, is an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupation fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels.

Occupational skills training must meet the following criteria:

- Be outcome-oriented and focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy
- Be of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal
- Lead to the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential
- Meet the quality standards in WIOA Section 123

5. Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training for a specific occupation or occupational

cluster – This element refers to the concurrent delivery of workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway

6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities, encouraging responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors



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7. Supportive services that enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities
8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation
9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling provides individualized counseling to participants and may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs
11. Financial literacy education includes information and activities such as creating budgets, setting up checking and saving accounts, managing spending, understanding credit reports, and protecting against identity theft
12. Entrepreneurial skills training assists youth in developing the skills associated with starting and operating a small business
13. Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services
14. Post-Secondary preparation and transition activities, which prepares youth for postsecondary education after attaining a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

GeauxJobs is bound by the LWC decision not to request a waiver of the 75% OSY and 25% ISY mandate therefore services in our local area must be primarily focused on OSY.

School districts in the area offer some form of Career and Technical Education (CTE) or Career

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Pathway courses and the though the local GeauxJobs centers would like to provide support for these programs as needed due to the federal mandate we cannot. Dual enrollment courses are available in all schools so students can receive high school and college credit simultaneously.

To best serve our youth, LWDA 20 has established collaborative efforts with numerous youth focused partners who provide expertise addressing the needs of our out of school youth. Our partnerships include coordination with Adult Education, Job Corps/Youth Challenge, local school systems, LCTCS, Juvenile Justice, Youth Build, as well as community and faith-based organizations. In addition, LWDA issued a call for RFPs to obtain new partners to deliver services for youth residing in rural communities. Through these partnerships, youth have access to an array of specialized services especially for at-risk and out-of-school youth who have multiple barriers to employment and educational opportunities. In addition, we have enrollees in two Youth Build programs and a number of occupational training programs throughout the LCTCS system. Youth accessing services through GeauxJobs Centers are assessed at registration for eligibility, as well as being introduced to the full array of services, including the 14 elements of services available as appropriate for the individual youth. Under the direction of the LWDB, LWDA 20 strives to provide services that best serve to increase youth enrollment in post-secondary education, credentialing programs, increase graduation rates, encourage basic skills upgrade, address skills gaps, offer HiSet prep as needed, address soft skills deficiencies and lead youth to productive employment opportunities and lifelong success.

The 14 elements of youth services shall be obtained at no cost with other public and non-profit agencies and organizations or if necessary, thru procurement of services thru LWDA-20 procurement procedures.

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

The GeauxJobs Local Workforce Development Board along with the GeauxJobs Centers addresses the needs of individuals with multiple barriers to employment, specifically low-income individuals, basic skills deficient individuals and veterans. Even though these population groups have been identified for targeted services, a coordinated response will be developed for other groups that often face multiple barriers to employment such as 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 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 the wage records to calculate the individual’s earnings during eligibility of the individual.

Recipient 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.

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Training services for priority populations are used to connect participants to in-demand occupations that need to be filled by employers within GeauxJobs area. GeauxJobs 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 Key Performance Indicators. Co-enrolling with partners will ensure the needs of each participant will be met.

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

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

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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:**

Local areas do not approve training providers. The Louisiana Workforce Commission-LA Department of Labor is responsible for developing and maintaining the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) notifies training providers of the opportunity to apply for status as an approved training provider and thus eligible for 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. Training contracts for classroom occupational training may also be utilized when indicated by employer demand and when not available thru the ETPL/ITA System. Utilizing

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the ETPL provides participants with an informed choice, considering costs and other factors, of which school they wish to attend using their WIOA Individual Training Account and other funding such as Pell Grant monies. The decision to provide training on a limited basis, when deemed appropriate, thru a training contract as opposed to the ETPL/ ITA System should not limit or impact participant choice to attend other training programs.

Eligible participants who need training use the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to make an informed choice. In this way, the ETPL helps to provide consumer choice, while also supporting increased performance accountability. 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.

GeauxJobs-LWDA 20- 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. The GeauxJobs Centers are engaged in program review to evaluate whether or not an institution or program should be added to the State's Eligible Training Provider Lists ("ETPL") and the related eligibility procedures ensure the accountability, quality and labor-market relevance of training services programs that receive funds through WIOA. The State ETPLs are also a means for ensuring informed customer choice for individuals eligible for training.


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

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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 is able to make informed decisions.

Please see below GeauxJobs Training Policy

	<p>Policy Name:</p> <p><b>Individual Training Account Policy</b></p>
<p>Policy Number: <b>200-01</b></p>	<p>Revision Date: <b>3-10-2020</b></p>
<p>Effective Date: <b>3-10-2020</b></p>	

## OVERVIEW

Training services carried out with the adult, dislocated worker, and youth (OSY) funds received under GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will be in accordance with section 134 of WIOA.

Training funds shall be used to provide training services, to the extent feasible, to adult/dislocated worker/youth individuals who meet the eligibility requirements.

The ITA is an account established by a One-Stop Operator on behalf of an eligible individual. Individuals may use ITA's in exchange for training services for skills in demand occupations from training providers on the approved list of Eligible Training Providers. This system will maximize participant choice in the selection of training activities. ITA's place training resources in the hands of the consumer. Rather than being directed to a provider of training by an agency, the consumers will be able to select high quality training on their own. Consumer information about eligible training providers will be made available to all training seekers through the *one-stop* service delivery system.

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 dislocated/adult/youth grant funds budgeted for training services must be provided on a priority basis to public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. GeauxJobs LWDA-20 has established a maximum ITA amount that participants may receive and a total maximum per participant. (Attachment 1)

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GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will adhere to the following justification for training criteria for approving ITA Scholarships/Vouchers:

- a. There is no suitable employment for the worker
- b. The training is appropriate for the worker
- c. There is a reasonable expectation of employment following training
- d. Training must be reasonable and available to the worker
- e. The worker is qualified for the training
- f. The training is available at a reasonable cost

### **TRAINING SERVICES**

Participants will be evaluated to determine whether or not they are in need of training and if they possess the skills and qualifications needed to participate successfully in the training program in which they express an interest. Individual training accounts (ITA's) will be established for all eligible participants as defined in the act.

Occupational skills training will be provided in areas identified as targeted occupations based upon criteria such as number of openings, average entry level wage, potential for long term/stable employment, and general suitability for GeauxJobs LWDA-20 applicants.

Occupational training will be conducted for occupations where skill shortages exist and for occupations where there is a reasonable expectation for employment. Occupational skills training shall conform to the specifications in the GeauxJobs - LWDA 20 Demand Occupations list. Participants will be informed of the demand occupations and/or skills for which training may be provided.

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 has made available to all individuals the right to pursue occupations that are non-traditional. The attainment of this goal will be achieved through the provision of counseling and information that will assist the individual in selecting the occupational skills training that is best suited for them, including those occupations considered nontraditional.

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will pay for On-Line Training courses that are part of the overall curriculum of an approved training program at an approved training institution, and are conducted in a classroom setting and/or under the supervision of an Instructor/Teacher.

LWDA 20 will consider funding standalone on-line training programs on a case-by-case basis and will be approved by the Director of Workforce Development.

Individuals will be able to select a service provider from the Service Provider List.

The provider list is maintained by LWC and available in all One-Stops and on the Internet through LWC's Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE). The training participant will be required to do an in-depth review of all information concerning the training provider, demand occupations, career paths in which training is being requested, and labor market information prior to being approved for training.



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The training participant will be required to sign a receipt of training vendor information form that will state they conducted this review, and believe the training vendor, and career path they have chosen was made based on all the information they could find. It will also state they believe the career path they have chosen is the correct, and appropriate one for them. GeauxJobs staff will not recommend a specific training provider.

The client file will include a description of how the determination was made that the training selected is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or another area to which the trainee is willing to relocate. The client file will also include documentation of the determination that the individual has the skills and qualification to allow successful participation in the selected training program.

In the event the training participant (client) does not complete the training, all funds that have been allocated for their training, and not used, will be recouped (de-obligated) and placed back into the training system. Training for this client will be considered complete, and further training *will not* be considered unless the client is able to furnish justification for not being able to complete the training program. Only then, with approval from Administrative Board Staff and availability of funds, can training funds be considered for this client. Program Staff will keep the Contract Staff informed on the status of the participant throughout the program year.

Training is limited to a curriculum that can be completed in two years or less.

With the following exceptions:

- Four-year curriculum in a Higher Education Institution (College/University), in which the eligible individual to be enrolled has no more than one (1) year (2 semester if possible summer) remaining before receiving their diploma/certificate, and
- The individual has a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater, and
- The individual can provide documentation certifying the above requirements are met
- GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will provide funding for the 1st year of Apprenticeship Training if a recognizable industry-based certification can be obtained in the first year.

ITA's may be used to purchase the following:

- Tuition for training services for skills in demand occupations
- Books, fees, and/or other required training materials
- Other required training expenses\*
- Credentials.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will allocate WIOA funds for the provision of occupational classroom training to eligible individuals who:

- After an interview, evaluation or assessment, and case management, have been determined by a one-stop operator to:
  - Be in need of training services, and

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- Have the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the selected program of training services.
- Selected programs of training services that are directly linked to the employment opportunities in demand in GeauxJobs LWDA-20 or another area in which the adult or dislocated worker are willing to relocate.
- Been determined eligible according to the “Priority system” established by the State and Local Board.
- Are unable to obtain other grant assistance, including Pell Grants • Require assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs.
- Otherwise meets the above requirements while an application for a federal Pell Grant is pending.
- Other Grant funds do not cover the complete cost of training.

### **PRIORITY SYSTEM**

1. In addition to the priority requirements established in the WIOA and State LWC policy for priority of services to Adults who are public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will provide priority for enrollment into training activities to individuals who are GeauxJobs LWDA-20 residents. Provided training funds are available and it is documented that funds are unavailable in the participant’s area of residence, consideration will be given to non-residential participants with approval of the GeauxJobs LWDA-20 Director.

### **2. ITA LIMITED SLOTS**

When the available slots for a Service Provider are limited GeauxJobs LWDA-20 participants will be enrolled first, prior to enrollment of non-residential participants. Slots will be reserved for GeauxJobs LWDA-20 participants for a minimum of two-thirds of the program year. After that time, non-residential participants will be considered for enrollment if it is documented that funds are unavailable in their area. Non-residential participants may be enrolled for training in an Institution where there is no limit on slots upon providing the above documentation.

### **TRAINING PROVIDER**

Training Institutions listed on Louisiana HiRE that have been approved by the Local Workforce Development Board will qualify as a provider, providing that they have been in business for a minimum of one (1) year with successful performance - 80% completion rate, 50% placement rate

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and a minimum wage rate of \$8 per hour. All Training Institutions that qualify to be a part of GeauxJobs LWDA-20 list of Training Providers and receive any federal funding of training dollars will have to be knowledgeable of the Workforce Investment Board's Policy on the Individualized

Training Account (ITA) System. All qualified Training Providers will be equally recognized for training services. Training Provider information such as demand occupations, career paths in which training is being requested, labor market information, convenience and accessibility will be considered by the participant in selecting a provider.

Training and Technical Assistance will be made available to all eligible Training Providers. The ITA system will be structured so that no one training provider is discriminated against. The Training Providers who meet the initial qualification (as set forth by the LWC) and whose training services are used during the first year will be evaluated annually to determine if their performance meets the state and local performance levels. Enrollment will be limited to initial Training Providers (per Attachment 2), until performance as stated in the ITA Agreement has been met. Established Provider limits are found in Attachment 2A. Limits will be based on the length of training.

### **FUNDING**

Participants will be advised that other funding sources must be sought prior to receipt of GeauxJobs LWDA-20 funds. GeauxJobs LWDA-20 staff will assist participants in securing other funding. (Pell grants, etc.) The solicitation of other funding must be documented.

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 funds for the ITA system will be through the applicable Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth (OSY) program after other sources of funding have been applied to the training cost. participants who select training where the cost exceeds the amount allowable must provide documentation or proof supporting their ability to pay the excess costs prior to receiving GeauxJobs LWDA-20 funds.

### **TRAINING PROVIDER AGREEMENT**

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will enter into an agreement with each Training Provider prior to the beginning of training and to the issuance of an ITA scholarship (voucher). The agreement will include all the necessary clauses required by the federal and state government, and the local GeauxJobs - LWDA 20 Board and provide the process for paying training providers, the payment schedule and refund policy. Training cost will come from LWC – ETPL site in HiRE.

### **ITA SCHOLARSHIP (voucher)**

The ITA scholarship (voucher) will be completed and delivered to the training provider by GeauxJobs LWDA-20 prior to the beginning of service. The scholarship (voucher) will be for an

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amount no more than the actual cost of the training minus the amount of any other available training grants or funds, such as Pell grants and cannot exceed the limits established by the Local Workforce Investment Board. GeauxJobs LWDA-20 will use an established ITA scholarship (voucher) that includes the following but not limited to:

- Name, address and telephone number of Training Provider
- Name, address, telephone number and social security number of participants
- Issuance and ending date
- Purpose of scholarship (voucher) (type of training)
- Value of scholarship (voucher)- Prior to other grants or funding
- Signatures: Program Supervisor (Operations Manager)
- Seal of GeauxJobs LWDA-20

The scholarship (voucher) shall be produced in:

- Original - Training Provider
- 1st copy- Contracting & Bookkeeping
- 2nd copy-participant's record

### **ITA SYSTEM PROCEDURES**

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 has designed a system to determine who is eligible to receive an ITA. The local Eligibility policy will describe how participants will receive assessment, counseling, and an individual employment plan prior to issuance of an ITA.

### **ATTACHMENT 1**

#### **INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNT VALUE**

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 has established a maximum amount that is applicable to all ITA's.

See Attachment 1 (a) for maximum amounts of Training Scholarships (vouchers). These begin with the date of entry into training.

Scholarship (voucher)s shall be issued for the total cost and length of training, however the yearly cost shall not exceed the established cost limits. Payment of training cost will be exclusively from GeauxJobs LWDA-20 funds and cost that extends beyond the current program year will be conditioned upon the receipt of GeauxJobs LWDA-20 funds from the Louisiana Workforce

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Commission. Payments will be made in accordance with the payment schedule negotiated with the Training Provider.

At the end of each program year WIOA Counselor will review each participant's progress and determine if the value of the scholarship needs to be adjusted.

In unusual circumstances where the total cost of a training program exceeds the maximum amount allowable, and where the participant is making sufficient progress the WIOA Counselor and Operations Manager may review the case and determine if there is sufficient reason to exceed the limit. If funds are available, all exceeding costs must be approved by the Director of Workforce Development.

## ADDENDUM TO ATTACHMENT 1 (a) - ITA Training Accounts Policy

## SVP Level:

1 Not considered for ITA Training Scholarship/Vouchers. This is short term that may be conducted under Intensive.

2-5 Up to \$10,000. per year.

6 Up to \$10,000 per year with a maximum of \$20,000\*.

7-9 Non-funded due to program length.

\*The addendum modification to Attachment 1 (a) of the ITA Training Account Policy will rescind on June 30, 2022 and the original approved Attachment 1 (a) will be effective.

## ATTACHMENT 1 (a)

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Scholarship amounts will be determined according to the SVP Codes of the occupation being trained for.

SVP Level:

1 Not considered for ITA Training Scholarship/Vouchers. This is short-term that may be conducted under Intensive.

2-5 Up to \$5,000. per year.

6 Up to \$5,000 per year with a maximum of \$10,000\*.

7-9 Non-funded due to program length.

\* After the first 12 months of training, the amount to be paid will be pro-rated as follows:

13-18 months - ½ of yearly allowable amount

19-24 months - yearly allowable amount

ATTACHMENT 2

GeauxJobs LWDA-20 INITIAL Provider Year Enrollment Limits

10 Slots- New provider receives 10 slots total combination of all curriculum for 1st year.

ATTACHMENT 2(a)

Established Provider Enrollment Limits

ITA vouchers may exceed 20 slots based upon fund availability and meeting performance measures of: placement, 2nd and 4th quarter exit performance, and median income levels, with the approval of the Workforce Development Director.

At the end of each program year, performance will be reviewed on all Training Providers prior to entering into a new contract. Training providers who fail to meet performance for the previous program year, may not receive a new contract for the next program year unless they can

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demonstrate thru a corrective action plan, subject to the approval of the Director of Workforce Development showing that necessary steps to be taken to meet and/or exceed performance for the new program year.

**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:**

- GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 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.
- GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 will dedicated incumbent worker training on a case by case basis while coordinating available funds with the Louisiana Workforce Commission.
- GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 uses funds for transitional jobs and has a specific transitional jobs policy to address the use of funds.
- GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 does not fund pay for performance contracts.

**CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION-  
GEAUXJOBS- LWDA 20**

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

GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 negotiated performance with the Louisiana Workforce Commission-representing the Governor’s office. Negotiation with no consideration for the current COVID-19 pandemic occurred and the following were the negotiated levels:

<b>Negotiated Performance</b>	<b>State Negotiated PY 20</b>	<b>State Negotiated PY 21</b>
<b>Adult</b>		
<b>Employment Rate Q2 after Exit</b>	72%	72%
<b>Employment Rate Q4 after Exit</b>	69%	69%
<b>Median Earnings Q2 after Exit</b>	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200
<b>Credential Attainment</b>	75%	75%
<b>Measurable Skills Gains</b>	70%	70%

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**Dislocated Worker**

<b>Employment Rate Q2 after Exit</b>	75%	75%
<b>Employment Rate Q4 after Exit</b>	70%	70%
<b>Median Earnings Q2 after Exit</b>	\$ 9,400	\$ 9,400
<b>Credential Attainment</b>	75%	75%
<b>Measurable Skills Gains</b>	66%	66%
<b>Youth</b>		
<b>Employment/Training Rate Q2 after Exit</b>	69%	69%
<b>Employment/Training Rate Q4 after Exit</b>	75%	75%
<b>Median Earnings Q2 after Exit</b>	\$3,200	\$3,200
<b>Credential Attainment</b>	73%	73%
<b>Measurable Skills Gains</b>	72%	72%
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>		
<b>Employment Rate Q2 after Exit</b>	61%	61%
<b>Employment Rate Q4 after Exit</b>	64%	64%
<b>Median Earnings Q2 after Exit</b>	\$5,700	\$5,700

**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.**

GeauxJobs-LWDA 20 has a contract with an internal monitor who reviews each training provider once annually to determine compliance with the training provider contract negotiated with GeauxJobs annual to provide training services. The internal monitor will also evaluate the local GeauxJobs office annually for compliance with reporting and eligibility.

Each monitoring evaluation will be shared with the Operations Manager, Local Site Supervisor, and the training provider. Any findings will be addressed with the entity and a corrective action plan will created and the entity will be monitored again regarding the finding and compliance with the corrective action plan.



## **CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSUANCES LOCAL COMPONENT- LWDA 20**

### **A. Fiscal Management**

1. Tangipahoa Parish Government Grant Management department is responsible for the administration of the WIOA federal award and all related financial transactions. A top priority of the department is to ensure compliance with the applicable Acts, Federal Registers, Uniform Guidance, State Directives, WDB policies and generally accepted accounting principles. Records are kept that adequately identify each Federal grant fund and contain information pertaining to the grants including authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, expenditures and income. Current financial systems allow for effective fiscal and

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internal control and accountability for funds, property, and other assets to guarantee they are used solely for authorized purposes.

A budget is prepared annually for all WIOA formula and supplemental monies, including all discretionary grants for programs, services and projects, in alignment with WDB priorities and Federal and state requirements. The Board priorities take into account the responsibilities of approval of the operational budgets, meeting performance standards, and the expending of funds appropriately and in a timely manner to comply with WIOA requirements. The Director of Workforce Development provides budget oversight, direction, and coordination in alignment with applicable parish government budget processes and cycles.

The Parish Grant Management department has formulated criteria to ensure that funds are equitably charged to the titles and activities that actually benefit from these funds. Direct costs are identified specifically for a program and directly charged to that program. Shared direct costs are readily assigned to multiple programs and are consolidated into a cost pool and subsequently distributed using an appropriate allocation method. The Fiscal Manager reviews cash balances and orders funds to meet immediate cash disbursement needs. Expenditures are calculated by funding source and cash ordered to cover those payments to be made at a date closely coinciding with receipt of the funds. These requests are made via email and funds are wired to the bank.

2. Tangipahoa Parish has processes for both competitive and non-competitive awarding of contracts for activities under Title I of WIOA. The Board may award contracts on a competitive basis to providers of adult and/or youth workforce development activities, taking into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for the specific program. The Board may also choose to award grants or contracts on a sole-source basis if it is determined that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of workforce activities in the local area and/or public service providers are available and able to adequately deliver the necessary services. The Parish's Federal Procurement Plan and the Procurement Policy included below.

#### **TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT**

#### **PROCUREMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN TANGIPAHOA PARISH ADMINISTRATION**

This policy and procedures are intended to serve as guidelines for the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction services and professional services for federally funded programs, including HUD programs such as the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Community Development Block Grant (DRU-CDBG) Program, LCDBG and ESG programs (Emergency Shelter or Emergency Solutions Grant), the Restore Act Program through U.S. Treasury, Federal Transit Administration, EDA, EPA, and other federal programs. These guidelines meet the standards established in 24 CFR 85.36 and state requirements and 2 CFR 200 of the Code of Federal Regulations (Uniform Administrative Guidance). For third party contracts, the Parish will follow FTA Circular 4220.1F. State funded programs or projects will be required to follow State procurement/bid guidelines, which in many cases are different from federal guidelines. So it will be important to know the

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source of the grants or funding coming into the Parish, since some of the federal funds are passthru through the State and then to the Parish. Local procurement standards, when federal or state funds are not involved, may vary from what is outlined herein by this document.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

No employee, officer, or agent of the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall participate in the selection or in the award or administration of a contract supported by federal funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved (see 18 U.S.C Part 208-209). Such a conflict could arise if the employee, officer or agent; any member of his/her immediate family; his/her partner; or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for award. The TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT, when conducting procurement using any funding, local, State, or federal, will comply with Title 42, Chapter 15 of the State of Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics

No officer, employee or agent of the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors or firms, potential contractors or firms, or parties to sub-agreements, except where the financial interest is not substantial, or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value.

Any alleged violations of these standards of conduct shall be referred to the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT Parish President or to the Parish's District Attorney. Where violations appear to have occurred, the offending employee, officer or agent shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal or transfer; where violations or infractions appear to be substantial in nature, the matter may be referred to the appropriate officials for criminal investigation and possible prosecution. If any party is unsure of a conflict-of-interest issue, or of possible nepotism, then written letters for clarification should be sent to the State Ethics Commission or to the Parish District Attorney.

### **PROCUREMENT SUPERVISION AND GENERAL POLICIES**

The Director or Supervisor of each department or agency of the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT, in conjunction with the Parish's Purchasing Agent, is responsible for procurement of goods or services, and shall review all proposed procurement actions within their departments. Procurements shall be also reviewed to ensure the procurement of prohibited unnecessary or duplicate items.

DBE: The TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall take affirmative steps to assure that small and minority firms, women's business enterprises (DBEs), and labor surplus firms, are solicited whenever there are potential qualified sources. The TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall also consider the feasibility of dividing total requirements into smaller tasks or quantities so as to permit maximum participation by small or minority firms or women's business enterprises, Where permitted by regulations, delivery schedules will be developed which will include

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participation by such businesses. Documented “good faith effort”, as outlined in Section 200.321 of 2 CFR 200 Uniform Guidelines, is required and must be documented by the Parish. In addition, where required by the federal program, Buy America Act requirements will be included within the Parish’s solicitation procedures.

The TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall assist the prime contractor whenever possible by providing copies of lists which identify qualified small or minority firms, or women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms. The DBE list shall be updated at least annually by the Parish.

### **SELECTION PROCEDURES**

ALL procurements issued by the Parish shall be carried out in a manner that provides open competition. Procurement technical specifications or scopes of works shall not restrict or eliminate competition. TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall not place unreasonable requirements on firms or businesses in order for them to qualify to do business, nor will TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT encourage or participate in noncompetitive procurement practices. The TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT will not participate in any organizational conflicts which would jeopardize any procurements. TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT will not require unnecessary experience or bonding requirements and in general will not use geographic based preferences without an acceptable written explanation that is documented and placed in the procurement file.

Pursuant to federal regulations, such as 2 CFR 200 and 24 CFR 85.36(b), all solicitations of offers shall incorporate a clear accurate description of the technical requirements for the goods or services to be procured. When using technical specifications and product descriptions, these specifications and descriptions shall not contain features which unduly limit competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product, or service and the minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications shall be avoided. A “brand name or equal” description may be used to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated.

All solicitations of bids or proposals shall clearly set forth all requirements which offerors must fulfill.

Contracts shall be awarded only to responsive/ responsible contractors/firms that possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement.

Consideration shall be given to such factors as the contractor’s/firm’s capacity, integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

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It is important that the Parish's DBE policies, along with any federal policies, be considered when procuring goods and services in order to provide for and encourage the participation of certified DBE and small businesses, including primary contractors and sub-contractors.

### **METHODS OF PROCUREMENT**

At a minimum, the Parish Government will follow the federal procurement standards outlined in the 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative guidelines, the Parish's procurement policy, and any applicable State of Louisiana bid laws. These are summarized in Attachment A attached herein. In addition, procurement files shall include written Procurement Summary that highlights the details of the procurement such as, the method of procurement used, how many bids or proposals were received, evaluation information etc. It is important to note the Parish will follow FTA's 4220 third Party requirements throughout the procurement process.

**TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall procure goods or services using one of the following methods listed below:**

**Micro-purchase.** For federal funded projects, upper cost limits for use of simplified micropurchase procedures is \$3000 and below for supplies; \$2500 and below for services; and \$2000 and below for construction. In such cases, there are no specified requirements, except as may be provided by Parish government.

**Small Purchase.** Relatively simple, informal procurement procedures will be used where the purchase of materials, single task services, supplies, equipment, and/or other property will not cost in the aggregate more than \$10,000, except where further limited by federal law, or HUD or other waiver policies. If such purchases are expected not to exceed \$30,000, but are over \$10,000, then State of Louisiana law, also used by Tangipahoa Parish, requires that the Parish get at least 3 written quotes. In such cases, the procurement officer must obtain a minimum of three written price or rate quotations from responsive, qualified sources. Documentation on all quotations received shall be made a part of the file. If small purchases are expected to cost more than \$30,000, then the Parish will seek sealed bids for non-construction purchases. Selections shall be made principally on price. Payment shall be made upon delivery or completion, unless agreed otherwise.

**Invitation for Bid.** Using this procurement method, procurements are publicly advertised in accordance with the state's Public Bid Law or the federal bid requirement, now set at \$150,000 minimum for construction projects. A firm fixed price contract (either lump sum or unit price) shall be awarded to the responsive / responsible bidder. Award is based on the lowest bid price. The Invitation for bid procurement method is not to be used for the procurement of professional services.

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**Request for Proposals (RFP)**. The RFP method of procurement is used when procuring services, using a variety of rating factors, including price. The RFP will be advertised, proposals will be evaluated and the best value or highest rated proposer that is responsible and responsive will be awarded the contract. Also, the RFP method of procurement includes methodology, experience, price, and possibly other rating factors, and price/costs submittals can be negotiated. A formal RFP shall be issued for solicitation of proposals.

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**. The technique of competitive qualification-based solicitations is normally conducted with more than one source submitting a response. All competitive solicitations shall be conducted using a formal written RFP or RFQ documents containing at least the minimum items shown in the attached RFP/RFQ Outline (See Attachment A) and in an open and competitive manner. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids, small or micro-purchases. By Louisiana State law, architectural and engineering services must be procured via requests for qualification statements; administrative consulting services and other professional services can be procured via requests for proposals or qualification statements. Other professional services may also be procured by requests for proposals using the RFP or RFQ format.

**The following procedures will be used for competitive negotiations:**

- i. Requests for proposals or qualification statements must be advertised in a newspaper in a local or the nearest metropolitan area in accordance with the rules of the federal program. All responsive and responsible proposals will be accepted and documented in the procurement file. RFP's may include the request for price and fee proposals, whereas generally RFQ's negotiate the price or fees during contract negotiation after selection of the respondent, but before an agreement is signed by all parties. A competitive range of fees and associated project cost shall be considered in line with the Parish's Independent Cost estimate.
- ii. Request for proposals or qualification statements shall contain a detailed list of tasks in the proposed scope of work that is expected to be accomplished.
- iii. The request for proposals or technical specifications shall identify all evaluation factors or selection criteria, including the corresponding point system that will be used to rate the proposals/qualification statements. Requests for proposals shall always include costs consideration and at least one non-cost evaluation factor. These factors can also include the participation of certified DBE consultants, contractors, and sub-contractors, which shall be encouraged by the Parish.
- iv. The Parish's selection/evaluation committee shall review all proposals and statements received and make a technical evaluation of each. The evaluation may include oral interviews with the higher-ranking proposers. This shall also include a written statement that identifies the basis upon which the selection was made, including the importance

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of cost (for RFPs). Cost reasonableness will be evaluated by the Parish before and after RFPs are reviewed.

- v. If there is only one proposal submitted after proper solicitation by the Parish, the Parish is encouraged to negotiate prices and costs within a competitive range based upon the Independent Cost Estimate done prior by the Parish.
- vi. Contract award will be made to the responsible offeror whose submission is deemed most appropriate to the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT with consideration for price, qualifications, and other factors set by the local governing body. Unsuccessful offerors shall be notified in writing within ten working days of contract award. Documentation of notification shall be maintained in the contract selection file for the individual project. Review of cost reasonableness and the use of the Independent Cost Estimate will be considered in all contract negotiations concerning this procurement method (RFP and RFQ)
- vii. If there is only one proposal, the Parish is encouraged to negotiate prices and should use the ICE as a benchmark when negotiating.
- viii. Contract award will be made to the responsive/responsible offeror whose submission is deemed most appropriate to the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT with consideration for price, qualifications, and other factors set by the local governing body.
- ix. Unsuccessful offerors shall be notified in writing within ten working days of a contract award. Documentation of notification shall be maintained in the contract selection file for the individual project.

**Request for Qualifications Noncompetitive Negotiation/Sole Source.** Noncompetitive negotiation shall be used when small purchase, formal advertising, or competitive negotiation procedures are not feasible. Noncompetitive negotiation will involve solicitations of a proposal from only one source. This can also occur if solicitations under the competitive negotiation procedures result in only one proposal or qualification statement. Noncompetitive negotiation shall only be used when written authorization has been obtained from the federal funding agency project sponsor. In order to qualify for this type of procurement, one of the following circumstances must apply:

- i. The item or service is available only from a single source;
- ii. It is determined that a public urgency or emergency exists, and the urgency will not permit the delay beyond the time needed to employ one of the other three methods of procurement.
- iii. After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.

**CONTRACT PRICING**

Cost plus percentage of cost contracting is **prohibited and is illegal based on the federal regulations** and NOT be used by the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT. The Parish shall perform cost or pricing analysis in connection with EVERY procurement action including contract modifications as outlined in 4220 1F Third Party Contracting. It is the parish's policy to only use Lump sum pricing when there is a definable scope of work or technical specifications that provides exact quantities, and the proposer assumes most of the risk for cost incurred. Unit prices can be utilized when there is a definable scope of work or technical specifications and the contractor assume all the risk for costs incurred, and the quantity is estimated. Cost reimbursement will be utilized when the task does not result in a definable scope of work or technical specifications, or the contractor will not assume the risk of incurring the cost to complete the task.

**COST REIMBURSEMENT CONTRACT**

A cost reimbursement contract is generally used when the scope of work or technical specifications are not clearly defined, such as in some professional service contracts. A cost reimbursement contract must clearly establish a cost ceiling which may not be exceeded without formally amending the contract and must identify a fixed dollar profit that may not be increased unless there is a contract amendment that increases the scope of the work.

A fixed price contract is appropriate when the scope of work is very well defined. A fixed price contract can only be awarded when fair and reasonable prices can be established through adequate price competition and the solicitation is based principally on price. A fixed price contract must establish a guaranteed price that may not increase unless there is a contract amendment that increases the scope of the work.

Independent Cost Estimates, using qualified project managers or estimators, will be prepared prior to solicitations and bids.

**INDEPENDENT COST ESTIMATES (ICE)**

An Independent Cost Estimate must be received prior to preparing a solicitation. Generally, it is the responsibility of the project manager to prepare the ICE. The ICE will be prepared, and document will be placed in the procurement file.

**PRICE OR COST ANALYSIS**

A. Price Analysis is used if it is determined that competition was adequate, and price was within the expected range established by the ICE. A Cost Analysis is used if it is determined that competition is inadequate, or price is inconsistent with the expected range established by the ICE. Price Analysis is a direct comparison of a supplier's price with benchmark prices for the same good or service. Price Analysis Techniques are as follows:



1. Purchaser must be familiar with market conditions
2. Compare bids
3. Compare price / quantity relationships
4. Compare prices of similar products
5. Published information i.e. supplier price list, trade journals, government publications

B. A Cost Analysis is used when a price analysis will not provide sufficient information, adequate price competition is lacking, using sole source method, including contract modifications, the offeror is required to submit the elements (i.e. labor hours, overhead, materials) of the proposed cost. The recipient must obtain a cost analysis when price competition is inadequate, when only a sole source is available or in the event of a change order. Reference FTA C 4220.1F Chap. VI, 6 A.) It is to be noted a cost analysis must include an analysis of profit or fee. **REQUIRED FEDERAL CLAUSES**

All federally funded procurements will include the appropriate Third Party Contract Clauses. Listed below are the clauses associated with the type of procurement;

#### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES/ A&E & ASSOCAITED CLAUSES**

No Federal government obligations to third parties  
 Program fraud and false or fraudulent Access  
 to Records  
 Federal Changes  
 Civil Rights EEO, Title VI & ADA  
 Incorporation of FTA terms  
 Energy Conservation  
 Termination provisions > \$10,000  
 Debarment and Suspension > \$25,000  
 Provisions for resolution of disputes, breaches, or other litigation > \$100,000  
 Lobbying > \$100,000  
 Clean Air > \$100,000  
 Clean Water > \$100,000  
 Fly America if involving transport or travel by air  
 A&E for new buildings & additions

#### **OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT SUBRECIPIENTS & ASSOCIATED CLAUSES**

No Federal government obligations to third parties  
 Program fraud and false or fraudulent Access  
 to Records  
 Federal Changes

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Civil Rights EEO, Title VI & ADA  
 Incorporation of FTA terms  
 Energy Conservation  
 Termination provisions > \$10,000  
 Debarment and Suspension > \$25,000  
 Provisions for resolution of disputes, breaches, or other litigation > \$100,000  
 Lobbying > \$100,000  
 Clean Air > \$100,000  
 Clean Water > \$100,000  
 Fly America if involving transport or travel by air  
 A&E for new buildings & additions  
 Contract work hours & safety standards act > \$100,000  
 Transit Employee Protective Arrangements  
 Charter Service Operations  
 School Bus Operations  
 Drug and Alcohol Testing  
 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE'S) if applicable

#### **ROLLING STOCK & ASSOCIATED CLAUSES**

No Federal government obligations to third parties  
 Program fraud and false or fraudulent Access  
 to Records  
 Federal Changes  
 Civil Rights EEO, Title VI & ADA  
 Incorporation of FTA terms  
 Energy Conservation  
 Termination provisions > \$10,000  
 Debarment and Suspension > \$25,000  
 Buy America > \$150,000  
 Cargo Preference Involving property that may be transported by ocean vessel Provisions  
 for resolution of disputes, breaches, or other litigation > \$100,000  
 Lobbying > \$100,000  
 Clean Air > \$100,000  
 Clean Water > \$100,000  
 Fly America if involving transport or travel by air  
 A&E for new buildings & additions

#### **CONSTRUCTION & ASSOCIATED CLAUSES**

No Federal government obligations to third parties  
 Program fraud and false or fraudulent  
 Access to Records

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## Federal Changes

Civil Rights EEO, Title VI &amp; ADA

Incorporation of FTA terms

Energy Conservation

Termination provisions &gt; \$10,000

Debarment and Suspension &gt; \$25,000

Buy America &gt;\$150,000

Cargo Preference Involving property that may be transported by ocean vessel

Provisions for resolution of disputes, breaches, or other litigation&gt; \$100,000

Lobbying &gt;\$100,000

Clean Air &gt; \$100,000

Clean Water &gt;\$100,000

Fly America, if involving transport or travel by air

Davis Bacon Act &gt;\$2,000

Contract Work Hours & Safety standards act >\$100,000 (including safety vessel) Bonding  
(not required of states) >\$100,000 (including ferry vessels)**MATERIALS & SUPPLIES**

No Federal government obligations to third parties

Program fraud and false or fraudulent Access  
to Records

Federal Changes

Civil Rights EEO, Title VI &amp; ADA

Incorporation of FTA terms

Energy Conservation

Termination provisions &gt; \$10,000

Debarment and Suspension &gt; \$25,000

Buy America &gt;\$150,000 for steel, iron, manufacture of goods

Cargo Preference Involving property that may be transported by ocean vessel

Provisions for resolution of disputes, breaches, or other litigation&gt; \$100,000

Lobbying &gt;\$100,000

Clean Air &gt; \$100,000

Clean Water &gt;\$100,000

Fly America if involving transport or travel by air

**CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION - USE OF PARISH’S INTERNAL CONTROL POLICIES**

The TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT shall maintain procurement and contract administration systems and financial systems that insure contractors/firms/suppliers perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders, Tangipahoa internal control policies, fixed asset policies, and federal Uniform Administrative policies. The accepted performance of contractors/ firms may be a factor in subsequent-future contract negotiations and award. Remedial action by the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT through legal processes shall be considered in instances of identified significant nonperformance. Maintaining and tracking of **fixed assets** purchased through the use of federal funds will comply with the procedures and disposal policies adopted by the Parish for fixed assets in their internal control policies.

**GRIEVANCE-COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FOR PROCUREMENT**

See Attachment C herein for the Parish’s policy on filing procurement complaints.

This policy has been approved by the Tangipahoa Parish President after review with appropriate Parish staff and by resolution of the Parish Council.

**ATTACHMENT “A”**

<p><b>Basic Contracting-Procurement Requirements- State of La. vs Federal Standards</b></p> <p><b>for Local Project funded with State or Federal funds</b></p>
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**Micro-purchase Thresholds**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>for federally-funded</b> No specified requirements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$3,500 and below for supplies</li> <li>\$2,500 and below for services</li> <li>\$2,500 and below for construction</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>State-funded (\$0-\$9,999)</b></li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bid or purchase procedure specified, if under \$10,000, but it is best to get at least 2 written quotes</li> </ul>         |

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**Small purchases**

- **Federal (under \$150,000)**

For purchases under \$150,000 (not including A&E Professional Services). Written price quotations are needed from at least 3 qualified sources

- **State (under \$150,000)**

- \$10,000-\$30,000

Includes supplies, equipment, services, or construction

- Need at least 3 quotes, written or faxed

- \$30,000 and above

- Advertise for sealed bids (except for construction contracts which do not need public advertisement if less than \$150,000, but would need 3 written quotes)

**Federal and State:**

Publicly advertised bid required for construction projects exceeding \$150,000; and for federal projects or use of federal funds, if equipment, supplies, or services are to exceed \$150,000.

Public bid advertising is required for construction projects expected to exceed \$150,000 in cost. Contracts over \$50,000 require the use of State- licensed & bonded contractors. Mandatory bid, payment, and performance bonds.

**Professional Services** such as architects, engineers, attorneys, auditors, appraisers

Varies for State of La. versus Federal requirements, but open procurement is required

- **Federal**

- Competitive proposals required with maximum open competition; qualification based and cost- price analysis needed during selection; Affirmative steps required to solicit participation by DBE firms

- **State**

- No specified State requirement

**Note:**

--More detailed procurement and contracting requirements for the State can be found in a Powerpoint presentation on the La. Police Jury Association website:

<http://www.lpgov.org/Files/Articles/AGOfficeBidProcessandPurchasing2016.pdf>

--More detailed federal procurement and contracting requirements can be found in Title 2 CFR Part 200 and in 44CFR and Circular A-110

**ATTACHMENT “B” – NOTES ON PREPARING RFP/RFQs**

A well-written RFP or RFQ will contain all of the information the proposers need to know in a manner that captures interest and is easy to follow. The RFP or RFQ should consist of an introduction and five sections, each of which is summarized briefly on this page:

1. Advertisement/Purpose (Introduction) - Cover letter to summarize the services being solicited and the due date for proposals.
2. Program Information - Include an overview of the grant/project status and a summary of the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties to provide the context for the solicited services and capture the interest of potential respondents.
3. Scope of Services - Start with an overview of the solicited services, summarize general expectations, specify the anticipated role of the selected firm, and provide a detailed list of tasks to be accomplished. Should be connected to the fee proposal and be detailed enough to be in the final contract.
  - Statement of Work (RFP only): List in detail the tasks the selected consultant will be expected to perform. List must be detailed enough for consultant to provide price or estimated cost for the services.
4. Submission and Evaluation Requirements - Describe what sections should be included in the proposal (e.g. approach, organization chart or staffing plan, fee proposal (RFP only), etc.) and what information each of those sections should contain. Also describe the criteria the Committee will use to evaluate the proposal and the weights for each criterion. Submission requirements and evaluation criteria should be linked.
  - Approach section (RFP): For each task identified in the scope of work, respondent is to describe how they would accomplish the task(s).
  - Project staffing: Include an organization chart, names and roles of principal staff members, time commitments for principal staff members, and attach resumes.
  - Qualifications: Include project summaries for your team’s relevant experience, organized by firm or by type of experience.
  - Fee proposal (RFP only): Price for services described in the approach, broken out by task.

- Evaluation Criteria: List the criteria on which the proposals will be evaluated (e.g. creativity of approach, reasonableness of fee, quality of relevant qualifications, previous experience, etc.) and give the weighting for each criteria. During evaluation, an independent cost estimate and review will be completed for each proposal being considered and during contract negotiations, in compliance with 2CFR200.317-200.326 and with guidance from any specific Departmental Circulars. Written information documenting such review and estimating will be provided in the procurement file.
5. Schedule and Required Information - Provide information about the procurement not related to the actual project. This includes a schedule/timetable for the procurement, information on written questions and pre-proposal conference, contractual obligations, information on conflict of interest, and all other required clauses.
6. Attachments - Provide any required forms (e.g. form for fee proposal or Certifications/Assurances), further clarify the expectations by including a sample contract, copies of the roles/ responsibilities checklist, and/or scopes of work for other consultants, and include more detailed information on the project (e.g. application or project summary).

## **ATTACHMENT C: PROCUREMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

### **SECTION 1**

It is the policy of the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT to review all complaints received by the local governing body.

### **SECTION 2**

The following procedures will be followed on all procurement related complaints received by the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT:

1. The complainant shall notify the Parish Finance Director of the complaint. The initial complaint may be expressed orally or by written correspondence (written correspondence may include an email sent to the proper party)
2. The Finance Director will notify the Grant Administrator or designated Parish project representative of the complaint within 3 working days.
3. The Grant Administrator or designated representative will investigate the complaint and will report the findings to the Finance Director within 3 working days.

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4. The Finance Director will notify the complainant of the findings of the Grant Administrator or designated representative in writing or by telephone within 3 working days of receiving the complaint.
5. If the complainant is aggrieved by the procurement decision, he/she must forward the complaint in writing (if previously submitted orally) to the Parish Finance Director who will forward the complaint and all actions taken by the Grant Administrator or designated representative to the Parish President's office for review. This will be accomplished within 5 working days of receipt of the written complaint.
6. The Parish President's Office will have an additional 3 working days to review the complaint and forward their recommendation or decision to the complainant in writing, with a copy to the Grant Administrator.
7. If the complainant is aggrieved with the decision of the Parish President, he/she may notify the granting agency (if the project involves funding from a grant), or the Parish Council Clerk in writing that he/she desires to be afforded a hearing by the local governing body, Parish Council. The complainant will be placed on the next regularly scheduled council meeting agenda. The Parish Council Clerk will notify the complainant in writing or email as soon as possible of the date of the hearing.
8. The complainant may bring all relevant data, witnesses, etc., to the Parish Council meeting. The TANGIPAHOA PARISH COUNCIL at the meeting, will review the complaint and forward to the complainant within 10 days a certified copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the hearing was conducted and for which a decision was rendered. If a decision is not reached at the hearing, the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT will inform complainant of an appropriate date to expect a response. Within 10 working days of reaching a decision, the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision by the Parish.

### SECTION 3

All citizen complaints relative to issues with Equal Opportunity violations alleging discrimination may also be forwarded for disposition by a complainant to the:

Louisiana Department of Justice

Public Protection Division

Post Office Box 94095

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9095

or

Complainant may contact the Louisiana Department of Justice Division directly at the Toll Free Telephone number 1-800-273-5718 or 225-342-7900.



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SECTION 4

The Parish Finance Director will maintain a file for the purpose of keeping reports of procurement related complaints.

SECTION 5

This policy does not invalidate nor supersede the personnel policy, citizen’s participation plan, or other policies of the TANGIPAHOA PARISH GOVERNMENT which are currently adopted, but is intended to serve as an additional guide for procurement related complaints.

SECTION 6

This policy may be amended by the Parish President’s office as needed and shall be posted to the Parish’s home website.

All contracts are reviewed and monitored on a regular basis as indicated by Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 policy. Any inappropriate or unacceptable findings would be discussed with the Grant Management and Workforce Administrative Staff and brought to the CEO and/or full board for action if necessary.

The Board, as required under WIOA law, released a Request for Proposals to competitively procure the One-Stop System Operator function included below. This process was conducted again during the 2020/2021 program year as required by law.

**One-Stop Operator Procurement Process**

ALL procurements issued by the Parish shall be carried out in a manner that provides open competition. Procurement technical specifications or scopes of works shall not restrict or eliminate competition. Tangipahoa Parish Government shall not place unreasonable requirements on firms or businesses to qualify to do business with the parish, nor will Tangipahoa Parish Government encourage or participate in noncompetitive procurement practices. The Tangipahoa Parish Government will not participate in any organizational conflicts which would jeopardize any procurements. Tangipahoa Parish Government will not require unnecessary experience or bonding requirements and in general will not use geographic based preferences without an acceptable written explanation that is documented and placed in the procurement file.

Pursuant to federal regulations, such as 2 CFR 200 and 24 CFR 85.36(b), all solicitations of offers shall incorporate a clear accurate description of the technical requirements for the goods or services to be procured. When using technical specifications and product descriptions, these specifications and descriptions shall not contain features which unduly limit competition. The

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description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product, or service and the minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications shall be avoided. A “brand name or equal” description may be used to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated.

All solicitations of bids or proposals shall clearly set forth all requirements which offerors must fulfill.

Contracts shall be awarded only to responsive/ responsible contractors/firms that possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement.

Consideration shall be given to such factors as the contractor’s/firm’s capacity, integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

It is important that the Parish’s DBE policies, along with any federal policies, be considered when procuring goods and services in order to provide for and encourage the participation of certified DBE and small businesses, including primary contractors and sub-contractors. LWDBs must use a competitive process based on the principles of competitive procurement in the Uniform Administrative Guidance set out at 2 CFR 200.318 through 200.326 and shall be in accordance with the Procurement Policy and Procedures for use of Federal Funds in Tangipahoa Parish Administration Guidance.

### **Who May Apply:**

The one-stop operator must be an entity (public, private, or nonprofit) or a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes three or more of the required one-stop partners of demonstrated effectiveness, located in the Local Area. Entities selected and serving as one-stop operators are subrecipients of a Federal award and thus are required to follow the Uniform Guidance.

Such entities may include the following:

- Government agencies or governmental units, such as: Local or county governments, school districts, State agencies, and Federal WIOA partners.
- Employment Service State agencies under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA.
- Indian Tribes, tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, Indian-controlled organizations serving Indians, or Native Hawaiian organizations (collectively referred to herein as “Indian Tribes”).

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- Educational institutions, such as: institutions of higher education, nontraditional public secondary schools such as night schools, and area career and technical education schools (however, elementary, and other secondary schools are not eligible to become a one-stop operator).
- Community-based organizations, nonprofit entities, or workforce intermediaries. • Other interested organizations that can carry out the duties of the one-stop operator, such as a local chamber of commerce, other business organization, or labor organization.
- Private for-profit entities.
- Local WDBs, if approved by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) and the Governor as required in WIOA sec. 107(g)(2).

### **One-Stop Operator Selection Process:**

A formal RFP shall be issued for solicitation of proposals. The following shall be the process used to solicit the One-Stop Operator for LWDA 20:

1. The One-Stop Operator shall be selected using a written Request for Proposal (RFP) Competitive process that defines and explains all aspects of the service being procured. The RFP method of procurement is used when procuring services, using a variety of rating factors, including price. The RFP will be advertised. Proposals will be evaluated and the best value or highest rated proposer that is qualified and responsive. The RFP will be awarded the contract. Additionally, the RFP method of procurement shall include methodology, experience, price, and possibly other rating factors. Price/costs submittals can be negotiated.
2. The RFP must identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals must be considered to the maximum extent practical.
3. The Requests for Proposals will be publicized minimally in the local newspaper of record for the Parish of Tangipahoa-The Hammond Daily Star and the nearest Metropolitan Newspaper- The Baton Rouge Advocate and posted on the website for the Local Workforce Development Area- GeauxJobs for a period of 30 days. Additional publicization shall occur if the initial publicization does not provide for a competitive response. All publicization shall occur for a period of 30 days via web. Print advertisement for bids shall include at minimum of four public print notifications during the 30-day advertisement period. The RFP timelines from initial release to award shall be included in the posted Request for Proposals document.
4. Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 will have a written method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting recipients- the review

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committee shall include two reviewers from Tangipahoa Parish Government and at minimum one outside reviewer with knowledge of WIOA.

5. Contracts must be awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered.
6. In the event a single provider responds to the competitive RFP than a procurement by noncompetitive proposal shall be used. Procurement by noncompetitive proposals is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source and may be used only when one or more of the following circumstances apply:
  - (1) The item is available only from a single source.
  - (2) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation.
  - (3) The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to a written request from the non-Federal entity; or
  - (4) After solicitation of several sources, competition is determined inadequate.

If there is only one proposal submitted after proper solicitation by the Parish, the Parish is encouraged to negotiate prices and costs within a competitive range based upon the Independent Cost Estimate done prior by the Parish. Noncompetitive negotiation will involve solicitations of a proposal from only one source or if under the competitive negotiation procedures, a result produces only one proposal or qualification statement. Noncompetitive negotiation shall only be used when written authorization has been obtained from the State/Federal funding agency project sponsor. To qualify for this type of procurement, one of the following circumstances must apply:

- i. The item or service is available only from a single source.
- ii. It is determined that a public urgency or emergency exist, and the urgency will not permit the delay beyond the time needed to employ one of the other three methods of procurement.
- iii. After solicitation of several sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.

#### B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 ensures their policies, procedures, programs, and services are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments, in order to provide equal access to all customers with disabilities. Additionally, Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 agrees to fully comply with the provisions of WIOA, Title VII of the civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the aforementioned laws.

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Geaux Jobs- LWDA 20 continues to ensure all materials and delivery methods are appropriate to diverse cultures, languages and education. Program accommodations include, as appropriate, the provision of interpreters for individuals with language barriers and/or hearing impairments who require such assistance in order to participate in center programs, large print materials and enlarged computer screens for individuals with visual disabilities, earphones with enhanced sound for individuals with hearing disabilities, etc. HiRE is JAWS enabled to assist individuals with visual disabilities to access employment and training services via the Internet. Each Center has been provided with a translation machine that can assist with service delivery for job seekers of other languages. Referrals to appropriate community-based organizations are made for those in need of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Strong linkages exist with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to ensure Centers are trained and able to serve customers with disabilities appropriately.

### C. Plan Development & Public Comment

1. The Board views this plan as a starting point in the development of more effective and collaborative partnerships that will only enhance this working document as mutual trust and teamwork is established between all partners over the next few years. The further advancement of these partner relationships will allow the opportunity for a truly coordinated plan that all embrace and support in an effort to create an effective integrated system. All partners have been given an opportunity to provide comments and feedback to the plan. The regular meetings held with partner agencies are utilized to gather feedback and input for development of the local plan as well as coordination with our economic development partners to ensure both agencies' plans are aligned and are coordinated appropriately. Geaux Jobs sends out a copy of the plan to all partner agencies as soon as an initial draft is prepared and requests any input, feedback, and additional comments for inclusion in the final draft.
2. A comment period of thirty (30) days will be provided and formal comments may be received from members of the public, partner agencies, and representatives of business and labor organizations. The local and regional plan will be available to view on the Geaux Jobs website ([www.geauxjobs.org](http://www.geauxjobs.org)). A public notice is placed in local newspapers of the GeauxJobs mandated local area notifying the public of the availability to view the plan and provide comments. All comments received are submitted to the Louisiana Workforce Commission as an attachment to the local plan.

### **LOCAL AREA 20 SIGNATURE PAGE**

**Local Area WIOA Board Chair**

**Local Area Chief Executive Officer**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Parish President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Board Chair

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

### Section 4A: Coordination and Planning Requirements:

The Local Workforce Development Area 21 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

The Local Workforce Development Area 21 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.1). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

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

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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 LWDA's 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. 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



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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).

### **Function of the One-Stop Operator**

The role of the One-Stop Operator is equivalent to a “Mall Manager”. In this role, the Operator will be responsible for ensuring a seamless delivery of services from all partners. Workforce services are integrated into the framework of the one-stop service delivery system and are provided through partner agencies under various funding sources

### **Indication on how the One-Stop Operator is procured**

- Request for Proposal (RFP) is released
- Non-Mandatory Pre-proposal Conference
- Written inquiries received
- Written inquiries answered
- Proposals submitted
- Proposal Presentation to One-Stop Committee and Executive Board
- Notice of Intent to Award sent from the Purchasing Department
- Full Metro Council for approval
- Technical Assistance Training

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- Budget Review Discussions with Fiscal
- Mayor’s Signature/Contract Initiation
- One-Stop Operator in place

**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, economic development organizations such as local chambers of commerce, 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.

LWDB21 – EmployBR will engaged with business and community partners to support development of education and skills through work based learning strategies such as the work experience program which allows participants to explore careers and interests through employment.

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

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- 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, RESEA, and Re-Entry Programs.

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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.

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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.

### **Local Board**

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

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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 provision of 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 (High School Equivalency Test, formerly known as GED) to the 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

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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. 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



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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 and will be able to compete fairly in educational work settings, and in general, to have an equal opportunity in order 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 multiple barriers to employment by actively conducting outreach targeting these populations in coordination with one another. The customer will be referred to the most

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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 dislocated 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 Onthe-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

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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.

**Local Board coordinating the provision of transportation as stated in the Support Services Policy**

**Article II: Scope of Services**

The City-Parish hereby engages the services of Service Provider, “Coleman’s Elite Transportation, LLC,” with said services to be rendered to EmployBR Program(s) as follows:

The Service Provider shall provide general transportation services on behalf of EmployBR participants for approved EmployBR program activities within the Greater Baton Rouge Area.

**Article II: Scope of Services**

The City-Parish hereby engages the services of Service Provider, “First Parish Transportation Corporation (Yellow Cab),” with said services to be rendered to EmployBR Program(s) as follows:

The Service Provider shall provide general transportation services on behalf of EmployBR participants for approved EmployBR program activities.

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**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE/S: TRANSPORTATION**

**From:** To and From various locations, including but not limited to Employ Baton Rouge, 4523 Plank Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70505

**To:** Various Locations (Round trips)

**Program:** On Demand Transportation

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.

Successful models of youth workforce investment activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)) include:

- 1) 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.

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- 2) 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

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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.

EmployBR is bound by the LWC mandate that at least 75 percent of available statewide funds and 75 percent of funds available to local areas are spend on workforce investment services for out-of-school youth. The state was approved for a waiver to use up to 50 percent of available statewide funds and 50 percent of funds available to local areas for out-of-school youth through PY 23. EmployBR will meet this minimum expenditure rate through a variety of strategies, including but not limited to, partnering with local community and parish organizations that serve the out-of-school youth population, as well as outreach to the identified population.

**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. Low-income individuals, basic skills deficient individuals and veterans are typical customers in the Center. A coordinated response is developed for these and other groups that often face multiple barriers to employment,

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including: high school 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 Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessment or through 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.

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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 EDLWD 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



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[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.

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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 serves all significant population groups. The final career decision is up to the individual applicant. However, through case management guidance and analysis of ETPL programs, the individual can make informed career 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 of seventy-five percent (75%) on an annual case-by-case basis as determined by the needs of training and expenditures.
- LWDB 21 – EmployBR will dedicate incumbent worker training on a case by case basis while coordinating available funds with the Louisiana Workforce Commission
- LWDB 21 – EmployBR uses funds for transitional jobs and has a specific transitional jobs policy to address the use of funds.
- LWDB 21 – EmployBR does not fund pay for performance contracts.

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

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.

A top priority for LWDA-21, EmployBR and the LWDA board is to improve access to services and establish a sound and effective referral and co-enrollment process. Co-enrollment will allow partners to leverage resources, while providing more comprehensive service delivery strategies that meet the needs of customers with barriers to employment. The virtual referral platform (Unite Us) is being researched for consideration to use in this process.

LWDA 21 -EmployBR monitors the services provided and those that do not show a increase in outcomes or productivity are reduced or eliminated on a case-by-case basis. LWDA 21 – EmployBR partners with LWDA 20 – Geaux Jobs to address regional training needs, with an eye towards those that have a high return on investment. This analysis is done as needed, or when emerging industries are identified. Evaluations of education providers are completed by the Program Analyst to monitor the return on investment and outcome data of participants enrolled in education and workforce training programs.



<p><b>Points Description</b></p> <p>* Each YES response = 10 points          * Cannot determine at time of review = 5 points          * Each NO response = 0 points</p>
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	<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:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 6A: Fiscal Management

East Baton Rouge Parish / City of Baton Rouge Grants Management department is responsible for the administration of the WOIA federal award and all related financial transactions. A top priority of the department is to ensure compliance with the applicable Acts, Federal Registers, Uniform Guidance, State Directives, WDB policies and generally accepted accounting principles. Records are kept that adequately identify each Federal grant fund and contain information pertaining to the grants including authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, expenditures, and income. Current financial systems allow for effective fiscal and internal control and accountability for funds, property and other assets to guarantee they are used solely for authorized purposes.



<b>Policy Name:</b> <b>One-Stop Operator Procurement Policies and Procedure</b>	<b>Policy Number:</b> <b>02-2021</b>	<b>Date:</b> <b>March 11, 2021</b>
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**One-stop Operator Competitive Selection**

**BACKGROUND**

Each local workforce development boards (local board) must:

- use a competitive process for the selection of a one-stop operator for the local workforce delivery system; and
- ensure the recompetition of the one-stop operator occurs no less than once every four (4) years.

WIOA does not allow for the “designation” or “certification” of any entity as a one-stop operator, including a local board, without a competitive process.

**POLICY**

This policy:

- establishes the minimum requirements for a local board’s competitive selection of a one-stop operator;
- identifies the essential elements of the local board’s contract with the selected one-stop operator; and
- identifies the basic requirements for monitoring of one-stop operators.

**Section I. Competitive Selection Requirement**

Each local board must use a competitive process based on local procurement policies and procedures and the principles of competitive procurement in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR part 200 (commonly referred to as the Uniform Guidance), including the U.S. Department of Labor (Department) specific requirements at 2 CFR part 2900.

Sole-source procurement of a one-stop operator is permissible only under certain circumstances, as described in Section IV of this policy.

**Section II. Eligible Entities**

The one-stop operator must be an entity (public, private, or nonprofit) or a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes three (3) or more of the required one-stop partners of demonstrated effectiveness, located in the local area.



Entities selected and serving as one-stop operators are subrecipients of a Federal award and thus are required to follow the Uniform Guidance.

#### A. Local Boards as One-stop Operators

While the entities listed above are eligible to serve as one-stop operators, an entity's eligibility to be the one-stop operator in a specific local area is affected by the nature of the procurement process, particularly as it relates to conflict of interest and avoiding "less-than arms-length" relationships.

As stated above, a local board may compete for and be selected as a one-stop operator, as long as appropriate firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures are in place. These policies and procedures must conform to the specifications of 20 CFR § 679.430 for demonstrating internal controls and preventing conflict of interest. In addition, the local board must meet mandatory competitive requirements described in this policy, WIOA and its implementing rules, and the Uniform Guidance including the U.S. Department of Labor (Department) specific requirements at 2 CFR part 2900.

In situations where the outcome of the competitive process is the selection of the local board as the one-stop operator, the Governor and the CEO must agree to the selection of the local board as required by WIOA sec. 107(g)(2).

Sole-source procurement of a local board as a one-stop operator is permissible only under certain circumstances, as described in Section IV of this policy, and only with the agreement of the Governor and the CEO. If a local board is selected as the one-stop operator through sole-source procurement, the local board must establish sufficient conflict of interest policies and procedures and these policies must be approved by the Governor.

#### B. For-profit Entities

For-profit entities that are subrecipients of a Federal award as a one-stop operators must adhere to the Uniform Guidance, including any requirements identified by the Department under 2 CFR part 2900.

- The Department requires private for-profit entities that are one-stop operators to adhere to the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.323 concerning earning and negotiating a fair and reasonable profit.
- The Uniform Guidance requires that profit is reasonable and fair and that the entity conducting the competition negotiate profit separately from costs.<sup>11</sup>
- Negotiation with for-profit entities entitled to earn profit must separate amounts intended to pay for costs from amounts intended to pay for profit.
- Contract price equals costs plus profit.
- Profit should be based on the contractors' efforts and risks in achieving a performance result that typically aligns with the performance measures outlined in the local board's



local plan.

- Conditions to consider in quantifying the opportunity to earn profit are referenced at 48 CFR 15.404-4.
- Local boards are allowed to cap the maximum profit potential that could be earned per performance results within the approved budget.
- The earning of profit should not be based on total budget, expending of the budget, and/or pass through costs, such as tuition or fixed costs, that require minimal to no effort from the contractor nor directly achieve a performance goal.

#### C. Other Entities

All non-Federal entities, including Indian Tribes, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions that are not state agencies, community-based organizations, and other entities, must adhere to the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200, including any requirements identified by the Department under 2 CFR part 2900, when acting as a one-stop operator.

### **Section III. One-stop Operator Responsibilities and Prohibited Functions**

The role of the one-stop operator must be clearly articulated in all phases of the procurement process, as well as in the legally binding agreement between the local board and the one-stop operator.

#### A. Required Responsibilities

At a minimum, the local board must ensure that, in carrying out this role, the one-stop operator must:

- coordinate the service delivery of required one-stop partners and service providers;
- in coordinating services and serving as a one-stop operator, refrain from establishing practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services;
- disclose any potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships of the one-stop operator with particular training service providers or other service providers, including but not limited to, career services providers; and
- comply with Federal regulations, and procurement policies, relating to the calculation and use of profits.

#### B. Additional Responsibilities

The local board may establish additional roles for the one-stop operator, including the following:

- being the primary provider of services within the center;
- providing some of the services within the center;
- coordinating service providers within the center and across the one-stop system; and
- coordinating service delivery in a multi-center area, which may include affiliated sites.

#### C. Prohibited Functions

The one-stop operator must not perform the following functions:

- convene system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan;
- prepare and submit local plans;
- be responsible for oversight of itself;
- manage or significantly participate in the competitive selection process for a one-stop operator;
- select or terminate a one-stop operator, career service providers, and youth providers;
- negotiate local performance accountability measures; or
- develop and submit budgets for activities of the local board.

When the entity serving as the one-stop operator is also serving in a different role within the one-stop delivery system (as, for example, when a local board serves as the one-stop operator), the one-stop operator may perform some or all of these functions, but only if it has established sufficient firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures.

#### **Section IV. Uniform Guidance and Procurement Standards**

As the subrecipient of Federal funds, the one-stop operator must follow the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200, including the contractual provisions in 2 CFR 200.326 and 2 CFR part 2900.

Once the local board has competitively selected a one-stop operator, the local board and one-stop operator must execute a legally binding agreement which may take the form of a written contract or another type of agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The contract, agreement, or MOU with one-stop operators is addressed in Section V of this policy.

All other non-Federal entities, including entities that receive funding from the State of Louisiana (such as the local board), must use a competitive process to select a one-stop operator that is based

on local procurement policies that are consistent with the procurement standards of the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.318 through 200.326.

#### **A. General Procurement Requirements**

Under WIOA, and consistent with the Uniform Guidance, the general procurement requirements include:

##### **I. Written Policies and Procedures**

Written general and one-stop operator specific procurement policies and procedures must be consistent with the Uniform Guidance. The preparation of written documentation explaining the determination concerning the nature of the competitive process to be followed in selecting a one-stop operator. These written policies must outline a timetable to ensure that the selection of a one-stop operator through a competitive process is conducted every four (4) years. These written policies must also address the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements, such as protests, appeals, and disputes.

##### **II. Methods of Procurement for Competitions**

Non-Federal entities (such as local boards) are required to use the methods of procurement described at 2 CFR 200.320 when selecting a one-stop operator. The method selected will vary by the particular circumstances of the local board. The following methods of procurement are permissible to select a one-stop operator through a competitive process:

- a. sealed bids (formal advertising), such as an invitation for bids (IFB); and
- b. competitive proposals, such as a request for proposals (RFP).

In addition, where certain criteria are met, a one-stop operator may be selected by noncompetitive proposals (sole source).

##### **III. Full and Open Competition**

All procurement transactions must be conducted using full and open competition. Written procedures must allow for sufficient time for all phases of the procurement process to be carried out in a manner that would not unduly restrict competition. Pre-qualified lists must be current and include enough qualified sources to ensure open and free competition and must not preclude bidders and offerors from qualifying during the solicitation period. Additionally, the following conditions apply.

- a. Procurements that are in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently set at \$150,000 by 48 CFR § 2.1) require a procurement process by means other than a small purchase procurement. Two such permissible procurement methods are the use of sealed bids (formal advertising) and competitive proposals. These procurement methods must be outlined in a written procurement policy, so that all parties involved in any stage of the process are familiar with their roles, functions, and responsibilities.

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- b. Entities performing a competitive procurement must ensure that the proposed costs of the one-stop operator are allowable, meaning that they are reasonable, necessary, and allocable, as required in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200.
- c. Situations considered to be restrictive of competition include, but are not limited to:
  - i. placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business;
  - ii. requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding;
  - iii. noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies;
  - iv. noncompetitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts;
  - v. organizational conflicts of interest;
  - vi. specifying only a “brand name” product instead of allowing “an equal” product to be offered and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement; and
  - vii. any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

#### IV. Written Standards of Conduct

The local board must have written standards of conduct requiring fairness and objectivity during all phases of the procurement process. The ethical standards of persons with fiduciary responsibility for public funds are expected to be above reproach and such that they are able to withstand any public scrutiny. Written standards of conduct must address the following:

- a. *Persons and entities involved in the competitive process to select a one-stop operator using Federal funds must be free of apparent or real conflicts of interest.* Conflicts of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated has a financial or other interest or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.
- b. *Disclosure of any real or apparent conflict of interest, whether individual, or organizational.* Written standards of conduct must identify the process for recusal of individuals or organizations that are members of the local board who disclose a real or apparent conflict of interest.
- c. *Demonstrating internal controls and preventing conflict of interest.* The written standards of conduct must include a description of the use of firewalls to mitigate conflict of interest in circumstances including, but not limited to, situations where an entity acts in more than one role in the one-stop delivery system or performs more than one function in the procurement process, as well as situations where the non-Federal entity uses a sole source selection.



- d. *Confidentiality.* Information contained in the proposals submitted by offerors/bidders is maintained in a manner that is confidential, to avoid the use of the information to another offeror's or bidder's advantage and to prevent collusive bidding.
- e. *Firewalls.* Firewalls that will mitigate conflict of interest are required.
- f. *Ineligibility.* No entity that develops or drafts specifications, requirements, statements of work, IFBs or RFPs, and evaluation of proposals may compete under that procurement.

V. Transparency and Responsibility

The entire procurement process must be performed under a process that promotes transparency and responsibility from the planning phase to the closeout phase.

- a. *Sunshine Provisions.* Information about the selection and certification of the one-stop operators must be made available to the public on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings and made available to auditors and Federal reviewers. Such information may include minutes from local board meetings in which the decision on selection and certification is made. This provides an opportunity for public comment and participation in the process as appropriate. Making information available to the public includes regularly posting information to a website and responding promptly to written or electronically submitted requests for information.

The information that the local board is required to make available to the public includes, but is not limited to, the local board's written conflict of interest policy, the local board's written procurement policies, the procurement solicitation itself, a listing of the entities that have submitted bids or proposals, an abstract of those bids or proposals, the identity of the selected one-stop operator, and total award amount and duration of the contract with the one-stop operator.

- b. *Responsible Entities.* When selecting a one-stop operator, the non-Federal entity must award only to responsible entities that possess the ability to successfully perform under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement. Consideration must be given to the entity's integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources. A local board must also ensure that any entity to be selected as a one-stop operator is not debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or made ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities. The Uniform Guidance requires that past performance be an evaluation factor when it is time to re-procure the one-stop operator.

VI. Sole-source Procurement (noncompetitive proposals)

The Uniform Guidance identifies procurement by noncompetitive proposals as permissible in certain circumstances discussed below. The Department interprets references to "noncompetitive proposals" in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.320(f) to be read as sole source procurement for purposes of competitively selecting a one-stop operator.

Non-Federal entities, including subrecipients (such as local boards) may select a one-stop operator

through sole source selection when consistent with local procurement policies and procedures which conform to the Uniform Guidance set forth at 2 CFR 200.320.

The Uniform Guidance states that procurement by noncompetitive (sole source) proposals is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source which may be used only when one or more of the following circumstances apply.

- a. The item or service is available only from a single source.
- b. The public exigency or emergency for the item or service will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation.
- c. The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to a written request from the non-Federal entity.
- d. After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate, whether for reasons of number or quality of proposals/bids.

#### VII. Recordkeeping

All entities must prepare written documentation explaining the determination concerning the nature of the competitive process to be followed in selecting a one-stop operator. Local boards must also maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement. These records must include, but are not limited to:

- a. all proposals/bids received;
- b. ratings of those proposals;
- c. rationale for the method of procurement;
- d. selection of agreement or contract type;
- e. selection or rejection of proposals/bids;
- f. appeals and disputes; and
- g. the basis for the contract price.

Record retention requirements, as specified at 2 CFR 200.333, are typically three (3) years from the date of submission of the final expenditures report.

Entities that make a sole source selection must prepare and maintain written documentation of the entire process of making a sole source selection. Documentation must be retained and must clearly identify the review process in the Local Area. The documentation should provide evidence that the review was performed by an impartial entity and detail the firewalls that were in place during the review of the proposals.

## VIII. Formal Competitive Procurement Process

A formal competitive process may generally include RFPs, IFBs, and other solicitations requiring formal advertising. As noted above, processes commonly used to select one-stop operators are sealed bids (formal advertising) procurement methods and competitive proposals.

### B. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

Any organization or entity that has been selected to perform multiple functions in a local area must develop a written agreement with the local board and CEO to clarify how the organization will carry out its responsibilities while demonstrating compliance with WIOA and corresponding regulations, the Uniform Guidance, and conflict of interest policies of both the State and the organization or entity performing multiple functions.

A conflict of interest can arise when actions are taken or may appear to be taken by any entity involved in more than one role, such that the performance of that entity in one role affects its interest in its other role, thereby making it difficult for the entity to perform the procurement process objectively and impartially. Therefore, proper firewalls must be in place to ensure the transparency and integrity of the procurement process and demonstrate to the public and to the Department that the selection process was impartial, and that no preferential treatment was given to the awardee.

#### I. Recusal of Members of the Local Board

The local board must recuse individuals who have conflicts of interest from the one-stop operator competition. Such individuals must include those individuals with financial or other interests in the entities applying to be the one-stop operator. Recusal of individuals with conflicts of interest is a way to avoid conflicts of interest when a small number of decision makers have conflicts of interest. However, if the number of members who must be recused deprives the local board of quorum, the local board must follow an alternative process and outsource the selection to an outside entity. Best practice also requires local-board procurement policies and procedures to define the requirements for quorum for decisions of the local board.

- **Local Board as One-stop Operator.** If the local board competes for and is selected as the one-stop operator, the local board must have appropriate firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures in place which must conform to 20 CFR 679.430.

One way to avoid a conflict of interest is to establish effective conflict of interest policies and maintain appropriate firewalls that apply when the local board competes to be the one-stop operator. This may include, for example, a requirement for an outside entity to conduct the competition. For example, the local board could contract with a separate and independent outside entity to conduct the competition. Outsourcing the entire process (including development of requirements, drafting the RFP or IFB, evaluation of proposals/bids, and identification of best entity) to an alternate entity would be the best practice in this circumstance to avoid a conflict of interest. These costs and activities would be allowable under WIOA.

- **Outside Entity.** If the local board chooses to have an outside entity conduct part of, or the entire one-stop operator competition, the outside entity must meet certain requirements.



The outside entity must be an independent organization that is capable of exercising professional and ethical judgment. The outside entity must also be required to submit a conflict of interest statement. Payment for running the competition would be an allowable cost under WIOA.

- **Public Disclosure.** The local board must publicly disclose any conflicts of interest, real or apparent, and any recusal by individuals or organizations with real or apparent conflicts of interest. Regular public disclosure provides transparency to stakeholders in the procurement process for the selection of the one-stop operator. Best practice is to publicly disclose any conflicts of interest and recusals on the local board website. Additional methods, such as publication in newspapers, may also be used to ensure full and regular public disclosure.

### C. Additional Mechanisms to Provide for a Full and Open Competition

There are additional steps that the local board may take if necessary, in furtherance of a full and open competition for a one-stop operator. Some of the steps below are generally applicable requirements, while others are practices that may be appropriate in certain circumstances. Depending on the circumstances, the local board must combine multiple mechanisms, as appropriate, to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest.

- **Examination of competitive processes by an outside party.** Local boards may opt to retain an outside entity to conduct an objective review of the competitive process, or parts of the competitive process, such as: whether the RFP/IFB was unduly restrictive or whether the selection process was properly and fairly conducted. Likewise, local boards may opt to retain an outside entity to conduct an objective review of other aspects of the competitive process, including a review of the entities selected as a one-stop operator, such as:
  - past performance;
  - compliance with Federal requirements and policies;
  - financial systems;
  - internal control framework; and
  - policies to perform and manage the one-stop operator services in accordance with WIOA.

Such a review of the competitive process by an outside entity could help monitor whether the process remains equitable and transparent. The outside entity conducting such a review could be an independent organization, as described above, or a separate state agency, such as the office of the state auditor, or office of the state inspector general. If the results of the review process find weaknesses or barriers to effectively managing the competition or contract, the state agency and local board must work together to establish special conditions/criteria to monitor those barriers and to achieve timely or effective resolution.

- **Documentation.** The entities conducting the competition must prepare written documentation explaining the determination concerning the nature of the competitive



process to be followed in selecting the one-stop operator. As explained in several other parts of this guidance, documentation is required for several steps in the competitive process. Documentation is key for ensuring transparency in the competitive process.

- Revision of the original procurement solicitation (e.g. the RFP/IFB) or recompetition of the one-stop operator. If the entity conducting the competition determines there were defects in the competitive process, the entity must re-compete the selection of the one-stop operator. Defects in the competitive process include violation of the WIOA Joint Final Rule, Uniform Guidance, and/or failure to follow the local board's procurement policies and procedures. The competitive process may also be defective if the policies and procedures do not provide for a full and open competition, or if the procurement solicitation issued was inadequate to generate full and open competition. However, if the entity conducting the competition identifies defects in the procurement solicitation before the conclusion of the solicitation period, the entity must revise the procurement solicitation and extend the timeframe for the solicitation.

#### **Section V. Essential Contract Elements**

All contracts, agreements, or MOUs between the one-stop operator and local board must include the essential elements of a legally executed and binding written agreement, and contain at a minimum the following:

- Statement of Work (SOW). The SOW specifies the period of performance or the start and end date of the contract. It also specifies the services to be performed including measurable performance goals to be delivered under the contract, agreement, or MOU.
- Authorized Officials and Purpose. Authorized officials are persons authorized to enter into and sign legally binding agreements and must be on record as the signatory official. Signatures of the offeror/bidder and offeree (local board or NDOL) must be contained as part of the written contract.
- Additional Contractual Terms and Conditions. Contracts, agreements, and MOUs must include such standard terms and conditions that are either required by the NDOL, the local board, or the Federal agency as national, State, or local policy requirements. The contract, agreement, or MOU must identify that one-stop operators are subrecipients of Federal funds.

#### **Section VI. Monitoring of One-stop Operators**

Oversight and monitoring are an integral function of the local board to ensure the one-stop operator's compliance with the:

- requirements of WIOA;
- activities defined under the SOW;

- performance reporting requirements; and
- terms and conditions of the contract or agreement governing the one-stop operator.

Monitoring includes an attestation by the monitoring entity that it has examined compliance with the requirements of WIOA, the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200 and 2 CFR part 2900, and the terms and condition of the contract/agreement with the one-stop operator.

WIOA requires the local board to conduct monitoring of its one-stop operator. When the local board is the one-stop operator, there is an inherent conflict of interest in that the local board cannot effectively monitor itself. In such circumstances, an outside entity or a state agency, such as a state auditor or inspector general, must conduct the monitoring and report the monitoring results to the CEO. If the state agency is selected as the operator, an independent state agency, like an auditor or inspector general, should conduct the monitoring.

### **Section VII. Timelines**

Effective July 1, 2017:

- all existing and new one-stop operators must have been selected using a competitive process; and
- all contracts and agreements with one-stop operators must have been executed as the result of a competitive process, as required by WIOA.

The statutory requirement for the selection of the one-stop operation through the competitive selection process cannot be waived.

Each local board must conduct a competitive process for one-stop operator selection no less frequently than once every four (4) years.

A local board may choose to implement a competitive selection process that occurs more often than once every four (4) years.

### **Section VIII. LWDB 21 One Stop Operator Procurement Procedure**

All One-Stop Operator procurements issued by the LWDB 21 shall be carried out in a manner that provides open competition. Procurement technical specifications or scopes of works shall not restrict or eliminate competition. East Baton Rouge Parish Government (EBR) shall not place unreasonable requirements on firms or businesses to qualify to do business with the parish, nor will EBR encourage or participate in noncompetitive procurement practices. EBR will not participate in any organizational conflicts which would jeopardize any procurements. EBR will not require unnecessary experience or bonding requirements and in general will not use geographic based preferences without an acceptable written explanation that is documented and placed in the procurement file.

Pursuant to federal regulations, such as 2 CFR 200 and 24 CFR 85.36(b), all solicitations of offers

shall incorporate a clear accurate description of the technical requirements for the goods or services to be procured. When using technical specifications and product descriptions, these specifications and descriptions shall not contain features which unduly limit competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product, or service and the minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications shall be avoided. A “brand name or equal” description may be used to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated.

All solicitations of bids or proposals shall clearly set forth all requirements which offerors must fulfill.

Contracts shall be awarded only to responsive/ responsible contractors/firms that possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement. Consideration shall be given to such factors as the contractor’s/firm’s capacity, integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

**Who May Apply:**

The one-stop operator must be an entity (public, private, or nonprofit) or a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes three or more of the required one-stop partners of demonstrated effectiveness, located in the Local Area. Entities selected and serving as one-stop operators are subrecipients of a Federal award and thus are required to follow the Uniform Guidance.

Such entities may include the following:

- Government agencies or governmental units, such as: Local or county governments, school districts, State agencies, and Federal WIOA partners.
- Employment Service State agencies under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III of WIOA.
- Indian Tribes, tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, Indian-controlled organizations serving Indians, or Native Hawaiian organizations (collectively referred to herein as “Indian Tribes”).
- Educational institutions, such as: institutions of higher education, nontraditional public secondary schools such as night schools, and area career and technical education schools (however, elementary, and other secondary schools are not eligible to become a one-stop operator).
- Community-based organizations, nonprofit entities, or workforce intermediaries.
- Other interested organizations that can carry out the duties of the one-stop operator, such as a local chamber of commerce, other business organization, or labor organization.
- Private for-profit entities.
- Local WDBs, if approved by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) and the Governor as required in WIOA sec. 107(g)(2).

**One-Stop Operator Selection Process:**

A formal RFP shall be issued for solicitation of proposals. The following shall be the process used to solicit the One-Stop Operator for LWDA 21:



1. The One-Stop Operator shall be selected using a written Request for Proposal (RFP) Competitive process that defines and explains all aspects of the service being procured. The RFP method of procurement is used when procuring services, using a variety of rating factors, including price. The RFP will be advertised. Proposals will be evaluated and the best value or highest rated proposer that is qualified and responsive. The RFP will be awarded the contract. Additionally, the RFP method of procurement shall include methodology, experience, price, and possibly other rating factors. Price/costs submittals can be negotiated.
2. The RFP must identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals must be considered to the maximum extent practical.
3. The Requests for Proposals will be publicized minimally in the local newspaper of record for East Baton Rouge Parish (EBR) – The Advocate, posted on the websites for the City of Baton Rouge (brla.gov), the Local Workforce Development Area 21 (employbr.com) - and the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (nawdp.org) for a period of 30 days. Additional publication shall occur if the initial publication does not provide for a competitive response. All publications shall occur for a period of 30 days via web. Print advertisement for bids shall include at minimum of four public print notifications during the 30-day advertisement period. The RFP timelines from initial release to award shall be included in the posted Request for Proposals document.
4. LWDA 21 will have a written method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting recipients. The review committee shall include two reviewers from East Baton Rouge Parish Government and at minimum one outside reviewer with knowledge of WIOA.
5. Contracts must be awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered.
6. In the event a single provider responds to the competitive RFP, a procurement by noncompetitive proposal shall be used. Procurement by noncompetitive proposals is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source and may be used only when one or more of the following circumstances apply:
  - a. The item is available only from a single source.
  - b. The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation.
  - c. The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to a written request from the non-Federal entity;
  - d. After solicitation of several sources, competition is determined inadequate.

#### **DISCLAIMER**

This policy is based on LWDB 21's reading of the applicable statutes, regulations, rules and guidance released by the U.S. Government and the State of Louisiana. This policy is subject to change as revised or additional statutes, regulations, rules and guidance are issued.

2020 - 2024

  
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WIOA Chief Administrator/LWDB 21 Director

**REFERENCES**

- *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) Secs. 101, 107, 121;*
- *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR Part 200, including 2 CFR part 2900; 20 CFR § 677.150, 678.600, 678.605, 678.610, 678.615, 678.620, 678.625, 679.390, 679.430, TEGL 15-16*

### 6B: Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

EmployBR ensures their policies, procedures, programs, and services are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments, in order to provide equal access to all customers with disabilities. Additionally, EmployBR-LWDA 21 agrees to fully comply with the provisions of WIOA, Title VII of the civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the aforementioned laws.

EmployBR continues to ensure all materials and delivery methods are appropriate to diverse cultures, languages and education. Program accommodations include, as appropriate, the provision of interpreters for individuals with language barriers and/or hearing impairments who require such assistance in order to participate in center programs, large print materials and enlarged computer screens for individuals with visual disabilities, earphones with enhanced sound for individuals with hearing disabilities, etc. HiRE is JAWS enabled to assist individuals with visual disabilities to access employment and training services via the Internet. Each Center has been provided with a translation machine that can assist with service delivery for job seekers of other languages. Referrals to appropriate community-based organizations are made for those in need of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Strong linkages exist with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to ensure Centers are trained and able to serve customers with disabilities appropriately.

### C. Plan Development & Public Comment

2020 - 2024

1. The Board views this plan as a starting point in the development of more effective and collaborative partnerships that will only enhance this working document as mutual trust and teamwork is established between all partners over the next few years. The further advancement of these partner relationships will allow the opportunity for a truly coordinated plan that all embrace and support in an effort to create an effective integrated system. All partners have been given an opportunity to provide comments and feedback to the plan. The regular meetings held with partner agencies are utilized to gather feedback and input for development of the local plan as well as coordination with our economic development partners to ensure both agencies' plans are aligned and are coordinated appropriately. EmployBR sends out a copy of the plan to all partner agencies as soon as an initial draft is prepared and requests any input, feedback, and additional comments for inclusion in the final draft.

2. A comment period of thirty (30) days will be provided and formal comments may be received from members of the public, partner agencies, and representatives of business and labor organizations. The local and regional plan will be available to view on the EmployBR website ([www.employbr.org](http://www.employbr.org)) A public notice is placed in local newspapers of the EmployBR mandated local area notifying the public of the availability to view the plan and provide comments. All comments received are submitted to the Louisiana Workforce Commission as an attachment to the local plan.

## OUR BOARD

### OVERVIEW

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWBD) represents a wide variety of individuals, businesses, and organizations through the local area. The East Baton Rouge Parish Workforce Development Board comprises 23 members appointed by the CEO (mayor-president) of East Baton Rouge Parish. The board consists of private sector and public sector members.

Private sector members may represent high demand industries such as technology, healthcare, insurance, construction, financial education, transportation, manufacturing, telecommunications, etc. The Board's chairperson and co-chairperson must be representatives of the private sector.

Public sector members represent labor union & apprenticeship, education, Wagner-Peyser, veterans, community-based organizations, vocational rehabilitation etc.

Local Workforce Development Board 21 has the following committees:

**Executive Committee** - The Executive Committee acts on behalf of the full board between meetings when such action is necessary.

**Youth and Young Adult Committee** - The Youth and Young Adult Committee acts on behalf of the full board between meetings when such action is necessary to assist the LWDB with activities related to youth and young adult workforce activities.

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## LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD-21/EMPLOY BR

*Serving the residents of East Baton Rouge Parish*

[Download \(/LA%20Area%20%20Regional%20and%20LOCAL%2021%20\(BR\)%20Plan%20for%20Public.pdf\)](#) the Proposed 2020 – 2024 Local/Regional Combined Plan. Public comments regarding the proposed plan should be submitted via email to [tsmall@brla.gov](mailto:tsmall@brla.gov) (mailto:tsmall@brla.gov) no later than January 31, 2021.

*The Workforce Development Board is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program.*





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**NOTICE**

Darrel Lewis, Director | Workforce Investment Opportunities Act (WIOA) Chief Administrator of the City of Baton Rouge – EmployBR, Local Workforce Development Area Twenty-One (LWDA 21) has posted the Local Regional Workforce Development Plan for Region 2 and Local Workforce Development Board 21. Public comments will be received from January 1, 2021 – January 31, 2021. Public comments should be submitted to Tierra Small | Local Workforce Development Board 21 Board Coordinator via email at [tsmall@brla.gov](mailto:tsmall@brla.gov). The Local Regional Workforce Development Plan can be found at <http://employbr.businesscatalyst.com/About/board>.



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(225) 358-4510



EmployBR.com

2020 - 2024

**Tierra Small**

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**From:** Tierra Small  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 4:58 PM  
**To:** Darrel C. Lewis  
**Subject:** LWDB 21 February 2, 2021 Emergency Meeting  
**Attachments:** WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD 21 MEETING Agenda 02022021.pdf; LWDB 21 BR Local Plan Notice 2020 (1) (002).pdf

Good afternoon,

I hope you are having a great day so far! This is a reminder that there will be an Emergency Local Workforce Development Board 21 Meeting held on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. to vote on the Proposed Region 2/ Local Workforce Development Board 21 Local Regional Workforce Development Plan. This meeting will be held virtually via WebEx. For your review I have attached the Meeting Agenda and the Proposed Local Regional Workforce Development Plan Notice. Below I have also placed a link to the meeting. Please confirm to me by 5:00 p.m. tomorrow, January 27, 2021 as to whether or not you will be in attendance. This will help us ensure that a sufficient amount of members are present so that a quorum will be met. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing everyone on next Tuesday!

Thank you

Meeting Link

[https://brla.webex.com/meet/employbr\\_webex](https://brla.webex.com/meet/employbr_webex)

Join by phone

469-210-7159

Access code: 960 442 661

Tierra Small  
Board Coordinator  
Workforce Development Board 21  
4523 Plank Road  
Baton Rouge, LA 70805  
(225)358-4579 EXT. 352



## LOCAL AREA 21 SIGNATURE PAGE

**Local Area WIOA Board Chair**

**Local Area Chief Executive Officer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Mayor-President

DRAFT