



## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Region 4 Plan

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires local boards and chief elected officials (CEOs) in each planning region to engage in a regional planning process that results in the preparation and submission of a single regional plan. Regional plan must include a description of the following:

**1. A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the Regional Plan, including a description of how all local areas were afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process.**

Prosperity Region 4 consists of thirteen counties in West Michigan. Collectively, this includes two Michigan Works Agencies, fourteen American Job Centers, and one affiliate sites.

[Michigan Works! West Central's](#) (MWWC) service area includes Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, and Osceola counties, while [West Michigan Works!](#) (WMW) serves Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa counties.

The Region 4 Michigan Works! Agencies convene local area employers, industry talent councils, community-based organizations, economic development organizations, talent development initiatives, and educational providers to create a plan for the region. Although much of this work is localized, both agencies remain committed to the broader, regional perspective as evidenced in the following ways: [Talent First](#) works as a catalyst to ensure an ongoing supply of world-class talent for West Michigan. Talent First illuminates gaps, evaluates leading practices, and advocates for the implementation of those leading practices to make West Michigan a top 20% employment region.

Through the leadership of the [board of directors](#) and over 100 [CEO council members](#), ten [Talent First staff](#), and seven workgroups focused on regional initiatives for early childhood, K-12 education, post-secondary education, workforce development, workforce diversity and inclusion, workforce analytics, employer talent solutions, West Michigan Region 4 has identified the goals and strategies reflected in this plan.

Adult Learning Partners of West Michigan (ALPWM) is a networking group made up of approximately 70 members representing the thirteen-county region to bring together professionals committed to sharing 'Best Practices' used to serve the adult population in need of a high school diploma, general education development (GED), English as a Second Language (ESL), remediation education, vocational education, credentials, certifications as well as job readiness and employability skills training. ALPWM meets monthly and plays a vital role in the Region 4 planning process.

Also vital to the planning process is the Region 4 [Offenders Success](#) program. MWVC oversees this program and both agencies actively participate with the quarterly steering team meetings, proactively targeting service provision to meet the identified needs of returning offenders, thereby reducing their risk of recidivism, and enhancing their employment opportunities.

[The West Michigan Veteran Coalition](#) (WMVC) connects both region 4a and 4b by identifying solutions for gaps in veteran services, reducing duplication of efforts and simplifying connections with local resources. WMVC has four areas of concentration: education, employment, health care, and quality of life. In addition to participating in bimonthly meetings and being an active resource for veterans seeking education and employment services, WMW is also represented on the board of directors.

Additionally, Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! collaborate on statewide workforce initiatives, National Emergency Grants (NEG) applications and promote the Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF) throughout the region.

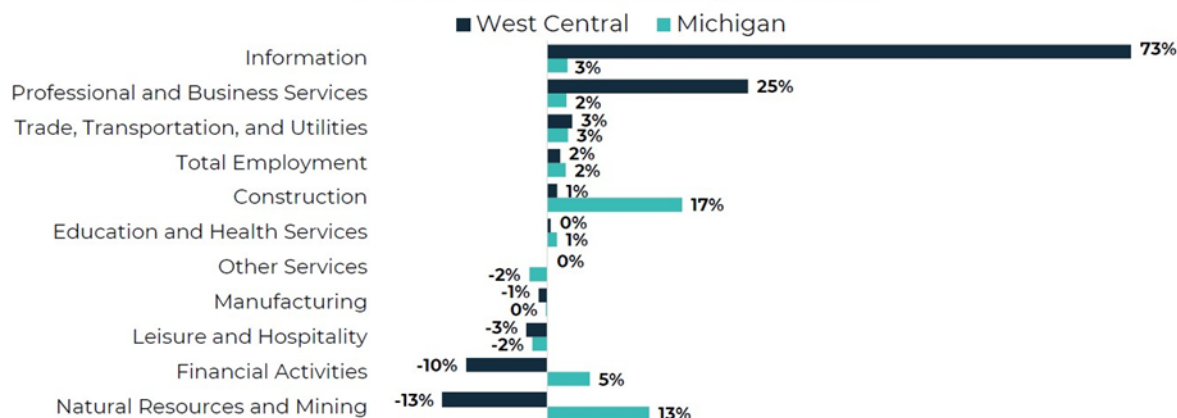
These types of partnerships provide consistency while recognizing the unique needs of our communities and employers. Stakeholders representing both region 4a and 4b are encouraged to participate in joint training sessions in relation to regional planning and continue to analyze and discuss joint data and service delivery approaches while remaining intentional about the importance of “regional thinking.” Each partner agency has shared draft planning information and convenes as needed to exchange ideas and discuss proposed goals, priorities, and industry needs.

**2. An updated and thorough analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions for the WIOA Planning Region. Including an analysis of existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis shall include:**

- ***The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs of in-demand industry sectors and occupations.***

The information provided below reflects data both prior to, during, and after the COVID pandemic significantly impacted economic conditions in March of 2020. Although post-pandemic, we continue to monitor labor market information to understand current workforce needs and adjust appropriately.

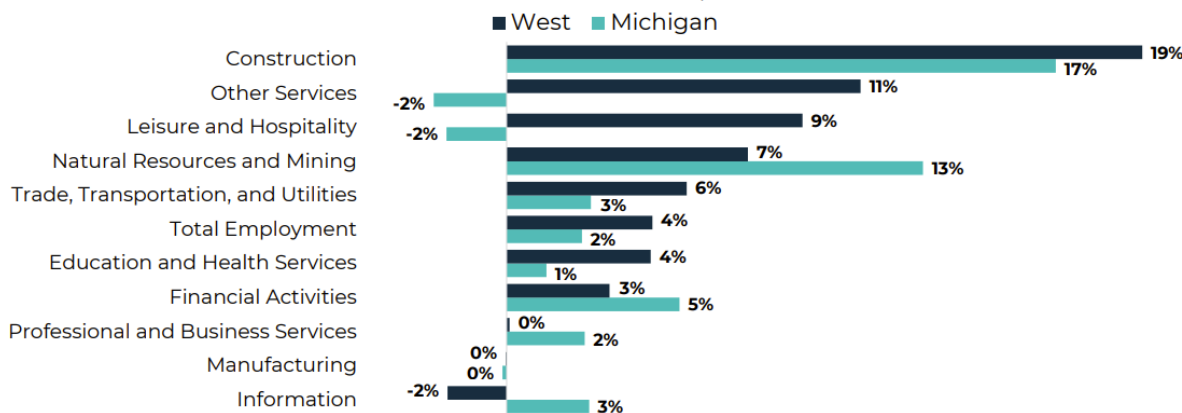
### Private Sector Job Trends, 2017–2023



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 10)

Current Labor Market information (LMI) for West Central Michigan, provided by the DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, and Local Area Unemployment Statistics, shows total private sector employment increased in West Central Michigan by 2.9% in the 2017-2023-time period. This was .2 percentage points greater than the state. Several industries experienced modest growth since 2017, with the Information sector witnessing the most significant expansion at 72.8% for the area. This stands in stark contrast to the statewide increase of only 2.5% in this sector.

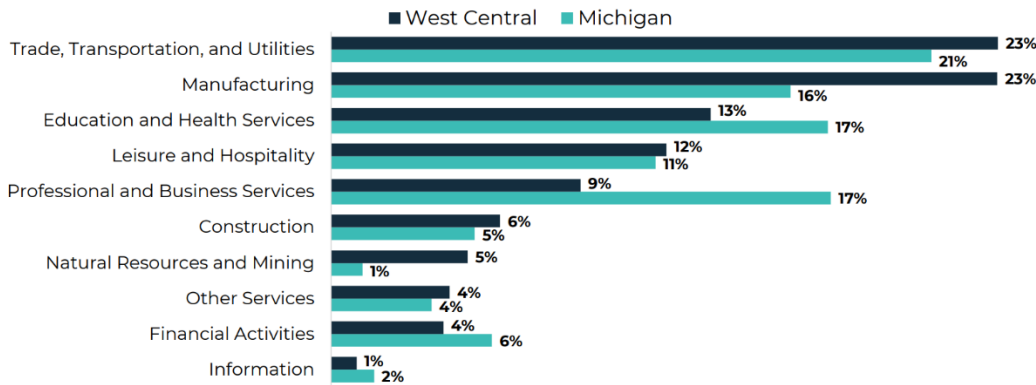
### Private Sector Job Trends, 2017–2023



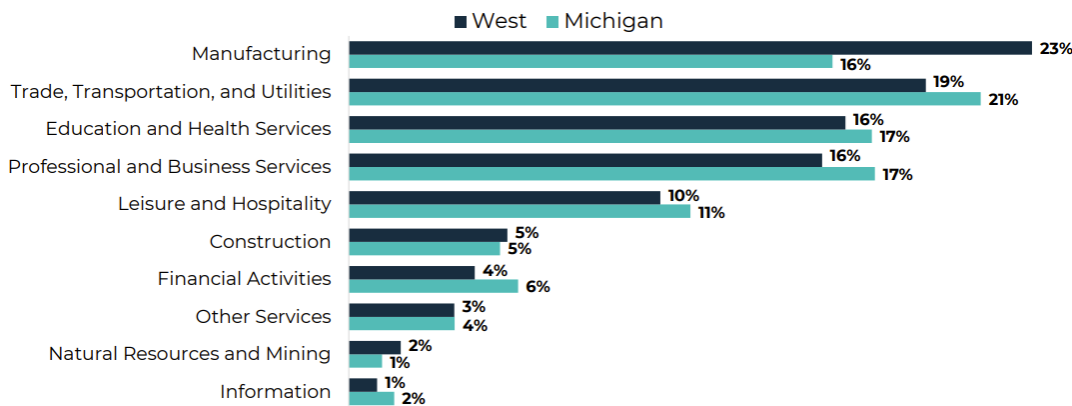
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 10)

Data on private sector job trends shows considerable growth in construction, other services, and leisure and hospitality in West Michigan from 2017-2023. The most notable growth is in other services, representing a 10.8% increase in West Michigan. Leisure and hospitality show a 9% increase, and education and health show a 4% increase. Manufacturing remains steady and information shows a slight decline. Overall, West Michigan shows a 4% increase in total employment, outpacing the state's 2% increase.

Distribution of Industry Jobs, Second Quarter 2023



Distribution of Industry Jobs, Second Quarter 2023



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 10)

According to the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics, manufacturing, trade, transportation and utilities, education and health services, and professional and business services represented nearly three-quarters of jobs in the West Michigan area.

Occupations within the construction and transportation & material moving categories represented 8.5% of the total of all online job advertisements in West Michigan. High-demand occupations within West Michigan’s construction industry include job titles such as carpenter, plumber, welder, electrician, roofer, landscaping and groundskeeping, civil engineer, heating and air mechanics and installers, and first line managers and laborers.

Manufacturing continues to be the largest industry by volume and represents 23% of all occupations in West Michigan, outpacing the state by 7%. High-demand occupations within West Michigan's manufacturing industry include automotive, CNC programming and operation, food and other production, machinery manufacturing, and machine shops.

Agribusiness, the business of agricultural production, can be identified throughout high-demand occupations in the construction, manufacturing, and information technology sectors. With its continuous growth, it is a recognized sector with high-demand occupations within West Michigan that include many cross-industry careers. Occupational opportunities include maintenance mechanic, food processing and production, tractor trailer truck driver, first-line supervisors, computer and IT services, and general farm labor.

High-demand occupations within West Michigan's healthcare industry include patient care assistants, medical surgical registered nurses, registered nurses, community health workers, phlebotomists, physical therapists, medical assistants, and other healthcare support workers.

These occupations continue to show regional growth and Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! are collectively focused on growing the talent pipeline in this area.

Jobs in Information technology span between several industries such as information and professional and business services. Additionally, jobs within high demand positions within the IT industry include software developer, web developer, information security analyst and computer user support.

Occupations within the leisure and hospitality categories include food preparation and serving related, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, personal care and service and represent 11.2% of the total of all online job advertisements by major occupational category in West Michigan. High-demand occupations within West Michigan's leisure and hospitality industry include retail salespersons, first-line supervisors of retail sales workers, fast food and counter workers, janitors and cleaners, and customer service representatives.

The professional occupations include higher skilled and educated positions such as mathematical analyst, architect, and designer.

West Michigan is also focused on employer needs in the transportation and utilities industry. Both Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! offer training scholarships and career services for individuals under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) who are interested in pursuing this career choice to include those who are considered hard to serve and re-entering citizens.

These occupations include employment opportunities for high school completers through those holding graduate or professional degrees. This trend aligns well with the goals of WIOA and will allow career pathway development and apprenticeship opportunities for those individuals who are accessing the workforce system.

These industries continue to remain steady or show regional growth, and West Michigan Works! continues focusing on growing the talent pipeline in these areas.

### Online Advertised Job Postings in the West Central MWA

Job Title	Postings
Retail Salespersons	530
Registered Nurses	425
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	409
Customer Service Representatives	248
Fast Food and Counter Workers	215
Postsecondary Teachers	213
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	191
Food Service Managers	179
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	151
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Housekeepers	146

Source: Help Wanted OnLine, Lightcast Developer (Table 16)

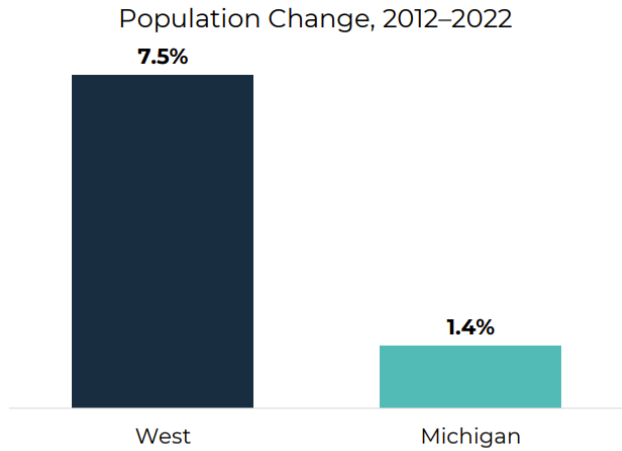
### Online Advertised Job Postings in the West MWA

Job Title	Postings
Registered Nurses	5,865
Retail Salespersons	5,387
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	4,155
Fast Food and Counter Workers	2,978
Sales Reps., Goods, Nontechnical	2,936
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,488
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Housekeepers	2,455
Customer Service Representatives	2,441
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	2,168
Food Service Managers	2,149

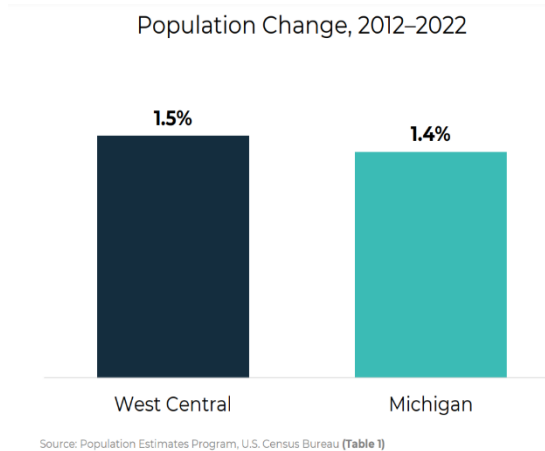
Source: Help Wanted OnLine, Lightcast Developer (Table 16)

In 2023, approximately 133,300 jobs were advertised online in West Michigan, according to Help Wanted OnLine, Lightcast Developer. The top job five advertisements were for registered nurses, retail salespersons, first-line supervisors of retail sales workers, fast food and counter workers, and sales representatives, collectively representing over 15% of all advertisements in West Michigan. In the West Central area, there were 8,300 online job postings during 2023. Nearly 20 percent of all available advertisements were similar to those in West Michigan, including positions for retail salespersons, registered nurses, first-line supervisors of retail sales workers, and customer service representatives. These roles outperformed fast food and counter workers in terms of demand in West Central.

- **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.**

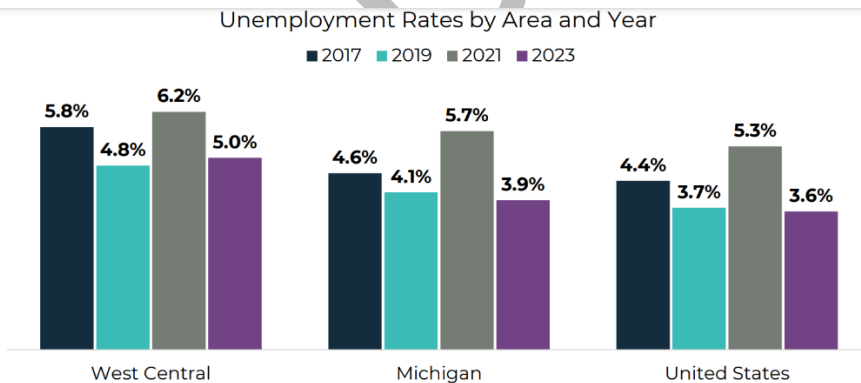


Source: Population Estimates Program, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 1)

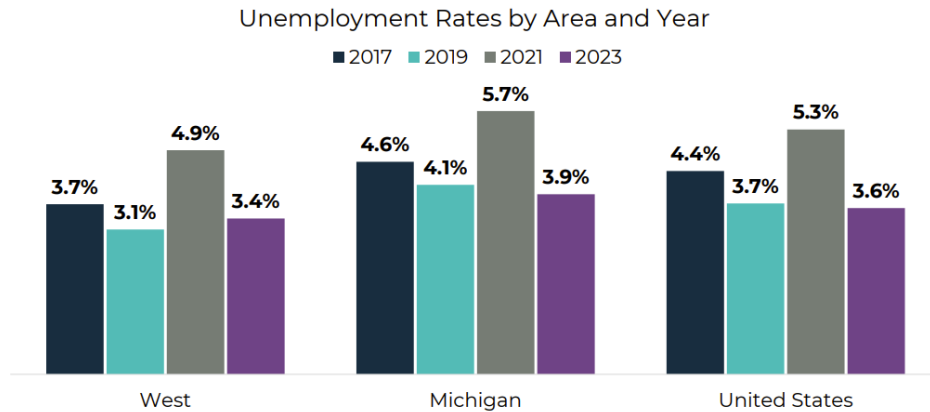


Source: Population Estimates Program, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 1)

An analysis provided by the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics estimated the population for West Michigan in 2022 (US Census Bureau) was 1,455,500. This was an overall increase of 7.5 percent, or 101,100 since 2012 when the population was 1,354,400. West Central’s population increase by 1.5 % between 2012 and 2022. This was a gain of 2,700 residents, showing a total population of 183,900. Michigan’s population has increased by 1.4 percent, or 135,800. Nationally, there was over a six percent increase in the population.



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 6)



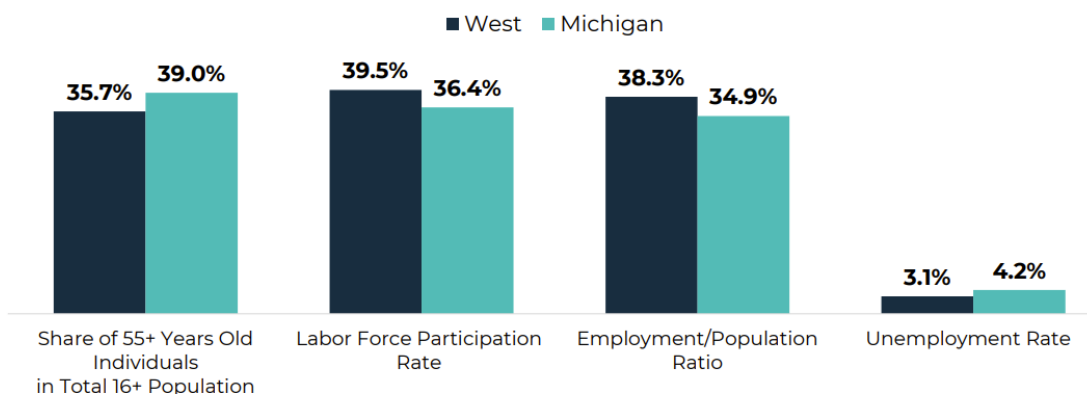
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 6)

Current Labor Market information (LMI) for West Michigan, provided by the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics, shows that the population increased by 7.5% between 2012 and 2022. The jobless rate in West Michigan decreased by 3.6% since 2017, representing a rate lower than compared to the state and nationally. Between 2012 and 2022 in the West Central Region the population increased by 1.5%. The area's jobless rate was consistently higher compared to Michigan and the United States. Since 2017, the number of unemployed in the area decreased by 11 percent (approximately 500 individuals).

Looking at jobless rates by demographics, West Michigan experiences rates below the state average in every category. Males in the region had a jobless rate 0.1 percentage points less than that of females in the region. Individuals who are Black/African American had a jobless rate of 10.8 percent. This rate was 1.9 percentage points lower than that of the state. The unemployment rate for those who are Black/African American was notably higher than all other demographic groups in both the West Central area and Michigan. The local jobless rates by age and gender were lower than most statewide averages. Females in the area had a noticeably lower jobless rate than the statewide rate.



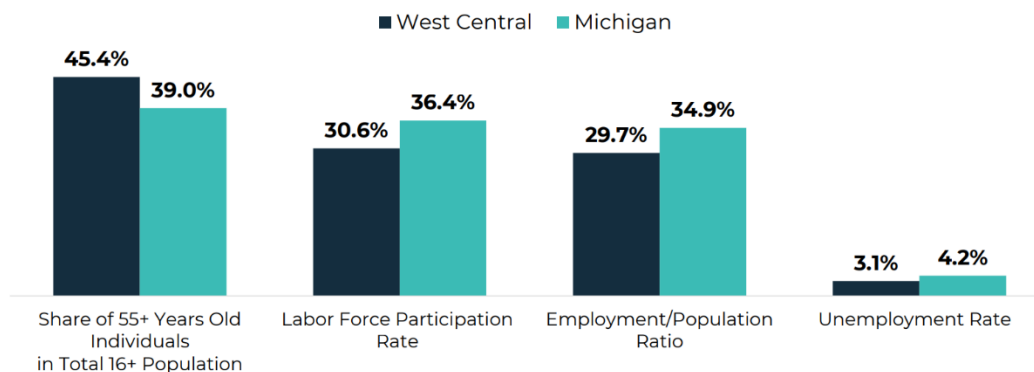
### Labor Force Status of Older Workers



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 9)

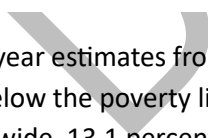
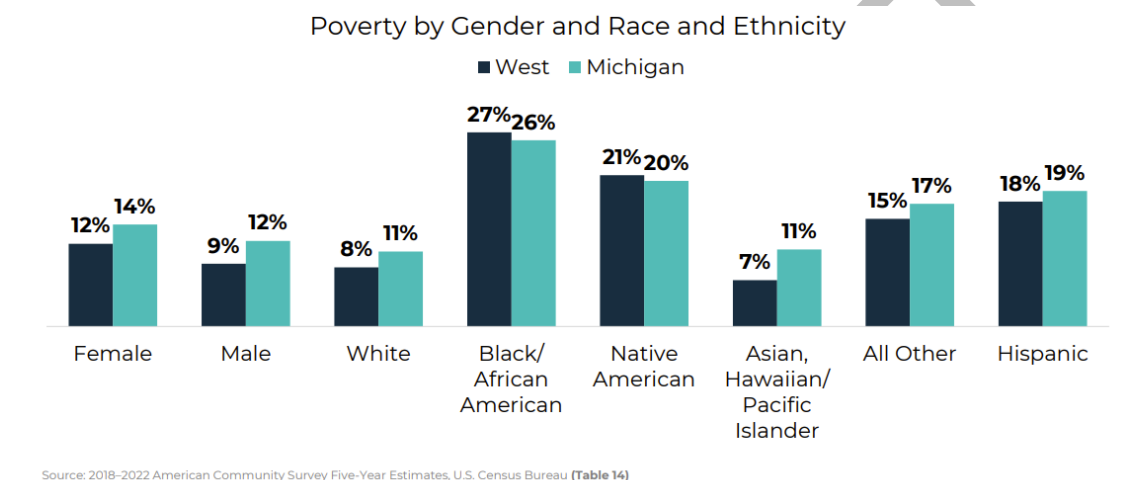
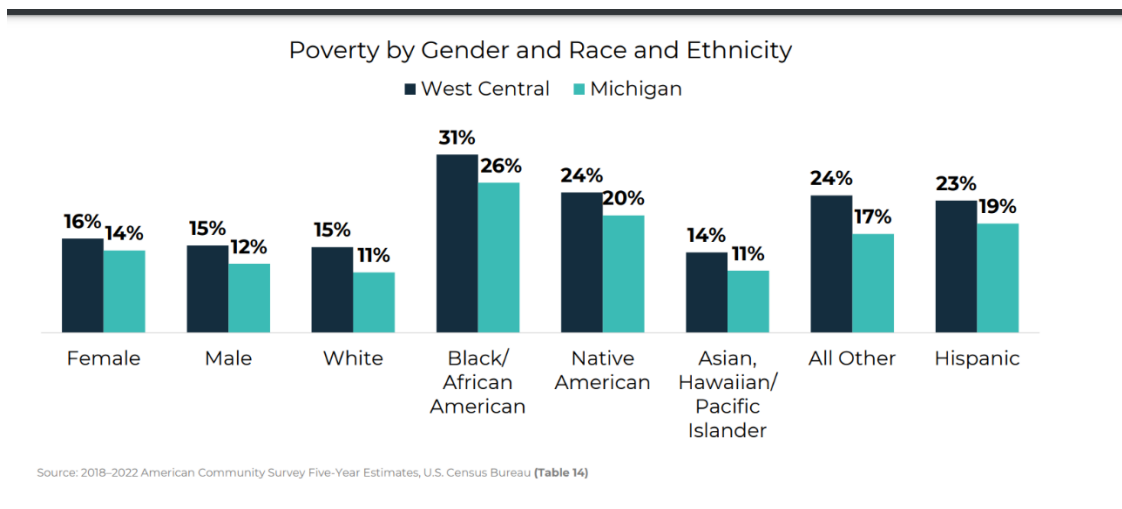
West Michigan’s older workers, those age 55 and older, accounted for nearly 35.7 percent of the total population, lower than the statewide average of 39 percent. Older workers in the region had a labor force participation rate almost three percentage points higher than Michigan’s. Unemployment rates among older workers are lower in the region (3.1 percent) than at the statewide level (4.2 percent).

### Labor Force Status of Older Workers



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 9)

West Central’s older workers, those age 55 and older, accounted for nearly 45.4 percent of the total population, higher than the statewide average of 39 percent. Older workers in the region had a labor force participation rate almost six percentage points lower than Michigan’s. Unemployment rates among older workers are lower in the region (1.1 percent) than at the statewide level (4.2 percent).



According to 2018–2022 five-year estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 10.2 percent of West Michigan’s population lives below the poverty line and 15.8 percent of West Central’s population lives below the poverty line.. Statewide, 13.1 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Those who are Black/African American have the highest poverty rate of those living in West Michigan at 27 percent and 31% in West Central. This was greater than the comparable rate for the state.

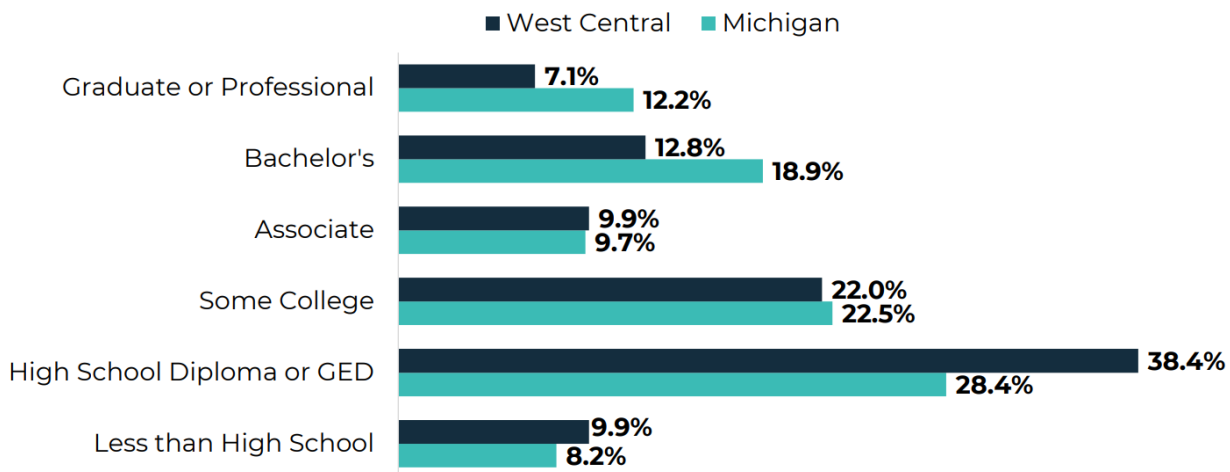
In December of 2023, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services reported that there were nearly 43,100 assistance program recipients in West Michigan and 7,600 in West Central. In West Michigan, 55.1 percent of recipients were female, 51 percent for West Central both of which were similar to the distribution observed in the state’s 54.3. The region as a whole had a much lower share of recipients who were Black/African American than that of the state.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 11.4 percent, of the population in West Michigan and 18.4 in West Central were reported to have a disability. The number of individuals with a disability by race/ethnicity aligns closely to their share of total population in the West Michigan region. Unlike Michigan and West Michigan, a higher share of males in the area had a disability compared to females in West Central.. Just

under 40 percent of those with a disability in the region were age 65 or older, slightly lower than the statewide distribution (40.7 percent).

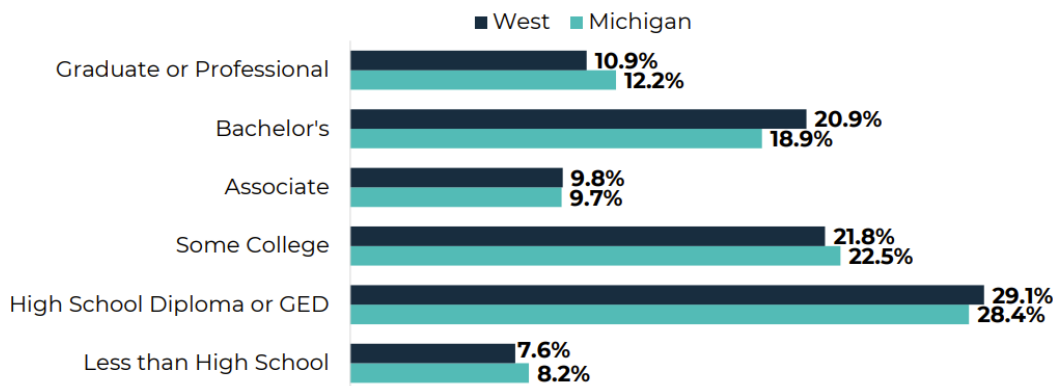
The chart below shows education attainment for ages 25 and up for West Michigan and West Central in comparison to the State. West Michigan outpaces the state in bachelor degree attainment at 20.9 percent compared to the state’s 18.9 percent. Individuals holding high school diplomas or GEDs were only slightly above the state average by nearly one percentage point. The West Central residents held a lower level of educational attainment, on average, than state wide. Nearly two-fifths had a high school diploma or equivalent as their highest education.

Educational Attainment (Ages 25+)



Source: 2018–2022 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 3)

Educational Attainment (Ages 25+)



Source: 2018–2022 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 3)

- **An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region and the region’s capacity to provide the workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of the workforce,**

***including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.***

Although West Michigan has experienced population increases, a steady decrease in unemployment rates prior to and following the Covid-19 pandemic, and slightly better than state averages in most of the workforce trends, it remains a region in need of intentional workforce development.

Although the West Michigan region appears to be ahead of the state in many areas, we know there are pockets experiencing high poverty rates, low educational attainment, and high unemployment. These pockets are either geographically or demographically based. Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! are relentlessly pursuing innovative and relevant solutions to these challenges through unique partnerships and resources to meet individual and employer needs. This includes seeking ways to provide access to those not currently utilizing the welfare reform or other workforce systems, provide one stop barrier removal services in coordination with existing and newly sought out community partners, better preparing individuals to attend various training opportunities, and finding ways to increase the labor force by re-engaging people with disabilities who are otherwise capable of working.

Using sector strategies, the Region 4 Michigan Works! agencies continue to convene and connect to create a network of partners to meet the demands of the region's current employers as well as the emerging industry needs in order to achieve a skilled workforce.

As previously mentioned, industry talent councils have been established within the region to help identify employer needs from an industry-wide perspective. These councils allow for the identification of best practices and shared strategies as well as increased articulation of what areas employers may need workforce development assistance.

Key roles of each of the industry sector council includes:

- Information conduit: sharing trends and best practices affecting talent.
- Talent initiatives: leading, supporting and promoting talent initiatives throughout West Michigan.
- Training needs: sharing current training needs with educational partners to develop curriculum, create career pathways and nurture a supply chain of talent.
- Networking: promoting networking among employers, educators, workforce development and economic development professionals for the purpose of developing a skilled workforce.

Educating youth and enhanced outreach activities allow for a better understanding of what the regional economy looks like and what career opportunities are in existence post high school or following postsecondary education. Building the talent pipeline will increase the skilled talent pool

and retain young people in our area. [MiCareerQuest](#), a region-wide career exploration event for youth, Jobs for Michigan Graduates (JMG), and the Summer Youth Work Experience program are all examples of current workforce development activities targeted at increasing the local labor force and addressing the education and skill gaps in our region.

West Michigan is also focused on identifying and advocating to provide more meaningful and efficient services to individuals with disabilities. These initiatives include addressing the infrastructure improvements needed to lessen the barriers brought by housing, transportation, and internet access as well as increasing the training and employment opportunities that are available to this population. Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is a core partner, and representatives are co-located inside many of the service centers. In addition, West Michigan has established relationships with the Michigan Bureau for Blind Services, Disabilities Advocates of Kent County, Disability Network, Mid-Michigan Industries and Disability Connections. West Central Michigan Works now has an advocate from Disability Network co-located in their Lake County Service Center. These agencies are sharing resources and are at the table investigating ways to share common intakes, assessments, and making direct connects to opportunities.

In rural areas or where public transportation is unavailable, support services, such as gas cards or auto repairs, may be provided to assist individuals with getting to and from workforce development activities including education and employment. Though the causes of transportation barriers are different, these barriers exist in both urban and rural areas of the region.

Adult education and literacy programs are made available through established and emerging partnerships with local providers. Some of the West Michigan Region 4 service centers provide instruction and testing onsite or through direct services. In areas that have expanded resources, community conversations and informational tours are taking place to increase awareness of workforce development services. In some communities, Michigan Works! staff conduct workshops and initiate career coaching as part of the educational curriculum.

Short-term occupational skills training and higher education opportunities are also available throughout the region and are funded with local WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth allocations for those who qualify. Region 4 works closely with training providers to ensure that the supported programs lead to an industry recognized credential and the credential falls in line with employer demand. Recent initiatives have also shown that training providers including community colleges are responsive to the development and delivery of a curriculum that directly addresses the skill gaps.

The geography of Region 4 presents a challenge to both rural communities and employers. Although some training opportunities are offered online, many are only available in the urban areas. Lack of transportation makes occupational skill training or higher education inaccessible for many in rural areas. Commuting patterns suggest that many people living in the rural areas are working in urban locations; however, there is still a large gap in accessible skills training for those who want to live and work in the same community. Efforts to better assess training needs and accessibility of training

programs are being addressed in collaboration with the West Michigan industry councils, higher education providers, vocational training partners, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), adult education providers, veterans' services, and other community partners.

Work-based training is available and is a viable option that allows individuals to learn the skills that employers need without attending occupational skills-based training or higher education.

Depending on the desired skill, the training, and the length of the training, this may assist residents with employment opportunities that will require an education attainment of high school diploma through associate degree (approximately 80 % of projected jobs). Work-based training can be funded with local WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker allocations, and, for those who qualify, this is a very desirable option.

Work-based training opportunities include:

- **On-The-Job Training:** intended to provide a participant with the knowledge and skills necessary for the full performance of the job. OJT is a critical tool that can help job seekers enter into successful employment. The term “on-the-job training” means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:
  1. Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job.
  2. Provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 75 % of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training.
  3. Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.
- **Pre-Apprenticeship Training:** designed to provide work experiences that can help participants obtain the skills needed to be placed into a registered apprenticeship.
- **Registered Apprenticeships:** designed to combine paid learning on-the-job and related technical and theoretical instruction in a skilled occupation. This training is an important component of the education and training services that the workforce system can provide to its participants and should be used as a strategy to train and employ job seekers. Registered Apprenticeships offer job seekers immediate employment opportunities that usually pay higher wages and offer continued career growth.

- ***Incumbent Worker Training:*** designed to assist employers with training current workers in specific circumstances to meet the needs of employers and increase the skill level of workers.

**3. A description of regional service strategies that have been or will be established as a result of coordinated regional analysis and delivery of services, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements, when appropriate. Regions may consider:**

- ***Existing service delivery strategies that will be expanded, streamlined, or eliminated.***

In addition to the analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities mentioned. Hope Network's Wheels to Work program provides an opportunity to expand services across the region. This program provides transportation to designated "hubs" through an area, based on employer needs. Wheels to Work is currently operating in Kent, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties and has recently expanded into include Newaygo County. With employer interest increasing, this program is a possible solution to both employers' needs to decrease turnover due to lack of reliable transportation and enabling talent to access reliable transportation.

- ***New service strategies necessary to address regional education and training needs.***

Both Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! actively participate in and attend monthly meetings with the Adult Learning Partners of West Michigan (ALPWM), a region-wide collaborative that includes adult education providers from all thirteen counties. This allows the region to share information with adult education providers.

Career Education Advisory Councils (CEAC) are active in both regions and specifically address education and training needs for youth. Career and Technical Education (CTE) partners participate in these as well fostering the development of job skills training throughout the region.

- ***Strategies to address geographic advantages.***

Region 4 is made up of both urban and rural communities. Many people in rural parts of the region are commuting to urban areas for training and to participate in the workforce. Supportive service policies are written specifically to adjust to the needs of the geographical area served. Training opportunities will almost always require the need for travel and is factored into suitability for training discussions. Efforts are made to respond to the needs through collaboration with partners such as Veteran's Career Advisors (VCA), Michigan Rehabilitation Counselors, Adult Education Providers, institutions of higher learning and other partners based upon the needs of the participant.

- ***Approaches to improve services to individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth, or other hard-to-serve populations.***

In several service centers across the region Michigan Rehabilitation counselors are co-located within the MWWC and MWW service centers and available for referrals. Staff are also familiar with Michigan Career and Technical Institute programs tailored to suit individuals with disabilities. In our continuous effort to grow our partnership we strive to co-enroll individuals into both organizations' programs as we have identified that we share the same populations. MRS has been involved in some of the rapid response meetings and routinely attends community events throughout the region. Staff have participated in the transitional council meetings that coordinate services for individuals with disabilities who will soon be graduating. This provides an opportunity to share information about services offered by different agencies within the local communities.

Veteran career advisors (VCAs) are shared across the region. Additionally, county employed Veterans Service officers provide services when the need arises.

- ***Strategies to connect the unemployed with work-based learning opportunities.***

Collaboration continues across the region to establish new USDOL Registered Apprenticeships and to increase employer and training institution engagement in the process. National Apprenticeship Week is promoted through social media posts and coordinated activities in area schools to raise awareness about apprenticeships.

Work experiences provide youth the opportunity to build relationships with local employers, while giving businesses the opportunity to develop the skill sets of future employees. Smaller businesses offer a unique opportunity to learn about running your own business and these opportunities are a focus for work experience sites.

On-the-job training opportunities provide work-based training for people who are learning a new skill or specific employer processes.

- ***Strategies to integrate existing regional planning efforts among core partners.***

Regional service strategies are currently being developed through the guidance and direction of the Career Education Advisory Council (CEAC) and Talent First to ensure the upcoming talent pipeline is exposed to in-demand industries and have the knowledge required to access training for those occupations. These efforts include partners from adult education, training providers, community colleges, and employers.

In many instances the ISDs rely on Michigan Works! to help connect them to employers and employer training needs. Additionally, Michigan Works! coordinates with school districts and Tech Centers to take part in events such as student career days and job fairs.

Other planning efforts include the regional collaboration through the West Michigan's Veteran Coalition bi-monthly meetings, the Adult Learning Partners of West Michigan (ALPWM) monthly meetings, and the Offender Success steering team quarterly meetings.



As mentioned, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) representatives are located in many of the One-Stop Service Centers across Region 4. This connection integrates referral processes, barrier removal strategies and allows MRS and the Michigan Works! agencies to share best practices.

Job Corps is a core partner that provides high school diploma (HSD), high school equivalency (HSE), job training, and certificate opportunities to youth ages 16-24. Although the residential facility is located in Grand Rapids, they are considered a valuable resource for youth for the entire region.

Additionally, both MWWC and WMW have implemented a direct service delivery system for Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act (WIOA), Partners Accountability Training and Hope (PATH), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and Wagner Peyser (WP). This allows for one point of contact for partner agencies, enabling stronger integrated strategies with core partners.

#### **4. A description of plans for the development and implementation of, or the expansion of, sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.**

Regionally, Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs) convene employers along with education providers, economic development organizations, and other groups associated with workforce development to solve talent challenges. Local industry clusters are formed based on local needs and are led by employers.

An industry cluster is a geographic concentration of related employers, industry suppliers and support institutions in a product or service field. Michigan's Industry Cluster Approach (MICA) creates a framework in which many employers within a single industry jointly engage with the workforce system to identify their talent demand and challenges.

Much of the work being done to address talent demand issues is happening through industry sector collaboration, or industry councils. Councils bring together employers, workforce agencies and other partners such as training institutions and economic development agencies to create regional, sector specific workforce strategies. Creating a continuous flow of information between key players ensures that labor supply is aligned with employer demand.

- ***Current in-demand industry sectors and occupations within the region.***
- ***Which sectors are regional priorities, based upon data-driven analysis.***

Key industry clusters for region 4 include the following:

- Agribusiness
- Construction and energy
- Health care
- Information technology
- Manufacturing

- Hospitality
- ***The status of regional collaboration in support of the sector initiatives.***
- ***Current sector-based partnerships within the region.***

In addition to the work both agencies are convening locally, both agencies work with [The Right Place](#), a West Michigan economic development organization, offering confidential, comprehensive business services in many counties throughout the region.

[Hello West Michigan](#) focuses on the region's in-demand sectors with employers engaging through memberships. They offer several initiatives such as *Rethink West Michigan* and have been instrumental in promoting West Michigan as a place where business thrives, and people want to live and work. Both WMW and MWWC are close partners with Hello West Michigan.

Industry sector engagement is robust in region 4. There are many employer-led collaboratives that drive innovative programming and events to help bring awareness to high demand jobs and address solutions to address employers' short term talent needs. Information on the employer-led collaboratives in our region include:

The Construction Careers Council (CCC) was established in May 2021 to address the current and future talent needs in the construction industry. The mission of the Construction Careers Council is to create a bright future for West Michigan's construction industry by building a diverse and qualified workforce. The council is employer led, and a culmination of local employers, educators, workforce development, union representation, and association representation with the goal of working together to solve workforce development issues within the construction industry. The council uses three major strategies to address workforce development needs:

- o Campaign: The council helps to spread awareness about construction careers. The council promotes career paths within the industry through innovative projects.
- o Train: The council aims to provide resources for employers looking to upskill new or current employees and create a sustainable talent pipeline for the construction industry in West Michigan.
- o Sustain: The council creates beneficial retention solutions aimed at keeping the current talent that is in the industry... in the industry.

Discover Manufacturing (DM), the industry Talent Council for Manufacturing, began in 2014 but was formally recognized with a resolution signed August of 2016. DM's mission is to inspire and expand manufacturing talent in West Michigan. DM is a collaborative of manufacturers, educators, workforce development, and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan's manufacturing talent needs. West Michigan Works! and The Right Place are the visionary founders of Discover Manufacturing, taking it from a sub-committee of the Manufacturers' Council focused in Kent County, to a larger scale initiative serving Region 4a and 4b. There are three strategies that guide its work to bring the vision and ideas to reality:

- o Promote manufacturing

- o Identify and expand training opportunities
- o Share best practices regionally

The Agribusiness Talent Council (ATC) was incorporated in 2018 and was originally known as the Food Processing Talent Council. The council was born out of the need to address a common need of talent, training, and industry promotion among regional food processors. Food processors recognized the importance of having the region's farms, animal raisers, and other agribusinesses at the table as well. The council expanded to include traditional agriculture operations and changed its name to Agribusiness Talent Council in 2019. The ATC addresses common challenges in attracting talent, promoting the industry, and providing training and resources to employers in Agribusiness. This employer led collaborative seeks to expand the talent pool by promoting career pathways and opportunities in West Michigan's agribusiness industry. It focuses on four key strategies to meet its vision:

- o Train: Connect businesses with resources to create your own skilled talent by upskilling your current workforce.
- o Recruit and Retain: Create and join projects that pull new talent into Agribusiness and keep existing talent long term.
- o Promote the Industry: Focus on promoting Agribusiness as a great career pathway for all ages.
- o Connect to Resources: Create new and share existing beneficial resources for the Agribusiness industry.

The West Michigan Health Careers Council (WMHCC) was established in January of 2016 out of a need to address specific health care talent needs in the West Michigan region. The mission of the WMHCC is to strengthen the West Michigan health care industry by identifying, developing, and promoting health care career opportunities. The purpose of the council is to provide an employer led collaborative council of health care employers, educators, workforce development, and economic development organizations working together to solve health care needs. This mission and vision are supported through four key strategies:

- o Outreach & Promotion: The council works with employers and community partners to encourage careers in the health care industry.
- o Education & Training: The council works to create and provide effective ways to enter into, learn in, and be effective employees in the health care industry.
- o Funding & Resources: The council works to find funding opportunities to support the efforts of the WMHCC.
- o Retention: The council works to find ways to help health care employees stay within the industry or organization.

West Michigan Tech Talent (WMTT) is a West Michigan Works! Supported Industry Talent Council. WMTT's mission is to engage employers of IT professionals with best practices, resources, and a community to grow, develop, recruit, and retain a diverse and inclusive world class IT workforce in West Michigan. To accomplish their work, WMTT focuses on the following key strategies:

- o GROW: reaching out to students K-16 to promote IT careers, ensuring that under-represented groups have equitable access.
- o DEVELOP: upskilling our current workforce and adult career changers.

- RECRUIT & RETAIN: partner with organizers of conferences, meetups, and local tech events to sponsor and promote their efforts to build a vibrant and inclusive tech community

Over the next year, West Michigan Works! in partnership with Experience Grand Rapids, will convene employer leaders and key workforce partners in the hospitality to form a new Industry Talent Council focused on the hospitality industry.

Recently, Region 4a has also implemented and convened an employer-led collaborative in health care. The partnership between regions 4a and 4b was instrumental in bringing this to fruition. Within the health care sector, we have several shared employers — specifically hospitals — across the region.

- ***The extent of business involvement in current initiatives.***

Businesses involved in the development, implementation, and expansion of sector initiatives include all the employer partnerships noted through the regional collaboration as well as the local industry councils and the small business owners in each of our communities.

- ***Other public-private partnerships in the region that could support sector strategies.***

Other partnerships that support sector strategies include community colleges, career tech centers, adult learning providers, organizations committed to community support initiatives, and agencies with a similar mission.

**5. A description of any administrative cost arrangements that currently exist or that will be established within the region, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. Regions may consider:**

- ***Current or proposed resource leveraging agreements.***
- ***Establishing a process to evaluate cost sharing arrangements.***

While MWWC and WMW continue to collaborate on multiple projects, with one or the other agency acting as the fiduciary, there are no overarching arrangements or any intent to pool funds for administrative costs at this time. MWWC and WMW continue to share lessons learned and best practices throughout the region.

**6. A description of how transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, currently are coordinated or will be coordinated within the region.**

The need for transportation and other support services are identified through the assessment of individuals' needs and the available resources in an area. Although there is no universally accessible

transportation for all region 4 commuters, MWWC and WMW remain committed to seeking timely solutions for those in need by utilizing a direct contact at each of the agencies.

- ***Whether the provision of transportation or other supportive services could be enhanced, and if so, how and establishing a process to promote coordination of supportive services delivery.***

Reliable transportation, as well as access to quality childcare and education, remain a struggle for many individuals in our region, particularly in rural areas. Addressing these barriers has been a primary focus of the [Workforce Development Working Group](#). By prioritizing the insights into the personas of our workforce, this workgroup asked a series of “How Might We” questions that allows insight, continued focus, ideation, and intervention in their impacted areas.

#### **Childcare Trade-offs** *How Might We:*

- Help employers implement strategies that address the childcare needs of their employees.
- Remove constraints that impact childcare providers ability to operate or expand.
- Secure funding to support the expansion of Reach Out & Read Michigan.
- Implement a statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

#### **It’s More Than Moving People** *How Might We:*

- Find ways to utilize other resources (church vans, Wheels to Work program, carpool networking)?
- Influence transportation options to be more uplifting and less stigmatized?
- Equip commuters to obtain transportation on their own terms and not as a favor or obligation?

#### **Uncovering My Skills** *How Might We:*

- Improve postsecondary attainment and reduce poverty in West Michigan while incentivizing work and advancement by partnering with the Federal Reserve.
- Enhance Michigan’s adult basic education system by accelerating the implementation, evaluation, and scaling of effective practices.
- Increase the number of adults in West Michigan with a postsecondary credential through the West Michigan Education-to-Employment Partnership.
- Expand work-based learning opportunities (internships, co-ops) offered by employers to college students to increase the number of graduates who stay in West Michigan.

- ***What organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services.***

Organizations that currently provide services or are seeking to expand services to our region include:

- [Great Start Readiness Program \(GSRP\)](#); A Michigan state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children with factors which may place them at risk of educational failure.
- [Hope Network Wheels to Work Program](#); a program designed to help employers get their employees to work, efficiently and affordably. This program currently provides transportation solutions to Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon and Newago counties with plans to expand to beyond.
- [Michigan Mobility Plan](#); Michigan needs a vision for a 21st-century transportation system that will support user needs for improved safety, infrastructure conditions, and system reliability to drive statewide economic investments. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is developing an integrated, performance based 2045 State Long-Range Transportation Plan (Michigan Mobility 2045) to guide implementation of this vision.

**7. A description of how workforce development services currently are, or could be, coordinated with economic development services and providers within the region, and a description of the strategies that have been or will be established to enhance service delivery as a result of the coordinated regional analysis of such services. Regions may consider:**

- ***Current economic development organizations engaged in regional planning.***

West Michigan Works! and Michigan Works! West Central have formed a regional prosperity collaboration that aligns with the Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI). Through the guidance and direction of the Career Education Advisory Council (CEAC), Talent First, and The Right Place, Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! have come together to develop a regional prosperity plan. This will ensure that businesses have the skilled talent they need, educators are providing the training and credentials that match these needs, and individuals, including those with disabilities, have current labor market information and access to viable training opportunities to close the skills gaps. Through the development of industry sector councils and the support of community partners and employers who have united to form industry sectors, Region 4 will continue to prosper by increasing business and talent attraction. The MWAs will work closely with economic development and MEDC to assure employer councils and associations, as well as individual employers, are aware of services and opportunities for their operations.

- ***Education and training providers involved with economic development.***

Many training providers, ALPWM members, and CEAC committees are valued contributors to the economic development in West Michigan. The following education and training providers are also represented on our Workforce Development Boards:

*Michigan Works! West Central*

- Ferris State University
- Mecosta Osceola ISD
- Mason-Lake Adult Education

*West Michigan Works!*

- Ottawa Area ISD
- Muskegon Community College
- Northview Public Schools
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Montcalm Community College

- ***Current businesses involved with economic development organizations.***

Many regional and local businesses are valued contributors to the economic development in West Michigan. The businesses are also represented on our Workforce Development Boards:

*Michigan Works! West Central*

- Blue Triton/Ice Mountain
- Consumers Energy
- Dept. of Health and Human Services
- Ferris State University
- Five-Cap, Inc.
- Fremont Area Community Foundation
- G-M Wood Products
- Grand Oaks Nursing Center-Baldwin
- Hamtech, Inc.
- Lake-Osceola State Bank
- Mason Lake Adult Education
- Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District
- Michigan Dept. of Corrections

- Michigan Freeze Pack
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services
- Peterson Farms
- Reed City Group
- SMART Local No. 7
- United Auto Workers - Grand Rapids
- Whitehall Industries
- Youth Attention Center

*West Michigan Works!*

- Berends Hendricks Stuit
- Wolverine Coil Spring
- Haworth
- Greater Muskegon Economic Development
- Second Act, LLC
- Department of Health & Human Services
- ITC Holdings, Inc.
- Goodwill Industries of West Michigan
- Plumbers, Fitters, and Service Trades #174
- Barry County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Alliance
- Heart of West Michigan United Way
- Perrigo
- Cascade Engineering
- Holland Board of Public Works
- The Right Place
- Lakeshore Advantage
- Trinity Health
- Meijer Inc.
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services
- Fleis & Vandenbrink
- Plascore
- Consumers Energy
- Corewell Health
- West Michigan Construction Institute



- Kendrick Plastics
- West Michigan Training Alliance
- Bradford White
- CarbonSix

- ***Targeted businesses from emerging sectors/industries.***

High growth businesses and industries in the West Michigan region include manufacturing and transportation/utilities.. Agriculture, construction and energy, healthcare, information technology and most recently, hospitality, are additional industries that the region has identified as key sectors.

**8. A description of how the region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in the WIOA Section 116(c), for the local areas or the planning region. Regions may consider:**

- ***The process to be used for determining regional performance goals.***

Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! both participated independently with Michigan Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) to negotiate the performance goal through program year 22/23. These negotiations were based on historical performance and local economic conditions.

Performance levels for future programs have not been set or negotiated at this time. Both areas have updated their respective local plans to reflect the negotiated rates.



## LOCAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS PI 24-13

Local Plans serve as four-year action plans to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and to support the state's vision and strategic and operational goals. The Local Plan sets forth the strategy to:

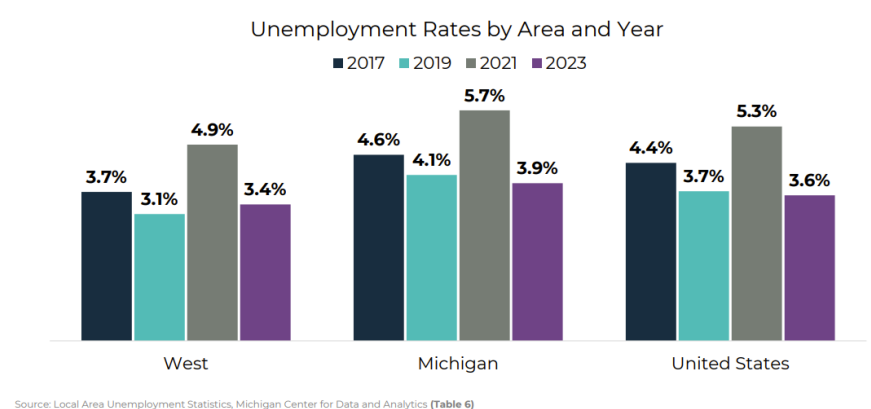
- Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers.
- Apply job-driven strategies in the One-Stop system.
- Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment, training, and education programs.
- Incorporate the Local Plan into the Regional Plan per 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 679.540.

Section 108(b) (1) through (22) of the WIOA requires local boards and CEOs to develop and submit a comprehensive four-year Local Plan that is consistent with the State Plan and based on an analysis of regional labor market data. The Local Plan shall include the following:

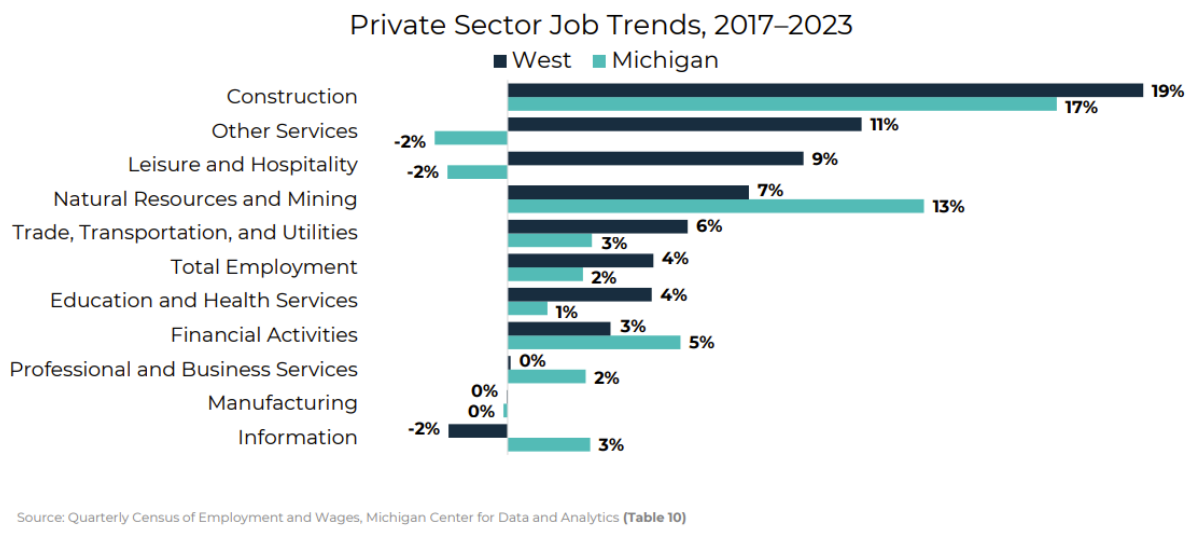
### 1. An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions including:

- *The regional analysis prepared as part of the Regional Plan.*

The information provided below reflects data both prior to, during, and after the COVID pandemic significantly impacted economic conditions in March of 2020. Although we are post-pandemic, we continue to monitor labor market information to understand current workforce needs and adjust appropriately.

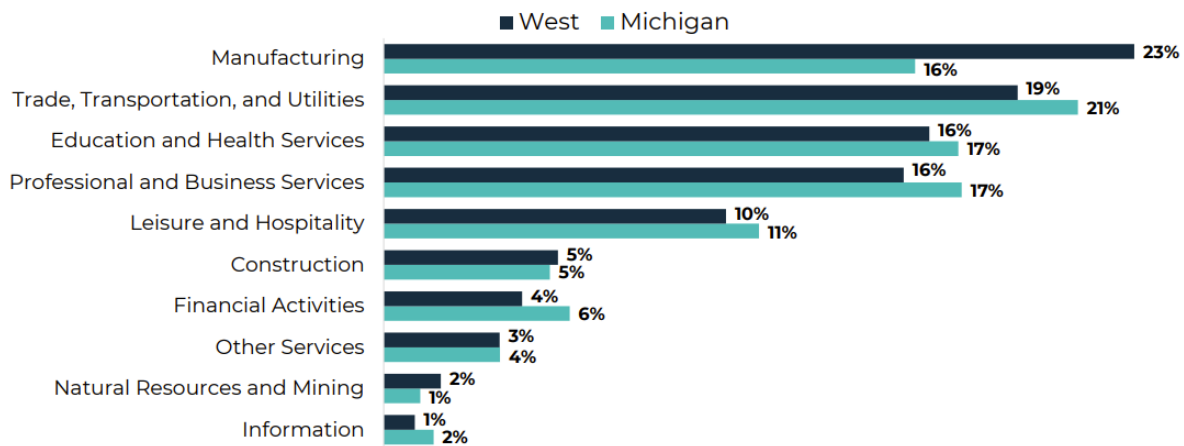


Current Labor Market information (LMI) for West Michigan, provided by the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics, shows that the population increased by 7.5% between 2012 and 2022, representing the highest population growth of all 16 MWAs. The jobless rate in West Michigan decreased by 3.6% since 2017, representing a rate lower than compared to the state and nationally.



Data on private sector job trends shows considerable growth in construction, other services, and leisure and hospitality in West Michigan from 2017-2023. The most notable growth is in other services, representing a 10.8% increase in West Michigan. Leisure and hospitality show a 9% increase, and education and health show a 4% increase. Manufacturing remains steady and information shows a slight decline. Overall, West Michigan shows a 4% increase in total employment, outpacing the state’s 2% increase.

### Distribution of Industry Jobs, Second Quarter 2023



According to the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics, manufacturing, trade, transportation and utilities, education and health services, and professional and business services represented nearly three-quarters of jobs in the West Michigan area.

Manufacturing continues to be the largest industry by volume and represents 23% of all occupations in West Michigan, outpacing the state by 7%. High-demand occupations within West Michigan's manufacturing industry include automotive, CNC programming and operation, food and other production, machinery manufacturing, and machine shops.

Occupations within the construction and transportation & material moving categories represented 8.5% of the total of all online job advertisements in West Michigan. High-demand occupations within West Michigan's construction industry include job titles such as carpenter, plumber, welder, electrician, roofer, landscaping and groundskeeping, civil engineer, heating and air mechanics and installers, and first line managers and laborers.

Occupations within the leisure and hospitality categories include food preparation and serving related, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, personal care and service and represent 11.2% of the total of all online job advertisements by major occupational category in West Michigan. High-demand occupations within West Michigan's leisure and hospitality industry include retail salespersons, first-line supervisors of retail sales workers, fast food and counter workers, janitors and cleaners, and customer service representatives.

Agribusiness, the business of agricultural production, can be identified throughout high-demand occupations in the construction, manufacturing, and information technology sectors. With its continuous growth, it is a recognized sector with high-demand occupations within West Michigan that include many cross-industry careers.

Occupational opportunities include maintenance mechanic, food processing and production, tractor trailer truck driver, first-line supervisors, computer and IT services, and general farm labor.

Jobs in Information technology span between several industries such as information and professional and business services. Additionally, jobs within high demand positions within the IT industry include software developer, web developer, information security analyst and computer user support.

High-demand occupations within West Michigan's healthcare industry include patient care assistants, medical surgical registered nurses, registered nurses, community health workers, phlebotomists, physical therapists, medical assistants, and other healthcare support workers.

These industries continue to remain steady or show regional growth, and West Michigan Works! continues focusing on growing the talent pipeline in these areas.

### Online Advertised Job Postings in the West MWA

Job Title	Postings
Registered Nurses	5,865
Retail Salespersons	5,387
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	4,155
Fast Food and Counter Workers	2,978
Sales Reps., Goods, Nontechnical	2,936
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,488
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Housekeepers	2,455
Customer Service Representatives	2,441
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	2,168
Food Service Managers	2,149

Source: Help Wanted OnLine, Lightcast Developer (Table 16)

In 2023, approximately 133,300 jobs were advertised online in West Michigan, according to Help Wanted OnLine, Lightcast Developer. The top job five advertisements were for registered nurses, retail salespersons, first-line

supervisors of retail sales workers, fast food and counter workers, and sales representatives, collectively representing over 15% of all advertisements in West Michigan.

- ***An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region and the region's capacity to provide the workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.***

Although West Michigan has experienced population increases, a steady decrease in unemployment rates prior to and following the Covid-19 pandemic, and slightly better than state averages in most of the workforce trends, it remains a region in need of intentional workforce development. Given that there are pockets of communities at high rates of poverty and unemployment, both geographically and across specific demographics, WMW is committed to removing barriers to equitable work and opportunities.

WMW is seeking ways to provide better, more relevant services to those currently utilizing the welfare reform or other workforce systems, provide one stop barrier removal services in coordination with existing and newly sought out community partners, analyzing WMW services to determine both access and outcomes across multiple demographics, better prepare individuals to attend various training opportunities, and finding ways to increase the labor force by re-engaging people with disabilities who are otherwise capable of working. Michigan Works! West Central and West Michigan Works! are relentlessly pursuing innovative and relevant solutions to these challenges through unique partnerships and resources to meet individual and employer needs.

Using sector strategies, the Region 4 Michigan Works! agencies continue to convene and connect to enhance the network of partners to meet the demands of the region's current employers as well as the emerging industry needs in order to achieve a skilled workforce.

Industry talent councils have been established within the region to help identify employer needs from an industry-wide perspective. These councils allow for the identification of best practices and shared strategies as well as increased articulation of what areas employers may need in workforce development assistance.

Key roles of each of the industry sector councils include:

- ***Information conduit:*** sharing trends and best practices affecting talent.
- ***Talent Initiatives:*** leading, supporting and promoting talent initiatives throughout West Michigan.
- ***Training Needs:*** sharing current training needs with educational partners to develop curriculum, create career pathways and nurture a supply chain of talent.
- ***Networking:*** promoting networking among employers, educators, workforce development and economic development professionals for the purpose of developing a skilled workforce.

Educating youth and enhanced outreach activities through partnerships allows for a better understanding of what the regional economy looks like and what career opportunities are in

existence post high school or following postsecondary education. Building the talent pipeline will increase the skilled talent pool and retain young people in our area. [MiCareerQuest](#), a region-wide, hands-on career exploration event for youth, Jobs for Michigan Graduates (JMG), and other youth-based work experience initiatives such as DTE Foundation and Young Professionals that provide additional resources to expand Summer Youth Work Experience Program are examples of current workforce development activities targeted at increasing the local labor force and addressing the education and skill gaps in our region.

West Michigan is also focused on identifying and advocating to provide more meaningful and efficient services to individuals with disabilities. These initiatives include addressing the infrastructure improvements needed to lessen the barriers brought by housing, transportation, and internet access as well as increasing the training and employment opportunities that are available to this population. Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is a core partner, and a representative is co-located within many of the service centers. In addition, West Michigan Works! has established relationships with the Michigan Bureau for Blind Services and Disabilities Advocates. These agencies are sharing resources and are at the table investigating ways to promote common intakes, assessments, and making direct connections to opportunities.

In rural areas or where public transportation is unavailable, support services, such as gas cards or auto repairs, may be provided to assist individuals with getting to and from workforce development activities including education and employment. Though the causes of transportation barriers are different, these barriers exist in both urban and rural areas of the region.

Adult education and literacy programs are made available through established and emerging partnerships with local providers. Some of the West Michigan Region 4 service centers provide instruction and testing onsite or through direct services. In areas that have expanded resources, community conversations and informational tours are taking place to increase awareness of workforce development services. In some communities, Michigan Works! staff conduct workshops and initiate career coaching as part of the educational curriculum.

Short-term occupational skills training and higher education opportunities are also available throughout the region and are funded with local WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth allocations for those who qualify, and WMW is committed to finding and using additional funding in order to best utilize our traditional funding to have a greater impact on our West Michigan communities. Region 4 works closely with training providers to ensure that the supported programs lead to an industry recognized credential and that the credential aligns with employer demand. Recent initiatives have also shown that training providers, including community colleges, are responsive to the development and delivery of a curriculum that directly addresses the skill gaps.

The geographic factors of Region 4 present the greatest weaknesses to both the rural communities and employers. Although some training opportunities are offered online, many are only available in the urban areas, making transportation a barrier that often discourages individuals from pursuing occupational skill training or higher education. Commuting patterns suggest that many people living in the rural areas are working in urban locations; however, there is still a large gap presented for both employers and residents when they are not able to obtain the skills needed to live and work in the same community. Efforts to better assess training needs and accessibility of training programs are being made in collaboration with the West Michigan Industry Talent Councils, Higher Education providers, Vocational Training partners, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Adult Education providers, Veterans Services, and other community organizations.

Work-based training is available and is a viable option that allows individuals to learn the skills that employers need without attending an occupational skill based or higher education training. Depending on the desired skill, the training type, and the length of the training, this may assist residents with employment opportunities that will require an education attainment of high school diploma through associate degree (approximately 80% of projected jobs). Work-based training can be funded with local WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth allocations, for those who qualify.

Work-based training opportunities include:

- ***On-the-job training***: intended to provide a participant with the knowledge and skills necessary for the full performance of the job. OJT is a critical tool that can help job seekers enter successful employment. The term “on-the-job training” means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:
  - Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job.
  - Provides reimbursement to the employer of typically 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training.
  - Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, considering the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.
- ***Pre-apprenticeship training***: designed to provide work experiences that can help participants obtain the skills needed to be placed into a registered apprenticeship.
- ***Registered apprenticeships***: designed to combine paid learning on-the-job and related technical and theoretical instruction in a skilled occupation. This training is an important component of the education and training services that the workforce system can provide to its participants and should be used as a strategy to train and employ job seekers. Registered apprenticeships offer job seekers immediate employment opportunities that usually pay higher wages and offer continued career growth. WMW is committed to creative solutions to increase the number and the diversity of those participating in apprenticeships.
- ***Incumbent worker training***: designed to assist employers with training current workers in specific circumstances to meet the needs of employers and increase the skill level of workers.

West Michigan Works! has built strong relationships with education providers at all levels to ensure that quality, high-demand trainings are accessible to individuals.

- ***A description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance as described in the WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.***

- ***A description of the local board's strategy to align local resources, required partners, and entities that carry out core programs to achieve the strategic vision and goals.***

West Michigan Works! is an employer-recognized model of high-quality service that convenes an aligned network of partners, cultivates a skilled workforce, and meets the needs of employers. This strategic vision includes goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce as well as aligning local resources with required partners to carry out core programs.

The West Michigan Works! strategic plan was developed in 2016, shortly after the organization was created through a merger of multiple Michigan Works! agencies to serve a seven-county region. The comprehensive process that resulted in the plan engaged numerous stakeholders, including board members and staff, community partners, education and training providers, economic development, employers, and job seekers. This input was incredibly valuable and ensured a strong plan that launched the newly formed entity, providing strategic direction and focus. After nearly four years and achieving many of the goals set forth in the plan, the plan was updated in the spring of 2020 with the most recent update being made in 2022, based on new conditions, and needs among partners and local communities. The revision process also engaged numerous stakeholders, through focus groups and surveys.

The agency's contracted One-Stop Operator (OSO) facilitated this process by evaluating the current conditions, collecting, and aggregating input, and identifying new strategic directions. The updated plan built on the successes of the previous four years, by leveraging the foundations laid by the board and staff, the vision, mission, values, and core competencies are unchanged; however, the goals and strategies are more targeted than before, reflecting the specific needs expressed by stakeholders during the input process.

This updated plan reflects the next phase of the organization's forward momentum, building on the progress made to date, and leveraging strengths and opportunities. All goals and strategies are inclusive to serving target populations such as youth and individuals with disabilities. For a list of previous goals and strategies, as well as an assessment of their progress, you can access the strategic plan on our website or [here](#)

#### *Goals and Strategies*

<b>Goal A:</b>	Foster widespread networks to collaboratively address workforce needs in the region.
<b>Goal B:</b>	Expand the local pipeline of work-ready talent to meet the needs of the workforce and of West Michigan employers.
<b>Goal C:</b>	Enhance capacity and increase resources by leveraging strengths, successes, and networks.
<b>Goal D:</b>	Improve engagement across the organization through strategic initiatives, professional development, and a solutions-driven culture.
<b>Goal E:</b>	Enable a culture that honors the worth and dignity of all people, where staff and customers have equitable access to opportunities.



### *Customer-Focused Strategies*

- 1) Engage local talent, especially youth, by providing work-based experiences that build occupational awareness and career pathways in the local economy. (A, B, D, E)
- 2) Increase connections with diverse talent through partnerships outreach efforts. (A, B, E)
- 3) Expand employability skills training services to new, targeted audiences across the region. (B, C, E)
- 4) Establish and expand services that provide solutions for retention of employees at West Michigan employers. (A, C, E)

### *System-Focused Strategies*

- 5) Advocate for systems and resources that lessen barriers to success for employers and underserved communities in West Michigan. (A, B, E)
- 6) Facilitate career pathways for the region's key industries in partnership with industry councils and postsecondary institutions. (A, C)
- 7) Enhance the positive reputation of West Michigan Works! through brand association with workforce resources and opportunities. (A, C, E)

### *Capacity-Building Strategies*

- 8) Develop mechanisms that enable the organization to capitalize on successful initiatives and pursue different sources of funding. (C, D)
- 9) Develop robust systems for professional development in support of a culture that emphasizes staff diversity and inclusion, training, and empowerment. (D, E)
- 10) Improve communication among staff departments in support of a culture that prioritizes team-based approaches and solutions-driven strategies. (D, E)

### *Accountability Strategies*

- 11) Engage board members in ongoing continuous improvement through subcommittees and workgroups that reinforce strategic priorities. (A, D, E)
- 12) Conduct annual reviews of service delivery models and execution to ensure equity, consistency, and quality at all West Michigan Works! Service Centers. (A, D, E)

- ***Expected performance levels may be used to evaluate outcomes until such time as formal performance goals are established.***

The negotiated performance goals for Program Years PY22 and PY23 are reflected below.

West Michigan Works!		
Performance Measure	PY22 MWA Proposed Target	PY23 MWA Proposed Target
<b>WIOA ADULT</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	87.0	87.0
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	85.4	85.4
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,255	\$7,255
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	83.4	83.4
Measurable Skill Gains	59.5	59.5
<b>WIOA DISLOCATED WORKER</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	85.8	85.8
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	85.1	85.1
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,888	\$8,888
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	82.5	82.5
Measurable Skill Gains	53.6	53.6
<b>WIOA YOUTH</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	78.6	78.6
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	79.0	79.0
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,718	\$3,718
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	62.1	62.1
Measurable Skill Gains	37.0	37.0
<b>WAGNER-PEYSER</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	72.2	72.2
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	71.8	71.8
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,568	\$6,568

**2. A description of the workforce development system in the local area including:**

- ***The programs that are included in that system.***

West Michigan Works! is part of the statewide Michigan Works! system and is the official workforce development agency in West Michigan, serving the employers and job seekers of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. The agency brings federal and state workforce programs to the region, leveraging and aligning resources for maximum impact, with the ultimate goal of preparing a skilled workforce that meets the needs of local businesses. The full picture of workforce development in West Michigan is much bigger than one agency. It operates as a system, incorporating a broad set of partners and stakeholders, including community-based organizations, education and training partners, and employer associations.



Within this system, job seekers and employers can connect to valued work force programs from an American Job Center that include:

- WIOA Title I Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
- Wagner-Peyser Act
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES)
- Migrant and Seasonal Worker Program
- Fidelity Bonding
- Adult Education and Literacy activities
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Older Worker services
- Veteran's services
- Employment and training activities including programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
- Unemployment Insurance Agency – registering for work
- Partnership, Accountability, Training and Hope (PATH), including Refugee programming
- Food Assistance Employment and Training Program (FAE&T)
- Prisoner Re-entry
- Job Corps
- Youth Build
- Telamon
- Industry Sector partners
- Business Services, including Rapid Response

West Michigan Works! directly delivers services for WIOA Title I, except for youth services in Kent County. Those services are provided through a hybrid of contracts by experienced community partners who hold expertise in working with young adults and WMW youth career coaches. Services that cannot be provided directly are offered through various partner agencies in the West Michigan Works! service area.

Services can be accessed by contacting or visiting one of the 10 locations (8 full One-Stop Service Centers and 1 affiliate site) throughout the seven-county region. Contact information, service center locations, and hours of operation can be found [here](#).

- ***A description of the local board's strategy to work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to provide service alignment (including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006).***

The delivery of core programs and the alignment with One-Stop partners is bridged by the One-Stop Operator (OSO). The OSO is charged with assisting WMW in the coordination of services from multiple partners to ensure both quality and efficiency are achieved. In areas where expansion of services is identified, the OSO will facilitate the connections among programs and partners so that services are integrated as much as possible and the customer experience is streamlined.

This coordination includes working closely with the intermediate school districts (ISDs) to strengthen the relationship with career technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. In addition to local partnerships, the Career and Educational and Advisory Council (CEAC) reviews and provides input on the ISD's career and technical education (CTE) plans.

As noted in the regional plan, organizations such as [Talent First](http://www.talent2025.org/) <http://www.talent2025.org/>, Adult Learning Partners of West Michigan (ALPWM), Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) [Offenders Success Program](#) and [The West Michigan Veteran Coalition](#) (WMVC) are also critical to ensuring that core services align with the broader needs of region 4.

Additionally, we have identified *Convening and Connecting* as a strategic core competency. Staff members across the organization have built partnerships and established relationships with partners in the workforce development ecosystem. WMW will continue to build on this competency using the following tactics:

- Act as a hub for connecting organizations across regional networks
- Continuously identify gaps and target resources accordingly
- Continue convening Industry Councils focused on the talent needs of employers
- Work with community colleges and other training organizations to create programs and pathways that meet employers' needs for their current and future workforce

### 3. A description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs will:

- *Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.*

West Michigan is also focused on identifying and expanding access to employment, training, education, and support services to eligible individuals, including those with disabilities.

These initiatives include addressing the infrastructure improvements needed to lessen the barriers brought by housing, transportation, and internet access, as well as increasing the training and employment opportunities that are available to this population. Based on the data within the 2024 Workforce Analysis Reports for West Michigan, race is a clear indicator of employment and earning opportunities and outcomes in West Michigan. Therefore, West Michigan is committed to ensuring access to services and opportunities for all people groups in the region. Efforts include structured training for West Michigan Works! staff around race, culture, and equity practices, partnerships with community-based organizations who work with targeted populations, training opportunities for West Michigan employers in equitable hiring practices, and continuous evaluation of our own service delivery practices.

Onsite certified nursing assistant (CNA) classes that target this population are in Kent, Muskegon, and Ottawa counties. These classes offer a longer learning time and include instruction from local training partners and work-ready instruction from a WMW talent development instructor (TDI).

Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is a core partner and co-located inside of many of the local Service Centers. In addition, WMW has established relationships with Michigan Bureau for Blind Services, Disabilities Advocates, Disability Connections, and agencies offering services for older workers.

Adult education and literacy programs are also accessible. Some of the service centers throughout the Region 4b area provide instruction and testing onsite in partnership with adult education providers. In areas that have expanded resources, community conversations and informational tours are taking place to increase awareness of workforce development services.

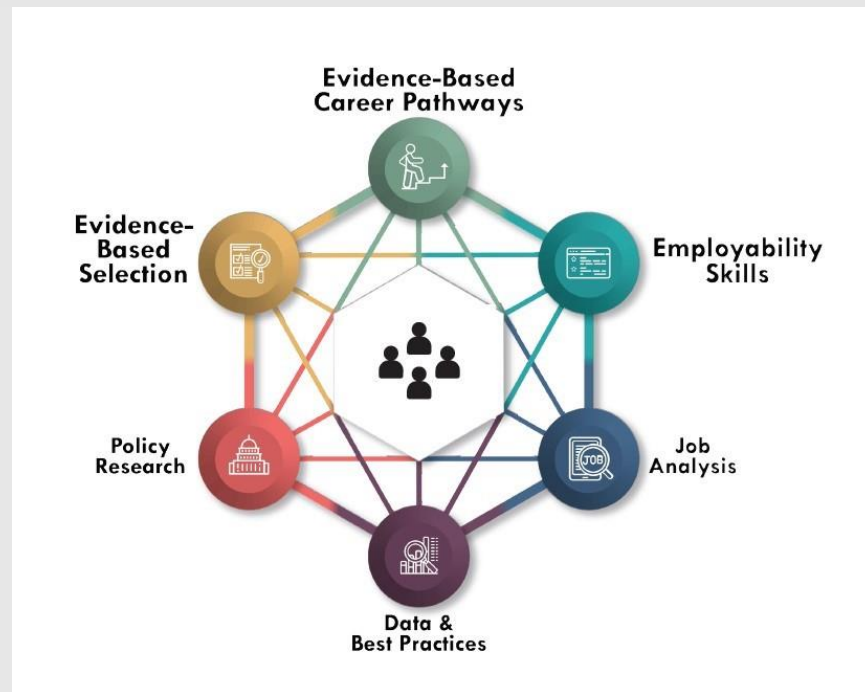
In some communities, Michigan Works! staff conduct workshops and initiate career coaching at the adult education provider location. Adult education services are currently provided in four of WMW's eight service centers. Short term occupational skills training, career technical training and higher education opportunities are also available throughout the region and are funded with local WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth allocations for those who qualify. Additionally, WMW has received grant awards to assist targeted populations with access to short term trainings leading to entry level positions in manufacturing and healthcare.

WMW works closely with training providers to ensure that the supported programs lead to an industry recognized credential and that the credential aligns with employer demand. Recent initiatives have also proved that training providers, including community colleges, are responsive to the development and delivery of a curriculum that directly addresses the skill gaps.

- *Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs.*
- *Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).*

WMW actively engages with local employers and training providers through the various committees and councils to develop career pathway options that promote career laddering opportunities in high demand industry sectors.

In 2019, WMW collaborated with the Talent Innovation Network of West Michigan (Talnet) to elevate workforce development efforts in the region from good to great. Talnet assisted with the integration of evidence-based career pathways into its six-prong approach. With committed stakeholders from employers, educators, public workforce agencies, economic development groups, and human service agencies across the 13-county region, we are collectively working towards a shared vision for success.



### Evidence-Based Career Pathways

Advance the use of the seven-step career pathways model by educational institutions, workforce agencies and employers to improve career coaching, career profiles and career navigation skills.

### Vision for Success

Our vision is to create a regional talent system where:

- Employers identify the competencies that are measurably related to job performance and align their internal systems to source, select, and develop talent based on these competencies. •  
Employers communicate their competency requirements to job seekers, talent suppliers, employees, parents, and students.
- Educational institutions and workforce agencies align their offerings to deliver the needed competencies.

- Students and job seekers have the skills and resources needed to make smart decisions about career choices and effectively represent their skills to targeted employers
- Policy and funding are aligned to support the above.

WMW continues to understand the needs of area employers, evaluate the variety, locations, and effectiveness of the trainings currently offered and with the support of all stakeholders, work together to improve the access to activities and training opportunities leading to a recognized post-secondary credentials.

WMW is dedicated to creating access to creative and innovative solutions to training and credentials, including work-based learning opportunities that are also tied to credentials and programs such as integrated education and training, allowing individuals to work on both a high school equivalency certificate and an industry-recognized credential. Strategies such as these meet individuals where they are and assist in solving real-life problems of needing to earn money immediately while continuing to further the training of the individual.

The lingering impact of the pandemic continues to bring challenges regarding the availability and access of needed training in our area. As this shift continues to evolve, WMW is committed to seeking innovative ways to assist job seekers with access by means of maximizing support services through dual enrollment into programs when appropriate and expanding allowable supports to include technology packages and internet access.

#### **4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:**

- ***Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs.***
- ***Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.***

As previously mentioned, West Michigan Works! facilitates the engagement of employers through the various Industry Councils. Through the leadership of a West Michigan Works! Industry Council Lead (ICL), we strive to meet the workforce development needs of area employers.

The ICLs are part of a more robust [West Michigan Works! business solutions team](#), serving as the primary liaison between the agency and employers offering a wide variety of services and resources available through the Michigan Works! system and pulling in workforce development, economic development, education, and other regional partners, as needed.

The WMW business solutions team also consists of various managers, business solutions representatives (BSRs), two apprenticeship success coordinators and a team of four project coordinators offering services to assist employers in hiring, training, and retaining talent through recruitment assistance, hiring events, building talent pipelines, work-based training and a rapid response system.

The Retention Solutions Network (RSN) at West Michigan Works! offers customized, timely, in-person support and training to member employers to keep employees on the job and businesses thriving. This network offers a deeper level of service to help employers minimized work disruptions, decrease

absenteeism, increased employee retention and engagement, provide insightful data on impact, train front line workers, supervisors, and managers, and share best practices among employer members.

WMW also supports local businesses by leveraging federal and state funding, as well as other grant opportunities to braid resources used to support training needs aimed at upskilling the current workforce.

Establishing industry talent councils in each of the high demand industries in the region has proven to be a great strength for West Michigan Works! stakeholders involved in the council provide real time feedback and strategy to move each industry forward.

Small businesses are represented by the industry councils and also supported on a one-on-one basis, ensuring that they can take advantage of the services that many larger businesses in the area are already participating in. West Michigan Works! relies on established industry talent councils to engage employers and help provide the capacity needs of the workforce system. Industry talent councils are employer led, and each council has representation from local small business owners, area employers, and established higher education providers. This diverse group of stakeholders allows the councils to identify the current employer demand and the skills needed to align those efforts.

West Michigan Works! focuses on the following six industry sectors: agribusiness, construction and energy, manufacturing, health care, information technology, and most recently, hospitality. Each of the industry sectors has formed an industry council to identify the needs of employers within the sector and meet those needs through creative and collaborative solutions.

Key roles of each of the industry talent councils include:

- Information conduit; sharing trends and best practices affecting talent.
- Talent Initiatives; leading, supporting and promoting talent initiatives throughout West Michigan.
- Training needs; sharing current training needs with educational partners to develop curriculum, create career pathways and nurture a supply chain of talent.
- Networking; promoting networking among employers, educators, workforce development and economic development professionals for the purpose of developing a skilled workforce.

### *Agribusiness*

In 2019, collaboration of West Michigan food processing and traditional agricultural companies led to the development of the [Agribusiness Talent Council](#). The council is dedicated to attracting talent, promoting the industry, and providing training and resources to employers. The Agribusiness Talent Council has expanded its reach through projects such as:

- Food safety and leadership training for specialty crop growers with [MDARD funding](#)
- Sharing best practices through the [Foods that built West Michigan](#) campaign
- Publicly held annual [Career Ag-xploration Events](#)
- A combined reading and agriculture month in-classroom activity in March, [Spotlight on Ag Readers](#)
- Quarterly inclusive hiring events, [Ag-Jobs-4-All](#), in partnership with area non-profits who serve opportunity populations



### Construction

The Construction Careers Council was formed in May 2021 with West Michigan Works! as the lead convener. It includes a collaborative of partners including workforce development, educators, and construction employers. Projects within CCC include:

- [CCC Traveling Roadshow](#) in-school activities connecting students with industry professionals
- [Women in Construction Week](#) raising awareness of and celebrating women leaders in the industry
- Before the Jobsite resume writing and mock interview tips for successfully securing a job offer
- MiCareerQuest

### Healthcare

The [West Michigan Health Careers Council](#) is building a pipeline of qualified health care talent for West Michigan. This collaborative of health care employers, educators, and workforce development offers opportunities to help solve health care talent needs. Collectively, they develop pools of qualified candidates, utilize proven assessment tools, create or engage in training programs, and open access to training funding streams. Recent projects of West Michigan Health Careers Council include:

- MiCareerQuest
- Family friendly [Career Fair Carnival](#) events where parents can apply and interview for current industry positions while their children enjoy no-cost carnival like activities.
- Mini-Medical School in partnership with Muskegon Area ISD, which showed 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students what a day in the life of a medical professional looked like.
- Work-based learning activity, showing high school students the progression of a traumatic injury patient through multiple health care disciplines treating their injury.
- Health Careers Expo, showcasing entry-level and other careers to high school students and their parents.

### Information Technology

[West Michigan Tech Talent](#) brings technology employers, educators, workforce development and economic development organizations together to grow, develop, and recruit a strong and diverse tech workforce for West Michigan. Some recent council projects include:

- MiCareerQuest
- {Mi} Code Initiative, reaching thousands of 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students across our seven-county region annually. In one hour, the students learn simple computer coding and create code of their own. . In 2019, the West Michigan Hour of Code initiative had over 80 volunteers from nearly 30 local IT employers, reaching nearly 3,000 3<sup>rd</sup>5<sup>th</sup> grade students across our seven-county region.
- Demystifying the Student Visa event, helping small businesses understand the process for hiring international students and breaking down barriers for these students to obtain internships required for graduation.
- Communicating as a Technologist one day training to help current professionals improve communication skills.
- Networking events, including a newly developed Tech Trails hiking event, offering opportunities for new and current tech employees to connect and learn best practices.

### Manufacturing

Region 4b is a key stakeholder in facilitating and maintaining the council that includes employers, community partners, and training providers who all share the mission on expanding talent throughout West Michigan. This work is accomplished through [Discover Manufacturing](#). Recent projects of the Discover Manufacturing council include:

- The expansion of West Michigan Manufacturing Week activities, reaching more than 12,000 students in 2023
- MiCareerQuest
- Earn and Learn directory, providing future professionals access to information on employers of choice in our region. Funds for being on the directory go directly to the scholarship program.
- Discover Manufacturing Scholarship Program awarding both high school seniors and non-traditional students up to \$1,000 to pursue education related to the industry

### *Hospitality*

In partnership with Experience Grand Rapids, West Michigan Works! is starting a new industry talent council focused on the hospitality industry. Initial employers operating in Kent County from five key subsectors of the industry, lodging, food and beverage, event management, transit, and recreation and entertainment, along with education and workforce development partners will identify the mission, vision, and strategies during the summer and early fall of 2024. After the strategies are identified, projects will be enacted to raise awareness of careers in this important industry in our region.

West Michigan Works! convenes an aligned network of partners, cultivates a skilled workforce, and meets the needs of employers. With the mission to lead workforce development strategy and resource alignment in West Michigan by understanding the talent needs of employers and employment needs of jobseekers and connecting them to solutions, the coordination between workforce programs and economic needs is imperative.

WMW has a strong partnership with all local economic development organizations. Representation from the Right Place, Muskegon Area First, Lakeshore Advantage, and the Barry County Economic Development Alliance serve on the WMW WDB, and WMW representatives serve on many of the economic development boards and committees. Additionally, our local economic development agencies and business solutions representatives actively work together to create solutions for area businesses.

- ***Strengthen linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and Unemployment Insurance programs.***

Michigan's Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) manages the unemployment insurance program which provides temporary income to workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own. The program is funded through unemployment taxes paid by employers.

Under normal circumstances, Michigan residents who apply for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits will also visit a local service center or call to schedule a virtual appointment to create a profile on the Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTC), which serves as the state's labor exchange system by connecting Michigan's job seekers and employers.

WMW frontline staff will view the claimant's online profile and then electronically transmit the claimant's validated registration using a shared electronic system. This data is then downloaded into the UI mainframe, where the registration date is posted to the claimant's UI record.

It is the entry of registration data that allows benefit payments. If a claimant enters his or her profile into the PMTC but fails to report in-person to a One-Stop service center, the UI system will not allow benefit payment, even though the claimant is registered for work.

West Michigan Works! and the UIA work closely together with a goal to assist individuals with employment reengagement. This collaboration includes ensuring that employment services are available to claimants including assistance with:

- Access to computers to file a claim, review information about their claim, see job opportunities in their area and check their UI "to do" list so they do not miss important deadlines.
- How to best use the PMTC to navigate through and provide valuable information on this site for job seekers and employers to assist in the many facets of career development and placement.
- Meet the work test requirements of the state unemployment compensation system by finding and applying for jobs.
- Processing waivers of work search for claimants who are enrolled in approved training or school.

To streamline the programmatic registration process, increase documentation accuracy and gain insight on the quality of education and training programs, the state has established a Confidential Agreement for Information with the UIA to allow the Michigan Works Agencies (MWA) access to wage record data and customer email addresses.

Additionally, all West Michigan Works! full-service centers have a designated phone and chat feature that gives claimants in the One-Stop Service Center priority when seeking assistance from a UI agent.

To promote a holistic understanding of the UI system, West Michigan Works! staff have been encouraged to job shadow agents and the UIA offices and UI agents have been encouraged to job shadow WMW frontline staff while assisting claimants in the Service Centers.

The region also has an established relationship with the state's Reemployment Analyst, allowing for more frequent information sharing and quick resolution for claimants who may be experiencing unique issues.

**5. A description of how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.**

WMW partners with regional and local economic developers to provide the best possible service to new and expanding companies and better understand the forecasted skills needed to fill job vacancies. When appropriate, the WMW Business Solutions Representative (BSR) and economic developers make joint calls to businesses to fact-find employer needs and possible solutions. West Michigan Works! business solutions team holds regular meetings with each of the local economic developers in our region. Additionally, representatives from the MEDC have presented at business solutions regional team meetings as a product knowledge presentation. On a regional level, WMW also works closely with TalentFirst to address the growing needs of the region.

In the space of workforce activities and regional economic development, it is recognized that there are some individuals who may be particularly well suited for entrepreneurial enterprises. Within the local One-Stop service center, efforts are made to ensure individuals are exposed to the appropriate resources. One of the first resources available to jobseekers is an Entrepreneurial Bootcamp offered at least 4 times per year through the One-Stop service center. This Bootcamp provides a two-day workshop

experience where jobseekers will leave with a business plan as well as referrals to small business resources around the region. For those who do not wish to engage in the Entrepreneurial Bootcamp, staff will offer resources, career coaching, career pathway planning and referrals to community partners, such as Grand Valley State University's Small Business Development Center.

**6. A description of the One-Stop delivery system in the local area, including:**

- ***How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers.***

West Michigan Works! delivers core workforce services directly, except for youth services in Kent County, which includes youth contracted services. This allows us to continuously evaluate, analyze, and improve effectiveness to ensure we are meeting the needs of the employers, workers, and job seekers.

In addition to professional staff development that includes opportunities for personal and professional growth, diversity awareness, career coaching techniques, business solutions professional (BSP) certificate, and leadership workshops, WMW is also committed to continuous improvement in developing community partnerships, understanding the needs of area employers, and providing better access to career and training services for job seekers.

Evaluation of effectiveness is accomplished through negotiated performance goals, programmatic monitoring, and internal quality and compliance reviews. Internal reviews take a holistic approach to identify possible areas of weakness in service delivery, staff training deficiencies, and best practices that can be shared across our region. When possible, demographics, educational attainment, and poverty levels are also studied.

Results and progress towards our strategic goals are provided to and reviewed by the workforce development board (WDB) and the governing board.

- ***How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.***

WMW has eight full One-Stop service centers and one affiliate sites within the seven-county region. Access to services is provided through the center either at the center or off site depending on the needs of the job seeker and or employer. Appointments may be made outside of regular business hours as deemed necessary. WMW has been creative in providing new ways of accessing services, including through video conferencing, space to participate in virtual employer events or interviews, prerecorded videos outlining information and workshops, telephone intakes, electronic documentation processes, and the provision of activities through a learning management system. WMW has updated supportive service policies to include the provision of technology to access services where necessary, and we have partnered in creative ways with existing structures that provide internet access to those who may live in outlying areas.

Additionally, WMW uses its network of partners to meet individuals where they are, both literally and figuratively, by identifying creative solutions to access. Information on how to access services and service locations can be found on our [website](#).

- ***How entities within the One-Stop delivery system, including One-Stop operators and the One-Stop partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of the WIOA (Section 188), if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 12101, et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.***

West Michigan Works! supports universal access to diverse customer needs that exist within the local delivery area, which includes the needs of individuals with disabilities, people of different cultures, and persons with barriers to employment. Where inclusion abounds, centers are welcoming, inviting, accommodating, and accessible to everyone. Reasonable accommodations are made including access to facilities, services, technology, and materials.

The WMW agency and the OSO comply with all regulations relating to non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and inclusion.

- ***A description of the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners.***

The roles and resource contribution of the One-Stop partners are outlined in memorandum of understandings (MOUs) that ensure coordination and delivery of services and establish joint procedures to enable all parties to be more fully integrated into the current service delivery system. These service provisions vary county by county; therefore, the county-specific MOUs are attached to this document.

#### **7. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.**

Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a program of training services includes a structured regimen that leads to specific outcomes. A program of training services is one or more courses or classes, or a structured regimen that leads to:

- An industry recognized certificate; a certificate of completion of a registered apprenticeship, a license recognized by the state involved or the federal government
- A post-secondary credential (an associate or baccalaureate degree)
- Consistent with 20 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 680.350, a secondary school diploma, or its equivalent
- Employment, or
- Measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment as described in (a) or (b).

Training services are available to eligible, registered WIOA participants who, after an interview, evaluation or assessment and career planning, are determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone.

WMW relies on annual labor market information (LMI) to identify in-demand occupations and the level of training needed for each one. This information is then vetted through the Industry Talent Councils to

confirm the accuracy of the data for our local area. WMW makes this information available to the public, including training partners, to help identify the need for new training options and methods of delivery.

Types of training offered for eligible adult, dislocated workers and youth include:

- On-the-Job training.
- Skill upgrading.
- Entrepreneurial training.
- ABE or ESL (contextualized or other) in conjunction with training.
- Customized training.
- Other occupational skills training.
- Registered apprenticeships.
- Other non-occupational skills training.

**8. A description of the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in 20 CFR Section 681.460 are to be made available within that framework.**

West Michigan Works! provides youth services across the seven-county region through a blend of direct and contracted programs. Direct, out-of-school youth (OSY) services are delivered by WMW staff in Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa. A hybrid approach of subcontractors and direct service staff deliver youth services in Kent County to out-of-school youth only. Youth are informed of the various program elements available within WIOA through the use of flyers and discussion with interested youth and partner agencies. Program elements accessed by the youth are determined based on assessments and the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) development with the youth. The fourteen elements are available, either provided directly by WMW or contracted youth career coaches or through referral to a partner organization. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or contracts are developed for elements that cannot be provided directly by WIOA staff.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)/Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) is the delivery curriculum and framework implemented for the direct service youth locations. Services are delivered within a seven-step CareerPoint, career coaching model. JMG competencies and events align well with the WIOA program elements and provides assessment of progress made with the youth towards career readiness. JAG/JMG was chosen as the WMW youth model for service delivery due to its success as a school-to-college/career program for at-risk, disadvantaged youth. Additionally, WMW has developed, with the input of youth, the Ascend branding which focuses on representing all youth initiatives within WMW. This branding represents the purpose of the youth program: a movement towards something better, growth, and moving forward with the youth's journey.

**9. A local definition of Part B of Basic Skills Deficiency, which reads "a youth who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society."**

The local definition of Part B of Basic Skills Deficiency can be found in the WMW *WIOA In- and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility Policy 15-03c3*, which states is a youth "who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at the level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society, as locally defined" with one or more of the following criteria:

- English is the individual's second language; or

- Has a social, mental, or physical impairment as documented by a physician or other qualified service provider; or
- Enrolled in remedial courses in post-secondary education; or
- Lacks the short-term pre-vocational skills (i.e., learning, communication, or computer literacy skills) an individual needs to prepare for unsubsidized employment or training, as documented by and in his/her comprehensive assessment; or
- On-the-Job training ONLY: if an individual possesses 50 percent or less of the skills required to do the job, as indicated by the training outline.

**10. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which shall include an identification of successful models of such activities.**

- *Further, local areas are to define “requires additional assistance” for In-School and Out-of-School Youth eligibility criterion in their Local Plan.*

Youth activities include both individualized and group offerings, as appropriate. The fourteen program elements are available and accessible through the youth service provider or through an identified community resource that offers the necessary service. Beyond the fourteen program elements, services also include eligibility and suitability determination, academic and occupational assessments, individual service strategy development with the youth, support services, incentives, and career coaching.

A variety of activities are available to help youth become employment ready. These include, but are not limited to, resume building, interview skills, workplace etiquette, job search assistance, job placement, paid and unpaid work experience (summer and year-round) and access to funding for industry recognized training and certification. Career guidance and education are provided online and in person; they include career exploration and assessments, labor market information, college and talent tours, assistance with FAFSA application and identifying other financial aid information and options.

WMW and partnering organizations host MiCareerQuest, a regional career exploration program serving over 8,000 students each year. MiCareerQuest provides employer-led, hands-on experiences for youth in various in-demand industries including healthcare, manufacturing, IT, construction, and agribusiness. Educational institutions help link the career and education elements. This event primarily targets in-school youth; however, WIOA-enrolled out-of-school youth from the region are also invited to participate in the event.

Academic services are provided through tutoring, time management, monitoring of academic progress and attendance, goal setting/career planning, decision making, mentoring, financial literacy, high school completion or GED preparation and testing. Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG) offers the curriculum and is the foundation of the direct, out-of-school youth program and services.

Reasonable and necessary accommodations are provided to youth with disabilities to ensure WIOA services and activities are available. Collaborative relationships exist in the region with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) to assist in coordinating programs, funding, and opportunities for disabled youth, when identified as a need. Attendance at the Michigan Career Technical Institute (MCTI) is also available to assist with credentialing, for those eligible.

WMW WIOA *In- and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility Policy 15-03c3* includes the approved criteria for determining youth who requires additional assistance. This policy is attached for reference of the fifteen “requires additional assistance” barriers and basic skills deficiency definition.

**11. Information regarding any waivers being utilized by the local area, in accordance with any Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity-Workforce Development (LEO-WD) communicated guidelines or requirements regarding the use of the waiver(s).**

West Michigan Works! has not requested any waivers.

**12. A description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.**

With the support of the Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) and the members of the ALPWM, West Michigan Works! continues to identify and implement opportunities to coordinate and enhance secondary and post-secondary education activities with workforce activities.

The CEAC of the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board (WDB) works to build and maintain a collaborative partnership with local school districts, employers, postsecondary institutions, training providers, career and technical education organizations and adult education providers. The CEAC advises the WDB regarding the educational portions of their WIOA local plan, coordinates with other entities in guiding career development programs and career pathways and collaborates with the ISD serving as the local State Section 107 fiscal agent and State Section 108, Section 61B fiscal agent to ensure alignment with programming.

With adult education providers and WMW aligning the use of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), the area can avoid duplication of eligibility and suitability requirements often imposed on the job seeker. The recognition of an evidence-based career coaching model and agreement on what it takes to prepare a skilled workforce is also instrumental in avoiding duplication of services and moving job seekers towards their career goals. Through community colleges, WMW, and several K-12 districts have agreed on an employability skills framework that will be taught throughout K-12, postsecondary, and the public workforce system. Additionally, WMW has close partnerships with the local ISDs and frequently coordinates workforce activities, including the offering of employability skills and job search workshops.

In areas where it is not feasible for secondary education providers to offer instruction in a One-Stop service center, WMW career coaches work alongside the provider to support the job seeker and remain focused on the goals identified as part of a developed Individual Employment Plan. This helps bridge the transition from secondary education to post-secondary education and increases credential attainment.

Integrated education and training (IET) opportunities are also emerging in West Michigan. This approach provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Although this level of collaboration can be more challenging, the area has successfully completed cohorts for truck driving (CDL A), certified nursing assistant (CNA) and corrections officer, and through Special 107 grants, welding, machining, and electronics training.

**13. A determination of whether the Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) has elected to provide supportive services and needs related payments. The MWAs that elect to provide supportive services to participants during program enrollment must describe the procedure to provide supportive**



**services. The procedure will include the conditions, amounts, duration, and documentation requirements for the provision of supportive services.**

Support services will be made available to enrolled individuals who demonstrate a need that directly correlates with participation, employment and training – and those in follow up (WIOA youth only). This need will be assessed by a career coach and documented on the participant’s Individual Service Strategy (ISS) or Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Needs Related Payments (NRP) may be available to those participating in an approved training activity, as allowed by the utilized funding stream. The parameters for eligibility, service conditions, amounts, duration and required documents are outlined in the *Support Services Policy 15-06c5* and subsequent changes.

**14. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.**

When possible, activities will be scheduled jointly with community partners or at the same location to minimize transportation barriers. Virtual offerings for enrollment, assessments and other service provision are currently available to help reduce transportation and barriers associated with public space capacities.

As part of the assessment process, a WMW career coach works with the individual to complete an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) or Individual Employment Plan (IEP). This employment plan identifies employment and training goals as well as barriers that might impact successfully achieving these goals.

Whenever possible, the WMW career coach will work directly with the individual to seek community resources deemed to aid in removing the barriers. If no other resources are available, and the support needs fall within the provisions of the local support service policy, such supports may be approved through WIOA.

**15. A description of the local per participant funding cap, if applicable.**

WMW has not established a per participant funding cap outside of the support service and Individual Training Account (ITA) service provisions. Support services are capped at \$1,000/rolling 12-month period and ITA’s are capped at \$5,000/year and \$10,000/24 months with no lifetime limit.

**16. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the One-Stop delivery system.**

West Michigan Works! feels that duplication of services does not align with a human centered approach and takes intentional measures to avoid duplication whenever possible. This includes duplication of referral, duplication of forms, and duplication of services provided.

Since WMW provides all Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services directly, a natural coordination of referrals into other WIOA and partner services occurs. Career coaches and career navigators are crossed-trained within the core programs and utilize the state One Stop Management Information System (OMSIS) to case note progress and access information or services previously provided to the job seeker. This also allows for dual enrollment into multiple programs when needed. Where possible, WMW staff is organized by function, rather than by program.

In cases where individuals are referred through a partner agency or are referred to a partner agency, the two agencies will convene to determine a strategy in the best interest of the jobseeker. In many cases, it's feasible to implement a direct referral process that allows us to share information using signed releases.

For individuals being referred to or from partner education providers that also offer career coaching, the progress made by the individual is recognized and the coaches can resume service delivery where the previous coach left off, thus meeting the job seeker where they are.

**17. A description of how the local area is planning to deliver employment services in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended by Title III of the WIOA. This description shall include:**

- ***The identification of a point of contact (name, address, phone number, email).***

Contact information: Tasha Evans

Director of Talent Solutions West

Michigan Works!

215 Straight Ave. Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Telephone: (616) 336-2070

Email: tevans@westmiworks.org

- ***Information regarding whether the MWA is providing employment services directly in the local area or if service providers are being used. If service providers are being used, please include the name of the provider, the type of entity, and whether or not the provider is a merit-based organization. For type of entity, please choose from the following: state governmental agency, local unit of government, special purpose unit of government, school district, intermediate school district, public community college, public university, or other.***

West Michigan works! provides employment services directly as a special purpose unit of government.

- ***A description of how Wagner-Peyser funded services will be provided at no cost to employers and job seekers.***

Access to services is provided at no cost to employers and job seekers by visiting a West Michigan Works! One-Stop service center or filiate sites or by accessing available services online. One-Stop service centers are equipped with ample computers, workstations, office space, webcams for virtual job fairs and hiring events, a resource kiosk, and other equipment commonly utilized for job search activities such as printers and fax machines. All One-Stop service centers also provide accessibility and reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses.

Additionally, services are often delivered onsite or remotely for rapid responses, worker benefit orientations (WBO), on-the-job training (OJT) follow-ups, individuals who are incarcerated, Job Corp students, and cohort style enrollment and trainings.

Recently, WMW has also responded to the economic impact of the pandemic by enhancing electronically accessible resources on our website, finding innovative ways to provide labor marker information (LMI), assessments, workshops, and other service options remotely.

- ***An explanation of how labor exchange services will be provided using the three tiers of services: self-services, facilitated services, and staff-assisted services.***
- ***A description of the manner in which career services are being delivered.***

Regardless of the service delivery method, WMW is committed to providing universal access to three levels of services for employers and job seekers:

#### *Self-Services:*

Any service that is provided to employers through an electronic resource or at a physical location in which there is little to no staff involvement; Any service that is provided to the job seeker through an electronic resource or at a physical location in which there is little to no staff involvement.

#### *Staff-Assisted Services:*

Assisting the employer in using any of the self-service tools, including:

- Assistance with navigating the Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC).
- Distributing and collecting job applications.

Assisting the job seeker in using any of the self-service tools, including:

- Assistance with navigating the PMTC and internet sites.
- Inputting information on the PMTC for job seekers.
- Printing and making copies of resume.
- Job search assistance.

#### *Individualized Staff-Assisted Services:*

A service that requires a significant amount of staff-time, including:

- Inputting job orders on the PMTC for employers.
- Completing a search of resumes that match the criteria of job orders for employers.
- Contacting job seekers, on behalf of the employers, for initial screenings prior to interviewing with the employer.
- Scheduling interviews for the employer.
- General services/assistance.
  - Assistance establishing eligibility for financial aid.
  - Initial assessment of skill levels and supportive service needs.
  - Provision of information and meaningful assistance filing for Unemployment Insurance (UI).
  - Job/training preparation.
  - Career counseling/guidance.
  - Job search assistance.

- Placement assistance.
- Placement assistance/referred to employment.

The level of career service needed will be determined jointly with a West Michigan Works! staff using fact finding techniques and probing questions. For job seekers, career navigators, Talent Development Specialists (TDS), and Talent Development Instructors (TDI), are available to assist at all service center locations. For employers, regional Business Solutions Representatives (BSR), Industry Council Leads (ICL), and an apprenticeship coordinator can assist on site or in any of the service center locations.

In some areas, partnerships with youth providers, local prisons, Job Corps, education providers using cohort style training, and disability advocates have also been established to provide all three levels of service to job seekers on site.

West Michigan works! has information about services and access to services available through our website.

WMW follows the protocols set for serving veterans through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), priority of service, and serving people with disabilities.

- ***A listing of how many staff at each site will be available to provide services.***

Staffing levels are based on the traffic patterns and unique needs of the local area. Although staff are typically assigned to one center, WMW also employs “floating” staff who are trained in delivering employment services (ES) and are equipped to provide seamless coverage for planned leave time and special events. The following listing includes the WMW career navigators, Talent Development Specialists (TDS), Talent Development Instructors (TDI) and the manager responsible for overseeing ES services.

**Designated Michigan Works! Service Center Offices:**

One-Stop Service Center Location	Staff Available
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<b>Allegan County</b>	Allegan Service Center 3255 122nd Ave. Suite 101 Allegan, MI 49010	6
<b>Barry County</b>	Hastings Service Center 130 E State St. Hastings, MI 49058	
<b>Kent County</b>	Grand Rapids Northwest Service Center 215 Straight NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504	8
	Grand Rapids Southeast Service Center 121 Martin Luther King Jr. St. S.E. Suite 120 Grand Rapids, MI 49507	11
<b>Kent county</b>	Rockford Service Center (Affiliate Site) 10075 Northland Dr NE Rockford, MI 49341	6
<b>Ionia county</b>	Ionia Service Center 603 W. Adams St. Ionia, MI 48846	
<b>Montcalm County</b>	Greenville Service Center 114 S Greenville W Dr. Greenville, MI 48838	
<b>Muskegon County</b>	Muskegon Service Center 316 Morris Ave Muskegon, MI 49440	9
<b>Ottawa County</b>	Holland Service Center 12331 James St., Suite 130 Holland, MI 49423	6
<b>Regional Floating Career Navigators (Job seeker services)</b>		4
<b>Regional Business Solutions (Employer services)</b>		28

- ***A description of how the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Work Test will be administered. This description must include an explanation of how the registration of UI claimants***

***will be conducted and how reporting claimant non-compliance with the “able, available, and seeking work” requirements will be managed.***

Registration of Unemployment Insurance (IU) claimants occurs after an individual applied for UI benefits. This process requires that the claimant visit a Michigan Works! One-Stop service center or schedule a virtual appointment to create a job seeker account or registration on the Pure Michigan Talent Connect, an online tool connecting job seekers to employers.

During this process, WMW frontline staff will administer the UI Work Test to help assure that UI claimants receive exposure to job opportunities and demonstrate that claimants are meeting the basic requirements for receiving UI benefits: “If they are able, available, seeking employment, and did not refuse any suitable employment.”

Noncompliant issues or reasons associated with a violation to the Work Test include:

- Not being able to work.
- Not being available to work.
- Not seeking work.
- Refusing offers of suitable work.

If it comes to the attention of a WMW staff that a UI claimant is in violation of the work test requirements, it will be reported through the non-compliance to UI through the Michigan Integrated Data Automated System (MiDAS).

- ***A description of how the Reemployment Service Eligibility Assessment requirements will be administered.***

Whenever possible, claimants who have been referred through RESEA and are within the local service area will receive a personal invitation via US mail or email as an introduction to the One-Stop service center. Claimants also receive a time sensitive notice form UI requiring them to make an appointment with a one-stop service center within 21 days.

Appointments are scheduled with enough time to deliver all required components to the claimant. WMW will be flexible in scheduling when time permits and honor any request to reschedule within the policy guidelines.

West Michigan Works! will be responsible for providing the following components and reemployment activities:

#### *Orientation to West Michigan Works! services (First RESEA Only)*

The orientation will provide an overview of services available through the Michigan Works! service centers. In addition, each RESEA participant will be provided with a packet of information related to job searching to take with them. This overview will include the following elements:

- What services/programs are offered through Michigan Works!.
- Workshops, job fairs and other scheduled events.
- Other partner services offered such as adult education, veterans services, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS).

- A description of and the benefits that the Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC) offers job seekers.
- How to use the PMTC in your job search including how do you find employers and how employers find you.
- Job search assistance including self-services, staff assisted services and individualized services
- Other job search methods and online web searches.
- Opportunity to explore career pathways through Pathfinder and other career pathway exploration methods.
- Information on classroom training, portable credentials, and work-based training such as on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities and apprenticeships.

#### *Confirmation of active Profile on Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC)*

For each RESEA participant, staff will verify their active profile status on PMTC. In addition, participants will be encouraged to complete the following resume sections:

- *Career status* is marked as “actively searching” and information entered is “viewable to employers.”
- All basic required resume components are completed.
- The *education* and *certificates* sections are completed.
- *Work Experience* information is entered for the most recent employer, preferably 10 years of employment history will be entered.

#### *UIA Eligibility Assessment using the UI Eligibility Review Guide*

West Michigan Works! staff will meet with claimants in a confidential location to complete the eligibility Assessment. Failure to seek or accept work will be reported as noted above.

#### *Review of Monthly Record of Work Search*

Michigan Works! is expected to review the claimant’s job search activities. Job search activities are reported by the job seeker directly through their individual MiWAM account. To complete this process, the job seeker will discuss the job search activities reported and a WMW staff will offer suggestions for improved job searching strategies.

#### *Develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS)*

The ISS prepared will list those services identified as needed, appropriate, and agreed to by the claimant, including job search, self-services, and training activities. Services offered to the claimant may be any of any combination and will be customized to the specific needs of the individual. The ISS will be used to assist in determining if a second appointment would be beneficial to the claimant and will be documented electronically in the OSMIS.

#### *Discuss specific Labor Market Information (LMI) with the claimant:*

Labor market and career information will be provided in a variety of ways. Assistance accessing or interpreting this information will be made available by skilled WMW staff. At a minimum, each participant will be provided current information from local Hot Jobs lists and encouraged to utilize the following websites:

- [www.milmi.org](http://www.milmi.org).
- [www.careeronestop.org/lmihome.asp](http://www.careeronestop.org/lmihome.asp).
- [www.mitalent.org](http://www.mitalent.org).

*Provision of at least 2 hours of Reemployment Services:*

In addition to the elements described above, services including the direct referral to participate in a variety of employment readiness workshops and continued employment follow-up will take place. These services will be monitored to ensure they meet the minimum required time provisions.

For some RESEA participants the ISS will indicate that more individualized career coaching, barrier removal, occupational training or on-the-job training is necessary. In these instances, the Employment Specialist (ES) staff will take the appropriate steps to refer the participant to the needed service and will follow up to determine if the RESEA participant has completed the entry process properly. In most cases this will mean a referral to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), or the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) programs also operated by West Michigan Works!

In other instances, re-employment will be the proper 'next step.' The Employment Specialist staff will work with West Michigan Works! Business Solutions Unit (BSU) to identify suitable employment opportunities. The participant will be referred to those job openings and whenever possible, follow-up will be done to determine if the participant is hired.

Success stories will be captured as often as possible and at a minimum, at least one success story will be submitted per quarter for reporting purposes.

- ***An explanation of how the MWA will participate in a system for clearing labor between the states by accepting and processing interstate and intrastate job orders as a component of the National Labor Exchange System.***

West Michigan Works! participates in the system for clearing labor between the states by accepting and processing interstate and intrastate job orders by providing access to the Pure Michigan Talent connect and receiving and routing certain job orders to designated Employment Services staff for proper processing.

- ***An explanation of how the MWA will ensure veterans will be provided access to the same employment services received by the general population. This explanation must include a description of the screening process the MWA uses to refer eligible veterans to Veteran Career Advisors for case management services and how priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses will be applied in the delivery of Wagner-Peyser funded services.***

All job seekers accessing the One-Stop service center for the first time "register" with West Michigan Works!. This process captures basic information and demographics to create an account that will allow them to visit the center by means of a self-check-in system for future visits.



As part of the registration process, veteran status is determined. If the job seeker has been identified as a veteran or eligible spouse, it is requested they complete a Veterans Career Advisor (VCA) questionnaire. This questionnaire helps determine referral eligibility for VCA services. If the veteran is eligible, the questionnaire is given to the VCA either in person or by means of email depending on the location of the veteran and the availability of the VCA.

Regardless of eligibility or participation with VCA, these individuals will receive priority of service to employment services offered through the one-stop.

Priorities include but are not limited to access to job postings on the PMTC one day prior to the public and next available access to job search tools such as computers and printers.

- ***An assurance that Migrant and Seasonal Workers (MSWs) will have equitable access to and receive the full range of employment services that are provided to non-MSW customers.***

Staff development opportunities, a West Michigan Works! designated point of contact, and internal monitoring ensures equitable access to services for MSW's.

- ***An explanation of the services and staffing the MWA will use to ensure that MSWs will be provided access to the same employment services, benefits, protections, counseling, testing, and job and training referral services received by the general population. This explanation shall include a description of the referral process to MSWs or other appropriate MWA staff.***

West Michigan Works! offer MSWs the full range of employment services, benefits, and protections, including counseling, testing, and job training referral that are provided to non-MSWs. The levels of services offered, and a listing of one-stop locations and staffing levels have been previously noted.

Should a MSW job seeker require a referral to or from one of the three State Agriculture Employment Specialist located within the One-Stop service area, the following process is implemented:

- Interested MSW job seekers who call or walk into the Service Center will have a WMW staff member review the appropriate H-2A job information.
- WMW will review job posting and required skills/experience required of the position to determine if the MSW job seeker qualifies for the position.
  - If the job seeker *does not* qualify for referral to the position, the MSW job seeker will be provided ES services and be referred to other open employment opportunities.
  - If the MSW job seeker *does* qualify for referral to the position, WMW will review all items on the 2524 Form for that job order found within the ETA 790 with the MSW job seeker.
  - Once the 2524 Form has been completed, it must be signed by the WMW staff member and the MSW job seeker.
- The qualified MSW job seeker will also be provided a copy of the ETA 790.
- Contact information for the MSW job seeker is then sent to the appropriate employer for employment consideration by the WMW Business Solutions staff member.

- ***A description of any other planned services or activities for which Wagner-Peyser funds will be utilized.***

Additional planned services or activities utilizing Wagner-Peyser funds include New American Navigator services and staff resources to administer employer assessments and job seeker work ready assessments.

**18. A description of any navigators being utilized in the local area to provide targeted support and resources to specific groups of individuals with barriers to employment.**

WMW also employs a fulltime New American Navigator whose primary responsibility is to assist this growing population navigate through the workforce system and help them connect to needed resources and agencies that can assist with barrier removal. Although this navigator is available for individual's accessing services throughout the region, the home office is in the Grand Rapids Southeast Service Center, the service center who serves the largest percentage of refugees.

Additionally, career navigators in all one-stop centers who are administering employment services are cross trained by the Department of Human and Health Services (DHHS) to aid in the navigation of MI Bridges, a system used by low-income families to access Medicaid, childcare assistance, food benefits, health insurance, and dental plans.

**19. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II.**

- ***This description shall include how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with the WIOA Sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and the WIOA Section 232.***

Partnerships with adult education and literacy services have been established throughout the seven county region. These partnerships will continue to strengthen through collaboration and shared goals aimed at increasing education opportunities and credential rates for Michigan residents. WMW has contracted with an Adult Education Coordinator to assist in the coordination of activities, identifying gaps in Adult Education needs, and help facilitate programs and relationships between the local One Stop offices and the Adult Ed providers located in each county.

In some areas, adult education providers conduct instruction to individuals in one of our One-Stop Service Centers and in other areas, WMW staff provide employment services in one of the many adult education facilities. When it is not feasible to deliver services utilizing shared space, referrals are made with intentional follow-up to ensure the continued success of the individual.

Review of the local title II applications is completed by two or more members of the WMW workforce development board using a rating system.

**20. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local One-Stop delivery system.**

- *This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11)) between the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) or other local entities described in WIOA Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than Section 112 or Part C of that Title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to Section 121(f)) in accordance with Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.*

West Michigan Works has MOUs in place that define the requirements for integration of and access to all services available within the local one stop delivery system. Please see MOUs attached.

**21. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds (Grant Recipient).**

Area Community Services Employment and Training Council (ACSET) is a Public Agency and the administrative and fiscal agent for WMW. It was initially established under an interlocal Agreement between Kent County, and the City of Grand Rapids dated September 23, 1985. ACSET is a separate legal entity and a public body incorporated under Section seven of the Urban Cooperation Act (UCA). Currently ACSET is the Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) for seven counties and is governed by a board consisting of representatives from those seven county Commission Boards, as well as the City of Grand Rapids Commission Board.

The WMW Workforce Development Board (WDB) consists of 35 members, which includes representation from the seven counties in Region 4b. Membership includes sector categories, including: Business, Adult Education, Economic Development, Community Based, Higher Education, Vocational Rehab, and Labor Training, Organized Labor and Public Assistance.

**22. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for the WIOA Title I activities.**

Sub-grants and contracts are awarded through a request for proposal (RFP) process. The RFP is released on the WMW website, through media outlets, and notification is mailed to current contractors, community partners and other identified potential bidders. The RFP is not released in advance of the scheduled date. A review committee is selected to review proposals, and may include community partners, Workforce Development Board (WDB) members and administrative staff. Proposals are reviewed and rated on a competitive basis according to the criteria stated in the RFP. Sub-recipients selected for funding will be approved in the manner required by WIOA or subsequent legislation.

**23. The local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO(s) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under the WIOA Title I Subtitle B, and the One-Stop delivery system in the local area.**

Local boards are not required to provide or negotiate performance levels for those measures designated by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) as baseline measures as described in Section II.

WIOA Performance measures were negotiated in Program Year 22/23 and agreed upon. Please refer to the chart provided in question #1.

**24. A description of the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board. For this section local boards shall include:**

- ***Effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the local board will implement to assess their One-Stop centers.***

Through the guidance of the One Stop operator and Strategic Policy Consultants, WMW has developed and updated a strategic plan report that engaged numerous stakeholders, including board members and staff, community partners, education and training providers, economic development, employers, and job seekers.

As outlined in the strategic plan, specific goals identified to be in alignment with West Michigan Works! vision, mission, values, and core competencies are as follows:

- Foster widespread networks to collaboratively address workforce needs in the region.
- Expand the local pipeline of work-ready talent to meet the needs of the workforce and of West Michigan employers.
- Enhance capacity and increase resources by leveraging strengths, successes, and networks.
- Improve engagement across the organization through strategic initiatives, professional development, and a solutions-driven culture.
- Enable a culture that honors the worth and dignity of all people, where staff and customers have equitable access to services and opportunities.

Strategies to achieve these goals have been defined to include customer focused, system focused, capacity building and accountability. Progress, effectiveness and continues improvements are analyzed and updated annually. The most recent West Michigan Works! Strategic Plan Report can be found [here](http://www.westmiworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Report-WMW-Strategic-Plan-Update-2020.pdf)

- ***A description of how the local board will allocate One-Stop center infrastructure funds.***

Funding for the basic infrastructure of the Workforce Service Centers is based on the overhead and fixed costs of each one-stop service center and in consideration of local and partner funding. These are the basic costs of the physical locations and services. Each partner will annually confirm and agree to the number of FTEs providing services in the One-Stop. The FTE number will be utilized in the IFA to determine each parties' share of the One-Stop cost.

- ***A description of the roles and contributions of One-Stop partners, including cost allocation.***

As previously mentioned, the roles and resource contribution of the one-stop partners are outlined in MOUs that ensure coordination and delivery of services and establish joint procedures to enable all parties to be more fully integrated into the current service delivery system. Please see the attached MOUs.

**25. A description of how training services outlined in the WIOA Section 134 (Adult and Dislocated Worker) will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including Talent :**

- ***If contracts for training services will be used.***
- ***Coordination between training service contracts and individual training accounts.***

Training funds will be referred to as scholarships, and approvals will be made based on local in demand occupations, giving priority of services to veterans and qualified spouses, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals who are low income and youth residing in a high poverty area. Ideally, individuals will have a high school diploma or GED and are both eligible and suitable for training.

WMW does not use a per provider training contract in addition to an Individual Training Account (ITA); however, approved providers must meet the eligibility criteria and performance standards of the Michigan Training Connect (MiTC) to be considered for training services.

When an individual is issued a training scholarship, the training provider is emailed a copy of the approved ITA. This receipt serves as the confirmation of training classes and funding levels approved by WMW. The ITA also includes the release of information to facilitate ongoing communication between the provider and WMW should that be necessary for the overall success of the individual.

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

Individuals in need of skill upgrading or other training services will have access to the state and local Labor Market Information (LMI) through various websites and printed materials available in all WMW One-Stop Service Centers. Additionally, service center staff will assist individuals in identifying high demand employment opportunities and the skill or credential requirements needed to obtain available positions.

Local area training providers who are eligible to receive ITA training funds can be found on the MiTC site. Participating training providers are required to disclose a description of the offered program, contact information, admission requirements, program duration and cost, training format, credential earned as well as post completion placement rates and median earnings.

Using an identified career coaching model, qualified career coaches will assist eligible WIOA individuals in navigating through career pathway planning, identifying skill gaps, career exploration, high demand training program options, training provider requirements, FAFSA, and placement rates but will not endorse or recommend one training provider over another.

**26. A description of the process used by the local board, consistent with Section III, to provide a 30day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into development of the Local Plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, labor organizations, and education.**

West Michigan Works! partners, including job seekers, state agents, economic development organizations, education providers, employers, industry councils, and community-based organizations have worked collaboratively with WMW to identify, develop, and implement the content included in this plan. This work has and will continue to influence inclusive service delivery strategies that address the needs of our changing economy.

WMW will notify the public through newspapers and online platforms that a draft of this plan is available for a 30 day public comment review, and public comments will be accepted directly through the WMW website. Printed copies of the plan will be provided upon request. All comments will be encouraged and taken into consideration.

Following the review period, an electronic version of this plan will be available on the WMW website.

**27. A description of how One-Stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under the WIOA and by One-Stop partners.**

The local board will continue to use the One-Stop Information Management System (OSMIS) or its successor, Information Management Performance And Customer Tracking (IMPACT) as the primary means of case management. Although there is no system currently in place that would allow for the integrated tracking across One-Stop partners, awareness of eligibility and tracking systems are being shared in an effort to reduce the duplication of services.

WMW is committed to sharing our intake process with partners and has offered the same career coach training it provides staff to partners in an effort to reduce differences in approaches to career coaching, forms used, and internal processes.

**28. A description of the local priority of service requirements.**

Per the *Priority of Service Policy 16-06c1*, priority of service will be given to eligible recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and/or individuals who are basic skills deficient when receiving individualized career and training services who qualify for WIOA Adult funding. Veterans and eligible spouses as well as individuals with disabilities and individuals living in a high poverty area will also be given priority of services. Please see attached. WMW will make intentional efforts to reach the priority of service population and make individualized career and training services available. Funding levels for these services will be monitored and individuals eligible under this priority will be given career services and training approvals before all other eligible individuals.

- Low income will be defined as individuals who received income for a six-month period that does not exceed the higher level of the poverty line or 70% of the Lower Living Standards Income Level (LLSIL).
- Basic Skills deficiency will be assessed through the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS).

- High-poverty area will be defined as a Census tract; a set of contiguous Census tracts; Indian Reservation, tribal land, or Native Alaskan Village; or a county that has a poverty rate of at least 25% as set every five years using American Community Survey five-year data.
- WMW will focus on intentional outreach targeting these groups including the enhancement of partnerships with community partners and organizations who are providing services to these individuals.

**29. A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response (RR) activities.**

Rapid Response is designed to provide an entry point into the workforce system for both dislocated workers and employers. This is a component of a demand-driven system. WMW has an identified lead staff person who is responsible for the coordination of Rapid Response partners and the execution of services. Notifications of a WARN or mass layoff are promptly communicated with LEO, as well as coordinated meeting times and dates. The Rapid Response includes a UIA presentation and a Michigan Works! orientation.

**30. A description of RR activities.**

The RR activities encompass activities necessary to plan and deliver services to dislocated workers to facilitate a relatively quick and unencumbered transition to employment or training, following either a permanent closure or mass layoff or a natural (or other) disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation. The state is responsible for providing RR activities.

The state staff is assigned a geographic territory with the responsibility for the coordination of RR activities between the state and the local area. A Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notice typically activates the RR intervention in plant closings and mass layoffs. The WARN Act requires employers with more than 100 employees to provide at least 60 days advance notice of a covered plant closing or mass layoff at a site where the plant closing/mass layoff will affect at least one third of the workforce and a minimum of 50 employees.

The state monitors media reports and uses a network of local contacts, such as the MWAs, state and local economic development officials, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, union officials, United Way, and other partners to identify plant closings or layoffs.

- Services included as part of the RR process include:
  - a) Initial RR meeting with the company and union officers (if applicable).
  - b) Worker orientation meetings for employees. These meetings include presentations by MWA service providers and provide information on employment services; WIOA funded career services (basic and individualized) and training services; special population services (Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Veterans' services), and local/community services (United Way, local community colleges, credit union counseling, etc.). Collaboration with other state agencies (e.g., Office of Retirement Services, Friend of the Court) are planned as needed.

Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency representatives may also participate in worker orientation meetings and provide information on how to file/claim unemployment insurance benefits. Establishment and organization of a Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC). A JAC is an ad hoc group of workers and managers who organize to provide adjustment services on behalf of the employees who are about to lose their jobs due to a plant closure or a mass layoff. The purpose of a JAC is to help displaced workers make a successful transition to a satisfactory job or training in the shortest possible time (reference Policy Issuance (PI) 06-12, "Establishment of Labor Management Committees, also known as JACs at Sites of Facility Closures and Mass Layoffs," issued September 26, 2006).

- c) Layoff Aversion IWT, which includes an assessment of the potential for averting layoffs in consultation with the state or local economic development agencies, including private sector economic development entities and other key partners, up to a year in advance of an actual or potential dislocation event. Special attention and reference should be given to the timeframes and activities charted in the USDOL Training Employment Notice (TEN) 9-12. An IWT is the actual employment and training instrument to upgrade and alter skills to maintain employment or transition to similar employment, a preventative measure, to save jobs, increase economic productivity, and decrease the negative impacts of unemployment. Reference the USDOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 30-09, the USDOL TEN 9-12, and the PI 12-02.
- d) State Adjustment Grants (SAGs) are additional increments to a local area's Dislocated Worker formula funding award to meet documented funding deficits. The MWAs may request additional funding for a single or multiple dislocation event(s) via a SAG, following the application process outlined in the SAG PI 12-32. The process includes review of the application and supporting documents and negotiation with the MWA to finalize the award. The WD reserves the right to award SAGs with specific terms and conditions, including demonstration that the SAG aligns with the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach, an obligation to spend all or part of the SAG by the end of the Program Year (PY) in which it was granted, or other time period as determined by the WD.
- e) National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs) are another form of assistance provided to dislocated workers. The NDWGs are discretionary grants awarded by the Secretary of Labor to provide employment-related services for dislocated workers in specific circumstances. The WD and local MWAs work together to develop the application and project design for an NDWG, in response to a specific dislocation event.
- f) The MWAs shall develop a policy describing how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with the aforementioned statewide RR activities provided by the WD to address actual or potential dislocation events, in accordance with the WIOA, Section 134(2)(A) and 20 CFR 682.300 to 682.330. In addition to the general RR elements listed under the subsections above, the policy must include, but is not limited to the following actions:
  - i. A listing of the name of the person, title, mailing address, email address, and telephone number primarily responsible for (1) JACs, (2) SAGs, and (3) NDWGs.



- ii. The steps taken to include layoff aversion as a component of RR, whether realized as a policy or a set of procedures in conformity with the USDOL TEGL 30-09, the USDOL TEN 9-12, and the PI 12-02.
- iii. A description of the coordination of layoff aversion with IWT.
- iv. A description of the MWA's role in the function of JACs.
- v. A description of the local circumstances which would activate a request for a SAG (for example, specific level or percent of local dislocated worker formula funding expended, obligated and/or unobligated; specific level or percent of local and/or regional unemployment; the size of an actual or potential dislocation event; the time period between local dislocation events, etc.).

WMW staff works closely with LEO to coordinate Rapid Response activities necessary to plan and deliver services to dislocated workers in order to facilitate a relatively quick and unencumbered transition to employment or training, following an announcement or notification of a permanent closure or layoff, regardless of the number of workers affected, or a natural (or other) disaster resulting in job dislocation.

In accordance with the WIOA section 134 (a)(2)(A) and 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 682.300 to 682.370, WMW will coordinate, arrange, and provide services as part of Rapid Response (see attached). Steps include:

- Notification of potential events includes notifying LEO of closures or layoffs and coordinating the presence and involvement of local agencies.
- Research and strategy meeting, leading to an initial employer meeting.
- Coordinate the development of an approved plan with employer, LEO and local agencies.
- Rapid Response worker orientation sessions.
- Dislocated Worker surveys.
- Workforce Transition Committees or Joint Adjustment Committees (JACs).
- Peer-to-Peer Assistance, Transition Centers, Job/Career/Education Fairs
- Workshops, including job-seeking skills, resume writing, interviewing, basic computer literacy classes, other computer classes, and remedial education
- Transition to local One-Stop services
- Post-Rapid Response follow-up with employer

WMW has developed a worker orientation presentation outline so that information provided through worker orientation sessions is consistent across our region. During these sessions, subject matter experts address topics that are pertinent to affected workers.

If an employer is unable to hold a Rapid Response or worker orientation in person, WMW offers these meetings virtually. All parties involved (including the employer, LEO, UIA, and relevant community services) meet through a virtual meeting platform and electronic documents are shared. If an employer

does not wish to hold any virtual worker orientation sessions, WMW sends electronic documents that include UIA information to be shared with workers.

The business solutions unit of WMW will be primarily responsible for the MWA role in the JAC applying for State Adjustment Grants (SAG) or National Emergency Grants (NEG).

*Contact information:*

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As part of the research and initial meetings with the employer, layoff aversion will be one of the first topics discussed. A fact-finding discussion with the employer will be conducted to determine if training assistance could be helpful and likely to avert layoffs. This option is often appropriate early in the employer's decision-making process. West Michigan Works! works with the employer, LEO, and local agencies (if and when appropriate) to determine if other activities or assistance could be undertaken to accomplish layoff aversion.

If training can assist in averting layoffs, an Incumbent Worker application will be initiated. Fact finding will occur with the employer to determine the type of training necessary for workers who are at risk of being laid off. These efforts will be coordinated by West Michigan Works! in conjunction with the company and any training providers that may be involved. WMW's Rapid Response process is integrated with our *Work Based Training Policy 18-06*.

West Michigan Works! will assist and facilitate, in collaboration with LEO, the workers and company's establishment of a JAC. West Michigan Works! will assist the workers in seeking out candidates to staff and facilitate the JAC, and to participate as support. The JAC is the worker's organization, so all assistance would be to provide information and choices, not to direct or run the JAC.

State Action Grant (SAG) request would be activated when the number of potential laid off workers is significant and existing funding is not likely to handle the request for services without impeding the operation of the Dislocated Worker program elsewhere in the area. Additionally, if the employer request is outside of West Michigan Works! realm of expertise (such as stress or financial counseling) SAG may be requested.



## Eligibility Policy 15-03c2

<b>Title:</b>	WMW 15-03c2 Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) In and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>4-22-2019</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>	West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board on 4-8-2019 ACSET Governing Board on 4-22-2019
<b>Program(s) Affected:</b>	This policy applies to individuals seeking eligibility to participate in the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth programs
<b>Scope:</b>	WIOA Youth programs
<b>Supersedes:</b>	WMW 15-03c1
<b>References:</b>	WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B & C); WIOA Rules, 20 CFR 681.300; WIOA Manual
<b>Policy:</b>	<p>Provisions of career or training services for all WIOA programs is dependent upon the individual's ability to prove authorization to work in the United States. Any individual who cannot demonstrate authorization to work will not be eligible for program enrollment, career or training services and will be referred to appropriate agencies. Efforts to determine authorization to work and/or refer customers to appropriate agencies or offices to assist will be coordinated with Migrant Services. All individuals, regardless of authorization to work, are able to receive self-services through West Michigan Works! service centers.</p> <p><b>A. In-School Youth</b></p> <p>An eligible in-school youth is defined, under WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C), as an individual who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is age 14-21 (or through the age of 25 with a disability) <b>and</b></li> <li>2. Attending a school (as defined by state law) <b>and</b></li> <li>3. A low-income individual <b>and</b></li> <li>4. Has one or more of the following barriers             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A homeless individual, including runaways</li> <li>b. An offender</li> <li>c. A foster care youth including a youth who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

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## WMW 15-03c2 WIOA In and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility

for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under Section 477 of the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement

- d. Pregnant or parenting youth
- e. Basic skills deficient
- f. A youth who is an individual with a disability
- g. An English language learner
- h. Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

Note: youth who are homeschooled, in alternative education or virtual learners are in-school youth.

### **B. Out-of-School Youth**

An eligible out-of-school youth is defined, under WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B), as an individual who:

- 1. Is age 16-24 **and**
- 2. Not attending any school (as defined by state law) **and**
- 3. Has one or more of the following barriers
  - a. A recipient of a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner
  - b. A school dropout (age 18+ or 16+ with parent consent)
  - c. A homeless individual, including runaways
  - d. A youth within the age of compulsory (required by law) school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent completed school year calendar quarter
  - e. An offender
  - f. A foster care youth including a youth who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under Section 477 of the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement

## WMW 15-03c2 WIOA In and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility

- g. Pregnant or parenting youth
- h. A youth who is an individual with a disability
- i. A low-income youth who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

**C. Requires Additional Assistance**

Definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure or hold employment” criterion must be established at the local level. The West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board definition for Youth Who Require Additional Assistance includes the following:

1. GPA less than 2.0 in secondary or post-secondary education
2. Dropping out of post-secondary education
3. Fired from one or more employers (for any reason, including attendance)
4. No employment history
5. An employment history of less than six months for one employer
6. Member of a single parent household
7. Gang affiliation
8. High absenteeism rate from school
9. Responsible for care of siblings or other family members
10. Recreational or addictive use of drugs or alcohol
11. In need of credit recovery
12. Living in rural areas lacking adequate transportation to employment
13. Received an Individual Education Plan (IEP), an accommodation under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (also called a “504 Plan”), or an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) through Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)
14. Child of an incarcerated parent

## WMW 15-03c2 WIOA In and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility

## 15. Victim of human trafficking

**D. Five Percent Allowances**

WIOA allows a five percent enrollment exception under two situations:

- Per section 681.250 of the Federal Register, WIOA allows a low income exception where five percent of WIOA youth may be participants who ordinarily would be required to be low-income for eligibility purposes and meet all other eligibility criteria for WIOA except the low-income requirement.
- Per 681.310 (b) of the Federal Register, not more than five percent of the in-school youth newly enrolled in a given program year may be eligible based only on the “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment” condition.

Both exceptions require the MWA to calculate the five percent exception based on new enrollees for the program year rather than the total caseload. Due to the limited number eligible for the five percent allowance, the MWA reserves the 5% exception determination within the administrative operations. Contractors and direct service youth staff must not enroll youth using either of the five percent exception criteria.

**E. Other Responsible Adult**

For purposes of authorizing a minor to participate in the WIOA programs, the signature of a parent, guardian or other responsible adult is required. Local areas may define “other responsible adult” in order to enroll minors with the authorization of individuals other than a parent or legal guardian.

Other responsible adults shall include the following:

- A relative with whom the individual resides;
- An adult who has been delegated custodial or administrative responsibilities in writing, either temporarily or permanently, by a parent or by an appropriate agency;
- An agency or organization representative who is in a position to know the individual’s circumstances (i.e. clergy, school teacher, probation or other officer of the court or foster parent);

WMW 15-03c2 WIOA In and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility

- A representative of an agency which provided services to the individual and who is aware of the individual's circumstances (i.e. social worker, homeless shelter official, child protective worker, foster worker, or health clinic official).

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## Attachment A: Definitions

**Attending School:** An individual attending any secondary school, home school, alternative education, virtual learning or credit bearing post-secondary education. This includes full or part-time and those who are between school terms and intend on returning to school.

**Not Attending School:** An individual not attending secondary education or credit bearing post-secondary education. An individual attending adult education under title II of WIOA, YouthBuild, Job Corps, high school equivalency or dropout re-engagement programs or those attending non-credit bearing classes are not considered attending school.

**Low-Income Individual:** A low-income individual must meet one of the following conditions -

- a) Is receiving or is a member of a family that receives, or was determined eligible to receive incomebased public support within the prior six months;
  - a. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
  - b. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  - c. Refugee Assistance
  - d. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - e. Food Assistance Program (FAP)
- b) A member of a family that lives at 100% or less of the poverty threshold or at 70% or less of the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL)
- c) Receives or is eligible to receive free, or reduced lunch
- d) Qualifies as a homeless individual
- e) Is a foster youth
- f) An individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirement of the poverty level  
(item b above), but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement g)
- Living in a high poverty area

**School Dropout:** An individual who is no longer attending secondary school and who has not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. The term “school dropout” does not refer to individuals who have dropped out of post-secondary education.

**Homeless Individual:** A homeless individual is defined as an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, adequate night time residence; and any individual –

- Who has a primary night time residence that is a publicly or a privately operated shelter for temporary accommodation;

- An institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; **OR**
- A public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Offender: An offender is an individual who is an adult or juvenile –

- a) Who is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process, and for whom services under this Act may be beneficial; or
- b) Who requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction

Runaway: A runaway youth is defined as an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, adequate night time residence; and any individual -

- Who has a primary night time residence that is a publicly or a privately operated shelter for temporary accommodation;
- An institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; **OR**
- A public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

In Foster Care or Aged Out of Foster Care: Foster care means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes. A child in foster care is in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the State or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption, or whether there is federal matching payments that are being made.

Pregnant or Parenting Youth: A pregnant or parenting youth is an individual who is between the ages of 14 and 24 years of age and pregnant, or a male or female youth who is providing custodial care for one or more dependent children under the age of 18.

Basic Skills Deficient: Basic skills deficient is defined as an individual –

- a) Who is a youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- b) Who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at the level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society, as locally defined with one or more of the following criteria:
  - English is the individual's second language; or
  - Has a social, mental or physical impairment as documented by a physician or other qualified service provider; or
  - Enrolled in remedial courses in post-secondary education; or

- Lacks the short-term pre-vocational skills (i.e. learning, communication or computer literacy skills) an individual needs to prepare for unsubsidized employment or training, as documented by and in his/her comprehensive assessment; or
- **On-the-Job Training ONLY:** if an individual possesses 50% or less of the skills required to do the job, as indicated by the training outline.

Family: The term “family” means two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, who are living in a single residence, and are included in one or more of the following categories:

- A married couple and dependent children
- A parent or guardian and dependent children • A married couple

Income: For registration eligibility purposes, income is divided into included income and non-included income.

*Included Income:*

Includes all income *actually received* by the members of the applicant’s family during the income determination period six months prior to application. Only the income for individuals included in the applicant’s family size is considered when determining family income. In addition, the income of these family members is only to be counted during the periods persons are actually members of the applicant's family unit.

\* Included income is income *actually received* by the participant, meaning they have actually received a check stub for hours worked. If an applicant has worked, but has *not* yet received payment, this will **not** be factored as income.

*Included income:*

1. Gross Wages and Salary - The total money received (amount paid before deductions) from work performed as an employee including:
  - gross wages and salaries
  - tips
  - commissions
  - piece rate payments (payments based on the number of items/units completed, instead of hours worked)
  - cash bonuses
  - vacation pay (this includes Armed Forces terminal leave pay) • Income earned through the senior community service employment program.
2. Net Self Employment Income - Net income (gross receipts - operating expenses = net employment income) from a business firm, farm, or other enterprise (including odd jobs) in which a person is engaged on his/her own account. If net self-employment income reflects a deficit amount, income from the source is to be

considered "-0-" when calculating family income. Self-employed includes a farmer, rancher, fisherman, professional person, independent trades person, and other business people.

### 3. Miscellaneous Income:

- Regular payments from railroad retirement, strike benefits from union funds, worker's compensation, veteran's payments, and training stipends
- Alimony
- Unemployment compensation
- Child support payments
- Military family allotments, excluding allotments for active duty, or other regular support from an absent family member or someone not living in the household
- Pensions whether private, including employer contributing 401(k), **OR** government employee (including military retirement pay)
- Regular insurance or annuity payments
- College or university grants (does NOT include Pell), fellowships, scholarships, and assistant ships
- Dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, and periodic receipts from estates or trusts.
- Net gambling or lottery winnings.
- WIOA, On-the-Job Training payments.
- Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance benefits including Social Security Disability Income – SSDI, received under Section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 402)

#### *Non-Included Income:*

- Severance Pay
- Welfare payments (including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income, Food Assistance Employment and Training Program, and Refugee Assistance
- Capital gains
- Foster child care payments
- Any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank, the sale of property, an employee exclusive 401(k), the sale of property, a house or a car
- Tax refunds, gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, one-time insurance payments, or compensation for injury
- Non - cash benefits such as employer paid fringe benefits, food or housing received in lieu of wages, Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, school meals, and housing assistance
- Pay or allowances received while on Active Military Duty. (38 U.S.C. 2013)

- Pell grants
- Education assistance and compensation payments to veterans and other eligible persons  
(Chapters 11, Compensation for Service Connected Disability or Death, 13, Dependence and Indemnity Compensation for Service Connected Death, 31, Vocational Rehabilitation, 34, Veterans' Education Assistance, 35, War Orphans' and Widows' Educational Assistance, and 36, Administration of Educational Benefits. 38 U.S.C. 2013)
- Allowances, earnings, and payments to individuals participating in programs under WIA shall not be considered as income for the purposes of determining eligibility for WIA
- Earned income credit (EIC). (TEIN #35-93)
- Educational financial assistance received under Title IV of the High Educational Act. (20 U.S.C. 1087)
- Needs-based scholarships
- Adoption subsidies

Individual with a Disability: an individual with any disability as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12102)

English Language Learner: An English language learner means an eligible individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English Language, and –

- a) Whose native language is a language other than English; or
- b) Who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language

Age of Compulsory School Attendance: Per Michigan Combined Law 380.1561, for a child who turned age 11 before December 1, 2009 or who entered grade 6 before 2009, the child's parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year from age of 6 to the child's sixteenth birthday. Except otherwise provided in this section, for a child who turns age 11 on or after December 1, 2009 or a child who was age 11 before that date and enters grade 6 in 2009 or later, the child's parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send the child to a public school during the entire school year from age 6 to the child's eighteenth birthday.

High Absenteeism Rate: High Absenteeism will be considered as 10 or more unexcused absences in a school year (10 days or 60 hours).



## Priority of Service Policy 16-06c1

**Title:** WMW 16-06c1 Priority of Service

**Effective Date:** August 28, 2017

**Applicability:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Programs

**Scope:** Veterans' priority of service means that veterans and eligible spouses are given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under a qualified job training program. Veterans' preference applies to all USDOL-funded employment and training programs, including programs funded under WIOA and the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, not just when a local area is in limited funds status. Federal law requires that the individual receiving priority must first meet the program's existing eligibility requirements. In addition, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) requires priority be given to "public benefits recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient" when providing individualized career and training services using WIOA Title I Adult funds.

**Supersedes:** WMW X16-06 Priority of Service February 1, 2017

**Reference:** Jobs for Veterans' Act P.L. 107-288, 20 CFR Part 1010 and Policy Issuance #04-26 Change #3 Implementation of the Veterans' Priority Provision of the Jobs for Veterans Act, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Public Law 113-128 Section 134 (c) (3) (E), Draft WIOA Manual July 2015. 20 CFR 680.600; 20 CFR 680.640; 20 CFR 680.650; 20 CFR 683.230; 38 U.S. Code Part 4213, TEGL 18-11, TEGL 26-13. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Manual sec. 1-9, TEGL 1009 and TEGL 22-04.

**Policy:** Priority of service for individualized career and training services funded through Title I WIOA Adult funds will be applied to all WIOA eligible public benefits recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, and veterans' priority for covered persons, as defined by the Jobs for Veterans Act, will be applied for those services as well. Veteran's priority of service for covered persons will also be given for TAA services offered under the Trade Act, and basic career services and services to Dislocated Workers under WIOA. This policy defines both the applicable eligibility requirements for priority of service as well as the order in which priority will be applied.

**Priority for Service under WIOA Title I Adult funds:**

Priority for individualized career services and training services under WIOA Title I Adult funds must be applied to adult recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals, and/or individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Individuals who are interested in receiving career and training services under the local priority of service system must first be determined eligible for the service requested.

Individuals who are not in a priority of service category but are actively enrolled in a career or training service will be allowed to complete the activity. It is not expected that non-priority service participants must give up their place to an individual who is in a priority of service category and may be just starting a career and/or training service.

**Basic Skills Deficient:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) has defined basic skills deficient as the same for adult and youth participants, namely, an individual that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade (8.9 or lower) level. It also includes a youth or adult, that is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. Basic skills deficiency will be determined using an objective, valid and reliable assessment, such as the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE). Refer to TEGL 18-11, Youth Literacy and Numeracy Gains, for further information on testing.

If the priority of service determination is based on the basic skills deficient criteria, the job seeker file must contain academic tests (including the job seeker's name, date of test, and results).

**Low-Income Individual:** An individual who meets any one of the following criteria satisfies the low income standard for priority for WIOA adult individualized career services and training services:

1. Receives, or in the past six months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months has received, assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program or state or local income based public assistance;
2. Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family size, is not in excess of the higher of the current U.S. Department of Labor 70 percent Lower Living Standard (LLS) Income Level or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines;
3. Is a homeless individual as defined in §41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, or a homeless child or youth as defined in §725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
4. Receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act;

5. Is a foster youth on behalf of whom state or local government payments are made; or
6. Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets: WIOA's income requirements, even if the individual's family income does not meet the income requirements; or The income eligibility criteria for payments under any federal, state, or local public assistance program.

#### Military Pay and Benefits:

All pay and/or financial allowances earned while a veteran was on active duty must be disregarded when determining whether the veteran is a "low income individual" for the purpose of applying the rule of priority for low – income persons under Title I of WIOA in this policy. Title 38 U.S.C. 4213 also exempts from inclusion in "low income" calculations any financial benefits received by a covered person under the following Chapters of Title 38 of the U. S. Code:

- 11. Compensation for service-connected disability or death;
- 13. Dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths;
- 30. All-volunteer force educational assistance program;
- 31. Training and rehabilitation for veterans with service-connected disabilities;
- 34. Veterans Educational Assistance
- 35. Survivors' and dependents' educational assistance; and ☐ 36. Administration of educational benefits.

Also excluded from "low income calculations" are benefits received under Chapter 106 of Title 10 of the U. S. Code, Educational assistance for members of the selected reserve.

However, pension payments authorized by Title 10 of the U. S. Code, such as those received by military retirees, whether or not their retirement was based on disability, and pension benefits paid under Chapter 15 of Title 38 of the U. S. Code, are **not** exempt from being included in the calculation of low income.

Also, veterans and eligible spouses are not required to coordinate their entitlement to VA benefits for education and training benefits with any concurrent eligibility they may have for WIOA funded training. West Michigan Works will not require veterans or eligible spouses to exhaust their entitlement to VA funded training benefits prior to allowing them to enroll in WIOA funded training.

#### Veterans Priority:



The regulations specify that the definition for veteran specified at 38 U.S.C. 101(2) applies across all qualified job training programs for the purpose of priority of service. That definition includes two key criteria:

1. Service in the active army, marines, naval including coast guard, or air service; and,
2. Discharge under conditions other than dishonorable.

**Veteran:** Under this definition, the term “veteran” means a person who served at least one day in active military, naval or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, as specified in 38 U.S.C. 101(2). Active service includes full-time Federal service in the *West Michigan Works!* is a division of ACSET, an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program & a proud partner of the American Job Center network. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TTY 711.

National Guard or a Reserve component. This definition of “active service” does not include full-time duty performed strictly for training purposes, nor does it include full-time active duty performed by National Guard personnel who are mobilized by State rather than Federal authorities (i.e. in response to natural disasters).

**Priority of service:** Priority of service means the right of eligible covered persons to take precedence over eligible non-covered persons in obtaining services.

- The covered person receives access to the service or resource earlier in time than the noncovered person; or
- If the service or resource is limited, the covered person receives access to the service or resource instead of or before the non-covered person.
- The regulations specify how priority of service is to be applied across three different types of qualified job training programs:
  - Universal access programs that do not target specific groups;
  - Discretionary targeting programs that focus on certain groups but are not mandated to serve target group members before other eligible individuals; and,
  - Statutory targeting programs that are mandated by federal law to provide priority or preference to certain groups.

**Covered Person:** The term “covered person” means a veteran or an eligible spouse, as defined herein.

**Eligible Spouses:** The regulation specifies spouses of any of the following veterans:

1. Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
2. Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:

- a. Missing in action
  - b. Captured in line of duty by a hostile force; or
  - c. Forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power;
3. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
  4. Any veteran who died while a disability was in existence. A spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member (i.e., categories 2 or 3 above) would lose his or her eligibility if the veteran or service member were to lose the status that is the basis for the eligibility (e.g. if a veteran with a total service-connected disability were to receive a revised disability rating at a lower level). Similarly, for a spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member, that eligibility would be lost upon divorce from the veteran or service member.

Consistent with TEGl 26-13, the definition of “eligible spouse” includes same-sex spouses. Eligibility for WIOA Title I services incorporates the definition of family where low-income priority of service is a consideration. Consistent with ETA’s policy, same sex spouses are included within the definition of family. Interpreting “husband” and “wife” as gender neutral in the definition of “family” could impact an individual’s family income calculation.

#### **Implementing Priority of Service:**

West Michigan Works! will remain intentional in conducting outreach to priority populations to ensure that covered persons, low income and basic skill deficient individuals receive the employment and training services they need.

Outreach will include but is not limited to; informing areas of the community that are likely to have priority populations of the services available; collaborating with social service agencies and other community partners that serve a similar population, creating opportunities to present information onsite at neighborhood events and when permitted, scheduling individual appointments alongside of WIOA required partners to reduce transportation needs and associated barriers.

The individual seeking career or training services under priority of service must be identified and categorized prior to enrollment. Priority of service is initiated on the local level and must follow the standard procedure outlined below:

- A. Priority for individualized career services and training services funded through Adult funds under Title I of WIOA will be applied in the following order:
  1. Covered Individuals (Veterans and eligible spouses) who are low-income, recipients of public assistance or are basic skills deficient.
  2. Individuals (non-covered) who are low-income, recipients of public assistance, or are basic skills deficient.

3. Covered Individuals (Veterans and eligible spouses) who are NOT low-income and are NOT recipients of public assistance or basic skills deficient.
4. All other eligible individuals.

B. Priority for basic career services and services for Dislocated Workers under WIOA; and TAA services for adversely affected workers under the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, will be applied in the following order:

1. Covered persons (veterans and eligible spouses).
2. All other eligible individuals.

*West Michigan Works! is a division of ACSET, an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program & a proud partner of the American Job Center network. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TTY 711.*

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## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN

Partners for the Service Centers located in in Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa Counties AND THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD Part I  
WEST MICHIGAN WORKS!

### General Information

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as the MOU) establishes the terms and conditions between the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board (hereinafter referred to as the "WDB"), whose principal office is located at 215 Straight Ave NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504, and the One-Stop Partners providing services for the American Job Centers located in Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa Counties (hereinafter "the West Michigan Works! service delivery area"). The names and locations of each One-Stop Partner (hereinafter referred to as "Partners" or "Partner") are listed in Exhibit A, which is attached and incorporated as part of this MOU. The WDB and Partners will be collectively referred to as "the Parties".

This MOU delineates the respective roles and responsibilities of the Parties, in compliance with the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, Section 121(c)(2). By signing this MOU, the Parties agree to abide by the terms, conditions, goals, and principles set forth herein.

This MOU is designed to ensure the efficient and effective coordination and delivery of services of the American Job Centers (service centers) located in the West Michigan Works! service delivery area in order to prevent duplication and maximize available resources. In addition, this MOU establishes joint processes and procedures that will enable all Parties to more fully integrate the current service delivery system, resulting in a more seamless and comprehensive array of education, human service, job training, and other workforce services.

### Part II

#### Service Provision and Coordination

The Parties expressly agree as follows:

- Each Party will provide the services identified in Attachment 1 and Exhibit A to the American Job Center(s) identified in Exhibit A during regular business hours. Exhibit A and Attachment 1, which are attached and incorporated as part of this MOU, list the services provided by the Parties in each county of the West Michigan Works! service delivery area.

West Michigan Works! is a division of ACSET, an equal opportunity employer/program and a proud partner of the American Job Center network. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. West Michigan Works! is supported by state and federal funds; more details at [westmiworks.org/about/](http://westmiworks.org/about/).

Rev. 6/21/2023

- Customer data, including customer personally identifiable information (PII) may be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the American Job Center Network, only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.
- All Parties will abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding confidential information, including PII from educational records, including, but not limited to, 20 CFR Part 603,

45 CFR Section 205.50, 20 USC 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99, and 34 CFR 361.38. Additionally, in carrying out their respective responsibilities, each Party shall respect and abide by the confidentiality policies and legal requirements of all of the other Parties.

- Each Party will ensure that access to software systems and files under its control that contain PII or other personal or confidential information will be limited to authorized staff members who are assigned responsibilities in support of the services and activities described herein and will comply with applicable law. Each Party will take measures to ensure that no PII or other personal or confidential information is accessible by unauthorized individuals.
- Each Party will properly secure customer PII in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws as well as each Party's confidentiality and privacy policies.

### Part III One-Stop Operating Budget

Section 121 of WIOA requires each One-Stop Partner to contribute its proportionate share of the infrastructure and additional costs associated with funding services and operating the West Michigan Works! delivery system in each county (shared costs). Each Partner has separately executed an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) that specifies how these shared costs of the one-stop delivery system in Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa Counties are apportioned amongst the Parties. The Parties agree to negotiate the details of each county's IFA on an annual basis, and to modify it as substantial changes occur.

### Part IV Referral Strategies

The Partners and the WDB agree to refer Customers to applicable services provided by the other agency by the most appropriate method. Referrals may be made on a formal or informal basis (i.e. mail, email, telephone, referral card, computer, video or in person).

### Part V Nondiscrimination

The Parties, as required by applicable federal and state law, shall not discriminate against any Customer or employee with the respect to any matter directly or indirectly relating to employment or provision of program services because of race, color, religion, national origin (including limited English proficiency), marital status, age, sex, height, weight, or disability.

As One-Stop Partners, the Parties acknowledge that they must comply with equal opportunity and nondiscrimination requirements of 29 CFR Part 38 as well as other applicable federal and state regulations.

### Part VI Inclusion Strategies

The Parties shall employ methods to ensure the needs of workers, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, are addressed in providing access to services, including access to technology and materials made available through the One-Stop delivery system, and, if necessary, the furnishing of interpreters.

The Parties will cooperate with compliance monitoring that is conducted at the local level to ensure that all American Job Center programs, services, technology, and materials are physically and programmatically accessible and available to all persons. Additionally, staff members will be trained to provide services to all persons, regardless of range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, comprehension, or education level.

## Part VII

### Legal Relationship

The term “Partner” as used in this MOU describes a one-stop partner that carries out workforce development programs as set forth in section 121(b) of the WIOA and does not imply or create any duties or liabilities arising from a true partnership relationship.

The WDB shall have no authority to supervise any employees of the Partners and no employees of the Partners shall be or shall be deemed to be employees of the WDB by virtue of this MOU. Each party shall retain and take full responsibility for its obligations with respect to its employees, including without limitation its workers’ compensation obligations.

## Part VIII

### Duration of Agreement

This MOU is effective from July 1, 2023 until June 30, 2026, unless otherwise terminated by mutual agreement of all signing Parties.

Any Party may withdraw from this MOU by giving written notice of intent to withdraw at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance of the effective date of the withdrawal. Notice of withdrawal shall be given to all Parties covered by this agreement. Should any Partner withdraw, this MOU shall remain in effect in its entirety with respect to the remaining Parties until the expiration date of this agreement, or a new MOU is executed, whichever occurs first.

All signing Parties assure that this MOU will be reviewed and renewed at least once every three years, or when substantial changes occur.

## Part IX

### Procedure for Amendment or Assignment

This MOU may be modified at any time by written agreement of the Parties. Such amendments will require the signature of all Parties affected by such amendment. Assignment of responsibilities under this MOU by any of the Parties shall be effective upon written notice to the other Parties. Any assignee shall also commit in writing to the terms of this MOU.

Part X  
No Third-Party Beneficiaries

This MOU is executed by the Parties in order to comply with Section 121(c)(2) of WIOA and its implementing regulations. Nothing in this MOU, express or implied, is intended to or shall confer on any other person or entity any legal or equitable right, benefit, or remedy of any nature whatsoever under or by reason of this MOU.

Part XI  
Counterparts

This Agreement and any amendments to the Agreement may be executed in two or more counterparts, each of which shall have the same force and effect as the other, as one and the same instrument. In the event this Agreement is signed by a party and delivered to another party via facsimile or electronically in pdf format, the transmitting party intends to be, and shall be, contractually bound by the facsimile or pdf. signature(s) thereon.

Part XII  
Certification

The undersigned hereby agree to abide by all terms and conditions outlined in this agreement, or in any amended version of this agreement, for the duration of this agreement.

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All partners will:

- Provide access to programs or activities through the American Job Center Network, in addition to any other appropriate locations
- Use a portion of funds to provide applicable career services and work collaboratively with the State and Local WDB to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system.

In addition, each partner may provide the following services to their targeted population, as indicated on Exhibit A.

**A) Career Services**

- 1) Eligibility determination, outreach and intakes
- 2) Initial Assessments
- 3) Provision of labor market information
- 4) Labor Exchange Services
- 5) Comprehensive and Specialized Assessments
- 6) Development of Individual Employment Plan
- 7) Individual Career Counseling and Planning
- 8) Short-Term Pre-Vocational Services
- 9) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences Linked to Careers
- 10) Workforce Preparation Activities
- 11) Financial Literacy Services
- 12) Out-of-Area Job Search Assistance and Relocation Assistance
- 13) Follow-Up Career Services
- 14) Access to Training Services Directly Linked to Employment Opportunities
- 15) Leadership Skills
- 16) Supportive Services
- 17) Reasonable Accommodations/Accessible Design Intervention 18) Benefit Planning

**B) Business Services**

- 1) Establishing and Developing Relations with Local Employers
- 2) Customized Screening and Referral of Qualified Participants
- 3) Customized Employment-Related Services to Employers and Employer Groups
- 4) Industry Sector Development, Convening, and Implementation

**C) Adult Education and Literacy**

- 1) Provide general instruction adult education and literacy activities
- 2) Provide Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education
- 3) Provide Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals



Program	Provider	WMW Service Center								Service Delivery Method			Services to be provided (see attachment 1 for the list of possible services):	
		Allegan	Barry	Ionia	Kent - Northwest	Kent - Southwest	Montcalm	Muskegon	Ottawa	Staff on Site	WMW Staff Trained	Direct Linkage through Technology		
WIOA Title I (Adult, DW, Youth)	West Michigan Works!	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				A - 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16; B-1,2,3,4
Trade Adjustment Assistance	West Michigan Works!	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				A-1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10,12,13,14,16
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act	West Michigan Works!	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				A-1,2,3,4,5,6,11; B-1,2,3,4
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	West Michigan Works!	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				A-2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,13,16; B-1,2,3,4
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	West Michigan Works!	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				A-2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,13,16; B-1,2,3,5
YouthBuild	Bethany Christian Services				x	x								A-1,2,5,6,7, 8,9,10,11,13,14,15,16,17; B-1,2; C-1,2
WIOA Title 1 (Indian and Native American Programs)	Michigan Indian Employment & Training Services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x			A - 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16
National Farmworker Jobs Programs	Telamon	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		A - 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18 B-1,2,3,4 C-1 D
Job Corps (WIOA title I)	Gerald R Ford Center	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		All services in sections A, B, C and D
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	AARP Foundation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x			A-1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13, 14, 15, 16; B-1,2,3,4
WIOA Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy)	Allegan Public Schools	x									x			A - 1,2,5,6,7,10,11,14,16; B - 1; C - 1
	Plainwell Renaissance Adult Ed		x								x			C1, D
	Belding Public Schools			x							x			A - 1, 2, 15, 16, 17; C - 1
	Portland Public Schools			x							x	x		C-1
	Grand Rapids Community College				x	x						x		A-1,2,5,7,8,10,11,14,15,16,17. B-1,2,4. C-1. D
	Kent Intermediate School District					x								C-1,2; D
	Literacy Center Of West MI				x	x					x	x		A - 1, 2, 10, 11, 14; B - 1, 3; C - 1, 2
	Rockford Public Schools				x	x						x		A1,2,7,11,16,17 and C1
	Sparta Public Schools				x	x						x		A-7,10,11 ; C-1,2
	Fruitport Community Schools								x					C-1, 2
	Central Montcalm Adult Ed						x							A - 1,2,7,11; C-1, D
	Orchard View Public Schools								x					C 1-2
	Read Muskegon								x		x			A- 1,2,15 C- 1, D
	Whitehall District Schools								x				x	A- 2,7,10,11,14,15,16, C-1, D.
	Zeeland Public Schools	x									x			A 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17; B 1, 2, 3, 4; C 1, 2; D
Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker	State of MI - Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO)													Separate MOU
Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Chapter 41 of title 38)	State of MI - Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO)													Separate MOU
WIOA Title III - Unemployment Compensation	State of MI - Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO)													Separate MOU
WIOA Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation)	Michigan Rehabilitation Services (LEO)													Separate MOU
	Michigan Commision for Services to Blind Persons													Separate MOU
Career and Technical Education - Carl D. Perkins	Grand Rapids Community College				x	x						x		A-1,2,5,7,8,10,11,14,15,16,17. B-1,2,4. C-1. D
	Muskegon Community College								x	x		x		A - 1,2,3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13,14, 15, 16, 17 B - 1,2,3,4
Career and Technical Education - Carl D. Perkins	Montcalm Community College			x			x							A - 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16; B-1,2,3,4;
Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO)	N/A													
Community Service Block Grant Employment and Training	N/A													
HUD - Emp & Training	N/A													

SIGNATURE PAGES

Approval on behalf of the WDB:

Mark Bergsma

8/29/2023

Print Name of WDB Chair

Date

*Mark Bergsma*

8/29/2023

Signature of WDB Chair

Date

Approval on behalf of Chief Elected Official:

Jim Storey, Chair

9/19/2023

Name and Title of Chief Elected Official

Print

Date

9/19/2023

Signature of Chief Elected Official

Date

DocuSign Envelope ID: 1290A967-7482-4B1D-AAD1-92F45372F3B6

Approval on behalf of Partner: AARP Foundation  
(Partner Entity Name)

Demetri Antzoulatos | VP, Finance, Grants, and Operations

Print Name

and Title

*Demetri Antzoulatos*

Date

7/28/2023

Signature of Partner

Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: Alleghen Public Schools  
(Partner Entity Name)

Michelle Ostling  
Print Name and Title

6-29-23  
Date

Michelle Ostling  
Signature of Partner

6-29-23  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: Belding Adult Education  
(Partner Entity Name)

Ann Van Dusen, Director  
Print Name and Title

June 29, 2023  
Date

Ann Van Dusen  
Signature of Partner

June 29, 2023  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michigan

Bethany Christian Services of

(Partner Entity Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Vice President of Operations  
Print Name and Title

George Tyndall, \_\_\_\_\_  
7/5/2023  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Partner

\_\_\_\_\_  
7/5/2023  
Date

DRAFT

Approval on behalf of Partner: Fruitport Adult Education  
(Partner Entity Name)

Brenda Baker Director  
Print Name and Title Fruitport Adult Ed

4/11/23  
Date

Brenda Baker  
Signature of Partner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Partner Entity Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name and Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Cynthia A. Shuck  
Signature of Partner


\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DRAFT

Approval on behalf of Partner: Grand Rapids Community College  
(Partner Entity Name)

Julie Parks, Dean, Workforce Training  
Print Name and Title

6/28/2023  
Date

  
Signature of Partner

6/28/23  
Date

DRAFT

Approval on behalf of Partner: KENT ISD ADULT ED.  
(Partner Entity Name)

OOGIE LAMAR - DIRECTOR  
Print Name and Title

6/30/2023  
Date

Oogie Lamar  
Signature of Partner

6/30/2023  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: Literacy Center of WM  
(Partner Entity Name)

Wendy V Falb Executive Director  
Print Name and Title

7/25/23  
Date

Wendy Falb  
Signature of Partner

7/25/23  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: MI Indian  
(Partner Entity Name)

Mary Cody-Gibson  
Print Name and Title

8/17/23  
Date

  
Signature of Partner

8/17/23  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: Orchard View Schools  
(Partner Entity Name)

Brandy Carey, CE Director  
Print Name and Title

June 27, 23  
Date

  
Signature of Partner

June 27, 23  
Date



Half of Partner: Portland Public Schools  
(Partner Entity Name)

DeVos - Director  
Title

6/25/25  
Date

[Signature]  
Partner

6/28/23  
Date



Approval on behalf of Partner: Read Muskegon  
(Partner Entity Name)

Melissa A. Moore, Executive Director  
Print Name and Title

6/28/23  
Date

Melissa A. Moore  
Signature of Partner

6/28/23  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: Montcalm Community College  
(Partner Entity Name)

TRACY TAYLOR, DEAN OF OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMS +  
Print Name and Title WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

07.05.2023  
Date

Tracy L. Taylor  
Signature of Partner

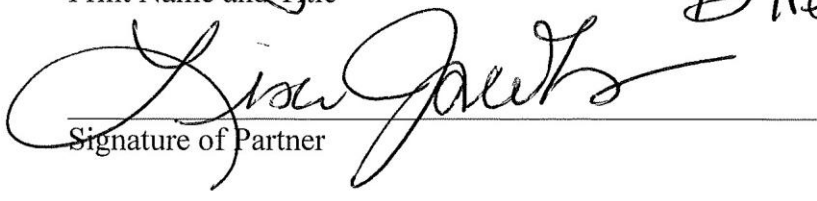
07.05.2023  
Date



Approval on behalf of Partner: Rockford Public Schools -  
(Partner Entity Name) Adult Education

Lisa Jacobs, Executive Director  
Print Name and Title

7/19/23  
Date

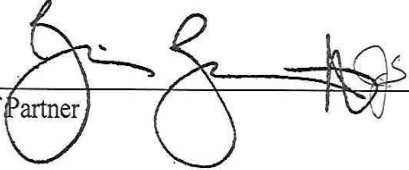
  
Signature of Partner

7/19/23  
Date

Approval on behalf of Partner: Gerald R. Ford Job Corps Center  
(Partner Entity Name)

Brian Burnett, Center Director  
Print Name and Title

August 14, 2023  
Date

  
Signature of Partner

8/14/23  
Date

DRAFT

Approval on behalf of Partner: Telamon Corporation  
(Partner Entity Name)

Sarah Perry Director of Workforce and Career Services  
Print Name and Title

6.29.23  
Date

**Sarah Perry**  
Signature of Partner

Digitally signed by Sarah Perry  
DN: cn=Sarah Perry, o=Telamon Corporation,  
ou=Program Director, email=sperry@telamon.org,  
c=US  
Date: 2023.06.29 15:40:47 -0400

6.29.23  
Date

DRAFT

Approval on behalf of Partner: ZEELAND ADULT EDUCATION  
(Partner Entity Name)

MIKE O'CONNOR  
Print Name and Title

7-17-23  
Date

Mike O'connor  
Signature of Partner

7-17-23  
Date



Approval on behalf of Partner: WHITEHALL DISTRICT SCHOOLS  
(Partner Entity Name)

STEVEN D. ANDERSON DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
Print Name and Title

6-29-23  
Date

[Signature]  
Signature of Partner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

