



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local Plan West Michigan Works! PI 16-02c1

Prosperity Region 4b, located in West Michigan, is comprised of seven counties: Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa. This area incorporates both rural and urban communities with diverse economic needs. West Michigan Works! (WMW) will act as the local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) board and the provider of the One-Stop Service Centers to the region, offering inclusive work opportunities to achieve a stronger, skilled workforce for employers and valuable employment opportunities for individuals.

WMW supports the state vision described in the State of Michigan Talent Investment Agency's Combined WIOA Plan and has collaborated with one-stop partners, community organizations, and local businesses in developing a strategic plan that includes:

- An employer-driven system that directly addresses employers' needs, including recruiting and retaining talent by identifying skill gaps and better preparing and training the region's workforce.
- A career planning strategy that assesses and trains adults and eligible youth to develop career pathways in high demand industries.
- A plan to leverage resources with core partners to support and streamline services and make more efficient use of the workforce development system.
- A youth-focused strategy that assists in identifying barriers, goals, and career pathways that will empower youth to make educated decisions and better prepare them for the workforce.

The following plan gives a detailed description of how WMW will develop, align, and integrate meaningful services, specifically addressing the elements required in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the State of Michigan's Policy Issuance 16-02c1.

West Michigan is a strong and vibrant economic region. The economy is diverse, with manufacturing, health care, construction, information technology, and agribusiness all strong components of the economy. The region is home to a hardworking talent base, excellent educational institutions and economic development organizations known for their innovative and proactive approach to retaining and attracting businesses to the region.

For many years four separate Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs) operated within the region, each with its own board, administrative teams, contractual partners, service centers and staff. While the same or similar services were provided to jobseekers and employers throughout the region, programs were tailored to meet employer demand in their respective areas.

Under the impetus of the Governor's Regional Prosperity Initiative and a desire to take a more regional approach to talent development, these Michigan Works! agencies consolidated into one regional entity, West Michigan Works! (WMW). The new MWA and Workforce Development Board cover the Governor's Prosperity Region 4b: Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, and Ottawa counties. The merger became effective October 1, 2015.

During the facilitated consolidation process, the individual Michigan Works! agencies and their respective workforce boards engaged in dialogue to determine how a regional approach to providing programs and services would eliminate duplication of services, enhance governance and administrative functions, reduce costs, and streamline funding and services for businesses, jobseekers and other partners in West Michigan.

In addition to the consolidation, the change in legislation at the federal level brings new challenges and opportunities to the workforce system. The impact of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) cannot be understated, and, given the timing of both WIOA changes and the consolidated board and service delivery mechanisms, the WMW Workforce Development Board embarked on a strategic planning process.

This process engaged business, economic development, associations, education, and community partners for input into the strategic plan. In addition to identifying a vision and mission that reflects the new WMW organization, the strategic plan identifies strengths and resources from across the region that will be scaled, enhanced, and strengthened.

The strategic planning process and resulting strategic plan brings a defined mission, vision, and values statement to WMW. It has also set new goals, recommendations for continuous improvements, and implementation for monitoring progress throughout the life of the plan.

The strategic plan can be found on our website at westmiworks.org, and includes the following goals and strategies:

- Identification of the vision and mission of West Michigan Works!
- Identification of key goals and strategies
- Alignment with State of Michigan and Workforce Development Agency strategic plans
- Alignment with regional efforts to address talent demand
- Alignment of board functions and strategies with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- Development of a workforce board committee structure that aligns with identified goals and strategies
- Identification of key industry sectors for alignment with West Michigan Works! activities

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

Knowledge and Skills Necessary to Meet Employer Needs

Current Labor Market information (LMI) for West Michigan, provided by the DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, and Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), shows that in West Michigan, private sector jobs continue to grow overall with the greatest change from 2011 to 2017 being in Construction and Manufacturing, as well as the Professional and Business Services. West Michigan outperformed the state in private sector job growth in every industry except for Professional and Business Services. As of the second quarter of 2017, approximately 19,600 jobs were advertised online in West Michigan, according to the Conference Boards' Help Wanted Online Database. This is a decline of 4,300 ads since the 1st quarter 2016. The top job advertisements were for Registered Nurses with Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers and First Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers close behind.

Table 8 - Private Industry Employment Trends - 2011 - 2017

Industry	Second Quarter 2011	Second Quarter 2013	Second Quarter 2015	Second Quarter 2017	2011 - 2017 Numeric Change	2011 - 2017 Percent Change
Total Employment	537,418	577,556	618,142	656,486	119,068	22.2%
Natural Resources and Mining	10,817	11,183	12,606	12,528	1,711	15.8%
Construction	22,087	23,789	27,172	30,639	8,552	38.7%
Manufacturing	122,871	134,980	145,967	155,036	32,165	26.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	108,346	113,236	122,701	125,778	17,432	16.1%
Information	6,163	6,282	6,091	6,346	183	3.0%
Financial Activities	24,153	26,607	26,296	27,984	3,831	15.9%
Professional and Business Services	79,038	86,228	93,239	104,702	25,664	32.5%
Education and Health Services	89,877	95,107	100,584	105,861	15,984	17.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	55,283	59,611	62,547	65,661	10,378	18.8%
Other Services	18,783	20,533	20,939	21,951	3,168	16.9%

Source: DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)

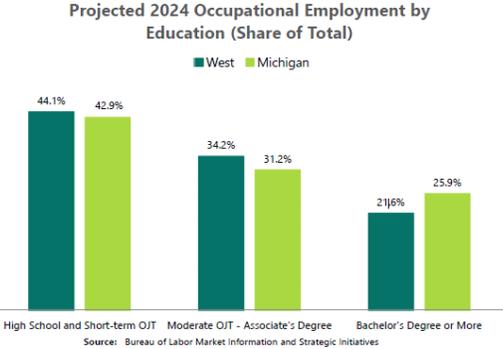
Online Advertised Job Postings – West Michigan	
Job Title	Number
Registered Nurses	755
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	605
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	589
Retail Salespersons	550
Customer Service Representatives	426
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	390
Industrial Engineers	385
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating	383
Helpers--Production Workers	305
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	270

Source: The Conference Board, Help Wanted Online Database

The analysis on the projected occupational growth rates is suggesting that 44 percent of West Michigan jobs will require a high school diploma or less with short-term or on-the-job training. 34 percent of the jobs will require an Associate’s Degree, post-secondary training, some college with no degree, or a high school diploma or less accompanied with an extensive apprenticeship

or on-the-job-training experience. Approximately 22 percent of the jobs will require a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. These projections are on par with the State of Michigan overall, with the need for a Bachelor’s Degree comprising of a little under a quarter of the jobs by 2024

Jobs in West Michigan will require similar levels of education as compared to Michigan overall in 2024.



When comparing high-demand, high-wage jobs with educational requirements, *Registered Nurses* are expected to have the most annual openings according to the Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. *Physical Therapists* are showing the greatest growth percent with a fairly high median hourly wage. *General and Operational Managers* are showing the highest wages but the least amount of growth. This completed research confirms that pay level is directly correlated with the level of formal education and/or the length of the job training or apprenticeship.

Analysis of Current Workforce

An Analysis completed by the State of Michigan’s Department of Technology, Management and Budget Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives provides the population estimate for West Michigan Prosperity Region 4 was at 1,596,000 people in 2017 (US Census Bureau). This is a 4.5 percent increase over 2011-2017, while the statewide population showed an increase of only 0.9%. The data shows that much of the increase was in Kent County, totaling more than 40,000 new residents. While West Michigan as a region was growing during this time (2011-2017) Mecosta, Newaygo, Osceola, Oceana Counties slightly lost population.

Table 1 - Population Trends - 2011 - 2017

Area	2011	2013	2015	2017	2011 - 2017 Numeric Change	2011 - 2017 Percent Change
West Michigan						
Prosperity Alliance	1,523,804	1,547,930	1,570,291	1,595,965	72,161	4.5%
Allegan	111,137	111,946	114,085	116,447	5,310	4.6%
Barry	58,911	59,076	59,389	60,586	1,675	2.8%
Ionia	63,853	63,982	64,051	64,291	438	0.7%
Kent	608,174	623,457	636,508	648,594	40,420	6.2%
Lake	11,454	11,390	11,693	12,013	559	4.7%
Mason	28,633	28,647	28,721	29,073	440	1.5%
Mecosta	43,424	43,205	42,987	43,391	-33	-0.1%
Montcalm	63,245	62,765	62,728	63,550	305	0.5%
Muskegon	169,975	172,196	172,373	173,693	3,718	2.1%
Newaygo	48,310	47,844	47,863	48,242	-68	-0.1%
Oceana	26,450	26,264	26,287	26,442	-8	0.0%
Osceola	23,468	23,310	23,167	23,260	-208	-0.9%
Ottawa	266,770	273,848	280,439	286,383	19,613	6.8%
Michigan	9,876,199	9,899,219	9,918,170	9,962,311	86,112	0.9%
United States	311,644,280	316,234,505	321,039,839	325,719,178	14,074,898	4.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Population Estimates

Further research conducted by this same source demonstrates the current workforce trends within Region 4. The data below will provide an accurate analysis of the labor force by demographics and education attainment levels.

On par with the increase in population, the labor force has also increased for a total workforce population of 824,432. With this increase, the area still maintained unemployment trends that followed both the Michigan State trends and the United States trends of steady decrease since 2011. From 2011 to 2017, West Michigan went from a 9.1 percent unemployment rate to a 4.0 percent unemployment rate landing 0.6 percent below the Michigan average and 0.4 percent below the United States average.

Looking at jobless rates by demographics, West Michigan experiences rates below the State average in every category except the Native American populations. Males age 16 and over show a slightly higher unemployment rate than females age 16 and over; however, this rate is still below the state average in both categories. West Michigan's highest jobless rates are

found within the sub category of males age 16-19 showing almost 23 percent, female age 16-19 showing 19 percent and Black/African American showing just over 16 percent.

When looking at the data provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2012-2016 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, the number of older workers staying in the labor market longer in West Michigan is slightly less than the State average. During 2012-2016, this group has had a 39 percent workforce participation rate (employed or seeking work) which is an increase of 2 percent. Overall, the total population and labor force rates remain slightly higher than the State average.

Poverty rates for West Michigan are just slightly below the state average with an estimated 17 percent of residents living below the poverty line. When broken down by demographics, West Michigan is fairly close to the State averages in all categories with the biggest exception being Hispanics which is showing a poverty rate of 15 percent higher. The data also shows a larger percentage difference in West Michigan between White, 12 percent falling below the poverty line, and Black/African American, 33 percent falling below the poverty line.

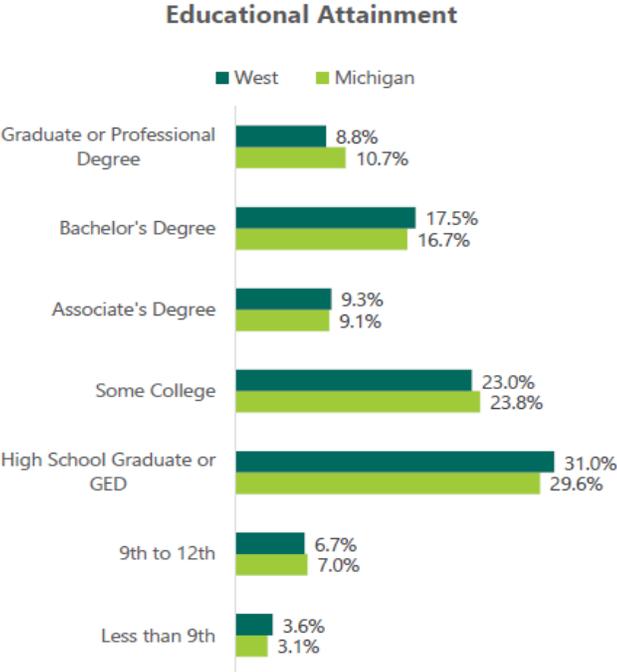
According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), there are approximately 46,610 welfare registrants in West Michigan. Both Female and Male registrants were fairly close with females making up almost 56 percent in Michigan, compared to the males making up 44 percent.

Based off of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2012-2016 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, West Michigan has a lower jobless rate compared to the State for White, Black/African American, and Asian Individuals. However, African Americans have the highest jobless rate among racial groups, at 16 percent over the 2012-2016 period.

According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, roughly 46,900 assistance program registrants resided in West Michigan as of June 2017. This number is down by 18,500 individuals since December 2014. Over 60 percent of the assistance program registrants were White while only 18 percent were Black or African American. This data suggests that the Black or African American population is accessing welfare reform services at a much lower level.

Individuals with a reported disability account for 199,000 of West Michigan's population. The demographic characteristics are similar to the State average with the biggest variance being between the White (86 percent) and Black / African American (8 percent) populations. The percentage of male and female individuals with disabilities in West Michigan is on par with the State average in both categories with the male to female share in the region being 49 percent to 51 percent.

Educational attainment is based on the number of residents 25 and older. In Michigan, that number includes 1,021,053 residents. Overall, the attainment rate for West Michigan is consistent with the overall State average; however, individuals holding Bachelors’ Degrees out performs the State average by 3 percent. The chart below demonstrates the educational attainment levels through 2024 for West Michigan in comparison to the State of Michigan.



Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

Although West Michigan has experienced population increases, a steady decrease in unemployment rates, and slightly better than State averages in most of the workforce trends, it remains a region in need of intentional workforce development. This includes seeking ways to provide access to those not currently utilizing the welfare reform or other workforce systems, provide one stop barrier removal services in coordination with existing and newly sought out community partners, better preparing individuals to attend various training opportunities, and finding ways to increase the labor force by re-engaging people with disabilities who are otherwise capable of working. West Michigan Works! is relentlessly pursuing innovative and relevant solutions to these challenges through unique partnerships and resources to meet individual and employer needs.

Industry Sectors

West Michigan Works! focuses on the following four Industry Sectors: Construction & Energy, Manufacturing, HealthCare, and Information Technology. Each of the Industry Sectors has

formed an Industry Council to identify the needs of employers within the sector and meet those needs through creative and collaborative solutions.

Construction

High Demand occupations within West Michigan's *Construction* Industry include job titles such as carpentry, civil engineers, cost estimators, plumbers, heating and air mechanics and installers, and first line managers and laborers. The Construction Workforce Development Alliance of West Michigan (CWDA) was created by the Associated Builders and Contractors Western Michigan Chapter (ABCWM), American Subcontractors Association of Michigan (ASAM), and Home Builders Association of Greater Grand Rapids (HBAGGR). It includes a collaborative of partners including workforce development, educators and construction employers.

Projects within CWDA include JobReady: Construction, the Construction Jump Start Program, MiCareerQuest, and Careers in Construction Month. Careers in Construction Month is held in October and is a month long celebration of the construction industry and a way to show students, parents and teachers the great career opportunities available within the Construction industry. JobReady: Construction is a collaboration of community partners that came together to help construction contractors recruit, hire, train, and retain talent, with an emphasis on recruitment in urban areas and the communities surrounding the job sites of construction projects.

Manufacturing

High demand occupations within West Michigan's *Manufacturing* Industry include automotive, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, food production, machinery manufacturing, plastics product manufacturing, and machine shops. Region 4b is a key stakeholder in facilitating and maintaining the Discovery Manufacturing council that includes employers, community partners, and training providers who all share the mission on expanding talent throughout West Michigan.

Recent projects of this council include Manufacturing Week, MiCareerQuest, promotion of Going Pro Apprenticeship Readiness Pilot Program, Adopt a School Program, Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Employer Collaborative, M-CAM Mobile Manufacturing Lab, a partnership with Talent 2025 to conduct demand forecasting and better connect educational curriculum to employer needs, and the development of an updated Discover Manufacturing website (www.discover-manufacturing.com) that allows students, parents, educators, and employers to stay connected and engaged in manufacturing.

Healthcare

High demand occupations within West Michigan's *Healthcare* industry include; physicians, surgeons, dentists, technicians, RN, LPN, physician assistants, home health aides and medical assistants.

The healthcare industry sector council, "West Michigan Health Careers Council," is a collaborative of healthcare employers, educators, workforce development, and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan's healthcare talent needs. The council offers employers opportunities to help solve their healthcare talent needs- whether that be developing pools of qualified candidates, utilizing proven assessment tools, engaging in training programs, or opening access to training funding streams, among others.

The work of the West Michigan Health Careers Council includes a focus around continued growth of career pathways. Using labor market information, employment data, and employer input, the council has identified competencies for high demand or hard-to-fill positions to understand the trends across the industry. Following the success of a Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program, the council continues to expand this model to other healthcare programs.

Information Technology

High Demand occupations within West Michigan's *Information Technology (IT)* include; computer and information systems manager, computer support specialists, database administrators, analysts, software developers, and network administrators.

West Michigan Tech Talent (WMTT) is a collaborative of technology employers, educators, workforce development and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan's current and future technology talent needs. WMTT achieves its goals through the work of three Workgroups. WMTT also supports its network by helping coordinate and promote a variety of events, workshops, and community organizations through its website and by financially supporting a sponsorship program. Some of the initiatives in these workgroups include:

- GROW - efforts towards K-12 students with an aim to support projects which create awareness and interest in the IT field and encourage students to prepare for careers in IT. (Projects include MiCareerQuest, Events for Teachers to incorporate computer science in the classroom, and the West Michigan Hour of Code Initiative)
- DEVELOP – efforts towards adult learners and career changers. It aims to align local training and development opportunities with identified skill gaps from employers. (Projects include coordination of Industry Led Collaborative Trainings, Information Security Co-Op program, promotion and coordination of the Skilled Trades Training Fund, and workshops/seminars for employers)

- RECRUIT/RETAIN – efforts towards attracting IT talent from outside the region and retain current talent within our region, utilizing best practices and partnering with organizations that current pursue these efforts.(Projects include organizing a campaign around collective data about IT positions and job openings, and support/sponsorship of local tech conferences)

Agribusiness

Agribusiness, the business of agricultural production, can be identified throughout high demand occupations in the Construction, Manufacturing, and Information Technology sectors. With its continuous growth, it is becoming an emerging sector of its own with high demand occupations within West Michigan that include many cross-industry careers such as, maintenance mechanic, food processing and production, tractor-trailer truck driver, first line supervisors, computer and IT services, and general farm labor.

Recent collaboration of West Michigan food processing companies has led to the development of the (Food) Processing Talent Council that is dedicated to talent pipeline development and training through multiple channels including apprenticeships, Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers and H-2A population recruitment, and Talent Pipeline Management strategies. The participation in the federal H-2A program in West Michigan continues to increase, providing much needed, and sought after talent to West Michigan farmers and growers.

Supporting Industries

WMW is also focused on the Transportation and Utilities careers in support of the identified industry sectors and is addressing the employer needs by participating in State-led conversations that include employers, training providers, and workforce development staff regarding innovative ways to recruit, train, and retain qualified candidates.

Professional and Administrative Services careers include higher skilled and educated positions such as mathematical analysis, architecture, and art and designer. These occupations also support WMW's identified high demand industry sectors and include employment opportunities for high school completers through those holding graduate or professional degrees. This trend aligns well with the goals of WIOA and will allow career pathway development and apprenticeship opportunities for those individuals who are accessing the workforce system.

Roles of Industry Sectors

Key roles of each of the industry sector councils include:

- Information conduit; sharing trends and best practices affecting talent.
- Talent Initiatives; leading, supporting and promoting talent initiatives throughout West Michigan.

- Training Needs; sharing current training needs with educational partners to develop curriculum, create career pathways and nurture a supply chain of talent.
- Networking; promoting networking among employers, educators, workforce development and economic development professionals for the purpose of developing a skilled workforce.

Talent Solutions

Utilizing WIOA and other funding sources, WMW offers training scholarships and career services for individuals who are interested in pursuing these career choices, including those who are considered hard-to-serve and returning citizens. The occupations are identified on WMW's Hot Jobs List. This list also identifies the WMW approved training list, which include the highest demand occupations that require training beyond a high school diploma.

Educating youth and enhanced outreach activities allows for this population to have a better understanding of what the regional economy looks like and what career opportunities are in existence post high school or following postsecondary education. Building the talent pipeline will increase the skilled talent pool and retain young people in our area. MiCareerQuest (<http://www.micareerquest.org>), a region-wide career exploration event for youth, Jobs for Michigan Graduates (JMG) and the Summer Youth Work Experience Program are all examples of current workforce development activities targeted at increasing the local labor force and addressing the education and skill gaps in our region.

West Michigan is also focused on identifying and advocating to provide more meaningful and efficient services to individuals with disabilities. These initiatives include addressing the infrastructure improvements needed to lessen the barriers brought by housing, transportation, and internet access, as well as increasing the training and employment opportunities that are available to this population. Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) is a core partner and a representative that is co-located inside of many of the local service centers. Onsite classrooms for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) courses that target this population are located in two of the counties in WMW's service area. In addition, WMW has established relationships with Michigan Bureau for Blind Services, Disabilities Advocates, and Disability Connections. These agencies are sharing resources and are at the table investigating ways to share common intakes, assessments, and making direct connections to opportunities.

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

Adult Education and Literacy programs are made available through established and emerging partnerships with local providers. Some of the service centers in WMW's service area provide instruction and testing onsite in partnership with Adult Education providers. In areas that have expanded resources, community conversations and informational tours are taking place to increase awareness of workforce development services. In some communities, Michigan Works! staff conduct workshops and initiate career coaching at the Adult Education Provider location. Adult education services are currently provided in four of WMW's eight service centers.

Short term Occupational Skills Training and Higher Education opportunities are also available throughout the region and are funded with local WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth allocations for those who qualify. WMW works closely with training providers to ensure that the supported programs lead to an industry-recognized credential and that the credential aligns with employer demand. Recent initiatives have also shown that training providers, including community colleges, are responsive to the development and delivery of a curriculum that directly addresses the skill gaps.

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

In an effort to address the inequity of unemployment rates in specific neighborhoods and geographic areas, WMW has teamed up with multiple community partners to conduct outreach in targeted areas to engage residents in training programs, including pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. Partners involved in these efforts include the Urban League, community colleges, employers, Adult education providers, Intermediate School Districts, and other community-based organizations.

Work-based training is available and is a viable option that allows individuals the opportunity to learn the skills that employers need without attending an occupational skills based or higher education training. Depending on the desired skill, the training type and the length of the training, work-based training may assist individuals gain employment opportunities that require an education attainment of high school diploma through Associates Degree (approximately 80

percent of projected jobs). Work-based training can be funded with local WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations for those who qualify, this is a very desirable option.

Work-based training opportunities include:

- *On-The-Job-Training* – intended to provide a participant with the knowledge and skills necessary for the full performance of the job. OJT is a critical tool that can help job seekers enter into successful employment. The term “on-the-job training” means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:
 - Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
 - Provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and
 - Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.
- *Pre-Apprenticeship Training* – designed to provide work experiences that can help participants obtain the skills needed to be placed into a registered apprenticeship.
- *Registered Apprenticeships* – designed to combine paid learning on-the-job and related technical and theoretical instruction in a skilled occupation. This training is an important component of the education and training services that the workforce system can provide to its participants, and should be used as a strategy to train and employ job seekers. Registered Apprenticeships offer job seekers immediate employment opportunities that usually pay higher wages and offer continued career growth.
- *Customized Training* – aimed at meeting the special requirements of an employer with a commitment to employ after successful completion of the training.
- *Incumbent Worker Training* – designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (or group of employers) to retain a skilled workforce, or to avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining new skills necessary to retain employment.

West Michigan's high-demand industries, manufacturing, construction, health care and information technology, continued to experience high growth with consistently moderate turnover and high unmet demand for labor. Working with employer-led industry councils, West Michigan Works! identified common workforce and training needs within the industries and together, the collaborations result in training individuals to meet today's talent needs and introducing the workforce of tomorrow to viable careers in West Michigan.

Inspired by the success of the Medical Assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program (MARAP), WMW has developed registered apprenticeship programs in other industries. WMW now holds the Standards of Apprenticeship with the Department of Labor for fields in Manufacturing, Information Technology and Construction.

- As the program Sponsor, WMW is the liaison between employers and the Department of Labor, making program development and administration seamless for employers.
- WMW facilitates collaboration with employers, local community colleges and training providers to develop the best supporting curriculum with flexibility to meet individual company needs.
- Connections with high school apprenticeship feeder programs and other community resources assist in the development of a talent pipeline.
- WMW can provide recruitment and assessment of candidates so they are apprenticeship ready.
- Industry apprenticeship consortiums provide a forum to collaborate and share best practices with other employers in each industry.
- Employers have access to funding to help support their apprenticeship program.

Many employers do not have the time or resources to develop their own program. Participating in a WMW industry apprenticeship consortium allows employers to easily and quickly put a program in place at their company.

As of May 2018, below is a list of the US Department of Labor approved occupations under the WMW Standards of Apprenticeship:

Healthcare

- Medical Assistant – 1 year
- Sterile Processing Technician – 1 year or less

Advanced Manufacturing

- Industrial Manufacturing Technician – 1 year
- Maintenance Technician – 2 years
- Maintenance Mechanic – 4 years
- Tool & Die Maker – 4 years
- Machine Operator – 1 year
- Machinist
- CNC Machine Specialist – 2 years

- CNC Machinist Operator – 4 years
- Mechatronics Technician – 4 years
- Welder Combination – 3 years

Information Technology

- Computer Support Specialist – 1 year

Construction

- Construction Apprentice – 1 year
- Mechatronics Technician Electrical – 1 year
- HVAC- Installer/Service – 3 years

Performance Measures

WIOA performance measures serve as indicators to track progress toward meeting performance goals and vision for WMW. Performance measures also serve as an accountability system to assess the effectiveness of local areas. Both WIOA and Wagner-Peyser performance measures are tracked and reported on a quarterly bases.

WMW’s negotiated WIOA and Wagner-Peyser performance indicators and goals are included in this plan (see #17).

Strategic Plan

The WMW Workforce Development Board, through its strategic planning process, has created a strategic vision that aligns local resources with required partners to carry out core programs. This includes a broader reach of services to target populations, an expansion of one-stop facility use, and enhanced opportunities for businesses to hire and retain skilled workers. The strategic vision includes ongoing partnership with community agencies and the seamless operations of the one-stop service centers.

As part of its strategic plan, WMW has set forth a goal of increasing the local talent pool, using the following strategies:

- Educate youth about the opportunities that are available in the local economy.
- Increase outreach to youth, underemployed, and hard to serve populations.
- Develop and pilot a soft skills training program.
- Catalogue the services and strengths of partner organizations to have a full picture of the capabilities of the workforce development system and create a resource guide to promote services.

A full copy of the West Michigan Works! strategic plan can be found at www.westmiworks.org.

Core programs delivered at the One-Stop Service Centers, and administered by WMW, include Wagner-Peyser, WIOA programs authorized under Title I, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and

Partnership Accountability Training and Hope (PATH, Michigan's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funded employment & training program). Additionally, intentional relationships have been established with required partners such as Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Veteran services, Adult Education, Unemployment Insurance, Job Corps, training providers and Area Agency on Aging. Sharing a common access point allows for ongoing support to the jobseeker as well as reducing the transportation and childcare barriers associated with visiting multiple agencies. Program eligibility and enrollment are also more accessible and coaching capabilities are enhanced as a result of the collaboration.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) has a presence in each of the WMW service centers, providing direct access to services, additional job coaching for individuals with a qualifying disability and support services to aid in the removal of employment barriers.

Literacy and Adult Education partnerships have been strengthened by intentional efforts to leverage resources and establish common goals. WMW provides an offsite information session in areas where individuals are not able to easily access services or when language or learning barriers exist. In addition, processes have been put in place to give a "soft handoff" to minimize duplicate services and ensure there are no unnecessary service gaps.

2. A description of the workforce development system:

The strategy used to carry out workforce development programs and align services involves continuous collaboration with core and non-core partners. WMW strives to be inclusive of contracted service providers and partners, institute innovative efforts to cross-train staff, reduce unintentional program barriers and empower individuals by giving them "soft hand offs" and direct referrals to partners and programs that are not housed inside of the service centers. Additionally, WMW is working with partners across the region to assist jobseekers in crossing barriers of place and space. Where jobseekers are comfortable coming into the one-stop for services, WMW is inviting partners into the one-stop to engage jobseekers in their services. Where partners are already working with jobseekers in their space and individuals are unfamiliar with the one-stop center, WMW staff is going outside the one-stop to meet the jobseekers and bridge those barriers.

The workforce development system encompasses required partners, as defined by WIOA, as well as community-based partners and employer partners. Individuals and businesses are able to receive both self- and staff-assisted services from a one-stop center that include:

- Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
- Wagner-Peyser services

- Migrant and Seasonal Worker Program
- Fidelity Bonding
- Adult Education and Literacy activities
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Services for older workers
- Trade Act
- Veterans priority services
- Employment and training activities
- Unemployment Insurance Agency – registering for work
- Partnership, Accountability, Training and Hope (PATH), including Refugee programming
- Food Assistance Employment and Training Program (FAE&T)
- Prisoner Re-entry
- Industry Sector partners
- Business Solutions services, including Rapids Response

WMW currently delivers core programs directly. This includes WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Trade, PATH, and FAE&T. In Kent County, contracted Youth services make the most sense for a robust and comprehensive service delivery strategy. WMW utilizes a structured career coaching model for all program participants which includes completing a robust career portfolio, showcasing the individuals work history, education, and transferable skills.

The procured One Stop Service Operator (OSO) is charged with assisting WMW in the coordination of services from multiple partners so that both quality and efficiency are achieved. The OSO will facilitate the connections among programs and partners so that services are integrated as much as possible and the customer experience is streamlined.

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

3. A description of how access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals will be expanded:

The Michigan Industry Cluster Approach (MICA) has been implemented throughout the State's workforce system. The cluster approach is inherently demand-driven; local employers provide direct information on in-demand jobs, required skill sets, training program requirements and candidate assessment factors to improve successful transition from training to long-term employment. The regional workforce system uses industry and occupational data gained from industry sector council meetings to identify skill gaps within the cluster. Asset mapping determines whether training is available to address those skill gaps. Consulting with employer partners within industry councils ensures that training meets industry and occupational requirements and standards.

Employment and training options are made available to eligible individuals with priority of service given to adults who are identified as low income, basic skill deficient or a qualified veteran or spouse of a veteran. For a description of eligible individuals please see *WMW 15-04 Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility* (attached).

These individuals have the opportunity to meet with a career coach who will assist them in identifying and removing employment barriers, developing an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), completing career assessments, and researching high demand training options. In some cases, an individual may require basic education to attain a high school diploma or its equivalent or improve in identified deficiencies prior to entering training. WMW will work closely with area Adult Education partners to assist the individual as part of their career pathway plan.

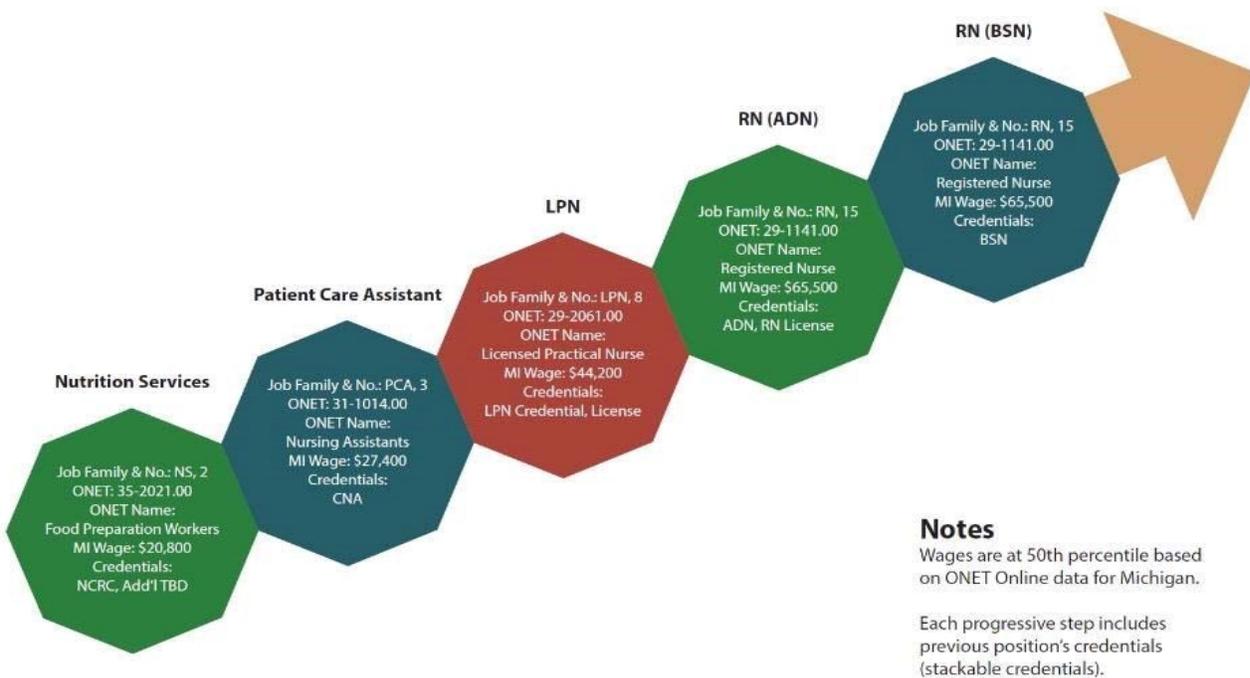
WMW prioritizes training programs that lead to a high quality recognized credential and are demand-driven. Training programs can include online courses when in-class instruction is not available or feasible.

Career pathway planning is made available to individuals qualifying for core programs. WMW has been actively working with local employers and training providers to develop career pathway options that will provide career laddering in many different employment sectors.

Assessments and training opportunities may also lead to credential stacking for those co-enrolled in WIOA Adult, National Emergency Grant or Dislocated programs, as well as those found eligible for WIOA Youth.

For example, partnerships with local area employers guarantee job seekers who complete a career portfolio and pathway plan, an interview for an entry level position with a local hospital, where there is the potential to progress to higher paying positions. WMW is planning

to expand this opportunity throughout all in-demand industry sectors. The chart below illustrates one of the health care career pathways utilized with this partnership.



Access to Pre-Apprenticeships, Apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training, and other work-based and occupational skills training is also available to interested eligible individuals. Funding for these postsecondary credentials may be braided with other workforce development funds and with employer contributions.

Awareness of activities leading to such programs is promoted through social media sites, local school boards, community colleges, community partners, job fairs, onsite and community workshops, West Michigan Works! Career Coaches, employer participation, and strategic events organized to target a larger audience such as MiCareerQuest, a region wide career exploration event for youth (www.micareerquest.org).

WMW has eight full service centers and two satellite centers throughout the seven counties. Additionally, WMW has several access points (Share Network sites) throughout the region and will look to expand such access points, where it makes sense & there is a need, across the area by sharing space and providing access to services at partner locations.

In rural areas or where public transportation is not available, support services to remove transportation barriers such as gas cards or auto repairs may be provided. As previously mentioned, WMW is working to eliminate barriers of place by going outside the one-stop to

provide services with community partners. Though the causes for these barriers are different, the barriers exist in both the urban and rural areas of the region.

WMW is actively working with core partners across the region to develop strong referral systems and piloting multiple co-enrollment strategies. Adult Education partners located in multiple service centers provide seamless service delivery to jobseekers. Additionally, staff are cross trained within the programs delivered by WMW and understand when co-enrollment may be beneficial to begin or build upon a Career Pathway for an individual. For example, an individual may be co-enrolled in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funded programs, Out-of-School Youth, and Adult Education services at the same time to provide the best possible outcome.

4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used to facilitate employer engagements:

WMW supports the State of Michigan's demand-driven workforce system as its primary workforce development strategy. Priority industries have been defined and appropriate services have been developed and provided based upon input received from employers and other key partners.

WMW serves as the backbone agency for the aforementioned employer-led Industry Councils, where employers convene to discuss talent supply/demand data, define hiring requirements within each high-demand industry, develop & lead sourcing projects to build the talent supply chain, explore funding for the projects, and strengthen regional communication and engagement. An employer serves as the Project Chair and multiple employers are engaged in work groups that fall within the Sourcing Project. Examples of such workgroups include the USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Programs, MiCareerQuest, Internships, and the Career Pathways Initiative. These industry sector council meetings allow employers to focus on the specific needs of their industry and form collaborative initiatives within the sector.

A Business Solutions Representative (BSR) Sector Lead has been appointed to lead the Industry Sector Councils. They develop in-depth expertise on a specific industry and identify common talent needs and trends. They convene regularly scheduled council meetings that include a primarily employer led audience, as well as training institutions, State representatives, economic developers, and community partners to address individual, local and regional talent issues. WMW also has additional BSRs on staff in each county that meet individually with employers to determine their unique workforce needs and offer a portfolio of available core services.

WMW also has an Apprenticeship Success Coordinator on staff to educate employers about registered apprenticeships and assist them in the development of a program at their company, whether it be as a participant in one of our industry apprenticeship consortiums or developing their own program where they hold the standards. The role also includes obtaining feedback from employers regarding the high demand and hard to fill jobs. This information can come through our industry sectors or from interaction with individual employers or employer collaborations. WMW will use this information to develop standards for additional occupations to meet employer needs. Part of this development process includes bringing together employers, education partners and USDOL Apprenticeship Representatives to develop the plan, outlining the occupation and the related theoretical instruction needed.

WMW supports local businesses by leveraging federal and State funding, as well as other grant opportunities in order to braid funds to help support training needs. Training allows local businesses to upskill their current workforce, move them into the higher skilled positions and back-fill entry-level positions which are often easier to recruit.

Small businesses are supported on a one-on-one basis, ensuring that they are able to take advantage of the services that many larger businesses in the area are already participating in. The Business Solutions Unit also organizes hiring events, employer seminars and many community events (initiated by the local Chamber of Commerce and other community partners) to engage small businesses. The ongoing goal is to further expand outreach to associations that will include small businesses.

WMW assists in recruitment for local businesses by utilizing Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC) and local service centers for hiring events. WMW is equipped to offer recruitment strategies to local businesses from a small family-owned store to a Fortune 500 company. Utilizing WMW service centers and local partners, the local board can host and facilitate large hiring events including job fairs, specialized industry specific job fairs, and *Meet the Employer* events that offer a glimpse into high-demand positions at local companies. WMW assists employers in position profiling, wage research, job descriptions, and other assessments before the hiring is started. In addition, WMW can manage the application and resume collection process, and application screening for employers.

Staff are knowledgeable and trained to assist jobseekers and claimants with registering for work as well as other employment services to aid in a quick return to the workforce. Information regarding how to register for unemployment benefits and required follow-up is provided at the centers and information regarding Michigan Works! services is shared at the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) offices. Computers and direct priority phones are available for individuals using the one-stop center to file, validate, or update UIA claims. Claimants are also able to use a designated fax line for reporting biweekly job search. WMW staff help jobseekers navigate their Michigan Web Account Manager (MIWAM) accounts and

engage them in other services as appropriate. Additionally, WMW has participated in the pilot Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) program, and has developed a robust process for the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) claimants that include work-based learning.

Partnerships are established with local and State economic development agencies, K-12 and higher education partners to collaborate on various projects and initiatives such as MiCareerQuest, Discover Manufacturing, Apprenticeship Week, and Talent Tours. These partnerships are also engaged when executing programs such as the Michigan Skilled Trades Training Fund program.

With the use of industry sector leads and general service Business Solutions Representatives, WMW is at the forefront of support for the local businesses. Including sector initiatives and career pathways work for both local businesses and their employees.

5. A description of workforce and regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area:

WMW partners with regional and local economic development organizations to provide the best possible service to new and expanding companies. In some cases, the WMW Business Solutions Unit and economic developers make joint calls to businesses to determine the employer needs and possible solutions. On a regional level, WMW works with Talent 2025 to address the growing employment needs of the region. WMW will continue to foster these relationships.

WMW hosts quarterly partnership meetings to discuss current projects and opportunities to increase collaboration. Organizations that are invited to this meeting include community colleges, economic development organizations, local Chambers of Commerce, and other economic partners.

Aside from these quarterly partnership meetings, all partners communicate on a consistent basis to reach shared goals.

Local universities and area community colleges offer entrepreneurship training in conjunction with other programs. WMW will support such training as it relates to an individual's career pathway plan. It is recognized that there are some individuals who may be particularly well-suited for entrepreneurial enterprises; efforts are made to ensure individuals are exposed to the appropriate resources. Working with community partners, such as Grand Valley State University's Small Business Development Center, entrepreneurship workshops may be offered in our one-stop centers to introduce individuals to the idea of entrepreneurship and to make

them aware of the resources available to support such endeavors. Additionally, WMW staff will be trained on the available resources.

6. A description of the one-stop delivery system:

WMW is dedicated to providing consistent services throughout its seven-county region, while being sensitive to the local community's needs and providing targeted services as needed. Through the strategic planning process, the local board developed sub-committees to oversee and review outcomes that align with the key strategies and goals of the WDB, including assessment of providers & services to ensure that they are addressing identified skills gaps by providing the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities. These committees will work with and provide feedback to key staff to address areas needing improvement.

West Michigan Works! One-Stop Service Centers are open for business Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., offering non-traditional hours on an as-needed basis to accommodate individuals who are currently underemployed and allow for participation in apprenticeship orientations and workshops.

WMW is committed to strengthening partnerships with one-stop partners and training providers to offer on-site workshops within our communities and WIOA information sessions both electronically and on educational campuses.

Satellite centers and access points have been established to deliver information to those residing in rural areas that do not have access to a full service center. Using data to analyze service areas with lower income and higher unemployment rates, WMW will continue to establish access points in community spaces, such as churches, libraries, and other existing community partners.

Career Coaches will utilize technology for jobseeker follow up, including telephone appointments and emails, when necessary. Support services to remove transportation barriers for eligible participants are available.

WMW complies with the provisions of the WIOA and also works closely with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Disability Advocates, Lakeshore Disability Network, American Association of Retired Persons, and Bureau for the Blind to ensure that the facility and materials are comfortable and accessible to individuals with disabilities. WMW provides adjustable workspaces and Job Access with Speech (JAWS) in its centers.

WMW encourages the use of the centers by individuals with disabilities and often works with local partners to schedule tours and answer any questions that arise. All reasonable accommodations are made upon request.

Staff are supported by the guidance of an on-site manager and frequently participate in trainings, presentations, and simulations to promote awareness and higher quality of service.

WMW agrees that the one-stop partners must have a defined role and provide resources within the Workforce Development System. Wagner-Peyser (WP), WIOA, TANF, and Trade services are provided by WMW. This allows for shared intake information, joint appointments, dual enrollment, easy access to office equipment, shared work or meeting space and an overall true one-stop experience for jobseekers. Each of the required programs or organizations comply with service expectations and mandated provisions as well as providing the following contributions:

- **Senior Community Service and Employment:**
 - Works in collaboration with West Michigan Works! staff to provide eligible (age 55+) WP and WIOA participants opportunities to gain work skills by participating in trial employment programs and specialized training programs. These services are often better suited for this population and employer connections in the local communities have already been established. A direct referral system to and from these providers, shared assessments, shared employer partnerships, and intentional efforts to extend or braid on-the-job training or work experience by utilizing both programs are all considered valuable resources.

- **Education and Family Literacy:**
 - Adult Education providers, including literacy services, are critical in achieving a strong secure workforce. West Michigan Works! has made great strides in developing stronger partnerships to allow individuals to easily navigate through increasing basic skill levels while working towards higher education goals. The role and resources contributed from these providers include using shared spaces to best serve the participants by allowing informational workshops on resume writing, interviewing, Labor Market Information (LMI), and training opportunities to be delivered by WMW staff during or just after classroom times. Shared assessments, shared progress notes, and working together to provide beneficial support to the participant all lead to an increase of individuals achieving their career goals.

- **Vocational Rehabilitation:**
 - Vocational rehabilitation programs have resources that the local workforce development system is not equipped to provide. These service providers are

located in all of the West Michigan Works! full service centers making shared assessments, joint intakes, Individual Employment Planning (IEP) sessions and creative problem solving much more effective for individuals. In addition, Michigan Rehabilitation services (MRS), with the consent of the jobseeker, is able to directly discuss barriers to employment and reasonable accommodations with the assigned career coach which allows for a more transparent and focused employment plan.

- **Veterans Services:**

- The defined role of the Veterans Career Advisor (VCA) is to provide direct services to Veterans, enabling them to be competitive in the labor market. They provide outreach and offer assistance to disabled and other veterans by promoting community and employer support for employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeship and on-the-job training (OJT). Identifying eligible veterans is a joint effort between WMW and the VCA and begins when the veteran first enters a Service Center by means of an application. Since the VCA representative is co-located inside of the service centers, jobseekers can often times speak to someone without having to schedule an appointment. Those who do not qualify for VCA services are referred to WIOA and will begin working on training or career pathways. All veterans and eligible spouses will receive priority of service regardless of services accessed.

- **Ex-Offender Services:**

- While individuals with a criminal history are served within WMW programs, specific ex-offender programs are also offered throughout the local community partnerships and resources provided by these agencies or organizations, which include an open and honest account of the participants background to ensure that job placement or job search assistance is realistic and appropriate. Some of our partners also provide Temporary Work Experience (TWE) opportunities as well as innovative programs that afford the participant good faith employment opportunities after completing employer pay, self-pay, or WIOA funded training programs. While WMW does not administer the Offender Success program, Offender Success staff uses WMW Service Centers to meet with clients as needed.

- **Programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006:**

- WMW works with many private and public colleges and universities located in its service area to provide service alignment through programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. This work is

accomplished through the Career and Educational Advisory Council as well as the sector strategies employed in the area.

WMW continues to assess the contributions of partners in each of its service centers. Recurring partner meetings are taking place both locally and across Region 4b to align services for jobseekers and ensure that communication and partnerships are occurring. County specific Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) have been established with required partners.

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

Employment and training opportunities are available to job seekers based on employer demand. Using a career coaching model, individuals pursuing employment and training options are assessed for employment barriers, transferable skills, interests, and career goals. Available activities include work based training such as On-The-Job Training (OJT), apprenticeships (including nontraditional apprenticeships), work or volunteer experience, as well as Occupation Skills Training that leads to an industry recognized credential. Workforce training providers include proprietary, local community colleges and universities and often offer nontraditional hours or condensed programs to accommodate the adult learner. Through WIOA Individual Training Account (ITA) funds, which are locally called scholarships, and other federal funds, eligible individuals may engage in these activities at little or no cost.

8. A description of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area:

Youth services are provided in the seven-county region of WMW. In Kent all youth services and in Allegan in-school youth services are provided through subcontractors. WMW staff directly provide services in Allegan (out-of-school), Barry, Ionia, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa. Services to youth ages 14-21, in-school youth are available in Kent, Muskegon and Allegan. Services to out-of-school youth, ages 16-24 are available in all seven counties. For a description of eligible youth, please see WMW 15-03, change 1, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) In- and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility (attached).

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

A variety of activities are available to help youth become employment ready. These include, but are not limited to, resume building, interview skills, workplace etiquette, job search assistance, job placement, paid and unpaid work experience (summer and year-round) and access to industry recognized training and certification.

Career guidance and education is provided through online and in person career exploration and assessments, labor market information, college and talent tours, assistance with FAFSA application and identifying other financial aid information and options.

WMW and partnering organizations host MiCareerQuest, a regional career exploration program serving over 9,000 students each year. MiCareerQuest provides employer-led, hands-on experiences for youth in various in-demand industries including healthcare, manufacturing, IT and construction. Educational institutions help link the career and education elements. This event primarily targets in-school youth; however WIOA enrolled out-of-school youth from the region are also invited and participate in the event.

Academic services are provided through tutoring, time management, monitoring of academic progress and attendance, goal setting, decision-making, mentoring, financial literacy, high school completion or GED preparation and testing. In Kent and Muskegon counties, the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program is operated at four schools (two high schools and two alternative education programs). In addition, an Out-of-school JMG model is operated in Muskegon county. JMG is a successful school-to-college/work program for at-risk, disadvantaged youth. The JMG program compliments the required elements of the WIOA program elements and offers a strong emphasis and curriculum regarding leadership, education and careers.

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

9. A description of how secondary and post-secondary education activities will be coordinated to enhance services:

Partnerships are established with local and state economic development agencies, K-12 and higher education partners to collaborate on various projects and initiatives such as MiCareerQuest, Industry Councils, and Registered Apprenticeships.

Utilizing the Industry Councils, WMW partners with educators and various training providers to help employers meet their training needs for customized training and Skilled Trades Training

Fund grants. WMW hosts a quarterly partnership meetings to discuss current projects and ways to increase collaboration. ISDs and economic development partners are invited to attend to share best practices and increase opportunities for collaboration on local and regional projects. WMW also coordinates the activities of the State required Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC). This advisory group includes education partners that provide direction and feedback to the WDB in aligning and implementing programs. All partners communicate on a consistent basis to collaborate to reach shared goals.

10. A description of supportive services and needs related payments:

Support Services will be made available to enrolled individuals who demonstrate a need that directly correlates with employment. This need will be assessed by a career coach and documented on the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS) plan. Needs Related Payments (NRP) are also available to those also participating in an approved training activity, as allowed by the utilized funding stream. The parameters for eligibility, service conditions, amounts, duration, and required documentation is outlined in the *WMW 15-06c1 Support Services Policy, including Needs Related Payments* (attached).

11. A description of the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area:

When possible, activities will be scheduled jointly with community partners or at the same location to minimize transportation needs. If, after the individual is assessed, support services are deemed necessary to continue career and training services, other resources will be accessed prior to issuing supports through WIOA Title I or PATH funds.

12. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of services:

To avoid duplication of services, WMW staff is trained across multiple programs and encouraged to utilize shared reporting and tracking systems, when access is permitted. The local board has participated in conversations with core partners to strategically orchestrate a warm handoff when appropriate and shared appointments when collaborating on services. Although there is no funding cap per participant, funding caps for specified programs have been put in place to maximize training services to unemployed and underemployed WIOA eligible Youth, Adults, and Dislocated Workers. These provisions reflect the financial needs of the target population as well as the credentialing needed in an employer-driven system. The parameters

associated with Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are outlines in *WMW 15-01c1 Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Guidelines* (attached).

WMW consistently meets with community partners to ensure collaboration on projects is occurring to reduce the duplication of services whenever possible. Meetings with Adult Education providers, community colleges, economic development organizations, and other community partners occur on a regular basis.

13. A description of how coordination between WIOA Title I workforce investment activities and adult education and literacy activities will be reached:

Region 4 Adult Education providers meet on a monthly basis to discuss best practices, new services, and technical assistance. Staff from WMW are regularly at these meetings to assist in the coordination of services and build better relationships toward stronger partnerships. On a local level, local Service Center Managers deepen existing partnerships by sharing professional development opportunities and collaborating on new programs and partnerships, including Intergrated Education and Training programs, integrated ESL services, and colocation of services.

Partner relationships that have already been established across the WMW delivery area will be strengthened by the coordination of outreach services, awareness initiatives, and the colocation of services where it makes strategic sense. As these relationships are enhanced, agreements are formalized in either contractual relationships or the establishments of Memorandums of Understanding.

14. A description of cooperative agreements or MOUs which define how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop:

WMW has chosen to carry out umbrella MOUs county-by-county, whereby all required partners sign a single MOU for the county in which they deliver services, resulting in seven separate master MOU agreements. In many of the service centers, required partners, including Michigan Rehabilitation Services, have established office space and are working closely with WMW staff to address the needs of the jobseeker. MOUs, in alignment with State of Michigan, Talent Investment Agency policy include both service provision coordination and infrastructure funding.

15. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds:

Area Community Services Employment and Training Council (ACSET) is a Public Agency and the administrative and fiscal agent for WMW. It was initially established under an Interlocal Agreement between Kent County and the City of Grand Rapids dated September 23, 1985. ACSET is a separate legal entity and a public body incorporated under Section 7 of the Urban Cooperation Act (UCA). Currently ACSET is the Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) for 7 counties.

Background/History

- On September 10, 1996, Allegan County joins the ACSET agency for employment and training program planning and development only; not the Community Action Agency (CAA) designation.
- On October 1, 2014, Barry County joined ACSET for the purpose of employment and training programs.
- On October 1, 2015, Allegan County, Barry County, Ionia County, Kent County, Montcalm County, Muskegon County, Ottawa County, and the City of Grand Rapids entered the 4th Amended Interlocal Agreement under the UCA; resulting in the formation of West Michigan Works! (WMW). Because of this, ACSET also entered into a Municipal Partnership Act Contract for the purpose of re-establishing ACSET as the CAA in Kent County.
- On October 2, 2017, ACSET separated with the Community Action Agency in Kent County, only administering employment and training programs.

As of October 1, 2015, ACSET is governed by a 14 Member Governing Board which consists of the following representation:

Public Agency	ACSET Governing Board Member
Allegan County	County Board Chair or Designee
	County Board Member
Barry County	County Board Chair or Designee
Ionia County	County Board Chair or Designee
Kent County	County Board Member
	County Board Member
Montcalm County	County Board Chair or Designee

Muskegon County	County Board Chair or Designee
	County Board Member
Ottawa County	County Board Chair or Designee
	County Board Member
City of Grand Rapids	Mayor or Designee
	City Commission Member

The WMW Workforce Development Board (WDB) consists of 35 members, which includes representation from the 7 counties in Region 4b. Membership includes sector categories, including: Business, Adult Education, Economic Development, Community Based, Higher Education, Vocational Rehab, and Labor Training, Organized Labor and Public Assistance.

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

Sub-grants and contracts are awarded through a request for proposal (RFP) process. The RFP is released on the WMW website, through media outlets, and notification is mailed to current contractors, community partners and other identified potential bidders. The RFP is not released in advance of the scheduled date.

A review committee is selected to review proposals, and may include community partners, WDB members and administrative staff. Proposals are reviewed and rated on a competitive basis according to the criteria stated in the RFP. Sub-recipients selected for funding will be approved in the manner required by WIOA or subsequent legislation.

17. A description of the levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official(s) to be used to measure the performance:

WIOA and WP performance measures were negotiated in Program Year 15 and the agreed upon goals are reflected in the chart below. Performance for Youth Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit is designated as baseline, as determined by US Department of Labor, because it is unlikely that adequate data exists to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

West Michigan Works!	Adults	Dislocated Workers	Youth	Wagner-Peyser *
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	84%	83%	72%	65%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	74%	74%	73%	64%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,833	\$7,150	Baseline	\$6,863
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	66%	65%	70%	N/A

18.A description of the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board:

WMW is committed to delivering the highest performance possible and recognizes the factors developed by the State board. Performance is measured based on identified goals as defined by WIOA and approved by the WDB and Governing Board as well as other non-measurable community successes and gains. As stated previously, the WMW strategic planning process, in coordination with the One Stop Operator, has identified essential steps needed to maintain and grow as a high performing board.

Effectiveness is measured by meeting or exceeding performance based goals as well as additional goals identified in the strategic plan. These measures are compiled and reported quarterly. Deficiencies are evaluated and addressed as needed.

Other criteria that has been identified includes the ongoing need for stronger partnership engagements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with local area adult education providers, disability services, and training providers including community colleges. This process is multi-faceted however agreements have been made with those utilizing space within the one stop centers and pending agreements for those not utilizing space are anticipated to be in place by Program Year 18-19.

Additionally, WMW is committed to ongoing process improvement through the professional development of staff, both administrative and service delivery. Professional development will

include training related directly to everyday duties, as well as larger strategies, such as ongoing Lean Management Training.

19. A description of how training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts:

Training services as outlined in the WIOA section 134 will be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITA) approved by the local board and issued directly to the training providers on behalf of the eligible participant and will follow the WMW ITA policy.

Individuals will be made aware of high demand employment opportunities and the local training programs and providers that are eligible to receive ITA funds based off of the MiTraining Connect (MiTC). Qualified career coaches will assist the individual in navigating through program requirements, FAFSA options, and the training programs placement rates but will not endorse or recommend one training provider over another. Training contracts will not be required as long as the training and provider is listed as approved on the MiTC and the program results in an industry recognized credentials for an identified in-demand employment opportunity based off of the local labor market information provided by West Michigan Works!

Training funds will be referred to as scholarships and approvals will be made based on local in demand occupations, giving priority of services to veterans and qualified spouses, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals who are low income and youth residing in a high poverty area. Ideally, individuals will have a high school diploma or GED and are both eligible and suitable for training. To ensure the individual is able to make an informed choice on the desired training program and provider the assigned career coach will assist them with:

- Complete interest and career readiness assessments to ensure they are focused on their desired industry or occupation
- Identify and address employment barriers including transportation to and from the training site, length of training program, and educational levels or assessment results recommended to ensure success
- Research in-demand occupations through the use of local labor market information and job postings to include required credentials needed and previous work experience preferred by employers
- Locate qualified trainings that lead to an industry recognized credential through the use of the MiTC, facilitate or encourage the individual to tour the campus or training location and assist them with making informed decisions on program selections
- Develop a career pathway plan that encourages obtaining portable and stackable credentials

20. A description of the process used by the local board, consistent with Section III, to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan:

An electronic version of this plan will be available for public comment through the WMW website for 30 days after posting. The local board will provide a copy of the plan to interested parties and required partners and will encourage comments and feedback prior to board approval.

All comments will be encouraged and taken into consideration for revisions. Other sections of this plan may also be revised as program guidance becomes available.

21. A description of how one-stop centers are implementing an integrated intake system for programs carried out under the WIOA and by one-stop partners:

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

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

22. A description of the local priority of service requirements:

Priority of service will be given to eligible recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and/or individuals who are basic skills deficient when receiving individualized career and training services who qualify for WIOA Adult funding.

Veterans and eligible spouses as well as individuals with disabilities and individuals living in a high poverty area will also be given priority of services.

WMW will make intentional efforts to reach the priority of service population and make individualized career and training services available. Funding levels for these services will be monitored and individuals eligible under this priority will be given career services and training approvals before all other eligible individuals.

- Low income will be defined as individuals who received income for a six-month period that does not exceed the higher level of the poverty line or 70 percent of the Lower Living Standards Income Level (LLSIL)
- Basic Skills deficiency will be assessed through Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) testing and will include those individuals scoring less than a 9th grade reading or math equivalent
- High-poverty area will be defined as a Census tract; a set of contiguous Census tracts; Indian Reservation, tribal land, or Native Alaskan Village; or a county that has a poverty rate of at least 25 percent as set every five years using American Community Survey five-year data
- WMW will focus on intentional outreach targeting these groups including the enhancement of partnerships with community partners and organizations who are providing services to these individuals.

23. A description of the coordination of workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities:

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

24. A description of Rapid Response activities:

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

In accordance with the WIOA section 134(2)(A) and 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 682.300 to 682.330; WMW will coordinate, arrange, and provide services as part of Rapid Response. Steps include:

- Notification of potential event includes notifying TIA of closures or layoffs and coordinating the presence and involvement of local agencies.

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

The Business Solutions Unit of West Michigan Works! will be primarily responsible for the MWA role in the JAC applying for State Adjustment Grants (SAG) or National Emergency Grants (NEG).

Contact information:

Deborah Lyzenga, Regional Business Solutions Director
 West Michigan Works!
 215 Straight Ave, NW Grand Rapids MI 49504
 Phone: 616-336-5148
 Email: dlyzenga@westmiworks.org

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

If training can assist in averting layoffs, an Incumbent Worker application will be initiated. Fact finding will occur with the employer to determine the type of training necessary for workers who are at risk of being laid off. These efforts will be coordinated by West Michigan Works! in conjunction with the company and any training providers that may be involved.

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

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



Title: WMW 15-04
Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility

Effective Date: November 16, 2015

Approved By: West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board on November 16, 2015
2015

Program Affected: Adult and Dislocated Worker WIOA programs

Scope: To determine eligibility for Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Adult and Dislocated Worker participants

Supersedes: N/A

References: WIOA Section 3(2); WIOA Section 3(15); WIOA Rules 680.120; WIOA Rules 680.130; WIOA Manual

Policy: This policy defines local eligibility criteria for West Michigan Works! WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. In addition, the policy identifies local MWA documentation requirements of WIOA Dislocated Worker eligibility.

Provision of career and training services for all WIOA programs is dependent on the individual's ability to prove authorization to work in the United States. Any individual who cannot demonstrate authorization to work will not be eligible for program enrollment and will be referred to the appropriate agency. Efforts to determine authorization to work &/or refer customer to appropriate agency or office to assist will be coordinated with Migrant Services. All individuals regardless of authorization to work are able to receive self-services through West Michigan Works! service centers.

A. Basic Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for participation in the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs individuals must at a minimum:

- 1) Be age 18 years or older **and**
- 2) Be a citizen of the United States or an eligible non-citizen **and**
- 3) If the individual is a male, born after January 1, 1960 who is 18 years of age or older; be registered for selective service

B. WIOA Adult Individualized Career Services

If an individual meets the basic eligibility criteria and the following local requirements they may be considered for enrollment in the WIOA Adult program, allowing them to receive individualized career services. West Michigan Works! requires individuals meet the following local eligibility requirements for enrollment in the WIOA Adult Program:

- 1) Adults are unemployed or underemployed and are determined by West Michigan Works! to be in need of individualized career services to obtain self-sufficient employment;

C. WIOA Dislocated Worker Individualized Career Services

To qualify for participation in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program for individualized career services individuals must meet the basic eligibility criteria above and the following criteria:

- 1) One of the following:
 - a. Has been terminated/laid off, or has received notice of termination/layoff from employment; **and** Is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; **and** Is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation **or** has been employed

for a duration sufficient to demonstrate an attachment to the workforce

- b. Has been terminated/laid off, or has received a notice of termination/layoff from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at a plant, facility, or enterprise
- c. Is employed at a facility which has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days
- d. Employed at a facility which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close with no end date
- e. Self-employed but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions or because of natural disasters
- f. Displaced Homemaker
- g. Spouse of a member of the Armed Forces who lost employment due to active duty relocation
- h. Spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who is unemployed or underemployed

D. Local Documentation Requirements for Dislocated Worker Eligibility

Dislocated Workers may be eligible under one of several definitions provided by WIOA. Two of the definitions require local Michigan Works Agencies to establish a policy regarding acceptable documentation for program eligibility.

Documentation required for Dislocated Worker eligibility as defined in WIOA requires West Michigan Works! to establish documentation policies for:

- Unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; and
- Have been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce

1. *Unlikely to Return*

The industry or previous occupation in which the individual worked will be documented by self-certification. The occupation in which the individual worked shall not only be based on job title, but on the majority of job duties identified on the applicant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

The West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board has chosen to use Labor Market Information (LMI) that indicates a 5% or less growth rate from the following sources to determine whether the individual is unlikely to return to his/her previous industry/occupation:

- Labor Market Information documents from the State of Michigan including; the Annual Planning Information Report (APIR), Industry Information Documents, and Occupation Information documents.
- Labor Market Information relating to industries and/or occupations from labor market intelligence system/database software procured by West Michigan Works!

Individuals from occupations listed in high growth documents referenced above, or created by West Michigan Works! shall not be considered “unlikely to return to his/her previous industry or occupation” or have “limited opportunities for employment or re-employment in the same or similar occupation,” and therefore are not eligible under those criteria.

Exceptions to the above prohibition can be granted if the applicant has a characteristic that makes him or her “unlikely to return” that can be documented and justified on the applicant’s Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS should detail the circumstances causing the participant to be unable to return to the previous industry/occupation. Examples of exceptions would include (but not limited to) medical or personal situations that clearly prevent the individual from returning to their previous industry/occupation.

2. *Attachment to the Workforce*

The Dislocated Worker eligibility also depends on the applicant proving that he/she has been employed for sufficient duration to show attachment to the workforce. The West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board accepts proof of attachment to the workforce when the applicant verifies a minimum of 30 days of previous employment within the past twelve months using pay stubs or telephone verification from the employer. As a last resort, an applicant statement of previous employment is acceptable.



Title: WMW 15-06 c1
Support Services Policy, including Needs-Related Payments

Effective Date: 05-23-2016

Approved by: West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board

Programs Affected: All Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs.

Scope: This policy provides guidance for providing supportive services to job seekers enrolled in West Michigan Works! WIOA programs.

Supersedes: N/A

References: WIOA Section 3(2); WIOA Section 3(15); WIOA Section 3(59); WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G); WIOA Section 134(d); WIOA Rules 680.120; 680.130; 680.900 et. seq. and 681.570; State of Michigan Draft WIOA Manual; State of Michigan Workforce Development Agency Policy Issuance 04-04; Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 48 – Federal Acquisition Regulations; CFR, Title 2 – Grants and Agreements; U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration; One-Stop Comprehensive Financial Management Technical Assistance Guide; and State of Michigan Workforce Development Agency Policy Issuance 15-12.

Background:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), PL 113-128 provides program guidelines for supportive services and needs-related payments for adults and dislocated workers as defined in WIOA Sections 3(59) and 134(d)(2) and (3). A variety of services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments (NRP) necessary to enable an individual to participate in career and training services may be provided. Items necessary to participate in career and training services may include , but are not limited to, assistance with uniforms, other appropriate work attire, and work-related tools and protective gear. Assistance with educational testing, reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities, and referrals to health care may qualify as appropriate supportive services for youth as defined in WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G).

Policy:

All WIOA enrolled adults, dislocated workers and youth are eligible for supportive services as defined in WIOA Section 3(59). The exception is Needs-Related Payments (NRPs), which are a form of supportive service available only to adults, dislocated workers, and out-of-school youth (OSY) ages 18-24 who are enrolled in training. Information regarding the availability of supportive services in the region and referral to those services must be provided to all adults, dislocated workers and youth.

Supportive Service Limits and Conditions

Cap: \$1,000 per participant in a 12-month period

Supportive services, including but not limited to- employment or training related clothing, tools, equipment, supplies, medical and transportation needs may be provided to program participants when:

1. They are an allowable (authorized) program expense;
2. They are necessary to enable an individual to participate in program (employment and training) activities; and
3. Job Seekers are unable to obtain supportive services through other community programs and resources.

One Time Work-Related

Tools necessary for employment are eligible with verification of employment and documentation from employer stating the need and list of necessary tools.

Employment-Related Medical

Immunizations, physicals, mental health assessments, optical or dental needs will be procured through the least expensive means. Justification for need of service as it relates to training or employment and justification for the chosen vendor will be documented in an individual service strategy (ISS).

Clothing

Interview clothes, uniforms or work related clothes- Limited to \$150 per participant.

Boots/shoes, including steel toed shoes, not to exceed \$150 per participant. If a uniform rental service is used, the supportive service should not be provided for a period longer than 3 months.

Automobile

Repairs to a vehicle necessary to remove a barrier to employment or training are eligible.

Vehicle being repaired must be titled to participant or participant's family. With proper justification, insurance, plates and registration are eligible expenses as they relate to training or employment. A new auto insurance policy will not be provided for longer than 3 months.

Childcare

Limited to \$80.00 per week for first child, or \$2.00 per hour

- \$20.00 for each additional child
- Not to exceed \$120.00 per week
- During participants' training or first 6 weeks of employment.
- To be paid to a licensed daycare provider.

Transportation

\$.30 per mile, not to exceed \$100 per week.

- Transportation allowances are for those traveling to an approved training program or to worksite during the first 6 weeks of employment.
- Youth participants are eligible for transportation allowance for job search, attendance at trainings or the first 6 weeks of unsubsidized employment.
- Bus passes or taxi rides if reliable transportation is not available. Not to exceed \$50.00 per week.
- If gas cards are used to reimburse a participant, mileage must be documented to support the expense.
- Drivers training may be paid for with documentation of need.

Testing Fees

Testing, permits and license fees are an allowable expense. Occupational testing and licensing fees that are not included in an individual training account (ITA) may be funded as a supportive services. Drivers training testing and licensing may also be provided with documentation of need.

Supportive Service Procurement

Purchase and procurement of all Support Services must follow ACSET's Procurement Policy.

Documentation

Support Services may be awarded providing that the provision of the service is included in the participants Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or an ISS. At a minimum:

- The IEP or ISS must specify the activity or goal that must be met in order to qualify for the support service.
- The IEP or ISS must specify services that are planned in order for the participant to continue in Career or Training Services.
- Justification of the need for the support service must be provided.

Waivers or Exceptions

In cases with unusual circumstances, where staff feel it would be beneficial to exceed a cap amount or provide additional support services, waiver requests should be made on a case-by-case basis to the Service Center Manager.

Needs-Related Payments

Needs-Related Payments (NRPs) are defined as financial assistance in a stipend form provided to participants for the purpose of enabling unemployed participants to participate in training. Needs-Related Payments will only be available if required by a program or funding source.



Title: WMW 15-03, change 1
Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) In and Out-of-School Youth Eligibility

Effective Date: 2/26/2018

Approved By: West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board on 2/12/2018
ACSET Governing Board on 2/26/2018

Program(s) Affected: This policy applies to individuals seeking eligibility to participate in the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth programs

Scope: WIOA Youth programs

Supersedes: WMW 15-03

References: WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B & C); WIOA Rules, 20 CFR 681.300; WIOA Manual

Policy: Provisions of career or training services for all WIOA programs is dependent upon the individual's ability to prove authorization to work in the United States. Any individual who cannot demonstrate authorization to work will not be eligible for program enrollment, career or training services and will be referred to appropriate agencies. Efforts to determine authorization to work and/or refer customers to appropriate agencies or offices to assist will be coordinated with Migrant Services. All individuals, regardless of authorization to work, are able to receive self-services through West Michigan Works! service centers.

A. In-School Youth

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

1. Is age 14-21 (or through the age of 25 with a disability) **and**
2. Attending a school (as defined by state law) **and**
3. A low-income individual **and**
4. Has one or more of the following barriers
 - a. A homeless individual, including runaways
 - b. An offender
 - c. A foster care youth including a youth who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care

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

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

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

B. Out-of-School Youth

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

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

C. Requires Additional Assistance

Definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure or hold employment” criterion must be established at the local level.

The West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board definition for Youth Who Require Additional Assistance includes the following:

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

D. Five Percent Allowances

WIOA allows a five percent enrollment exception under two situations:

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

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

E. Other Responsible Adult

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

Other responsible adults shall include the following:

- A relative with whom the individual resides;
- An adult who has been delegated custodial or administrative responsibilities in writing, either temporarily or permanently, by a parent or by an appropriate agency;
- An agency or organization representative who is in a position to know the individual’s circumstances (i.e. clergy, school teacher, probation or other officer of the court or foster parent);
- A representative of an agency which provided services to the individual and who is aware of the individual’s circumstances (i.e. social worker, homeless shelter official, child protective worker, foster worker, or health clinic official).

Attachment A: Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- a) Who is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process, and for whom services under this Act may be beneficial; or

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- b) Who requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction

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

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

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

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

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

- a) Who is a youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or

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

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

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

Included Income:

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

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

Included income:

1. Gross Wages and Salary - The total money received (amount paid before deductions) from work performed as an employee including:
 - gross wages and salaries
 - tips
 - commissions
 - piece rate payments (payments based on the number of items/units completed, instead of hours worked)
 - cash bonuses
 - vacation pay (this includes Armed Forces terminal leave pay)
 - Income earned through the senior community service employment program.

2. Net Self Employment Income - Net income (gross receipts - operating expenses = net employment income) from a business firm, farm, or other enterprise (including odd jobs) in which a person is engaged on his/her own account. If net self-employment income reflects a deficit amount, income from the source is to be considered "-0-" when calculating family income. Self-employed includes a farmer, rancher, fisherman, professional person, independent trades person, and other business people.

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

Non-Included Income:

- Severance Pay
- Welfare payments (including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income, Food Assistance Employment and Training Program, and Refugee Assistance
- Capital gains
- Foster child care payments

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- Any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank, the sale of property, an employee exclusive 401(k), the sale of property, a house or a car
- Tax refunds, gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, one-time insurance payments, or compensation for injury
- Non - cash benefits such as employer paid fringe benefits, food or housing received in lieu of wages, Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, school meals, and housing assistance
- Pay or allowances received while on Active Military Duty. (38 U.S.C. 2013)
- Pell grants
- Education assistance and compensation payments to veterans and other eligible persons (Chapters 11, Compensation for Service Connected Disability or Death, 13, Dependence and Indemnity Compensation for Service Connected Death, 31, Vocational Rehabilitation, 34, Veterans' Education Assistance, 35, War Orphans' and Widows' Educational Assistance, and 36, Administration of Educational Benefits. 38 U.S.C. 2013)
- Allowances, earnings, and payments to individuals participating in programs under WIA shall not be considered as income for the purposes of determining eligibility for WIA
- Earned income credit (EIC). (TEIN #35-93)
- Educational financial assistance received under Title IV of the High Educational Act. (20 U.S.C. 1087)
- Needs-based scholarships
- Adoption subsidies

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

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

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

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

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



- Title:** WMW 15-11, change 1 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Incentive Policy
- Effective Date:** 2/26/2018
- Approved by:** West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board on 2/12/2018
ACSET Governing Board on 2/26/2018
- Programs Affected:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth
- Reference:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Federal Register, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking 681.640; 2 CFR part 200
- Policy:** Incentives under the WIOA youth program are allowed to youth participants for recognition and achievement directly tied to training activities and work experiences and must align with the goals of the program. Although incentive payments are allowable under WIOA, the incentives must be in compliance with the requirements in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR part 200. Federal funds cannot be spent on entertainment costs. Therefore, incentives may not include entertainment, such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment. This Youth Incentive Policy does not create an entitlement and incentives are dependent on the availability of funding.
- Procedure:**
- Incentives may be earned by enrolled Youth upon completion of specific, performance-related outcomes and/or goal attainment (see chart below);
 - Enrolled Youth must also be in compliance with program requirements (maintaining required contact, etc.);
 - WIOA enrolled Youth are eligible to receive up to \$500 (lifetime) in performance incentives;
 - Incentives will be presented in the form of prepaid debit cards or gift cards;
 - Incentives may be awarded at any time during programming including the 12-month follow-up period;
 - Only one incentive value may be awarded per performance outcome, except for GED Testing (4 tests total) and tutoring (6 sessions total);
 - All incentive awards will be documented on the WIOA Youth Performance Incentive Receipt Form and in the Individual Service Strategy in OSMIS. Incentives will also be case noted. Supportive documentation, as indicated, will be maintained in the jobseeker file.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Incentive Policy

PERFORMANCE GOAL	SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION	INCENTIVE AMOUNT
Attainment of Diploma, GED or other Credential	One of the following: Transcript, certificate, diploma, letter from school (must include attainment date)	\$125
Entered Employment/Post-Secondary Education or Military	One of the following: Employer verification, Work Number record, pay stubs, school enrollment, military service verification	\$50
Retained Employment or Continued Post-Secondary Education for six consecutive months after exit	One of the following: Employer verification, Work Number record, pay stub, school attendance	\$50
Successful Completion of a Work Experience Activity	Fulfilling the work experience activity time period, unless prematurely terminating activity for unsubsidized employment	\$100
GED or Remediation Tutoring Sessions	Attendance documentation from tutor/teacher	\$25/2 sessions \$25/4 sessions \$25/6 sessions
Completion of Official GED Subject Test (4 subject areas)	Passing test scores/confirmation from GED.com or testing site	\$25/test (4 total)
TABE Post Test with gain (for those scored as basic skills deficient) or WorkKeys Assessment scoring Bronze level	Test scores	\$50