

# NW PA Workforce Investment Area (NW170)

## Program Year (PY) 2009 WIA Local Plan

### I. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

**Describe the process for the development and modification of the local Plan, as well as how the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 implementation strategy was incorporated into the process. Include**

- A. A description of the involvement of the Local Elected Official (LEO), the LWIB and stakeholders in the modification of the Plan;**
- B. A description of the collaboration between the LWIB and representatives from economic development, education, the business community, other stakeholders and interested parties in the development;**
- C. A description of the process used to make the Plan available to the public and the outcome resulting from review of public comments. Describe measures taken to provide increased transparency and measures to include or address all comments received within the review period. A copy of the published notice should be included as Appendix A. Any comments related to the Plan, and a brief discussion regarding any changes made to the Plan in response to comments received, should be included as Appendix B. (Revised)**

The RCWE has thoroughly involved all stakeholders in the development of the local plan. Through each step of the process, comments, suggestions and input received have been incorporated into the draft of the plan. The process for development of the local plan began with the discussions for drafting the Recovery Act Plan on March 27, 2009 at an all-day meeting with PA CareerLink® Operators, PA CareerLink® Site Administrators, Business Services Unit representatives, Industry Partnership members, local economic development agencies, RCWE staff and participants representing community organizations such as Greater Erie Community Action Committee, Partners for Performance, St. Benedict Education Center, Keystone Community Education Council, Erie School District, etc. Input from this meeting was used to develop the Recovery Act Plan that was approved in June 2009, and was also an integral component in the development of this Local Plan. Meetings were held with the Chief Local Elected Officials, the Fiscal Committee and the Executive Committee which included review of the plan. The draft Local Plan was also reviewed by WIB committees that include representatives of community organizations. The draft plan will be posted for public comment from August 10 through September 8, 2009 via the RCWE website ([www.nwpawib.org](http://www.nwpawib.org)) and a public forum to review the Local Plan will be held on August 12, 2009 at 10 AM. A printed copy of the draft plan has been placed in the front office of the RCWE for review by the public. Notice of the public comment period and the public forum to review the Local Plan was placed in local newspapers (Appendix A). During this period written comment was accepted via e-mail or mail. Any public comment received will be attached as Appendix B.

### II. VISION, GOALS AND PRIORITIES

#### A. Vision

### NWPA WIB Vision

Northwest Pennsylvania will have a skilled workforce that is responsive to the current and future needs of the region.

### NWPA WIB Mission

To connect people with jobs through collaborative workforce development efforts and strong partnerships with the economic development, business, education and government sectors in the Northwest Pennsylvania region.

### NWPA Youth Council Vision

The Youth Council will be the recognized forum for youth policy in the regional workforce development system.

#### **Describe how the LWIB will:**

- 1. Utilize available resources to support local and regional workforce and economic development;**
- 2. Maximize and leverage resources to develop a high-demand, skilled workforce to support the needs of business and industry in the local area;**
- 3. Engage business, industry, education, economic development, and community organizations to participate with the public workforce system to identify workforce challenges and develop strategies and solutions to address those challenges.**

The NWPAWIB guides the investment of funds through a regional workforce development network that is in place to maximize and leverage resources for development of a high-demand, skilled workforce and to engage business, industry, education and economic development organizations to support business and industry. The network includes 8 industry partnerships, a regional career education partnership and county-level workforce development teams. The County Level Workforce Development Teams include representatives from all organizations working with employers to solve specific training and employer needs. The industry partnerships work toward identifying more general needs of the industry as a whole. The career education partnership identifies and implements opportunities to connect students in grades K-12 to career awareness and post-secondary options. Training needs that cannot be solved at the county or partnership level are referred to the Regional Workforce Development Team (RWDT) which includes additional partners and resources. (Attachment 1). Industry partnership employers are active on the LWIB in identifying workforce needs, educational requirements and career pathways.

A project has been developed and implemented in partnership with the Black Family Foundation, the Erie Community Foundation and Mercyhurst College to identify and implement a strong, sustainable referral network of community organizations throughout the region to provide a greater awareness and availability of a wide range of services to jobseekers.

A merger of the Youth Council and the Regional Career Education Partnership has created a partnership of individuals with expertise in the special needs of youth with area educators to create an opportunity to enhance curriculum development that prepare youth for future employment and increase career awareness.

In addition, a tiered, progressive assessment process is being developed that will identify potential stumbling blocks that can be addressed prior to an individual seeking employment or training. This process will benefit all jobseekers and will provide a faster track for getting those jobseekers with transferable skills placed into employment.

**4. Ensure a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce, including the vision for economic recovery, touching on the Recovery Act principles and how the Recovery Act funds can be integrated into transformational efforts to achieve an invigorated, more innovative public workforce system capable of helping future economic growth and advancing shared prosperity for all Pennsylvanians. (Revised – Recovery Act)**

Our LWIA manages our High Priority Occupation List so that it aligns with the occupations that are in demand within our six-county region (Erie, Crawford, Warren, Venango, Forest, and Clarion). In addition to these efforts, we will focus on occupations within our industry partnerships that present opportunities, now and in the future, for high growth that require higher skills. This would include existing, new and emerging occupations. We are targeting the following industry partnerships: Building and Construction Trades, Healthcare, Advanced Diversified Manufacturing (Metals, Plastics, Electronic Manufacturing Services, and Food Processing), Information and Technology, Logistics and Transportation, and Renewable Energy/Green IT. Energy-related jobs for our region, including existing, new and emerging occupations, will be a major focus. Examples of these occupations include, but are not limited to the following: Energy Auditors (Commercial/Residential), Geothermal Installers, Renewable Energy Technicians, and Water Treatment Plant Operators.

The LWIA is scheduling public meetings to foster opportunities to develop collaborations with local governmental agencies and employers who are likely to be creating jobs in infrastructure, food production and processing, healthcare, conservation and energy efficiency programs. In addition, the LWIA is focusing on the development of regional partnerships across LWIAs and state borders into adjacent workforce investment areas that share common economic and workforce needs in an effort to align formula activities with state and regional economic recovery plans. These partnerships will enable the LWIA to create regional innovation systems that support industry growth and corresponding emerging employment opportunities and the associated skill competencies that are needed to support them.

We plan to discuss green jobs/green collar jobs with all appropriate industry partnerships (Building & Construction Trades; Advanced Diversified Manufacturing; Healthcare; and Food Processing) to determine their needs and required training for these occupations. Discussion will also focus on high-growth occupations and new technologies that may be

impacting occupations within these industry partnerships. Once these green jobs/green collar jobs, high-growth occupations, and new technologies have been identified we will develop partnerships with training providers to provide the required training for these high-growth, higher-skilled occupations. This activity will provide adult education, job training, postsecondary education, apprenticeship training, career advancement activities, and supportive services to meet the skill needs of existing and emerging regional employers and high-growth occupations. In situations where training programs do not exist, we will work with area colleges, universities, community colleges, career and technical centers, proprietary schools, and other appropriate training providers to develop the training. It is our intent to work with such institutions as Gannon University, Penn State Erie, Erie Institute of Technology, Triangle Tech, and Precision Manufacturing Institute for technical expertise related to curriculum development and training.

These strategies will enable low-income, displaced and under-skilled adults and disconnected youth to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for success at work. This in turn will also help underemployed and dislocated workers find new, good jobs. Recovery Act funds will be used to provide training to individuals, develop curriculum/programs, provide supportive services, and if necessary acquire assessment tools to achieve the overarching goal of an invigorated, more innovative public workforce system that promotes economic growth for our citizens.

**5. Ensure that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including youth most in need of assistance: out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farmworker youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk. (New – Recovery Act)**

During the recent update of the NWSA Workforce Investment Board (WIB) strategic plan, the following goals were set for the Youth System:

- Imbed STEM occupations into career awareness, career exploration, and work-based learning experiences; especially for females, minorities and other underrepresented groups
- Connect K-12 education and employers to significantly increase internships and other work-based learning opportunities for youth
- Build strategies around education and employment for re-engaging disconnected youth who have dropped out of high school or are aging out of foster care
- Assist education in the implementation of the PA Department of Education Career Education and Work Standards to provide effective work-readiness preparation to students
- Strengthen relationships and collaboration with the Career and Technical Education system.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds will provide opportunities for more youth to participate in summer work experiences as well as investigate the

prospect of future post-secondary training. Targeted outreach to youth most in need of assistance has and is being conducted through Children and Youth Services, juvenile placement facilities, county assistance offices, schools and community providers.

**6. Increase training access and opportunities through:**

- a. the use of WIA Title I and Recovery Act funds as well as other leveraging resources;**
- b. contracts or agreements with institutions of higher education, especially community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and other training providers; and**
- c. expanding the relationships and curricula developed through industry partnerships.**  
**(New)**

Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and other training funds as well as Pell and PHEA grants will be leveraged to increase training opportunities for individuals. As gaps in training are identified through the industry partnerships, potential exists for partnership and/or direct contracts with training providers to build capacity and/or create curriculum.

In collaboration with the LWIB, Industrial Resource Center, Erie Chamber of Commerce, Erie County Technical School, Clarion University and local employers, a specialized welding training program was established in 2006. Capacity was created for three projects, specialized needs of employers were incorporated into the training and the participants were ASW and ASME certified. The program has since expanded into thirteen counties and to date has training over 260 participants.

As an additional effort to develop contracts/agreements with training providers that would result in capacity building and /or creating curriculum, we are in the process of working with industry partnerships to identify common training needs that exist in various occupations within and across these partnerships. Once a common training need is identified a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be developed for training providers to develop consortium training that meets employer's needs. We are also working with industry partnerships to identify skill gaps for new hires and pre-hire training that is needed. These areas would also provide additional opportunities for training provider contracts/agreements and curriculum development. We also plan to expand this activity to include Chambers of Commerce and Manufacturer's Associations within our region as an outreach effort to companies that may not participate in industry partnerships.

**B. Priorities and Goals**

- 1. Identify key workforce investment goals and priorities for the local workforce system.**
  - a. Describe how each supports the local workforce development vision. Include strategies to align with Pennsylvania's current objectives, the**

**Governor's Job Ready Pennsylvania priorities, and support the creation and sustainability of small, new, and emerging industries.**

In alignment with the Strategic State Workforce Investment Plan and the Governor's Job Ready Pennsylvania Priorities, the Northwest WIB updated their local strategic plan in 2010 (See Strategic Plan 2010 - 2013 as Attachment 2) . The local workforce development priorities position the Northwest PA region on a path to the future, sets the board's agenda for action, and places in motion a dynamic roadmap that is open to change, improvement, and evolution over its designated life cycle and beyond. As a change agent in the region, the Workforce Investment Board will play a critical role of community convener, bringing stakeholders to the table to discuss issues, resolutions, and accountability. A collaborative approach with workforce, educational, and economic development is key to future competitiveness and prosperity. To achieve the vision, the following goals were established to address:

**Goal 1: Board Development**

Provide strong, entrepreneurial-focused leadership, thereby promoting and advocating for business and industry in our region. Some objectives included:

- An organizational recruitment base exists from which vibrant, engaged entrepreneurial board members are recruited
- Targeted industry representation on the WIB increases each year representative of Northwest PA's economic base
- Board engagement and community awareness is enhanced through joint projects and collaboration with the Communications Committee
- Board members receive orientation and continuing education throughout their term on the board
- A consistent relationship exists with local chambers that enriches the recruitment/selection process for WIB appointments

**Goal 2: Communications**

Increase awareness, understanding and usage of the workforce development system that encourages collaboration among target audiences for economic improvement. Some objectives included:

- A centralized and user friendly online information hub exists that provides ongoing basic information regarding the Northwest PA regional workforce development network structure and all programs and services
- Target audiences in the region clearly understand what the Northwest PA workforce development network is and what it does
- Promote board engagement and workforce professional staff understanding of the regional workforce development network in Northwest Pennsylvania through ongoing multimedia informational material

**Goal 3: Employer Demand Services**

Maximize the growth of the regional economy by providing employer-demand services and ongoing support of new and existing employers. Some objectives included:

- By June 30, 2011, RCWE/NWPA WIB will have contacted 75 random companies within the Northwest PA Workforce Investment Area's six-county region to garner a better understanding of their service requirements with regard to workforce development specifically, as it pertains to the CareerLink® and the County Business Service Units while offering services to those employers simultaneously.
- Understand our internal resources and realign those resources to accomplish our primary goal and measure increase of employer satisfaction
- By June 30, 2011, ESU and BSU employer penetration rates will have increased within each of the NW PA CareerLinks® by x% within the six-county region of the Northwest PA Workforce Investment Board
- By December 2011, a handpicked panel of economists and business specialists will have reviewed the responses of the BREP calls and identified x% of employer needs. (Basically, "read the palm" of the data and tell us what the region's employers need to induce economic growth for the region.)

Goal 4: Youth Council

Promote career pathways and tangible opportunities for youth

- Create an active leadership driven Youth Council including Industry Partnerships, NWPA WIB members, private sector, family and youth participants, and required WIA participants by June 30, 2011
- Identify and remove barriers to potential work study and employment opportunities for youth
- Track/evaluate the youth after completion of: summer programs, industry clubs, and internships utilizing guidance counselors, supervisors, and teachers
- Seek creative funding strategies to sustain career counselors in all school districts in the region

Goal 5: NW PA CareerLink® Development

PA CareerLink®s will be flexible and entrepreneurial in the development of programs and services and will emphasize customer service and transparency

- A comprehensive three-tiered assessment strategy is available and offered for all individuals receiving workforce development services in the one-stop system is being linked with continuous program improvement.
- Ongoing integration of NW PA CareerLink® and ABLE programs exists in the one-stop system so that formal remediation opportunities in reading, math, writing, language, and problem-solving classes are available.
- PA CareerLinks® will emphasize flexibility and customer service process, program development, and facility usage.
- A comprehensive Customer Satisfaction and Quality Review process is in place for the NW PA CareerLink® System that measures, responds and provides continuous improvement.
- A NW PA CareerLink® Employer Customer Service process which is aligned with NW PA Industry Partnerships and fully integrated with NW PA Workforce Development Business Services is provided in a seamless manner to serve NW PA employer workforce needs.

## Goal 6: Programmatic Policy & Analysis

Maximize the effectiveness of workforce development programs through policy development and analysis of program outcomes.

- Create protocols in the PA CareerLink@s that steer clients toward appropriate job placement services and career paths in an effort to reduce the unemployment rate by at least two to three percentage points
- Establish system to monitor implementation of protocols in PA CareerLink@s so that the unemployment rate is reduced by at least two to three percentage points
- Establish policies that are conducive to increasing the supply and demand of OJTs vs. ITAs so that the number of OJTs exceeds the number of ITAs by at least 20%
- Establish data collection and reporting forms that provide relevant data, outcomes, and information relative to the decision making process and policy making process of the staff and board
- Create an improved customer satisfaction process, taking into account the multiple surveys that exist within the system, from both the job seeker side and the employer side that achieves at least a 90% satisfaction rate and also promotes continuous quality improvement
- Ensure that NWPA WIB-generated Request for Proposals clearly define the desired outcomes for the funding source and the types of activities that could be used to achieve those outcomes so that 100% of the goals/outcomes are attained

## **2. Discuss how goals and priorities are adjusted to respond to the economic downturn and the subsequent infusion of Recovery Act funds, including:**

### **a. How workforce investment system resources (WIA formula funds, Recovery Act, etc.) can be deployed to serve increased numbers of businesses and job seekers;**

The NWPA WIB will carefully evaluate the needs of employers and job seekers during these economic times to determine new and creative ways to serve increased numbers. NWPA WIB has reserved a portion of ARRA funds that will be issued via public competitive procurement for training needs identified by the employer and for additional assessment and intensive service needs of the job seeker.

### **b. Increasing access to education and training opportunities for adults and dislocated workers who need to upgrade or acquire new skills and developing career pathways that meet the transformed workforce of the future;**

### **c. Preparing youth for the workforce of tomorrow; and**

### **d. Developing partnerships with community colleges and other institutions of higher education, business, labor organizations, registered apprenticeship programs, and community and faith-based organizations to align workforce development strategies in the local area or region. (New)**

Based on guidance from the National Association of Workforce Boards at their annual conference in March 2009 and 2010, the local workforce investment board

(LWIB) through its committees developed a revised strategy and work plan focused on the economic downturn (see Attachment 3). This vision/strategy was adopted by the committees of the LWIB during April 2010 and includes three major initiatives: Work-Based Learning; Alternative Energy Technologies; and Open Source Social Networking. The Work-Based Learning goal includes the promotion of life-long learning through education and skill development achieved through a direct connection with industry. The Alternative Energy Technologies goal includes working to reduce waste and pollution and benefit the environment and income that pays a family sustaining wage with benefits that provides a career path with upward mobility. The Open Source Social Networking goal utilizes free online public applications such as Linked In, Facebook, Twitter, and Google groups to foster effective communication with interested parties. Also, the goals of the LWIA are all encompassing of “STEM” and “green”. The work of the WIB committees includes emphasis on summer youth employment connected with work readiness and education, as well as green occupations. These initiatives will enable the LWIA to expand existing training programs to prepare workers for careers in the renewable energy sectors and for other green jobs, as well as providing work experience and training for youth participants that meets work readiness goals for the LWIA.

### **III. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

#### **A. Organization, Administration and Oversight**

- 1. Describe the role of the LEO in the governance and implementation of WIA in the local area. In local areas consisting of more than one unit of government, indicate the decision making process between the local elected officials. Multi-county LWIAs should describe the process to select the CEO.**

The Chief Local Elected Officials of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango, and Warren Counties, as the grant recipients of WIA funds, jointly signed a CLEO agreement for the joint governance and implementation of WIA. CLEOs meet quarterly with WIB leadership, attend and participate in WIB meetings and serve on various WIB committees including Executive and Fiscal committees. In addition, they appoint LWIB members and approve the budget in conjunction with the WIB.

As per the signed agreement, a quorum of 4 members (including duly designated alternates) must be present in order to conduct business. All decisions by the Chief Local Elected Officials shall be made by majority vote of the total membership. In the event that the Chief Local Elected Officials are unable to reach a majority vote on any matter which could result in delay or discontinuation of services to clients in the local area, the disagreement shall be resolved by majority vote of the full LWIB membership at a public meeting, the determination of which shall be binding upon the Chief Local Elected Officials.

- 2. Identify the WIA Title I Contractor. Describe the process for selection and the relationship of the WIA Title I Contractor to the PA CareerLink® Consortium.**

WIA Title I Program Operators for the Northwest Region are selected through a competitive bidding process. Current contracts are separated by program funding stream and geographically. In Erie County the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are operated by Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC), and Youth programs by the School District of the City of Erie (ESD). For Clarion, Crawford, Forest, Venango and Warren Counties, Partners for Performance (PFP) is the contractor for Adult and DW programs; and Venango Training and Development Center (VTDC) is the Youth program operator. All of these contractor organizations comprise the PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium, as well as BWDP and OVR. Contractors report monthly to the Board through the RCWE.

**3. Identify the PA CareerLink® Consortium. Describe the role of the Consortium in the One-Stop System and the relationship to the LWIB. (New)**

The PA CareerLink® Consortium for the Northwest Region is a single, regional operator consortium that includes the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership, Erie County WIA Title I Adult and DW Program Operator (Greater Erie Community Action Committee), Clarion, Crawford, Forest, Venango and Warren County WIA Title I Adult and DW Program Operator (Partners for Performance), Erie County WIA Title I Youth Program Operator (The School District of the City of Erie), the Clarion, Crawford, Forest, Venango and Warren County WIA Title I Youth Program Operator, as well as a private sector member of the WIB to provide a private-sector business approach. The PA CareerLink® Consortium is responsible for the oversight and management of the operations of the PA CareerLink® system in the Northwest Region. This regional operator consortium meets monthly and also participates at the WIB Executive Committee meetings. Also, operator consortium presentations are provided at the bimonthly WIB meetings.

**4. Identify the Fiscal Agent, as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO). Provide all contact information for this entity (WIA Section 118(b)(8)).**

The fiscal agent for the LWIB, as designated by the CLEOs, is the Regional Center for Workforce Excellence, 764 Bessemer Street, Suite 102, Meadville, PA 16335. The Chief Financial Officer is Michele Zieziula, Phone: 814-333-1286, ext. 103, Email: [michelez@nwpawib.org](mailto:michelez@nwpawib.org); Fax: 814-333-1754.

**5. Provide an organizational chart (Appendix C) that delineates the relationship between the agencies involved in the workforce development system, including: the CEO, the required and optional PA CareerLink® partner programs, and line of authority. The chart should reflect the distinct separation between governance and service delivery structure consistent with the State's LWIB Staffing Policy.**

The organizational chart is included as Appendix C.

**B. Local Workforce Investment Board**

**1. Describe any functions the LWIB has assumed other than those required by statute.**

The LWIB has not assumed any additional functions at this time.

**2. Describe measures developed to improve operational collaboration of workforce investment activities and programs. Include measures to identify and eliminate existing barriers to coordination.**

The NWPA Regional Workforce Development Team (RWDT) was formed and convened in March 2005. The team meets monthly and is a collaborating body of partnering agencies (WedNet, GAT, IRC, SBDCs, IDCs, etc.) to eliminate duplication of efforts and create a pipeline for resources which will help to foster employers' competitiveness and workforce retention and training. In addition, Policy and Program Coordination meetings that include RCWE staff, contractor staff, operators, site administrators, etc. are conducted quarterly to improve communication and coordination/facilitation of issues. Monthly operator/site administrator meetings and conference calls are conducted with RCWE staff in attendance. Moving forward, contractors will participate in periodic regional training sessions to create a seamless WIA system across the six counties.

**3. Describe how the Board ensures that meetings and information regarding Board activities are accessible to the public (including persons with disabilities.)**

The LWIB advertises all WIB meetings and all other public meetings in five area newspapers and on our website ([www.nwpawib.org](http://www.nwpawib.org)). Information regarding WIB activities, RFPs, strategic plans, and other significant issues is also advertised for public comment/response or posted on the website. Provisions are made for accessibility to public meetings and any special requests to address the meeting groups are accommodated. The LWIB and the RCWE are equal opportunity employer/programs. Information is available in alternate format upon request and meeting locations are ADA compliant.

**4. Describe how the LWIB ensures timely, open and effective sharing of information between state and federal agencies, other LWIBs and the local workforce investment system, including the PA CareerLink®.**

On behalf of the LWIB, the RCWE submits reports to the state and federal government as requested and shares best practices at the PA Partners Annual Conference and other workforce development forums. Quarterly meetings have been established to develop an open line of communication and partnership among agencies, other WIBs and PA CareerLink® partners. Also, partnerships have been created with other WIBs to enhance employer services across regions with similar needs and workforce development goals. Quarterly meetings are held with the Chief Local Elected Officials and WIB leadership. The Chief Local Elected Officials participate on the Executive and Fiscal Committees of the WIB. The RCWE represents the local WIB on the PA Partners Board, the PA Association of Workforce Investment Boards, Technical Workgroups, Point of Contact meetings, PA CareerLink® symposiums, the Local Management Committee and other regional and state groups.

**5. Describe the LWIB committee (other than the Youth Council) structure, membership and functions.**

The standing WIB committees include:

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has authority to act on behalf of the full WIB; provides oversight to WIB Committees and support to WIB Chair; issue management; unified advocacy on issues to support employers and sectors of employment. The Executive Committee includes WIB officers and other chair-appointed WIB members, and input from nonvoting members including the Chair of Chief Local Elected Officials, PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium Co-Chairs, WIB Solicitor, and RCWE Chief Executive Officer.

Fiscal Committee

The Fiscal Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the WIB on budgets, special projects and general financial matters. The Fiscal Committee includes WIB Chairperson, WIB Vice Chairperson, WIB Treasurer, Chief Local Elected Official of Erie County, Chair of the Chief Local Elected Officials, and one other Chief Local Elected Official from the rural counties who is appointed at the annual meeting of the Chief Local Elected Officials.

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee develops and oversees the implementation of regional PA CareerLink® marketing and public relations activities and enhances community awareness and understanding of the system network and its benefits to various consumers. The Communications Committee includes WIB members, PA CareerLink® Site Administrators, Business Service Unit representatives, economic development agency representatives, Chief Local Elected Officials, PA CareerLink® staff.

Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee

The Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee continuously monitors best practices and current trends for innovative approaches and workforce /PA CareerLink® system improvements; conducts certification and oversight of PA CareerLink®s; implements measures to ensure customer satisfaction; reviews and makes recommendations on contractor and PA CareerLink® performance; ensures quality standards are met. Identifies and certifies training providers that meet demand occupations; develops ITA process; ensures that a quality system for performance of training providers is implemented; establishes training priorities and skill standards based on employer needs analysis and other training issues that arise within the region. The Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee membership includes WIB members, Site Administrators, PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium representatives, and community education members.

Employer Demand Services Committee

The Employer Demand Services Committee ensures diversification and sustainability of the northwest PA workforce development system through funding and partnership development. Provides linkage to local economic development efforts; develops community needs identification/analysis and regional planning initiatives; provides guidance and recommendations to the

WIB on all relevant plans, processes and projects involving strategic goals. Enhances regional collaboration and networking with the Education, Economic Development, Private Industry and Government sectors. The **Employer Demand Services Committee** membership includes WIB members, PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium members, economic development representatives, Regional Rapid Response representatives, WIA Title I contractor staff, Business Services Unit representatives, community education members.

#### Board Development Committee

The Board Development Committee's function is to establish the Workforce Investment Board as the recognized leader for regional workforce development policy and efforts. **Board recruitment/selection process development, WIB orientation, and board self-assessment initiatives.** The Board Development Committee membership includes WIB members, community based organization representatives, and PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium members.

These committees were formed and their functions were developed in line with the WIB's strategic plan goals.

### **6. Describe Youth Council membership and how its composition supports programs that prepare youth for employment in demand occupations. (New)**

In addition to the members required for compliance (juvenile justice, public housing, parent of a WIA youth, WIA youth participant), the NWPA Youth Council membership includes representatives from K-12 education, Career and Technical Centers, post-secondary education, School-to-Work, youth placement facilities, community organizations, PA CareerLink®, and state government. This wide variety of youth experts provides a sound and extensive knowledge of youth issues, local community contacts and a network of partners. During PY 2008-09, the NWPA Regional Career Education Partnership (RCEP) merged with the NWPA Youth Council which connected the two groups to better work toward common goals.

### **7. Describe the relationship of the Youth Council to the LWIB and to the WIA Title I Contractor.**

The Youth Council is a standing committee of the NWPA WIB. The purpose of the Youth Council is to support and advise the LWIB in the establishment and delivery of youth services to ensure that youth have the opportunity to develop their career potential and become productive citizens. The Youth Council meets bi-monthly to address issues, review progress of youth programs, and develop recommendations for youth policy. The Council provides input in the development of the WIA Youth RFP, reviews proposals for recommendation to the WIB, and monitors the operations of the WIA Title I Youth Contractors.

### **8. Describe the process used to identify and select LWIB members.**

The CLEOs solicit private sector business nominations for potential WIB members from chambers of commerce and/or professional business

organizations. The Board Development Committee makes recommendations to the Executive Committee on targeted industry vacancies needing representation on the WIB. Executive Committee reviews the application information and provides their recommendation to the local chambers/business organizations on which candidates are considered the best fit for the WIB. Local chambers/business organizations then provide letters of nominations, along with other nomination information, to the respective Chief Local Elected Official for appointment. Labor representatives are nominated by local labor organizations and educational representatives are nominated by regional and/or local educational organizations. Two nominations are made for the area by state departments, one from Labor and Industry and one from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The other appointments are made partly from private sector business and partly from a combination of educational institutions, economic development, community-based organizations, other mandated partners, PA CareerLink® investors and other local individuals that the Chief Local Elected Officials determine to be appropriate, up to a maximum of 45 members.

- 9. Describe the process to identify a potential conflict of interest for, or any matter that would provide a financial benefit to: a LWIB member, a member's immediate family, or a representative entity. Include actions to be taken by the LWIB or LWIB member, in the event of a conflict of interest.**

NWPA WIB members and Youth Council members sign a Conflict of Interest statement and agree to comply with the Conflict of Interest Code as required by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. WIB members and Youth Council members are not permitted to discuss at any WIB, Youth Council, or committee meeting any matter, vote on any motion or take any action whatsoever that constitutes a conflict of interest under any law, rule, or regulation applicable directly or indirectly to the Workforce Investment Act program. When there is doubt as to whether a member's action is or may be construed to be a conflict of interest the member must abstain from acting on that issue or matter. Members are required to avoid any action which promotes the appearance of impropriety as it relates to conflict of interest. If there is an appearance that a conflict of interest exists, an investigation is conducted and if the WIB believes that a true conflict of interest has occurred, the member who has violated the conflict of interest code will be recommended for removal to the CLEOs or the Governor.

#### **IV. ECONOMIC AND LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS**

**Provide an updated analysis of the local economy, the labor pool, and labor market with a focus on the economic downturn and projections for economic recovery. This analysis must include the following: (Revised) (See Attachment 4)**

**A. The current makeup of the local economic base by industry.**

The top 10 employing industry sectors in Northwest PA consists of Manufacturing (28%), Healthcare (16%), Retail Trade (15%), Educational Services (12%), Accommodation and Food Services (7%), Construction (6%), Other Services

(except Public Administration) (5%), Transportation and Warehousing (4%), Public Administration (4%), and Wholesale Trade (3%).

Based on regional cluster comparisons for 2007, the percent of regional jobs by cluster:

Electronic Manufacturing Services (1.19%); Food (1.04%); Healthcare (11.75%); Metals and Metal Fabrication (7.99%); Plastics (2.75%); Building and Construction (3.42%); Information and Communications (3.42%); Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (2.52%).

(Source: Central Research Staff, 2009).

## **B. Current and anticipated plant closings, mass layoffs and business expansion (New – Recovery Act)**

Since January 2008, 117 companies in NWPA have experienced lay-offs affecting 5,754 individuals. Layoffs included the following businesses in the region: Clarion Laminates, Owens Illinois-Sam Adams Bottles, and SMI in Clarion County; DIC Tool, Dout Tool, Edinboro Mold, Ideal Tool, Meadville Forge, Moldex, and SMC – Saegertown Manufacturing in Crawford County; Accuride, Better Baked, Clear Lakes Lumber, County of Erie, Erie Coke, Erie Plastics, Erie Shipbuilding, Foamex, Fralo Industries, General Electric, Hamot Medical Center, Lake City Housing, Liberty Iron and Metal, Lord Corporation, Modern Industries, Montessori School, Nutec, PHB Die Cast, PHB Machine, Riley Stoker, Troyer Farms, and Zurn Industries in Erie County; Sperian Fall Protection and Webco Industries in Venango County, Adelphoi Warren, Associated Spring, Betts Industries, Bollinger, Chicago Bridge and Iron, Insert Molding Technology, Osram Sylvania, Targeted Pet Treats, United Refining, Warren County Courthouse and Whirley Industries in Warren County.

Of these, there have been 19 business closings resulting in 1,608 jobs being completely lost from the region. Examples of the business closings include Marquis-Commodore, Sealy Mattress in Clarion County; Dahlmar, Garvin Industries, Presby Homes – Titusville, and Value City in Crawford County; Chromalox, Circuit City, DHL/ABX Air, Fashion Bug, Flex-Y-Span, ICT, Insight Erie YP and Local Insight YP in Erie County.

## **C. Industries and occupations expected to grow or decline in the short term and over the next decade.**

The following occupational groupings have a larger concentration of employment in the NW region compared to the state as of 2007: management; community and social services; education, training and library; healthcare support; food preparation and serving related, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance; personal care and service; farming, fishing and forestry; construction and extraction; and production. These ten occupational groupings may offer the most job opportunities in the LWIA due to their higher-than-average employment concentrations. About half (48.8%) of the LWIA's jobs are found in these occupational groupings.

The following occupational groupings have demonstrated an increase in employment concentrations in the LWIA compared to the state from 2002 to 2007 and are likely to continue to increase by 2012: community and social services;

healthcare support; personal care and service; farming, fishing and forestry; construction and extraction; and transportation and material moving.

The top 15 3-digit SOC occupations that have a larger concentration of employment in the LWIA compared to the state as of 2007 include: counselors, social workers, and other community and social service specialists; first-line supervisors/managers, protective service workers; other personal care and service workers; communications equipment operators; farming, fishing, forestry workers and supervisors; fishing and hunting workers; forest, conservation, and logging workers; other construction and related workers, and extraction workers; supervisors and production workers; assemblers and fabricators; metal workers and plastic workers; textile, apparel, and furnishings occupations; woodworkers; and other production occupations. About 15% of the LWIA's jobs are found in these occupations.

**D. Local industries and occupations that have a demand for skilled workers and have available jobs, both today and projected over the next decade.**

Eight occupations at the 3-digit SOC level have demonstrated relatively large increases in employment concentrations in the LWIA compared to the state from 2002-2007 and are likely to continue to increase at a rapid pace through 2012: entertainment attendants and related workers; transportation, tourism, and lodging attendants; other personal care and service workers; communications equipment operators; supervisors, farming, fishing and forestry workers; forest, conservation and logging workers; extraction workers; and air transportation occupations.

Industries expected to have demand for skilled workers over the next decade include: medical centers, primary and secondary school systems, personal care centers, child care centers, trucking companies, air transportation companies, logging companies, gaming entertainment facilities, oil and gas industries, and reservation and transportation travel agencies.

**E. Occupations most critical to the local economic base.**

Occupations most critical to the local economic base include industry employment in manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, educational services, followed by accommodation and food services, construction, transportation and warehousing. Production occupations, food preparation and serving related occupations, construction trades workers, motor vehicle operators and installation maintenance and repair occupations account for 70% of all blue collar employment in the LWIA. Production occupations account for 32%, food preparation and serving related occupations for 12%, construction trades workers for 9%, motor vehicle operators for 9%, and installation maintenance and repair occupations for 9%.

Five occupations account for 74% of all white collar employment. They include office and administrative support occupations, sales and related occupations, management occupations, education training and library occupations, and health diagnostic and treating practitioners and technical occupations. Office and administrative support occupations account for 27%, sales and related occupations for 18%, management occupations for 12%, education training and library occupations for 12%, and health diagnostic and treating practitioners and technical occupations for 6%.

**F. Skill needs for the available, critical and projected jobs.**

The LWIB has determined through industry partnership outreach, individual sectoral Demand Occupation and KSA research, employer surveys and local labor market research that the following skills are needed:

Manufacturing: Written comprehension, mathematics, operation and control, manual dexterity, mechanical, equipment maintenance, reading comprehension, coordination, oral comprehension, administration and management

Business Services: Oral/written comprehension, economics and accounting, sales and marketing, reading comprehension, mathematics, active listening, critical thinking, oral/written expression, administration and management, clerical

Healthcare: Oral/written comprehension, reading comprehension, oral/ expression, service orientation, active listening, administration and management, clerical

Information and communication: Oral/written comprehension, computers and electronics, mathematics, manual dexterity, telecommunications, reading comprehension, sales and marketing, engineering and technology, oral/written expression, deductive reasoning, installation, programming, repairing, troubleshooting, speaking

**G. Current and projected demographic of the available labor pool, including the incumbent workforce.**

The NW Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Area includes Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango and Warren Counties. These counties have a combined civilian unemployment rate of 6.89%, civilian employed of 238,713, civilian unemployed of 17,685, with a total labor force of 356,661.

In May 2009, the NWPA region saw an annual increase in its civilian labor force from May 2008 of 1.18%; the NWPA region saw a monthly increase in its civilian labor force from April 2008 to May 2009 of 0.62%. This is the same trend seen across Pennsylvania and the United States.

The NWPA region saw a decline in the monthly employed population of -500 or -0.21% from April 2009 to May 2009 and a decline in the annual employed population of -7,100 or -2.95% from April 2008 to May 2009.

The NWPA region saw an increase in its monthly unemployed population of 2,100 or 9.55% from April 2009 to May 2009 and an increase in its annual unemployed population of 10,100 or 72.14% from April 2008 to May 2009.

The NWPA region saw an increase in its monthly unemployment rate of 0.7% from April 2009 to May 2009 and an increase in its annual unemployment rate of 3.8% from April 2008 to May 2009.

Unemployment rates for May 2009 by county for the NWPA region include Clarion County at 9.8%; Crawford County at 10.4%; Erie County at 9.3%; Forest County at 10.7%; Venango County at 9.1% and Warren County at 7.8%

The most recent figures for June 2009 indicate an unemployment rate of 9.6% for the NWPA region which is up from 5.6% in June of 2008 and surpasses the state unemployment rate of 8.4%.

(Data provided by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA), PA Department of Labor and Industry. Analysis provided by shared Research Coordinator, Central PA Workforce Development Corporation, July 2009).

**H. Any “in migration” or “out migration” of workers that impact the local labor pool.**

As of July 2008, the LWIA population was 519,348. Of that number, 227,945 individuals live in the LWIA who are employed, regardless of where they work. Approximately 215,760 individuals (95%) live and work in the LWIA. Approximately 12,185 workers (5%) live in the LWIA but work in another area. Therefore, the greater majority of workers in the LWIA live within the region.

Higher proportions of commuters compared to LWIA resident workers are apparent in the industries of:

<u>Out-Migration</u>	<u>In-Migration</u>
Construction	Construction
Federal Civilian & Military	Federal Civilian & Military
Forestry/Fishing/Ag Support/Farms/Mining	Forestry/Fishing/ Ag Support/Farms/Mining
Manufacturing	Manufacturing
Private Households	Utilities/Transportation & Warehousing
Utilities/Transportation & Warehousing	Wholesale Trade & Retail Trade

By county, about 80% of all Clarion County jobs are held by Clarion County residents; about 85% of all Crawford County jobs are held by Crawford County residents; about 93% of all Erie County jobs are held by Erie County residents; about 50% of all Forest County jobs are held by Forest County residents; about 81% of all Venango County jobs are held by Venango County residents; about 90% of all Warren County jobs are held by Warren County residents.

According to the Census commuting patterns, there is a net export of 1,816 workers commuting from the LWIA to other areas. A breakdown by county shows:

Clarion County: There is a net export of 1,233 workers commuting from Clarion County to other areas.

Crawford County: There is a net export of 3,036 workers commuting from Crawford County to other areas.

Erie County: There is a net import of 4,945 workers commuting to Erie County from other areas.

Forest County: There is a net import of 295 workers commuting from other areas to Forest County.

Venango County: There is a net export of 1,074 workers commuting from Venango County to other areas.

Warren County: There is a net export of 1,713 workers commuting from Warren County to other areas.

Approximately 32% of all commuters travel for an average of 10 to 19 minutes.

Furthermore, 75% of all commuters travel less than 30 minutes to work.

**I. Current local area skill gaps and skill gaps projected to occur over the next decade.**

The LWIB has evaluated the critical skills needed by workers in the occupations in which local job demand exceeds the supply of trained workers. As in the past, despite the fact that these critical occupations occur in a wide variety of occupational fields, they exhibit some noticeable similarities in their skill requirements. Most of these occupations share a common dependence on problem identification (identifying the nature of problems) and reading comprehension (understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents). Content skills, such as speaking (talking to others to effectively convey information), active listening (listening to what other people are saying and asking questions as appropriate), and writing (communicating effectively with others in writing as indicated by the needs of the audience), are all vitally important in these occupations, so it is important that training programs make sure their graduates do not complete their training without a sure command of these observation, literacy and communications skills. A second commonality of these occupations-in-demand is the important of social skills, such as coordination (adjusting actions in relation to others' actions), information gathering (knowing how to find information and identifying essential information), service orientation (actively looking for ways to help people), and mathematics (using scientific methods to solve problems). Training programs designed to address critical worker shortages in the Northwest PA WIA must take steps to insure that program completers are equipped with these content, process, social, and problem-solving skills in addition to the specific knowledge required for competency in these fields.

**V. PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

**A. Describe the network that is the Workforce Development System in the local area. Provide information about the availability and coordination of services. Include information about strategic partnerships with community and faith-based organizations, RIGs, WIRED, IPs, Health careers, and others (Revised) (former Section V (A) has been moved to VI (A))**

Most of the information and coordination of services is facilitated by the Regional Workforce Development Network as described in Section II. Vision, Goals and Priorities (A)(3) [Attachment 1] and the region's industry partnerships. Community based organizations have established varying levels of partnership within the PA CareerLink® system formally and an informal network of referrals exists to supplement the workforce development services that are available in the region. The following organizations are examples of FBO/CBOs that participate in the system as Board members, contractors, and/or PA CareerLink® partners: Greater Erie Community Action Committee, St. Benedict Education Center, Community Action, and Keystone Community Education Council. A special project was implemented in partnership with Mercyhurst College and Erie Community Foundation to develop a comprehensive data base of social service agencies and the services that they provide in the region.

**B. Describe the integration of the labor market information provided by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) into planning and decision-making.**

State and local labor market information provided by CWIA is incorporated into the policies and initiatives of the WIB involving cluster or occupational information. Labor market information provided by CWIA was utilized in the LWIA's strategic planning process. The Regional Data Analysis Tool (RDAT) is used in planning and development of programs and projects. In addition, local area research information provided by the shared research staff located in the Central LWIA has provided a valuable resource to the LWIB in setting policy for the region with regard to areas such as determining local self-sufficiency levels which are critical during this time of economic downturn. In addition, this local labor market information is an extremely useful resource for grant writing.

**C. Describe how LWIB ensures that the strategic direction and performance goals are communicated for PA CareerLink® planning and alignment. (Former sections D & E moved into section VI (A))**

Strategic direction and performance goals are communicated for PA CareerLink® planning and alignment through a number of avenues: operators, site administrators, supervisors, and program staff are invited to participate in the development of strategic initiatives; planning meetings; RCWE Staff conduct quarterly policy and program coordination meetings; the RCWE Staff attends local operator consortium meetings, Regional Workforce Development Team (RWDT) and County-Level Workforce Development Team (CLWDT) meetings. Performance measurements and expectations are documented in Title I program provider contracts. In addition, PA CareerLink® operator consortium chairpersons participate on WIB committees, including Executive Committee, as well as provide updates and receive feedback from the WIB at bimonthly WIB meetings.

## **VI. SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **A. Delivery System**

#### **1. Provide a description of the service delivery network.**

The NW Region is comprised of five PA CareerLink® sites. The purpose of each PA CareerLink® is to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance access to the individual programs' services while improving long-term success. The service delivery network includes the WIB, LEOs, Fiscal Agent, PA CareerLink® Operators, and PA CareerLink® Partners (mandated and voluntary). Each PA CareerLink® is a full-service site and provides the full continuum of core, intensive, and training services. Core services are also available throughout the service area via Internet access.

Customers entering the PA CareerLink® can receive a full array of core services from any or all partners. Core services are tracked in the State PA CareerLink® system. Customers requiring intensive services are evaluated and recommendations are made based on the initial assessment of knowledge, skills and abilities. This would also include recommendations for additional core services that include workshop participation. Based on the determination of the initial assessment, the customer begins job search services or moves into the intensive services process. A customer requiring intensive services proceeds with formal and informal assessment. Intensive services require a training plan be developed and may include additional assessment or job development. If the

customer cannot obtain employment through intensive services, they are considered for the next step which is training. Training services may include skill training or on-the-job training. The customer is exited upon securing suitable employment or choosing to no longer participate in PA CareerLink® services, at which time follow-up services are conducted for no less than 12 months.

**2. Identify the LWIA's PA CareerLink®(s), including: the number of sites, location, and affiliate sites. Describe factors used to assess the effectiveness of such configuration.**

- **Include factors for determining a location's business hours and the types of services offered. (Reference can be made to previous Section V(A)(1) and (2))**

Five full-service centers were chartered and operational by November 8, 2002. These are the PA CareerLink® of Erie County at 155 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Erie; the PA CareerLink® of Oil Region at the PennDot Building, 255 Elm Street, Oil City; the PA CareerLink® of Warren County, 24 Market Street, Warren; the PA CareerLink® of Crawford County, 210 Chestnut Street, Meadville; and the PA CareerLink® of Clarion County, 22 South Second Avenue, Clarion.

In addition to the fully chartered comprehensive sites, three access points are located in Corry, Marienville, and Tionesta.

The number and location of PA CareerLink® sites and access points were established by the CLEOs in 1998. As leases for facilities become due for renewal (i.e. one-year in advance) the RCWE forms local steering committees comprised of local WIB members, operators, CLEOs, community partners and leaders, etc. to evaluate the demand for services, the options for delivery and the alternatives for facilities to support the need. These steering committees provide recommendations to the WIB. PA CareerLink® steering committees have been convened for Clarion, Crawford, Erie, and Warren Counties. Business Hours for each site were determined based on demand for services.

A PA CareerLink® capacity plan was conducted in October 2008 within the local PA CareerLink® system to identify best practices and build efficiencies within the system in an effort to consolidate and streamline efforts. This capacity plan provided recommendations regarding physical infrastructure, physical locations, staffing and delivery of service. These recommendations are currently being implemented in an effort to ensure quality improvement and eliminate waste throughout the local PA CareerLink® system.

**3. Describe the process and criteria used to certify/validate Pa CareerLink® and affiliate sites. (New)**

The NWPA region's five PA CareerLink® sites are certified via the state's formal CareerLink Quality Review Process (CLQR). This process looks at seven key indicators in the overall operation of PA CareerLink®s that include Leadership, Local Planning, Workforce Connections, Job Seeker Service Delivery, Business Services, Resources and System Indicators. The CLQR process allows an opportunity for PA CareerLink®s to take a comprehensive

look at how services are provided from a continuous improvement perspective to achieve a higher quality of service delivery to customers, both job seekers and employers.

In addition to the CLQR process, regular quality monitoring visits of all PA CareerLink® sites are conducted within the region. Currently the WIB CareerLink Committee is evaluating a quality assurance process for each local PA CareerLink® site that is based on the Malcolm Baldrige formally recognized process that looks at key areas such as leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resources focus, process management and business results.

**4. Describe overarching service delivery strategies, including the following:**

**a. The strategy for seamless service delivery including: transition between core, intensive and training services and referral to partner services for both businesses and individual customers.**

A referral method for customers exists between the PA CareerLink® Operators and the PA CareerLink® Partners. The primary principle of the referral system is the provision of a seamless delivery of service to both job seekers and employers. The PA CareerLink® system is focused on a shared service delivery infrastructure to employer PA CareerLink® partners to offer the widest array of services that meet employer and job seeker needs. By utilizing a common database system, partners will be able to provide a variety of universally accessible, high quality, customized services in a streamlined, cost-effective manner. The PA CareerLink®s strive to provide universal access to all customers, and to insure customer satisfaction through informed customer choice. Customers may choose self-service access to services via the Internet from home, the public library system or affiliate partner sites.

Customers who seek assisted services may visit a PA CareerLink® site or access services at an affiliate site located in their community. Individuals entering a PA CareerLink® are greeted and asked to sign-in and complete a brief survey on services of interest. An information sheet on PA CareerLink® system services is provided. Next, the customer is directed to the Career Resource Center where staff are available to assist them in accessing services. For services provided on-site, the customer can choose to be assisted by PA CareerLink® staff or to access services through self-directed methods.

Job Seeker Functional Teams were developed and are comprised of staff from partnering agencies that are assigned to provide core, intensive and training services. Each core service is documented. If unsuccessful in securing employment through core services, the customer may continue in intensive services, where service provision will also be documented. If still unsuccessful, the customer may be referred for training services. All efforts will be made to assist the customer in securing financial aid and other partner resources (such as OVR, CAO, and local welfare program contractors) before considering WIA funding for training. WIA training services are limited to state approved training programs and limited by LWIB requirements. Priority in issuing Individual Training Accounts will be given to veterans and eligible spouses, dislocated workers, public

assistance recipients, and other low-income individuals who cannot otherwise be served.

An Employer Functional Team and the BSU are responsible for coordinating the PA CareerLinks® outreach efforts to employers. This includes employer visits, job order development, and other customer-driven job development activities. The PA CareerLink® Business Services Units have evolved into County-level Workforce Development Teams (CLWDT), as identified employer needs have extended beyond what the local PA CareerLink® could address. These teams consist of agencies and organizations spanning education, economic development, chambers, public sector service organizations, and workforce development representatives. They meet on a monthly basis to ensure timely responses to identified needs. Referrals have been made through the Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) and are case managed to assure better customer satisfaction.

**b. The type and availability of training and employment activities and supportive services, the provision of universal service availability for individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and those with significant barriers encountered and the means to address them. Include how these are determined and assessed. (Revised)**

A primary focus of the PA CareerLink®s is to provide comprehensive workforce development services, accessible to all employers, job seekers and incumbent workers that result in economic self-sufficiency and a workforce trained to employer specifications and prepared to compete in a global economy. The following are a variety of training and employment activities that exist within the local area:

- Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment
- On-the-Job Training
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction which may include cooperative education
- Training programs operated by the private sector
  - Skill upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with services described above
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training
- Training services that are developed and implemented by a partner agency's governing legislation

Supportive services are available to eligible WIA Youth throughout the region. Such services include assistance with transportation and child care, referral to medical services, assistance with work-related clothing and tools, stipends, housing assistance and linkages to community services.

The LWIB has instituted a local supportive services policy that states that the contractor will ensure that unless stipulated otherwise in the grant award,

needs-support payments for dislocated workers can be provided bi-weekly to any individual who: is currently participating in WIA Title I training services; has ceased to qualify for, or have exhausted, all UC benefits or Trade Readjustment Allowance; and is not obtaining such services through any other funding stream. The individual receiving training will be responsible to present the appropriate subcontractor with verified time sheets in order to receive this stipend; and the subcontractor will be fully responsible for the administration, payment authorization and distribution, and maintenance of records in disbursement of support funds.

For people with limited English proficiency, the Language Line is provided and assistance is available from Interpretive Services of the Hispanic-American Council. The limited English proficiency participants are also referred to adult literacy providers.

When there is a hearing impaired person in need of on-site interpretive services, state certified Sign Language Interpreters are contacted to provide assistance. All PA CareerLink® staff are trained on the use of the TTY line. A Braille embosser, materials available in alternate format, Zoom text and JAWS are available.

Handicap parking is available at all PA CareerLink® locations. Signage includes Braille for the visually impaired. Staff, through interaction with participants, are able to assess particular needs and make appropriate referrals or arrangements for special assistance to ensure that there is universal access to all services.

**c. Include a copy of the memorandum of understanding (Appendix D) between the LWIB and each partner in the local workforce investment system, as required in WIA Section 118(b)(2)(B).**

A copy of the LWIB/Partner Agreements (MOU) for each partner in the local workforce investment system is included as Appendix D.

**5. Describe how the Eligible Training Program / Provider System is used to provide improvement of education and training opportunities in response to the needs business and industry. Include the policies and procedures to determine eligibility of local level training providers, the use of performance information to determine continued eligibility, update or revise system information, and the agency responsible for these activities. (Moved from Section B)**

The development and implementation of the list of regional high priority occupations gave training providers the impetus to focus training opportunities on programs that would have the greatest impact on meeting the workforce needs of business and industry in the region. The first step in the eligibility process is to complete a Provider Sign-Off form. This signed document signifies that the training provider understands and agrees to adhere to the region's Individual Training Account policy, which is contained in the form. It provides verification of compliance with ADA standards and the school's non-discrimination/EOE policy. This form also provides a description of the data

collection methodology for performance information. Training providers must include the following documentation when submitting this form: copy of license, accreditation, most recently audited financial statement, and school catalog. Once this information is received and reviewed, the institution may submit courses/programs. The submission process could be delayed if the review of this information and unfamiliarity with the institution warrants a physical visit. Courses/ programs are reviewed to ascertain whether or not they provide the skills, knowledge and abilities for the corresponding high priority occupation. Training providers are required to meet the performance measures implemented in the Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership's Performance Management Plan for PY 2006 to continue eligibility. Training providers are also monitored during the program year. The RCWE oversees these activities.

**6. Describe and provide examples of coordination with apprenticeship programs. (New – Recovery Act)**

Currently youth apprenticeships are used when available; however, apprenticeships are limited in their availability within the LWIA. The local Building and Construction industry partnership is working closely with labor organizations in the promotion of apprenticeships.

**B. Adults and Dislocated Workers**

**1. Describe how the LWIB ensures universal access to the minimum required core services and how partner resources are integrated to deliver core services.**

Universal access to core services is provided through the five PA CareerLink® sites and via the Internet. Dislocated workers identified through Rapid Response activities are provided an opportunity to register with the PA CareerLink® on-line and are required to attend a PREP workshop which outlines the services available to them through the PA CareerLink®. PA CareerLink® sites have been designed to appear seamless to customers. Staff from all partners share duties in the Career Resource Center and are cross-trained with basic knowledge of other partner programs to be able to assist customers effectively.

**2. Describe measures taken to ensure intensive services are provided to adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in WIA Section 134(d)(3)(A).**

Once the customer is determined eligible for intensive services, a mutually agreed upon Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) is developed, which outlines the services the customer needs to obtain and retain employment. The IEP identifies employment goals, skill deficiencies, and barriers that must be addressed.

The LWIA is working with the PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium to develop a region-wide standard for assessment. This tiered, progressive assessment process will identify potential stumbling blocks that can be addressed through a better comprehensive plan prior to an individual seeking employment or training. The first tier at Assessment Level One includes the identification of

basic skill levels such as soft skills, Basic Literacy, and English as a Second Language. The second tier at Assessment Level Two includes identifying interest and career-related skills through the Choices, SAGE and TABE assessment tools. The third tier at Assessment Level Three includes the assessment of occupation-specific, employer-defined skills through the WorkKeys assessment tool. Assessment for the individual may include an interest inventory such as Choices. More comprehensive assessment, such as WorkKeys or SAGE Compute-a-Match, may be used as a counseling tool to determine compatibility with employment possibilities. If, after completion of the prescribed intensive services, the customer is unable to secure employment, he/she may be recommended for further training that is viable and consistent with the customer's documented career goal.

When customers, such as Dislocated Workers, enter intensive services with a set of skills and work history, counseling for re-employment or training may include skill building rather than entry level retraining.

**3. Discuss how, in the context of a low-growth economy, innovative training strategies to:**

- a. Address longer-term unemployment.**
- b. Increase services to workers in need.**
- c. Support the full range of PA CareerLink® customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations, including such supports as needs-based payments, basic skills remediation, English as a second language, and supportive services.**

The NWPA WIB, PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium, and WIA Title I contractors are developing additional intensive service opportunities such as Work Certified, WIN Courseware, increased partnership with ABLE providers, work specific short-term training such as "Shop Math" and other short-term work skills programs to assist job seekers during this period where job opportunities may be limited. Partnerships with Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) providers will address literacy and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) needs. The local workforce investment board will work with local Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) providers to address any capacity issues that may arise due to increased need for these services. This could include additional instructors or class offerings. Partnership with the local Employment and Retention Network (EARN) provider will develop into a shared Work Certified program that will teach job skills. Additional workshops will be created to handle the increased number of participants and unique needs of recently dislocated workers. This plan will ensure clients are taking the steps that will allow them to complete their education/training, obtain a job in a field of interest, and maintain that employment.

Through the intensive assessment process, clients with these needs will be identified and referred to partnering organizations to receive services such as basic skills remediation and English as a Second Language (ESL). As stated above, the Work Certified program will be made

available within the PA CareerLink® for individuals requiring basic job skills.

The LWIB revised its Supportive Services Policy to increase the amount of needs-related payments to eligible dislocated workers and widened the option of needs-related payments for adults through Recovery Act funds.

**d. Ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessments and certifications towards the next level of education and employment.**

The NWPA Region will implement two certification programs: Work Certified and Work Keys. Work Certified includes basic skills, initial computer skills, work ethic, responsibility, etc. WorkKeys measures work related reading, math and locating skills against specific job titles. Clients will be able to match their knowledge, skills and abilities to jobs and training within their areas of interest. Clients wishing to enter training will be required to show sufficient levels of skill in the three basic areas. The NWPA business service representatives will work with employers to ensure that these certificates are recognized and meaningful to employers.

**e. Provide targeted work experiences in order to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all jobseekers, and summer work experience for youth.**

The LWIA engages its industry partnerships in providing targeted work experiences, on-the-job training, and summer work experiences for youth, as well as developing apprenticeship programs as another path to increase skill levels. LWIA contractors work closely with adult, dislocated, and youth clients and employers to identify appropriate work experience and on-the-job training opportunities. Currently apprenticeships are limited in availability. RCWE, its industry partnerships, and its contractors are collaborating to identify and develop additional apprenticeship opportunities. The Great Lakes Building Trades Industry Partnership has taken a special interest in the development of apprenticeships. The NWPA Region provided summer youth work experiences for 254 youth during summer 2009. There is an expectation that an additional 150 youth will receive work experiences during the summer of 2010.

**f. Align workforce activities with education, economic, and community development strategies to meet skill needs of individuals for occupations and industries important to the local and regional economies.**

**(Revised – Recovery Act) (Former sections B (2)(3)(4) have been merged into other sections of the Plan)**

The NWPA Regional Workforce Development Network was developed to address needs identified through the county-level teams that encompass a collaborating body of partnering agencies with dedicated resources that align workforce development, community development, economic

development and education strategies. The goal of the team is to create a pipeline where these resources help to ensure efficiencies within a system with limited funds and to avoid duplication of outreach efforts. This group meets monthly to assess needs and make recommendations to organizations who can meet local and regional industry needs for training and/or services that will build or sustain the skills, knowledge and abilities of the workforce.

**4. Describe any plans for transferring funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Include the circumstances applicable to a transfer request, the measures to assure no loss of service to the original program population, and the expected impact on program performance. (Formerly at VI (B)(1))**

If needed, the NWPA WIB will submit a request to the state for permission to move Dislocated Worker Funds to the Adult program.

**5. Describe the reemployment services (RES) provided to Unemployment Insurance claimants, including:**

- a. Coordination of RES with other services provided at the PA CareerLink® under WIA.**
- b. Services that will be provided under RES, such as skill assessment, career guidance, individual service plans, and labor market information.  
(New – Recovery Act)**

PA CareerLink® partners provide re-employment services assisting customers in job search, resume writing, pre-employment workshops, PREP (Profile Re-employment Program), and Rapid Response Activities.

Unemployment Compensation (UC) customers are identified when they sign in (in person) at the PA CareerLink®. New customers or those who have not utilized services recently complete an intake form (PEP - Personal Employment Plan) that lets PA CareerLink® staff know their situation and needs. PA CareerLink® staff in the Career Resource Center give those customers a one-on-one orientation and explain the programs and services available to them. Referrals are made to the appropriate programs. When the Adult/DW program staff receives the referral, they invite the customer to a WIA Orientation which explains the program and gets the process started. The customer is assigned to a WIA case manager, who provides assessment and reemployment services aimed at helping the customer find suitable employment. If the customer is unable to find suitable employment, training is considered. The customer is also referred to any other agency/staff that may assist, such as Veterans Program, OVR (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) etc., and the WIA staff work along with those agency/staff to assist the customer in the most effective manner. WIA staff continue to track and provide services to those who are employed (track retention - address problems) and in training (track progress, address problems, provide reemployment services after completion of training).

PA CareerLink® staff also reach out to UC customers through mailings (names retrieved through CWDS). They are sent a letter inviting them to visit the PA CareerLink® and are made aware of available services. PREP customers who are interested in training are also referred to WIA Adult/DW providers. Individuals who fail to attend PREP after two notices are reported to the UC office for their follow-up action.

### **C. Service to Specific Populations**

**Describe for each of the groups listed below, the process used to integrate programs in the service delivery system; e.g. maximize and leverage resources, ensure sustainability of the system, avoid duplication, and provide innovative services within the LWIA. Describe how the LWIA will ensure that Recovery Act services will be prioritized for low-income individuals and those receiving public assistance. (Revised to include Recovery Act)**

- **Services to businesses**

Businesses are served through the PA CareerLink® Business Service Units which are made up of WIA, BWDP, and other partners who deal directly with employers. Additionally, NWPA has created shared business service representative positions with economic development partners in the counties to provide one point of contact/liaison for the employers, economic development and PA CareerLink® staff.

- **Approach to identify qualified applicants for partner programs**

Through weekly staff development, PA CareerLink® staff are made aware of the eligibility requirements of partner programs as well as events or special information from the partners. This shared knowledge/cross training allows for clients to be referred to appropriate program opportunities.

- **Services to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers**

The NWPA Workforce System does not currently have specific programs targeted to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, though some special services for children of these workers exists through the K-12 education system. NWPA is evaluating the development of an agriculture industry partnership that can assist in identifying specific employment and training needs for this population.

- **Services to persons with disabilities**

The PA CareerLink®s in NWPA are ADA compliant. Accommodations are made to assure individuals with disabilities are able to access services such as ADA compliant work stations, computers, Braille embosser, large print, magnifiers, headsets, speech recognition, and test-to-speech technology.

- **Services to veterans and related eligible persons, including National Guard and returning veterans. (TEGL 22-04) (TEGL 22-04, Change 1)**

Eligible veterans and their spouses receive priority of service as identified in the local Priority of Service Policy, in addition to specific services provided through the Veteran Representatives located in the PA CareerLink®s.

- **Services to TANF customers and low-income individuals:**

PA CareerLink® works closely with the Department of Public Welfare Employment and Retention Network (EARN) program provider to ensure that TANF clients are being served in the most efficient and effective manner. A pilot program has been developed in which both the EARN contractor and WIA contractor will be offering Work Certified classes. EARN clients will be able to participate in these classes at the PA CareerLink® and the PA CareerLink® customers will be able to participate at the EARN site. In smaller counties, this will create efficiencies as there are often not enough of either client to fill a class. In Erie, where class sizes may overflow, two classes may run concurrently.

- **Services to displaced homemakers;**  
Displaced homemakers can be made eligible to be served under the WIA Dislocated Worker Program. In as such, all dislocated worker services would be available to them as identified in their IEP. Additionally, some displaced homemakers may also enroll in the New Choices/New Options program.
- **Services to individuals with multiple barriers to employment, including:**
  - **Services to women and minorities;**
  - **Older individuals;**
  - **Persons with limited English proficiency;**
  - **Persons with disabilities, and;**
  - **Ex-offenders**  
In each PA CareerLink®, there is a partnership among mandatory, as well as other partners to assist in provision of core services. Core services are universally accessible to job seekers and employers. Staff persons providing such services are identifiable only as PA CareerLink® staff. It is only at the point where job seekers enter intensive services that any eligibility for services occurs. Populations in need and partners vary among PA CareerLink@s. Service coordination includes coverage of front desk activities, staffing of Career Resource Centers, Help Desk/Job Referral assistance, core service workshops, Rapid Response coverage, dual enrollments for TAA eligible customers, employer services and participation on Business Service Units, etc. Each PA CareerLink® Site Administrator oversees these partnerships in each PA CareerLink® to accommodate needs and facilitate services for the job seekers and employers specific to their communities. Some PA CareerLink® partners or referral sources serving specific populations include Mature Services (older persons), OVR (persons with disabilities), Veterans Reps (veterans), ABLE and Hispanic American Council (persons with limited English proficiency), GECAC Re-Entry Program (ex-offenders), Rural Opportunities Inc (farm workers), Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership Migrant Services (migrant workers), Upward Bound and Talent Search (minorities), New Choices/New Options (displaced homemakers and women), WIA Title I Contractors (adults and dislocated workers), and DPW Earn Program (public assistance recipients).
- **Services to Dislocated worker and Trade Act eligible participants.**

WIA Title I Dislocated Worker staff are located in each PA CareerLink® site. They participate in Rapid Response activities and PREP workshops to provide information to potential Dislocated Workers. Dislocated workers may receive ITAs to be re-trained in a demand occupation following the local ITA policy.

Trade Act Program Services is a cooperative venture conducted through BWDP and WIA Dislocated Worker staff. Often, the Rapid Response Coordination Services Unit is directly involved in service provision, when Rapid Response Services are needed.

Program Year 2005 was a pilot year for the dual enrollment of Trade Act eligible workers into the WIA Dislocated Worker Program.

#### **D. Priority of Service**

**1. Provide the Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy (Appendix E) including policy for the justification of exceptions. Describe how ITA resources are leveraged with other resources. (Reference previous Section VI(B)(4))**

The ITA policy has been included as Appendix E. Exceptions to the policy are considered and implemented as needed and deemed appropriate. An exception was approved to allow training approvals for ITAs funded by Recovery Act funds to be awarded to Adult and Dislocated Worker Program participants retroactively back to the date when the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was implemented in February 17, 2009 to provide more training opportunities in line with the spirit of the Recovery Act. The WIB voted to reduce the cap on ITAs to \$5,500 in an effort to serve more individuals with limited funding.

**2. Describe local policies regarding self-sufficiency, including the process for establishing, monitoring compliance with and updating policy. (Reference previous Section VI(B)(3))**

Local policies regarding self-sufficiency are defined differently for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The LWIB self-sufficiency policy for Dislocated Workers includes that if a Dislocated Worker's current gross weekly income exceeds 80% of their income at dislocation, they will be considered self-sufficient. An Adult is considered self-sufficient when earning a wage of \$14.55 per hour, based on regional research. This policy was revised based on extensive research of the LWIA and review of federal and state regulations and guidelines. This self-sufficiency policy will continue to be reviewed and evaluated as we implement Recovery Act initiatives and activities to ensure effectiveness and quality in the delivery of services to participants.

**3. Discuss the LWIB's policies and procedures for priority of service for the One-Stop Consortium, including the process used to determine whether funds are limited. (Revised)**

The LWIA Priority of Service policy was recently revised to provide more comprehensive language describing the implementation of the priority of

service policy for Adult participants (funded under formula funds) when funds are limited. It is outlined that priority should be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals as detailed in WIIN No. 3-99, Change 2. The process used to determine whether funds are limited includes obligation levels: at or above 80% of available program funds in the first quarter, at or above 85% of available program funds in the second quarter, at or above 90% of available program funds in the third quarter, and at or above 95% of available program funds in the fourth quarter. This priority of service policy will continue to be reviewed and evaluated as we implement Recovery Act initiatives to ensure effectiveness and quality in the delivery of priority of service to eligible program participants.

**4. Provide the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Veterans priority policies. (Appendix F ) Veterans priority must be sufficient to meet the requirements of 20 CFR 1010.230, published at 73 Fed. Reg. 78132 on December 19, 2008 (Revised)**

The LWIB revised Priority of Service Policy includes language to ensure compliance with the requirements of 20 CFR 1010.230 and the Jobs for Veterans Priority Provisions of the Jobs for Veterans Act from December 19, 2008. It is noted that in the event that funds are limited, first priority would be public assistance recipients and low income individuals who are also covered veterans and eligible spouses. The WIB also revised the LWIB Priority of Service policy to open it up to more individuals for core and intensive services and to increase our opportunity to provide more services to the working poor and low income population in times of limited funding.

The LWIB Priority of Service Policy is included as Appendix F.

**E. Rapid Response (RR)**

**Describe the LWIB's role and functions in the provision of Rapid Response services including coordination with statewide Rapid Response activities.**

Regional Rapid Response Services are coordinated by the DLI Rapid Response Coordination Services Unit, from the point that the initial WARN (or alternate notification) is issued through the conclusion of layoffs or plant closing. The regional representative is located in the PA CareerLink® – Erie County, and travels throughout Northwest Pennsylvania as needed. The Rapid Response Coordinator is the first point of contact for all Rapid Response services, who works with the employers and unions, where applicable, to determine the services needed and the service delivery approach which best serves the needs of each employer and affected workers. Staffs of the Bureau of Workforce Development Services (BWDP) and WIA Title I Dislocated Worker Contractors work closely with the Rapid Response Coordinator to form a Rapid Response Team, providing Rapid Response and other core services, as needed. Other PA CareerLink® partners and community agencies work closely with the Rapid Response Team, helping the affected workers and their families adjust to the dislocation, and prepare them for re-employment. NWPA has implemented the use of Dislocated Worker Transition Teams which are made up of workers and managers of the affected company to advocate for access to services and to reduce the effects of worker dislocation. RCWE will implement a regional strategy to provide coordination and additional workshop opportunities for dislocated and trade affected workers through the creation of program and workshop specialist

positions. These individuals will work closely with the Rapid Response coordinator and RR Teams to ensure clients are receiving services in a timely and effective manner.

## **F. Youth**

**1. Describe the strategy to ensure eligible youth have the opportunity to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training. Include strategies to address:**

**a. Youth most in need, such as: out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in and aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, and other at-risk youth.**

**b. Reconnecting disconnected youth through multiple pathways to education and training that enable them to enter and advance in the workforce**

**c. Serving youth with funds from the ARRA, and how strategies respond to the economic downturn.**

**d. STEM education and Green jobs. (Revised)**

WIA Title I Youth contractors are housed in the PA CareerLink®s across the region which gives them access to youth seeking services. In addition, they actively seek referrals from Children and Youth Services, Juvenile Probation Offices, County Assistance Offices, School Districts and other community partners to identify youth in need of service. The contractors employ case managers to work closely with each of the registered WIA youth to ensure that individual obstacles are identified and a tailored plan is put in place to assist each participant in obtaining success through education and/or employment. This plan includes development of a long-term employment goal and the short-term action steps needed to reach that goal. As needs are identified, the contractors work with community partners to connect youth to appropriate services.

As the economic downturn continues, the competition for jobs becomes greater. Jobs typically held by young people are now being filled by adults with greater experience. The ARRA funds provide an incentive for employers to hire young people as well as provide worthy work experience for youth. Over 400 youth were served in this program from May-September 2009. The LWIA operated a summer youth employment program in summer 2010 as well. Year round ARRA activities will focus on the older out-of-school youth population assisting them to find employment and/or obtain further education and employment.

RCWE is a member of the NWPA STEM Steering Committee and is heavily involved in the planning and activities occurring around this project. The Youth Council and WIB actively support STEM efforts by supporting STEM summer camps, Robo-bots competitions, the STEM Conference, Real World Design Challenge, and the Great Lakes Industrial Technology Summit. RCWE, with support of the STEM Initiative, is in development of an

information video targeted toward middle schools students that will create interest and excitement toward STEM Skills.

A Renewable Energy/Green IT industry partnership has recently formed that is examining jobs and skill needs around green technology. It is expected that the development of this partnership will help to inform youth about future job possibilities and needed training.

**2. Describe the Youth Council and how it is integrating a vision for serving youth through collaboration with crosscutting agencies or entities within the local workforce investment system.**

The Youth Council consists of the mandated partners as well as other professionals with youth in expertise. (See Attachment 7). The NWPAWIB Strategic goal for youth is to increase workforce development opportunities for youth by: 1) continuously improving the operations and programs of the youth system, 2) creating a link between education and workforce development, and 3) increasing awareness of existing youth services. To this end, the Youth Council has created a network of program partners throughout the geographic region headed by two lead agencies that provide case management and act as brokers of services for youth. The lead agencies are currently the City of Erie School District and Venango Training and Development Center. There are over 100 Network program partners that provide one or more of the ten service elements for youth. These partners include approximately school districts, community organizations and private sector employers. Where a particular element is not already available, the lead agency will develop that service element as needed. Lead agencies are responsible for identifying and overseeing youth work experiences.

**3. Describe local efforts to promote collaboration between the public workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment. Additionally, describe local efforts to successfully connect youth to the education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment.**

The NWPA WIB promotes collaboration in many ways. The Title I Youth RFP specifically seeks collaborate proposals that include all ten required elements. Bidders must show that they are partnering with organizations that provide these services rather than duplicating services already being offered by others. This requirement not only builds collaboration but also promotes efficiencies in the system. Once awarded, the program partners meet regularly to share best practices, collaborate on new projects and identify the best plan for serving individuals in their communities. The network provides an excellent vehicle for referrals and collaboration. These partners include approximately 100 schools, Juvenile Probation Offices, Assistance Offices, employers, community and faith-based organizations across the region.

**4. Describe the strategy to coordinate with Job Corps, Pennsylvania Conservation Corps (PCC) and other youth programs. (Revised)**

As described above, the NWPA WIB has built a huge network of partners including Junior Achievement, Keys to Work, PA Business Week, PA Conservation Corps, among others. The strategy used to develop the network and coordinate efforts has been to bring these organizations to the table and identify the benefits for everyone involved, which removes territorial issues. The NWPA Region has been fortunate to have a strong relationship with Job Corps in the past. A Job Corps representative was a member of the Youth Council and worked closely with the WIA Youth Contractors to serve youth in the region. Due to a recent change in Job Corps staffing, there is no longer a full-time Job Corps representative in NWPA. The RCWE is working toward re-building that relationship through the Job Corps Center in Pittsburgh.

**5. Describe policies to ensure compliance with applicable safety and child labor laws.**

All worksite supervisors and youth are required to sign off on a work experience handbook which outlines the program and details safety requirements and child labor laws. Programs and work-sites serving WIA Youth are monitored for compliance with child labor laws and safety regulations. The RCWE has developed a monitoring tool which includes an interview with the employer/instructor, a site inspection, and an interview with the youth. If a site or program is found to be out of compliance, corrective action will be taken which may result in immediate removal of the youth from the worksite.

**6. Describe the strategy to provide initial intake, objective assessment, case management, individual service strategies and eligibility assessment for Youth.**

Youth are required to complete a pre-application, provide documentation, and complete an initial needs assessment questionnaire for entry into the WIA Youth Program. The pre-application document gathers the basic identification information, income level, and work history while the initial needs assessment provides an overview of what the individual's needs might be. If the youth meets eligibility requirements, the case manager will review the initial needs assessment with the youth (and parent if the youth is under age 18) to better define the needs and begin to create an individual service strategy (ISS). If the youth is not eligible for WIA, he/she will be referred to other services that may be able to help them. Out-of-school youth are assessed for basic skill levels in reading and math using a state-approved tool. Youth testing below basic will be provided tutoring and/or remediation to raise their skill levels. Other assessments may be conducted for occupational interest, aptitude, and employability skills to determine appropriate goals and services. Upon completion of each service element identified in the ISS, the participant and case manager will review the ISS to ensure the course of action is still appropriate. The case manager maintains contact with the youth throughout each service element and continuing through a 12-month retention service phase (follow-up) after completion of active services.

**7. Describe the design framework for youth programs that includes the following components:**

- **Preparing youth for post-secondary education;**
- **Connecting academic and occupational learning;**
- **Preparing youth for unsubsidized employment opportunities;**
- **Connecting youth to the business community through intermediary entities.**

Youth are assessed for basic skills, occupational interest, aptitude, and employability skills. The participant and case manager work together to define long-term occupational goals and short-term action steps. As the goals and action steps are defined, the case manager identifies appropriate services. These may include tutoring to raise basic skills levels, complete high school or obtain a GED; researching post-secondary training opportunities; connections to financial aid assistance; an ITA; connection with Job Corps; pre-employment skill workshops; guided work experience; job shadowing; and leadership development opportunities.

**8. Describe the anticipated program design for the WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act. Include in this description a program design for both younger, in-school, and older or out-of-school youth (including the 22-24 year olds that can be served with Recovery Act funds).**

The LWIA implemented a Summer Youth Work Experience Program in summer 2009 that encompassed the six counties of the region and served approximately 400 youth. A Summer Youth Employment Program was also conducted during the Summer of 2010 through ARRA funds. The youth were determined eligible through the PA CareerLink® Contractor system that is in place. To expedite the enrollment process, these youth received a work-ready assessment prior to being placed in employment. Throughout the six-week Summer Work Experience, participants received instruction in work readiness skills and were assessed at the end of the experience to measure an increase in work-readiness skills.

- Youth ages 22-24 which have been recruited through the Summer Youth Program will be placed with private sector employers, as much as possible, with the intention of unsubsidized employment beyond summer. Those interested in additional education and training opportunities will receive thorough assessment in basic skills, work attitudes and aptitudes, and career interest surveys within the first 60 days of participation. If needed, these youth will receive remediation, GED prep, or any of the other allowable services to prepare them for additional education. Following the Summer Work Experience, these youth may receive Individual Training Accounts (ITA) or other forms of educational assistance to enroll in post-secondary education and training.
- Older and out-of-school youth ages 18-21 may be placed in private or public sector Summer Employment as well as receive any of allowable services that may be necessary to re-connect them with education or raise their basic skill levels. These service elements include remediation, GED Prep, work readiness, supportive services, mentoring, and leadership development. As with the 22-24 year olds, those interested in continuing their education may receive thorough assessment and Individual Training Accounts to assist in post-secondary enrollment.

- Younger and in-school youth ages 16-18 will be placed mostly in public sector summer work sites in small groups of 4-8. The focus for this group will be job readiness. As with the other age groups, students may be identified that require additional services beyond summer and will continue to participate in Workforce Investment Act activities.

Students ages 14-16 will participate in summer career camps with a community service component. These youth will learn work-readiness, leadership, teamwork, and have an opportunity to explore a variety of careers. Participation in the community service component will earn the youth a stipend at the completion of the camp. Depending on location, the camps may last 2-3 weeks. Youth in need of additional assistance may be served beyond summer through the full array of Workforce Investment Act services.

The NWPA WIB will operate summer youth programs in 2009 and 2010. It is expected that 67% of program funds will be used during the first summer. Youth participating in the six-week work experience will receive wages in the amount of \$7.25 per hour. Younger youth participating in career camps and community service will receive a stipend based on their participation hours.

As much as possible the contractors will develop worksites within the private sector. Targeted industry sectors will include healthcare and manufacturing. The contractors are aware of the limitations regarding not impacting the profit margin of the employer and the placement of youth where layoffs have occurred. These factors will be considered prior to placement of any youth at a site. Every attempt will be made to place youth in an industry that is of interest to the youth. The private sector placements will be used mainly for the older youth 18-24 considering the possibility for continued unsubsidized employment beyond the work experience.

Public sector worksites will be identified for individual and group placement of participants. These include municipalities, school districts, and community organizations. Work experience opportunities at these sites vary from office assistance to landscaping.

As youth are recruited for the summer work program, they will be evaluated as to their educational needs. Opportunities for tutoring, remediation, and GED Prep will be made available to youth with those needs. NWPA has developed a vast network of partners throughout the communities that provide these services (many provided as in-kind), including Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) providers, schools, and community-based organizations.

Youth participating in the summer work experience will be able to receive additional Workforce Investment Act services throughout their participation as needed. Those continuing to participate in Workforce Investment Act services after the summer will continue to receive services as needs are identified through their individual service strategy.

It is expected that 400 youth will be served through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Workforce Investment Act Summer Youth Program in 2009 and 2010. Of these, it is estimated, that approximately one-third will participate in year round activities.

**9. Describe any policies or strategies, in alignment with State guidance, to ensure implementation of activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or day-care. (New – Recovery Act)**

Out-of-school youth participating in summer or year round activities have access to supportive services and any of the ten elements as needed to assist their participation in employment or training. These supportive services could include uniforms, tools, transportation assistance, housing assistance, referral to child care and medical care, etc.

**10. Describe strategies to incorporate the required youth program elements within the design framework. Elements to include are:**

- **Tutoring, study skills training, instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention;**
- **Alternative secondary school services;**
- **Summer employment opportunities linked to academic and occupational learning;**
- **Paid and unpaid work experiences;**
- **Occupational skill training;**
- **Leadership development opportunities;**
- **Comprehensive guidance and counseling;**
- **Adult mentoring;**
- **Supportive services; and**
- **Follow-up services.**

The Title I Youth RFP specifically seeks collaborative proposals that include all ten required elements. Bidders must show that they are partnering with organizations that provide these services rather than duplicating services already being offered by others. In geographic areas where an element is needed but not available, the contractor is responsible for identifying or creating that service element.

**11. Describe services provided to non-WIA eligible youth under the 5% exception (WIA Section 129(c)(5)). Include the process and criteria used to determine “serious barriers to employment.”**

Youth made eligible through the 5% exception category are able to participate in any of the 10 WIA Youth Elements that are necessary for their success. This category is used when youth have barriers but are over the income level allowed by WIA eligibility. Contractors wishing to enroll a youth under the 5% exception category must ask permission from RCWE along with proof of the barrier. If approved, contractors are required to notify the RCWE when the participant exits the program. This process ensures that the level remains below 5%.

As approved by the LWIA on May 14, 2004, individuals with serious barriers to employment include individuals (including youth with a disability) who have social, behavioral or educational deficiencies that create a significant barrier

to employment. Verification criteria must include a written statement from the lead agency or social service agency and written approval by the RCWE.

**12. Describe the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) authorized by the Recovery Act. In your description, distinguish between WIA-funded and Recovery Act-funded youth as appropriate when different program components apply, including:**

- **Program period(s)**
- **Program design for younger, in-school, and older or out-of-school youth (including the 22-24 year olds that can be served with ARRA funds).**
- **Program elements**
- **Pre-/post-work readiness test**
- **Types of worksites**
- **Use of wages and/or stipends**

The summer youth employment program is described in detail in question F-8. All youth in the summer work experience program will be tested for work ready skill levels prior to beginning their work experience. NWPA will utilize a locally developed pre-post test. Throughout the experience, classroom activities will be included to build work ready skills. At the completion of the participants will be post-tested. In addition, employers will provide an evaluation of the participants' performance and attendance records will be maintained. Increase in work-ready skills will be measured by successful results in two out of the three components. Successful results are defined below:

<b>Work-Ready Component</b>	<b>Measure of Success</b>
Work-Ready pre-post test	Increase of at least 10%
Employer Evaluation	Minimum score of 85%
Attendance Rate	Minimum of 95% attendance

**G. Business Services**

**1. Describe the role of the Business Services Team in the PA CareerLink® system.**

The Business Service Unit in each PA CareerLink® was formed to create efficiencies and improve service to employers. BST members meet regularly to share information and reduce multiple visits to employers. Business Service Unit activity reports are provided to the WIB as part of the bimonthly WIB meetings.

**2. Describe how the Local Area ensures that local strategic plans and goals of the PA CareerLink® system for business services are communicated and connected with Business Services Teams.**

The RCWE meets regularly with the PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium, Site Administrators and BSUs to reinforce the strategic goals of the PA CareerLink® system, address issues and develop processes that improve the function of the Business Service Teams.

**3. Describe service innovations offering human resource solutions for business customers, including development of: career ladders, industry recognized credentialing, customized service delivery, and collaboration or partnership.**

The implementation of the Regional Workforce Development Network has provided many opportunities for collaboration and innovation in business services to employers. Industry partnerships are examining career ladders and lattices. The PA CareerLink® BSU and the County-Level Teams work closely to assist individual employers in meeting their workforce needs through assessment, pre-employment screening, customized training, incumbent worker training programs, and referral to other resources.

**4. Describe any Local Area plans for waiving the required 50% matching employer payment for Customized Training. If applicable, describe the criteria that will determine the percentage of cost to be paid by the employer.**

Currently the LWIA does not waive the employer matching payment for Customized Training.

**5. Describe any plans the Local Area has to permit the use of up to 10% of Local Area formula funds to conduct Statewide Activities, such as Incumbent Worker Training. (Previously at Section A)**

There is no plan to permit use of local area formula funds to conduct Statewide Activities at this time.

## **H. Faith-Based and Community Organizations**

**Describe service coordination with Faith-Based and Community Organizations.**

Community based organizations have established varying levels of partnership within the PA CareerLink® system formally and an informal network of referrals exists to supplement the workforce development services that are available in the region. The following organizations are examples of FBO/CBOs that participate in the system as Board members, contractors, and/or PA CareerLink® partners: Greater Erie Community Action Committee, St. Benedict Education Center, Community Action, and Keystone Community Education Council. A special project is currently being implemented in conjunction with Mercyhurst College and Erie Community Foundation to develop a comprehensive data base of social service agencies and the services that they provide in the region.

## **VII. ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. Program Administration**

**Describe any local policies or guidelines implemented to support WIA Title I program operations that are not addressed elsewhere in the Plan. Include information regarding the purpose, development, implementation, and monitoring of such policies.**

The Workforce Investment Act allows local areas to determine criteria for the sixth barrier for youth which reads “An individual (including youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or obtain and hold employment”. On May 14, 2004 the NWPA WIB approved the following definition for determination of this barrier: “Youth with social, behavioral or educational deficiencies that create a significant barrier to employment.” Verification must include a written statement from the lead agency or social service agency and written approval by the RCWE.

## **B. Fiscal Administration**

- 1. Describe the administration of WIA funds used by the LWIB. Include oversight responsibilities for WIA funds, PA CareerLink® and other workforce development resources.**

WIA funds used by the LWIB are administered via a contracting process whereby organizations are awarded contracts as a result of a competitive bidding process. Contractors are required to submit a budget for approval and then submit requests for reimbursement on a monthly basis. Contractors are also monitored on a monthly and annual basis to ensure no disallowed costs are being incurred.

- 2. Describe measures to eliminate duplicative administrative costs being used by the LWIB.**

Administrative costs are reviewed during the annual budgeting process by comparing the LWIB administrative budget with the individual PA CareerLink® budgets. Areas where the LWIB can offer some cost savings or eliminate duplicative costs are identified. Planning sessions then take place to find means to accomplish efficiencies.

- 3. Describe the property management approach used by the LWIB.**

Property is managed via the Procurement and Property Management Policy, rev. D (Attachment 5)

- 4. Describe how the LWIB will ensure that Recovery Act funds will supplement, not supplant, existing resources**

The LWIA will be running two simultaneous systems. The LWIA formula funding system will keep moving forward at the same time that Recovery Act funds are being expended. Every year the LWIA formula funds are insufficient to meet the need for services; therefore, the Recovery Act funds will supplement, not supplant existing funding.

- 5. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the Local Area has in place to ensure not only compliance with the laws,**

**regulations and guidance but also with the intent and spirit of the Recovery Act, particularly plans to monitor reemployment services and summer employment, including summer employment worksites. (New – Recovery Act)**

We have responsibility to provide oversight and monitoring of programs and activities supported with funds that flow through our organization. Our local monitoring policy is intended to ensure compliance with the Workforce Investment Act and federal regulations while providing guidance for continuous improvement and technical assistance. We are committed to ensuring compliance with Sections 183, 184, and 185 of the Workforce Investment Act; 20 CFR Part 667, Subpart D; 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97, Uniform Administrative Requirements; and appropriate OMB Circulars and the State WIA plans and policies.

Fiscal monitoring of funds would be conducted two times per year. Program monitoring visits are conducted on an annual basis for the following: Program Operators (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth); Service Providers; and other contracts that do not fit clearly within one of the aforementioned categories. A Local Workforce Investment Board approved monitoring tool exists for each of these areas. A written monitoring report is submitted within thirty (30) days of a monitoring visit. A Corrective Action Plan to rectify any findings must be submitted to the monitor within thirty (30) days of issuance of the report or as requested in writing by the monitor. Follow-up activities will be conducted within ninety (90) days of the date of the corrective action plan approval. This policy and procedure would extend to monitoring reemployment services and summer employment including summer employment worksites as a result of Recovery Act funding. This monitoring would provide accountability in the use of Recovery Act funding and timely spending of the funds and implementation of activities.

**6. Describe pro-active risk management strategies the LWIB will implement to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of all funds and activities. (New)**

Programmatic and fiscal monitoring is conducted on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with all governing guidelines which include applicable local, state and federal statutes. However, as a proactive approach to ensure accountability and prevent the occurrence of any waste, fraud and abuse, a Risk Management Policy was developed in 2009 for implementation in the LWIA to provide a more comprehensive approach to accessing risk. In addition, although regular fiscal monitoring of invoices and processes is conducted on a regular basis within the organization, an outside entity of certified public accounts was contracted to conduct the fiscal monitoring process to provide an objective and more comprehensive review of the fiscal operations.

**C. Procurement**

- 1. Describe the competitive process used to award grants and contracts (WIA Section 118(b)(9)). Include how community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations, are notified of contract opportunities (TEGL 17-01). Also include the process to procure training services that are made as exceptions to the ITA process.**

Competitive Requests for Proposals are announced to the public through advertisement in five local newspapers, announcements at public Board and committee meetings and via the RCWE website. Upon receipt of proposals, they are reviewed by RCWE staff for completion and adherence to requirements. Proposals are thoroughly reviewed by sub-committees of Board members, committee members, and community partners that are familiar with the program. The sub-committee makes a recommendation to the full WIB for approval.

**2. Describe criteria used for awarding grants for all WIA and Recovery Act youth activities, including criteria used to identify effective or ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities. (Revised – Recovery Act)**

WIA Title I Youth activities are competitively procured through a public RFP process. Proposals are evaluated by the Youth Council which makes provider recommendations to the Board. Evaluation criteria include: Organizational background, staffing capacity, a transition plan (if new bidder), comprehensive program design, performance outcomes, fiscal capability, cost effectiveness, and in-kind contributions and/or collaborative agreements with program partners.

**3. Describe how providers of all youth services are procured under the Recovery Act. If using funds for summer employment opportunities and the fiscal agent or the LWIA is not operating this program element, please specifically describe procedures for procuring summer employment operational entities and job opportunities. (New – Recovery Act)**

Through the competitive procurement process, the NWPA WIB has identified two lead agencies to provide case management and service coordination for year-round and summer youth activities for WIA and ARRA funds. The lead agencies develop partnerships with local community and education entities to provide program services such as tutoring and leadership. The lead agencies work individually with youth and employers to identify sites for work experience (year-round and summer).

**4. Describe the process to award contracts for Customized Training, On-the-Job Training. (New)**

WIA Adult and DW contractors work individually with clients and employers to identify On-the-Job Training and Customized Job Training opportunities. The WIA contractor creates a written agreement with the employer and client outlining the requirements and expectations of the placement. These agreements are monitored during contractor compliance monitoring.

**5. Describe how the LWIA will implement the Recovery Act provision allowing the LWIB to award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible training provider if the LWIB determines that it would facilitate the training of multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, and if such a contract does not limit customer choice. (New – Recovery Act)**

The LWIA conducted a regional training provider consortium meeting in July 2009 to identify potential for developing and implementing new curriculum to support training that is identified as a need by working closely with the industry partnerships. If the needed training does not exist or is limited within the region, RCWE will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit training providers who are willing and able to implement the needed training program. Contracts with institutions of higher education or other eligible training providers will also be considered to facilitate training multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, being cautious that such contracts do not limit customer choice.

**6. Describe the system to assure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding Minority and Women Business, discrimination or harassment. (Moved from VII(E)(1))**

The General Assurances and Certification requirements inclusive with the LWIB contracting process ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding Minority and Women Business, discrimination and harassment.

**D. Appeals And Grievances**

**1. Describe the procedures established for providers of youth or training services to appeal a denial of eligibility, a termination of eligibility or other action by the LWIB or One-Stop Operator.**

Training providers may use the appeal process that the state has implemented as part of their training provider certification process. In addition, training providers can process their appeal locally by submitting it in writing to the Training Strategies Committee within 30 days.

**2. Describe the procedure(s) for individual customers to appeal a denial of eligibility, reduction or termination of services or other adverse action by the PA CareerLink® or service provider. (New)**

The LWIB Complaint Policy provides a process for handling customer complaints regarding eligibility, services or other adverse action by the PA CareerLink® or service provider.

A copy of the LWIB Complaint Policy is included as Attachment 6.

**3. Describe the grievance procedure for PA CareerLink® staff. (New)**

The LWIB Complaint Policy provides a process for handling complaints or grievances by PA CareerLink® staff. (Please refer to Attachment 6 Complaint Policy, Section 4. Procedure, 4.5).

**4. Attach copies of each of the above processes. (New)**

The LWIB Complaint Policy that outlines these processes is included as Attachment 6.

## **E. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action**

### **1. Provide contact information for the Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer and EO Liaison(s) in the Local Area.**

The designated EO Officer is:

Paul Newlin, Quality Assurance Coordinator/EO Officer  
Regional Center for Workforce Excellence  
764 Bessemer Street, Suite 102  
Meadville, PA 16335  
Telephone: 814-333-1286  
TDD/TYY: 814-337-7205  
Email: [pnewlin@nwpawib.org](mailto:pnewlin@nwpawib.org)

The designated PA CareerLink® EO Liaisons are:

PA CareerLink® Clarion County  
Betty McWilliams  
22 South Second Avenue  
Clarion, PA 16214  
Telephone: 814-223-1550  
Email: [bmcwilliams@clarioncareerlink.org](mailto:bmcwilliams@clarioncareerlink.org)

PA CareerLink® Crawford County  
Brian Greenawalt  
210 Chestnut Street  
Meadville, PA 16335  
Telephone: 814-337-5574  
Email: [bgreenawalt@crawfordcareerlink.org](mailto:bgreenawalt@crawfordcareerlink.org)

PA CareerLink® Erie County  
Joseph Miceli  
1309 French Street  
Erie, PA 16501  
Telephone: 877-788-3743, ext. 506  
Email: [jmiceli@state.pa.us](mailto:jmiceli@state.pa.us)

PA CareerLink® Oil Region  
Deborah Schumacher  
255 Elm Street  
Oil City, PA 16301  
Telephone: 814-678-5051  
Email: [dschumacher@state.pa.us](mailto:dschumacher@state.pa.us)

PA CareerLink® Warren County  
Arlene Papalia  
2 Market Street  
Warren, PA 16365  
Telephone: 814-723-2350  
Email: [apapalia@state.pa.us](mailto:apapalia@state.pa.us)

**2. Describe how the identity of the EO Officer and the complaint process are made available.**

Equal Opportunity policies are prominently disseminated and/or communicated in written and/or oral form, electronically and/or on paper to staff, clients, or the public listing the EO Officer's name, title, and contact information, including TTY/TDD number.

**3. Describe the process for assuring that no individual shall be excluded from participation, denied benefit or employment, nor subjected to discrimination under or in connection with, any program or activity for any reasons, including but not limited to: race, color, religion, national origin or citizenship, age, disability, political affiliation or belief.**

Complaint forms for filing allegations of discrimination at the local, state and federal levels can be obtained from the Equal Opportunity (EO) Liaison in the PA CareerLink®, the Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) EO Officer, the Office of Equal Opportunity, or directly from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Civil Rights Center (CRC). Complaints must be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged occurrence of discrimination. Complaints filed after the 180-day time period will be forwarded to the CRC. The Director of the Civil Rights Center, for good cause shown, may extend the filing time beyond 180 days.

Individuals, specific classes of individuals, or authorized representatives may file complaints/allegations of discrimination regarding PA CareerLink® issues with the Equal Opportunity Liaison in the PA CareerLink® who forwards the complaint directly to the State Equal Opportunity Officer.

Individuals, specific classes or individuals, or authorized representatives may file complaints/allegations of discrimination about LWIA programs or services with the Local Workforce Investment Area's Equal Opportunity Officer, or directly with the State Equal Opportunity Officer. Complainants are also made aware of their right to file allegations directly with the USDOL Civil Rights Center.

Complaints/allegations do not have to be submitted on the prescribed complaint form in order for them to be considered valid complaints or allegations. Discrimination complaints may be submitted to:

Local Workforce Investment Area Equal Opportunity Liaison or

Mr. Khan L. Mitchell, Director  
Office of Equal Opportunity  
Department of Labor and Industry  
Room 514, Labor & Industry Building  
651 Boas Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
1-800-622-5422  
TDD/TTY: 1-800-654-5984 or PA Relay 711

Or

Director, Civil Rights Center'  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Room N-4123  
Washington, DC 20210  
(202) 219-7026  
TDD (202) 219-7003

Complaints filed by the complainant or his/her authorized representative must be filed in writing and must contain the complainant's and respondent's name and address, date alleged incident of discrimination occurred, a description of the allegations with enough detail to allow a determination by the CRC or Department of Labor & Industry about jurisdiction over the complaint, whether or not the complaint was filed in a timely manner, apparent merit, and, if true, whether the allegations would violate any of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and the complainants or his/her authorized representative's signature.

*Procedures for Complaint Processing at the Local Workforce Investment Area Equal Opportunity Officer Level*

Upon notification of a discrimination complaint, the LWIA EO Officer must inform the complainant of their right to file a complaint and have it investigated at the local, state or federal level. *All complaints filed with the LWIA Equal Opportunity Officer must be immediately reported to the EO Officer in the Department of Labor & Industry.*

*If the complainant elects to attempt resolution at the local level, the LWIA EO Officer, based on consultation with the State OEO, will conduct fact-finding/investigation at the local level in consonance with procedures outlined in the WIA..*

*The LWIA Equal Opportunity Officer shall meet with the complainant or his/her authorized representative within ten (10) business days from the date of receipt of the written allegations, to conduct a fact finding or investigation of the circumstances underlying the allegations and attempt to informally resolve the issue(s). The LWIA EO Officer's findings will be submitted in writing to the complainant not later than ten (10) business days following the fact-finding/investigation. The written notification shall include notice of the complainant's right to request a formal investigation by the EO Officer at the state level if a satisfactory resolution is not accomplished at the local level.*

*If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the attempted informal resolution, he/she must inform the LWIA EO Officer and the EO Officer at the State level within five (5) business days of receipt of the unsatisfactory decision and request a formal investigation by the State Equal Opportunity Office.*

*All complaints filed at the local level must be documented on the WIA/SESA local complaint log that is submitted to the State Equal Opportunity Office on a quarterly basis.*

## VIII. PERFORMANCE

### A. Performance Management

- 1. Describe the monitoring process and oversight criteria and procedures utilized to move the system workforce investment toward the LWIA goals.**

A more comprehensive monitoring tool is used that incorporates an on-site file review and a separate desk review to provide a more detailed oversight of contractor performance and compliance. Monitoring criteria includes performance for program accountability, compliance with contract provisions, adherence to fiscal and procurement policy and EO requirements. A team approach to review of training provided and subsequent outcomes ensures the most efficient use of training funds to more effectively meet the workforce development needs of the region.

- 2. Describe the system to capture and report performance data.**

RCWE ensures that all WIA Title I contractors provide data through the CWDS system in a timely manner. The NWPA WIB collects additional data from contractors and PA CareerLink® Site Administrators to regularly monitor performance. This information includes number and types of ITAs, foot traffic, number of people in intensive services, and customer satisfaction surveys.

- 3. Describe how partner services are made available through PA CareerLink®, including how the LWIA will avoid duplication of core services.**

Partner services are managed within the PA CareerLink® via staff meetings, staff communication, and service interest questionnaires. Referral and routing forms are used to avoid duplication of services. In addition, functional teams evaluate services and processes and provide recommendations for improvement. Cross training of staff is also conducted to increase staff knowledge of partner roles.

- 4. Describe how the LWIA identifies areas needing improvement and any processes in place to address deficiencies.**

The Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee meets bimonthly to evaluate the quality of services provided in the LWIA. Areas of concern are investigated and appropriate corrective action plans are implemented. Improved and more comprehensive monitoring tools have been developed and implemented, along with revised monthly reporting to the WIB by contractors and PA CareerLink®s. A more effective monitoring process has been developed and implemented for quality and continuous improvement.

- 5. Describe LWIA policies or strategies to ensure effective implementation of Common Measures. Identify the performance indicators and goals established to track progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the LWIA's vision for the workforce investment system.**

Quarterly Program and Policy meetings provide a forum for technical assistance with regard to Common Measures. State performance reports are reviewed quarterly. The Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee have implemented revised goals as a result of LWIB strategic planning that incorporate the development of a work plan that enhances continuous program improvements and oversight of performance and effectiveness of services provided.

**6. The Recovery Act emphasizes the importance of accountability. Describe overall efforts for performance and reporting of the results of activities funded by the Recovery Act, and how the LWIB will measure whether it has achieved the local goals for implementation as described in “Local Vision and Priorities.”**

The NWPA WIB will review progress reports for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act bi-monthly. During opposing months, these reports will be reviewed by the workforce investment board’s Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee. The reports will be measured against the established goals of the workforce investment board, the intent of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and applicable compliance regulations. The reports will be posted to the NWPA Workforce Investment Board website ([www.nwpawib.org](http://www.nwpawib.org)) for public review. Additionally, the creation of a “dashboard” tracking tool for reporting performance indicators and outcomes to the LWIB is under evaluation.

**Describe the methodology for determining whether Summer Youth Employment Program participants have attained a measurable increase in work readiness skills and what tools will be used for this determination. (New – Recovery Act)**

All youth in the summer work experience program will be tested for work ready skill levels prior to beginning their work experience. NWPA will utilize a locally developed pre-post test. Throughout the experience, classroom activities will be included to build work ready skills. At the completion of the participants will be post-tested. In addition, employers will provide an evaluation of the participants’ performance and attendance records will be maintained. Increase in work-ready skills will be measured by successful results in two out of the three components. Successful results are defined below:

<b>Work-Ready Component</b>	<b>Measure of Success</b>
Work-Ready pre-post test	Increase of at least 10%
Employer Evaluation	Minimum score of 85%
Attendance Rate	Minimum of 95% attendance

**B. Negotiated Performance**

**1. Describe how levels of negotiated performance ensure and support the LWIA vision.**

The negotiated performance levels for our LWIA are founded on a comprehensive effort and team approach to provide training opportunities for our local workforce that develop the skills of region's workforce in line with the workforce needs that have been identified through effective partnerships with area economic development, business and education sectors. These negotiated performance levels are based on the assessment of the individual and placement into appropriate training to provide placement into employment that will provide self-sufficiency and continued employment in high demand occupations throughout the region. Youth negotiated performance levels are based on effective assessment of youth and placement into appropriate training aimed toward the achievement of a degree or certification, an increase in literacy/numeracy levels and placement and retention in appropriate employment to provide a self-sufficient wage. Performance levels are reviewed and evaluated throughout the program year. The Programmatic Policy & Analysis Committee is currently discussing the development and implementation of a quality "scorecard" that will provide a more effective tool for the LWIB to evaluate performance and develop continuous improvement initiatives for the future. This effort is in alignment with the LWIA's vision and mission.

- 2. Provide a listing of the negotiated LWIA performance standards for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, as Appendix G in the Plan.**

The LWIA negotiated performance standards for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs is included as Appendix G.

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A - Published Notice**
- Appendix B - Plan Review Comments**
- Appendix C - Organizational Chart**
- Appendix D - LWIB / One-Stop Partner Agreement(s)**
- Appendix E – ITA Policy**
- Appendix F – Priority Policy**
- Appendix G - Performance Measures and Levels**

**From:** Dreibelbis, Jason [mailto:jdreibelbi@state.pa.us]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2011 12:11 PM

**To:** 015-McCann, Ed; 020-Walsh, Elizabeth; 030-Bokovitz, Patrick; 035 Carey, Frank; 045-Thompson, William J.; 055-Turano, Virginia; 060-Sheely, Scott J.; 070-Dischinat, Nancy; 080-Birkelbach, Gerald; 090-Nelson, Eric; 100-Whisler, Susan; 110-Fornataro, Fred; 125-Snelick, Susan; 130-Thompson, Frank; 135-Sebelin, Joseph; 145-Dogan, Gregg K.; 165-Bell, Linda; Michele Zieziula; 175-Miller, Shannon; 180-Kaufman, Terri; Mellor, Dee (Birkelbach); Pashman, Stefani; Turskey, Michael; Vierling, Lucy Ann; 005 Kelley, Bernard; 005 Walkush, Jonathan; 015-Alan Fineman; 020-Thomas Lord; 045-Tom Whetsel; 055-Fred Lettieri; 060-Rod Kopp; 070-Edward Murray; 070-Marie Beacher; 080 Jim McFarland; 090- Dale Porter; 090 Edwards, Mark; 100-Julie A. Ingram; 130-Kevin Abrams; 135-Keith Ramsay; 165-Ami Gatts; 165-David Suski; 165-Ryan Russell; Kelly Emerson; Michele Zieziula; 180 Truskey, Mike; Buzzinski, Chet; Judy Hill-Finegan; Mulberger, Erica; 005 Cherna, Mark; 015 Murr, Pat; 020 Packard, Wendy; 030-Singleton, Lila; 045-Tim Yurcisin; 055-Angelo, Sharon; 060 Joseph Schiffer; 075-Fallabel, Gerald; 080-Cohen, Ronnie; 090-Fulmore-Townsend, Chekemma; 090-Susan Gutschow; 095 Kight, Ellen; 100-Cheryl Johnson; 100-Lisa Beam; 100-Phyllis J. Bandstra; 100-Terry Sheffield; 110-Amanda Riskosky; 110-Larry Garvin; 110-William Clevenger; 125-Larry Horning; 130-Penne Watkins; 135-Cynthia DeFebo; 135-Garry Wentz; 135-John Casella; 135-Marie McDonnell; 145-Sam Gianetti; 165-Deborah Newton; 165-Lisa Neil; c stuart; AmosGoodwine; CindyBelczyk; Jean Burrell; 175-Adele Craig; 175-Barry McLaughlin; 180 Reiner, Cindy; 180-Dillard, Lynne; 180-Jamie Eckrode; Jessica Bilger; Linda Van Der Pool; Margie Eby; Mowry, Tammi; Penny Hess; Sue Snyder; Monaghan, Eileen; 060 Rank, Lori; 135 DeFebo, Cynthia; 135 McDonnell, Marie; 145 Borrelli, Eileen; Donnell, Derrick; Dudley, Alan; 180 Harwood, Susan; Adamczyk, Patricia; Albright, Janice; Bakaysa, Michael (L&I/BWDP); Bilger, Jessica; Bogacki, Thomas; Bond, Susan; Brewer, Norman; Brickner, Patricia; Buscher, Joseph; Cole, Barbara; Cole, Terry; DeArmin, John; Dillon-Griffith, Marie; Drummond, Patricia; Hann, Jim; Haupt, John; Jones, Bruce (L&I-BWDP); Lazor, Kevin; McClellan, Chuck; Mirarchi, Margaret; Myers, Marcia; Neidle, Betsy; O'Domes, Richard; Olander, Raeann; O'Leary, Dennis (L&I/BWDP); Ortiz, Emanuel; Palumbo, Angela; T Partridge; Pferdekamper, Eric; E Ramalho; Rogers, Larry; Sikina, Ed; Sninsky, Nancy; Stalfa, Elaine; Stoner, Dianne; Tribue, Curtis; Urban, Butch; Vanderburgh, Todd; Samwagner; Weckerly, Margaret; West, Joseph; Woods, Nicki

**Cc:** Rabenold, James; Kuba, Daniel; Nichols, James; Picioccio, Michael; Moulfair, William; Marte, Samuel; Schmidt, Douglas; L Schell; Stratico, Joseph; Zale, Edward; Staszko, Franky; Schramm, Eda; Lyles, Danette; Bohanick, David; Annaguey, Leona G; Baker, Keith (L&I-LXCS); Block, Jeanne; Bohanick, David; DiBenedetto, James; Fuller, Michael; Johnson-Moser, Dayna; Kerlin, Doris; Lotz, Ruth; Lyles, Danette; Reeves-Luckette, Areles; Serrano, Yanimer; Shirk, Gregory; Stoltz, John; White, Michael (L&I/BWDP); Zimmerman, Terri

**Subject:** Local Plan Extension through PY 2010

**Importance:** High

### **On Behalf of Dan Kuba:**

The action in the following e-mail message was approved prior to July 1, 2010. Because no record has been found demonstrating that the message was previously distributed to Local WIBs, the Bureau is taking this opportunity to do so at this time. Please note that a copy of this message must be filed with the LWIA's copy of the Local Plan modification(s) effective in PY 2010.

### ***Local Workforce Investment Plan Extension***

Notice: Effective July 1, 2010, the Commonwealth unilaterally extends the program period of Local Workforce Investment Plans (Local Plans) through PY 2010, from June 30, 2010 to the new ending date of June 30, 2011.

A copy of this message must be filed with the LWIA's copy of the current Local Plan.

### ***Plan Review***

Although extension of the current Local Plan is unilaterally executed by the State, LWIAs are requested to review current Local Plans to determine if modification is necessary to update them. WIA Regulation § 661.355 states that the Governor must establish procedures governing the modification of local plans. Situations in which modifications may be required include significant changes in local economic conditions; changes in the financing available to support WIA Title 1 and partner-provided WIA services, such as a cap in Individual Training Accounts; changes to the Local Board structure; or a need to revise strategies to meet performance goals.

Please be aware that we are preparing a subsequent memorandum that will unilaterally extend the local plans from an ending date of June 31, 2011 to June 31, 2012. This action; however, is forthcoming following approval of the State's Strategic Plan extension request by USDOL, and will provide additional direction regarding the One-Stop certification process (with local input).

If you have questions regarding this matter, you may contact Michael White, Acting Supervisor, Planning Coordination Services, at telephone number 717-214-7173 or e-mail [michwhite@state.pa.us](mailto:michwhite@state.pa.us).

Dan

**Daniel D. Kuba** | Acting Director  
Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership  
PA Department of Labor & Industry  
651 Boas St., 12th Floor | Harrisburg, PA 17121  
Phone: 717.705.8821 | FAX: 717.705.3799  
E-mail: [dkuba@state.pa.us](mailto:dkuba@state.pa.us)  
[www.dli.state.pa.us](http://www.dli.state.pa.us)<<http://www.dli.state.pa.us>>

Auxiliary aids and services are available on request to individuals with disabilities. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Confidentiality notice may appear here, when applicable.