

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA 4

**PROGRAM YEAR 16
LOCAL AREA TRANSITIONAL PLAN**

**Submitted by Local Workforce Board
and
East Tennessee Human Resource Agency, Administrative and Fiscal Agent**



The East Tennessee Region and LWDA 4 have been fortunate to recruit and gain growth through expansion and new industries in our area. Even though much of our demand is still service sector employment, manufacturing is showing strong growth in our area with emphasis in STEM related fields, computer assisted manufacturing and maintenance and other technical positions which offer better pay and more growth opportunities. As a result, the local area and partners along with businesses have placed emphasis on these industries and the need for trained staff.

The implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act has brought new challenges to the Local Workforce Board and Staff as we continue to receive guidance regarding implementation.

Local Workforce Development Areas 1-5, along with 60 of our partners and community representatives completed a regional workforce plan. LWDA 4 submitted Applications for Certification for each of its nine American Job Centers, and the review process is currently being conducted by the State.

LWDA 4 and its youth sub-contractor, Tennessee College of Applied Technology at Jacksboro, continue to recruit out-of-school youth for the youth program. This group of individuals is difficult to recruit since many have chosen to go directly to work rather than into training. We are exploring ways to recruit including working with our partners and community organizations including juvenile courts, churches, recreational businesses, etc.

The LWDA 4 Board and Staff look forward to the coming year although many changes continue in the workforce program. We believe that as we continue to learn with our partners about the flexibility and challenges within WIOA that we can be successful in our provision of quality services and training to our business and the workforce.

Please address the criteria in 10 pages or less. Responses are focused on the local area's compliance with federal or state requirements. If the criteria indicate the need for a document, include with the required attachment the criteria's heading name, within the attached document header.

- Describe the consortium agreements, as defined by **WIOA 107(d)(11)**, in place between the local board and the TN Department of Human Services, Office of Rehabilitation Services with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. **[WIOA Sec.10B(b)(14)]**

See Attachment A for Agreement

Local Workforce Development Area 4 is committed to working closely with the Tennessee Department of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in developing innovative ways to serve the disabled population. We co-enroll individuals to provide close case management for those who may require additional assistance in training and in reaching their goals for employment. We have and will continue to cross train our staff so services are readily available for our customers and staff understand the services available through our partner programs. We will work together to ensure businesses throughout the region have a better understanding of the benefits of hiring these dedicated employees who have overcome their barriers to employment.

WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation staff worked together most recently on the beginning development of this and future regional plans through multiple meetings in the region. We will be working closely with them over the next several months to complete our local planning efforts, partner sharing sessions, and through transfer of information and resources.

- Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. **[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]**

The East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA) has been designated by the Local Elected Official as the fiscal agent for LWDA 4.

- Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the process for sole-sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a regional operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. **[WIOA Sec.10B(b)(16)]**

ETHRA serves as the administrative and fiscal agency for LWDA 4 and utilizes ETHRA's

Purchasing Policies and Procedures. (See attached.) For purchases under \$3,000 bids are not required but documentation must be submitted that demonstrates the price is fair and the item meets operational needs. Verbal quotes or written quotes (3) are required for items from \$3,001 to \$4,999 and must be documented. Informal written bids are required on purchases over \$5,000 but less than \$25,000. All documentation must be filed. Sealed bids are requested for purchases over \$25,000 except in emergency situation or proven sole source procurement. Invitations for bids are sent to prospective vendors, published on ETHRA's web site and whenever possible advertised in print media.

Sole-source purchases may be arranged without benefit of bid when an item is unique and has specific characteristics that can be filled by only one source. A justification must be developed based on information from both the source vendor and other documentation. The Purchasing Agent will ensure that that this justification is sufficient to allow the purchase and will consider many factors, including but not limited to, whether other products could be used with minor modification. See policy for other considerations.

In addition to ETHRA Policies, the agency follows all Federal and State policies including the Workforce Service Policy on Property Management and the recent Workforce Policy on Allowable and Disallowable Costs.

The Executive Committee and/or the Board for the Local Workforce Development Area approves all applications for Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, and any special training classes and sub-contracts for Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services and One-Stop Operator. As stated, all sub-contractor services that exceed \$25,000 are acquired through sealed bid. A bid or request for proposal package is developed and the Procurement Manager for ETHRA, with assistance from staff, ensures information regarding the bid or the bid packages is placed on the ETHRA web site, and sent to interested parties and/or advertised in print media. The sealed bids are opened and recorded and then evaluated by appropriate individuals.

No subrecipient agreement is entered into without review and approval by the LWDB including IWT and OJT contracts. In the past, special classes have been approved by the Board without bid based on documentation of need and reasonableness of cost.

In addition, the Local Elected Officials and the Workforce Board approve the budget for the delivery of services at the American Job Centers and proposed expenditures for operations and infrastructure. The Board is provided with quarterly expenditure reports.

- Describe the local area's negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system, to include attaching the completed Performance Targets Table. ***[WIOA Sec.10B(b)(17)]***

Target table is attached which shows the negotiated local levels of performance. LWDA 4 has in the past been very successful in reaching its performance levels. We believe this is a direct result of the way we do assessments. For every individual who requests training services, we attempt to ensure the person has the ability to reach their training goal and has a true interest and passion for the career they have chosen.

Under WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth will all have performance goals for employment rate 2nd quarter and 4th quarter, median earnings, and effectiveness in serving business. Except for Title III (Wagner-Peyser) the other partners will also have performance goals for credential attainment, and measurable skills gain. This emphasis will require that all partners work together to achieve these goals. One way to reach this goal will be to co-enroll participants to ensure they have all the support they need to be successful in their pursuits of training and employment.

WIOA has placed a special emphasis on serving those individuals with barriers and out-of-school youth. LWDA 4 have already been serving many individuals that have barriers and do not believe that this will affect performance except for the large transition to out-of-school youth as now defined by WIOA and State definition. We are currently having difficulty in recruiting these youth to participate and are exploring new ways to engage today's youth population. We have found that many of these youth are not interested in training as employment opportunities currently exist and they appear to be satisfied with the salary they are receiving. As stated, unemployment rates have improved throughout LWDA 4 and jobs are available. However, many dislocated workers have decided not to return to the workforce even with the improvement in the economy. This group has also been difficult to recruit and interest in training opportunities, as those who want to work go right back into the workforce.

- Describe the indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent, eligible providers and the AJC delivery system, in the local area. *[WIOA Sec.10B(b)(17)]*

Note: This description may include how and by whom the indicators are being deployed; and if the measured performance and effectiveness are used in the continuous improvement process.

The Local Fiscal Agent's performance is measured by the findings from annual audits and PAR Reports, and the provision of financial information to the LWDB. ETHRA is audited yearly by an independent auditor and the reports are made available to the LWDB. In addition, the LWDB is furnished with the name and telephone number of the auditor in order that they may call them with any questions or concerns. ETHRA has an Audit Committee made up of members from its Policy Council and a staff member reports directly to them in matters that relate to finance and policies of the Agency. PAR monitoring is conducted yearly and all reports of these monitoring are provided to the LWDB including the corrective action plans. Financial reports are provided quarterly to the LWDB.

The request to become an eligible provider and be added to the ETPL is conducted by

the LWDB. Providers requesting approval are encouraged to attend and present their proposed programs to the Board. Questions regarding cost, demand and the details related to quality of the program are addressed by the Board. Under WIOA, it is anticipated that the Board will look closely at existing providers to ensure they are meeting the needs within LWDA 4.

The State Performance measures have been utilized to measure performance and the effectiveness of the AJCs. The LWDB is provided a report by county that shows the performance standard and the achievement by that county in relation to the standard as available. In addition, the LWDB is provided a quarterly report on the number of enrollments, exits, carryover and active participants by funding stream and county at each quarterly meeting.

- Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA ***Section 10B(d)***. Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plans. ***[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(20)]***

- Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan, the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.
 - o Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. ***[WIOA Sec.10B(d)(1)]***;
 - o Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. ***[WIOA Sec.10B(d)(2)]***; and
 - o If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan's attachments. ***[WIOA Sec.108(d)(3)]***

The Local Plan notification was placed on the ETHRA website. In addition, notification regarding the release of the plan for public comment was sent to the Local Elected Officials, the LWDB, Chamber of Commerce, Community Colleges, local TCATs, and partner and community businesses or organizations. Opportunity was provided to view the plan online and everyone was given the opportunity to request hard copies of the plan. In addition, individuals were given the opportunity to provide written comments by mail and e-mail.

- List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each AJC partner in the AJC within the local area. By checking the box adjacent to each line item below the local board attests to ensuring the compliance components/documents listed are in place and effective prior to July1, 2016.

Title 1 Steve Bandy
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Title II Kasey Vatter
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Title III Evelyn Gaines Guzman
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Title IV Jeffrey Blackshear
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TANF Families First Contractor
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Job Corps Transitioning contractor. Information should be available soon.

Required Documents:

The appendices are available upon request and will be submitted to the State on May 2, 2017.

In addition to the response to the questions asked above, please provide copies of the following compliance components/documents at the time of submission:

Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local elected officials

Agreement between the chief local elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated

Agreement between the chief local elected official(s) and the Local Workforce Development Board

AJC Partner Service Agreement(s)

Resource Sharing Agreement(s) and MOU(s) (see required MOU template guidance)

Resource Sharing Agreement Budget(s) (Resource Sharing Agreements will be replaced by Infrastructure Agreements (IFAs))

Local Workforce Development Board policy and process that provides for nomination, appointment and removal of board members; resolutions; bylaws; code of conduct; and conflict of interest

Financial management policy and process including cost allocation plan; internal controls; cash management; receipts of goods; cost reimbursement; inventory and equipment; program income; travel reimbursement; audit requirements and resolution; annual report; property management; debt collection; and allowable cost

Local procurement policy

Program management policy and process including equal opportunity for customers; supportive services; needs related payments; file management; eligibility; self-sufficiency criteria; individual training accounts; layoff assistance; priority of services; grievance for eligible training providers list; transitional jobs; stipends; and training verification/refunds

Copies of the listed compliance components/documents below are ***not required at this time, but may be requested during monitoring and/or auditing.***

- Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan
- Human resources policy and process including employee classification; benefits; holidays and PTO; recruitment and selection; employee development; discipline;

layoffs, terminations and severance; sexual harassment; and equal opportunity/non-discrimination

- Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, **if** applicable