

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Local Plan
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2028**

Local Area: WorkLink

Counties within the Local Area: Anderson, Oconee, Pickens Counties

Local Area Administrator and Contact Information:

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Attachment B: Local Plan Requirements

The local plan serves as a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate local workforce development area (LWDA) service delivery strategies with those that support the state’s strategic and operational goals. In partnership with the chief elected officials (CEOs), each local workforce development board (LWDB) must develop and submit a local plan to identify and describe the policies, procedures, and activities that are carried out in the LWDA, consistent with the strategic vision and goals outlined in the WIOA State Plan and the respective regional plan.

In alignment with South Carolina’s Unified State Plan (resulting from South Carolina’s Act 67 of 2023), the Program Years (PYs) 2024 – 2027 WIOA State Plan vision is to achieve and sustain South Carolina’s workforce potential. The plan focuses on the following priorities:

1. Develop and create an effective customer-driven workforce system through the alignment of programs and policies, the use of leading-edge technology, and high-quality staff.
2. Prepare jobseekers for priority occupations through relevant training and skills acquisition, and match jobseekers to open employer positions.
3. Improve the education and workforce infrastructure network to decrease obstacles to work in order to improve recruitment and retention of workers, which is necessary to maintain economic development competitiveness.
4. Create alignment between the workforce development system and the South Carolina agencies and organizations directing implementation of the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA), and CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 funding.

The following guiding principles must be considered priorities and included in responses throughout the LWDA’s PYs 2024 – 2027 Local Plan:

- Partnership and collaboration,
- Increased access to resources and services through the use of technology, and
- Innovation and cost efficiencies.

The local plan must include:

Section I:	Workforce and Economic Analysis
Section II:	Strategic Vision and Goals
Section III:	LWDA Partnerships and Investment Strategies
Section IV:	Program Design and Evaluation
Section V:	Operations and Compliance

Section I: Workforce and Economic Analysis

An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions, to include existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis shall include:

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKLINK WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

The WorkLink Workforce Development Area serves three counties in the northwesternmost corner of South Carolina: Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens. A blend of small towns and growing cities, the area offers recreation destinations provided by the mountains, foothills, forests, and lakes that make up the geography of the area, as well as shopping and dining experiences common to mid-size cities.

The area's economic success is centered on its access to the I-85 corridor that connects Atlanta, Georgia with Charlotte, North Carolina. Situated approximately halfway between both large cities and next door to Greenville, SC, the area has attracted significant interest from manufacturing companies around the world and serves as an economic driver for the region. I-85 touches a portion of Oconee County and traverses the northern half of Anderson County, giving Pickens County easy access to I-85 via connector Hwy 153.

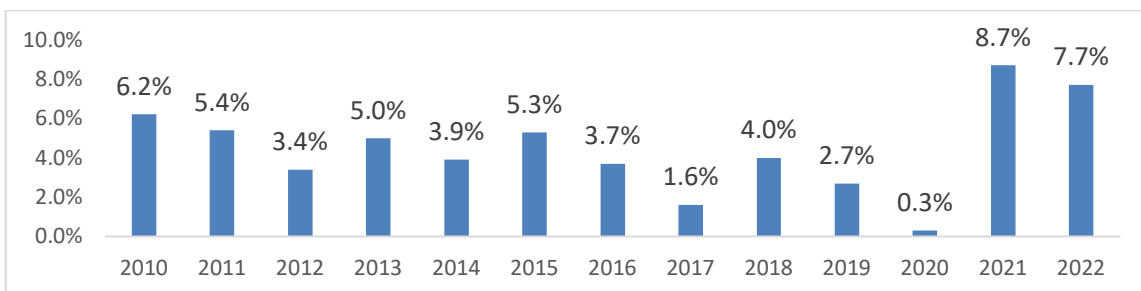
AREA INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

WorkLink benefits from its strategic location, skilled workforce, comprehensive infrastructure, and commitment to innovation, making it an ideal area for corporate expansion. Major industries include:

1. **Aerospace:** The aerospace sector leverages synergies with the automotive industry and advanced materials expertise.
2. **Automotive:** A longstanding leader in automotive manufacturing and research, WorkLink is home to numerous suppliers and manufacturers critical to the automotive industry.
3. **Engineered Materials:** The region supplies advanced materials for healthcare, plastics, photonics, and composite industries, positioning itself as a global leader.
4. **Food Manufacturing:** Home to companies contributing to innovative food production and packaging solutions.
5. **Life Sciences:** Recognized as an emerging hub for medical devices and biosciences, with a robust infrastructure supporting the entire supply chain.
6. **Sustainable Agriculture and Energy:** Leading advancements in sustainable practices and renewable energy solutions.

In 2022, nominal GDP in the Worklink WDA expanded 7.7%. This follows growth of 8.7% in 2021. As of 2022, total GDP in the Worklink WDA was \$15,575,493,000 (Figure 1).

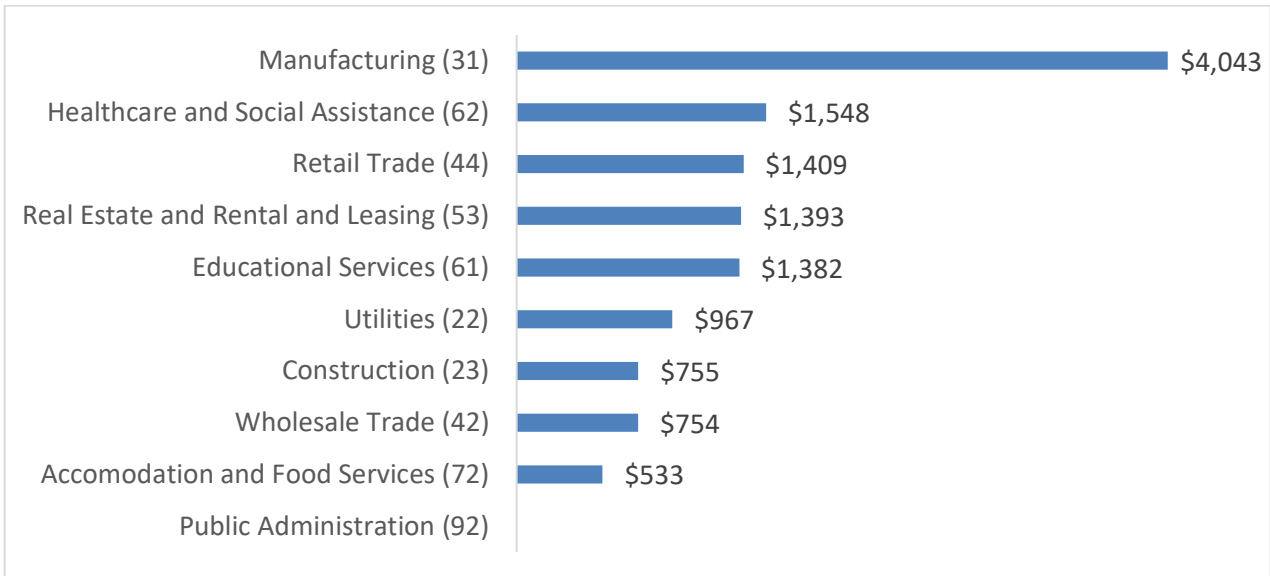
Figure 1: 1-Year Percent Change in GDP for the WorkLink region



Source: Jobs EQ – 2023Q4 WorkLink; Gross Domestic Product data are provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, imputed by Chmura where necessary, updated through 2022.

Of the sectors in the Worklink WDA, Manufacturing contributed the largest portion of GDP in 2022, \$4,043,418,000. The next largest contributions came from Health Care and Social Assistance (\$1,548,062,000); Retail Trade (\$1,409,113,000); and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (\$1,392,737,000).

Figure 2: GDP in Millions by Industry 2023Q4 in the WorkLink region



Source: JobsEQ; Gross Domestic Product data are provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, imputed by Chmura where necessary, updated through 2022.

Existing and Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

SC Department of Employment and Workforce reported 10,360 employers in the WorkLink region for the last quarter of 2024 (Table 1). Small Business, defined as having less than 50 employees, makes up 95.4% of the employer community whereas medium business (50 to 499 employees) makes up 4.3% and large business (500+ employees) makes up 0.3%. Small businesses employ the most individuals at 35.9% followed by medium business at 34.2% and large business at 29.9%.

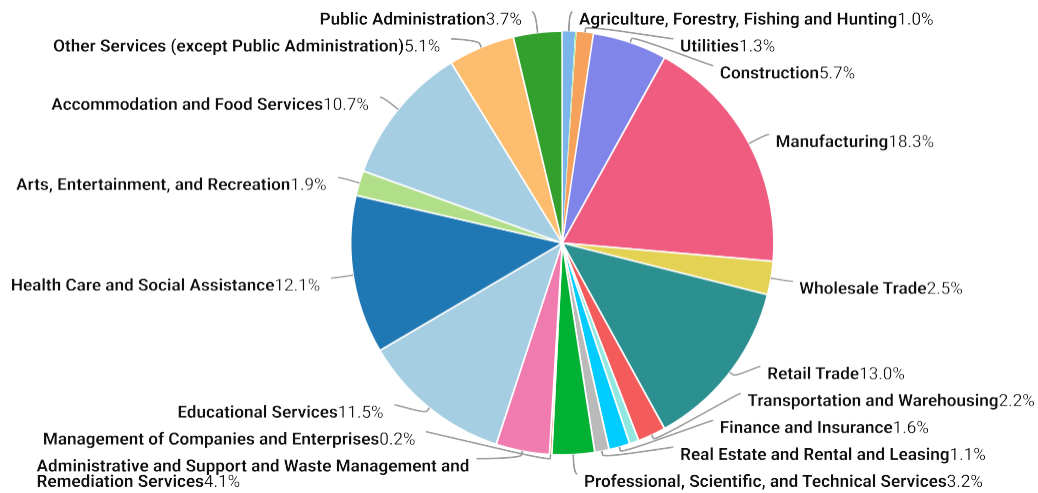
Table 1: Employers & Employees by Size of Establishment in the WorkLink area

Business Description	Employers	%	Employees	%
Small Business (0-49)	9,882	95.4%	54,939	35.9%
Medium Business (50-499)	444	4.3%	52,392	34.2%
Large Business (500+)	34	0.3%	45,735	29.9%
Total Business	10,360		153,066	

Source: SC Department of Employment and Workforce, Community Profile, October 10, 2024

The largest sector in the Worklink WDA is Manufacturing, employing 27,405 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Retail Trade (19,513 workers) and Health Care and Social Assistance (18,067). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Utilities (LQ = 2.50), Manufacturing (2.28), and Educational Services (1.43).

Figure 3: WorkLink area workers by Industry Cluster

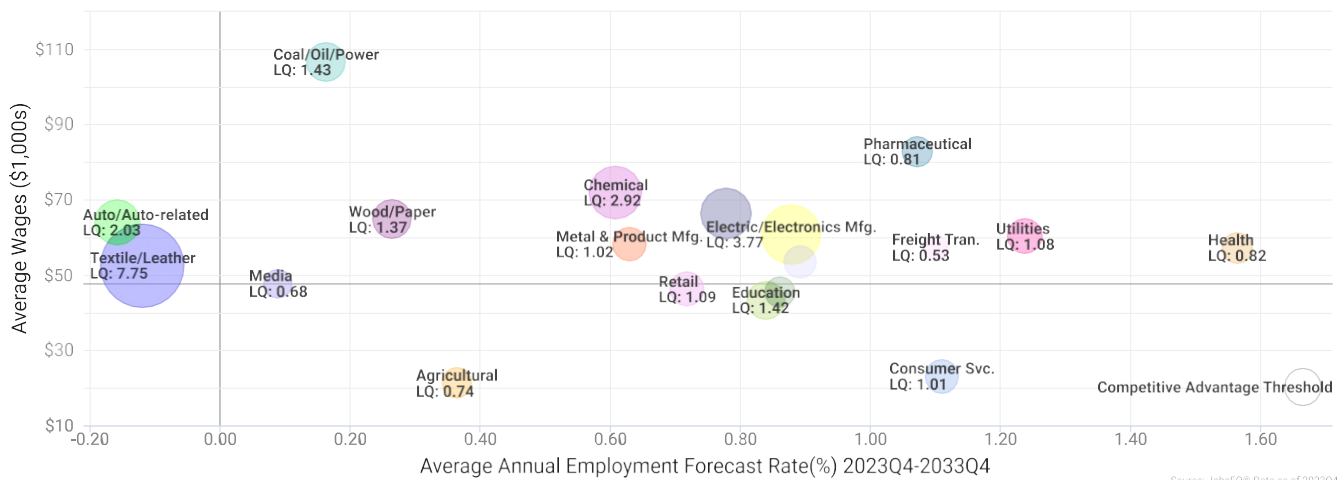


Source: JobsEQ® Data as of 2023Q4

Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2023Q3 with preliminary estimates updated to 2023Q4.

Sectors in the Worklink WDA with the highest average wages per worker are Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$138,039), Utilities (\$103,278), and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (\$73,050). Regional sectors with the best job growth (or most moderate job losses) over the last 5 years are Educational Services (+1,453 jobs), Construction (+1,253), and Accommodation and Food Services (+1,128).

Figure 4: Industry Clusters for WorkLink Area



Source: JobsEQ® Data as of 2023Q4

Location quotient and average wage data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, imputed where necessary, and updated through 2023Q3 with preliminary estimates updated to 2023Q4. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

The industry cluster in the Worklink WDA with the highest relative concentration is Textile/Leather with a location quotient of 7.75 (Figure 4). This cluster employs 2,364 workers in the region with an average wage of \$52,512. Employment in the Textile/Leather cluster is projected to contract in the region about 0.1% per year over the next ten years.

Over the next 1 year, employment in the Worklink WDA is projected to expand by 1,340 jobs (Table 2). The fastest

growing sector in the region is expected to be Management of Companies and Enterprises with a +1.8% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+283 jobs), Educational Services (+147), and Accommodation and Food Services (+147).

Table 2: Industry Projections as of 2023Q4 for the WorkLink area

Worklink WDA, 2023Q4¹

NAICS	Industry	Current			5-Year History		1-Year Forecast				
		Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
31	Manufacturing	27,405	\$64,187	2.28	1,125	0.8%	2,902	1,108	1,659	135	0.5%
44	Retail Trade	19,513	\$33,427	1.32	955	1.0%	2,780	1,192	1,493	96	0.5%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	18,067	\$56,641	0.82	597	0.7%	2,058	855	920	283	1.6%
61	Educational Services	17,154	\$48,690	1.43	1,453	1.8%	1,765	795	824	147	0.9%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	15,975	\$19,437	1.23	1,128	1.5%	2,977	1,275	1,555	147	0.9%
23	Construction	8,520	\$53,327	0.95	1,253	3.2%	815	300	439	77	0.9%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	7,583	\$26,961	1.20	-117	-0.3%	946	379	489	78	1.0%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	6,115	\$39,111	0.65	422	1.4%	765	303	401	61	1.0%
92	Public Administration	5,566	\$45,920	0.81	413	1.6%	562	227	287	48	0.9%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,847	\$62,939	0.44	860	4.0%	470	161	236	73	1.5%
42	Wholesale Trade	3,807	\$67,460	0.68	815	4.9%	413	155	231	27	0.7%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	3,227	\$53,407	0.44	214	1.4%	400	155	200	46	1.4%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,849	\$20,323	0.95	686	5.7%	468	181	245	42	1.5%
52	Finance and Insurance	2,413	\$66,926	0.41	129	1.1%	229	85	118	26	1.1%
22	Utilities	1,914	\$103,278	2.50	-304	-2.9%	172	69	99	5	0.2%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,639	\$48,413	0.61	223	3.0%	177	76	83	19	1.1%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,479	\$23,814	0.80	10	0.1%	181	86	91	5	0.3%
51	Information	1,065	\$72,210	0.36	17	0.3%	107	38	58	11	1.0%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	263	\$138,039	0.11	-91	-5.7%	27	9	13	5	1.8%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	132	\$73,050	0.24	-33	-4.4%	14	5	8	1	0.9%
	Total - All Industries	149,535	\$47,825	1.00	9,755	1.4%	17,699	7,215	9,145	1,340	0.9%

Source: JobsEQ®

The largest major occupation group in the Worklink WDA is Production Occupations, employing 16,972 workers (Table 3). The next-largest occupation groups in the region are Office and Administrative Support Occupations (16,709 workers) and Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (15,209). High location quotients (LQs) indicate occupation groups in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The major groups with the largest LQs in the region are Production Occupations (LQ = 2.04), Architecture and Engineering Occupations (1.32), and Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (1.26).

Occupation groups in the Worklink WDA with the highest average wages per worker are Management Occupations

(\$108,000), Legal Occupations (\$97,600), and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (\$91,000) (Table 3). The unemployment rate in the region varied among the major groups from 0.8% among Legal Occupations to 4.6% among Transportation and Material Moving Occupations.

Table 3: Occupational Projections as of 2023Q4 for the WorkLink area

Worklink WDA, 2023Q4¹

SOC	Occupation	Current					5-Year History			1-Year Forecast				
		Empl	Mean Ann Wages ²	LQ	Unempl	Unempl Rate	Online Job Ads ³	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
51-0000	Production	16,972	\$45,800	2.04	715	3.3%	552	305	0.4%	1,868	723	1,099	45	0.3%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	16,709	\$41,300	0.93	557	2.4%	660	845	1.0%	1,915	899	1,010	6	0.0%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	15,209	\$27,600	1.26	836	4.4%	899	932	1.3%	3,127	1,354	1,631	143	0.9%
41-0000	Sales and Related	14,296	\$40,800	1.08	642	3.5%	1,440	732	1.1%	2,066	916	1,084	66	0.5%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	11,383	\$38,500	0.87	780	4.6%	697	1,134	2.1%	1,662	619	906	137	1.2%
11-0000	Management	9,958	\$108,000	0.89	169	1.4%	798	1,538	3.4%	906	321	476	110	1.1%
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	9,859	\$54,300	1.23	211	1.9%	572	768	1.6%	968	450	421	98	1.0%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	7,901	\$91,000	0.90	117	1.1%	1,722	180	0.5%	584	258	211	115	1.5%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	6,518	\$52,100	1.12	170	1.9%	544	448	1.4%	661	263	325	74	1.1%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	6,253	\$46,800	0.92	370	4.1%	235	597	2.0%	612	223	324	65	1.0%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	5,531	\$74,300	0.58	162	2.1%	387	905	3.6%	527	175	289	62	1.1%
31-0000	Healthcare Support	5,517	\$32,900	0.82	187	2.5%	431	512	2.0%	921	371	435	115	2.1%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	4,631	\$32,700	0.95	264	3.9%	360	-215	-0.9%	683	292	345	46	1.0%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	4,100	\$31,800	1.11	155	3.2%	177	370	1.9%	808	294	455	59	1.4%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	3,181	\$86,400	1.32	65	1.6%	262	129	0.8%	251	92	122	37	1.2%
21-0000	Community and Social Service	2,880	\$48,800	1.07	71	2.1%	250	88	0.6%	297	116	140	40	1.4%
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	2,352	\$87,500	0.49	64	1.7%	226	401	3.8%	187	56	92	39	1.7%
33-0000	Protective Service	2,240	\$45,200	0.70	68	2.2%	112	215	2.0%	259	108	132	19	0.9%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	2,138	\$54,500	0.78	72	3.1%	203	191	1.9%	252	101	127	24	1.1%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	1,050	\$78,200	0.80	51	3.9%	195	19	0.4%	110	23	75	12	1.1%
23-0000	Legal	546	\$97,600	0.45	7	0.8%	17	1	0.0%	41	16	17	7	1.3%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	310	\$39,800	0.35	18	4.1%	6	57	4.2%	47	17	29	2	0.5%
Total - All Occupations		149,535	\$51,700	1.00	5,752	2.9%	10,745	10,152	1.4%	18,769	7,687	9,745	1,337	0.9%

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Over the next 1 year, the fastest growing occupation group in the Worklink WDA is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a +2.1% year-over-year rate of growth (Table 3). The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (+143 jobs) and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (+137). Over the same period, the highest separation demand (occupation demand due to

retirements and workers moving from one occupation to another) is expected in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (2,985 jobs) and Sales and Related Occupations (2,000).

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

Overview of Skills and Abilities Needed

MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing is the largest industry in the WorkLink area with some niche markets for Automotive, Advanced Materials, Biosciences, and Aerospace. Some of our largest manufacturers include Michelin, BorgWarner, Reliable Automatic Sprinkler, Itron, Arthrex, McLaughlin Body Company, JTEKT Koyo Bearings, Greenfield Industries, Bosch, and United Tool and Mold. Predicted to grow by 5.5% within ten years, 1,407 new manufacturing positions will become available, making up a total of 27,017 individuals employed in this industry.

Key Career Pathways for Manufacturing include Production, Maintenance, Installation, and Repair, Quality Assurance, Logistics & Inventory, and Health, Safety & Environmental Assurance

Key occupations within this industry include: Assembler, Automated Manufacturing Technician, Biomedical Equipment Technician, Electrical Installer and Repairer, Hand Packer and Packager, Machine Operator, Welder, Electrical and Electronic Technician and Technologist, Industrial Engineer, Manufacturing Engineer, Manufacturing Technician, Precision Inspector, Production Manager, Computer Maintenance Technician, Electrical Equipment Installer/ Repairer, Facility Electrician, Industrial Electronic Installer/ Repairer/Manager, Industrial Machinery Mechanic, Industrial Maintenance Electrician, Industrial Maintenance Technician/ Mechanic, Maintenance Repairer, Inspector, Process Control Technician, Quality Control Technician, Quality Engineer, Safety Team Leader, and Safety Technician.

Key Skills and Abilities include: Communication (both written and oral), problem solving and critical thinking, how to use information and technology applications, understanding team member role, understanding health, safety and environmental procedures, leadership and teamwork abilities, ethics and legal responsibilities, and technical skills

HEALTHCARE

Healthcare, the second largest industry and key to the WorkLink area, is home to two large healthcare systems. AnMed Health, founded in 1904, has a long history of serving residents of WorkLink through 400 physicians and 3600 employees. Prisma Health, serving more than 1.2 million patients per year and employing 32,000 employees according to their website, has a large presence in the WorkLink Region, offering affiliated hospitals and a network of medical offices to meet the medical needs of local residents. Poised to grow 26.92%% in the next ten years, the industry will be looking to fill an additional 4,35 jobs, putting the total workforce employed in healthcare to 20,483.

Key Career Pathways for the Healthcare Industry include: Therapeutic Services, Diagnostic Services, Support Services, Health Informatics, and Biotechnology Research and Development.

Key occupations within this industry include: Surgical Technologists, Diagnostic Medical Sonographers, Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists, Nuclear Medicine Technologists, Radiation Therapists, Dental Hygienists, Ophthalmic Medical Technicians, Physical Therapist Aides, Dental Assistants, Phlebotomists, Physical Therapist Assistants, Medical Assistants, Occupational Therapy Aides, Radiologic Technologists, Home Health Aides, Respiratory Therapists, Medical Secretaries, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Health Technologists and Technicians, Nursing Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, and Personal Care Aides.

Key Skills and Abilities include: Interpersonal skills, integrity, professionalism, initiative, dependability and reliability, adaptability & flexibility, lifelong learning, teamwork, customer focus, planning & organizing, creative thinking, problem

solving & decision making, working with tools & technology, scheduling & coordinating, checking, examining & recording, sustainable practices, and health & safety.

Figure 5: Chart showing projected employment changes by industry in the WorkLink region through 2030

Worklink Industry	2020 Estimated Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Change	Percent Change	Annual Percent
Total All Industries	136,740	147,200	10,460	7.65	0.74
Health Care and Social Assistance	16,133	20,483	4,350	26.96	2.42
Accommodation and Food Services	13,405	15,562	2,157	16.09	1.50
Manufacturing	25,610	27,017	1,407	5.49	0.54
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediat	4,621	5,470	849	18.37	1.70
Other Services (except Government)	6,253	6,996	743	11.88	1.13
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,674	2,209	535	31.96	2.81
Transportation and Warehousing	2,372	2,791	419	17.66	1.64
Finance and Insurance	2,318	2,678	360	15.53	1.45
Retail Trade	17,607	17,904	297	1.69	0.17
Wholesale Trade	3,547	3,826	279	7.87	0.76
Information	817	1,070	253	30.97	2.73
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3,360	3,566	206	6.13	0.60
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,113	1,164	51	4.58	0.45
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	810	860	50	6.17	0.60
Management of Companies and Enterprises	214	213	-1	-0.47	-0.05
Mining	172	166	-6	-3.49	-0.35
Construction	5,589	5,560	-29	-0.52	-0.05
Utilities	1,572	1,501	-71	-4.52	-0.46
Educational Services	15,651	13,896	-1,755	-11.21	-1.18

Source: S.C. Department of Employment & Workforce - Industry Projections

CONSTRUCTION

Construction has become a significant industry in the WorkLink area. Although population growth for the area is predicted to see growth at 0.9% by 2030, the region's growth is projected to continue to increase by 4% through the year 2023 (Figure 5). In answer to the demand for newly paved roads, new and upgrading of businesses and manufacturing facilities, and new residential housing, the construction industry will need skilled tradesmen to maintain and upgrade infrastructure. Employers in the WorkLink area include: J. Davis Construction, Trehel Corporation, Glenn Constructors, American Concrete & Construction, King Asphalt, and Marsh/Bell Construction Co.

Key Career Pathways for the Construction Industry include: Commercial and Industrial Construction, Heavy Highway Civil

Construction, and Residential Construction, which can be fine-tuned to Floor and Wall trades, Mechanical and Electrical trades, Site Preparation trades, and Other trades.

Key occupations within this industry include: Painter and Wall Coverer, Floor Coverer, Drywall Finisher, Glazier and Glass Worker, Electrician, Sprinkler Fitters, Sheet Metal Workers, Welders, Plumbers, Pipefitters, Electrical Workers, Sign and Display installers, Roofers, Waterproofers, Millwrights, Laborers, Elevator Constructors, Construction Managers, Boilermakers, Heat and Frost Insulators, Pile Drivers, Operating Engineers, Iron Workers, Heavy Equipment Operators, Drivers, Cement Masons, Carpenters, Cabinet Makers, and Bricklayers.

Key Skills and Abilities include: Interpersonal skills, integrity, professionalism, initiative, dependability and reliability, willingness to learn, teamwork, following directions, following plans and schedules, problem solving & decision making, working with tools & technology, craftsmanship, checking, examining & recording, and sustainable practices.

PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

The North American Industry Classification System describes the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector as “comprising establishments that specialize in performing professional, scientific, and technical activities for others. These activities require a high degree of expertise and training. The establishments in this sector specialize according to expertise and provide these services to clients in a variety of industries and, in some cases, to households. Activities performed include: legal advice and representation; accounting, bookkeeping, and payroll services; architectural, engineering, and specialized design services; computer services; consulting services; research services; advertising services; photographic services; translation and interpretation services; veterinary services; and other professional, scientific, and technical services.” This industry will be key in supporting entrepreneurs and businesses in the WorkLink area. With our increasing reliance on technology, an expanding diversity of population and languages, additional construction; and growing gig economy, the residents of the WorkLink area may find careers that suit them in this field. Employers in the WorkLink area include: Charter Spectrum, KeyMark, MTS Office Machines, Poly-Med, Ipsum Technologies, The Alliances, and Parimer Scientific.

Key Career Pathways for the Professional, Scientific and Technical Industry include: four overarching career pathways within this industry: Automation, Bioscience, Engineering, and Geospatial Technology. These pathways can be further defined into the following: Legal Services; Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services; Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services; Specialized Design Services; Computer Systems Design and Related Services; Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services; Scientific Research and Development Services; Advertising and Related Services; and Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

Key occupations within this industry include: Software Developers, Web Developers, Human Resource Managers, Financial Analysts, Marketing Specialists, Lawyers, Legal Assistants, Managers, Accountants, Auditors, Bookkeepers, Veterinary Assistants, Veterinary Technologists & Technicians, Tax Preparers, Medical Secretaries, Administrative Assistants, Maintenance Workers (Machinery), Avionics Technicians, Police Officers, and Cooks.

Key Skills and Abilities include: Interpersonal skills, integrity, personal acceptability, initiative, dependability and reliability, lifelong learning, business fundamentals, teamwork, adaptability & flexibility, marketing & flexibility, scheduling & coordinating, creative thinking & problem solving, checking, examining, & recording, working with tools & technology, personal health & safety, and sustainability.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION

The Administrative and Support industry also includes the Waste Management and Remediation sectors. The jobs associated with this industry are often hired within various companies as an essential activity, such as office administration, clerical support, solicitation, collection, security and surveillance, cleaning, and waste disposal services. Most staffing agencies regardless of contract workers’ occupation fall under this category.

Key Career Pathways for the Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Industry include:

Janitors and cleaners, Laborers and Freight, Stock and materials Movers, Office Clerks, and Security Guards.

Key occupations within this industry include: Pest Control Workers, Tree Trimmers, Security Guards, Locksmiths, Septic Tank Services, Landscaping and Groundskeeping workers, Janitors, Bill and Account Collectors, Court Reporters, Medical Transcriptionists, Production Workers, and Commercial Drivers.

Key Skills and Abilities include: Interpersonal skills, integrity, personal acceptability, initiative, dependability and reliability, lifelong learning, business fundamentals, teamwork, adaptability & flexibility, marketing & flexibility, scheduling & coordinating, creative thinking & problem solving, checking, examining, & recording, working with tools & technology, personal health & safety, and sustainability.

TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING

With WorkLink’s access to I-85 and I-385, transportation and warehousing is predicted to become a significant industry for the area with a 18.4% positive growth by 2030. The Inland Port of Greer, access to several airports, including Greenville-Spartanburg Airport and railroad access through Norfolk-Southern and CSX Transportation within 50 miles of the WorkLink area will make WorkLink an attractive location for distribution and logistics companies. One major employer in the area, Walgreens, a pharmaceutical distribution company based in Anderson County, is already established along I-85, and actively recruits those with disabilities to work in their distribution center. Other employers in the WorkLink area include: Benore Logistics, Am-Can, Walgreens Distribution Center, Spartan Logistics, and Snider Fleet Solutions.

Key Career Pathways for the Distribution & Logistics Industry include: Facility and mobile equipment maintenance, Health, safety and environmental management, Logistics planning and management services, Sales and services, Transportation operations, Transportation systems and infrastructure, and Planning, management and regulation.

Key occupations within this industry include: Communications, Transportation and Utilities Manager, Dispatcher, Freight, Stock, and Material Mover, Industrial Truck and Tractor Operator, Logistical Engineer, Logistician, Materials Associate, Materials Handler, Materials Mover, Process Improvement Technician, Quality Control Technician, Traffic, Shipping, and Receiving Clerk, and Warehousing and distribution center operations.

Key Skills and Abilities include: Interpersonal skills, integrity, professionalism, initiative, dependability and reliability, adaptability & flexibility, lifelong learning, teamwork, customer focus, planning/ organizing, problem solving & decision making, working with tools & technology, checking, examining & recording, and business fundamentals.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THAT EMPLOYERS NEED

Table 4 highlights the projected annual job openings in the Worklink WDA from 2020 to 2030. The occupation groups with the highest total openings are Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (2,717), Sales and Related Occupations (1,959), and Production Occupations (1,859). These groups also experience significant separation demand due to retirements and job transitions. Other notable groups with substantial openings include Office and Administrative Support Occupations (1,699) and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (1,555). In contrast, occupation groups such as Legal Occupations and Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations have much lower openings.

In 2023, the WorkLink Workforce Development Area (WDA) reported a total employment of 134,920, with a mean hourly wage of \$24.65 across all occupations (Table 5). The highest-paying occupation group was Management Occupations, offering a mean hourly wage of \$52.48, followed by Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations at \$41.79. Other high-paying fields included Business and Financial Operations (\$35.64) and Computer and Mathematical Occupations (\$40.29).

Table 5: Total occupations by group, reflecting annual exits, transfers, change, and total openings

Occupation Group	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Change	Annual Total Openings
Total, All Occupations	6,359	9,714	1,301	17,374
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	1,064	1,454	199	2,717
Sales and Related Occupations	787	1,143	29	1,959
Production Occupations	625	1,195	39	1,859
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	724	942	33	1,699
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	535	891	129	1,555
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	414	445	60	919
Healthcare Support Occupations	332	360	138	830
Personal Care and Service Occupations	290	380	80	750
Management Occupations	203	453	87	743
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	288	393	57	738
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	215	257	197	669
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	190	375	49	614
Construction and Extraction Occupations	174	398	15	587
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	129	278	54	461
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	83	166	32	281
Protective Service Occupations	91	128	22	241
Community and Social Service Occupations	67	128	24	219
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	62	108	18	188
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	34	86	24	144
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	27	74	5	106
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	12	41	4	57
Legal Occupations	14	20	5	39

Source: 2024 DEW Economic Analysis

Conversely, the lowest-paying occupation groups were Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations, with a mean wage of \$13.40, and Personal Care and Service Occupations at \$15.48. Healthcare Support Occupations had a mean wage of \$16.91, while Protective Services offered \$20.89. Groups such as Sales and Related Occupations and Office and Administrative Support Occupations had wages around \$19.01 and \$19.89, respectively. This wide wage range highlights disparities, with higher-paying roles concentrated in management and healthcare and lower-paying roles in service-related industries.

From 2020 to 2030, annual job openings in the WorkLink WDA reflect significant workforce demands. The occupation groups with the highest total openings include Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (2,717), Sales and Related Occupations (1,959), and Production Occupations (1,859). These roles see substantial separation demand due to retirements and job transitions. Other notable groups include Office and Administrative Support Occupations (1,699) and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (1,555).

In contrast, smaller annual total openings are projected for groups such as Legal Occupations (39) and Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations (57), reflecting more specialized roles. Emerging demand sectors like Healthcare Support Occupations and Personal Care and Service Occupations are expected to experience growth, driven by demographic trends and evolving workforce needs.

Overall, the total annual openings across all occupations are projected to reach 17,374, comprising 6,359 exits, 9,714 transfers, and 1,301 new positions, emphasizing the dynamic nature of the labor market.

Table 6: Current Employment by occupation and wages for entry, mid-career, and experienced workers

Occupation Group	Employment	Entry Level Hourly Wage	Mean Hourly Wage	Experience Hourly Wage
Total, All Occupations	134,920	\$12.60	\$24.65	\$30.68
Management Occupations	7,810	\$27.61	\$52.48	\$64.91
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	4,560	\$20.24	\$35.64	\$43.34
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	2,030	\$23.09	\$40.29	\$48.88
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,920	\$26.22	\$40.48	\$47.62
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,070	\$20.92	\$33.49	\$39.78
Community and Social Service Occupations	1,440	\$16.58	\$23.93	\$27.61
Legal Occupations	490	\$18.38	\$37.14	\$46.52
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	9,160	\$16.64	\$29.02	\$35.21
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1,170	\$13.20	\$28.44	\$36.06
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	8,010	\$20.06	\$41.79	\$52.65
Healthcare Support Occupations	4,920	\$11.78	\$16.91	\$19.47
Protective Services Occupations	2,620	\$13.22	\$20.89	\$24.72
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	15,580	\$9.47	\$13.40	\$15.36
Building and Grounds Cleaning Maintenance	3,490	\$11.55	\$15.85	\$18.00
Personal Care and Service Occupations	2,750	\$10.21	\$15.48	\$18.11
Sales and Related Occupations	13,410	\$10.77	\$19.01	\$23.13
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	14,700	\$13.24	\$19.89	\$23.22
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	110	\$13.54	\$18.21	\$20.54
Construction and Extraction Occupations	4,500	\$15.79	\$23.30	\$27.06
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	5,810	\$16.35	\$25.69	\$30.36
Production Occupations	17,460	\$15.79	\$21.98	\$25.07
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	10,890	\$12.70	\$18.28	\$21.08

Source: 2024 Economic Analysis

WorkLink has several emerging demand industries and occupations based on regional trends in economic development, population growth, and technological advancement (Table 6). As for the recent workforce data and regional economic strategies, Table 7 lists some key insights into emerging sectors and occupations that are poised for growth.

Table 7: Key Insight for Emerging Industries Sectors and Occupations

GROUP SECTORS	Industries in Demand	Occupations in Demand	Why Is It Emerging?
ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND SKILLED TRADES	Aerospace and aviation	CNC machinists	WorkLink is home to a robust aerospace sector with companies like JPS Composite Materials, requiring skilled workers for high-tech manufacturing.
GROUP SECTORS	Industries in Demand	Occupations in Demand	Why Is It Emerging?

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND SKILLED TRADES (CONT'D)	Automotive manufacturing and repair	Welders	WorkLink's strong automotive industry drives demand for skilled trades, including welding and machining roles.
	Industrial machinery and equipment manufacturing	Industrial maintenance technicians	The growing need for advanced machinery and equipment manufacturing boosts demand for highly skilled workers in industrial maintenance.
	Engineered materials and metal fabrication	Engineers (mechanical, electrical, industrial)	The area's emphasis on engineered materials and metal fabrication, particularly in sectors like automotive, requires a highly skilled workforce.
HEALTHCARE AND LIFE SCIENCES	Biotechnology and medical device manufacturing	Registered nurses (RNs)	WorkLink's growing healthcare infrastructure and aging population drive demand for healthcare professionals and support roles in medical device production.
	Healthcare services (including aging population care)	Nurse practitioners (NPs)	Expansion in healthcare services is necessitated by an increasing need for medical personnel and advanced healthcare technologies.
ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY	Solar and wind energy generation	Solar panel installers and technicians	Growing interest in renewable energy, coupled with WorkLink's focus on environmental sustainability, increases demand for green energy professionals.
	Nuclear energy and energy grid components	Environmental engineers and consultants	The area's energy sector, including nuclear and renewable energy solutions, is expanding rapidly, creating new roles in energy systems and sustainability.
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	Information technology services	Software developers and engineers	With rapid digital transformation, there is a strong demand for IT professionals, especially in software development, data analysis, and cybersecurity.
	Cybersecurity and data protection	Cybersecurity specialists	As cybersecurity threats increase, businesses and governmental agencies in the region are investing heavily in tech and security roles.
FOOD MANUFACTURING AND AGRICULTURE	Food manufacturing and processing	Food scientists and technicians	The rise of food production and sustainable agriculture in the WorkLink area calls for professionals specializing in food science and production management.
GROUP SECTORS	Industries in Demand	Occupations in Demand	Why Is It Emerging?

FOOD MANUFACTURING AND AGRICULTURE (CONT'D)	Sustainable agriculture	Agricultural engineers and farm managers	The area's agricultural growth, driven by sustainability initiatives, generates demand for professionals in farming, sustainability, and agribusiness.
LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION	Warehouse and distribution	Truck drivers	WorkLink's logistics and transportation sector thrives with its proximity to major ports like Savannah and Charleston, resulting in higher demand for drivers and logistics coordinators.
	Supply chain management	Supply chain analysts and managers	As e-commerce grows, there is an increasing need for supply chain management professionals in the region's expanding logistics sector.
ADVANCED MATERIALS AND ENGINEERING	Engineered materials and composites	Composite materials engineers and chemists	A growing number of companies in aerospace and automotive sectors require advanced materials and composite materials professionals.

Educational Requirements by Occupation

Occupations span a range of industries, with a potential for high growth wages and advancement. Some roles require credentialing while others do not. Following is a list of priority occupations by industry with typical educational requirements for South Carolina and the WorkLink region.

Table 8 - Priority Occupations requiring a High School Education in 2024

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources			
Occupation	Entry-Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Required
Animal Caretakers	\$22,800	\$29,800	None
Pest Control Workers	\$28,000	\$40,100	None
Architecture & Construction			
Occupation	Entry-Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Required
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	\$51,600	\$69,000	May be required by employer
Electricians	\$41,100	\$55,300	Required by S.C.
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	\$37,500	\$46,000	None
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$39,200	\$53,200	Required by S.C.
Carpenters	\$33,700	\$48,700	Required by S.C.
Mechanical Door Repairers	\$41,600	\$53,900	None

Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	\$49,200	\$71,100	None
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers	\$40,600	\$55,300	None
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	\$27,500	\$35,100	None
Additional Occupations			
Occupation	Entry-Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Required
Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	\$45,200	\$54,900	None
Photographers	\$20,300	\$40,600	None
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	\$42,100	\$62,900	None
Postal Service Mail Carriers	\$41,600	\$57,900	None
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	\$51,600	\$74,600	May be required by employer
Pharmacy Technicians	\$34,700	\$39,100	Required by S.C.

Source: DEW, Priority Occupations for 2024

Occupations Requiring Postsecondary Non-degree Award:

These occupations typically require short-term postsecondary training or certification, but not a full degree.

Career Cluster	Occupation	Region Entry Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Requirement
Architecture & Construction	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	\$39,600	\$49,700	None
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$28,900	\$46,700	None
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	\$39,300	\$58,500	None
Health Science	Medical Assistants	\$33,200	\$38,300	None
Health Science	Dental Assistants	\$38,700	\$45,200	No licensing requirement currently known
Health Science	Phlebotomists	\$34,700	\$39,300	None
Health Science	Nursing Assistants	\$29,600	\$34,300	None
Human Services	Massage Therapists	\$27,500	\$47,000	License required by S.C.
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	Firefighters	\$30,500	\$40,500	None

Source: DEW, Priority Occupations for 2024

Occupations Requiring Associate's Degree:

These occupations typically require a two-year degree, often provided by technical colleges or community colleges.

Career Cluster	Occupation	Region Entry Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Requirement
Health Science	Respiratory Therapists	\$60,600	\$68,700	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Dental Hygienists	\$66,700	\$71,900	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	\$37,400	\$60,500	License may be required by employer
Health Science	Physical Therapist Assistants	\$54,200	\$68,600	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Occupational Therapy Assistants	\$56,600	\$71,400	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Dental Hygienists	\$67,900	\$76,000	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	\$50,700	\$63,700	License may be required by employer
Information Technology	Computer Network Support Specialists	\$44,100	\$69,100	None

Source: DEW, Priority Occupations for 2024

Occupations Requiring Bachelor's Degree:

These occupations typically require a four-year degree and often appear in a variety of fields such as business, education, health, and technology.

Career Cluster	Occupation	State Entry Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Requirement
Architecture & Construction	Civil Engineers	\$66,000	\$90,600	License may be required by employer
Architecture & Construction	Construction Managers	\$68,700	\$110,600	License required by S.C.
Business Management & Administration	Management Analysts	\$53,800	\$91,800	None
Business Management & Administration	Human Resources Specialists	\$45,100	\$68,500	None
Business Management & Administration	Training and Development Specialists	\$38,500	\$64,600	None
Education & Training	Secondary School Teachers	\$46,900	\$59,100	None
Finance	Accountants and Auditors	\$49,900	\$77,000	License required by S.C.
Finance	Financial and Investment Analysts	\$58,800	\$88,500	License may be required by employer
Health Science	Nurse Practitioners	\$101,600	\$114,700	License required

				by S.C.
Information Technology	Software Developers	\$75,700	\$114,900	None

Source: DEW, Priority Occupations for 2024

Occupations Requiring Master's or Doctoral Degree:

These occupations require advanced degrees beyond a bachelor's, such as a master's, doctoral, or professional degree.

Career Cluster	Occupation	State Entry Level Wage	Mean Annual Wage	License Requirement
Health Science	Physical Therapists	\$74,800	\$94,400	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Occupational Therapists	\$69,000	\$93,500	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Dentists, General	\$98,600	\$176,800	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Physicians, All Other	\$91,900	\$316,700	License required by S.C.
Health Science	Pharmacists	\$112,000	\$128,500	License required by S.C.

Source: DEW, Priority Occupations for 2024

Knowledge and Skills

To meet the employment needs of employers in WorkLink, workers should possess a combination of technical, soft, and sector-specific skills. Soft skills are those attributes not defined by technical accomplishments or certifications attained. Key areas of knowledge and expertise include:

- **Industry-Specific Knowledge and Technical Skills**

- o Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering: Understanding of machinery operation, production processes, and automation systems.
- o Health Care: Skills in patient care, medical technology, and administrative tasks, including electronic health records (EHR) management.
- o Logistics and Transportation: Familiarity with supply chain management, shipping and receiving, and operation of vehicles/equipment.
- o Hospitality and Tourism: Customer service, event coordination, and facility management, as well as knowledge of local tourism trends.
- o Information Technology: Proficiency in software development, cybersecurity, network administration, and data management.
- o Construction and Skilled Trades: Competence in carpentry, electrical work, plumbing, HVAC systems, and construction project management.
- o Renewable Energy and Technology: A strong foundation in electrical and mechanical engineering, renewable energy technologies, regulatory knowledge, and project management. Along with these technical skills, proficiency in data analytics, troubleshooting, and understanding sustainability principles are essential.

- **Soft Skills**

- o Communication: Ability to interact effectively with coworkers, supervisors, and customers, both verbally and in writing.
- o Problem Solving and Critical Thinking: Analyzing problems and developing efficient solutions quickly.

- o Teamwork and Collaboration: Ability to work effectively in diverse teams and contribute to group goals.
- o Adaptability and Flexibility: Willingness to learn new skills and adjust to changing technologies and job demands.
- **Digital Literacy and Technology Skills**
 - o Competence with basic software tools (e.g., Microsoft Office Suite), cloud computing, and industry-specific software applications.
 - o Familiarity with emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, and automation in various sectors.
- **Workplace Readiness**
 - o Time Management and Organization: Ability to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines.
 - o Work Ethic and Dependability: Reliability, responsibility, and a strong commitment to quality work.
 - o Safety and Compliance Awareness: Knowledge of workplace safety standards and industry regulations.
- **Sector-Specific Certifications and Credentials**
 - o Earning certifications that are valued by employers in key industries, such as Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) for healthcare, welding certifications for manufacturing, or project management certifications for construction.

The WorkLink Workforce Development Area, with its diverse economy and expanding sectors like Healthcare and Social Assistance, Advanced Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Construction, and Administrative and Support and Waste Management Services, faces both opportunities and challenges in developing a sustainable, skilled workforce. As industries evolve and new sectors emerge, it is crucial to understand the demographic composition of the workforce—particularly the skills and qualifications of potential workers. This understanding is key to aligning with employer needs and closing employment gaps in the region.

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

WORKLINK AREA WORKFORCE OVERVIEW

WorkLink Population and Profile Overview

The WorkLink Workforce Development Area (WDA) has a total population of **414,473** according to the American Community Survey (ACS), with a balanced gender distribution: **49.2% male** (203,803) and **50.8% female** (210,670) (Table 9). The median age is **40.2 years**, indicating a relatively mature population. The largest age group is **55 to 64 years** (13.5%), followed closely by **45 to 54 years** (12.2%) and **25 to 34 years** (11.9%). Approximately **20.7%** of the population is under 18 years old, while **7.7%** is 75 years or older.

In terms of racial demographics, the population is predominantly **White** at **82.1%** (340,205), followed by **Black or African American** at **10.6%** (44,076). Smaller percentages identify as **American Indian and Alaska Native** (0.2%), **Asian** (1.2%), and **Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander** (0%). **Hispanic or Latino individuals** (of any race) make up **4.5%** of the population, and **4.3%** identify as **two or more races**.

Table 9: Population and Economic Overview of WorkLink 2023Q4

Percent	Value
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	Worklink WDA	Link Upstate WIOA	South Carolina	Worklink WDA	Link Upstate WIOA	South Carolina
Demographics						
Population (ACS)	—	—	—	414,473	1,609,997	5,142,750
Male	49.20%	49.00%	48.80%	203,803	788,334	2,510,019
Female	50.80%	51.00%	51.20%	210,670	821,663	2,632,731
Median Age ²	—	—	—	40.2	39.6	40
Under 18 Years	20.70%	22.00%	21.50%	85,874	353,989	1,103,927
18 to 24 Years	11.50%	9.70%	9.40%	47,696	155,847	485,502
25 to 34 Years	11.90%	12.90%	12.90%	49,465	207,880	664,060
35 to 44 Years	11.20%	12.00%	12.30%	46,566	193,967	631,951
45 to 54 Years	12.20%	12.60%	12.30%	50,698	202,415	633,020
55 to 64 Years	13.50%	13.20%	13.30%	56,131	211,799	685,773
65 to 74 Years	11.20%	10.50%	11.20%	46,290	169,436	573,897
75 Years and Over	7.70%	7.10%	7.10%	31,753	114,664	364,620
Race: White	82.10%	71.90%	65.00%	340,205	1,157,263	3,342,861
Race: Black or African American	10.60%	18.20%	25.80%	44,076	293,410	1,326,209
Race: American Indian and Alaska Native	0.20%	0.30%	0.30%	671	4,090	15,617
Race: Asian	1.20%	1.70%	1.70%	5,021	27,086	85,834
Race: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.00%	0.10%	187	632	2,722
Race: Some Other Race	1.60%	2.70%	2.40%	6,620	42,825	123,269
Race: Two or More Races	4.30%	5.30%	4.80%	17,693	84,691	246,238
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	4.50%	7.20%	6.20%	18,607	115,758	318,875
Population Growth						
Population (Pop Estimates) ⁴	—	—	—	423,223	1,655,346	5,282,634
Population Annual Average Growth ⁴	1.00%	1.10%	1.10%	3,993	17,845	56,361
People per Square Mile ⁴	—	—	—	230.3	208.5	175.7
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	57.70%	60.40%	60.10%	195,068	782,630	2,479,960
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	80.40%	81.10%	81.60%	117,796	489,328	1,558,055
Armed Forces Labor Force	0.10%	0.10%	0.90%	391	1,353	37,666
Veterans, Age 18-64	4.60%	4.70%	5.90%	11,543	45,302	181,805
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	76.60%	76.70%	74.40%	8,847	34,735	135,305
Median Household Income ²	—	—	—	\$59,754	\$62,102	\$63,623
Per Capita Income	—	—	—	\$33,495	\$34,534	\$36,072
Mean Commute Time (minutes)	—	—	—	26.2	24.9	25.5
		Percent			Value	
	Worklink WDA	Link Upstate	South Carolina	Worklink WDA	Link Upstate	South Carolina

		WIOA			WIOA	
Commute via Public Transportation	0.50%	0.30%	0.50%	974	2,207	10,735
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	11.90%	11.30%	9.70%	24,070	92,514	254,785
High School Graduate	28.40%	27.90%	27.70%	57,580	227,430	724,001
Some College, No Degree	19.60%	19.60%	20.50%	39,736	159,675	535,585
Associate's Degree	12.20%	11.10%	10.70%	24,834	90,647	278,858
Bachelor's Degree	17.30%	19.30%	20.10%	35,196	157,143	524,281
Postgraduate Degree	10.60%	10.90%	11.40%	21,444	88,652	297,294
Housing						
Total Housing Units	—	—	—	187,541	710,716	2,362,253
Median House Value (of owner-occupied units) ^{2,5}	—	—	—	\$192,208	\$198,627	\$216,200
Homeowner Vacancy	0.90%	0.90%	1.20%	1,072	4,248	17,285
Rental Vacancy	8.10%	6.70%	8.40%	3,929	13,372	55,136
Renter-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	26.80%	28.70%	29.10%	43,856	180,886	588,423
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available (% of Occupied Units)	6.10%	5.60%	5.70%	9,954	35,525	115,682
Social						
Poverty Level (of all people)	15.40%	14.20%	14.40%	61,889	222,272	717,849
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	10.20%	10.20%	10.50%	16,668	64,517	212,887
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.10%	1.30%	1.30%	4,730	20,379	66,257
Disconnected Youth ³	3.40%	3.10%	3.00%	909	2,817	8,424
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	32.50%	35.40%	39.20%	25,976	117,564	403,834
Uninsured	9.90%	10.40%	10.20%	40,869	165,570	512,886
With a Disability, Age 18-64	13.50%	12.10%	11.90%	33,738	115,925	359,972
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	38.50%	41.70%	40.90%	12,989	48,323	147,253
Foreign Born	3.50%	5.90%	5.30%	14,711	95,345	270,170
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	1.70%	3.50%	2.70%	6,645	52,530	132,913

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

The WorkLink area has seen a **1.0% annual growth rate** in population, with an increase of about **3,993 people per year**, bringing the total population estimate to **423,223**.

Cost of Living Index

The Cost of Living Index estimates the relative price levels for consumer goods and services. When applied to wages and salaries, the result is a measure of relative purchasing power (Table 10). The cost of living is 11.3% lower in Worklink WDA than the U.S. average.

Table 10 Cost of Living Information

	Annual Average Salary	Cost of Living Index (Base US)	US Purchasing Power
Worklink WDA	\$47,825	88.7	\$53,922
Link Upstate WIOA	\$53,703	90.2	\$59,544
South Carolina	\$56,214	93.0	\$60,462
USA	\$69,861	100.0	\$69,861

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Economic Characteristics

The labor force participation rate for the civilian population aged 16 years and over is 57.7% (195,068), while the prime-age labor force (25-54 years) has a much higher participation rate of 80.4% (117,796) (Table 9). The region also has a relatively small armed forces labor force at 0.1% (391). Veterans make up 4.6% of the population aged 18-64, with 76.6% of them actively participating in the labor force.

The median household income is \$59,754, with a per capita income of \$33,495 (Table 9). The mean commute time is 26.2 minutes, and a very small proportion of the population, only 0.5%, commutes via public transportation.

Housing

The WorkLink area has a total of 187,541 housing units, with a median house value of \$192,208 for owner-occupied units. The homeowner vacancy rate is relatively low at 0.9%, while the rental vacancy rate is higher at 8.1%. About 26.8% of occupied housing units are renter-occupied, and 6.1% of occupied housing units lack a vehicle.

Social and Health Indicators

Approximately 15.4% of the population lives below the poverty level, and 10.2% of households receive Food Stamps/SNAP benefits. 1.1% of the total population is enrolled in Grade 12, and there are 3.4% disconnected youth (ages 16-24 who are not in school and not working). 32.5% of children live in single-parent families. The area has a 9.9% uninsured rate, with 13.5% of adults aged 18-64 reporting a disability. Among those with disabilities, 38.5% are part of the labor force.

Foreign-Born Population

The **foreign-born** population in the WorkLink area is **3.5%** (14,711), and **1.7%** of the population aged 5 years and older speaks **English less than very well**.

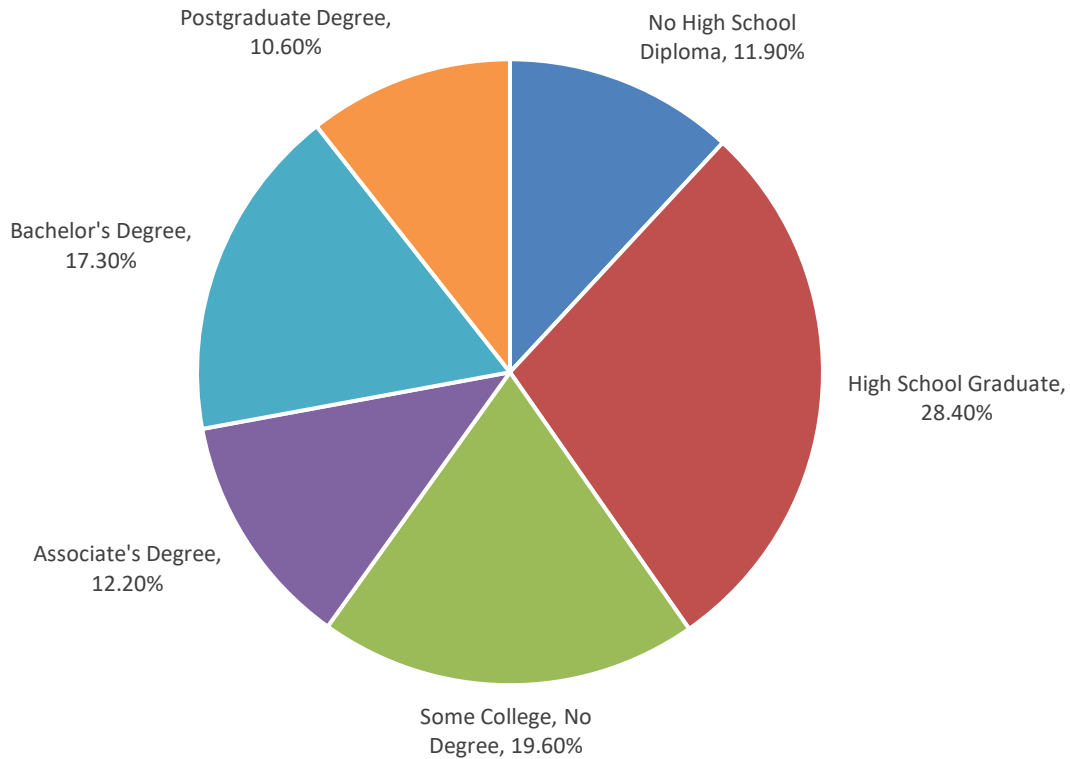
Educational Attainment

In terms of educational attainment for individuals aged 25-64 (Figure 6):

- **28.4%** have a **high school diploma** only, and **19.6%** have some college education but no degree.
- **17.3%** hold a **bachelor's degree**, while **10.6%** have attained a **postgraduate degree**.

- **11.9%** of individuals do not have a high school diploma, indicating a portion of the population with lower educational attainment.

Figure 6: WorkLink Estimated Education Level 2023



Source: 2023 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates

This demographic and economic profile of the WorkLink area highlights a mature, diverse population with growing labor force participation, especially among prime-age workers. However, challenges such as poverty, educational disparities, and low public transportation use persist. The data provides insight into the region's potential for economic growth, especially in sectors requiring skilled workers.

Barriers to Employment

The WorkLink area is home to a growing and diverse population. The adult population in the WorkLink area, which totals approximately 414,473 individuals, faces several barriers that impact their ability to secure stable employment and achieve long-term economic stability. The region's relatively low cost of living has not completely dampened the effects of inflation experienced over the last several years; this combined with limited access to resources such as broadband internet (only 2.5% of households have a broadband subscription), further inhibits adults' ability to seek employment, engage in remote work, or pursue education and job training.

Long-term Unemployed & Lack of Education

The region also experiences challenges related to educational attainment, with 11.9% of adults lacking a high school diploma and 19.6% having some college education but no degree. Only 17.3% of adults hold a bachelor's degree, making it more difficult for many individuals to compete for higher-paying jobs.

Low-Income, TANF & SNAP Recipients

Approximately 15.4% of adults, or 61,889 people, live below the poverty level, while 9.9% of adults, or about 40,869 individuals, are uninsured, further exacerbating difficulties in accessing healthcare and sustaining long-term employment.

- **Average Monthly SNAP Benefits** – Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administered by Department of Social Services offers relief to low-income families facing food insecurities. An average of 19,694 WorkLink area households (including approximately 43,243 individuals, or 7.0% of the state's SNAP recipients) received a total of \$11,495,986 in monthly SNAP benefits, accounting for 7.2% of the state's total monthly SNAP distribution.
- **Average Monthly TANF Benefits** – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families offers supplement income to parents and children while they look for sustainable employment. An average of 571 TANF cases representing 1,047 children and 1,360 total recipients are served each month in the WorkLink area. These recipients received a total of \$186,528 in monthly TANF benefits, accounting for 8.6% of the state's total monthly TANF distribution.

Home Instability & Homelessness

The median household income is \$59,754, but the disparity between income levels can make it difficult for low-income individuals to access training programs and secure jobs that pay a livable wage. Additionally, the median value of owner-occupied housing is \$192,208, which may be out of reach for many families struggling with poverty. Housing instability is another significant barrier, with 6.1% of households having no vehicle available, and 26.8% of housing units are renter-occupied, which can make it difficult for individuals to maintain consistent employment without reliable transportation and stable housing.

According to the 2020 South Carolina State of Homelessness Report, there are approximately 367 homeless individuals living in the WorkLink area out of 1,542 in the Upstate Region, which makes up approximately 24.0% of the total Link Upstate homeless population. The State is home to 4,268 at last count. This number includes approximately 22 homeless veterans living in the WorkLink area. Individuals who are homeless may have difficulty finding and keeping a job, and they may have difficulty attending training to obtain new skills and increase their employability.

Individuals with a Disability

In terms of labor force participation, 57.7% of adults are actively involved in the civilian labor force, but there are additional challenges related to disability. Of the estimated 414,473 individuals living in the WorkLink region, 243,037 are aged 18-64, which represents 58.6% of the total population. Approximately 33,738 of these individuals have been identified as having a disability, which equates to about 8.1% of the population aged 18-64 while 12,989 (3.1%) of these individuals are included in the labor force. These individuals may have disabilities such as hearing difficulties, vision difficulties, cognitive difficulties, ambulatory difficulties, self-care difficulties, and independent living difficulties. These individuals may need additional or specialized assistance when searching for employment.

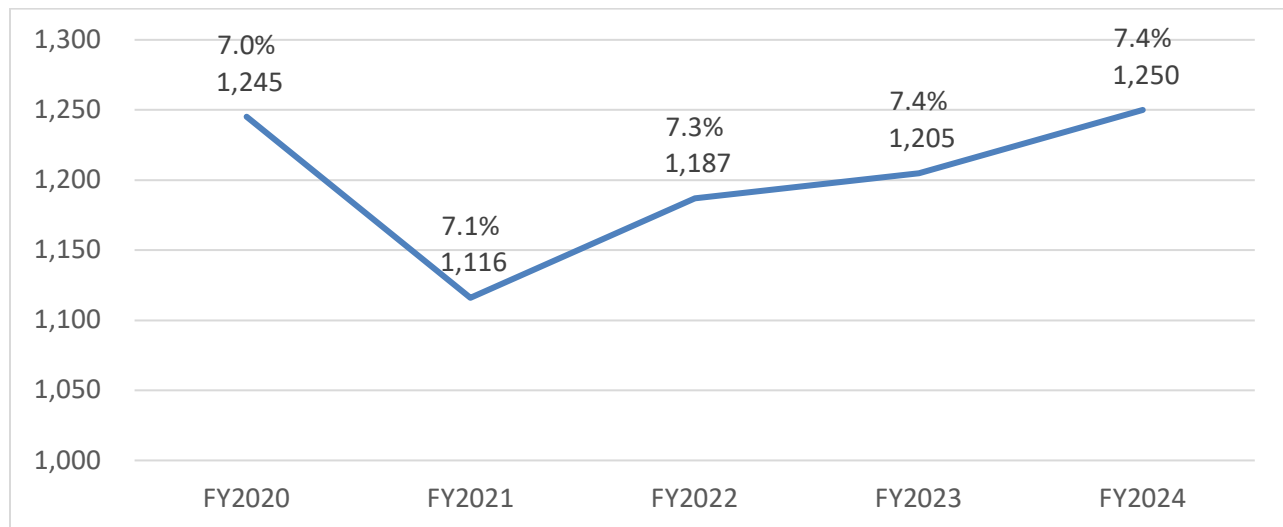
Veterans

In the WorkLink area, 4.6% of the population aged 18-64 are veterans, totaling 11,543 individuals. Among these veterans, 76.6% are active participants in the labor force, which equates to approximately 8,847 veterans engaged in employment or job-seeking activities. Some veterans may need specialized assistance in learning how to transfer their military experiences into civilian skills that are needed in the workplace. Some veterans also wish to return to school to obtain a degree or certification to help increase their employability.

Ex-Offenders

The data represents the number of individuals in the WorkLink region who are committing offenses over a five-year period, reflecting the offender population's trends (Figure 7). In FY2020 through FY2024, WorkLink saw a gradual increase in the number of offenders, from 1,245 in FY2020 to 1,250 in FY2024, maintaining a steady rate of approximately 7.4% of the state's committing population. Breaking it down by county, Anderson County accounted for 517 offenders in FY2020, with a slight increase to 524 by FY2024. Oconee County showed a smaller increase, from 281 offenders in FY2020 to 279 in FY2024, while Pickens County experienced a notable increase from 447 offenders in FY2020 to 447 in FY2024. Overall, the data indicates a steady or slightly increasing trend in the offender population across the WorkLink region. Those being released from jail may have been out of the workforce for a substantial amount of time and may need additional assistance with educational opportunities, job search, and interviewing skills.

Figure 7: WorkLink Population Distribution of Committing County for SC Department of Corrections



Source: FY2020-FY2024 South Carolina Department of Corrections

Youth Barriers to Employment

In the WorkLink area, youth face a variety of barriers that can significantly impact their ability to succeed academically, find employment, and transition to adulthood. The total youth population under 18 years old is approximately 85,874, with 3.4% (909 individuals) considered disconnected—neither enrolled in school nor employed. A significant portion, 32.5% of children, lives in single-parent households (about 25,976 children), and 5.8% of those under 18 have a disability, amounting to 4,096 youth. Additionally, 1.1% of youth are enrolled in grade 12, approximately 4,730 students.

Low Income

Poverty is a major barrier for many youth, with 15.4% of the total population living below the poverty line. For youth, this means challenges in securing stable housing, transportation, and access to essential services like the internet, which are all crucial for employment and education. The dropout rate in the WorkLink region stands at 2.2%, with 379 students leaving the school system before graduation in 2021. Those who drop out often face long-term consequences such as reduced job prospects, lower wages, and higher likelihood of involvement with the criminal justice system.

Lack of Education, Drop-outs

Another significant challenge is the number of youth not in school. In the 16-19 age group, 3,697 youth are not enrolled, with 1,942 of them lacking a high school diploma or equivalency. These youth are at greater risk for experiencing poverty, health problems, and criminal involvement, further compounding their difficulties in entering the workforce.

Justice Involved Youth

Crime and justice involvement also affect a substantial number of youth in the WorkLink region. In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were 775 juvenile cases, representing 6.5% of the state’s total. Youth involved with the justice system often face barriers such as lack of education, unstable housing, mental health and substance abuse challenges, and difficulties reintegrating into society.

Foster Care

Foster care youth also represent a vulnerable group. In 2022, 282 youth in the WorkLink area were served through foster care, or about 7.2% of the state’s total. These individuals often face challenges such as unstable housing, lack of job training, and involvement with the justice system, all of which create barriers to finding and maintaining employment. Youth aging out of foster care and those involved in the criminal justice system face unique challenges. As of September 2021, 464 individuals were released from the Department of Corrections in the WorkLink area, and many of these individuals need assistance with job search skills, interviewing, and reintegration into the workforce.

Overall, the WorkLink region's youth population faces a complex set of barriers, including poverty, lack of education, crime involvement, teen pregnancy, foster care challenges, and homelessness, all of which hinder their ability to succeed in school and the workforce. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions and support to help youth overcome these barriers and achieve long-term success.

- An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Developing a workforce to meet the demands of business is vitally important to the WorkLink economy. Although not comprehensive, below are key workforce development activities and programs offered in the WorkLink region.

CLASSROOM BASED EDUCATION & TRAINING ACTIVITIES

K-12 SYSTEM

Career and Technology Centers

Career and Technical Education Centers for the K-12 system are offered throughout the State of South Carolina. WorkLink K-12 students have access to four Career and Technical Education Centers and a variety of programs of study. Career pathways are clearly identified for students to be able to determine the skills and knowledge needed to succeed on the job, in the military, or in post-secondary education in their career field of choice.

Dual Enrollment

High School Juniors and Seniors can dually enroll in post-secondary classes while completing their high school education. They will receive college credit towards an associate degree or bachelor's degree for successfully completing college courses. These courses may include English, Computer Technology, History, Mathematics, Psychology, Allied Health Sciences, Welding, Automotive Technology, Engineering Graphics Technology, Building Construction Technology, among others. Many of the local colleges (including private, public, 2 year and 4 year) in the WorkLink region offer dual enrollment opportunities for students, including Tri-County Technical College.

Career Readiness

Career Readiness Assessments

The State of South Carolina offers the Ready to Work (R2W) career assessment to eleventh graders as an exit exam. The Ready to Work assessment determines the student's skill level in Applied Mathematics, Locating Information (or Graphic Literacy), and Reading for Information. Depending on the score level of the students, the Ready to Work assessment offers a certificate that students will be able to share with employers demonstrating the level of skills they have mastered.

The career assessment also offers Essential Soft Skills (ESS) components to demonstrate the mastery of skills the student has learned regarding Cooperation with Others, Resolving Conflicts and Negotiation, Solving Problems and Making Decisions, Observing Critically, and Taking Responsibility for Learning.

Workshops

WorkLink offers a variety of workshops to the public through partners such as Department of Employment and Workforce. Workshops are primarily available online but may be offered on an ad hoc basis in the Centers. Soft skills topics include dress, interview, job applications, and basic computer skills.

ADULT EDUCATION

Integrated English and Literacy

Adult Education is the primary provider of Literacy and English as a Second Language instruction in the WorkLink region. Each of these programs seek to improve the skills of the students they serve in writing, reading comprehension and, in the case of those with Limited English Proficiency, in understanding the spoken word. Both have integrated components

of workforce preparation, workforce training, and concurrent and contextualized learning, meaning that students will read passages relevant to the world of work and be introduced to words and phrases that are common in the workplace.

Integrated Education and Training

Adult Education, a division of the SC Department of Education, is the primary provider of education for those that have dropped out of traditional K-12 learning and wish to pursue a High School Diploma or its equivalent. Each Adult Education Center offers instruction to students to allow them to finish their High School Diploma requirements or prepare them to take the High School equivalency exam. Instruction includes workforce preparation, workforce training, and concurrent and contextualized learning.

COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

In total, the WorkLink region offers seven providers of training. Among those include one 4-year public university (Clemson University), one technical college (Tri-County), two private 4-year universities, one junior college, and two training providers that offer programs of study leading to credentials, but do not result in associate's level or higher degrees.

Technical College System

Tri-County Technical College, a member of the Technical College System, serves the WorkLink area with an overarching mission to prepare students for the workplace. Tri-County Technical college offers programs of study relevant to businesses in the area, including credit courses that lead to an associate degree or higher and continuing education courses for short-term training opportunities that lead to a credential such as an occupational license, certification, or credential.

Research University

Among the Universities and Colleges in South Carolina, Clemson University is found in the WorkLink region and has been designated as a research university. Their research is based on the following innovation clusters: Advanced Materials; Cyber Infrastructure and Big Data Science; Energy, Transportation, and Advanced Manufacturing; Health Innovation; Human Resilience; and Sustainable Environment. As a result of the BMW relocation to the Link Upstate region and Clemson's focus on research, CU-ICAR developed in partnership with automotive manufacturers to research innovative manufacturing solutions but serves as a way develop the workforce to meet the demands of business by engaging students in the process.

WORK-BASED LEARNING AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

On the Job Training (OJT)

Offered by WIOA programs, SC Department of Social Services, and SC Vocational Rehabilitation, On-the-Job Training offsets a portion of a new worker's wages that an employer will pay while the employee learns the skills required to perform necessary job duties. Seen as a monetary benefit to compensate for lost production while the individual is in the process of learning the skills needed to be proficient, the employee also benefits by earning while they learn. Some successful OJT placements have been with employers such as Materials Management (dba Patriot Automation), MST Concrete Products Inc., and MTS Office Machines.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)

Incumbent Worker Training is offered by Workforce Development Boards (or their contracted service providers) to employers that wish to upskill their workforce. Employees participate in classroom training to learn new skills, allowing them to retain their jobs and providing them with skills necessary for advancement. Employers can be reimbursed for a portion of the classroom training cost, offsetting company losses caused by taking employees away from their job duties. Several WorkLink companies have received IWT grants to further develop their workforce, such as Allegro Industries, JTEKT Koyo Bearings, Clarion, Mergon, and Borg-Warner.

Work Experience

Like an On-the-Job Training opportunity, the WIOA Youth Services Program, Palmetto Youth Connections, offers work experience opportunities to eligible youth 16-24 years old. The individual earns a stipend while learning skills necessary to perform a particular job at an employer host site.

readySC™

A program offered by the technical college system, readySC™ provides business solutions to companies relocating to WorkLink. A project manager is assigned to work with the company to identify needed solutions. Solutions may include assisting with recruitment, training the potential workforce to meet their needs, locating instructors to provide relevant training, and arranging for training to be conducted in offsite facilities. Employers that readySC™ has served in recent years include Michelin, First Quality, and Borg Warner.

Apprenticeship Carolina™

A division of the Technical College system, Apprenticeship Carolina™ stands as a key resource for employers to create and maintain registered apprenticeships within their businesses. Individuals learn while employed, both on-the-job and in a classroom setting. At appropriate training benchmarks, such as attainment of a credential, apprentices may receive wage increases. Apprenticeships are available to all age groups; however, employers may have dedicated apprenticeships specifically for youth. Some successful Apprenticeships in the WorkLink region include positions at Greenfield Industries and King Asphalt.

TAX CREDITS

E-Zone

The Enterprise Zone Retraining Program (E-Zone) offers a tax incentive through the Technical College system to employers that retrain their workforce on new equipment or technology to remain competitive. The business can claim the tax credit for retraining for up to \$1,000 per person per year. According to the Legislative Annual Report for Enterprise Zone Retraining Program, during calendar year 2018, one WorkLink business was approved for the Job Retraining Tax Credit and were projected to retrain a total of 190 employees.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program provides tax credits for businesses when they hire a new, eligible employee. Credits can range from \$2,400 to \$9,600 for each eligible employee. Eligible employees fall in the following categories:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients
- Empowerment Zone residents
- Vocational Rehabilitation or Ticket-to-Work Participants
- Recently released ex-felons
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients
- Disabled veterans who within the last year were discharged or unemployed for more than six months
- Unemployed veterans
- Veterans receiving SNAP
- Long-term unemployment recipient

PROGRAM AND SERVICES FOR PRIORITY POPULATIONS

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

SC Vocational Rehabilitation is the primary provider of employment and training services to those with Disabilities. SCVRD provides counselling and rehabilitation to individuals with cognitive, mental, or physical disabilities. A division of SCVRD, the SC Commission for the Blind serves those with seeing impairments.

Job Readiness Training Centers

SC Department of Vocational Rehabilitation has established training centers to prepare their consumers for employment. Offering a dual benefit to the consumer and the employer, consumers work for an established period, learning how to perform job duties in a manufacturing environment and essential soft skills. The employer can benefit by entering a job readiness contract with SCVRD. The contracts provide work opportunities to consumers within the Job Readiness Training Centers, and provides in return to the employer opportunities to hire individuals that have experience with assembling their products as well as the finished product itself.

Job Try Outs

SC Department of Vocational Rehabilitation offers job try outs to their consumers. The individual earns a stipend while learning skills necessary to perform a particular job at an employer host site.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

The out-of-school youth program primarily focuses on developing youth participants in the areas of completing secondary school (dropouts), acquiring work maturity skills training, gaining work experience, and placement in employment, military, or occupational skills training. The program incorporates the 14 youth elements and offers work experience placements to a variety of employers in the area.

Regional Workforce Advisor

The SC Commerce Regional Workforce Advisor serves on the Worklink Youth Committee, provides insight on efforts across the region and the State on to how to bridge gaps between secondary school education and adult workforce development activities. The Regional Workforce Advisor also provides information on career counseling methods and career pathways in the schools and encourages business involvement within the secondary school learning structure, to the extent possible. The Youth Committee has partnered with the Regional Workforce Advisor and the Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Showcase Board to provide opportunities for eighth graders to explore career fields and opportunities with local businesses in an annual event hosted for the seven school districts in the WorkLink region.

VETERANS

SC Department of Employment and Workforce offers Veteran Representatives to work with those that have been discharged from the military. Veteran Representatives identify employment opportunities and assist in placing Veterans in new employment opportunities. The Disability Veteran’s Opportunity Program Representative works with those with service-connected disabilities to provide support and resources on how to transition into civilian employment.

LOW INCOME

SC Department of Social Services provides several services that assist families with financial stability. Those that qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) may be eligible for cash assistance, employment and training services; those that qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) can receive food stamps, employment and training services; those that qualify for Food and Nutrition Programs receive emergency food assistance, programs for seniors, healthy eating activities); and those that qualify for SC Voucher Program can gain access to childcare assistance.

EX-OFFENDERS

Federal Bonding Program

The Federal Bonding program offered through SC Department and Employment and Workforce provides six months of fidelity bonding coverage in the amount of \$5,000-\$25,000 at no cost to the business or individual. This allows employers to expand their recruiting efforts, hire the desired talent and be protected against employee acts of dishonesty resulting in a monetary loss.

ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

A SWOT analysis was used as a strategic planning tool to assess WorkLinkk’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The SWOT analysis helped identify internal and external factors that could impact future success.

Table 11: WorkLink SWOT Analysis.

Category	Key Points
Strengths	High Customer Satisfaction: 88% of jobseekers, 58% of employers satisfied with candidate quality, 82% of stakeholders satisfied with communication.
	Effective Communication: 82% of stakeholders rated communication as excellent or good.
	Collaboration: 87% of stakeholders felt the career center collaborates effectively.
	Strong Online Resources: 84% of jobseekers found online resources helpful and easy to use.
	Workforce Preparation: 94% of stakeholders agreed that the career center prepares jobseekers

	effectively for employment.
Weaknesses	Limited Tailored Support: Jobseekers desire more personalized services, particularly for white-collar job seekers and those re-entering the workforce.
	Retention Challenges: 42% of employers dissatisfied with current retention rates.
	Limited Service Availability: Jobseekers requested expanded office hours, particularly in Easley.
	Skill Gaps: Employers identified gaps in training and certifications, especially for technical roles.
	Youth Employment Preparation: 8% of stakeholders rated the career center's youth programs as ineffective.
Opportunities	Expand Services for White-Collar Job Seekers: Tailor services to meet professional needs, such as workshops and interview preparation.
	Strengthen Collaboration with Educational Institutions: Partner more with local schools and career centers, especially for middle school career fairs.
	Address Skill Gaps: Develop programs to fill technical skill gaps, such as certifications for specialized roles.
	Growing Demand for Skilled Labor: Focus on training for high-demand roles such as skilled operators and technicians.
	Increase Office Accessibility: Consider expanding office hours or opening new locations for greater service reach.
Threats	Workforce Shortages: Employers anticipate significant workforce challenges in the next three years, especially with retention and recruitment.
	Funding and Resource Constraints: Potential reduction in WIOA funding and resources could impact service delivery.
	Technological Barriers: Jobseekers need more support for technology-related issues and digital literacy.
	Youth Employment Development: Inadequate youth preparation programs could limit success in meeting entry-level jobseeker needs.
	Retention and Skill Gaps: Employers' difficulty in finding skilled candidates may exacerbate workforce shortages and limit success in job placements.

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS

Several potential barriers exist for the current workforce.

Rapidly Evolving Employer Needs

Another threat that makes industry training a challenge is rapid changes in technology that can make a training program obsolete in a few years. In addition to this is the specific equipment and technology that a company may utilize but may not necessarily be generalized enough to create into a seamless training program that can address both an employers' need and a job seekers' skill levels.

Skills Gap

Of all barriers that we identified for our workforce, the most glaring is the skills gap that exists between what workers know and what employers need. What WorkLink has discovered is that those most in need may not be the most suitable to train for existing industry demands. Instead, dialogue is needed with partners and employers to develop a system of upskilling incumbent workers, and then providing skills to those with the most needs to back-fill the lower levels positions created by the vacating of low skilled positions to the middle skills careers.

Transportation

WorkLink also faces a unique challenge in regard to transportation. We have two main transportation bus lines that run through Anderson County to Clemson to Oconee County. The vast majority of Pickens County and the outer reaches of Anderson and Oconee Counties are not serviced by these bus lines. Many employers are not located on the bus transportation lines, instead opting for more mainline transportation avenues, such as I-85. Job seekers without transportation and that are not located on one of the bus lines find it difficult to travel in the region. As a result, these low-income individuals find work in one of the lower skilled jobs (such as retail or fast food) that is located on the bus

line, making it that much harder to reach them and help them see the value in upgrading their skills.

Low Levels of Literacy and Education

The most daunting barrier is that of current job seekers that demonstrate low levels of literacy or educational levels. WorkLink has a small demographic of those that need basic skills like reading or English as a second language. Very few literacy programs are offered in our area, and those that are offered have limited numbers of hours. Typically, these job seekers stay with a literacy program for several months (if not years) with minimal progress.

Lack of reliable internet access

It has become even more evident that internet access is not available in all parts of our region. To help people connect, we have established a list of hot spot locations for individuals to use. Even if there is access available to the internet, there is not always protection when sharing information on a public access Wi-Fi. Some portions of our community have also struggled with internet stability, mainly strong signals. Having reliable internet access will enable our potential customers to participate in WIOA online training programs. We have adopted policies that allow us to reimburse for internet costs for those that are in online training; however, there will be a gap for those that do not physically have a location to securely access the internet.

Lack of access to personal computers

Many of our low-income customers cannot afford a basic computer. They rely on their cell phones to interact with technology. For those attending online training, we have adopted policies to assist with the purchase of laptops and internet access while they are attending training. However, there remains a group of people that cannot access a working computer at this time but will need this to look for employment and attend online training.

Lack of computer skills

There are many individuals out there that know how to use a basic computer (turn it on, open a Word Document, send an email), but there is a gap of those that don't have those basic computer skills. Two of the most often used handouts in our turnstiles are the printouts on how to navigate the UI web portals and how to set up basic email accounts. Further, there is a technology information gap on how to connect to the web, how to troubleshoot basic internet access (such as restarting a router), how to use WebEx or Zoom, how to protect their information online, how to avoid scams, how to type, and how to set-up basic virus protection. Digital literacy classes are offered at our SC Works Clemson Comprehensive Center on a bi-weekly basis.

Limited access to partner services

Partners are still offering services; however, they are also trying to balance capacity with demand. CDC guidelines recommend businesses reduce their in-person capacity to accommodate social distancing measures. With high unemployment rates, demand for services is anticipated to rise in coming months. We also anticipate our partners being overwhelmed as the stimulus funds comes to an end. Some of the demands will be based on power bills soon coming due, childcare not being available or affordable, depression and other mental illness being exacerbated by stress and social distancing, and rumors of food shortages. Not only will their staff and facility capacities be taxed, but also the resources that they will be able to provide to those in need.

Limited access to virtual testing/assessments

Many of our partner programs rely on testing to determine skills and needs. There is limited capacity for in-person testing at this time. Online testing options are needed for the TABE, GED, WIN, and other occupational skills certifications.

Non-traditional Virtual Work Experience

Youth services need additional Work Experience options to be able to meet the 20% expenditure requirements. Non-traditional Work Experience training options that are available via digital or E-Learning and can be performed from any location (if there is a computer and internet/Wi-Fi) would give students continued opportunities that can occur during social distancing. We have found that many employers are not looking for Work Experience placements during social distancing.

Availability of online training

Training providers are working hard to convert classes to web-based training. However, Corporate and Community Education classes were not awarded the same funding that credited classes were to make the switch. Therefore, CCE is attempting to find creative ways to make the conversion. Online training schools are already ahead of the curve, but their classes are usually more expensive. Some of the ETPL classes have shut down completely due to the nature of the training, welding for example. In-person classes will be available; however, social distancing may make attending in-person harder than previously.

Section II: Strategic Vision and Goals

A description of the local board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency, including:

WORKLINK'S VISION AND MISSION

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board (WorkLink) finalized its five-year strategic plan in the fall of 2024.

VISION: Our vision is to have a fully employed, skilled workforce in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties, SC.

MISSION: We collaborate with partners to develop services that link employers and the workforce in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties, SC.

ORGANIZATIONAL CORE VALUES

We believe in the following shared principles, beliefs, and priorities.

- **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS.** We prioritize fostering strong, collaborative relationships with our partners, stakeholders, and the community to create a supportive network that enhances our collective impact.
- **EXCELLENCE.** We strive for excellence in all our endeavors, setting high standards and continuously improving our processes and outcomes.
- **GOOD STEWARDSHIP.** We are dedicated to being responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us through careful planning and prudent management.
- **RESPONSIVENESS.** We are committed to being responsive to the needs of our community and stakeholders to ensure that our programs and services remain relevant and effective.
- **SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.** We are committed to serving the community with dedication and integrity and to work tirelessly to address the needs and aspirations of our residents, fostering a thriving and inclusive environment for all.
- **EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE.** We pledge to treat every individual with respect, empathy, and professionalism. Our goal is to exceed expectations and create positive experiences for everyone we serve.

WorkLink has worked to develop a strategy grounded in local and regional demographic and economic data. We looked to a variety of sources to identify county and regional issues for both economic and workforce development. Through an ongoing analysis of economic and industry trends as well as program performance and outcomes, we will ensure that our strategies, sectors and occupations are the most appropriate for the populations and industries we serve.

- Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The board's goals grew out of an analysis of the region's focus group and survey results, recent and potential changes within the community and the workforce development industry, our identification of the characteristics of successful/winning workforce systems, and a SWOT analysis.

To prepare an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, we propose the following comprehensive approach aligned with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) goals. Our strategy emphasizes expanding financial resilience, eliminating employment barriers, engaging underserved communities, and utilizing labor market analytics to meet current and future workforce needs.

As a result of this planning process, the following goals were established to address the most immediate challenges:

Goal 1: Expand and Diversify Funding Sources to Enhance Financial Resilience and Expansion of Services

Objective: Strengthen financial resilience by leveraging diverse funding sources to enhance workforce services, with an emphasis on supporting youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

Goal 2: Increase Workforce Participation in Services and Employment by Eliminating Employment Barriers

Objective: Address systemic barriers to employment by providing holistic support and targeted training programs for job seekers, with particular focus on underserved populations.

Goal 3: Develop and Execute Comprehensive Outreach Strategies to Engage Underserved Populations and Communities

Objective: Increase engagement and participation among underserved populations through tailored outreach efforts that build trust and relevance.

Goal 4: Build Expertise in Labor Market Analytics to Project Future Needs

Objective: Strengthen data-driven workforce planning by aligning training programs with labor market demands and forecasting future workforce needs.

- A description of how the local board will work with core and required partners to align local resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals referenced above; and

ALIGNMENT OF RESOURCES

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board will endeavor to engage core programs and required partners through Board membership participation and assignment to committees. Other partners will be brought in as ad hoc members of each committee as necessary to pursue Strategic Planning initiatives.

Furthermore, core and required partners meet quarterly as a group to discuss system ideas, issues, and initiatives. In an effort to align local resources, each partner is engaged in Memorandum of Understandings and Individual Funding Agreements that detail referral processes and resources available through each organization. Each year partners review the agreements and strive for process improvement along with resource mapping. The partners' group has already begun the process of fine-tuning our relationships, not just with the Board, but also with community organizations that directly and indirectly support employment and training activities.

- **Step 1:** Finalize SC Works System Memorandum of Understanding to include: Cost allocation, referral processes, mutually beneficial services, relevant release of information forms, and co-location/system contributions as well as grievance procedures.
- **Step 2:** Map out services available in the community, specifically for priority populations and youth. Determine needs and communication protocols.
- **Step 3:** Evaluate the SC Works System in the WorkLink region and determine what areas we excel in and what areas need improvement. Evaluation and implementation of One Stop Certification Standards is a group effort.
- **Step 4:** Provide appropriate training to the Partners.

- A description of how the LWDB will utilize technology to increase access to resources and services for job seekers and employers.

Embracing Technology

To increase access to resources and services for job seekers and employers, the SC Works Centers will focus on developing and promoting various technological strategies.

- **Strategy 1:** Offer training to job seekers and employers to efficiently connect through the State's online job portal.
 - For job seekers, offering digital literacy workshops to teach them how to search for jobs, refine their resumes, and apply for positions would empower them to navigate the portal with confidence.
 - Employers would also benefit from guidance on how to post job listings, filter candidate applications, and manage their recruitment processes.

- Virtual career counseling and job placement assistance will be encouraged where appropriate. These offerings will allow job seekers to access workshops, resume-building sessions, and interview preparation through online platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Strategy 2: Identify and encourage virtual training and skill development programs.

- Partnering with our local technical college and universities to provide online courses and certifications would equip job seekers with the necessary skills to meet market demands.
- Identifying free courses through Coursera, LinkedIn, and Udemy may offer non-credentialed exposure to occupational skills that job candidates may find helpful in career exploration.
- Webinars and virtual workshops will be promoted to allow job seekers to develop soft skills, such as interview techniques and job search strategies, from the comfort of their own homes.
- To further promote job placement, virtual job fairs could be organized, allowing job seekers to interact with employers, view job openings, and conduct interviews in real-time.

Strategy 3: Use data analytics to make informed decisions on how to align resources and services while communicating outcomes to stakeholders.

Strategy 4: Adopt cloud-based storage solutions to allow securely uploading and accessing of shared documents, such as forms and policies.

Strategy 5: Enhance WorkLink's online presence, using social media and an optimized website to promote available resources, job opportunities, and training programs, ensuring job seekers are aware of all available services.

Section III: LWDA Partnerships and Investment Strategies

1. A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the local plan. The description must include how the CEOs, LWDB, and core and required partners were involved in the development of the plan.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL PLAN

The Chief Elected Officials, County Administrators, and WorkLink Workforce Development Board (WDB) were involved in the development of the regional plan through a collaborative and transparent process.

The Chief Elected Officials, County Administrators, WorkLink WDB members, and partners received the planning guidance and had an opportunity to review and provide feedback to the WDB Executive Director during the plan's development.

An executive summary of the draft regional plan was provided to these stakeholders, along with access to the full draft plan, allowing them to thoroughly review and offer additional feedback before finalization.

The regional plan was then made available for a 10-day public comment period. All comments received during this period are documented as attachments to the plan.

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

WORKLINK SC WORKS SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The one-stop delivery system brings together a series of partner programs and entities responsible for workforce development, educational, and other human resource programs to collaborate in the creation of a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services. Partners, programs, and providers collocate, coordinate, and integrate activities so that individuals seeking assistance have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes for individuals seeking services.

The system is broader than the SC Works Centers in each area. The system brings together partners and programs to provide universal access to career and training services in a seamless fashion. The goal is to increase system access for all customers. Not all system programs will be universal; that is, all programs will not be able to serve all people. However, all people can be served somewhere in the system. The system is about defining "common turf" across programs and integrating career and training services provided by partners into the SC Works Centers. No individual program is required to violate its governing statute.

With approval of the Local Board and chief elected officials, the following workforce development system was established in the WorkLink local area.

Comprehensive Center

Clemson SC Works Center

1376 Tiger Blvd, Suite 102

Clemson, SC 29631

8:30am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday

Satellite Centers

Anderson SC Works Satellite Center

1428 Pearman Dairy Rd

Anderson, SC 29624

8:30am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday

Easley SC Works Satellite Center

Tri-County Technical College

Easley Campus
Quickjobs Development Center
1774 Powdersville Road
Easley, SC 29642
8:30am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-5:00pm, Monday & Tuesday

Seneca SC Works Satellite Center
Tri-County Technical College Oconee Campus
Quickjobs Development Center
104 Vocational Drive
Seneca, SC 29678
8:30am-1:00pm, 2:00pm-5:00pm, Monday-Friday

Access Points

Access Points for job search services are also available at local libraries, adult education centers, and other community centers. Access Points offer access to a computer, through which job seekers will find online links to the several of the career services or job seeker services available at WorkLink SC Works Centers in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties.

Official Access Point locations include Anderson County Library System, Oconee County Public Library System, Pickens County Library System, United Way of Pickens, Goodwill Job Connection of Anderson, Pickens County Adult Education, Oconee County Adult Education, Anderson County Adult Education – Districts 1 & 2, Anderson County Adult Education – District 3, 4, & 5, SHARE of Oconee County, The Dream Center of Pickens County, and Anderson Interfaith Ministries.

Services

Career services will be provided by all partners in the SC Works Centers. Career Services include but are not limited to:

- **Initial Assessment:** Begins with intake and an initial assessment that sorts for customer needs and available options. A focus will be on determining customer's job readiness, including workforce skills, and available appropriate services.
- **Job Counseling:** Either individually or in group sessions that helps the jobseeker make the best use of the information and services available.
- **Job Referral:** Services that are tailored to the needs of specific employers and jobseekers. Both workers and employers may also choose to post job announcements and resumes on an electronic system that is open to all.
- **Employer Services:** Access to labor market information; recruitment, screening, and referral of qualified applicants; assisting employers with regulations; access to economic development information and resources; allocating job vacancies; brokering customized job training; connecting firms to SC Works information; technical assistance on assessment, recruitment, and human resource strategies; advocacy for targeted employers in key economic sectors; assistance with major layoffs and plant closures.
- **Labor Market Information:** Current and projected occupational supply and demand information, current occupational wage information; occupational skill standards; nonproprietary information on employers; and information on education and training program outcomes, including completion rates, placement rates, and wage rates of graduates.
- **Information and Referral:** Access to information regarding services needed by jobseekers, such as income assistance, housing, food, or medical care. Referrals to off-site services within the system will be made electronically.
- **Training and Retraining Information:** Access to and information about vocational exploration, basic skills and literacy training, job search skills, self-employment/entrepreneurial training, training leading to the award of skills certificates, work-based learning, two-year or four-year degree programs and state-approved apprenticeship programs.
- **Unemployment Insurance Information:** Phone accessibility to file for unemployment insurance benefits. Internet Claims filing can be submitted via the internet. Partner staff will assist those with disabilities in filing their initial claim.

- **Eligibility Determination:** Access to information regarding employment and training services needed by job seekers – eligibility for federal and state funded programs.
- **Outreach/Intake/Orientation:** Local activity, website is one source marketing. Intake—ability to register for programs. Orientation to services – description to state’s SC Works services/link to areas.
- **Performance Information on Local SC Works Centers:** How the local area is performing on the local performance measures and any additional performance information with respect to the SC Works delivery system in the local area.
- **Follow-up Services:** Including counseling regarding the workplace. Local responsibility – retention services.

SC Works Centers provide services to individual customers based on individual needs, including the seamless delivery of multiple services to individual customers. There is no required sequence of services.

- Identification of the programs that are included in the system; and

KEY PARTNERS

The SC Works system brings together a series of partner programs and entities responsible for workforce development, education, and other human resources programs to collaborate in the creation of a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs’ services. Striving to establish seamless services across 17 federally-funded employment and training programs, partners are represented in the following programs (Figure 8):

Core WIOA Programs: The following core programs are critical to the workforce development system:

- Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs: Currently provided by Eckerd Connects on behalf of the WorkLink WDB, these programs provide education and training tailored to local needs, helping job seekers build skills and gain employment.
- Title II – Adult and Family Literacy Act Program: South Carolina’s adult education and literacy programs are offered through the Office of Adult Education (OAE), which provides technical assistance to enhance local programs, focusing on individuals pursuing high school diplomas, equivalency degrees, or National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC). Programs emphasize individual learning plans, small group instruction, and career transition services.
- Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: Administered by SCDEW, this program offers job seekers access to job search preparation, career counseling, skill assessments, and employability workshops. Employers also benefit from services such as job listings, applicant screening, job fairs, and specialized testing.
- Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Act Programs: The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) provide services to individuals with disabilities. VR helps clients access job readiness training, substance abuse treatment, and employment services, while SCCB offers specialized services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Both programs support job seekers with disabilities and educate employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Additional Partner Programs: In addition to the core WIOA programs, several other partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stop centers. These programs, along with those administered under WIOA, create a robust network of services that support both job seekers and employers.

Career and Technical Education (Perkins)	Community Services Block Grant
Indian and Native American Programs	HUD Employment and Training Programs
Job Corps	Veterans’ Employment Programs
National Farmworker Jobs Program	Senior Community Service Employment Program
TANF	SNAP
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Unemployment Compensation Programs
YouthBuild	

Figure 8: A list of partner programs and providers for the WorkLink region

SC Works Center Partners in the WorkLink Region		
1	Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs	Eckerd Connects Inc
2	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs	Anderson District 1 & 2 Adult Education
		Anderson Adult Education Center 3, 4 & 5
		Oconee County Adult Education
		Adult Learning Center of Pickens County
3	Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce
4	Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities	SC Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
5	Post-Secondary Education Programs (Perkins)	Tri-County Technical College
6	Community Services Block Grant Employment and Training Activities	Sunbelt Human Advancement Resources (SHARE)
7	Veterans Employment and Training Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce
8	Senior Community Service Employment Programs	Goodwill Industries of the Upstate/Midlands of SC
9	Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce
10	Unemployment Compensation Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce
11	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs	SC Department of Social Services
Other Partners		
(Listed below are partners that are required by WIOA, but are not located in or do not provide Employment and Training services in the WorkLink region)		
12	Native American Programs	Indian Development Council
13	HUD Employment and Training Activities	Housing Authority
14	Job Corps Programs	Dynamic Education Systems (DESI)
15	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs	Telamon
16	YouthBuild Programs	
17	Second Chance Programs	

- How the Local Board will support strategies for service alignment among the entities carrying out workforce development program in the local area.

WorkLink has incorporated an overarching, ongoing goal of aligning resources for better coordination and alignment across partners.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The SC Works Memorandum of Understanding is one of the primary tools the Board uses to ensure a seamless delivery of services among employment and training funded organizations. The Memorandum of Understanding details the common SC Works Center budget, outlines fair share of costs, details partner responsibilities, and integrates referral systems between partners.

CO-ENROLLMENT

The State Plan says, “Co-enrollment across programs and streamlining intake systems and referral processes will have the greatest impact on coordination of services for the benefit of SC Works customers. Co-enrollment in multiple programs can improve outcomes for individuals, especially individuals with barriers to employment.” Partners are invited to the table and discuss how they can align services to provide the best path forward for mutual customers.

SC Commission for the Blind, SC Department of Social Services (TANF and SNAP programs), WIOA, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Veteran Employment Programs, and Wagner-Peyser are co-located under one roof. Partners meet quarterly to discuss how to remove duplication of services for common customers. Similarly a Business Services Integration team meets quarterly to discuss how to approach business services from a streamlined approach. WorkLink has taken steps to see this come to reality through partnerships on grant opportunities.

PARTNER MEETINGS/REFERRALS

WorkLink serves as a convener of partners. To this end, Business Service Integration Team Meetings and Partner Meetings are held at least quarterly to discuss current developments across agencies concerning job seekers and employers. During these meetings, referral processes are fine-tuned, and service delivery integration occurs organically

to meet the needs of mutual customers or groups of job seekers in unique ways.

The partners will collaborate on service alignment strategies among workforce development program entities by fostering collaboration and embracing technology to enhance service delivery. Partners will work together to implement and utilize technological tools and platforms that streamline operations and improve customer access to resources. For instance, all partner agencies will receive training to use the online job portal and virtual service platforms effectively, ensuring consistent communication and referral processes. Collaborative efforts will focus on integrating technology into co-enrollment processes, enhancing the use of technology platforms to increase customer support and satisfaction, and expanding virtual career counseling and workshops. Regular training sessions and cross-agency meetings will be held to discuss best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and explore new ways to leverage technology for seamless service delivery. By aligning around shared technological strategies, partners can reduce duplication of effort, optimize resource use, and better meet the needs of job seekers and employers in the local area.

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

- Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment;

STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING ACCESS

To expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, including those with barriers to employment, WorkLink has evaluated and implemented innovative and cost-effective strategies in response to shrinking WIOA federal dollars. These strategies aim to enhance service delivery, broaden outreach, and improve accessibility across the local area.

Adult and DW WIOA Program Services

- **Enhanced Digital Tools and Online Presence:** WorkLink is growing its presence on social media platforms and revising its website to improve accessibility and visibility. Job openings are consistently posted on SC Works Online Services and promoted through the website and social media platforms. These efforts include hot job listings, job fairs, hiring events, and resource fairs. Virtual workshops and training sessions are offered to provide job seekers with opportunities to improve resume writing, interview preparation, and other essential skills. Websites and resources will be reviewed and updated to be mobile-friendly, ensuring accessibility for individuals without computer access.
- **Leveraging Partnerships and Shared Resources:** WorkLink encourages the continued co-location of SC Works Center Partners, which frees up federal funds to be invested directly in participant services. Partnerships with libraries, community organizations, and nonprofits expand access to resources and services, including hosting outreach events and sharing employment opportunities. Agencies share costs for job fairs, resource fairs, and other events, enabling greater reach with limited budgets.
- **Creative Funding Strategies:** Grant applications will be prioritized, focusing on opportunities that will benefit customers and co-applicants alike. Outside grant funding is leveraged first for scholarships and participant budgets, with WIOA dollars supplementing supportive services for those enrolled in programs of study.
- **Service Accessibility in Rural Communities:** WorkLink provides services at various locations to reach rural communities, including Rapid Response services and mobile job fairs. Pop-up SC Works Center services may be hosted in high-traffic community areas like malls, grocery stores, and community festivals.
- **Low-Cost Communication and Outreach Efforts:** Text message updates inform job seekers about job fairs, training opportunities, and new resources. Community bulletin boards in public spaces are used to advertise job listings and events. Public Wi-Fi partnerships are established to provide job seekers with reliable internet access for job search activities.
- **Innovative Volunteer and Mentorship Initiatives:** Peer support networks connect successful job seekers with those just starting their employment journey. Volunteers assist in organizing and delivering job fairs, workshops, and digital literacy training.
- **Collaborative Planning and Integration:** Quarterly planning sessions with partner agencies and business service teams help refine strategies and serve mutual customers better. WorkLink acts as a convener of partners, holding

regular meetings to fine-tune referral processes and organically integrate service delivery based on the needs of unique customer groups.

By implementing these strategies, WorkLink not only expands access to services for eligible individuals but also maximizes the impact of available resources. These efforts ensure that even individuals facing significant barriers to employment can access the tools and support they need to succeed in today's workforce.

STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING ACCESS TO THE YOUTH PROGRAM

WorkLink's Youth Program strategies focus on fostering opportunities for young individuals by further developing resources to support their career readiness and success. These strategies include identifying and addressing gaps in the community to enhance service integration, ensuring that youth have access to comprehensive support systems. Additionally, the program emphasizes raising awareness and providing education about work readiness through targeted outreach efforts. A significant priority is placed on expanding work-based learning opportunities, promoting career pathways, and encouraging the attainment of industry-recognized credentials to equip youth with the skills and qualifications needed for meaningful and sustainable employment. These strategies will assist in carrying out the WIOA youth core programs and involve partners to align local resources.

Youth WIOA Program Services:

- **Further Development of Resources:** enhance and expand available resources to support the implementation of WIOA youth core programs and involve partners to align local resources.
- **Identifying and Addressing Community Gaps:** Integrate services to fill gaps in the community, ensuring comprehensive support for all youth.
- **Awareness, Education, and Outreach:** Promote work readiness through continued effective communication for community awareness, educational programs, and outreach initiatives.
- **Emphasis on Work-Based Learning:** Increase focus on work-based learning opportunities, career pathways, and industry-recognized credentials to enhance youth employability.

STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING ACCESS TO SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

These strategies are complemented by supportive services available in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties, including childcare, transportation assistance, housing support, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, financial counseling, healthcare services, legal assistance, job readiness training, and educational support. Local organizations such as Anderson Interfaith Ministries, United Way, SHARE, and county departments of social services collaborate to provide these critical resources. Together, these initiatives create a robust framework for empowering individuals and fostering workforce development.

- Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including an industry-recognized certificate or certification that is portable and stackable;

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING ACCESS TO CREDENTIALS:

Career Pathway Development

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board (WorkLink) remains committed to advancing career pathway development while improving access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials. This includes industry-recognized certificates and certifications that are portable and stackable. WorkLink will continue to collaborate with local technical colleges and four-year institutions to enhance access to these credentials. Local technical colleges will maintain an active presence at SC Works Centers, ensuring they are visible and readily available to clients seeking guidance and training opportunities.

WorkLink will strengthen partnerships with both secondary and postsecondary stakeholders to provide detailed career pathway guidance starting in K-12. This guidance will focus on current in-demand occupations and anticipated growth sectors, ensuring students and job seekers are informed about viable career options. Occupational skills training programs leading to industry-recognized, portable, and stackable certifications will remain a key focus across existing

and emerging career clusters.

In addition, WorkLink will continue fostering relationships with employers and training providers to develop targeted career pathways aligned with local and regional workforce needs. Partnerships with program providers will also be sustained to offer supportive services, such as transportation assistance and work uniforms, to eligible individuals facing barriers to employment. WorkLink's collaborations with career and technical education institutions approved to deliver training have been instrumental in supporting these efforts and will continue to play a vital role in workforce development initiatives.

Through SC Works Center Services:

- **Promotional Materials:** Brochures and flyers are available in the resource room and online, promoting lifelong learning through Adult Education and various post-secondary training providers, and demonstrating the importance and value of obtaining credentials.
- **Orientation Guidance:** SC Works staff review how to access SCPath.org, which hosts South Carolina's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), with customers during the SC Works Orientation.
- **Training Provider Presentations:** Training providers are encouraged to present information about courses of study that can lead to in-demand occupations at SC Works Orientations.
- **Financial Aid Information:** Information on financial aid and additional sources of training scholarships can be accessed through our resource room computers and knowledgeable staff.
- **Committee Representation:** Representatives from the Career and Development Centers of our local technical colleges, four-year universities, and adult education programs have been added as ad hoc members of the SC Works One Stop Operations Committee to better facilitate dialogue on how to best serve mutual clients.
- **Onsite Adult Education Support:** A staff member from the Adult Education Center is onsite at our comprehensive center location to administer WIN testing and to speak with anyone interested in pursuing Adult Education.

Through Adult and DW WIOA Program Services

- **Encouraging Portable, Stackable Credentials:** WIOA participants are encouraged to enter training programs that offer portable, stackable credentials. Many training providers have structured their programs to allow students to earn credentials at multiple points along their chosen career pathway (e.g., Patient Care Technician at Tri-County Technical College).
- **Labor Market Information Review:** Case managers review labor market information with customers to help them make informed choices about training options that lead to self-sufficient, sustainable careers. They also promote success stories of individuals who have successfully completed training and entered new careers.
- **Career Pathway Progression:** Customers discuss the next steps needed to progress along their career pathway with their case managers upon completing their training.
- **Financial Aid and Funding Guidance:** Case managers review financial aid application processes, available grants, partner services, and WIOA funding options with participants to help them identify sources to cover training and personal costs while attending training.
- **Facilitating Communication with Training Providers:** The WIOA Program Manager has developed relationships with local training providers to facilitate better communication on behalf of participants.
- **Seeking Grants and Partnerships:** At the WorkLink Board staff level, we continuously seek appropriate grants and supportive community partner opportunities to expand access to training opportunities.
- **Outreach Efforts:** Promote access to scholarships and supportive services specifically for dislocated workers through in-person client meetings, email correspondence, postings on various social media platforms, and by hosting and attending job and resource fairs.

Through Youth WIOA Program Services:

- **Comprehensive Career Path Development:** WIOA-eligible youth receive extensive career path information and development. This includes participation in assessments, career coaching, and guidance towards an identified career path.
- **Access to College Tours:** Students are provided with access to both virtual and in-person tours of the local technical college, allowing them to explore educational opportunities firsthand.

- **Information Sessions by Technical College Representatives:** Representatives from the local technical college visit students through Adult Education programs and SC Works Centers to provide detailed information about in-demand careers and available training options.
- **Career Coach Placement:** A WIOA career coach is located at the Adult Education Centers in each of the counties we serve.
- **Onsite Support:** A staff member from the Adult Education Center is onsite at our SC Works comprehensive center location to administer WIN testing and to speak with anyone interested in pursuing Adult Education.
- **Committee Representation:** The youth committee is comprised of a combination of board members and ad hoc committee members who actively serve in our communities in various areas of leading industry employers, social services, and education. This allows for open dialog of how to best prepare the youth clients for current and future workforce requirements.

- Facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING ENGAGEMENT OF EMPLOYERS:

WorkLink is committed to fostering robust partnerships between employers, workforce development programs, and educational institutions to address the region's workforce needs. To enhance employer engagement, including small businesses and those in high-demand industries, WorkLink employs tailored strategies and collaborative initiatives that ensure workforce solutions align with the evolving demands of the labor market.

- **Targeted Employer Outreach:** WorkLink's Business Services Coordinator leads outreach efforts, cultivating relationships with employers in key sectors, including small businesses, through networking events, industry forums, and site visits. Employer feedback is gathered through surveys and labor market data to design customized workforce solutions that address current and future needs. Partnerships with local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and the Society of Human Resource Management bolster these efforts, ensuring a broad reach across the community.
- **Customized Workforce Solutions:** WorkLink collaborates with employers to identify skill gaps and create tailored training programs for high-demand industries. Initiatives such as internships, apprenticeships, and On-the-Job Training (OJT) are promoted to give employers access to a skilled workforce while providing job seekers with valuable hands-on experience. Additionally, WorkLink partners with employers to implement Incumbent Worker Training and Rapid Response services as funding permits.
- **Support for Small Businesses:** Recognizing the unique challenges faced by small employers, WorkLink offers specialized assistance to help navigate recruitment, training programs, and funding opportunities. Financial incentives, such as OJT reimbursements, are promoted to encourage participation in workforce development programs. WorkLink also provides job posting services, candidate matching, and recruitment assistance to ensure small businesses can effectively meet their hiring needs.
- **Leveraging Technology:** SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) streamlines job postings, recruitment, and candidate tracking, enabling employers to connect with qualified workers efficiently. WorkLink enhances its online presence through social media platforms, including a professional LinkedIn profile, to share workforce development opportunities, employer success stories, and relevant labor market information, engaging a broader business audience.
- **Continuous Improvement:** To ensure alignment with employer needs, WorkLink conducts regular surveys and feedback sessions, enabling continuous refinement of workforce development programs in response to changing labor market conditions.

Through SC Works Center Services

WorkLink SC Works Centers play a vital role in employer engagement by hosting job fairs, hiring events, and resource fairs, all of which have successfully attracted previously unengaged employers. The promotion of training opportunities such as OJT and Rapid Response ensures employers remain aware of resources that can benefit their workforce. These centers also facilitate connections with local employers through direct outreach and active participation in business-focused organizations.

- **Local Outreach:** Conducting outreach in the local area through employer site visits, participation in business-focused organizations such as chambers of commerce, economic development activities, and local chapters of the Society of Human Resource Management.
- **Job Fairs and Hiring Events:** Placing special emphasis on job fairs and hiring events for local employers. The success of these events has served as an important outreach tool, encouraging several previously unengaged employers to become aware of employer and client services offered by SC Works and become more active in local workforce development activities.
- **Promotion of Training Opportunities:** Consistently promoting On-the-Job Training, Rapid Response, and Incumbent Worker Training opportunities, as funding permits.
- **LinkedIn Presence:** Creating and maintaining a LinkedIn profile for SC Works WorkLink. Staff are dedicated to building this professional social media platform by posting informative content and engaging with local employers and community leaders.

STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING ENGAGEMENT OF EMPLOYERS FOR YOUTH:

WorkLink is actively engaging local and small employers to provide work experience opportunities for youth in high-demand sectors. Current strategies include promoting the benefits of hosting youth participants, offering planning and training support to employers, and maintaining ongoing communication throughout the work experience to address both employer needs and youth progress.

Local and small employers are being engaged to offer work experience opportunities for youth in in-demand sectors. Current strategies for employer engagement include:

- Outreach and promotion of the benefits of Work Experience for youth.
- Once engaged, the employer participates in planning and training to be a work experience host site.
- Ongoing communication throughout the Youth's work experience provides real-time feedback and progress reports on how the Youth is progressing and what the Employer's needs are.

To further enhance engagement, WorkLink proposes hosting an Employer Information Fair to attract partners interested in working with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participants, contingent on funding availability. However, a significant barrier remains: state insurance limitations that preclude youth trainees from being covered under Workers' Compensation. Addressing this challenge is a priority to strengthen partnerships with small businesses and expand opportunities for youth in the WorkLink area.

- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;

Integrated Business Service Team (IBST) Strategies for WorkLink

WorkLink's Integrated Business Service Team (IBST), composed of core and non-core partners, plays an integral role in engaging both new and existing businesses within the local area. The IBST collaborates to identify and address employer needs, ensuring workforce development efforts align with regional economic demands. To strengthen these efforts, WorkLink plans to host cross-sector employer focus group summits to gain deeper insights into workforce challenges and opportunities. Employers are encouraged to actively participate in the business service team, providing valuable input and fostering closer collaboration.

- **Partnering with Local Chambers and Economic Development:** WorkLink actively works with local Chambers of Commerce and economic development organizations to address employer needs and support the recruitment of new businesses to the area. These partnerships enhance WorkLink's ability to connect employers with workforce solutions while promoting economic growth.
- **Streamlining Employer Services:** Business Service staff are committed to supporting employers by participating in workforce activities, such as outreach and human resource services, to reduce the time employers spend recruiting and interviewing frontline entry-level positions. These efforts ensure a seamless experience for businesses and enhance WorkLink's reputation as a trusted partner.

- **Technology Integration for Real-Time Engagement:** WorkLink will seek to enhance business engagement through the use of technology, such as tablets, conference calling, webinars, and virtual workshops. WorkLink will encourage IBST staff to provide real-time services using technology during on-site employer visits, such as employer registrations, job postings, job fair coordination, and employee registrations into SC Works Online Services (SCWOS). This technology also supports Incumbent Workforce Training (IWT) and Rapid Response IWT initiatives, streamlining processes for employers.
- **Enhanced Marketing and Outreach:** To improve outreach efforts, WorkLink is revising and repurposing marketing materials, focusing on strategies that include press releases featuring compelling human-interest stories, such as testimonials. Staff members are also tasked with contributing to the SC Works WorkLink website quarterly, ensuring fresh and relevant content. This website is prominently featured in updated marketing materials.

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS NEEDS

- **Business Representation:** 54% of the WorkLink Workforce Development Board are local business representatives. These members influence policy decisions and rulemaking within the WorkLink area, positively affecting both employers and jobseekers.
- **Sub-Committee Composition:** The WorkLink Workforce Development Board's One Stop Operations, Priority Population, and Youth sub-committees are comprised of both board members and carefully selected ad hoc committee members who represent in-demand business industry leaders in our communities. Their input is vital to successfully focusing our efforts on supporting local business needs.
- **Labor Market Information Review:** WorkLink regularly reviews relevant labor market information to ensure staff and board members are aware of current and future market trends. This information is validated through regular visits with employers and meetings with partners such as local and regional economic development entities and chambers of commerce.

- Improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development; and

Improving Coordination between Workforce Development and Economic Development

WorkLink maintains strong partnerships with economic development staff across its three-county area. Each county's economic development entity is represented on the Workforce Development Board, ensuring alignment between workforce initiatives and regional economic goals.

Local and Regional Partnerships

WorkLink's IBST actively participates in partnerships with industry-specific groups, Chambers of Commerce, and business retention and expansion programs. Collaborations with regional economic development organizations, such as Upstate Alliance, Ten at the Top, SCMEP, Apprenticeship Carolina, ReadySC, and the SC Department of Commerce, further strengthen alignment between workforce and economic growth efforts.

Supporting Economic Development

WorkLink's IBST collaborates closely with economic development organizations to support new business prospects and workforce initiatives at their request. This partnership ensures workforce programs remain responsive to the evolving needs of employers and contribute to the economic vitality of the region.

STRATEGIES FOR COORDINATING WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Development Staff specializing in training and workforce development will prioritize developing a continuum of work-based learning opportunities. These include work experience placements, internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training (OJT) programs. Combined with occupationally specific training leading to industry-recognized credentials, these initiatives are designed to meet the dual objectives of providing employers with access to a skilled workforce and creating upwardly mobile career pathways for job seekers. Additional emphasis will be placed on short-term career and technical classroom training to rapidly equip participants with in-demand skills.

Talent Pipeline Development: The overarching goal of these efforts is to create robust talent pipelines into demand occupations that Economic Development can use to meet industry needs and attract new companies to the area. These

pipelines will address employers' needs for qualified candidates while offering job seekers sustainable career options and opportunities for growth.

Ongoing Communication and Collaboration: WorkLink and SC Works staff communicate and meet regularly with economic development representatives to:

- **Coordinate Business and Industry Outreach Efforts:** Aligning strategies to engage employers effectively.
- **Plan Hiring Events and Job Fairs:** Jointly hosting events to connect businesses with job seekers.
- **Stay Current on Recruitment and Retention Efforts:** Keeping workforce strategies informed by local labor market trends.

Economic development representatives from all three counties are invited and encouraged to participate in quarterly Business Service Integration Team meetings with workforce development partners. These meetings facilitate collaboration, share updates, and streamline efforts to support mutual goals. WorkLink staff also provides technical support and labor market information to supplement economic development initiatives, ensuring comprehensive and informed approaches to regional workforce challenges.

Business Engagement Strategies: WorkLink utilizes a variety of strategies to connect with local businesses and support economic development efforts, primarily facilitated through the Integrated Business Services Team (IBST). The team develops and maintains strong, individualized working relationships with economic development organizations and companies across various industry sectors.

Individualized Business Services: IBST staff provides tailored services to meet the unique needs of individual companies, including:

- **Account Management:** Developing and maintaining company-specific relationships.
- **Recruitment and Hiring Services:** Offering recruiting, screening, and hiring support.
- **Assessments and Training:** Coordinating programs for incumbent worker training, occupational skills enhancement, and OJT.
- **Consulting Services:** Delivering labor market information, human resources support, and workforce-related workshops.
- **Multi-Company Initiatives:** WorkLink organizes job fairs, hiring events, employer roundtables, and similar engagements to connect multiple employers with job seekers. These events foster collaboration and allow for efficient workforce matching across the region.

Through these strategies, WorkLink will continue to strengthen its relationships with businesses, expand workforce opportunities, and address the region's dynamic labor market needs.

- Strengthen linkages between the SC Works delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

WorkLink is committed to strengthening the connection between the SC Works delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs to enhance support for job seekers. This collaboration ensures seamless assistance for individuals applying for unemployment benefits while providing access to reemployment services and additional workforce development opportunities.

LINKING SC WORKS SERVICES AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The WorkLink Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the SC Works System outlines the collaborative framework between workforce partners and UI programs. Key strategies agreed upon in the MOU include:

- **Referrals:** Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) staff provides claimants with information on filing claims and referrals to reemployment services tailored to individual needs.
- **Staffing and Cost Sharing:** RESEA staff are present in all comprehensive SC Works Centers, with UI sharing in the operational costs of the workforce system.
- **UI Training Resources:** DEW offers UI-related training resources to SC Works staff, ensuring frontline staff are equipped to assist claimants effectively and consistently.

Assistance for Unemployment Insurance Applicants

In all WorkLink SC Works Centers, individuals seeking assistance with unemployment applications are supported through:

- **Access to Technology:** Computers and phones are available during business hours, Monday through Friday, to enable job seekers to file claims or contact UI representatives.
- **Guided Assistance:** Staff provides guidance on how to apply for UI benefits, including direct support and instructions for independent application.
- **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA):** Staff members engage with individuals receiving unemployment benefits to connect them with SC Works Center services, expediting reemployment efforts.

Staff Training and Resources

To enhance service delivery, WorkLink prioritizes ongoing training for SC Works staff in collaboration with UI representatives. These training sessions empower staff to:

- Clearly explain the value of SC Works Center services in supporting job searches.
- Provide accurate and consistent assistance with filing initial UI claims.
- Facilitate meaningful engagement between claimants and available community resources.

Through these strategies, WorkLink ensures that individuals navigating unemployment benefit processes are also seamlessly connected to broader workforce development services. This integrated approach allows job seekers to leverage SC Works resources for career advancement, skill development, and access to employment opportunities, creating a comprehensive support system that fosters reemployment and long-term success.

4. A description of how the strategies discussed in Question 3 above will be aligned with the priorities outlined in the State Plan; specifically:
 - Developing and implementing cross-partner staff training to enhance service delivery to job seekers and business;

The State Plan emphasizes the importance of unified training across all workforce system staff to ensure seamless, high-quality service delivery. WorkLink's commitment to supporting the State Plan's vision for unified cross-partner training involves collaboration among core and non-core partners, including career coaches, job placement specialists, and business service representatives.

Cross-Partner Staff Training

To align with state priorities and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) goals, WorkLink will organize regular joint training sessions focused on:

- **Labor Market Trends and High-Demand Sectors:** Training staff to understand regional labor market trends and identify high-demand industries, equipping them to guide job seekers toward in-demand career pathways that meet employer needs.
- **Resources and Supportive Services:** Providing comprehensive knowledge of available resources to help staff address the unique barriers and strengths of job seekers.
- **Data-Sharing Systems:** Ensuring staff are proficient in using data-sharing and case management systems to facilitate smooth referrals and personalized service delivery.
- **Customer Service Satisfaction:** Ensuring customer satisfaction through exceptional service delivery.
- **Compliance with EO and ADA requirements:** Maintaining compliance with Equal Opportunity (EO) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- **SC Works Center Policies and Procedures:** Implementing and adhering to safety procedures and operational standards at SC Works Centers.

Quarterly Meetings to Enhance Coordination

WorkLink has instituted quarterly meetings to foster collaboration among partners and improve service delivery:

- **Partner Meetings:** Partners meet quarterly to discuss referral processes, eligibility requirements, and program updates. These meetings promote a unified understanding of services across agencies.
- **Staff Training Meetings:** Quarterly training sessions are held for SC Works Center staff to communicate updates on partner programs and streamline referral processes.
- **Business Service Team Meetings:** The Business Service Team meets quarterly to address employer needs, ensuring a coordinated approach to business engagement and reducing duplication of effort.

The strategies described above align directly with the priorities outlined in the State Plan by strengthening service delivery through cross-partner collaboration and training, enhancing staff understanding of labor market needs and employer demands, and ensuring job seekers receive coordinated, high-quality, and tailored workforce services. These efforts promote a unified approach to addressing regional workforce challenges while meeting the needs of both employers and job seekers effectively.

- Increasing the percentage of participants that obtain high-value credentials;

HIGH-VALUE CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

WorkLink is committed to increasing the number of participants earning high-value, industry-recognized credentials. By collaborating with technical colleges, universities, and vocational training providers, WorkLink identifies and supports programs that offer portable, stackable credentials in high-demand fields such as healthcare, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and logistics. These programs are designed to help individuals gain credentials incrementally, building toward advanced qualifications while allowing them to continue working. For example, a participant might begin with an entry-level certification in manufacturing and progress to a specialized role in industrial engineering. This approach aligns WIOA's priority of equipping participants with credentials that enhance employability and foster long-term career growth.

Many training providers structure their programs to award credentials at multiple stages along career pathways, such as the Patient Care Technician program at Tri-County Technical College, ensuring participants can achieve milestones as they advance. To further these efforts, WorkLink partners with various industries and community organizations to develop tailored career pathways for the region. Career pathways inform case managers' guidance during counseling sessions, where labor market information is used to help participants make informed decisions about training programs that lead to sustainable careers. Case managers emphasize the value of career planning and lifelong learning to empower participants to achieve self-sufficiency and upward mobility. Success stories of participants who have completed training and launched new careers are promoted to inspire others. WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker participants are encouraged to engage in training programs offering portable, stackable credentials.

While decreased funding for WIOA programs has limited the availability of scholarships and led to reduced enrollment, the rising cost of living has spurred greater interest in education and skill-building among individuals in the WorkLink area. This trend underscores the importance of aligning services and leveraging external funding sources to meet the growing demand for credentials.

Both the Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth programs strive to provide participants with comprehensive guidance through the development of Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) and Individual Service Strategies (ISS). Adult/Dislocated Worker participants may choose from the SCPath.org website, which hosts the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Youth participants are encouraged to pursue one of three pathways: I-BEST programs, Occupational Training through Corporate and Community Education (CCE) with an emphasis on manufacturing, healthcare, and STEM exploration, or enrollment in two-year or four-year degree programs at accredited colleges and universities. These efforts aim to address skill gaps in advanced manufacturing and healthcare, as outlined in the state plan, and foster interest in high-demand career pathways.

Further, the Department of Employment and Workforce has identified high priority occupations for the WorkLink area. WorkLink will encourage case managers to share relevant information with their participants about these priority occupations.

- Increasing access to education and training necessary for individuals to use Broadband to advance their personal goals and increase South Carolina’s technology workforce competitiveness;

DIGITAL LITERACY AND BROADBAND

WorkLink recognizes the critical role digital connectivity and skills play in today’s economy, particularly as South Carolina works to strengthen its technology workforce. To address this priority, WorkLink collaborates with local technology organizations, internet service providers, and community partners to enhance access to broadband and digital resources across Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee Counties. These efforts are especially focused on underserved rural communities, ensuring equitable access to high-speed internet and the tools necessary for individuals to succeed in a technology-driven workforce.

WorkLink is committed to fostering digital equity, ensuring that individuals and communities have the ability to access and safely utilize internet resources to participate fully in society and the economy. Digital equity does not require identical technology use or paths for all individuals but instead seeks to provide equal access to resources for those who choose to use them.

To further support digital inclusion, SC Works Centers and partnering agencies offer a range of services:

- **Access to Technology:** SC Works Centers provide individuals with access to computers and high-speed internet, as well as assistance navigating digital resources.
- **Digital Literacy and Financial Workshops:** Free, bi-weekly workshops on digital and financial literacy are available to the public at the comprehensive center.
- **Career Path Development:** All WIOA participants engage in comprehensive career path planning, including assessments, career coaching, and guidance tailored to their goals and industry needs.
- **Information Sessions with Technical Colleges:** Representatives from local technical colleges visit SC Works Centers and Adult Education programs to inform participants about in-demand careers and available training options.
- **Financial Aid and Funding Support:** Case managers assist participants in navigating financial aid applications, identifying grants, leveraging partner services, and utilizing WIOA funding to cover training and personal costs.
- **Training Provider Collaboration:** WorkLink’s WIOA Program Manager maintains relationships with local training providers to streamline communication and ensure participants receive the support needed to succeed.
- **Career Pathway Progression:** Case managers work closely with participants to map out and achieve the next steps in their career pathways upon completing training programs.
- **Digital Literacy Goals included in Participant Planning:** For participants, case managers incorporate digital equity goals into Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) and Individual Service Strategies (ISS), addressing specific needs such as broadband access and digital skills upgrades to support their success in the technology workforce.

By integrating digital literacy and broadband access into its services, WorkLink aims to create a tech-savvy workforce that meets the demands of the modern economy. These initiatives align with WIOA’s goals of increasing access to education and training while advancing South Carolina’s technology workforce competitiveness.

- Improving strategic outreach and service delivery to employers to effectively match job seekers with employers;

STRATEGIC OUTREACH AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO EMPLOYERS

WorkLink is committed to improving strategic outreach and service delivery to employers, aiming to effectively match job seekers with employment opportunities. Local data has revealed a strong interest in healthcare training, with seven out of eight youth participants in the previous WIOA program year selecting healthcare as their career pathway. One participant chose advanced manufacturing, reflecting the diverse training needs identified through the youth’s Individual Service Strategy (ISS). As part of this process, WorkLink mandates work-based learning as a key service, ensuring youth receive paid work experience that aligns with their chosen career pathway while gaining transferable skills.

To strengthen its outreach to local employers, WorkLink employs several strategies:

- **Local Outreach:** WorkLink staff engage with local employers through site visits, participation in business organizations such as chambers of commerce, economic development activities, and local chapters of the Society for Human Resource Management. These interactions allow for informative conversations about SC Works services and help build relationships with employers.
- **Job Fairs and Hiring Events:** WorkLink places significant emphasis on job fairs and hiring events, offering employers a platform to connect with job seekers. These events have proven to be effective outreach tools, encouraging previously unengaged employers to participate in workforce development initiatives.
- **Promotion of Training Opportunities:** WorkLink consistently promotes opportunities such as On-the-Job Training, Rapid Response, and Incumbent Worker Training, when funding permits, to help businesses upskill their current workforce and meet labor market demands.
- **Social Media Presence:** WorkLink maintains a professional LinkedIn profile and has developed a strong Facebook following to engage with both employers and job seekers. These platforms are used to promote job fairs, hiring events, resource fairs, and social services, with content frequently shared within the community.

Additionally, the Integrated Business Services Team (IBST) plays a key role in connecting employers with job seekers. By collaborating with local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development agencies, the IBST organizes job fairs, virtual hiring events, and employer roundtables to address workforce needs. WorkLink tailors its outreach to specific industries, such as manufacturing and healthcare, organizing sector-focused hiring events that give employers direct access to qualified candidates.

Through these efforts, WorkLink enhances its ability to match job seekers with suitable job opportunities, align with WIOA priorities, and foster stronger partnerships between workforce programs and local businesses.

- Increasing awareness of resources to mitigate obstacles to employment;

WorkLink will work to raise awareness of the supportive services available to help job seekers overcome barriers to employment. By collaborating with SC Works Centers and community partners, WorkLink ensures that individuals, including those facing challenges like disabilities or limited English proficiency, are aware of the resources available to them. Case managers work closely with individuals to identify their specific needs, such as transportation assistance, childcare support, housing, and mental health services.

INCREASE AWARENESS OF RESOURCES TO OVERCOME EMPLOYMENT OBSTACLES

In addition to offering resources for overcoming employment obstacles, WorkLink employs several key strategies to reach a wide audience and ensure access to necessary support:

- **Resource Directories:** Continue to review, develop, and maintain comprehensive resource directories that list available community resources for transportation, childcare, housing, mental health services, legal aid, and more. These can be made available both online and in print, ensuring easy access for job seekers.
- **Resource Corners:** Dedicated areas within the SC Works centers provide individuals with information, resources, and support services directly, including public transportation, childcare assistance, or referrals to legal aid services. Staff also assist in navigating these resources during one-on-one consultations.
- **Partnerships with Local Agencies:** Continue to collaborate with local agencies (e.g., housing, healthcare, mental health) to provide on-site support, such as direct consultations or regular service days where staff from these organizations visit the center to provide immediate assistance to clients.
- **Outreach Campaigns:** Develop targeted outreach flyers, emails, social media, and community events to promote available resources. This may include distributing materials about the services offered, as well as providing information on overcoming barriers like criminal backgrounds or limited education.
- **Webinars and Workshops:** Regularly offer workshops or webinars on topics that address obstacles to employment, such as resume building, overcoming criminal records, improving credit, managing childcare responsibilities while working, and accessing healthcare. These can be held in-person or virtually to maximize reach.
- **Case Manager Referrals:** Case managers are trained to discuss resources with clients during individual meetings.

They help clients identify specific barriers and directly refer them to appropriate community organizations or resources, ensuring that clients receive tailored support.

- **SC Works Welcome Packets:** Create and distribute "Job Seeker Resource Kits" that include helpful information and tools for overcoming common employment barriers. These kits include tips for applying for financial aid, legal resources for expungement, transportation options, and information on affordable childcare or housing programs.
- **Mobile Resource Center:** In areas where transportation may be a barrier to accessing services, the Career Coach, a mobile resource center provided through DEW, can be used to travel to underserved communities. The Career Coach provides job search assistance, workshops, and access to resources like internet and job readiness materials.
- **Collaboration with Local Employers:** The IBST team will work with local employers to identify potential employment barriers that can be addressed jointly. For example, employers could offer incentives like transportation stipends, childcare support, or flexible work hours for job seekers who face specific obstacles.
- **Success Stories and Peer Mentoring:** Highlight success stories from individuals who have overcome employment obstacles and create networking opportunities where those who have successfully navigated challenges can share their experiences and provide guidance to others.

- Implementing a multifaceted outreach strategy to rural and underserved communities to ensure that individuals living in these rural areas of South Carolina have access to employment and training resources;

OUTREACH STRATEGY TO RURAL AND UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

WorkLink recognizes that expanding access to employment and training resources for individuals in rural and underserved communities across the area is crucial. To address the unique needs of these rural areas, WorkLink has developed a multifaceted outreach strategy that combines both in-person and digital initiatives, ensuring that individuals in remote locations have access to the support they need.

- **Workshops and Hiring Events:** WorkLink hosts both virtual and in-person workshops, resource fairs, and hiring events for adults and youth, strategically held in locations that are accessible by public transit and in smaller rural venues. These events allow job seekers in rural areas to connect with employers, receive training, and access employment resources without having to travel long distances.
- **Access Points:** In collaboration with local libraries, community centers, and partner agencies, WorkLink provides access points in rural areas where individuals can access high-speed internet. These points enable residents to access online job boards, virtual workshops, and participate in remote hiring events, ensuring that technology is not a barrier to employment.
- **Onsite Support:** WorkLink partners with the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) to offer onsite support in rural communities. The SCDEW Rural Outreach Coordinator's office is located at the SC Works Comprehensive Center, and event flyers and program information are shared in the Resource Room. The Rural Connections events, targeted at job seekers with barriers to employment such as transportation challenges, bring job fairs and employer networking opportunities directly to rural communities, ensuring that individuals can access these events without needing to commute long distances.
- **Social Media and Online Presence:** To reach individuals who may have difficulty visiting physical locations, WorkLink utilizes social media platforms, such as LinkedIn and Facebook, to share information on job opportunities, training programs, and career events. The SC Works website is also a key tool for promoting available resources and services, making them accessible to a broader audience.

- Identifying resources and funding opportunities to provide services to jobseekers;

RESOURCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB SEEKERS

WorkLink actively seeks a variety of funding opportunities and resources to enhance its services for job seekers. This includes pursuing federal and state grants for workforce development, training, and supportive services like transportation and childcare. WorkLink also seeks to build strong partnerships with local businesses, non-profits, educational institutions, and government agencies, leveraging their resources and funding opportunities to support job

seeker needs and initiatives. WorkLink is working on activating its 501(C)3 which will allow the organization to actively pursue grants from private foundations and philanthropic organizations, as well as non-traditional funding sources like community fundraising to support workforce development initiatives.

Through public-private partnerships, donations, and in-kind contributions, WorkLink is able to maximize resources to better serve job seekers, expand training opportunities, and improve the overall impact of our workforce development efforts.

Some strategies that WorkLink has adopted are as follows:

- **Quarterly Planning Sessions:** Conducting quarterly planning sessions with partner agencies and business service team members to better serve mutual customers.
- **Rural Community Services:** Providing services at various sites as needed to reach rural communities, specifically through Rapid Response and job fairs.
- **Financial Aid and Funding Guidance:** Case managers review financial aid application processes, available grants, partner services, and WIOA funding options with participants to help them identify sources to cover training and personal costs while attending training.
- **Seeking Grants and Partnerships:** At the WorkLink Board staff level, we continuously seek appropriate grants and supportive community partner opportunities to expand access to training opportunities.

- Communicating opportunities to the workforce system; and

COMMUNICATING OPPORTUNITIES

Effective communication of opportunities within the workforce system is a WorkLink priority. Opportunities are communicated in a variety of ways through various platforms, including the SC Works website, social media, and email newsletters, to keep job seekers and employers informed about relevant events, resources, and programs.

WorkLink collaborates with partner agencies to ensure that stakeholders are aware of new initiatives and resources. For example, the Integrated Business Service Team (IBST) regularly notifies local businesses about incumbent worker training programs and job fairs that align with their hiring needs. Further, partners are engaged in how to better serve mutual customers through co-enrollment.

This coordinated communication strategy ensures that employers, job seekers, and partner agencies are all informed and can take full advantage of the services and opportunities available within the workforce system.

- Identifying and strategically targeting training providers in the state that are offering programs in the infrastructure, energy, and advanced manufacturing sectors.

TRAINING PROVIDERS IN INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY, & ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

WorkLink collaborates with partners such as Tri-County Technical College (TCTC) to provide targeted training opportunities that lead to occupations in renewable energy, automotive manufacturing, and industrial engineering, ensuring job seekers are prepared for the specific opportunities in these high-growth areas. This targeted approach ensures that workforce development efforts are aligned with South Carolina's economic priorities and future job market demands. Further, WorkLink will evaluate and adopt other eligible training providers from across South Carolina that offer programs in the infrastructure, energy, and advanced manufacturing sectors.

By strategically focusing on these key industries, WorkLink ensures that job seekers are equipped with the specialized skills required for high-demand roles in the state's growing economy. The WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is used to pinpoint approved training providers offering certifications and programs in these sectors. WorkLink will work

closely with these providers to ensure their programs align with regional workforce needs and meet the requirements for Workforce Development Board (WDB) approval.

5. A description of how the LWDB will work with core, required, and other partners, including economic development, to implement the strategies and services discussed in Question 3.

COORDINATION WITH SC WORKS PARTNERS TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board (WDB) actively collaborates with core, required, and other partners, including economic development organizations, to implement the workforce strategies discussed in the previous sections. The Board's membership includes representatives from these key partners, ensuring a broad perspective and alignment with the region's workforce development goals. Each member of the Board is assigned to a specific strategic plan topic, which focuses on priority populations, SC Works operations, and youth services. These topics are informed by the local and state plans, ensuring that the WorkLink WDB's initiatives align with the broader goals set by the State Workforce Development Board.

To ensure alignment and effective implementation, each committee within the WorkLink WDB works closely with WorkLink staff to develop strategic objectives that are consistent with the state-level workforce strategies. This collaboration ensures that regional priorities, such as creating strong talent pipelines and providing workforce solutions that address employer needs, are met in a coordinated way. The ongoing involvement of key partners, including economic development agencies like Upstate Alliance and Apprenticeship Carolina, enhances the development of these strategies by integrating economic development objectives and workforce needs.

WorkLink's Integrated Business Services Team (IBST), in particular, plays a critical role in fostering these partnerships. IBST staff coordinate business and industry outreach efforts, planning hiring events and job fairs, and sharing labor market insights with economic development organizations. This ensures that strategies to meet the needs of employers are not only developed but actively supported by economic development partners.

Further, WorkLink staff and partners work together to adapt processes and procedures that foster the implementation of appropriate workforce strategies. Feedback mechanisms are embedded into the process through quarterly partner and staff meetings. These meetings allow all stakeholders to provide input, share progress, and adjust strategies as necessary. By maintaining open communication and collaboration, WorkLink and its partners ensure that workforce development efforts remain flexible, responsive, and aligned with the ever-evolving demands of the regional economy.

Through these efforts, WorkLink aims to create a comprehensive and coordinated approach to workforce development, integrating core and required partners with economic development strategies to effectively serve both employers and job seekers. This collaborative model ensures that WorkLink's workforce development initiatives are aligned with the needs of the community, businesses, and the broader state workforce system.

6. A description of the Adult, DW, and Youth assessment processes of soft-skills and subsequent provision of soft-skills training, including descriptions of formal tools or resources utilized.

ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SKILLS AND TRAINING

In alignment with the State Plan, WorkLink's approach to assessment is continuous and dynamic, not limited to a single event. This comprehensive assessment includes a combination of interviews, career guidance assessments, basic skills assessments, observations, and specifically focused soft skills evaluations. These methods allow staff to understand the individual's progress and specific needs.

Assessment begins at enrollment and focuses on understanding the participant's baseline soft skills. This initial assessment informs the design of a training and development plan tailored to address the specific needs of each Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Process for Soft Skills

- **SCWOS Comprehensive Objective Assessment Summary:** This tool is used to evaluate the customer's academic and occupational skill levels, as well as identify service needs and strengths. This information forms the foundation for creating an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) tailored to each participant's needs.
- **TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education):** Administered pre- and post-assessment to measure progress in reading and math skills, particularly for those with limited formal education or who are high school dropouts.
- **Career One-Stop Interest and Skills Assessments:** Tools like the Career One-Stop Interest Assessment, Skills Profiler, and O*Net My Skills My Future are used to understand the individual's interests and skill sets and match them with potential career paths.
- **O*Net Interest Profiles and Career Assessment Testing:** These help identify the individual's strengths in academic and employability skills.
- **Employability Training Workshops:** These workshops, available both in person and online, offer group and individualized training sessions focused on soft skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and workplace etiquette.

Youth Assessment Process for Soft Skills

Many youth entering the program have minimal experience or training in these critical areas. The initial assessment covers several soft skills, including:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Workplace appearance and initiative
- Communication skills and response to supervision
- Teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities
- Workplace culture and safety knowledge

Soft Skills Training for Youth

WorkLink offers the Career Smart Curriculum, which is locally developed and provides comprehensive soft skills training. This curriculum covers critical areas such as:

- **Financial Literacy:** Managing personal finances, budgeting, and saving.
- **Resume Writing:** Crafting professional resumes that highlight skills and experiences.
- **NIOSH Safety Training:** Workplace safety, including understanding and adhering to safety protocols.
- **Employability Skills:** Training in critical thinking, dressing for success, proper use of social media, work ethic, and workplace expectations.
- **Entrepreneurial Skills:** Basic skills for starting and managing a business.

Youth participants must complete the Career Smart classes as a prerequisite for hands-on Work Experience training. This process ensures that youth not only gain valuable real-life work experience but also refine the soft skills necessary to secure and maintain future employment. The combination of classroom learning and work-based learning creates a robust pipeline for workforce development.

WorkLink adapted the Career Smart classes to be offered virtually, ensuring continuity of services for youth participants. This shift to online learning allowed the program to maintain engagement and provide necessary skills training during challenging times.

In conclusion, WorkLink's assessment processes for both adults, dislocated workers, and youth are designed to be ongoing and adaptable to individual needs. Through a combination of comprehensive assessments and targeted soft skills training, WorkLink is able to equip participants with the necessary tools to succeed in the workforce and sustain long-term employment.

7. A description of the strategies and services for employers that may include the implementation of initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs, On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers and support the local board's strategic vision and goals.

EMPLOYER SERVICES STRATEGIES

WorkLink's Employer Services Strategy supports regional employers by offering tailored services that align with workforce needs and the board's strategic goals.

The Integrated Business Services Team (IBST) is a central component of the WIOA service delivery model, offering tailored services to businesses, business associations, and relevant organizations. The IBST's services help businesses streamline hiring processes, upskill their workforce, and improve employee retention. Key IBST offerings include:

- **Workforce Education and Labor Market Information:** Providing businesses with valuable insights into local labor markets and available training programs.
- **Workforce Issue Consultation:** Offering guidance on labor market statistics, unemployment insurance, and tax incentives.
- **Layoff Aversion and Outplacement Services:** Helping businesses mitigate workforce disruptions by developing re-employment plans and connecting with Dislocated Worker agencies for rapid response services.
- **Human Resource Consultation:** Offering businesses support in developing job descriptions, conducting employee orientations, and analyzing turnover rates.

Business Service Liaison & Partnerships

The Business Service Liaison plays a pivotal role in coordinating services for employers. Through partnerships with organizations such as local Chambers of Commerce, the Department of Employment and Workforce, and the Society of Human Resource Management, WorkLink fosters strong relationships that streamline efforts and reduce duplicative outreach. This ensures efficient use of resources and improves engagement with employers. Additionally, a Business Service Integration Team holds quarterly meetings to align services, share insights, and address employer needs effectively, ensuring a responsive workforce system.

Training Programs:

- **Soft Skills Development:** Ensuring that job seekers gain critical soft skills training, preparing them to succeed in the workplace.
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** OJT programs help employers train eligible participants while receiving wage reimbursements (up to 50%, with potential increases to 75% based on specific factors). This reduces the financial burden on employers and ensures that job seekers gain valuable work experience.
- **Work Experience:** Supporting work-based learning for youth, adults, and dislocated workers, including career assessments and on-the-job training (OJT), to ensure participants are prepared for career advancement.
- **Transitional Jobs & Support:** Transitional jobs help individuals with barriers to employment gain work experience. These time-limited, subsidized positions support individuals in developing a work history and preparing for unsubsidized employment. Successful completion of these programs equips participants with skills and experience for future job opportunities.
- **Registered Apprenticeship (RA):** RA programs provide a structured training environment that benefits both employers and participants. Employers can use WIOA funding to support participants in these programs, making them a valuable tool for developing skilled workers.
- **Retention Services:** Helping businesses develop strategies to retain employees and ensure continued workforce development.

- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT): IWT programs focus on upskilling current employees, preventing layoffs, and increasing productivity. WorkLink allocates up to 20% of adult and dislocated worker funds to IWT programs, with employers required to match a portion of training costs based on their size.

Specialized Training:

- Career Pathways: WorkLink is involved in developing career pathways, particularly in healthcare and manufacturing, aligning educational programs with employer needs. Career pathways offer a clear sequence of education, training, and credentials that lead to career advancement.
- Sector-Based Strategies: These strategies engage businesses in creating educational programs that align with industry-specific needs. WorkLink actively participates in initiatives like the Upstate Manufacturing Network to address shared challenges in the sector, improve workforce culture, and promote career opportunities within the manufacturing industry.
- Developing career pathways and sector-based strategies to meet industry-specific demands, focusing on high-demand sectors like healthcare and manufacturing.

The Integrated Business Services Team (IBST) is a comprehensive, employer-focused strategy that connects businesses with a broad range of workforce development services. By offering customized recruiting, training, and retention services, the IBST plays a vital role in strengthening the regional workforce, supporting economic development, and aligning employer needs with job seeker skills. Through targeted initiatives like career pathways, sector-based strategies, and work-based learning, WorkLink continues to support both businesses and individuals, driving long-term workforce success.

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

REGIONAL COORDINATION EFFORTS

Regional Coordination Efforts

WorkLink coordinates workforce and economic development activities through regional partnerships and initiatives. Key efforts include:

- **Regional Recruitment of Entry-Level Applicants:** The group is developing a region-wide strategy to increase the draw of entry-level applicants from the four Local Workforce Development Areas, making it more responsive to employer demand. WorkLink has also participated in and supported region-wide job fairs.
- **Regional Recruitment of OJT Job Orders:** Another project focuses on developing a region-wide strategy to attract qualified entry-level On-the-Job Training (OJT) applicants and improve the time it takes to fill OJT vacancies. Cooperative agreements may be executed to enable local areas to invest in specific recruitment efforts and targeted OJT openings.
- **Entrepreneurial Skills Training:** WorkLink recognizes the importance of offering programs designed to equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge and tools they need to start and grow their businesses. We are exploring opportunities in partnering with local business, community colleges, and economic development agencies to offer workshops and training programs that cover essential entrepreneurial skills such as business planning, financial management, marketing, and legal considerations.
- **Microenterprise Services:** WorkLink supports microenterprises by providing access to high-speed internet, soft skill training workshops, conference room space, and networking opportunities. We collaborate with local financial institutions and business development organizations to ensure that microenterprises have the financial and advisory support necessary to thrive.
- **Support for Entrepreneurial and Microenterprise Growth:** WorkLink connects individuals to small business resources such as the Business OneStop website, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), and Tri-County Entrepreneurial Development Corp. Additionally, WorkLink integrates entrepreneurial services into youth programs and offers related classes for interested participants.

- **Economic Development Partnerships:** Collaborating with regional economic development agencies such as Anderson County Economic Development, Alliance Pickens, and Oconee Economic Alliance to plan events, such as job fairs, and provide support for businesses like BorgWarner and Michelin.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

WorkLink actively engages with our Economic Development entities on an ongoing basis through partnerships, collaborative meetings, or through Board interaction. Our partnerships with Alliance Pickens, Anderson County Economic Development, Oconee Economic Development, and ReadySC, have varying levels of involvement based on the project or the level of activity within our region.

- **Integration with Economic Development:** Economic development officials are part of WorkLink’s Board, promoting collaboration between workforce and economic development efforts to address labor needs and encourage business expansion.
- **Labor Market Data Support:** WorkLink provides labor market data to inform economic planning and attract new businesses by demonstrating the region's qualified workforce.
- **Entrepreneurial and Microenterprise Training:** WorkLink partners with organizations like SBDCs and local technical colleges to offer training and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs, including business plan development and financial support.
- **Strategic Collaboration:** WorkLink participates in planning sessions with economic development partners to create workforce pipelines, bridge skill gaps, and align workforce capabilities with employer needs.
- **Networking and Events:** WorkLink actively participates in economic development events, strengthening relationships with business leaders and educational institutions to support regional economic vitality.

ENTREPRENUERIAL AND MICROENTERPRISE SERVICES

The WorkLink area has identified several resources to support small business startups, including the Business OneStop website (<https://scbos.sc.gov/>), the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and the Tri-County Entrepreneurial Development Corp. These organizations offer free seminars and mentoring programs to individuals interested in launching their own businesses.

Microenterprise and entrepreneurial services are typically associated with positions in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical industry cluster, which is one of the key sectors the Board invests WIOA training funds in. Participants interested in entrepreneurial training are supported through this industry cluster.

Youth services also include entrepreneurial opportunities. Youth involved in Career Smart soft skills classes are introduced to entrepreneurial concepts. For those showing further interest, referrals are made to entrepreneurial classes at Tri-County Technical College or to the SBDC in Oconee County, where additional resources and support are available.

Section IV: Program Design and Evaluation

1. A description of the SC Works delivery system in the local area, including:

SC WORKS CENTER INTAKE PROCESS

If a customer is interested in SC Works Center services or WIOA specifically, they may contact staff to find out more about how to access those services. In some instances, a customer may be referred by another partner to a particular service. Generally, all customers are referred to the SC Works Orientation to learn more about the services for which they may qualify.

Upon entering the SC Works Centers, the customer will check in at the greeter kiosk. They will fill out a basic questionnaire about who they are, the services they need, and how they may be contacted for follow-up. This initial check-in process helps ensure that each customer receives personalized assistance tailored to their specific needs.

The customer is allowed to use the computers for various activities, including job searches, accessing unemployment insurance, or engaging in training-related activities. These resources are available to help customers improve their employment prospects and gain new skills. If the customer has a scheduled appointment, they will be directed to their appointment contact person who will provide further assistance.

WIOA ADULT/DW PROGRAM INTAKE PROCESS

Customers interested in SC Works Center services or WIOA specifically can schedule an orientation through one-on-one, group, or conference call sessions. After orientation, customers must establish a SCWOS account, complete the virtual resume via the background wizard, and undertake the O*NET Interest Profiler assessment. They should also gather personal information for eligibility determination.

Upon entering the SC Works Centers, customers check in at the greeter kiosk and fill out a basic questionnaire about their needs and contact information. They can use the computers for job search, unemployment insurance, or training-related activities, or they will be directed to their appointment contact person.

In-person appointments with career coaches are then scheduled to complete the WIOA application. Once the application and documentation are finalized, the customer enters the case management phase, beginning with an assessment interview and the creation of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP focuses on employment-related services, including training, supportive services, and soft skills development, tailored to the customer's needs based on assessments and career counseling.

Upon completion of services, the customer exits the program and enters a twelve-month follow-up period to document their success, case management effectiveness, and return on investment.

- How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers;

METHODS FOR ENSURING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

WorkLink is committed to ensuring the quality of services available to citizens in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties. To achieve this, we employ the following strategies to ensure our Service Providers deliver high-quality services:

- **Formal Annual Monitoring:** WorkLink staff conducts annual monitoring to review processes and procedures in accordance with federal statutes and regulations, state policies, local workforce development area instructions, and contract requirements. For the One Stop Operator, the State Workforce Development Board One Stop Certification Standards are used to determine compliance. During annual monitoring, WorkLink staff identifies new and best practices and encourages their adoption in formal monitoring reports.

- **Informal Ongoing Monitoring:** WorkLink staff also conducts informal ongoing monitoring through desktop reviews and periodic walk-throughs of the Centers, as well as visits with program staff. This approach encourages innovation and the sharing of ideas on how to better serve our customers.
- **Staff Training:** The SC Works Center Operator has established a training schedule that allows staff from across the WorkLink region to gather, share ideas, refresh on existing policies, and receive training on new and upcoming practices and procedures.
- **Encouraging Innovation:** Staff are encouraged to bring innovative ideas to their supervisors for consideration and potential implementation.

- How the local board will target rural communities, including facilitating increased access to services provided through the SC Works delivery system through the use of technology and other means;

As described in 20 CFR 678.305(d)(3), 34 CFR 361.305(d)(3), and 34 CFR 463.305(d)(3), WIOA allows for services to be provided remotely within a reasonable time, by phone, or through a real-time Web-based communication by a program staff member who can provide program information or services, including career services, to the customer.

MOVING FORWARD WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES

WorkLink has historically tried to remove the walls from the Centers and travel to centrally located partners within rural communities. We piloted OneStop On-the-Go for many years, but as resources have dwindled so has our ability to be mobile in serving our communities. We house the Rural Outreach Coordinator in our Clemson SC Works Comprehensive Center.

To maintain access for our smaller towns and cities, such as Belton, Honea Path, Starr, Iva, Westminster, West Union, Pumpkintown, and others, we have strategically located our Comprehensive Center at the geographic center of our region rather than in the largest population center. Additionally, we have placed all of our satellite centers in the most populous city in each county.

We have partnered with Adult Education to provide SC Works services to the Belton-Honea Path, Powdersville, and Pelzer areas as needed. We also establish rapid response transition centers at local employers when necessary. Furthermore, we organize job fairs in remote communities to inform job seekers about the services available at our centers and to provide opportunities to speak with employers about job openings.

For example, we brought the SC DEW Bus to a job and resource fair held at the Watkins Community Center in Honea Path to assist employees impacted by the Medline shutdown.

Some of the technology that we have locally adopted include:

- **WorkLink Website:** WorkLink hosts a local website that provides in-depth information about our services and guides visitors on how to access these services.
- **Conference Call-in Options:** To accommodate Board members busy schedules and increase meeting attendance, WorkLink offers conference call-in options for all board and committee meetings for those unable to attend in person.
- **Social Media Platforms:** Social media has transformed the way we reach the community. Advertising events and activities at the SC Works Centers is now more cost-effective, with a high return on investment.
- **Access Points:** WorkLink developed a page within our website that serves as an access point for job seekers, allowing them to access services from any partner location or internet-enabled computer.

Some positive changes that technology allowed for remote access are as follows:

- **Conference Call/Webinars** – Having the conference call-in platform for our Board members made it easy to transition our services to conference call/webinars. Workshops and Orientations to the SC Works Centers has offered us an opportunity to reach these rural communities in ways that we haven't been able to before. Eligibility Determinations have also been successful through webinars and conference calls. The camera feature allows us to

verify a person's identity with their driver's license and social security card via the web conference. We have ensured that (to the best of our ability) that the conferences are private by requiring a passcode to enter.

- **Smartphones** – In addition to the conference calling feature, we have also been able to adapt many of our case management procedures to technology-based services. Those that may not have transportation can still receive photos through their smartphone, and in most cases, find a way to print, sign, and return those documents via their phone.
- **Adobe Documents/Docusign**- We have been able to utilize Adobe and Docusign software for obtaining secure signatures.
- **21st Century Workplace Skills** – Our Service Provider saw a need to provide soft skills in a remote access friendly way. They have purchased the software for 21st Century Workplace Skills which will allow participants to access soft skills remotely through learning modules. The case managers will be able to follow up with the participants after reviewing their progress.

WorkLink also understands the challenges that rural communities face, such as lack of internet access, which may be beyond our immediate reach and technological capabilities. In these instances, we have identified hotspots that customers can use to access our services in remote communities. We have established access points in small branches of local libraries, community centers, and partner agencies in rural areas. These access points provide high-speed internet access to our online job boards, email, and virtual workshops and hiring events.

We recognize that the need for broadband access across our state is a significant issue that we cannot address locally alone. However, we fully support our state in their efforts to expand broadband access to all rural communities.

- How entities within the SC Works delivery system, including center operators and partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities; and

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The WorkLink Area SC Works Centers are strategically located throughout the region, ensuring accessibility via public transit routes. These centers are complemented by partner agencies offering workforce services at additional locations. All SC Works and satellite locations are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. Achieving compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Equal Opportunity provisions of WIOA is a priority, facilitated by continuous communication, collaboration, and cooperation among all partners.

SC Works and its partners are committed to ensuring compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. These efforts aim to guarantee equitable access to facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for all individuals, including those with disabilities. Compliance is overseen by a designated Equal Opportunity (EO) and ADA Compliance Officer, who conducts regular monitoring, evaluates demographic data to improve outreach and representation, and collaborates with the Priority Population Committee to enhance accommodations and accessibility.

SC Works facilities are designed to meet ADA standards, featuring ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, and designated parking. They are also equipped with assistive technologies, such as adjustable desks, large screen monitors, and scanning/reading software, to support individuals with diverse needs. Programmatic accessibility is emphasized through the provision of materials in accessible formats like braille, large print, and screen-reader-compatible digital content, as well as the availability of sign language interpreters, real-time captioning, and auxiliary aids. To further promote inclusion, websites and digital platforms adhere to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), ensuring accessibility for all users, while assistive technologies like screen readers and speech recognition tools are actively supported.

Staff receive ongoing training to serve individuals with disabilities effectively, focusing on the proper use of assistive technologies, inclusive language, and addressing reasonable accommodation requests. Policies on confidentiality and nondiscrimination are distributed, and staff are trained to uphold privacy and security standards for personal data. Outreach efforts include materials that clearly communicate Equal Opportunity (EO) and ADA compliance, alongside success stories that highlight the inclusivity and positive impact of SC Works Centers. Weekly public orientation sessions introduce WIOA services, emphasizing accessibility for all participants.

To maintain high standards of accessibility and equity, SC Works employs robust feedback mechanisms and conducts regular audits of facilities, programs, and services. These reviews assess key aspects such as parking, doorways, signage, auxiliary aids, wheelchair access, and TTY services. Collaboration with local organizations, libraries, and government services further strengthens outreach and recruitment efforts, ensuring diverse populations benefit from available programs. By integrating these comprehensive practices, SC Works fosters an inclusive, customer-focused environment that upholds the dignity and rights of all individuals, enabling their success and participation in the workforce.

- Identification of the roles and resource contributions of the SC Works partners

PARTNER ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS

SC Works Center partners share a mission in serving customers through employment and training services. Each of these partners plays a vital role in the system, while attempting to avoid duplication of efforts. The partners seen below have distinct roles and each contributes to the SC Works system as follows (Table 11):

Table 11: WorkLink SC Works Center Partner Roles

Funding	Program Administrator	Resource Contributions
Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs	WorkLink Workforce Development Board	Oversight, cash payment
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs	Adult Education Centers: Anderson 1&2, Anderson 3,4&5, Easley, Seneca	TABE and WIN testing and Proctoring; Cash Payment
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities	SC Vocational Rehabilitation	Brochures, Referrals as appropriate, Cash Payments
Post-Secondary Education Programs (Perkins)	Tri-County Technical College	Reduction in SC Works Satellite Center costs
Community Services Block Grant Employment and Training Activities	SHARE	Access Point location
Native American Programs	Indian Development Council	Brochures and referrals as appropriate
HUD Employment and Training Activities	Housing Authority of Easley	Referrals as appropriate
Job Corps Programs	Dynamic Educational Systems, Inc	Brochures, referrals as appropriate
Veterans Employment and Training Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs	Telamon	Brochures, referrals as appropriate
Senior Community Service Employment Programs	AARP, Goodwill	Work experience participants to serve in the resource rooms
Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
Unemployment Compensation Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
YouthBuild Programs	Partner being identified	Referrals as appropriate
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs	SC Department of Social Services	Facilitate workshops, Business Service Representative, cash payment
Second Chance Programs	Partner being identified	Referrals as appropriate

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

WorkLink’s SC Works Centers are dedicated to assisting all area job seekers and employers. Eckerd Workforce Services leverages technology to provide information and basic job-seeking and career planning assistance to the public in a cost-effective manner. While job seekers are encouraged to help themselves, staff are always available to answer questions and provide support.

The following types of services are available in the WorkLink local area:

BASIC CAREER SERVICES

- **Orientation to the SC Works System** - This orientation informs individuals of the full array of services available at the Center, including all partner services conducted on-site and other pertinent resources to ensure a successful return to employment. It also includes an overview of the processes and procedures for participating in the WorkLink WIOA program.
- **Referrals to partner programs** – SC Works staff refer individuals to partner agencies to determine whether their services will meet the individuals' needs.
- **Initial assessments** – Assessments are used to identify skills, strengths, deficiencies, and attitudes relating to vocational training, basic education, and employment. They may be used for career discovery and specific job applications.
- **Labor exchange services** - Staff-assisted labor exchange services include job search assistance, job development assistance, and job referrals. These services are conducted one-on-one or in small groups.

INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES

In-Depth Assessment: A thorough assessment of a participant should identify whether they have:

- Adequate basic education, skills, and work background for their choice of WIOA services or employment opportunities.
- The required occupational tasks and any skills they must develop to achieve their employment goals.
- Realistic job-seeking skills and the work maturity (attitude) to get and keep a job.
- Sources of additional support needed for success and the agencies that can provide this support.

Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP): The IEP is developed with the participant based on the results of the comprehensive assessment. The IEP shall:

- Identify all educational and employment goals to be achieved.
- Describe the training activities and appropriate services the Adult or Dislocated Workers will receive to achieve those goals and overcome existing barriers.
- Include objectives and planned outcomes, specifying who, what, when, where, and how.
- Detail non-WIOA funded services received during participation in WIOA, marked as partner-funded services (e.g., Pell Grant).

Counseling: Adults (18 and older) and Dislocated Workers who cannot find a suitable job may participate in one-on-one career counseling sessions. Enhanced, individualized career services offered by SC Works Center partners are available to those who qualify. These services assist individuals with barriers to getting and keeping a job.

Short-Term Skills Upgrading: Workshops, job clubs, short-term skills upgrading, GED preparation, and work experience assignments may be part of the individualized career services offered through the Centers. Additional services may include job readiness training, literacy activities (including English language training), and customized training.

Follow-Up Services: Appropriate follow-up services will be conducted for a minimum of 12 months following the participant's first date of employment. These services help participants maintain employment and provide workplace information and tips for success. Follow-up services also maintain a continuing link between the participant and the workforce system, assisting with other needs such as employer benefits, health insurance, and financial literacy and budgeting assistance.

TRAINING SERVICES

Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. These services may include:

- Occupational skills training
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Registered apprenticeships, which incorporate both OJT and classroom training
- Incumbent worker training
- Pre-apprenticeship training
- Workplace training with related instruction
- Training programs operated by the private sector
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training
- Transitional jobs

Training services are available for individuals who, after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and case management, are determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or higher wages from previous employment through career services alone. The participant must be determined to need training services and possess the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program.

3. A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

RAPID RESPONSE

Rapid Response Services, as mandated by DOL, are services delivered to businesses and employees of companies that are experiencing downsizing through layoffs or closure and may have also been impacted by a Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification (WARN) issued by the State. The Department of Employment and Workforce operates the Trade Adjustment Assistance program and coordinates the Rapid Response teams across the State of South Carolina. The Operator participates as necessary in Rapid Response outreach teams, arranging for WIOA Services to be presented on-site as requested by the Employer.

The WorkLink SC Works Centers provide the following Rapid Response Services to employees of businesses issuing WARN notices, in conjunction with the Department of Employment and Workforce and the local Economic Development offices in the WorkLink region. Services include:

- Developing a plan for averting layoff(s) with the affected business and/or in consultation with State or local economic development agencies, including private sector economic development entities;
- Reviewing affected workers' assistance needs;
- Coordinating and conducting Rapid Response workshop presentations to assist with career transition, job search tools and skills, résumé preparation, and interviewing techniques;
- Assessing re-employment prospects for workers in the WorkLink region;
- Providing information on available resources to meet the short and long-term needs of affected workers;
- Establishing a process of referring affected employees to the SC Works System;
- Developing recruitment/job development activities including job fairs, positive recruitments, job lead development, and general recruitment notifications;
- Providing Rapid Response Information Packets with appropriate information relating to potential dislocations, available adjustment assistance, and the effectiveness of Rapid Response strategies; and when appropriate, including information on TAA program; and
- Developing a business visitation program that improves service coordination, or a workforce transition committee comprised of representatives of the employer, the affected workers and the local community.

In the early part of 2020, the Local areas agreed to further integrate our services with the Rapid Response team at DEW by coordinating information and services for smaller layoff events (such as those that have fewer than 50 individuals that have been affected). We contact the employer, at the behest of the DEW Rapid Response team leader, to set up a Rapid Response time and coordinate information for the affected workers. DEW has provided videos and materials to communicate key pieces of information in a consistent manner, and local staff have been trained to answer questions or give the appropriate contact information for their questions to be answered. We are prepared to continue offering Rapid Response services as needed

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

YOUTH SERVICES

Out-of-School Youth (WIOA Program)

Palmetto Youth Connections provides case management to ensure all youth are successful. Case Management is a participant-centered, goal-oriented approach to the delivery of services designed to coordinate comprehensive educational, employment, career pathway goals, and plans to ensure that participants have access to necessary training and support services. The Fourteen (14) Youth Program Elements is the foundation of the youth comprehensive delivery of services. WorkLink Local Area focus on serving out-of-school youth ages 17-24 in our three counties (Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens) that are WIOA eligible. WorkLink does not currently offer In-School WIOA program services.

Serving Youth with Disabilities

The WorkLink WIOA Youth program allows the Board to make policies that benefit Youth with disabilities by giving youth a chance to self-identify as considering themselves to have a disability. Each youth who applies for WIOA services is asked to self-identify on the WIOA application in SCWOS during the eligibility determination process. Youth who self-identify can be identified by a youth characteristic report in the SCWOS system. This gives the Board information by which they can identify appropriate partnerships and service delivery methods to benefit youth with disabilities.

As a Board, WorkLink has sought to place Vocational Rehabilitation, a provider of services to those with disabilities, in key roles within the Board and its committee structure to influence services for Youth with disabilities. The Anderson Vocational Rehabilitation Area Manager serves on the Board as well as the chair of the WorkLink Priority Populations Committee while the Oconee/Pickens County Vocational Rehabilitation Area Manager serves as an active member of the Youth Committee. The Priority Population Committee has also sought to identify and include key partners that provide services to those with disabilities, such as AbleSC, on the committee, to educate the committee regarding services

available in the community for those with disabilities, and to procure relevant resources for the WIOA programs to ensure those with disabilities have access to the tools and resources they need to be successful.

Successful Model

As a result of Board leadership, the WorkLink Youth WIOA program has previously explored partnerships to serve out-of-school youth with disabilities, specifically Project Search. The Project Search partnership was with Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs to provide Work Experience in a specific setting such as a local hospital. The WorkLink Local Youth Program is open to partnerships that would provide WIOA services to youth with disabilities.

In-School Services (Partner based programs)

In addition to services for out-of-school youth with disabilities, school districts' have programs to serve their youth population that have disabilities. As an example of one of these programs, Vocational Rehabilitation has in-school counselors that work with students with disabilities throughout the school districts, providing support services, assistive technology, and career guidance.

5. A description of how the fourteen youth program elements are integrated in program design, including a description of partnerships which identifies the entities involved and the function(s) they are providing, and a description of formalized agreements in place for the provision of program elements not provided by the local program.

14 YOUTH ELEMENTS

Intensive case management must be provided to ensure all youth are successful. Services provide transitional support including occupational information, job search assistance, placement, job development, and follow-up (retention) services. Participants who are eligible for more structured occupational training will be provided information, and where appropriate, referred or assigned to the following:

1. Tutorial, Study Skills Training, Basic Skills:

Palmetto Youth Connections (PYC) uses Learning Express-Workforce Skills for 21st Century Success. Learning Express offers a multitude of items: GED test prep, practice for career certification exams, tutorials for computer skills and software, comprehensive job search platform, resume and letter writing, workplace and job skills improvement, and offers progressive lessons to improve skills. This approach offers constant immediate feedback reporting for each student to acknowledge his/her progress.

In the WorkLink area all Basic Skills Remediation, GED preparation, High School Diploma preparation, study skills, and tutoring support are provided and/or coordinated by Adult Education in all three counties. PYC focuses on small group or individualized instruction through direct instructor support and the use of interactive software that will accelerate outcomes. Academic deficiencies are addressed, and each online learning platform is documented to establish benchmarks for progress. The software ensures positive feedback, detailed administrative reporting, and proper documentation will be placed in the participant's hard file.

Students work independently and as a group in instructor-led activities. PYC provides ongoing, consistent support to maximize each student's effort and performance.

2. Alternative Secondary School or Drop-Out Recovery Services:

As a primary task, PYC assists enrolled youth to attain a level of academic proficiency needed to succeed in the workplace. The partnership with the Adult Education Centers in the three counties provides a unique opportunity for participants to receive GED preparation with a familiar community-based organization. Adult Education staff is highly trained to work with all levels of learners and resources to provide a quality academic program.

At the direction of the Local WDB and/or Youth Committee, formal collaboration with the Alternative Schools or Education Programs such as Title-One High Schools and At-Risk programs within the School Districts will be

developed when the option to serve in-school youth is a focus, with those most in need as the priority. Alternative Schools or Education Programs will continue to be a referral resource if a student should leave/drop-out of school. High School students will be targeted in the spring of each school year to increase WIOA awareness in the area to reach graduates who need one/one career coaching to move forward towards a Career Pathway.

3. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences, including Internships, Job Shadowing, On-the-Job Training or Pre-Apprenticeships:

PYC seeks Work Experience opportunities year-round for youth beginning with the PYC Career Coach input, evaluation, identification, preparation, and referral of youth who are in need of obtaining work experience before entering the workplace, and/or for work related to the identified Career Pathway. Hourly Stipends are paid to participants during work experience. Private, Public and Non-Profit Businesses offer these work experience opportunities. The PYC Workforce Specialist establishes these opportunities and seeks businesses that may offer the opportunity for full-time employment afterwards. Unpaid work experience will be a component of the program as needed, and/or as a teaching method for soft skills after verbal and written opportunities for improvement have been given to the participant.

At the direction of the Local WDB Youth Committee, PYC will pursue the establishment of Pre-apprenticeship programs, Internships and On-the-Job training. Job shadowing opportunities will be offered, as warranted by the chosen Career Pathway.

A Summer Work Experience component will be offered based on the need and funding available. Our Out-of-School Youth program model runs year-round and does not include a designated summer component. We do focus on these months for placement into work experience and/or employment as there is often an influx of part-time opportunities to gain necessary work experience prior to permanent job placement. Summer related services can also include GED/high school diploma classes, career assessment/exploration, work related soft skills training, and academic tutoring.

4. Occupational Skills Training:

Local area in-demand industry sectors or occupations drive occupational skills training and are a part of the Career Pathway process. PYC has developed a voucher system in which participants seeking short-term vocational training at the Technical College or through any approved training provider. All our participants will have the opportunity for career exploration and planning based on the desired outcome of self-sufficiency. Staff will work with each student to provide them with the necessary knowledge including labor market information to pursue post-secondary education programs and will assist students in linking with the local resources available to assist them in completing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications, Pell Grant application, and Lottery Tuition Assistance if they choose to pursue post-secondary education. PYC provides occupational skills training by using the structured guidance of the WorkLink Workforce Development Board approved high growth, high demand industries: Administrative and Support, Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Information Technology, and Construction. Youth participant training requests outside of the WDB approved in-demand industries must be verified to be in- demand, allowable, and submitted for final approval by WorkLink Executive Director.

Effort is placed on training for jobs requiring competencies to compete in the labor market. Emphasis is placed on training for jobs requiring skill and technology offering higher wages, benefits, and self-sufficiency.

5. Education Offered Concurrently with and in the Same Context as Workforce Preparation Activities and Training for a Specific Occupation or Occupational Cluster:

PYC provides education with concurrent workforce preparation within the local in demand career clusters (as funding allows). Palmetto Youth Connections provides/offers integrated education and training that includes workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills and hands on occupational skills training that are taught within the same timeframe and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway.

6. Leadership Development Opportunities, which may include such Activities as Positive Social Behavior and Civic Behaviors, Soft Skills, Decision-Making, and Team Work:

The Grantee provides leadership development activities for all youth.

Leadership Development may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities
- A tour of the regional technical college, which includes financial aid information and exploration of their resource center.
- A tour of other local post-secondary institutions, which includes financial aid information and exploration of their resource center.
- A presentation of military service opportunities by recruiters representing all branches.
- Peer centered activities including peer mentoring and tutoring
- Tutoring is provided through peer groups, such as the National Honor Society of the participant's school.

Citizenship training

- Attending a City or County Council meeting(s) within the participant's home community.
- Registering to vote.
- Workforce Skills Citizenship Component
- Budgeting of Resources

Employability Activities

- At least one tour of the local SC Works to explore the employability resources available to participants
- Positive social behaviors and training in decision-making, including determining priorities
- Presentation of local Drug and Alcohol Abuse programs
- Presentation of Pregnancy Prevention/Safe Sex programs
- Motivational/self-esteem programs
- Career Development programs
- Participation in the Youth Committee

All Leadership Development Opportunities are developed in conjunction with the county's appropriate agencies through linkages, and should be designed to be fun, informative, and motivational.

7. Supportive Services:

PYC understands many of the needs of the youth population. As these participants may not have adequate resources, we look to community linkages to assist each youth. One of the most important linkages we help put in place for every youth is knowledge of and registration with the SC Works Center where many community resources are co-located. This also brings other professionals into our network of support and opens the door for a variety of referral services. We feel that this strategy is the most effective in that it prevents duplication of services being provided in any area and helps to connect the youth to a system that can assist them in their adulthood.

Whether we have to coordinate a tour for our youth at a SC Works facility or if their staff can visit our classroom sites, we make certain every youth is offered opportunities to learn of all available SC Works resources. Certainly, every youth have access to and will be made aware of the 211 community resources system as a guide to services and learn how to access needed services.

PYC provides supportive services based on the funding available and the direction of the WDB Youth Committee. Examples of supportive services include, but are not limited to transportation reimbursement, childcare, purchase of work related clothing/equipment, work related pre-screenings, and emergency assistance.

Based on the WorkLink Workforce Development Board's Supportive Service Policy, childcare and transportation assistance is an allowable supportive service. However, childcare needs are coordinated first by the participant through referrals to other applicable agencies. The participant may request supportive services through the Grantee only after documenting that no other resources are available in the local area and that such supportive services are

required in order for eligible youth to participate in Title I WIOA. Supportive Services are identified and driven by the youth participants Individual Service Strategies (ISS) plan.

Note: A separate service from supportive services that is offered and allowed are incentives earned and designed around the youth participant's benchmarks and attainment of goals they have established on their ISS.

8. Adult Mentoring:

Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation.

PYC provides youth with adult mentoring through teachers, instructors, job shadowing or work site supervisors, tutors, and community organizations. An established partnership with a community-based agency that provides mentoring is a referral source for interested youth. The Grantee will be responsible for identifying and developing these relationships in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties. Mentors will develop a mentoring schedule and meet with their mentoring students at least two times per month to discuss goal setting, school issues, and problem solving.

Key to the success of any youth program or activity is an adult or adults within the community who are committed to serving as mentor(s) or role model(s) for all participating youth. Adult mentors should serve as role models and impart standards or expectations for these youth with respect to employment decisions, life skills, self-sufficiency and/or education achievement.

The adult mentors assigned to participants at the completion of the PYC program will have the responsibility of contacting participants approximately two (2) times per month (by telephone or in person) during the year. The role of the adult mentor is that of coach, advocate, counselor, and friend. The parent/guardian will be notified for participants under the age of 18, and/or when appropriate and together (participant, parent and mentor) will attempt to identify community resources that might provide assistance.

9. Follow-up (Retention) Services:

Follow-up (Retention) services are provided by PYC for each participant and may occur both during and after WIOA program participation. Every exited participant will have a 12-month follow-up completed, which reviews his/ her needs, status, and progress. PYC documents such services in the participants' files and SC Works Online Services. All youth must receive follow-up services.

Follow-up (Retention) services may be different for each individual based on his/her needs. Follow-up (retention) services, for not less than 12 months after completion of participation, include but are not limited to, the provision of on-going support, encouragement, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, and other non-financial support and personal assistance as necessary to enable these youth to obtain or retain employment, enroll and attend training, enlist in the military, maintain their grades in school or training, etc.

PYC will provide 12-month follow-up tracking on all participants who complete the year round training components. Quarterly progress reports will be obtained on all participants. These reports/documentation will be maintained in participant's files and SC Works Online Services.

10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling:

To include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual.

PYC provides comprehensive guidance counseling to youth that will take place in the form of follow-up calls, coordination of services, ISS updates, issuance of support services, mentor updates, etc.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, must be provided to each youth participant in any youth activity and tracked to ensure assistance is received and needs met.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling strategies should include, but are not limited to:

- Regularly scheduled contact with the participants (a minimum of bi-weekly).
- Support and intervention in time of crisis, assistance in development and implementation of a crisis plan.
- Intensive and personal follow-up activities which will be based upon the needs of the individual and documented in the case notes.
- Use of the ISS benchmarks to measure progress
- Provision of linkages, coordination of services, and resources that support the achievement of participants individualized goals (ISS).

The basic objective of this component is to monitor participant progress in fulfilling the ISS. Where progress is slow or in reverse, Career Coaches must be proactive in identifying the problem and solving it before the participant quits without achieving a recorded positive outcome. Referrals to outside agencies may be needed.

11. Financial Literacy Education:

PYC currently has a Financial Literacy component requirement through the Career Smart workshops offered to students as a pre-requisite to work experience training. Participants are exposed to financial management techniques that are building blocks to lifelong self-sufficiency and long-term financial planning. PYC will pursue other community resources, such as financial institutions, as appropriate, to provide financial guidance and education in the of form workshops/Seminars for youth in the service area.

PYC has numerous and free online financial literacy education and training resources available, for one/one and self-directed training options. Examples of these money smart resources are: fdic.gov and khanacademy.com. Other resources will be explored based on the differing learning styles of the youth served and the available funding.

12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training:

Palmetto Youth Connections currently has an entrepreneurial component requirement through the Career Smart Workshops offered to youth as a pre-requisite to work experience training.

PYC has numerous and free online entrepreneurial skills training resources available for one-on- one and self-directed training options to be offered to the youth in the service area. Examples of these resources are: BusinessMajors.about.com and myownbusiness.com. Other resources will be explored based on the differing learning styles of the youth served and the available funding. For students who are on the career pathway to own their own business, a certificate course option can be explored through corporate and community education and the local technical college.

13. Service that Provides Labor Market and Employment Information about Local In-Demand Industry Sectors or Occupations:

As a part of the Career Pathway process, each participant is required to review one/one with their career coach the local in-demand career clusters for informed decision making concerning the local job market. Other resources, such as Careeroutlook.us, can also be used to provide self – directed virtual career coaching and state by state career outlook information/comparisons.

14. Activities that Help Youth Prepare for and Transition to Post-Secondary Education:

As a part of the Career Pathway exploration process, the steps to enter post-secondary are reviewed. Students are encouraged to pursue post-secondary education as related to the career pathway. Participants have the support of a one/one career coach to assist with the following: scheduling tours, financial aid workshops through the institution, and follow up and support during the transition to college. Staff will also outreach to the post-secondary education institutions and career institutes to expose youth to the various options they have to continue their education.

PYC staff will also connect youth who are interested in the armed forces and Job Corps.

6. If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA § 3(5)(B), describe the LWDA’s policy that further defines how to determine if a youth is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. (If the LWDA continues to use TABE for determining youth basic skills deficiency, a local policy is not required.)

BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENCY POLICY FOR YOUTH SERVICES

The WorkLink area continues to use the TABE Assessment for determining youth basic skills deficiency. The WorkLink youth provider will follow the TABE Assessment Guidance provided initially by SCDEW at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and, if appropriate, will implement this guidance during other special circumstances.

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

COORDINATION WITH SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board has coordinated with secondary and post-secondary education programs in the following ways:

- **Adult Education Centers:** These centers house our Palmetto Youth Connections WIOA Youth program and host a member of the Adult/DW WIOA program staff on a weekly or permanent basis. This arrangement allows students participating in a GED program to have easy access to case managers.
- **Tri-County Technical College:** The college has provided facilities at a reduced rate for the two SC Works Satellite Centers in Seneca and Easley, offering mutual customers access to short-term training, job search services, and case managers in one place. Additionally, WorkLink and Tri-County Technical College coordinate strategies to serve mutual customers (job seekers and employers) through our annual job fair and by attending each other’s orientations to talk with customers.
- **Clemson SC Works Center:** This center offers WIN testing as a service provided by Adult Education of Pickens County.
- **Eligible Training Provider List:** This list is maintained locally and statewide to ensure that prospective students through the WIOA program gain access to quality, relevant programs of study. The Board votes to establish criteria for providers to serve the local area and determine the types of training in which we will invest funds.
- **Strategic Planning Sessions:** We periodically participate in or host strategic planning sessions to coordinate how we will serve local businesses through ReadySC or Corporate and Community Education.
- **WIOA Training Services:** These services cover training costs associated with WIOA-approved training programs. WIOA funds are coordinated with other resources, such as Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), federal Pell Grants, and partner funds.
- **Committee Representation:** Representatives from the Career and Development Centers of our local technical colleges, four-year universities, and adult education programs have been added as ad hoc members of the SC Works One Stop Operations Committee to facilitate dialogue on how to best serve mutual clients.

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

ADULT/DISLOCATED WORKER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board issued a Supportive Service Policy (WL Instruction Letter PY23-02) that details how we will coordinate supportive services such as transportation, childcare, and other supportive services under the Adult/Dislocated Worker funding.

Currently, supportive services are capped at no more than \$3,000 per customer per program year. We have also established criteria and limitations on who may receive supportive services.

Any active WIOA participant who is eligible for assistance, determined to need assistance, and participating in an approved WIOA activity may use the following supportive services as funding allows: transportation assistance, training support materials, medical or related assistance (necessary to gain employment or enter training), background checks, interpreter services, or legal aid services.

For those who are eligible for WIOA assistance, are low-income, determined to need assistance, and participating in a WIOA service, they may also access emergency or specialized assistance and childcare assistance, if funding is available and all other resources have been explored and/or exhausted.

Needs-Related payments are allowable for low-income participants who may have otherwise exhausted or are ineligible for Unemployment Insurance. Currently, Needs-Related Payments are not funded in our Service Provider's budget.

YOUTH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

If and when funding is available and allows, the Youth Services provider utilizes a portion of the WorkLink Workforce Development Board's funding for supportive services. These supportive services are used to coordinate transportation, childcare, and other supportive services (such as one-time emergency costs and training related materials). The youth participant must be determined in need and identified on the youth participant's Individualized Service Strategies (ISS).

9. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the SC Works delivery system.

COORDINATION WITH WAGNER-PEYSER SERVICES

Wagner-Peyser is a key partner in the SC Works Center, serving as the initial point of contact when a customer visits.

- **Resource Room:** Wagner-Peyser plays a critical role in the Resource Rooms by coordinating and facilitating access for job seekers to basic career services. They offer guidance to ensure customers are registered and their resumes are started in the SCWOS database. They also conduct initial informal assessments that many partners cannot provide prior to enrollment, provide information on partners and job listings, and offer basic information through workshops on soft skills. Additionally, they ensure that customers are referred to the appropriate partner for assistance.
- **Employment Services:** Wagner-Peyser plays a major role in employer services by providing job listings and coordinating job fairs. They also offer key outreach to employers regarding job openings and keep partners and customers updated on the latest labor market information.

Some strategies that we have used to maximize coordination, improve service delivery, and avoid duplication:

- **Center Management Team:** The SC Works Centers adopted a management team approach early on to oversee the Centers. Our Operator is responsible for ensuring the seamless coordination of these efforts but relies heavily on Wagner-Peyser to assist in the management of the Centers. Therefore, the DEW Regional Manager is part of our management team, providing input into Center decisions and leadership for DEW staff. The Center Management Team is focused on maximizing the coordination and improvement of service delivery.
- **Quarterly Meetings** - Our Operator meets with the SC Works Center Partners at least quarterly to map out ways to better serve our customers.
 - **Partner Meetings** - During these meetings each partner discusses referral processes, eligibility requirements and the like.
 - **Staff Meetings** - Further we have instituted quarterly training for SC Works Center staff that communicates partner program information and referral processes.
- **Business Service Team** - WorkLink has also developed a Business Services team that also meets quarterly to address employer needs in the community. This team comes together to collaborate and coordinate efforts in order to avoid duplication.

10. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II, including how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA requirements.

COORDINATION WITH ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board over the years has established relationships with our Adult Education providers in the WorkLink region. The Adult Education Centers have been designated in such a way that residents are referred to the closest Adult Education Center to them. The Adult Education Centers currently offer services for WorkKeys, TABE testing, Literacy, High School Diploma and equivalencies, and English as a Second language.

In the WorkLink area, Adult Education Centers house our Palmetto Youth Connections WIOA Youth program, as well as host a member of the Adult/DW WIOA program staff only a weekly if not permanent basis. This allows students participating in a GED program to have easy access to Career Coaches.

REVIEW OF ADULT EDUCATION RFP SUBMISSIONS

WorkLink has received instructions regarding the review process for Adult Education service providers. The review process will be facilitated through the SC Works One Stop Operations Committee or a designated ad hoc committee of the WorkLink WDB. The process will be as follows:

- WorkLink will receive notification from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce or the SC Department of Education, which will include:
 - Information on the upcoming Adult Education RFP and WIOA requirements for the WDB's review of proposals.
 - An outline of the proposal review process and timeline.
- The WorkLink Board staff will work with the WorkLink Board Chair to determine who will serve on the Adult Education RFP review committee.
- WorkLink WDB will receive Proposal Review Training via live webinar.
 - During the webinar, WorkLink WDB members will be provided with an overview of the proposals, instructions on how to review proposals, and how to use the proposal review rubric. WorkLink WDB members will have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar. A webinar playback option will be available.
 - WorkLink staff will provide training to the RFP ad hoc committee members of the Board if they do not attend the State Training.
- A point of contact will be available during the review process to answer questions and clarify any information.
- Any WorkLink WDB members with potential conflicts of interest will recuse themselves from the review process. For example, technical college representatives should not review any proposals if a technical college within their area submits a proposal.
- Upon receipt of all grant applications, SCDE - Office of Adult Education staff will screen all applications to determine eligibility to apply for funds. All eligible applications will be sorted and forwarded to the WorkLink area for distribution.
- Board members will use the rubric to review each proposal for alignment with their Local Plan.
- Once the review process is complete, all forms and other supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Office of Adult Education for consideration in the grant competition process.
- SCDE - Office of Adult Education staff will review WorkLink WDB comments and feedback on Local Plan and one-stop alignment and consider the results of the review.

11. A description of how the local board will coordinate with partner programs to conduct affirmative outreach to include members of groups protected by the Equal Opportunity provisions of WIOA § 188, including individuals of various religions, racial and ethnic backgrounds, individuals of limited English proficiency, individuals with disabilities, and individuals of different age groups and sexes.

OUTREACH: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Outreach materials are developed to be inclusive of all individuals. WorkLink strives to reflect the populations that live within our service area through program design and our outreach materials. We are currently sharing our outreach materials with various groups of partners and Board members to review for correct information, for appropriate

language, and for inclusivity. All outreach materials include the appropriate EO and ADA statements to insure customers recognize that we do not discriminate and we will provide appropriate accommodations. WorkLink also tries to share success stories that cover all demographics and backgrounds that commonly use the SC Works Centers.

Further WorkLink has an EO Opportunity and ADA Compliance Officer appointed for the region to handle complaints and EO related issues. The EO Officer conducts, or arranges for a qualified partner to conduct, an EO and ADA monitoring at least annually if not more frequently. Our EO Officer monitors and reports on the demographics of the population on the WIOA caseloads and in the region. Each program monitors and adjusts outreach to reflect the population as appropriate.

Section V: Operations and Compliance

1. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local SC Works system. This includes agreements between the LWDB or other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, such as the cross-training of staff, technical assistance, the use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION

2. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the chief elected official(s).

WORKLINK'S ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY

The Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary organization of local governments in the Northwest corner of South Carolina, serving a region that includes the counties of Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg.

Since its formation in 1965, the Council has served the dual mission of tackling issues of regional significance and providing services to local governments. Economic and community development, transportation, infrastructure development, resource management, aging services, and workforce development are all issues of regional importance in which ACOG takes an active role. At the local level, the agency's services include general administration, technical assistance, training, planning, grantsmanship, and information/mapping services.

As the administrative entity for the WorkLink Workforce Development Board, the ACOG provides the financial functions and activities of the Board and the human resources role for the staff to the Board. These functions and activities include:

- Budget preparation and administration
- Cost allocation
- Payroll/Fringe Benefits
- Grants and Contract administration
- Monitoring and Technical assistance to service providers
- Accounts Payable and Billing
- Property inventory, General accounting and fixed assets records
- Custody of funds
- Distribution of pass-through funds
- Cash flow
- Investments
- Debt administration and Risk management
- Internal and External financial reports, statutory and tax reports.

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

BOARD'S ROLE IN COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Each fall and winter, the WorkLink Board reviews the progress of the Service Provider to determine the adequacy of services delivered to participants and customers in the SC Works Centers and WIOA programs. Upon review, the Board will decide whether to extend the contract (unless the maximum number of extensions has been reached) or to release a request for proposals (RFP) to the public.

Once a determination has been made to release an RFP, a committee is formed to review how the services should be delivered and what the expected outcomes should be as a result of a grant award. The RFP is then released for approximately 6-8 weeks.

Upon the closing of the RFP process, all proposals are reviewed by the RFP committee, and a recommendation is made to the full Board. The Board votes to enter negotiations with the recommended service provider and then votes to accept the final budget upon completion of negotiations.

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS PROCUREMENT POLICY

WorkLink’s administrative entity, the SC Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG), issued a procurement policy that details how to insure that grants are awarded under a competitive process. WorkLink also follows this policy. Below is a snapshot of how WorkLink procures services in accordance with guidance from the ACOG. The acquisition of all services, equipment, or construction by the Council of Governments in an amount of \$15,000 or more will be acquired according to the following procedures.

Step	Action
1	The staff member will prepare and submit a completed check requisition to the WorkLink Executive Director in advance of the time goods or services are required. The cost of the item or service is indicated on the form.
2	The WorkLink Executive Director will determine that the item or service is authorized by the budget and that funds are available for purchase. The check requisition will be sent to the Finance Director of the COG for review and authorization by the COG Director, attaching necessary supporting information
3	The COG shall check to see if the item can be purchased on State contract.
4	The Staff member responsible for the project that will benefit from the purchase will prepare request for bids and specifications or request for proposals, list the potential vendors, and prepare proposed newspaper legal advertisement. The newspaper advertisement includes: 1) Brief scope of services; 2) Name and telephone number of the person to contact for a copy of the RFP or bid specifications; 3) Deadline for submitting proposal or bids; and 4) Statement that the Council of Governments does not discriminate.
5	The WorkLink Executive Director shall review and approve the requests for bids and specifications or RFP's, list of vendors and proposed newspaper advertisement.
6	The staff member shall send out RFP's or bid request to list of vendors and advertise in Anderson, Greenville, and Spartanburg papers. He/she shall allow a minimum of ten (10) calendar days for submission of proposals or bids.
Process for Bidding	
7	The staff member will hold public bid opening at time and place announced, and tabulate bids, and the WorkLink Executive Director will submit results to the WorkLink Committee that oversees the project that will benefit for selection of a successful bidder.
8	The WorkLink Executive Director shall award a contract to the vendor most advantageous to the Board. The staff member will maintain records of quotes for at least one year. (WorkLink staff will follow procedures 6-9 of the COG’s Small Purchases Procedure (Policy 9-3) that details how invoices, checks, and reconciliation will be handled.)
Process for Proposals and Subcontracting	
7	The staff member that will oversee the grant will conduct a preliminary review of proposals and submit them to the WorkLink Board’s RFP ad hoc committee for approval.
8	The appropriate committee shall select the best proposal.
9	The WorkLink Executive Director will submit committee recommendations to the WorkLink Board for approval.
10	The WorkLink Board reviews and approves selection.

11	In the event that there is only one proposal submitted, the Executive Director shall, if appropriate, request approval from the funding agency for employment of the contractor.
12	The staff member shall prepare draft contracts with successful bidder using Grant Award forms or the "Guide Form for Personal Services Contract" and "Additional Provisions" as appropriate and submit the draft grant or contract to the WorkLink Executive Director
13	The WorkLink Executive Director shall review and approve or require revisions to draft grant award or contract and return to appropriate staff member. The staff member will finalize the contract, attach a Document Certification Form, and will submit to the WorkLink Executive Director for final approval.
14	The WorkLink Executive Director will submit to the COG Finance Director.
15	The COG Finance Director shall review the final contract and submit it to the COG Executive Director for signature.
16	The COG Executive Director will sign the contract
17	Following the signature by the COG Executive Director, the staff member will obtain the subcontractor's signature.
18	The staff member will have an original copy of the contract filed in the finance department and in central files.

4. Agreed upon local performance goals after negotiations are finalized.

LOCAL WIOA PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) establishes performance measures to assess the effectiveness of workforce development programs funded through the Act. These measures are designed to evaluate outcomes for participants and ensure continuous improvement.

Below is an overview of the agreed-upon local performance goals for the WorkLink Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs for Program Years (PY) 2024 and 2025 (Table 12). These goals reflect a commitment to improving employment rates, supporting credential attainment, and increasing wages across participant groups in the WorkLink area, with a focus on continuous improvement from PY 2024 to PY 2025.

Table 12: Local Performance Goals for PY 2024 and PY 2025.

WorkLink WIOA Title I - Adult	Program Year 2024	Program Year 2025
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	81.5%	82.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	84.2%	84.2%
Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,750	\$7,750
Credential Attainment Rate	73.8%	73.8%
Measurable Skill Gains	70.0%	70.0%
WorkLink WIOA Title I – Dislocated Worker	Program Year 2024	Program Year 2025
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	86.5%	86.5%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	85.6%	85.6%
Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$9,287	\$9,287
Credential Attainment Rate	82.6%	82.6%
Measurable Skill Gains	72.4%	72.4%

WorkLink WIOA Title I - Youth	Program Year 2024	Program Year 2025
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 2nd Quarter After Exit	83.5%	83.5%
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 4th Quarter After Exit	82.0%	82.0%
Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,455	\$3,555
Credential Attainment Rate	70.0%	70.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	62.5%

5. A description of actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce area, including:
- The effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the LWDB will implement to assess their one-stop centers;

ONE STOP EFFECTIVENESS AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CRITERIA

In pursuit of having certified centers in our region, WorkLink Workforce Development Board staff will use the SC Works Certification Standards issued by the State Workforce Development Board to evaluate each of the SC Works Centers in the WorkLink region. To be certified, the centers must meet 100% of the Standards by the deadlines established either by the State or by the local Workforce Development, whichever date comes first.

These standards address Management, Job Seeker, and Business Services, and require that a current Business Engagement Plan and a current SC Works Operational Plan be included in the final documentation process.

The following outlines the process that will be used in certifying the centers in the WorkLink region:

Notification to the Operator(s) and Service Provider(s)

WorkLink Workforce Development Board staff issues a monitoring schedule at the beginning of each program year to notify the Operator(s) and service provider(s) of planned visits. The monitoring guide and/or schedule will detail deadlines for the submission of documentation associated with SC Works Certification Standards, as well as confirm dates of on-site visits to conduct a final review, including observation and in-person staff interviews.

Additionally, WorkLink staff will issue an email notification to the Operator(s) 30 days prior to the on-site visit. Further details will be included in the email regarding planning for the visit and how to submit documentation for evaluation.

Submission of Documentation

WorkLink has chosen to allow the Operator to provide appropriate proof of achieving the Certification Standards using the suggested "Proposed Evaluation" methods outlined in the associated "Proposed Evaluation" column of each standard. Additionally, the Operator may provide current photo or video evidence of items such as posters, outreach materials, signage, orientations, computer links, etc. There must be a date stamp included on the photo or video that falls within 90 days of the scheduled on-site visit by WorkLink staff. The Operator(s) will gather appropriate documentation as outlined in the Standards. All documentation should be submitted to WorkLink staff in its entirety 10 days prior to the on-site evaluation visit. Technical assistance needs, cost-prohibitive items for purchase, and noted deficiencies must be sent via email to WorkLink staff upon immediate identification.

WorkLink will begin reviewing the documentation upon receipt and will communicate with the Operator(s) for corrections or clarifications to be addressed at the time of the on-site evaluation visit.

During the Visit

WorkLink staff will hold an entrance conference to explain the purpose of the on-site evaluation, collect updated information and documentation from the 10-day review, issue a final schedule of observations and interviews to be conducted at each location, and address any questions or concerns the Operator(s) may have at that time. During the visit, WorkLink staff will verify that the received documentation is accurate and that activities in the Center are compliant with the standards.

A wrap-up exit conference will be scheduled at the end of the on-site evaluation period to discuss any questions and further clarifications that may be needed.

After the Visit

WorkLink will issue a written report to the Operator(s) within 30 days of the evaluation period regarding the status of the Centers' certification evaluation. The report will include whether each Standard was met and any recommended corrective actions. The Operator(s) will provide a written response accompanied by appropriate documentation showing proof of the correction or a timeline for the expected correction.

Committee and Board Consideration

Upon receipt of all final documentation, a formal report will be presented to the SC Works Committee. The Committee will review the report and make a recommendation to the full Board for Certification of the Centers.

Upon approval by the Board, the Operator(s) will be awarded, on behalf of the Center, a "Certification" in the form of a certificate declaring that the Center has been certified and meets the SC Works Certification Standards. The certificate will include the period for which the Centers will be certified. Each Center will display their Certification for the public to view.

- A description of fiscal and program performance goals beyond the federal measures and how progress will be tracked and made publicly available;

By integrating programmatic goals, fiscal accountability, and customer satisfaction metrics, the WorkLink Workforce Development Area demonstrates its commitment to managing WIOA Title I resources effectively. Rigorous monitoring processes and transparent communication ensure that strategic objectives, such as serving priority populations, maximizing participant benefits, and maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction, are met efficiently and equitably. These efforts reinforce the region's dedication to fostering workforce development and enhancing economic opportunities for its residents.

MONITORING AND COMMUNICATION

The WorkLink Workforce Development Area employs a robust tracking system using Financial Status Reports, Budget Reports, Contractor Detailed Balanced Reports, and Customer Satisfaction Surveys to ensure compliance and maintain high-quality service. These metrics are shared transparently with stakeholders through: Board and committee meetings, the WorkLink website, community presentations and partner meetings, social media and public events.

PROGRAMMATIC

1. **Participant Service Levels:** The Service Provider negotiates the number of customers to be served as part of the budget negotiation process.
Monitoring: The WorkLink Board tracks the number of individuals served against these projections, acknowledging that actual participant numbers are contingent upon funding levels.
2. **Strategic Plan Goals:** The Strategic Plan for 2024–2027 includes objectives for continuous improvement at the Board and service provider levels.
Review Process: Status updates on these goals are discussed at Committee and Board meetings throughout the year.

3. **Priority of Service (Adult Program):** The local area must ensure that at least 75% of WIOA program participants are low-income or basic skills deficient.

Tracking and Reporting: Progress is monitored monthly and presented to the Board at throughout the year.

4. **Customer Satisfaction Rates:** Customer satisfaction is a key performance metric, with surveys conducted to assess the quality of services provided by SC Works and Service Providers.

Tracking and Improvement: Satisfaction rates are monitored regularly, and feedback is used to make adjustments to program delivery and enhance the customer experience.

Reporting: These rates are shared with the Board and stakeholders during meetings.

FISCAL MEASURES

1. **Fund Utilization:** The WorkLink Board must expend 70% of available funds by June 30 each program year.

Monitoring: Reviewed monthly by Board staff and periodically presented to the Finance Committee and WorkLink Board.

2. **Grant Expenditure Compliance:** Service Providers must expend at least 90% of their grant award to remain compliant with their grant award.

Monitoring: Progress is reviewed monthly by WorkLink Board staff and reported at each Board meeting.

3. **Participant Cost Rate (Adult/Dislocated Worker Programs):** The WorkLink Board aims to achieve 30% expenditures on participant-related costs.

Service Provider Responsibility: Allocate at least 40% of the program budget to participant-related costs.

Approval Process: Budget modifications are subject to Board approval, and progress is tracked and reported on an ongoing basis to the WorkLink Board and Finance Committees.

4. **Youth Program Work Experience Expenditures:** The Youth Service Provider is tasked with allocating 20% of the program budget to work experience-related costs.

Compliance Tracking: Monitored as part of the monthly invoice review process, with ongoing reporting to the Board.

- A description of the methodology used by the local board to allocate SC Works center infrastructure funds; and

METHODOLOGY

WIOA and its related regulations and guidance establish, as a starting point, the expectation that Partners will share proportionately in the infrastructure and shared services cost of the SC Works system. Therefore, the Partners in the SC Works WorkLink region agree that costs will be shared based on the Full-time Equivalency (FTE) model. Shared costs will be allocated on the basis of a partner's number of staff assigned to work in a facility (enjoying the benefits of being in the building) on a weekly basis and counted proportionately by day as defined below:

- One Day - .20 (20% of a work week);
- Two Days - .40 (40% of a work week);
- Three Days - .60 (60% of a work week);
- Four Days - .80 (80% of a work week); and
- Five Days - 1 (100% of a work week).

Staff assigned to work only "half-days" in a facility on a weekly basis will be counted proportionately as defined below:

- One Day - .10 (half of 20% of a work week);
- Two Days - .20 (half of 40% of a work week);
- Three Days - .30 (half of 60% of a work week);
- Four Days - .40 (half of 80% of a work week); and
- Five Days - .50 (half of 100% of a work week).

Affiliate locations where services are provided only on a monthly basis will not be included in the proportionate share.

Staffing levels will determine the proportionate share percentage of infrastructure and additional shared services costs for which each Partner will be responsible for by location and program. Billing of each individual Center's costs will be based on the staff count as indicated in the Staffing Addendum attached to the Memorandum of Understanding. The addendum must be completed and signed by all cost-sharing Parties with the execution of this MOU. Staff counts must be based on planned staffing levels for the duration of the PY at the time of signature. Permanent adjustments to staffing levels for the duration of the PY (outside those of routinely occurring vacancies) will require the addendum and effective date to be revised and signed by all Parties. Any Party may request a new staffing addendum be executed at any time based on permanent staffing changes. The staffing addendum will be submitted to the Parties with invoices and supporting documentation reflecting actual expenses for payment.

- A description of the roles and contributions of SC Works partners, including cost allocation.

PARTNER ROLES

Each WorkLink SC Works Partner agrees to:

- (a) Provide access to its programs or activities through the SC Works delivery system;
- (b) Use a portion of funds made available to the partner's program, to the extent consistent with the Federal law authorizing the partner's program and with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR Part 200 and as supplemented by specific Federal agency Parts and CFRs, to:
 - (1) Provide applicable career services; and
 - (2) Work collaboratively with the State and Local Board to establish and maintain the SC Works delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions that are based upon:
 - (i) A reasonable cost allocation methodology by which infrastructure costs are charged to each partner in proportion to use and relative benefits received; and
 - (ii) Federal cost principles;
- (c) Enter into an MOU with the Local Board relating to the operation of the SC Works system; and
- (d) Participate in the operation of the SC Works system consistent with the terms of the MOU, requirements of authorizing laws, the Federal cost principles, and all other applicable legal requirements.

The development and implementation of this System will require mutual trust and teamwork between the Parties all working together to accomplish shared goals and in keeping with the main purposes and priorities of WIOA.

Purposes:

- Increasing access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need, particularly those with barriers to employment;
- Supporting the alignment of workforce, education, and economic development systems;
- Improving the quality and labor market relevance of a demand-driven workforce that meets the needs of businesses and job seekers;
- Promoting improvement in the structure and delivery of services; and
- Providing workforce development activities that increase opportunities of participants and that increase post-secondary credential attainment and as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet skill requirements of employers, and enhance productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

The Partners agree to:

- Actively participate in the strategic planning process for the local SC Works system;
- Serve on the Business Services team and participate in industry or sector partnerships, as applicable;
- Participate in SC Works Partner meetings, as appropriate;
- Coordinate and integrate activities so that individuals seeking assistance will have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes; and
- At a minimum, provide electronic access to programs, activities and services:

- Services provided through electronic means will supplement and not supplant those provided through the physical SC Works delivery system. The term “electronic” includes Web sites, social media, internet chat features, and telephone.

COST ALLOCATION

Each partner agrees to provide the resources necessary to fund their proportionate share of the costs as contained in the Shared Operating Budget which is attached to the MOU. The IFA should include, but is not limited to the following infrastructure cost items:

- Lease/Rent
- Utilities
- Landscaping
- Janitorial and cleaning maintenance
- Building maintenance and repairs
- HVAC maintenance
- Equipment rental expenses
- Security System
- Pest Control
- Supplies (public access and common spaces only)

The Partners may also share other costs that support the operations of the centers, as well as the costs of shared services that are authorized for and may be commonly provided through the SC Works partner programs to any individual, such as initial intake, assessment of needs, identification of appropriate services to meet such needs, evaluation of basic skills, referrals to other partners, and business services.

6. A description of how adult and dislocated worker training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts (ITAs), including:

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), classroom training for individual adults and dislocated workers must be provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) [PL 113-128 Section 134 (c) (3) (G)]. ITAs can only be issued for training programs that are listed on the South Carolina State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

The Service Provider manages the Individual Training Account (ITA) funds disbursements and balances in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and with policies and procedures established by the WDB. Funds authorized under an ITA are paid directly to the training provider using the Service Provider’s fiscal system for tracking obligations, vouchers, and purchase orders. The Service Provider is required to track all expenditures, obligations, and encumbrances in a timely and accurate manner, and report obligations and encumbrances accurately across program years and program fund streams.

The State has issued a Training Cap of \$14,000 for a participant’s lifetime. However, WorkLink has further defined the Training Cap as not to exceed \$5,000 per program year, and not to exceed \$10,000 in a lifetime (WorkLink WIOA Instruction Letter 10-07, Participant Lifetime Training Account (ITA) Cap). The Service Provider is tasked with not exceeding these limits without written authorization from WorkLink.

- If contracts for training services will be used;

CONTRACTS FOR TRAINING

Establishing contracts for training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) involves a structured process to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations while addressing the needs of participants and employers. The process begins with understanding WIOA training options, including Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and direct contracts for training, the latter being used when ITAs are impractical. To determine training needs, WorkLink

will analyze labor market data, consult with employers to identify in-demand skills, and assess participant goals and barriers to ensure alignment with regional economic priorities.

Eligible training providers must be included on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), demonstrating compliance with WIOA standards, performance outcomes, and proper accreditation. When contracts are necessary, WorkLink will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit training providers. The RFP will outline training objectives, expected outcomes, compliance requirements, and evaluation criteria such as cost, provider experience, and alignment with workforce goals. Proposals will be reviewed by a committee using a standardized rubric, and terms such as cost, duration, and performance metrics are negotiated before final selection.

Contracts will be drafted to include key components such as the scope of work, budget, performance metrics, compliance requirements, and termination clauses. Once training begins, monitoring will be conducted to track participant outcomes, evaluate provider performance, and ensure fiscal accountability. This will include regular site visits, feedback collection, and audits to verify compliance. All documentation will be maintained for review, and adjustments are made as needed to improve outcomes or address regulatory changes.

- How the use of training service contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs; and

COORDINATION OF CONTRACTS FOR TRAINING WITH ITAS

If contracts for Training become necessary, WorkLink will identify whether or not the training program is available through the Eligible Training Provider List. If the program of study leads to an in-demand occupation and is only offered by one training provider in the area, WorkLink will negotiate a contract with the Training Provider to a set number of students.

By only offering training contracts to 9a Training Provider that offers unique programs of study, we will ensure that Training Providers offering similar programs of study are treated equitably and have the same opportunities to serve customers on our WIOA caseloads through ITAs. The only exception to this would be if an employer requests a particular program of study at a particular Training Provider and has committed to hiring individuals from that training class.

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

CUSTOMER CHOICE

Customer choice is a guiding principle of WIOA, allowing participants the freedom to make informed decisions about their ITA training and occupational goals. Participants are expected and required to take an active role in managing their employment future using ITAs. Adults and dislocated workers who request an ITA must complete career exploration activities to ensure they obtain the necessary information to choose training for a demand occupation. These career exploration activities include comprehensive assessments, informational interviews with employers, and research of the labor market, demand occupations, and Eligible Training Providers [PL 113-128, Section 107(d)(11)].

The State has made SCPath.org a user-friendly, searchable website with the approved Eligible Training Providers listed. Customers are shown how to explore the ETPL through SCPath.org and are encouraged to look at Labor Market Information associated with their program of interest. As part of the learning process, the Service Provider requests that participants conduct a job search with their desired occupation in mind, explore the job duties, and talk with the Training Provider before making the choice to enroll. The Service Provider has also established relationships with each Eligible Training Provider in the local region and can guide participants to appropriate programs of study based on the likelihood of participant success, cost of training, Training Provider success rates (placement in unsubsidized employment), and whether the program of study will lead to self-sufficient, sustainable wages in an in-demand occupation.

Although the Board can set limitations on what training will be funded and how much to invest, it is ultimately the customer who makes the final decision on which training they will participate in, based on the information they have explored, and the guidance provided by case managers.

The WIOA youth Service provider will adhere and base youth customer choice via the youth Individual Service strategies (ISS) and assessment information to provide guidance of career pathway(s), current ETPL information, available local funding, and leveraging of funds (technical college scholarships, etc.) for the direction of training opportunities.

7. A description of the process used by the LWDB to provide a minimum 10 business day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of LWDA businesses, labor organizations, and institutions of education.

10-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

WorkLink will post the local and regional plans on our website (www.worklinkweb.com) with instructions for submitting comments, and will also send notices to the local newspapers for printing, email the local and regional plans to our county council members, County Administrators, Board members and partners, and post information on social media platforms to inform stakeholders and the general public of the 10-day public comment period. We will encourage those receiving the information to share the links to the regional and local plans with others. We will provide an in-person option and zoom conference call available for any that would like to provide comments.

To reach Business, Labor and Education, WorkLink will utilize existing relationships with chambers of commerce and economic development entities to ensure those representatives of business had ample opportunity to review the local and regional plans. A similar strategy will be employed to reach members of the K12, Adult Education and Higher Education entities in the local area, as well as direct contact with representatives of labor that serve on the WorkLink Board.

8. A description of how the local area SC Works centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by SC Works partners.

INTAKE AND CASE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In the WorkLink area, technology plays a critical role in overcoming geographical barriers and enabling seamless communication between SC Works Centers and partner agencies. Through the use of advanced tools, workforce services are delivered more efficiently to underserved areas, fostering collaboration across programs and improving service delivery outcomes.

Case Management

SC Works WorkLink utilizes SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) as its primary Management Information System (MIS). This centralized database, developed by Geographic Solutions, serves as the backbone for intake and case management for programs such as WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. While some partners maintain separate systems, SCWOS offers a four-tier security framework, allowing limited viewing rights to non-integrated partners. This ensures data confidentiality while enabling collaboration.

To streamline access, WorkLink provides partners with training, technical support, and necessary resources, including the Staff Account Request Form and Confidentiality Agreement. These measures allow partners to view case notes, service plans, and customer activities, ensuring continuity of care and eliminating duplication of services.

Streamlined Intake Process

The WorkLink area has adopted the SCWOS Greeter module to facilitate integrated intake processes. Implemented per State Instruction 21-04, this module enables jobseekers and employers to check into SC Works Centers and indicate

their service needs. Staff are notified promptly, allowing for quick and accurate service delivery. The system also retains customer information for future visits, improving efficiency and reducing redundant data collection.

By utilizing a single comprehensive form, SCWOS streamlines eligibility determination for multiple programs, saving staff time and simplifying the intake process. This ensures that customers receive timely and efficient service without unnecessary delays.

Comprehensive Tools and Features

- **Job Search Tools:** SCWOS provides advanced job search capabilities, allowing users to filter jobs by location, industry, title, salary, and other criteria. It matches job seekers with opportunities based on their profiles, skills, and experiences, while integrated resume-building tools help create tailored professional resumes. Custom job alerts notify users of new opportunities matching their preferences, enhancing their job search experience.
- **Skills Development:** Job seekers have access to training programs, certifications, and educational opportunities to advance their careers. Skills assessments help identify strengths and areas for improvement, while career pathway tools provide insights into required skills, certifications, and growth opportunities for various occupations.
- **Career Exploration and Planning:** The system offers detailed Labor Market Information (LMI), industry trends, salary projections, and job growth forecasts. SCWOS assessments further assist job seekers in identifying career paths aligned with their skills and aspirations.
- **Application and Search Management:** Job seekers can track applications, manage resumes, and stay organized by recording follow-ups and interview schedules. Notifications ensure users stay informed about employer responses and potential job opportunities.
- **Career Coaching and Workshops:** Career coaches use SCWOS to facilitate personalized guidance, resume reviews, and interview preparation.
- **Support Services:** The system simplifies eligibility determination for programs like WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and other workforce services. Referrals can also be made between partner programs with accompanying documentation relevant to the customer's situation.
- **Employer Tools:** Job seekers can research employers, view job postings, and apply directly through SCWOS. They can also make resumes available to potential employers for outreach, improving their chances of finding suitable employment.
- **Financial Literacy and Support:** SCWOS offers tools to assist with financial planning, budgeting, and accessing financial assistance programs.

9. A description of how the local board ensures compliance with the adult priority of service requirements under WIOA Title I.

ADULT PRIORITY OF SERVICE POLICY

WorkLink has issued an Adult Priority of Service policy for the local area and has trained our Service Provider to internally monitor this on an ongoing basis.

All adult-funded enrollments are completed in the order of the priority listing below:

- **First Priority - Low-Income Veterans and Eligible Spouses:** Veterans and eligible spouses who are low-income, including recipients of public assistance, or who are basic skills deficient. All veterans and eligible spouses must meet the WIOA definition of a veteran and provide a valid DD-214.
- **Second Priority - Low-Income Individuals, including Public Assistance Recipients or Basic-Skills Deficient:** Individuals who are low-income, including recipients of public assistance, or basic skills deficient.
- **Third Priority - Veterans and Eligible Spouses who are not Low-Income, or are not Recipients of Public Assistance, and are not Basic Skills Deficient.**
- **Last Priority - Individuals Outside of the Groups Listed in the Priorities:** Eligible individuals who do not meet the above priorities may still be enrolled as participants in the WIOA adult program. However, effective July 1, 2021, seventy-five percent (75%) of newly enrolled adult participants must be low-income, including public assistance recipients, or basic skills deficient.

Monitoring Tool

WorkLink and Service Provider staff use SCWOS to track Priority of Service for Adults.

Internal Service Provider Monitoring

Our Service Provider is actively tracking Adult eligible applicants and monitoring the number of Adults that fall into the “Third Priority” and “Last Priority” categories. They have created an Excel spreadsheet that allows them to accurately determine which applicants should be enrolled as soon as a slot is available. Veterans that fall into the “Third Priority” category automatically rise to the top of the list in order of eligibility determination date, followed by non-Veterans in the “Last Priority” category.

Informal Monitoring

Adult priority of service is informally monitored monthly and included in a report to the WorkLink WDB as part of a snapshot summary of WIOA services provided to participants.

Formal Monitoring

WorkLink formally reviews the Adult priority of service annually as part of the Service Provider’s monitoring. A status update is usually included in the formal monitoring report to inform Service Providers of their compliance status with the established priorities.

10. A description of how the local board is serving priority populations, including those with barriers to employment, as required by WIOA.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS SERVICES

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board is dedicated to expanding access to workforce development services for individuals facing employment barriers. These efforts focus on priority populations such as individuals with disabilities, youth, veterans, ex-offenders, and others. Key initiatives include the establishment of the Priority Populations Committee, strategic collaborations, and specialized programs to improve employment outcomes for these groups.

Priority Populations Committee

The WorkLink has established a Priority Population Committee to enhance access to SC Works Center services for individuals facing employment barriers. This committee comprises board members and subject matter experts on accessibility, special populations, and workforce services. The committee's primary objective is to identify and implement strategies that ensure workforce services are accessible to all, particularly individuals with disabilities and other special populations.

Strategic Collaboration and Direction

The Priority Populations Committee works closely with the Youth and SC Works Operations Committees to develop localized strategies aimed at improving education and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities and youth. At the state level, the Priority Populations Committee, formed by the State Workforce Development Board, provides oversight and establishes policies to serve youth, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and other disadvantaged groups.

Workforce Development Initiatives and Title-I Programs

The WorkLink Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) emphasizes workforce development activities, particularly for youth and individuals with disabilities. Leveraging the transition to WIOA, WorkLink has strengthened its Title I programs, focusing on high-quality education, training, and employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment. This commitment ensures that these individuals are better equipped to enter and succeed in the workforce.

Vocational Rehabilitation Collaboration

A critical partnership exists between the WorkLink Workforce Development Board and South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). VR collaborates on co-enrollment and co-funding efforts, assisting individuals with physical or mental impairments that hinder employment. Services provided by VR include:

- Identifying an individual’s strengths, abilities, job interests, and necessary services.
- Developing specific goals based on assessment results, including job shadowing, mentorship, or job tryouts.
- Therapy services, medical procedures, prosthetics, and assistive technologies like worksite assessments and daily living aids.
- Job readiness instruction, demand-driven skills training, and internships.
- Helping individuals find competitive employment, along with post-employment support to ensure job retention, including on-site job coaching.
- Access to adult education classes for work skills, literacy, and GED preparation, offered in partnership with local schools and supported by the SC Department of Education.

Adult Education Partnership

As part of the WorkLink SC Works system, Adult Education/Literacy provides additional support through co-located services including basic skills remediation; GED preparation; instructor-led, online, and blended learning options; and services offered at various locations, including the Clemson Comprehensive One-Stop.

Reentry Services for Ex-Offenders

In partnership with the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) and VR, the SC Works Centers provide pre-release and reentry services for individuals involved in the justice system. These services include orientation sessions, job placement assistance, and skill-building workshops. SCDEW plays a vital role in preparing ex-offenders for successful reentry, offering resources such as resume building, interview training, and a directory of employers open to hiring individuals with criminal records. Each of the three counties have identified targeted initiatives at reducing recidivism, which SC Works Centers and their partners have supported.

Strategies to Serve Priority Populations

Inclusive Outreach Materials: WorkLink emphasizes the importance of inclusive communication by carefully reviewing all outreach materials for accuracy, appropriate language, and inclusivity before publishing. Materials prominently display Equal Opportunity (EO) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) statements to reassure customers of our non-discrimination policies and commitment to accommodations. Success stories featuring diverse individuals are also highlighted to inspire and resonate with a wide range of demographics.

Adaptive Program Design: WorkLink adapts its program design and outreach efforts to meet the evolving needs of priority populations. Brochures and informational materials are available in digital formats to ensure accessibility while safeguarding vulnerable populations. The commitment to continuous improvement drives regular reviews of these materials to align with emerging needs.

Compliance and Accessibility Monitoring: A dedicated EO and ADA Compliance Officer oversees the region’s efforts to meet and exceed accessibility standards. This includes annual monitoring of ADA compliance, identifying areas for improvement, and recommending purchases of ADA-compliant equipment. Recent investments include updated resource room equipment to better serve individuals with disabilities.

Specialized Training and Policy Enforcement

WorkLink provides annual training to staff on EO compliance, disability etiquette (including service animal protocols), language barrier assistance, and emergency safety procedures. These efforts are supported by stringent policies for protecting personally identifiable information, ensuring that case managers handle sensitive data with the utmost confidentiality.

A toolkit developed under this grant offers practical resources and shares best practices with staff to assist individuals in overcoming barriers to reentry into society and the workforce. This initiative exemplifies WorkLink’s commitment to equipping individuals with the tools they need for a successful transition.

11. A description of the local area's fiscal and programmatic monitoring process.

OVERVIEW OF MONITORING

The purpose of monitoring is (1) to assist grantees in reaching the desired goals that lead to program efficiency and effectiveness, (2) to identify strengths and weaknesses in the operation of programs and delivery of services, and (2) to ensure compliance with the federal statutes and regulations, state policies, local workforce development area instructions, and contract requirements.

WorkLink monitors each of our service providers regarding their implementation of the programs, services, and administrative and financial procedures outlined in their grant and in accordance with a formal monitoring guide that was issued June 2019.

The monitoring guide includes the tools and procedures used to monitor each grant for the following types of activities:

- SC Works Operations* as it relates to program delivery
- Adult/Dislocated Worker (DW) Program Delivery
- Youth Program Delivery
- Eligibility Determination
- Assessment
- Adult and Dislocated Worker Activities and Procedures
- Youth Elements, Activities and Procedures
- Follow-Up Procedures
- Equal Opportunity (EO) Law Requirements
- ADA Compliance
- SC Works Online Services
- Data Validation
- Financial Practices
- Property, Procurement, and Inventory

*SC Works Operations is monitored under the SC Works Certification Standards issued by the State Workforce Development Board.

Notification of Monitoring

Monitoring begins as soon as the grant is fully executed and is ongoing throughout the life of the grant award. At least one visit to the grantee's office or training site will be made during the grant period. A formal monitoring schedule is issued at the beginning of each program year, detailing the dates of that year's monitoring. A courtesy reminder email is sent out, with detailed instructions on items to be submitted to the WorkLink staff, at least 30 days prior to the start of the monitoring period. However, announced and unannounced monitoring visits may be conducted. Primarily, announced visits will be made when the monitoring requires staff input.

Methods of Review

WorkLink conducts monitoring via desktop review and on-site visits or remote monitoring. WorkLink staff visit or conduct remote monitoring for each SC Works Center, Adult/DW program delivery site, and Youth program delivery site throughout the period scheduled for monitoring.

1. Desk-Top Review

Desk-top reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis by the monitor to gather and analyze data for various purposes, including follow-up and investigations. The desk-top review may consist of the following:

- Grantee's compliance documentation
- Contract and subsequent modifications
- Financial reports and supporting documentation
- SC Works Online Services participant and performance data
- The Act and Regulations
- WIOA Ad Hoc Reports in accordance with the most recently issued LWDA instructions.

2. *On-Site Review and/ or Remote Monitoring Review*

On-site reviews are conducted at the grantee's site and may be performed during a monitoring visit, when providing technical assistance, or when conducting an investigation. On-site monitoring consists of the following:

- Review of participant files
- Interviews of grantee staff, participants, training site supervisors, and/or instructors
- Attending group activities, such as Orientation or workshops
- Review of program and financial records
- Observation of training facilities, instruction, etc.
- Inventory of property

Monitoring File

A monitoring file will be established and will include:

- a. The applicable sections of the monitoring guide.
- b. A letter to the grantee's signatory official summarizing the accomplishments and corrective action required, including a deadline date for the grantee's response regarding corrective action.
- c. A response from the grantee, particularly when corrective action is required.
- d. Documentation of follow-up by the LWDA staff to ensure corrective action implementation, if necessary.

Monitoring Exit

An exit meeting will be conducted with the Program Management staff. The exit conference will be held to discuss accomplishments and to initiate corrective action, as required, without waiting for the written monitoring report. This also provides an opportunity for exchanging additional information, comments, and explanations.

Issuance of Monitoring Report

An official report is written and forwarded to the signatory official within forty-five (45) days of the on-site visit. The report identifies any deficiencies noted during the monitoring, as well as outstanding areas of operation and program accomplishment.

The letter transmitting the report will:

- a. Request a response and corrective action plan within thirty (30) days of the date of the transmittal letter, if deficiencies are noted; or
- b. Advise the grantee that there were no deficiencies noted.

The WorkLink LWDA will review the response and notify the grantee of its decision within thirty (30) days of the date of the response:

- If the response is satisfactory, the grantee will be notified that no further action is required, aside from implementation of the corrective action plan.
- If the proposed corrective action plan is deemed unsatisfactory, the grantee will be so notified and asked to submit a revised corrective action plan within ten (10) days of the date of the transmittal letter.

The revised corrective action plan will be reviewed, and the grantee will be notified of the disposition within thirty (30) days of the response date. Failure to respond within the established time period will automatically trigger sanctions.

If necessary, the WorkLink LWDA will conduct a follow-up review within ninety (90) days of the final disposition date. Additional follow-up reviews may be conducted as needed, depending on the grantee's response, and may include site visits.

Types of Monitoring and Frequency

- **Administrative, SCWOS File Management, and Financial Monitoring:** Conducted on an ongoing basis, typically monthly or quarterly, throughout the contract period.
- **Performance Monitoring:** Conducted at least quarterly, allowing for frequent review of performance-related documents. This may or may not require formal reports. Grantees must provide corrective action plans for any deficiencies noted during these reviews.

- **Equal Opportunity Monitoring:** Conducted on an ongoing basis by the WorkLink LWDA to ensure compliance with equal opportunity requirements. A formal review or self-assessment is conducted at least annually.
- **Property Monitoring:** Conducted at least once annually.
- **Data Validation Monitoring:** Conducted at least once annually in conjunction with programmatic monitoring. Grantees must ensure all data elements requiring documentation are supported by the sources outlined in the Data Element Validation Guide.

12. Copies of current local board policies and definitions, including:

- Supportive Services policy;
- OJT reimbursement policy;
- IWT policy, when using local funds;
- Youth incentives policy;
- Local training cap policy;
- Youth BSD policy (if applicable);
- Local definition for youth who “require additional assistance”; and
- Adult and dislocated worker self-sufficiency definition(s) for training.

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION

13. Copies of current local workforce area documents, including:

- Memorandum(a) of Understanding, including signature sheets;
- Resources Sharing Agreements, including signature sheets;
- All service provider grants, including statements of work and budgets;
- Statements of work for in-house operational staff (where applicable);
- Current or most recent Grant Application Request(s)/Request(s) for Proposals;
- LWDB By-Laws;
- LWDB and Committee meeting schedules;
- LWDB budgets; and
- Local monitoring schedules.

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION

Local Workforce Development Board Chair:

Signature

Date

Local Grant Recipient Signatory Official:

Print Name

Title

Signature

Date

WorkLink WIOA Local Workforce Development Board Membership

Total Seats: 23 Seats Occupied: 23 Seats Vacant: 0

At least 51% Business (per Section 107(b)(2)(A))				
No.	Name	Affiliation and Title	Contact Phone and Email	Address
1	Danny Brothers	Duke Energy – Sr. Account Manager	864.260.6051 danny.brothers@duke-energy.com	1636 Pearman Dairy Road Anderson, SC 29626
2	David Bowers II	JM Mold South – CEO	864.855.0450 david.bowers2@jmmoldsouth.com	807 Sheffield Road Easley, SC 29642
3	David Collins	Blue Ridge Electric Co-op – Manager of Finance	864.898.2017 david.collins@blueridge.coop	P.O. Box 277 Pickens, SC 29671
4	Stephanie Collins	AnMed Health – Human Resources Manager	864.512.1633 stephanie.collins@anmedhealth.org	800 North Fant Street Anderson, SC 29621
5	Jim Kilton	BASF, ECMS – Continuous Improvement Manager	864.533-0771 james.kilton@basf-catalystsmetals.com	554 Engelhard Drive, Seneca, SC, 29678 USA
6	Elizabeth McDonald	Arthrex – Human Resources Specialist	864.772-8501 elizabeth.lecroy@arthrex.com	130 Arthrex Dr. Pendleton, SC 29670
7	Shonna Williams	Canon Business Process Services – Human Resource Business Partner	864.276.6199 ShoWilliams@cbps.canon.com	Greenville, SC 29615
8	Hunter Kome	Baptist Easley Hospital – Chief Executive Officer	864.885.7191 hunter.kome@prismahealth.org	200 Fleetwood Drive Easley, SC 29640
9	Ashley Teal	Reliable Automatic Sprinkler – VP of Human Resources	864.843.5202 ateal@reliablesprinkler.com	1470 Smith Grove Road Liberty, SC 29657
10	Mike Wallace	Print It – Owner	864.882.3609 Mike@printitincolor.com	P.O. Box 1707 Seneca, SC 29678
11	Alex Vitou	Dodge Industrial - Plant Manager	864.281.2226 avitou@dodgeindustrial.com	905 SC-247 Belton, SC 29627
12	Brooke Garren	Ittron – Human Resources Manager	864.718.6557 brooke.garren@itron.com	313 N. Hwy. 11 West Union, SC 29696
13	Robert Halfacre	Park National Bank – Vice President	864.644.0301 rhalfacre@parknationalbank.com	6501 Calhoun Memorial Hwy. Easley, SC 29640
14				
15				

Not Less Than 20% (per Section 107(b)(2)(B))				
No.	Name	Affiliation and Title	Contact Phone and Email	Address
1	Lt. Ashley Anderson	Fraternal Order of Police (Labor) - Easley Police Department	864.905.2786 aanderson@easleypd.org	300 Woodfield Dr. Easley, SC 29640
2	Billy Gibson	SC Firefighters Association (Labor) – Director of Emergency Services	864.868.7381 pickenschief1@gmail.com	299 Pine Grove Church Rd. Sunset, SC 29685
3	Dr. Galen DeHay*	Tri-County Technical College – President (Apprenticeship)	864.646.1774 gdehay@tctc.edu	P.O. Box 587 Pendleton, SC 29670
4	Kristi King-Brock	Anderson Interfaith Ministries – Executive Director (CBO)	864.224.9256 Kristi.king-brock@aimcharity.org	P.O. Box 1136 Anderson, SC 29622
5	Katie Brown*	Anderson 3, 4, & 5 Adult Education – Director	864.260.5075 katiebrown@anderson5.net	2005 N. Main St Anderson, SC 29621
6				
7				
Education & Training (per Section 107(b)(2)(C))				
No.	Name	Affiliation and Title	Contact Phone and Email	Address
1	Katie Brown*	Anderson 3, 4, & 5 Adult Education – Director	864.260.5075 katiebrown@anderson5.net	2005 N. Main St. Anderson, SC 29621
2	Galen DeHay	Tri-County Technical College – President	864.646.1773 gdehay@tctc.edu	P.O. Box 587 Pendleton, SC 29670
3				
4				
5				
Governmental, Economic, and Community Development (per Section 107(b)(2)(D))				
No.	Name	Affiliation and Title	Contact Phone and Email	Address
1	Burriss Nelson	Anderson County Economic Development – Director (Economic Development)	864.260.4231 bnelson@andersoncountysc.org	1428 Pearman Dairy Rd. Anderson, SC 29622
2	Patrick Pruitt	SC DEW – Regional Manager (Wagner Peyser)	864.722.8268 ppruitt@dew.sc.gov	1376 Tiger Blvd. Clemson, SC 29631
3	Lisa Gillespie	SCVRD – Area Supervisor (Rehabilitation Act)	864.224.6391 lgillespie@scvrd.state.sc.us	3001 Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd. Anderson, SC 29625
4				
5				

Others as Chief Elected Officials Determine Appropriate (per Section 107(b)(2)(E))				
No.	Name	Affiliation and Title	Contact Phone and Email	Address
1	Tyler James	Oconee Economic Alliance – Existing Industry Manager (Economic Development /Other)	864.364.5550 tjames@oconeesc.com	528 Bypass 123, Suite G Senecas, SC 29678
2	Jeromy Arnett	Alliance Pickens – Existing Industry Manager (Economic Development / Other)	864.898.1500 jarnett@alliancepickens.com	P.O. Box 149 Liberty, SC 29657

Denote multiple representation with an asterisk (*).

Total Number of Seats Filled	23*
Number of Seats Filled Representing Business	13
Percentage of Seats Filled Representing Business	57%
Number of Seats Filled Representing Not Less than 20%	5
Percentage of Seats Filled Representing Not Less than 20%	22%
Number of Seats Filled Representing Education & Training	2
Number of Seats Filled Representing Gov't, Economic & Comm. Dev.	3
Number of Seats Filled Representing Others by Chief Elected Officials	2

WorkLink Workforce Development Board Roster of Workforce Staff

Name	Job Title	Workforce Job Duties/Responsibilities
Jennifer Kelly	Executive Director	Provides strategic leadership on Board initiatives. Also serves as Chief Operating Officer. Oversees the financial management of WorkLink funds. Serves as liaison to the Finance Committee. Oversees the SC Works System and Operator grant.
Sharon Crite	Youth Services Manager/Education Outreach	Oversees all aspects of youth program offering WIOA and other services to our youth population in the WorkLink region. Serves as liaison to the Youth Committee. Provides education outreach efforts to the public and private education sectors of our tri-county area. Oversees the financial management of Youth contracts.
Windy Graham	WIOA Performance & Reporting Manager	Oversees contracts and customer tracking system, provides training and technical assistance, and analyzes performance reports. Also serves as Eligibility Determination liaison and EO Officer. Maintains inventory control system. Oversees the financial management of the in-house budget/accounts payable.
Jennifer Campbell	Assistant Director	Oversees WIOA Title I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and grants. Serves as liaison to the SC Works Operations Committee. Oversees the financial management of Adult/DW grants. Manages Incumbent Worker Training Grants. Develops and implements strategic marketing and outreach. Serves as Assistant Director for WorkLink WDB.
Contractual		
Brandi Runion	Financial Consultant	Provides financial monitoring, technical assistance, in-house OJT monitoring and supports financial reporting efforts.

Comprehensive SC Works Center

Name:	SC Works Clemson Center
Address:	1376 Clemson Blvd, Suite 102, Clemson, SC 29631
Phone Number:	1-864-643-0071
Fax Number:	1-864-722-9250
Website:	www.worklinkweb.com
Hours of Operation: During CO	8:30am – 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday 8:30am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-5:00pm, Monday thru Friday
List of All Co-located Partners and Available Center Services:	<p>WIOA, UI, Vet Rep, TAA, Wagner-Peyser, DSS (Co-Located) Adult Ed, VR, Goodwill Industries SCSEP (rotational basis) All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For job seekers</i></p> <p>Resource Room to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor exchange tools • Computer applications software • Résumé writing software • Career exploration software • Job, career, and skill self-assessment tools • Career, job, and labor market information • Career planning information • Job search information • Interviewing information • Information on writing résumés and cover letters • Information on job retention • Directories • Periodicals (may be print or electronic) • SC Works Center Orientation • Workshops for job seekers and employers <p><i>For employers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities at the Site; • Access to labor market and related information through SC Works Online System (SCWOS); • State and/or federally generated information on the ADA; • Information regarding workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities; • Information and referral to business start-up, retention and expansion services; • Information and referral to sources for developing customized training programs; • Information on career preparation activities; • Information on Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and certification; • Information about incentives such as OJT programs, based on worker eligibility;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires; • State and/or federal program information on Federal bonding; • Access to information and services through the Center and online; • Access to media to address the employment and training needs of businesses; • Avenues to place job openings as well as access to SCWorks.org; • Referrals of well-qualified SC Works customers including all served populations; • Staff-assisted employee pre-screening; • Basic job matching of résumés and applications; • Preliminary basic skills and other assessments; • Industry specific job fairs; • Positive recruitments; • Relevant business seminars and information sessions; • Job developer referrals and workshops; and • Other WDB approved business services.
<p>During COVID-19:</p>	<p>WIOA, UI, Vet Rep, TAA, Wagner-Peyser All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For jobseekers</i> Resource Room services prioritized for job search and Unemployment insurance, all other resource room offerings available as social distancing allows or via telephone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Works Center Orientation (conference call or one-on-one); and • Workshops for job seekers and employers (virtual or conference call). <p><i>For employers</i> The following services are offered as social distancing allows or electronic means can be utilized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities; • Preliminary basic skills and other assessments; • Industry specific job fairs; • Relevant business seminars and information sessions; and • Job developer referrals and workshops.

Satellite SC Works Center

Name:	SC Works Anderson Center
Address:	1428 Pearman Dairy Rd, Anderson, SC 29625
Phone Number:	1-864-643-0071
Website:	www.worklinkweb.com
Hours of Operation:	8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday
List of All Co-located Partners and Available Center Services:	<p>WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (co-located) UI, Vet Rep, TAA, and VR (rotating) All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For job seekers</i> Resource Room to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor exchange tools • Computer applications software • Résumé writing software • Career exploration software • Job, career, and skill self-assessment tools • Career, job, and labor market information • Career planning information • Job search information • Interviewing information • Information on writing résumés and cover letters • Information on job retention • Directories • Periodicals (may be print or electronic) • SC Works Center Orientation • Workshops for job seekers and employers <p><i>For employers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities at the Site; • Access to labor market and related information through SC Works Online System (SCWOS); • State and/or federally generated information on the ADA; • Information regarding workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities; • Information and referral to business start-up, retention and expansion services; • Information and referral to sources for developing customized training programs; • Information on career preparation activities; • Information on Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and certification; • Information about incentives such as OJT programs, based on worker eligibility; • State and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires; • State and/or federal program information on Federal bonding; • Access to information and services through the Center and online;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals of well-qualified SC Works customers including all served populations; • Basic job matching of résumés and applications; and • Other WDB approved business services.
<p>During COVID-19:</p>	<p>WIOA, UI, Vet Rep, TAA, Wagner-Peyser All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For jobseekers</i> Resource Room services prioritized for job search and Unemployment insurance, all other resource room offerings available as social distancing allows or via telephone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Works Center Orientation (conference call or one-on-one); and • Workshops for job seekers and employers (virtual or conference call). <p><i>For employers</i> The following services are offered as social distancing allows or electronic means can be utilized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities; and • Industry specific job fairs.

Satellite SC Works Center

Name:	SC Works Easley Center
Address:	1774 Powdersville Rd, Easley, SC 29642
Phone Number:	1-864-220-8990
Fax Number:	1-864-220-8995
Website:	www.worklinkweb.com
Hours of Operation:	8:30am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-5:00pm, Monday & Tuesday
List of All Co-located Partners and Available Center Services:	<p>WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (co-located) UI, Vet Rep, TAA, and VR (rotating as needed) All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For job seekers</i> Resource Room to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor exchange tools • Computer applications software • Résumé writing software • Career exploration software • Job, career, and skill self-assessment tools • Career, job, and labor market information • Career planning information • Job search information • Interviewing information • Information on writing résumés and cover letters • Information on job retention • Directories • Periodicals (may be print or electronic) • SC Works Center Orientation • Workshops for job seekers and employers <p><i>For employers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities at the Site; • Access to labor market and related information through SC Works Online System (SCWOS); • State and/or federally generated information on the ADA; • Information regarding workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities; • Information and referral to business start-up, retention and expansion services; • Information and referral to sources for developing customized training programs; • Information on career preparation activities; • Information on Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and certification; • Information about incentives such as OJT programs, based on worker eligibility;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires; • State and/or federal program information on Federal bonding; • Access to information and services through the Center and online; • Referrals of well-qualified SC Works customers including all served populations; and • Basic job matching of résumés and applications
<p>During COVID-19:</p>	<p>WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (co-located) UI, Vet Rep, TAA (rotating only as needed) All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For jobseekers</i> Resource Room services prioritized for job search and Unemployment insurance, all other resource room offerings available as social distancing allows or via telephone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Works Center Orientation (conference call or one-on-one); and • Workshops for job seekers and employers (virtual or conference call). <p><i>For employers</i> The following services are offered as social distancing allows or electronic means can be utilized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities; and • Industry specific job fairs.

Satellite SC Works Center

Name:	SC Works Seneca Center
Address:	104 Vocational Drive, Seneca, SC 29678
Phone Number:	1-864-646-1741
Fax Number:	1-864-646-1749
Website:	www.worklinkweb.com
Hours of Operation:	8:30am-1:00pm, 2:00pm-5:00pm, Monday thru Friday
List of All Co-located Partners and Available Center Services:	<p>WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (co-located) UI, Vet Rep, TAA, and VR (rotating) All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For job seekers</i> Resource Room to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor exchange tools • Computer applications software • Résumé writing software • Career exploration software • Job, career, and skill self-assessment tools • Career, job, and labor market information • Career planning information • Job search information • Interviewing information • Information on writing résumés and cover letters • Information on job retention • Directories • Periodicals (may be print or electronic) • SC Works Center Orientation • Workshops for job seekers and employers <p><i>For employers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities at the Site; • Access to labor market and related information through SC Works Online System (SCWOS); • State and/or federally generated information on the ADA; • Information regarding workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities; • Information and referral to business start-up, retention and expansion services; • Information and referral to sources for developing customized training programs; • Information on career preparation activities; • Information on Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and certification; • Information about incentives such as OJT programs, based on worker eligibility;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires; • State and/or federal program information on Federal bonding; • Access to information and services through the Center and online; • Referrals of well-qualified SC Works customers including all served populations; • Basic job matching of résumés and applications; and • Other WDB approved business services.
<p>During COVID-19:</p>	<p>WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (co-located) UI, Vet Rep, TAA, and VR (rotating) All other partners linked electronically</p> <p><i>For jobseekers</i> Resource Room services prioritized for job search and Unemployment insurance, all other resource room offerings available as social distancing allows or via telephone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Works Center Orientation (conference call or one-on-one only); and • Workshops for job seekers and employers (virtual or conference call only). <p><i>For employers</i> The following services are offered as social distancing allows or electronic means can be utilized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview facilities; and • Industry specific job fairs.

SC Works WorkLink Access Point(s)

Host Name (e.g., Goodwill, Library, etc.)	Address	Phone Number	Fax Number	Days and Hours of Operation (for Workforce Services)	Workforce Services Available
Goodwill Industries	2901 S Main St. Anderson, SC 29624	864-296-9034	864-964-8209	8:30 – 5:00pm Monday - Thursday	Resource room material, flyers
Anderson Interfaith Ministries	1202 S Murray Ave Anderson, SC 29624	864-226-2273	864-225-0349	8:30am – 5:00pm Monday – Friday	Computer access for job searches and partner information
United Way of Anderson	907 N Main St # 202 Anderson, SC 29621	864-226-3438	864-226-3430	8:30 – 5:00pm Monday - Thursday	Resource room material, flyers
United Way of Pickens County	PO Box 96. Easley, SC 29641	864-850-7094	864-306-8675	8:30 – 5:00pm Monday - Thursday	Computer access for job searches and partner information
Pickens County Library System	304 Biltmore Rd Easley, SC 29640	864-850-7077		9:00am – 6:00pm Monday – Friday	Resource room material, flyers
Oconee County Public Library System	501 West South Broad Street, Walhalla, SC 29691	864-638-4133		9:00am – 6:00pm Monday - Friday	Computer access for job searches and partner information
Anderson County Library System	300 South McDuffie Street, Anderson, SC 29621	864-260-4500		9:00am – 6:00pm Monday - Friday	Resource room material, flyers
The Dream Center of Pickens	111 Hillcrest Drive Easley, SC 29640	864-644-8885	864-644-8882	9:00am-4:00pm Monday - Friday	Computer access for job searches and partner information
SHARE of Oconee County	708 E Main St, Seneca, SC 29678	864-882-3495		8:30am-5:00pm Monday-Friday	Computer access for job searches and partner information

Local Plan Comments: WorkLink Local Plan Modification PY2020-2023

Comment 1	
Originating Entity:	
Comment:	
Comment 2	
Originating Entity:	
Comment:	
Comment 3	
Originating Entity:	
Comment:	
Comment 4	
Originating Entity:	
Comment:	

WorkLink Workforce Development Area Service Providers

Entity Name	Contract Period	Program/Function
Eckerd Connects	7/1/2024 to 6/30/2025 (with grant extension options)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adult Program Services - Dislocated Worker Program Services - OneStop Operator - Youth Program Services

WorkLink Region SC Works Combined Operations and Business Engagement Plan

11/27/2024



Prepared by: **WorkLink Staff, Eckerd Workforce Development (SC Works Operator) & our Partners**

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Executive Summary

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) requires all Workforce Boards to submit a Center Operations and Business Engagement plan. It is also required as a part of the SC Works Certification Standards (SI 24-01). The plan focuses on the daily operations of the comprehensive center and the plan for business engagement. This Plan has been prepared with the involvement of several partners and staff that worked to provide input into the center operations and business engagement plan for the Clemson Comprehensive Center. Partners such as SCDEW, Eckerd Workforce Development (the contracted operator for the WorkLink Workforce Board), WorkLink, and Tri-County Technical College, and staff all contributed to the formation of the Center Operations and Business Engagement plan.

Objective: The objective is to effectively and efficiently manage the WorkLink SC Works System and Comprehensive Center within the Vision, Mission, and Core Values established by the WorkLink Workforce Investment Board and in accordance with all Federal, State, and Local Regulations and Policies. This is accomplished with a fully coordinated and integrated customer service strategy that is local market driven and offers accessibility, convenience, and customer choice.

Management Philosophy: Our management philosophy is (1) our employees and our partner employees are our greatest assets, and (2) quality job performance builds our business and credibility in the community. When we perform at or above our customers' expectations, we are usually rewarded with more opportunity to serve more Businesses and Job Seekers alike.

WorkLink System Customers: Our customers are in three primary groups (1) job-seeking customers, (2) employer customers, and (3) the WorkLink Workforce Development System Partners. We define quality service to these customers as a focused, integrated, seamless delivery process and excellent customer service, quality career management, and effective job placement to ensure their long-term success.

Performance Management: The WorkLink SC Works System understands that the term quality assurance requires collective action and accountability. True continuous improvement is a result of systematic planning, execution, coordination, and verification. The SC Works System Management Team has a central role in developing processes and mechanisms to stimulate consistent, proactive dialogue with the WorkLink Board staff throughout the relationship. In addition, the Management Team focuses on internal communications, coordination of various partnering organizations, and

benchmarking to identify and apply organization-wide Best Practices. We motivate staff from different organizations and backgrounds through our efficient delivery design structure and our ability to track and report progress. Through this process, we collectively become as strong as our strongest practice. WorkLink SC Works and our customers reap the benefits.

Staff Development: Training is a vital part of our continuous improvement program. We believe that exceptional supervision and systematic accountability mechanisms are crucial to performance. Continuous staff development through training, job related certifications, and ongoing meetings to communicate customer service expectations are crucial to the long-term success of the system. We emphasize to staff that every customer is different and our ability to customize solutions in response to unique requirements is key to each individual's success. Training also occurs within Business Services meetings with the promotion of passing referrals between team members. In summary, every customer should expect nothing less than best-in-class service from every staff member and partner.

Strategic Plan Goals of the WDB:

1. We will understand the skill level of the workforce.
2. We will involve business in the WDB and WDB activities.
3. We will integrate the workforce development system.
4. We will create a common theme for the WDB and the workforce system.

SC Works Center Overview

Governance & Oversight

The SC Works system provides employment services and training opportunities to employers and job seekers consistent with the vision and mission of the governing body: WorkLink Workforce Investment Board (the "Board").

The Vision, Mission, and Core Values of the Board for the WorkLink SC Works System are:

Vision Statement: To have a fully employed and highly skilled workforce in South Carolina.

Mission Statement: WorkLink develops the link between employers/businesses and the workforce.

Core Values:

- Service to the community
- Commitment to the plan
- Knowledgeable /trained Board members
- Responsiveness
- Excellence
- Supreme customer service
- Desire for excellence
- Good stewardship
- Fostering/enhancing existing relationships

The Board’s authority is established in both Federal and State legislation. The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments (SCACOG) serves as the Fiscal Agent for the Board. The Board and the SCACOG have a separate agreement that specifies the authority and responsibilities for each. The Board has the responsibility for building a one stop system that coordinates resources across several federal funding streams. The Board, through its fiscal agent, is the direct recipient of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funds. The Board may receive additional funds from time to time from a variety of sources, but primarily through the funds administered by the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW).

Business Model

The Workforce Solutions Model is focused on increasing the skill sets and employment levels of the workforce by assisting individuals in obtaining or improving the level of employment that leads to self-sufficiency through services delivered in a seamless and integrated delivery system while focusing on the needs of business and industry of the region. Additionally, the system should eliminate duplication of services, reduce costs through collaboration, enhance participation, accommodate the demand needs of employers and improve customer satisfaction.

SC Works Centers

The Board has developed an SC Works system that has a comprehensive center near the geographic center of the WorkLink area and placed satellite centers in each of the three counties within the region. The comprehensive center is located at 1376 Tiger Blvd, Clemson, SC 29631. The comprehensive center consists of all mandated (by WIOA legislation) partners, co-located or technologically linked. The satellite sites consist of two or more partners co-located in the same facility. The satellite locations are:

<p>SC Works Seneca Tri-County Technical College Oconee Campus QuickJobs Development Center 104 Vocational Drive Seneca, SC 29672 (864) 646-1741</p>	<p>SC Works Easley Tri-County Technical College Easley Campus QuickJobs Development Center 1776 Powdersville Rd. Easley, SC 29642 (864) 220-8990</p>	<p>SC Works Anderson 1428 Pearman Dairy Road Anderson, SC 29625 (864) 642- 0466</p>	<p>SC Works Clemson 1376 Tiger Blvd Ste 102 Clemson, SC 29631 (864) 643-0071</p>
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Customers

The Clemson SC Works Center (the Center) is in the business of serving and meeting employer needs primarily and job seekers secondarily.

Business Customers (Employers)

Strategic Reason – The Business Customer (Employers) are one of two primary customers of the workforce system as their demand for a skilled workforce drives the training and development of the Job Seeker Customer group. Business and Industry create jobs while the citizens of the surrounding communities fill those jobs. Both are needed to generate tax revenue to support our governmental infrastructure that provides Workforce Development Services to both groups.

Job Seeker Customers

Strategic Reason – Job Seekers are the citizens of our communities that are seeking to obtain employment or improve their current employment situation. This group includes everyone that is at an eligible age to work which typically begins at the age of 16 years old. This group is seeking basic guidance and access to free resources as well as access to more intensive or even training opportunities.

The Center serves many different types of job seekers. These job seekers can have varying barriers to employment. These barriers include:

- Disabled
- Veterans
- Low-Income
- Career Changers
- Re-Entry Ex-Offenders
- Older Workers
- Unemployed
- Chronically Unemployed
- Emerging Workforce
- Others
- Low-Skilled
- Underemployed
- ESL
- Transitioning Workforce

SC Works also serves employers. Characteristics of businesses that are typically served through the SC Works Centers are:

- Hiring (New Start-up)
- Expansion
- Layoff or Layoff Aversion
- Incumbent Worker Training

Products & Services

Description of Products & Services

The center offers many different products and services geared toward employers and job seekers. A list has been provided for both groups. The list contains services that may be provided to both sets of customers from the center.

Section I – Common menu of basic employer services to be offered:

1. Job Postings – Online, phone call, fax, in-person
2. Applicant screening and referral to employer specifications
3. Referral to Professional Testing (Typing, Basic Skills, Microsoft Office)

4. Customized Recruitment (Hiring Events)
5. Job Fairs
6. Provision of Labor Market Information
7. Interviewing Space, Scheduling
8. Provision of information and referral related to:
 - a. Tax Credits
 - b. Community Resources
 - c. Federal Bonding
 - d. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - e. Veterans services
9. Incumbent Worker Grants
10. OJT
11. Referral to Customized Training
12. Information on Unemployment Insurance (UI)
13. Rapid Response services
14. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) information and services
15. Veterans Employment Services

Section II – Expanded List of Employer Services:

1. Customized services for significant company or industry dislocations
2. Referral to WIN[®] testing
3. Referral to WIN[®] profiling services – May be free-for-service
4. Referral to Database of WIN[®] tested applicants
5. Access to Work Ready Basics, and Courseware to upgrade employee skills
6. Labor Market Information packets and brochures

Section I – Common menu of basic job seeker services to be offered to all job seekers:

1. Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling and rapid re-employment services)
2. Initial assessment
3. Eligibility and service information for all partner workforce development and support programs (e.g. education, public assistance, childcare)
4. Job search assistance, career information and career guidance
5. Resume development services
6. Job matching and referral
7. Local, regional, and statewide labor market information
8. Information on financial aid, including unemployment insurance (UI)
9. Instructions on filing an unemployment insurance claims or unemployment insurance issues
Information on:
 - a. Certified education and training providers
 - b. Local performance outcomes of training providers
 - c. Job fairs and supportive services
10. Orientation to use of personal computers for utilizing virtual tools available through the One-Stop system, including resume software, and enabling job seekers to perform job search activities, secure an email address and use email, and conduct research on employers.
11. Job search/self-marketing skills training (workshops).

12. Information about Entrepreneurship development skills.
13. Access to free virtual tools for job search, self-assessment and career development

Section II – Common menu of services for those enrolled in WIOA or partner programs:

1. Comprehensive assessment of knowledge, skills, abilities, and interest by use of various assessment tools
2. Development of individual employment plans
3. Individual career planning
4. Case management
5. Occupational skills training
6. On-the-job training
7. Referrals to programs or programs that combine workplace training with related instruction
8. Referrals to Adult education and literacy activities
9. Referrals to customized training

The Center can also provide special services to accommodate those customers who may have special needs.

For example:

- **Disabled** – Special Accommodations
- **ESL** – LEP (Limited English Plan)
- **Veterans** – Priority of Services
- **Older Workers** – SCSEP Program

The center can also help businesses with special needs or in special circumstances such as:

- **Employers that are Hiring** – Hiring Events & OJT
- **Employers that are Expanding** – Referral to ReadySC™
- **Employers that are experiencing Layoffs** – Referral to Rapid Response

Competitors

In the SC Works Center most of the would-be-competitors are in fact partners. Learning to work together is vital to serving the customer. The competition that the Clemson SC Works Center staff must keep on the radar is the customer's perception. The customer has high expectations for what the staff can do for them, and the SC Works Center must strive to live up to those expectations.

Market Niche

The Center must identify opportunities within the area to enhance the customer experience. Tools like Labor Market Information can play a key role in improving this experience. According to the Labor Market Information available on the WorkLink Community platform, potential market niches for the WorkLink area are highlighted. As of September 2024, the following employment data by industry was presented:

- Manufacturing – 28,200
- Retail Trade – 18,802

- Health Care/Social Assistance – 17,615
- Educational Services – 17,541
- Accommodation and Food Services – 15,681

The data demonstrates that manufacturing in the area is the biggest employer. The center should know that the biggest employer in the area is manufacturing and be prepared to react accordingly.

Outreach Plan

Targeting the Message

SC Works will conduct outreach to both employers and job seekers. The center will focus on reaching out to employers who are hiring, expanding, or experiencing layoffs, ensuring they can meet their specific needs. A key component of business outreach will be the efforts of the Business Services Team, utilizing brochures and flyers. For job seekers, we will use simple and clear flyers that provide general information on center locations, available services, and job search resources.

Outreach Methods

Outreach Methodology
1. Traditional Marketing
a. Newspaper – Ad in Classifieds about new locations with basic services list
b. Billboards – with locations throughout the three county region (In place)
c. Print Material – SC Works Brochures & Flyers announcing location changes, orientation todays & times, and services for disbursement in the community
d. Identify low cost and free Internet Advertisement opportunities
e. Radio – Identify free or cost efficient modes to advertise
f. Pop-up/Moveable Signage – Ability to mobilize advertised events
2. Presentations
a. Develop new PowerPoint Presentation Materials
b. Develop an Elevator Speech for staff to use in Community Presentations and meetings
c. Engage more Business & Industry involvement in Core Workshops
d. Develop new Rapid Response Packages
3. Internet Presence
a. Review the WorkLink Website to see if we can make any updates
b. Look at the use of Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, YouTube, etc.
c. Integrated links on Partner Websites to drive traffic

Partners Role in Outreach

All mandated partners will be given information on job seeker services. SC Works WIOA staff will do presentations informing partners about available services. All Business Service staff will be trained on all employer & industry workforce development services and will work with employers to identify

needs. Each partner will be responsible for sharing labor exchange information. Partners will attend partner meetings to inform other partners about the center and its products and services.

Measuring Results

As a part of the Outreach Plan and strategies each of the areas identified above will be measured through Customer Feedback. Part of our customer satisfaction survey in the next section will ask about how they heard about us and our services. For internet-based outreach we are able to quantify the traffic based on the number of visits and actions taken by individual users that visit the sites. In the case that we receive negative feedback as a result of specific outreach strategies we will re-evaluate the measurable data and determine whether or not to continue with that strategy or element within our plan.

Performance Outcomes

Performance Metrics & Goals

The center needs to measure success. To measure success, center statistics need to be looked at over time and in context. The Usage Report measures the following data:

Job Seekers Services

- Center Traffic - Total Customer Count & by Center location
- Individuals that Registered – Total & by Center location
- Unduplicated Customer Count – Total & by Center location
- Job Search Services – Total & by Center location
- Workshop Attendance - Total

Employer Services

- Internal Job Orders/Employer Job Openings – Total & by Center location
- Services Provided Employers – Total & by Center location
- Hiring Events - Total & by Center location
- Entered Employments - Total & by Center location
- Rapid Response Events – Total

Partner Performance Metrics & Goals

Partner Performance Metrics and Goals are included in the overall SC Works System Performance Metrics and Goals listed above. Included in these metrics are the WIOA and Wagner Peyser Federal Performance Measures as tracked by our Usage Report and WIOA Dashboard.

Data Types & Collection Methods

Data is being collected in multiple ways. The primary source of system wide data is from SCWOS, the State Workforce Reporting System established by SC DEW. There are other metrics that are not captured in SC WOS and tracked externally and locally within the System and/or Centers.

Measuring Customer Satisfactions

Customer service surveys are used to measure customer satisfaction. Paper surveys are distributed in the centers by and collected by staff. If the customer states any negative issues, they will be contacted and the issue is addressed. Digital customer surveys, created on the Survey Monkey online platform, are sent to customers via email through the SCWOS system. Customer's answers are tallied, stored, and reported. There are six (6) basic questions that job seekers and employers are asked when completing the survey. These standardized questions are required per SCDEW State Instructions 24-02:

1. Thinking about your most recent experience, how did you access SC Works Services?
2. What was your reason(s) for accessing SC Works services?
3. Were you able to complete the purpose of your visit/use of SC Works services?
4. How useful was the information you received while accessing SC Works Services?
5. Overall, how would you rate your experience using SC Works Services?
6. Please share your comments and suggestions on how we can improve SC Works services.

Communication and sharing information are the key components and should be shared during Partner meetings. SC Works is a team and is one part of a whole. When one part is falling short then others should step in to help.

Performance Accountability

Performance accountability is in place and very structured for Wagner Peyser and WIOA Services within the Center. Performance is tracked through structured follow-up services to customers. The WDB will address system wide performance issues to include all System Partners. The System Operator and Center Management are responsible for the accountability of Partners to established MOU's and Resource Sharing Agreements. Each of these are reviewed quarterly and renegotiated annually.

Communication to the WDB

Communication to the WorkLink WDB will flow from the Partner Consortium, through the Operator (Eckerd Workforce Development, Inc.) to the WorkLink Program Director, to the OneStop Operations Committee, to the Executive Committee or Finance Committee or both, and finally to the full Board. Matters of Policy, Operators Contract, Performance issues or any other type situation that requires a vote is taken to the Workforce Investment Board for a decision.

Management & Organizational Structure

Management Structure

Overall System

The Workforce Investment Board (WDB) has selected the OneStop Operations Committee to oversee the Adult and Dislocated Worker WIOA grant and hired the Operator to manage the SC Works Centers.

SC Works Comprehensive Center

Eckerd Connects Workforce Development was hired by the WDB as the Center’s Operator and Center Manager. SCDEW Regional Manager is also part of the Center Management team. Since SCDEW provides many pieces of the job seeker services their management must communicate with the operator, center manager, and WDB.

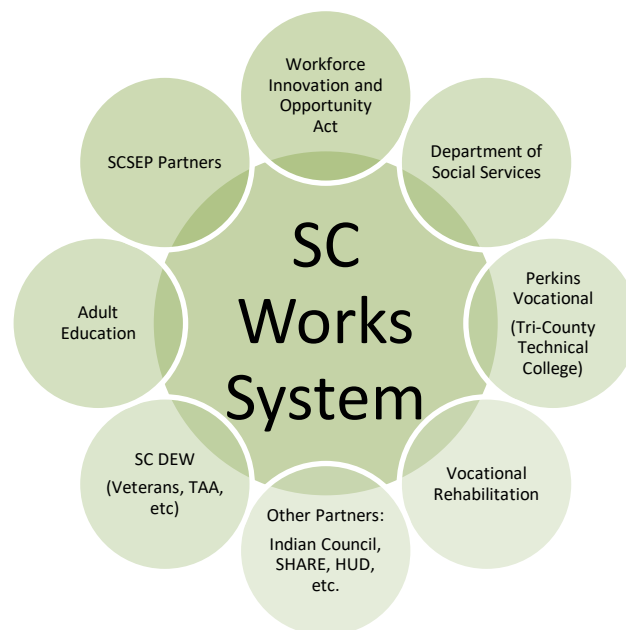
In the current management structure, the SC Works Comprehensive Center Operator also plays the role of the Center Manager. The Center Operator is responsible for building the partnerships and maintaining the referral processes within the system. The Center Manager oversees the physical locations of the SC Works Centers.

Organizational Chart

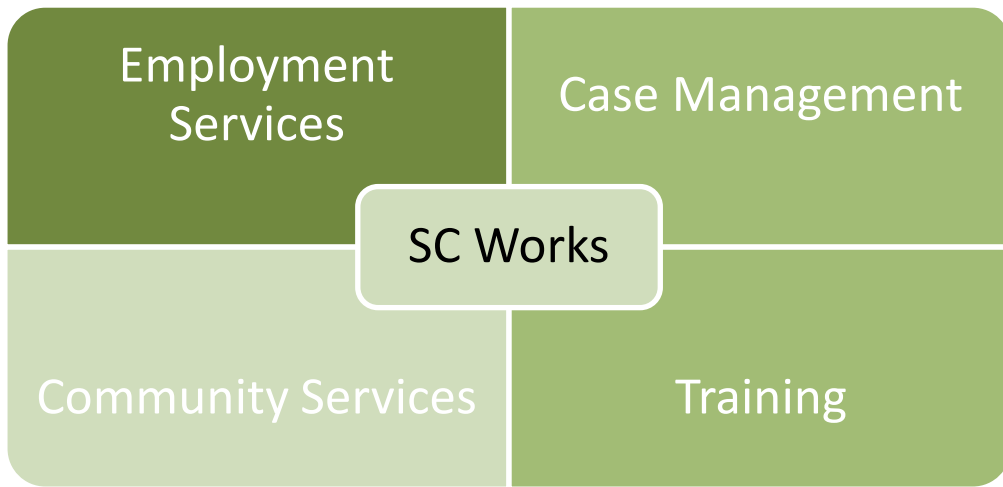
Current System

(Organizational Chart)

The overall workforce development system organizational structure is a “Referral” system with the idea of moving toward a “Co-Located” system that would be functionally driven. Ideally, we will strive to be an “Integrated” system which the Department of Labor (DOL) has intended since the inception of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

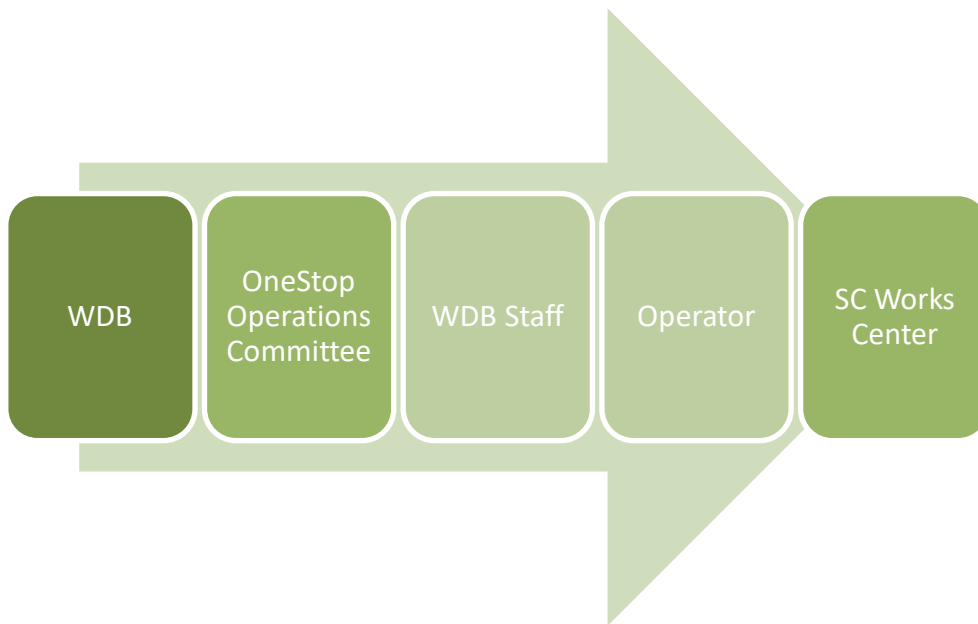


Ideal System (Fully Integrated System)



Communication Processes

The Board communicates to the centers through the Operator in the following communication flow:



Most of the communication is done via email. The Board communicates to the operator through the One Stop Operations Committee through meetings and emails. The operator passes the Board’s instruction to the partners through emails, instruction, and partner meetings.

Decision Making Process

Some of the decisions being made by various management positions throughout the system include:

The SC Works Comprehensive Center Operator – the Operator will call meetings; ensure Partners are there, promote good communication, etc.

Center Manager – the Manager will secure the meeting room and ensure all materials are available for the meeting.

Center staff collectively – Referrals; decide where customers should go as a procedural issue.

Single Partner agency – Staffing; ensure each site is staffed adequately; and manage their staff.

Standard Operating Procedures: - Standard operating procedures at the centers are typically developed based on requests or recommendations from Board Staff, Management and center staff. Any proposed procedures are submitted for approval to management and/or the Board Staff. Guidance from the Department of Labor (DOL) and the state is shared by the Board Staff and/or issuing agency with the One Stop Operator, who then communicates it to the relevant staff, partners, and other stakeholders.

Center Accessibility

Center Maintenance

Facilities are:

- **Clean** – The Center currently has a contract with Jan-Pro of the Western Carolinas for providing daily custodial services.
- **Designed in a customer friendly manner to enable easy customer flow, easy usage of the resource room and privacy for customers meeting with staff** – The flow recommended by WorkLink was from the Resource Room out to offices and back through the Resource Room.
- **Compliant with ADA requirements** – The Comprehensive Center currently has computer accessibility items in place and designated restrooms which are compliant with ADA requirements. The center has an accessible ramp in place which allows for easier access into the center. There are also designated parking spaces at the center to be used for ADA access.
- **Secure (personal information, IT, files, facility, etc.)** – All staff have keys to the entry/exit doors and can lock them at the end of the day. The Center’s custodian also has keys to the entry/exit doors and they ensure the doors are locked when they leave. The City of Clemson Police department performs a weekly drive-by checking the security of the facility. DEW Resource room staff wipes personal information from computers at the end of each day. DEW has a secure VPN tunnel and Eckerd Workforce Development has a secure router in place directly routed to their corporate offices. Eckerd Connects Workforce Development also has a secure guest account in place for Wi-Fi access with public use locked so that anyone wishing to gain access must obtain login credentials from staff. All files are kept locked in storage room cabinets and are archived and/or shredded when needed.

Center materials are:

- **Up-To-Date** – *Printed materials are continually checked for up-to-date information with assistance from the Resource Room staff ensuring the printed materials are up-to-date. Note: Spanish versions are available.*
- **Easy to read** – *Current materials are easy to read and follow.*
- **Integrated** – *Materials are integrated.*
- **Plentiful** – *Center Manager and Resource Room staff work together to keep materials well stocked.*
- **Available in a variety of formats (including access for the disabled)** – *Materials are currently available in a variety of formats and are accessible to meet the needs for disabled individuals.*

It is important to keep equipment up to date in the center. Technology Solutions currently has the contract to maintain the computers in the Resource Room and Jan-Pro of the Western Carolinas has the contract for custodial service and ensures the computers are cleaned and dusted on a weekly basis. If a need arises, it will be communicated to the Center Manager or the SCDEW Regional Manager who will communicate to the WDB and/or DEW in the case a new equipment purchase is necessary.

All signage is compliant with the current SC Works outreach and branding guidelines issued by SC DEW.

Outreach items that are paid for with WIOA funding must follow the following guidelines (as per WIOA law and ADA requirements):

- 1) SC Works Logo with tagline
- 2) At least one way to contact us
 - a. Web address: www.worklinkweb.com
 - b. Telephone # (Telephone number must include TTY:711)
- 3) American Job Center logo
- 4) EO Statement – “An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services available to individuals with disabilities.”
- 5) Amount and % of funding that is issued through US DOLETA. (See the Stevens Amendment Instruction Letter issued by WorkLink)

Center Staffing

Currently there is the availability of staff and equipment/machines to assist with disability issues; printed partner and resource materials are available. We will strive to have staff that is specifically trained in certain areas but all will be cross trained to work where and when needed to assist with all customers as well as those with Special Needs.

Maximizing Center Staffing

Another part of meeting customer’s needs is getting extra help for the center(s). In the past, The Comprehensive Center and satellites had administrative placements through the SCSEP program that places volunteers. There were also Security Personnel that were made possible for a time through

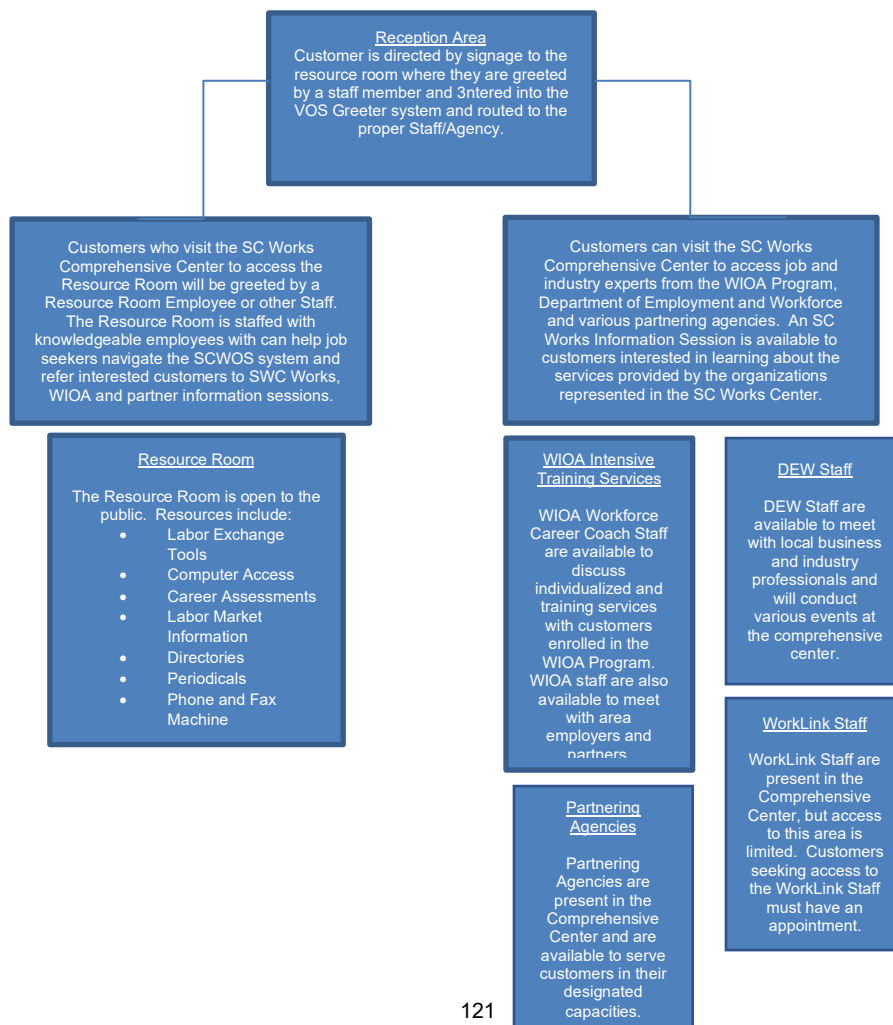
grant funding secured by WorkLink. WorkLink continues to look for ways through grant funding and partnerships with local service agencies to maximize center staffing and provide first quality services. Vocational Rehabilitation is currently co-locating in the Comprehensive Center as well as in the Satellite locations on a weekly basis. At the present time, a South Carolina Commission for the Blind VR Counselor, 3 DSS TANF Family Success Coaches, a DSS/SNAP E & T Coordinator and a DSS/Workforce Consultant partners are co-located as well either in the Comprehensive Center or Satellites.

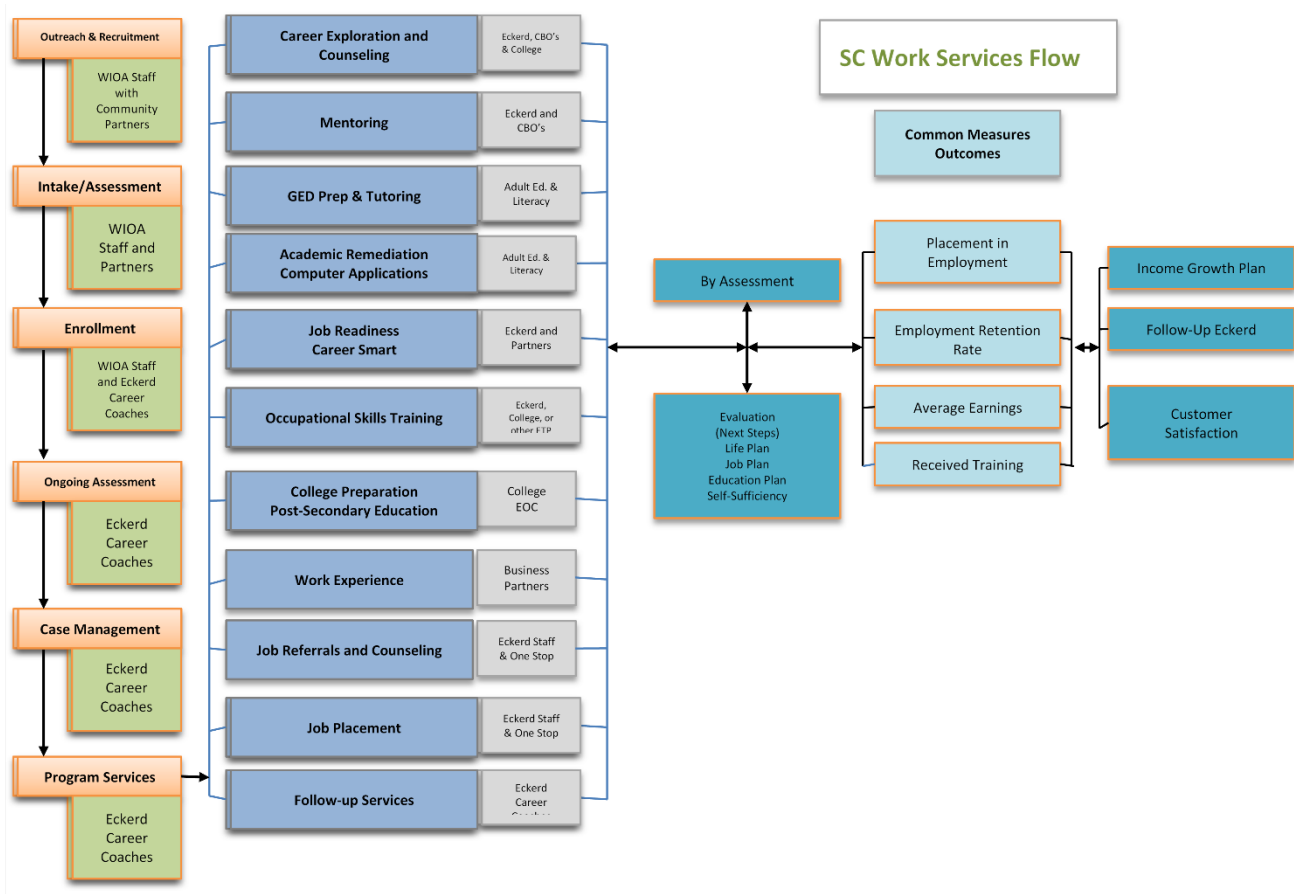
Services Flow

Flow of Services & Customer Access

Below is a Customer Flowchart of the Comprehensive Center and below that is a Customer Flowchart of the System to show how customers can move through the center and the system. Upon entering SC Works, customers are entered into the VOS Greeter system where they are routed/referred to the services/staff/agencies they need.

Referrals are generated through the SCWOS system, word of mouth, email, meetings, and various events. Staff and partners are granted access to the SCWOS system and receive training on how to effectively use it to refer customers to the appropriate services. To support continuous improvement, a plan will be developed in 2025 to revitalize and enhance the referral process, as well as streamline application and eligibility procedures across the partners.





Incorporating New Services or Products

The Center can showcase new services in the Center by displaying them on the monitor in the resource room and by posting them to the SC Works WorkLink social media pages. The Center utilizes brochures and other handouts throughout the Center but displays many of them in the Resource Room.

Partner Service Integration & Special Needs Access

There has been an attempt to align our partners together functionally in the Center. Most case management and training services are closest to the Resource Room to make it easier for the public to engage those services. Our goal, through the VOS Greeter system, is to get our customers to the appropriate person/partner so they may receive the assistance they are requesting. Other linkages to partners include printed materials, internet data, and partner referrals. Please refer also to the MOU and the Certification Standards.

System & Center Support Needs

Encouraging more partners to co-locate within the centers would give job seekers more reasons to come to the center. Adding more job seekers would prompt more employer interaction as well. For the Comprehensive Center to be more successful it will need more involvement from job seekers, employers, and partners.

Partner Accountability & Center Support

If partners are not “pulling their weight” the Center will encourage more involvement. The Center has a Memorandum of Understanding with many of the partners involved in the system. These MOUs are designed to encourage participation to ensure the Center’s success.

WDB Support

For the Center to succeed it will need assistance from the local Workforce Investment Board. The WDB should provide political assistance to keep all partners involved, provide technical assistance and training for the Center and staff as necessary.

Financial Plan

Comprehensive Center Budget

Please refer to **Attachment E** of the **Memorandum of Understanding**.

Partner Budget Contributions

The Memorandum of Understanding helps to outline the plan for sharing costs and resources (it is attached to the Operational Plan). The Individual Funding agreement is a part of the Memorandum of Understanding and outlines which partners will bring which resources to the Center. WorkLink, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and SCDEW all pay into the cost of running the Center. The current method of billing is by a Full-Time Employee (FTE) basis. The partners who pay part of the cost are billed on how many full-time employees are located in the Center. These expenses are paid on a quarterly basis.

Business Engagement Plan

Purpose

The Business Service Integration Team seeks to streamline services and provide innovative, effective

solutions to assist employers in their workforce needs.

We seek:

- To provide a Labor Exchange model of continuous improvement
- Meet/Exceed the needs of employers and local economy
- Optimize labor and industry programs for Workforce Development
- Substantiate and coordinate efforts of employment services, economic development and educational providers
- Minimize duplication of services, providing a single point of contact
- Maximize levels of expertise, providing an industry expert
- Increase efficiency in communication and information sharing among partners
- Increase customer retention and satisfaction

Menu of Business Services

The components of the Common Menu of basic business services are defined as follows:

Self-Service Options

- **Job Postings** – Arrangement in which an organization posts a list of open positions (with their descriptions and requirements) so that job seekers who wish to move to another job may apply. *In the case SC DEW, a management information system open to all job seekers has been provided for this purpose.
- **Provision of Labor Market** - the market in which workers find paying work, employers find willing workers, and wage rates are determined
- **Information on Community Resources** - Any agency, company, facility, or service in the community that provides assistance in supporting independence to those at risk.

Staff-Assisted Options for Recruitment

- **Applicant Screening and Referral** – A preliminary assessment of job candidates based on specified criteria which may result in information about an employer being shared with a jobseeker for the purpose of applying for the open job listing.
- **Customized Recruitment** – A process specifically tailored to an individual company in order to match qualified candidates with an employer. Typical customized recruitment efforts include:
 - **Direct Placement** – Assessment and referral of job seekers to employers; assistance to employers on writing and posting job openings for job seekers;
 - **Facilitation of Hiring** – Coordination of screening, testing, interviewing on an employer's behalf; and
 - **Workforce Knowledge** - In-depth, industry-specific knowledge and expertise.
- **Job Fairs** – A career fair (also known as a job fair) is a recruiting event where job seekers meet with multiple employers. Attending a career fair allows job seekers to meet with a variety of

employers at one convenient location. The company representatives will provide information about general career opportunities as well as specific details on current openings.

- **Veteran Employment Services** – Veteran programs provide intensive, priority employment services to all veterans, including group and individual career coaching, job referrals, resume preparation help, career fairs and job search workshops, job training programs, and referrals to training services.

Staff-Assisted Options for Hiring and Retention

- **Federal Bonding** - The Federal Bonding Program was established to provide Fidelity Bonds that guarantee honesty for “at-risk,” hard-to-place job seekers. The bonds cover the first six months of employment. There is no cost to the job applicant or the employer. Bonds are made available through SC DEW.
- **Tax Credits** - An amount of money that a taxpayer is able to subtract from the amount of tax that they owe to the government. The value of a tax credit depends on what the credit is being provided for, and certain types of tax credits are granted to individuals or businesses in specific locations, classifications or industries. For this purpose, tax credits are for employers that are hiring, retaining, or retraining employees.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** – The ADA prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life -- to enjoy employment opportunities, to purchase goods and services, and to participate in State and local government programs and services. Modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin – and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 -- the ADA is an "equal opportunity" law for people with disabilities. For this purpose, information may be provided to an employer upon request in order to meet ADA requirements.
- **Job Profiling** - the process of deciding exactly what tasks are involved in a particular job, and what skills, experience, and personality a person would need in order to do the job, particularly as it relates to a career assessment, such as WorkKeys. *(Fees are determined by the organization responsible.)*

Staff-Assisted Options for Temporary and Permanent Layoffs

- **Unemployment Insurance** - Unemployment Insurance (UI) is a nationwide program created to financially help eligible workers, who are unemployed through no fault of their own, while they actively search for new work. The program allows UI recipients to maintain purchasing power therefore easing the serious effects of unemployment on individual households, the community and the state. Employers finance the UI program through tax contributions and in South Carolina, the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) administers the UI program according to guidelines established by the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 41, and South Carolina Code of Regulations, Chapter 47. In South Carolina, the maximum potential to receive state benefits is 20 weeks.
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance Services** – The federal Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA), administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), provides comprehensive

assistance for workers, like Neal, who have lost their job due to foreign trade. This assistance is at no cost to employers or employees. TAA provides trade-affected workers with opportunities to gain skills and resources needed to become reemployed in a suitable job as quickly as possible.

- **Rapid Response Services** – Rapid Response, an information-sharing service for employees and employers, expedites access to SC’s public workforce system and services. Its goal is to help workers get new jobs as quickly as possible. When plant closings and layoffs affect 50 or more workers, the Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) goes into action for these reasons: Trade Impact; Company Downsizing/Restructuring; Natural Disaster; Plant Relocation; Bankruptcy; and other Factors.

Staff-Assisted Options for Training the Employer’s Workforce

- **New Hire Training** – funds the cost of instructors to train potential and existing employees in needed new skills as it relates to new technology, restructuring, new product lines, and other factors.
- **Incumbent Worker Training** –training funds for employees needing new skills due to new technology, restructuring, new product lines, and other factors. Funding that significantly upgrades employee skills/wages, helps avert layoffs, and improves retention opportunities receives priority. Employers are reimbursed a portion of the training cost based on the size of the company or the type of funding that is being utilized.
- **On-the-Job-Training** – Employee training at the place of work while he or she is doing the actual job. Usually a professional trainer (or sometimes an experienced employee) serves as the course instructor using hands-on training. Employers are reimbursed a portion of the new employee’s time based on the size of the company.
- **Customized Training** – Training (A) that is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers); (B) that is conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual on successful completion of the training; and (C) for which the employer pays for not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training."

All employer services are offered free of charge unless otherwise noted.

Process of provision of business services

The process for providing business services involves several steps to ensure effective service delivery and coordination between core and extended partners. Here’s how it typically works:

1. **Initial Engagement:** The business service process begins when a business expresses interest in receiving services, such as workforce development, recruitment support, or other related services. This could happen through direct outreach, referrals, or during events like job fairs or hiring events.

2. **Assessment and Service Planning:** The Business Services Team (BST) conducts an assessment to understand the business's needs, goals, and challenges. This includes identifying any specific workforce requirements, training needs, or other support that may be necessary. The service plan is developed collaboratively, ensuring input from both core partners (such as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) staff) and extended partners (such as local economic development organizations, community colleges, etc.).
3. **Coordination of Services:** Once the service plan is developed, the core and extended partners coordinate the delivery of services. This may include connecting the business to resources like candidate referrals, training programs, recruitment events, or other workforce-related services. Each partner's role and the specific services they provide are clarified to avoid duplication and ensure that all areas of need are addressed.
4. **Documenting the Process:** Documentation is key to tracking service delivery and ensuring accountability. A shared system (such as SCWOS) is often used to record all interactions, plans, referrals, and follow-ups. Both core and extended partners input relevant data into the system to document the services provided, any progress made, and the outcomes achieved. This helps to maintain a record of all activities and ensures transparency in the service delivery process.
5. **Follow-Up and Monitoring:** Regular follow-up meetings or check-ins are scheduled to assess the effectiveness of the services provided. This allows partners to make any necessary adjustments to the service plan or offer additional support. Partners communicate regularly to share updates, challenges, and successes. This ensures the business's needs are being met and any issues are addressed in a timely manner.
6. **Review and Continuous Improvement:** After the service delivery process is completed, the partners evaluate the outcomes and identify areas for improvement. Feedback from the business is also considered to refine future service delivery. This process is documented, and any lessons learned are used to improve service delivery for future businesses.



In summary, the process for providing business services is a collaborative effort between core and extended partners, ensuring that service planning, delivery, and documentation are seamless and transparent. This allows for efficient tracking of the services provided and enables continuous improvement in meeting the needs of local businesses.

Business Services Team Overview

The WorkLink Business Services Team consists of members representing the following agencies: Department of Social Services, Economic Development, Local Chamber of Commerce, Goodwill, Eckerd

Connects, ReadySC, SCDEW (state level, TAA/Trade, Veteran Services, Wagner-Peyser), Tri-County Technical College, Vocational Rehabilitation, WorkLink, and several additional community partner agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each partner plays a vital role in the Business Service Team, working collaboratively to provide businesses with seamless solutions to address their hiring needs. The Business Services Team Lead is responsible for maintaining regular communication with the partnering agencies, ensuring continuous updates. The outreach timeline will be determined based on the availability and schedules of both the partnering agencies and the Business Services Team Lead. The team convenes quarterly, during which documentation, contact information, and referrals are shared both in meetings and through email correspondence.

The following chart outlines the roles, responsibilities, and primary deliverables of each partner in providing the Common Menu of basic business services as well as any fee-based services.

Partners	Job Postings	Applicant Screening/Referrals	Customized Recruitment	Job Fairs	Federal Bonding	Tax Credits	Community Resources	ADA	Veterans Services	Unemployment Insurance	Incumbent Worker Training	On-the-Job-Training	Customized Training	Rapid Response	TAA Services	Veteran Employment Services
DSS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x									
Economic Development			x			x										
Goodwill	x	x	x	x			x					x	x			
Eckerd Connects												x	x			
SCDEW										x				x		
SCDEW - TAA Services		x		x	x		x	x				x	x	x	x	x
SCDEW - Veteran Services		x		x	x		x		x							x
SCDEW - Wagner Peyser	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								x
Tri-County Tech			x	x							x	x	x	x	x	x
Vocational Rehabilitation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			
WorkLink				x							x			x		

Business Engagement Strategy

WorkLink has adopted an Account Management System to focus our Business Engagement Strategy.

Existing Employer Relationships

- Those partners with existing, positive relationships will continue to serve these employers’ per the employers’ wishes.

New Employer Relationships

- Each employer should be assessed for any needed business solutions regardless of the partner program having the contact. The business team member will represent the array of available services to the employer.
- The appropriate Partner to provide the service will be contacted by the team member that reached out to the employer for follow-up on the employer's need or interest in the specified service.
- SC DEW will be responsible for facilitating new employer accounts in SCWOS.

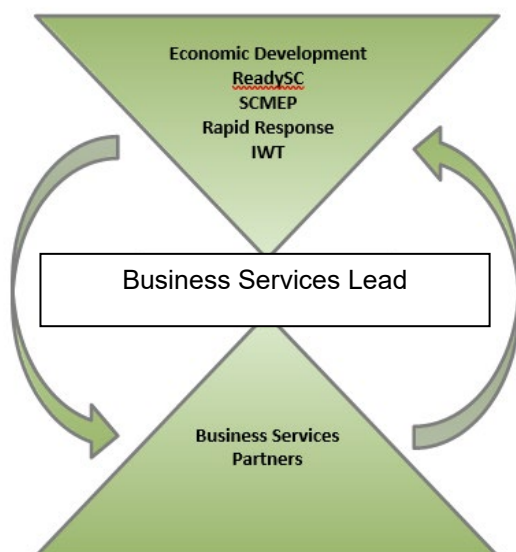
Business Service Team members will only provide outreach services to those employers who reside in the WorkLink region. For those employers seeking employer services outside the WorkLink region, the Business Service Team will work with the appropriate regions' Business Service Representative to provide services. If an employer from outside our region requests a job posting, the Business Service team will refer the employer to the appropriate region's Business Representative.

An informal or formal assessment of the business's needs must be conducted at the initial visit. The goal of the assessment is to determine what support they need in hiring or retaining their workforce, rather than selling a specific program or service. The intent is to build an effective and positive relationship with the employer. The assessment should determine which solutions may work best and provide either contact information to appropriate resources or make the connection with the appropriate business service team member for follow-up.

Business Services Team Lead

The team is managed as a unified entity by the Business Services Lead. The Business Services lead is appointed by the WorkLink Board and serves as the convener of partner agencies to discuss employer

Single Point of Contact



services. This is a quarterly meeting but may be convened on an ad hoc basis or at the request of an employer or partner. The Business Services lead serves as a central point of contact for communication about employer needs.

The appointed Business Services Lead will serve as the primary point of contact for Economic Development, ReadySC, SCMEP, Rapid Response, and IWT. This individual will funnel all leads to the appropriate Business Service Team member.

The appointed Business Service Lead will also coordinate job fairs and hiring events ensuring that the events are well coordinated, advertised, and

appropriately staffed. Any event may be led by another partner agency at the partner's discretion but should be communicated with the team.

Communication

Communication will be documented through SCWOS under the employer's SCWOS account and will be immediately relayed via email (or telephone) to all appropriate parties.

Each Business Service team member will give appropriate updates at quarterly team meetings.

Focus by Industry

In order to receive input on critical success factors, businesses are consulted during focus groups, one-on-one consultations, and employer surveys. The Business Service team members have been actively involved in the Workforce Development Alliance. The Workforce Development Alliance group seeks to engage employers in ongoing dialogue in order to understand their needs and respond to them. In addition to this, team members are actively involved in SHRM, plant manager, and other industry focused groups in the three-county region.

Based on employer feedback described above, the WorkLink Workforce Development Board has chosen to focus on the following industries (plus one occupation) in regard to providing training for the WIOA participants in our workforce region. Employer Service efforts will be focused on these key industries. Should there be existing industries outside of these that request our services, those needs will be addressed as they arise.

Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

The Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services sector comprises establishments performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations. These essential activities are often undertaken in-house by establishments in many sectors of the economy. The establishments in this sector specialize in one or more of these support activities and provide these services to clients in a variety of industries and, in some cases, to households. Activities performed include: office administration, hiring and placing of personnel, document preparation and similar clerical services, solicitation, collection, security and surveillance services, cleaning, and waste disposal services.

Construction

The construction sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in the construction of buildings or engineering projects (e.g., highways and utility systems). Establishments primarily engaged in the preparation of sites for new construction and establishments primarily engaged in subdividing land for sale as building sites also are included in this sector. Construction work done may include new work, additions, alterations, or maintenance and repairs. Activities of these establishments generally are managed at a fixed place of business, but they usually perform construction activities at multiple

project sites. Production responsibilities for establishments in this sector are usually specified in (1) contracts with the owners of construction projects (prime contracts) or (2) contracts with other construction establishments (subcontracts). Occupations may include: Carpenters, Construction laborers, Construction managers, Electricians, and Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators. (*North American Industry Classification System*)

Health Care and Social Assistance

The Health Care and Social Assistance sector comprises establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals. The sector includes both health care and social assistance because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the boundaries of these two activities. The industries in this sector are arranged on a continuum starting with those establishments providing medical care exclusively, continuing with those providing health care and social assistance, and finally finishing with those providing only social assistance. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals. All industries in the sector share this commonality of process, namely, labor inputs of health practitioners or social workers with the requisite expertise. Many of the industries in the sector are defined based on the educational degree held by the practitioners included in the industry.

Manufacturing

The Manufacturing sector comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products.

Establishments in the Manufacturing sector are often described as plants, factories, or mills and characteristically use power-driven machines and materials-handling equipment. However, establishments that transform materials or substances into new products by hand or in the worker's home and those engaged in selling to the general public products made on the same premises from which they are sold, such as bakeries, candy stores, and custom tailors, may also be included in this sector. Manufacturing establishments may process materials or may contract with other establishments to process their materials for them. Both types of establishments are included in manufacturing.

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector comprises establishments that specialize in performing professional, scientific, and technical activities for others. These activities require a high degree of expertise and training. The establishments in this sector specialize according to expertise and provide these services to clients in a variety of industries and, in some cases, to households. Activities performed include: legal advice and representation; accounting, bookkeeping, and payroll services; architectural, engineering, and specialized design services; computer services; consulting services; research services; advertising services; photographic services; translation and interpretation services; veterinary services; and other professional, scientific, and technical services

WorkLink has adopted one occupational exception: CDL Truck Driving. Although categorized as part of the Transportation and Warehousing industry, CDL truck driving is an occupation that supports ongoing business across all industries.

Industry Experts

Business Service Team members will be knowledgeable of all labor and industry workforce development programs for employers and will make appropriate referrals to partner staff to follow-up regarding specific program offerings.

The WorkLink Business Services team members that represent SCDEW will primarily target the manufacturing (including advanced manufacturing as well as entry level and various textile positions) and healthcare industries. The Corporate and Community Education Division (CCE) at Tri-County Technical College offers focused training programs to promote and support individual success, as well as support community and economic development. They partner with businesses to develop their workforce by providing advanced, specialized, and often tailored training programs.

Industries supported by Tri-County Technical College with education and training include: Manufacturing, Transportation, Healthcare, Business/Office/Computer IT, and Construction. The primary business engagement strategies for Vocational Rehabilitation include Manufacturing/Warehouse, Customer Service, Food/Restaurant, Janitorial/Custodial, and Retail.

Overview of the Expected Performance Outcomes

Each member of the WorkLink Business Services Team has an overall goal of assisting the local employers with their recruitment and hiring needs as well upskilling and retention of their workforce.

Individual Partner Goals:

- SCDEW has goals for the Recruiter and Virtual Recruiter. They each have a goal of 20 employer contacts and 12 Job Development Attempts per month.
- Tri-County Technical College's Corporate and Community Education Division has a performance goal of 80% completion rate for programs of study and job placement upon graduation of students.
- Vocational Rehabilitation has a goal of attaining five placements per year through their apprenticeship program, hosting a minimum of three Business Partnership Network meetings per year, hosting at least one job fair per year at each office, and attending at least two external job fairs per year.
- WorkLink Business Services Lead has a goal of making at least ten employer contacts per week and attending the monthly Society for Human Resource Management meetings (SHRM) in each of the three counties (Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens). The Business Services Lead is

also required to support all three Economic Development teams as needed.

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board reviews employer services and business services activities on a bi-monthly basis and will evaluate and determine if there are any goals above and beyond the state Business Services Metrics goals.

Each team members' activities, which will be shared monthly with the Business Services Team, will encourage more communication as well as better partnerships. With this increased communication and sharing of information, the partners will be able to better collaborate to assist each other with meeting their individual goals.