



**REGIONAL PLAN FOR  
PROGRAM YEARS 2021 – 2024  
(JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2025)**



Greater Lincoln, Greater Nebraska, and Greater Omaha  
Workforce Development Areas

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## Overview

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. Nebraska has submitted a Combined State Plan that includes the following partner programs:

- Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
- Wagner-Peyser Act
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- SNAP Next Step Employment & Training
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- Unemployment insurance
- Senior Community Service Employment

An analysis of economic conditions as included in the Combined State Plan provided the following information on emerging industry sectors and occupations. Further analysis included in this Regional Plan will be used to develop Local Plans and drive Board initiatives.

### INDUSTRY SECTORS

Based solely on projected numeric changes, the top five emerging industry sectors in Nebraska are:

1. health care and social assistance, with a projected increase of 21,861;
2. professional, scientific, and technical services, with a projected increase of 7,976;
3. accommodation and food services, with a projected increase of 7,660;
4. construction, with projected increase of 7,553; and
5. manufacturing, with a projected increase of 6,729.

Based solely on projected percent changes, the top five emerging industry sectors in Nebraska are:

1. professional, scientific, and technical services, with a projected increase of 18.11 percent;
2. health care and social assistance, with a projected increase of 15.61 percent;
3. construction, with a projected increase of 14.94 percent;
4. arts, entertainment, and recreation, with a projected increase of 14.01 percent; and
5. real estate, rental, and leasing, with a projected increase of 10.54 percent.

### OCCUPATIONS

Based solely on projected numeric changes, the top five emerging demand occupations in Nebraska are:

1. combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food, with a projected increase of 4,158;
2. registered nurses, with a projected increase of 2,857;
3. heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, with a projected increase of 2,535;
4. personal care aides, with a projected increase of 1,994; and
5. nursing assistants, with a projected increase of 1,733.

Based solely on projected percent changes, the top five emerging demand occupations in Nebraska are:

1. wind turbine service technicians, with a projected increase of 90.8 percent;
2. home health aides, with a projected increase of 41.1 percent;
3. information security analysts, with a projected increase of 37.7 percent;
4. occupational therapy assistants, with a projected increase of 33.7 percent; and
5. software developers, with a projected increase of 31.4 percent.

## **Combined State Plan Vision and Goals**

### **Vision**

Nebraska's vision is to be a national model for the delivery of workforce development services.

### **Goals**

Nebraska's two-part statewide goal for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers is:

- Selection and prioritization of development of career pathways; and
- Alignment of the state's workforce development system.

### **Strategies**

- Promote career pathways across the state.
- Coordination with local and regional areas to strengthen workforce system alignment and coordination across the state.
- Sector strategies to fill high demand jobs that are essential to the economic vitality of the state's communities and regions. (for example; Nebraska Tech Collaborative, Blue Print Nebraska, Sector Partnerships)
- Research and identify technological resources to integrate all supportive services.
- Identification of barriers to participation in career pathways by employers, jobseekers, and workers.
- Inventory and coordinate all services to maximize benefit of participants.
- Identifying best practices across the nation when it comes to alignment of career pathways.
- Scale public-private partnerships that create internships, apprenticeships, and customized workforce solutions
- The state board is working with Nebraska Department of Labor and Nebraska Department of Economic Development to develop a program that will support workforce initiatives sponsored by active and emerging industry sector partnerships, especially initiatives serving youth.

Each local area will incorporate these strategies to support the State Plan vision and goals.

### **1. Provide the following regional analyses based on conditions in each of Nebraska's economic development districts:**

The Governor of the State of Nebraska designated a single statewide planning region on October 15, 2020. The Governor assigned Nebraska's local workforce development areas (local areas) to the statewide planning region pursuant to the October 15, 2020 letter of designation and in accordance with Section 106(b)(1)(B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Currently, Nebraska has three (3) designated local areas:

- Greater Omaha Local Workforce Development Area (Greater Omaha), serving Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties;

- Greater Lincoln Local Workforce Development Area (Greater Lincoln), serving Lancaster and Saunders counties; and
- Greater Nebraska Local Workforce Development Area (Greater Nebraska), serving the remaining 88 Nebraska counties.

The U.S. Economic Development Administration helps fund and approves the boundaries for Nebraska's Economic Development Districts. These Districts will be referenced in this plan, however, the boundaries for these Districts are not the same as the boundaries for the designated statewide planning region, local areas, or NDOL service regions. Additionally, this plan will also point out areas of economic concentration within these defined areas and regions, which are smaller areas of concentrated economic activities focused around economic hub cities. Within this plan, we will try to make it as clear as possible which region or area definition is being used. Nebraska's Economic Development Districts include the following.

### Panhandle

The Panhandle Economic Development District is comprised of 11 counties in the Western part of Nebraska, including Scotts Bluff, Banner, Morrill, Sheridan, Sioux, Cheyenne, Garden, Deuel, Dawes, Box Butte, and Kimball counties. This area makes up the NDOL Panhandle Region and includes the Scottsbluff area of economic concentration (Scotts Bluff, Banner, Morrill, Sheridan, and Sioux counties) and Sidney area of economic concentration (Cheyenne, Garden, and Deuel counties). The Sidney area of economic concentration is the smallest area of economic concentration in Greater Nebraska. Scottsbluff and the smaller town of Gering form the seventh largest urban area in Nebraska. The combined population of this district is 82,962, with 6,692 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$34,063.

### West Central

The West Central Economic Development District is composed of 18 counties, including Lincoln, McPherson, Hooker, Thomas, Logan, Red Willow, Hayes, Hitchcock, Grant, Arthur, Keith, Perkins, Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Dawson, Gosper, and Furnas. This area makes up much of the NDOL Mid-Plains Region (which also includes Cherry County) and encompasses the North Platte area of economic concentration (Lincoln, McPherson, Hooker, Thomas and Logan counties) and the McCook area of economic concentration (Red Willow, Hayes and Hitchcock counties). The combined population of this district is 102,484, with 8,402 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$34,290.

### Central

The Central Economic Development District is made up of 14 counties, including Cherry, Holt, Boyd, Keya Paha, Rock, Brown, Blaine, Loup, Custer, Garfield, Wheeler, Valley, Greeley, and Sherman. This district crosses the NDOL Mid-Plains, Central, and Northeast Regions and encompasses the O'Neill area of economic concentration (Holt, Boyd, Keya Paha, and Rock counties). The O'Neill area of economic concentration makes up the second smallest in Greater Nebraska. Several counties that feed into the Tri-Cities area of economic concentration (Adams, Clay, Franklin, Nuckolls, Webster, Buffalo, Blaine, Garfield, Kearney, Sherman, Hall, Greeley, Hamilton, Howard, Merrick and Valley counties) also lie in this district. A small portion of the Columbus area of economic concentration (Platte, Boone, Butler, Colfax, Nance, Polk, and Wheeler counties) is also served by this district. The combined population of this district is 46,966 with 4,866 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$32,626.

### South Central

The South-Central Economic Development District covers 13 counties, including Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, and Webster. This district also includes the Tri-Cities area (Hastings, Grand Island, and Kearney) as part of the area of economic concentration (Adams, Clay, Franklin, Nuckolls, Webster, Buffalo, Blaine, Garfield, Kearney, Sherman, Hall, Greeley, Hamilton, Howard, Merrick and Valley). Grand Island, Kearney, and Hastings form a group of three closely tied cities within this

area. These cities share strong economic, workforce, and educational connections, along with a close enough proximity to each other which buttresses these bonds. The combined population of this district is 201,625 with 15,026 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$36,682.

### Northeast

The Northeast Economic Development District covers 17 counties, including Knox, Cedar, Dixon, Antelope, Pierce, Wayne, Thurston, Madison, Stanton, Cuming, Burt, Boone, Nance, Platte, Colfax, Dodge, and Butler. This district serves much of the Columbus area of economic concentration (Platte, Boone, Butler, Colfax, Nance, Polk, and Wheeler counties) and the Norfolk area of economic concentration (Madison, Antelope, Pierce, Stanton, and Wayne counties). The Columbus and Norfolk areas of economic concentration make up much of the NDOL Northeast region. The combined population of this district is 206,220 with 14,768 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$36,432.

### Southeast

The Southeast Economic Development District contains 15 counties, including Polk, York, Fillmore, Thayer, Seward, Saline, Jefferson, Saunders, Gage, Cass, Otoe, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee, Richardson. This district covers the NDOL Southeast region and a portion of the NDOL Lincoln region / Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Area (Saunders County only), as well as a portion of the Northeast NDOL regions. It also contains a portion of the Columbus area of economic concentration (Platte, Boone, Butler, Colfax, Nance, Polk, and Wheeler counties). The combined population of this district is 175,783 with 11,974 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$37,493.

### Siouxland Interstate Metro Planning Council

The Dakota Economic Development District is composed of one county, Dakota. This district is served by the NDOL Northeast region. The population of this district is 20,026, with 1,020 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$32,150.

### Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency Economic Development District comprises three counties in the Eastern part of Nebraska, including Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties. This area boundaries are the same as the Greater Omaha Workforce Development Area and aligns with the NDOL Omaha region. The combined population of this district is 779,252, with 47,116 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$46,345.

### Lancaster County

The Lancaster Economic Development District is composed of one county, Lancaster. This district, combined with Saunders county, makes up the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development area and aligns with the NDOL Lincoln region. The population of this district is 319,090, with 20,140 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$40,855.

- a. economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, based on regional labor market data for each district;**

### **Economic Conditions**

Table 1 shows the number of worksite establishments located in each Economic Development District, including the percent changed in number of establishments from 2018 to 2019. The number of worksite establishments decreased in all but one of Economic Development Districts from 2018-2019. The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency was the lone district to show an increase in the number of establishments, growing by 0.2%. Median earnings increases varied across the state. The Panhandle Area Development District saw the lowest percentage increase at 1.6%, with the highest being in the South-Central Economic Development District at 4.4%.

*Table 1: Labor Market Information: Population, Number of Worksite Establishment, and Median Earning*

Economic Development District	Population	Number of Establishments	Establishments Percent Change	Median Earnings	Median Earnings Percent Change
Central NE Economic Development District	46,966	4,866	-0.6%	\$32,626	2.1%
Lancaster County	319,090	20,140	-0.6%	\$40,855	3.1%
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency	779,252	47,116	0.2%	\$46,345	3.0%
Northeast NE Economic Development District	206,220	14,768	-0.8%	\$36,432	3.7%
Panhandle Area Development District	82,962	6,692	-1.4%	\$34,063	1.6%
Siouxland Interstate Metro. Planning Council	20,026	1,020	-1.4%	\$32,150	3.3%
South Central Economic Development District	201,625	15,026	-0.9%	\$36,682	4.4%
Southeast Nebraska Development District	175,783	11,974	-0.4%	\$37,493	3.8%
West Central Nebraska Development District	102,484	8,402	-0.6%	\$34,290	3.7%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

### Existing and Emerging In-Demand Sectors and Occupations

Table 2 provides a comparison of industry growth and decline over the past five years. For this table, the data is provided statewide, by NDOL Region, and by MSA. Statewide, industries with the most growth by percentage were: Construction (16.3%), Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (13.4%), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (10.8%), Administrative and Waste Services (7.6%), and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting (7.6%). Statewide, the industries with the most loss by percentage were: Utilities (11.5%), Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (9.8%), Wholesale Trade (6.7%), and Retail Trade (2.6%).

The top industries with growth (by percentage) across the defined regions and MSAs were Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, as well as Real Estate and Rental and Leasing. Industries experiencing loss in these defined regions and MSAs were Information, Retail Trade, and Wholesale Trade.

*Table 2: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Industry Comparison 2014-2019*

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Industry Growth/Decline from 2014-2019	State	Central Region (2013 Def.)	Grand Island MSA (2013 Def.)	Lincoln MSA (2013 Def.)	Mid Plains Region (2013 Def.)	Northeast Region (2013 Def.)	Omaha Consortium (2013 Def.)	Panhandle Region (2013 Def.)	Sandhills Region (2013 Def.)	Southeast Region (2013 Def.)
Accommodation and Food Services	6.8%	6.8%	2.3%	7.4%	0.2%	0.8%	10.7%	1.1%	-3.2%	-3.8%
Administrative and Waste Services	7.6%	-0.8%	-4.9%	31.2%	-13.8%	-11.6%	-1.4%	13.7%	-12.8%	13.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	7.6%	3.2%	-5.8%	-17.3%	9.6%	17.4%	17.1%	-0.6%	5.8%	10.9%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	10.8%	4.7%	9.8%	19.9%	30.9%	12.4%	6.1%	-15.8%	39.8%	7.9%
Construction	16.3%	-1.1%	-0.6%	20.3%	-14.7%	8.2%	27.8%	0.2%	20.0%	2.2%
Educational Services	4.0%	-0.3%	7.6%	7.2%	-0.2%	2.4%	3.9%	-2.5%	Confidential	4.5%
Finance and Insurance	5.4%	2.2%	10.3%	-12.5%	-0.6%	2.9%	11.7%	-18.7%	-5.9%	-2.3%



Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Industry Growth/ Decline from 2014-2019	State	Central Region (2013 Def.)	Grand Island MSA (2013 Def.)	Lincoln MSA (2013 Def.)	Mid Plains Region (2013 Def.)	Northeast Region (2013 Def.)	Omaha Consortium (2013 Def.)	Panhandle Region (2013 Def.)	Sandhills Region (2013 Def.)	Southeast Region (2013 Def.)
Health Care and Social Assistance	4.6%	1.3%	-6.6%	9.0%	-0.7%	-1.5%	8.7%	-6.0%	-2.1%	-4.1%
Information	1.2%	-6.7%	-17.5%	33.5%	-12.6%	-23.9%	-5.5%	-8.6%	-16.9%	-5.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	5.9%	34.8%	-9.4%	-1.1%	30.3%	31.8%	9.6%	Confidential	-45.0%	-28.8%
Manufacturing	2.6%	8.1%	-0.9%	-2.5%	0.2%	5.4%	3.1%	-13.1%	13.0%	3.8%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	-9.8%	6.8%	-2.3%	Confidential	-26.5%	-14.9%	8.7%	-6.7%	43.3%	-15.6%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	2.1%	0.2%	-7.9%	3.4%	-7.9%	-9.2%	5.2%	0.7%	-14.5%	3.3%
Professional and Technical Services	5.7%	4.1%	2.3%	14.1%	-9.5%	-6.2%	1.3%	-7.0%	18.1%	-10.5%
Public Administration	2.8%	6.1%	5.3%	0.8%	1.8%	4.1%	2.3%	1.2%	0.3%	-3.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13.4%	24.8%	14.6%	20.8%	-15.4%	-5.2%	14.4%	12.1%	31.4%	-2.5%
Retail Trade	-2.6%	-9.6%	-4.4%	-3.2%	-8.5%	-0.4%	0.3%	-9.4%	-11.5%	-3.8%
Total, All Industries	3.8%	0.7%	-0.9%	5.9%	-2.4%	1.5%	5.5%	-8.3%	-0.8%	-1.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	3.9%	-0.5%	13.8%	5.1%	-3.1%	11.5%	1.9%	-6.0%	15.9%	-8.6%
Utilities	-11.5%	-24.9%	-0.5%	Confidential	-8.2%	-3.2%	-17.9%	1.0%	Confidential	-4.0%
Wholesale Trade	-6.7%	-13.6%	-12.7%	2.1%	-4.2%	-9.6%	-3.3%	-34.0%	-11.2%	-12.8%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Table 3 shows the top five growth industries by percent change over the 2014-2019 period for industries employing more than 100 individuals at Nebraska worksites. The information is presented to include growth industries for the entire state, as well as growth industries for defined MSAs and NDOL regions. The growth measurement for this section is based on a comparison of the number of positions employed within the industry in 2014 compared to number of positions employed in the same industry in 2019. Construction, manufacturing, agricultural-related jobs remain consistently on the upward trend across most economic measurement regions throughout the state and have been consistent growth industries historically for Nebraska. There seems to have been significant growth recently in the category of Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation. This growth appears in many of the defined MSAs and regions, ranking in the top five industries in five of the nine, and showing up in the top five for the state.

Table 3: Top Five Growth Industries Comparison by Workforce Area 2014-2019

Workforce Area	Industry	2014	2019	14-19 Change	% Change
Nebraska	Administrative and Waste Services	48758	52480	3722	7.6%
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	13680	14724	1044	7.6%
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	14260	15794	1534	10.8%
	Construction	46271	53802	7531	16.3%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	9345	10594	1249	13.4%
Central Region (2013 Def.)	Accommodation and Food Services	5116	5464	348	6.8%
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	847	1142	295	34.8%
	Manufacturing	7904	8546	642	8.1%
	Public Administration	3521	3737	216	6.1%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	322	402	80	24.8%

Workforce Area	Industry	2014	2019	14-19 Change	% Change
Grand Island Metropolitan Statistical Area (2013 Def.)	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	508	558	50	9.8%
	Educational Services	3179	3421	242	7.6%
	Finance and Insurance	1469	1620	151	10.3%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	336	385	49	14.6%
	Transportation and Warehousing	1918	2183	265	13.8%
Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area (2013 Def.)	Administrative and Waste Services	7719	10130	2411	31.2%
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3421	4101	680	19.9%
	Construction	7820	9408	1588	20.3%
	Information	2571	3432	861	33.5%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1612	1948	336	20.8%
Mid Plains Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1999	2190	191	9.6%
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	411	538	127	30.9%
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	304	396	92	30.3%
	Manufacturing	5052	5064	12	0.2%
	Public Administration	3074	3129	55	1.8%
Northeast Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	3377	3965	588	17.4%
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	956	1075	119	12.4%
	Construction	4605	4982	377	8.2%
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	151	199	48	31.8%
	Transportation and Warehousing	4746	5290	544	11.5%
Omaha Consortium (2013 Def.)	Accommodation and Food Services	33475	37063	3588	10.7%
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	790	925	135	17.1%
	Construction	20898	26700	5802	27.8%
	Finance and Insurance	30000	33499	3499	11.7%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5639	6451	812	14.4%
Panhandle Region (2013 Def.)	Accommodation and Food Services	3203	3238	35	1.1%
	Administrative and Waste Services	1174	1335	161	13.7%
	Public Administration	2868	2901	33	1.2%
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	174	195	21	12.1%
	Utilities	298	301	3	1.0%
Sandhills Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1031	1091	60	5.8%
	Construction	365	438	73	20.0%
	Transportation and Warehousing	390	452	62	15.9%
	Professional and Technical Services	193	228	35	18.1%
	Manufacturing	370	418	48	13.0%
Southeast Region (2013 Def.)	Administrative and Waste Services	883	998	115	13.0%
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1270	1408	138	10.9%
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	406	438	32	7.9%
	Educational Services	4538	4743	205	4.5%
	Manufacturing	370	8970	8600	3.8%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Table 4 highlights projected industry growth by employment levels expected between 2018 and 2028 in each of the workforce areas. Location quotient is included to show the concentration of an industry compared to statewide and national averages. Regional specialization can be identified using industry concentration, or location quotient, which sets 1.00 as the state or national average. For example, LQ of 2 indicates employment in an area is twice that of the remainder of the state or nation. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting is predominantly the economic driver for most economic areas of concentration, followed by Manufacturing. Significant concentrations include Finance and Insurance in the Omaha Consortium, Educational Services in the Lincoln MSA, and Transportation and Warehousing in the Panhandle.

Table 4: Projected Industry Growth 2018-2028

Workforce Area	Industry	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change in Employment 2018-2028	Projected Percent Change 2018-2028	In State Location Quotient	National Location Quotient
Central Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	9058	476	5.5%	2.15	13.22
	Health Care and Social Assistance	12355	747	6.4%	1.16	1.05
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	1328	221	20.0%	0.76	0.92
	Manufacturing	8552	210	2.5%	1.21	1.29
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2053	234	12.9%	0.58	0.38
Grand Island Metropolitan Statistical Area (2013 Def.)	Construction	2503	278	12.5%	0.98	0.94
	Educational Services	4155	247	6.3%	0.87	0.96
	Health Care and Social Assistance	6288	923	17.2%	0.85	0.77
	Manufacturing	8954	723	8.8%	1.90	2.02
	Transportation and Warehousing	2247	166	8.0%	0.92	1.04
Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area (2013 Def.)	Accommodation and Food Services	16276	928	6.0%	1.09	0.82
	Construction	10431	817	8.5%	1.01	0.97
	Educational Services	24523	1992	8.8%	1.20	1.33
	Health Care and Social Assistance	30917	3386	12.3%	1.05	0.95
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11292	1435	14.6%	1.20	0.78
Mid Plains Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	7070	287	4.2%	2.45	15.04
	Educational Services	4867	114	2.4%	0.95	1.06
	Health Care and Social Assistance	6978	321	4.8%	0.95	0.86
	Manufacturing	5295	219	4.3%	1.06	1.13
	Wholesale Trade	2648	200	8.2%	1.25	1.18
Northeast Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	15464	987	6.8%	2.15	13.22
	Educational Services	12420	701	6.0%	0.97	1.07
	Health Care and Social Assistance	15133	849	5.9%	0.84	0.76
	Manufacturing	26156	1417	5.7%	2.13	2.26
	Transportation and Warehousing	5547	511	10.1%	0.83	0.94
Omaha Consortium (2013 Def.)	Accommodation and Food Services	39216	2874	7.9%	1.07	0.81
	Construction	28576	2331	8.9%	1.16	1.11
	Finance and Insurance	42330	2432	6.1%	1.40	2.08
	Health Care and Social Assistance	74749	10112	15.6%	1.03	0.93
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	31168	3319	11.9%	1.41	0.93
Panhandle Region (2013 Def.)	Accommodation and Food Services	3245	116	3.7%	1.02	0.77
	Administrative and Waste Services	1547	84	5.7%	0.72	0.54
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	5773	224	4.0%	2.45	15.05
	Health Care and Social Assistance	5926	137	2.4%	1.01	0.92
	Transportation and Warehousing	2771	86	3.2%	1.32	1.49
Sandhills Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	4557	161	3.7%	5.68	34.90
	Construction	508	36	7.6%	0.67	0.64
	Educational Services	1344	56	4.3%	0.93	1.03
	Health Care and Social Assistance	1902	57	3.1%	0.95	0.86
	Transportation and Warehousing	413	28	7.3%	0.55	0.63
Southeast Region (2013 Def.)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	8112	137	1.7%	2.70	16.63
	Construction	1968	138	7.5%	0.68	0.65
	Educational Services	5871	345	6.2%	1.04	1.16
	Health Care and Social Assistance	7070	160	2.3%	0.93	0.84
	Manufacturing	9217	221	2.5%	1.77	1.88

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**b. employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations based on regional labor market data for each district;**

Studies were commissioned by Nebraska Departments of Labor and Economic Development from 2016-2020 to identify skills gaps in the labor force by workforce area and contributing factors ([NEworks - Nebraska Labor Availability Study Publications](#)). Results indicate that all areas of Nebraska except Lincoln will experience a shortage of workers due to 1) the flow of individuals into the community will not keep pace with business needs or 2) a significant share of workers deemed difficult to hire due to a “poor work history.” While Lincoln will experience a surplus of job seekers in certain occupations due to local area universities, colleges, and community colleges, a large portion of these individuals are expected to leave the area. It is in the state’s best interest to recruit these graduates into Nebraska communities. Suggested areas of focus include:

- Loan Officers;
- Registered Nurses;
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurse;
- Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics;
- Maintenance and Repair Workers, General;
- Computer Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic;
- Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators and Tenders, Metal and Plastic;
- Machinists;
- Industrial Machinery Mechanics;
- Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers;
- Heavy and Tractor-trailer Truck Drivers;
- Software Developers;
- Computer Programmers;
- Computer Systems Analysts;
- Computer Programmers and Software Developers;
- Network and Computer Systems Administrators;
- Computer User Support Specialist;
- Management Analysts; and
- Accountants and Auditor.

**High Wage, High Skill, High Demand (H3)**

The Nebraska Departments of Labor and Education, in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, have focused their respective efforts towards existing and emerging occupations that meet certain high wage, high skill and high demand criteria. Known as H3 occupations, these occupations are considered high wage when at least half of their wage measures are at or above the regional average for all occupations. Occupations that require either some college or a higher level of educational attainment are high skill; these include occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent plus long-term on-the-job training, an apprenticeship, or an internship or residency. The number of annual openings, net change in employment, and growth rate determine whether an occupation is in high demand.

Tables 5 through 23 highlight the percentage of H3 occupations and projected employment needs by industry in each economic area of concentration. These tables include the education, work experience, and job training required for each position.

**Central**

*Table 5: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Utilities	294	466	63.1%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,124	1,819	61.8%

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Transportation and Warehousing	1,057	1,748	60.5%
Educational Services	3,936	7,433	53.0%
Construction	1,632	3,365	48.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,831	11,608	41.6%
Mining	30	89	33.7%
Other Services (except Government)	892	3,133	28.5%
Finance and Insurance	626	2,232	28.0%
Information	188	698	26.9%
Wholesale Trade	939	3,503	26.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	296	1,107	26.7%
Government	1,079	4,581	23.6%
Manufacturing	1,856	8,342	22.2%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	359	1,866	19.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	60	345	17.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	127	749	17.0%
Retail Trade	840	7,568	11.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	517	8,582	6.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	59	5,460	1.1%

Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020  
Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020

Table 6: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$25,185	\$35,546	\$43,329	1,409	1,462	53	3.8%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
Registered Nurses	\$56,322	\$65,272	\$75,235	2,021	2,156	135	6.7%	Bachelor's	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$42,960	\$81,454	\$131,264	1,117	1,183	66	5.9%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$25,408	\$36,150	\$44,680	999	964	-35	-3.5%	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate term on the job training
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$36,177	\$56,969	\$68,981	1,063	1,086	23	2.2%	Bachelor's	None	None
Machinists	\$33,451	\$41,320	\$45,964	626	660	34	5.4%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Carpenters	\$27,235	\$36,609	\$42,772	719	731	12	1.7%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$45,202	\$58,086	\$70,632	730	752	22	3.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Human Resources Specialists	\$37,608	\$48,727	\$62,686	343	388	45	13.1%	Bachelor's	None	None
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$33,812	\$40,192	\$57,454	448	465	17	3.8%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship

Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020

Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020

Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020

**Grand Island MSA**

*Table 7: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Utilities	109	188	58.0%
Educational Services	2,215	3,908	56.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	511	953	53.6%
Transportation and Warehousing	1,084	2,081	52.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,287	5,365	42.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	157	458	34.3%
Mining	13	42	31.0%
Information	109	370	29.5%
Government	707	2,740	25.8%
Other Services (except Government)	406	1,664	24.4%
Finance and Insurance	454	1,927	23.6%
Wholesale Trade	492	2,102	23.4%
Construction	468	2,225	21.0%
Manufacturing	1,020	8,231	12.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	46	374	12.3%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	191	1,900	10.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	51	549	9.3%
Retail Trade	470	5,728	8.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	185	2,885	6.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	124	3,267	3.8%

*Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020  
Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

*Table 8: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations*

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$32,826	\$43,250	\$52,329	1,322	1,436	114	8.6%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
Registered Nurses	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	935	1,104	169	18.1%	Bachelor's	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$39,790	\$69,235	\$99,587	714	765	51	7.1%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$49,943	\$65,464	\$86,524	674	713	39	5.8%	Bachelor's	None	None
Accountants and Auditors	\$47,076	\$64,296	\$106,579	414	434	20	4.8%	Bachelor's	None	None
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$44,944	\$63,535	\$79,882	406	430	24	5.9%	Bachelor's	None	None
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$37,634	\$45,142	\$51,106	269	304	35	13.0%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	None

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$42,631	\$47,420	\$54,641	176	208	32	18.2%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	\$43,528	\$51,525	\$64,928	152	181	29	19.1%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Long term on the job training
Physical Therapist Assistants	\$47,136	\$51,422	\$57,353	75	104	29	38.7%	Associate degree	None	None

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

### **Lincoln MSA**

**Table 9: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average**

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,457	2,284	63.8%
Information	2,222	3,503	63.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	6,568	10,760	61.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,899	9,857	59.8%
Utilities	447	805	55.5%
Educational Services	11,677	22,531	51.8%
Construction	4,799	9,614	49.9%
Finance and Insurance	5,752	11,900	48.3%
Government	7,602	15,880	47.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,311	27,531	41.1%
Other Services (except Government)	3,304	8,526	38.8%
Wholesale Trade	1,243	4,632	26.8%
Manufacturing	3,528	13,346	26.4%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,737	10,848	16.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	258	1,914	13.5%
Mining	1	8	12.5%
Retail Trade	1,736	19,105	9.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	274	3,928	7.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	164	3,063	5.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	213	15,348	1.4%

*Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

**Table 10: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations**

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$35,182	\$52,446	\$65,082	6,525	6,869	344	5.3%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Registered Nurses	\$55,780	\$64,680	\$74,097	5,140	5,703	563	11.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$50,029	\$81,797	\$128,814	3,016	3,274	258	8.6%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Accountants and Auditors	\$44,416	\$61,592	\$82,003	1,938	2,092	154	8.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Carpenters	\$29,123	\$40,759	\$49,963	1,947	2,066	119	6.1%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/ Technical Education	\$48,561	\$66,034	\$72,757	1,881	2,050	169	9.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Software Developers, Applications	Not Available	\$83,454	Not Available	1,022	1,266	244	23.9%	Bachelor's	None	None
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$47,560	\$61,403	\$62,707	1,682	1,833	151	9.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Credit Counselors	\$36,101	\$42,003	\$50,796	848	1,080	232	27.4%	Bachelor's	None	Moderate term on the job training
Compliance Officers	\$42,631	\$69,141	\$82,734	1,342	1,460	118	8.8%	Bachelor's	None	Moderate term on the job training

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Mid-Plains**

*Table 11: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Utilities	407	624	65.2%
Educational Services	2,564	4,753	53.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	527	987	53.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	215	404	53.2%
Construction	796	1,876	42.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,773	6,657	41.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	1,494	3,769	39.6%
Information	191	549	34.8%
Finance and Insurance	531	1,580	33.6%
Wholesale Trade	795	2,448	32.5%
Government	1,297	4,164	31.1%



Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Other Services (except Government)	387	1,400	27.6%
Mining	22	139	15.8%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	91	791	11.5%
Manufacturing	466	5,076	9.2%
Retail Trade	424	5,385	7.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	15	219	6.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	376	6,783	5.5%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	19	463	4.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	56	3,828	1.5%

Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020  
Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020

**Table 12: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations**

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$29,043	\$36,600	\$43,053	1,065	1,148	83	7.8%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
General and Operations Managers	\$42,652	\$73,410	\$113,660	761	803	42	5.5%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$38,760	\$55,687	\$66,132	877	899	22	2.5%	Bachelor's	None	None
Registered Nurses	\$52,818	\$64,716	\$75,773	897	933	36	4.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/ Technical Education	\$41,550	\$54,073	\$63,084	640	656	16	2.5%	Bachelor's	None	None
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	\$32,890	\$38,954	\$51,583	327	355	28	8.6%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$36,014	\$42,552	\$47,276	344	367	23	6.7%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	None
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$30,524	\$39,237	\$46,700	291	310	19	6.5%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Carpenters	\$31,773	\$36,836	\$43,285	309	310	1	0.3%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Loan Officers	\$47,757	\$66,683	\$81,131	181	200	19	10.5%	Bachelor's	None	Moderate term on the job training

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Northeast**

*Table 13: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Transportation and Warehousing	3,289	5,036	65.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,241	2,130	58.3%
Educational Services	5,768	11,719	49.2%
Utilities	552	1,205	45.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,140	14,284	43.0%
Wholesale Trade	2,236	6,021	37.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	77	210	36.7%
Construction	1,846	5,074	36.4%
Mining	70	200	35.0%
Finance and Insurance	1,444	4,660	31.0%
Information	224	828	27.1%
Government	2,284	8,652	26.4%
Other Services (except Government)	769	3,723	20.7%
Manufacturing	3,614	24,739	14.6%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	68	554	12.3%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	400	3,287	12.2%
Retail Trade	1,116	11,916	9.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	975	14,477	6.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	54	996	5.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	139	6,327	2.2%

*Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

*Table 14: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations*

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$35,922	\$47,943	\$56,902	4,581	5,051	470	10.3%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
General and Operations Managers	\$44,979	\$74,942	\$125,720	1,694	1,807	113	6.7%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Registered Nurses	\$54,118	\$62,135	\$71,128	2,297	2,425	128	5.6%	Bachelor's	None	None
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$29,599	\$37,889	\$44,590	1,541	1,504	-37	-2.4%	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate term on the job training
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$41,684	\$55,228	\$63,647	1,311	1,390	79	6.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$41,934	\$50,154	\$58,228	728	828	100	13.7%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$44,199	\$57,061	\$64,577	1,067	1,131	64	6.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Electricians	\$39,769	\$49,147	\$55,763	638	688	50	7.8%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$38,498	\$52,065	\$62,409	783	811	28	3.6%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$35,853	\$44,021	\$48,768	783	838	55	7.0%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	None

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Omaha MSA**

*Table 15: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Utilities	2,119	2,788	76.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	10,246	15,857	64.6%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	17,695	27,849	63.5%
Information	5,917	10,753	55.0%
Transportation and Warehousing	12,646	23,696	53.4%
Educational Services	21,673	41,631	52.1%
Finance and Insurance	20,620	39,898	51.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	28,384	64,637	43.9%

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Construction	10,313	26,245	39.3%
Government	8,166	22,348	36.5%
Other Services (except Government)	4,951	15,726	31.5%
Mining	98	363	27.0%
Manufacturing	5,732	28,138	20.4%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5,320	30,525	17.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,026	6,291	16.3%
Retail Trade	4,925	47,287	10.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	495	7,576	6.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	170	3,741	4.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	903	36,342	2.5%

Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020  
Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020

Table 16: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$37,640	\$45,946	\$52,586	12,677	13,315	638	5.0%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
Registered Nurses	\$55,299	\$67,314	\$77,255	12,818	14,687	1,869	14.6%	Bachelor's	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$52,202	\$90,066	\$136,531	8,332	9,053	721	8.7%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Accountants and Auditors	\$49,589	\$63,725	\$87,774	5,663	6,154	491	8.7%	Bachelor's	None	None
Software Developers, Applications	Confidential	\$93,700	Confidential	3,390	4,262	872	25.7%	Bachelor's	None	None
Electricians	\$33,745	\$53,338	\$67,612	2,905	3,228	323	11.1%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	\$38,440	\$57,567	\$72,704	2,282	2,732	450	19.7%	Bachelor's	None	None
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$46,293	\$69,835	\$77,720	2,495	2,803	308	12.3%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Elementary School Teachers, Except	\$47,701	\$61,302	\$72,201	4,153	4,371	218	5.3%	Bachelor's	None	None

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Special Education										
Human Resources Specialists	\$40,669	\$55,446	\$70,715	2,770	2,997	227	8.2%	Bachelor's	None	None

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Panhandle**

*Table 17: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Utilities	164	304	53.9%
Educational Services	1,990	4,326	46.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	349	765	45.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,349	5,789	40.6%
Transportation and Warehousing	1,052	2,685	39.2%
Finance and Insurance	475	1,331	35.7%
Construction	477	1,452	32.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	218	664	32.8%
Information	137	490	28.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	39	157	24.8%
Mining	36	154	23.4%
Government	873	4,031	21.7%
Other Services (except Government)	229	1,104	20.7%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	287	1,463	19.6%
Wholesale Trade	361	2,179	16.6%
Manufacturing	269	2,028	13.3%
Retail Trade	336	4,641	7.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	265	5,549	4.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6	190	3.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	24	3,129	0.8%

*Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

*Table 18: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations*

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$41,114	\$52,205	\$58,857	581	610	29	5.0%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
Registered Nurses	\$52,387	\$64,825	\$74,218	932	980	48	5.2%	Bachelor's	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$49,423	\$76,736	\$112,199	687	685	-2	-0.3%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$39,341	\$55,506	\$64,449	649	641	-8	-1.2%	Bachelor's	None	None
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$36,055	\$42,758	\$48,075	320	336	16	5.0%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	None
Electricians	\$35,507	\$47,864	\$57,980	217	230	13	6.0%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$49,009	\$47,966	\$60,915	181	192	11	6.1%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Rail Car Repairers	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	172	184	12	7.0%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Managers, All Other	Confidential	\$55,222	Confidential	210	221	11	5.2%	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$50,114	\$59,961	\$73,581	364	360	-4	-1.1%	Bachelor's	None	None

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Sandhills**

*Table 19: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	184	244	75.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	279	385	72.5%
Utilities	65	95	68.4%
Educational Services	685	1,288	53.2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	20	38	52.6%
Construction	196	472	41.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	738	1,845	40.0%
Finance and Insurance	118	377	31.3%
Information	36	127	28.3%
Government	293	1,251	23.4%
Other Services (except Government)	71	337	21.1%
Manufacturing	72	391	18.4%

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Wholesale Trade	153	846	18.1%
Retail Trade	183	1,344	13.6%
Mining	5	39	12.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5	45	11.1%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	6	73	8.2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4	54	7.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	282	4,396	6.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	0	844	0.0%

Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020  
Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020

Table 20: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$29,544	\$38,116	\$46,956	401	431	30	7.5%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	299	314	15	5.0%	Bachelor's	None	None
Registered Nurses	\$54,870	\$61,916	\$69,120	319	331	12	3.8%	Bachelor's	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$32,662	\$67,050	\$87,904	191	201	10	5.2%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$30,390	\$37,176	\$42,179	232	222	-10	-4.3%	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate term on the job training
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	\$33,078	\$42,297	\$53,813	87	97	10	11.5%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Electricians	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	78	86	8	10.3%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Carpenters	\$32,657	\$38,007	\$42,380	100	106	6	6.0%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	128	133	5	3.9%	Bachelor's	None	None

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$36,747	\$45,597	\$47,601	108	111	3	2.8%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	None

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Southeast**

*Table 21: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Utilities	910	1,114	81.7%
Educational Services	2,839	5,526	51.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	683	1,440	47.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	34	80	42.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,549	6,910	36.9%
Information	131	381	34.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	259	760	34.1%
Finance and Insurance	465	1,720	27.0%
Government	1,350	5,006	27.0%
Wholesale Trade	552	2,317	23.8%
Mining	11	47	23.4%
Construction	387	1,830	21.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	26	151	17.2%
Other Services (except Government)	250	1,556	16.1%
Manufacturing	1,332	8,996	14.8%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	143	1,057	13.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	610	7,975	7.6%
Retail Trade	327	4,816	6.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	13	389	3.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	38	3,113	1.2%

*Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

*Table 22: Projected Employment Needs by H3 Occupations*

SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$31,424	\$37,386	\$44,215	915	994	79	8.6%	Post-secondary non-degree award	None	Short term on the job training
General and Operations Managers	\$32,934	\$74,630	\$105,273	766	812	46	6.0%	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Registered Nurses	\$56,613	\$64,248	\$72,890	1,136	1,180	44	3.9%	Bachelor's	None	None



SOC Title	Entry Level Wage	Median Annual Wage	Exp Wage	2018 Est Jobs	2028 Proj Jobs	Growth Openings	Percent Change	Education	Work Exp	Job Training
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$41,600	\$53,032	\$62,157	526	572	46	8.8%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$42,433	\$56,209	\$64,567	688	731	43	6.3%	Bachelor's	None	None
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$39,645	\$50,084	\$63,517	498	520	22	4.4%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$42,101	\$55,789	\$63,695	568	604	36	6.3%	Bachelor's	None	None
Machinists	\$33,324	\$38,594	\$44,786	282	311	29	10.3%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Gas Plant Operators	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	396	386	-10	-2.5%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	\$33,146	\$38,300	\$45,834	282	294	12	4.3%	HS diploma or equivalent	None	Long term on the job training

*Skill and Demand from 2018-2028 Long-term Occupational Projections, July 2020*

*Wages from Occupational Employment Statistics, 1st Quarter 2020*

*Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020*

## **Nebraska Statewide**

*Table 23: H3 Occupational Employment Percentages by Industry Sector, 2018 Annual Average*

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Management of Companies and Enterprises	13,013	21,102	61.7%
Utilities	4,603	7,589	60.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	26,824	45,364	59.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	28,794	51,600	55.8%
Educational Services	54,007	103,115	52.4%
Information	9,177	17,699	51.9%
Finance and Insurance	30,567	65,625	46.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	63,358	144,626	43.8%
Construction	18,693	52,153	35.8%
Government	23,054	68,653	33.6%
Other Services (except Government)	11,525	37,169	31.0%
Wholesale Trade	11,752	40,458	29.0%
Mining	280	1,081	25.9%
Manufacturing	18,602	99,287	18.7%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	9,033	51,810	17.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,498	10,050	14.9%
Retail Trade	10,489	107,790	9.7%

Industry Sector	Employment in H3 Occupations	Total Employment	Percent of Total Industry Employment in H3 Occupations
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	959	14,894	6.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3,432	57,451	6.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,497	77,658	1.9%

Custom calculation based on high wage, skill, demand (H3) indicators and 2018-2028 Long-term Industry Projections produced July 2020  
Produced by The Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, October 2020

**c. knowledge and skills needed by job seekers to meet the employment needs of the employers in each district, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**

In addition to the education, work experience, and job training needed for specific high demand H3 occupations on tables 5 through 23, tables 24 through 33 provide the top advertised detailed job skills for all positions in an economic area of concentration. Most of these skills can be classified as “soft skills,” highlighting the need for work-based learning to develop positive work habits.

**Central**

*Table 24: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills*

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	1,235
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	654
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	654
4	Work independently	Basic Skills	470
5	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	450
6	Route calls	Receptionist Skills	345
7	Assessing customer needs	Concierge Skills	345
8	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	344
9	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	316
10	Positive attitude	Interpersonal Skills	165

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

**Grand Island**

*Table 25: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills*

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	909
2	Work independently	Basic Skills	583
3	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	385
4	Problem solving	Basic Skills	308
5	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	289
6	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	255
7	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	203
8	Educate patients	Physician Skills	164
9	Time management	Basic Skills	119
10	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	112

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

**Lincoln**

*Table 26: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills*

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	2,937
2	Problem solving	Basic Skills	1,030

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
3	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	802
4	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	731
5	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	597
6	Work independently	Basic Skills	542
7	Supervises licensed practical nurses	Registered Nurse (RN) Skills	486
8	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	454
9	Decision making	Basic Skills	399
10	Time management	Basic Skills	369

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

## Mid-Plains

Table 27: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	677
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	438
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	384
4	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	242
5	Route calls	Receptionist Skills	229
6	Assessing customer needs	Concierge Skills	229
7	Discharge planning	Registered Nurse (RN) Skills	134
8	Provides nursing supervision	Registered Nurse (RN) Skills	124
9	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	119
10	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	83

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

## Northeast

Table 28: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	1,757
2	Work independently	Basic Skills	990
3	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	893
4	Problem solving	Basic Skills	851
5	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	727
6	Route calls	Receptionist Skills	444
7	Assessing customer needs	Concierge Skills	443
8	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	419
9	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	302
10	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	292

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

## Omaha

Table 29: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	9,290
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	3,492
3	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	3,331
4	Problem solving	Basic Skills	3,120
5	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	2,529
6	Work independently	Basic Skills	2,385

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
7	Positive attitude	Interpersonal Skills	1,999
8	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	1,896
9	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	1,803
10	Time management	Basic Skills	1,767

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

## Panhandle

Table 30: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	643
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	299
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	292
4	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	150
5	Route calls	Receptionist Skills	125
6	Assessing customer needs	Concierge Skills	125
7	Decision making	Basic Skills	117
8	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	115
9	Work independently	Basic Skills	98
10	Time management	Basic Skills	96

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

## Sandhills

Table 31: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	205
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	176
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	135
4	Assessing customer needs	Concierge Skills	122
5	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	122
6	Route calls	Receptionist Skills	122
7	Medication administration	Registered Nurse (RN) Skills	45
8	Serving food	Waitress or Waiter Skills	32
9	Positive attitude	Interpersonal Skills	25
10	Work independently	Basic Skills	23

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

## Southeast

Table 32: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	916
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	629
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	514
4	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	390
5	Route calls	Receptionist Skills	330
6	Assessing customer needs	Concierge Skills	330
7	Work independently	Basic Skills	193
8	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	170
9	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	164
10	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	154

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

**Statewide**

*Table 33: Top Advertised Detailed Job Skills*

Rank	Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Advertised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	18,569
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	7,768
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	7,288
4	Work independently	Basic Skills	5,353
5	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	5,153
6	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	4,646
7	Typing	Office Clerk Skills	4,400
8	Organizational skills	Basic Skills	3,222
9	Positive attitude	Interpersonal Skills	2,939
10	Time management	Basic Skills	2,779

Source: NEworks Job Postings November 2020

**d. workforce in each district, including:**

**i. current labor force employment and unemployment data;**

Nebraska unemployment is typically among the lowest in the nation. The unemployment rate peaked at 8.7% in April of 2020 during the pandemic but had completely recovered by September of the same year and reached a low of 3.0% in October. The Central, Lancaster, and Northeast areas currently have unemployment rates lower than the state average. Siouxland has the highest at 3.9%.

*Table 34: Unemployment Rates by Economic Development District*

Economic Development District	Time Period	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Central NE Economic Development District	2019	26941	26194	747	2.8%
Lancaster County	2019	177186	172276	4910	2.8%
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency	2019	407465	394567	12898	3.2%
Northeast NE Economic Development District	2019	112402	109182	3220	2.9%
Panhandle Area Development District	2019	43594	42135	1459	3.3%
Siouxland Interstate Metro. Planning Council	2019	10791	10369	422	3.9%
South Central Economic Development District	2019	108014	104715	3299	3.1%
Southeast Nebraska Development District	2019	92165	89312	2853	3.1%
West Central Nebraska Development District	2019	56682	54932	1750	3.1%

Source: NE Dept of Labor, Labor Market Information, LAUS Program

Nebraska ranks 14th in poverty with a rate of 11.0%. While most economic development districts in the state have a lower poverty rate, Lancaster County and Siouxland are currently experiencing a higher percentage of individuals in poverty.

*Table 35: Poverty Rates by Economic Development District*

Economic Development District	Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	Poverty Rate	Estimate Total
Central NE Economic Development District	4526	9.9%	46513
Lancaster County	37502	12.5%	299690
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency	78128	8.6%	746987
Northeast NE Economic Development District	22601	10.7%	200477
Panhandle Area Development District	10457	10.9%	82118
Siouxland Interstate Metro. Planning Council	3227	16.2%	19882
South Central Economic Development District	22769	10.8%	195093
Southeast Nebraska Development District	16355	10.5%	167956
West Central Nebraska Development District	11014	11.2%	100975

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B17020

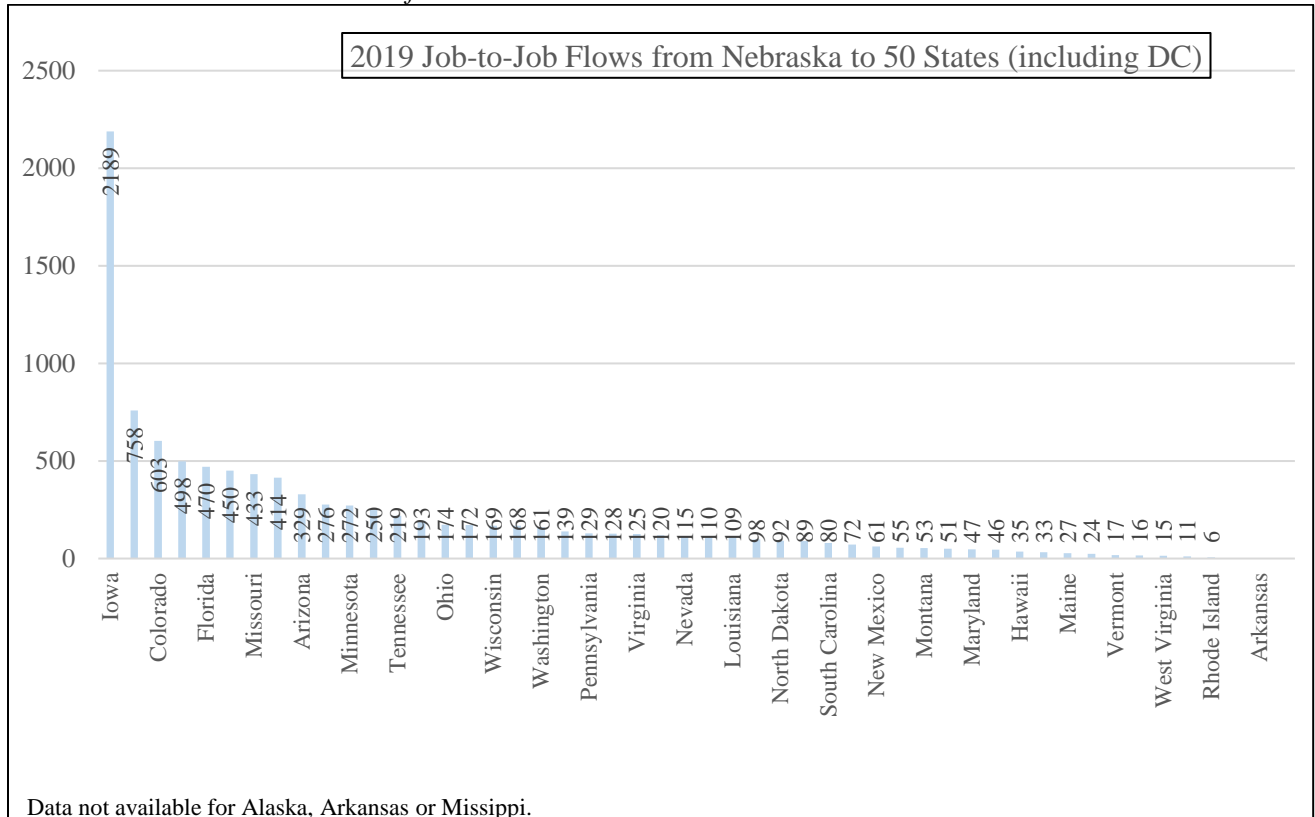
ii. information on labor market trends; and

**Job-to-Job Flows from Nebraska Analysis**

Tables 36 – 38 highlight the jobs that are leaving Nebraska and moving to other states. In 2019 significantly more jobs moved to Iowa than any other state.

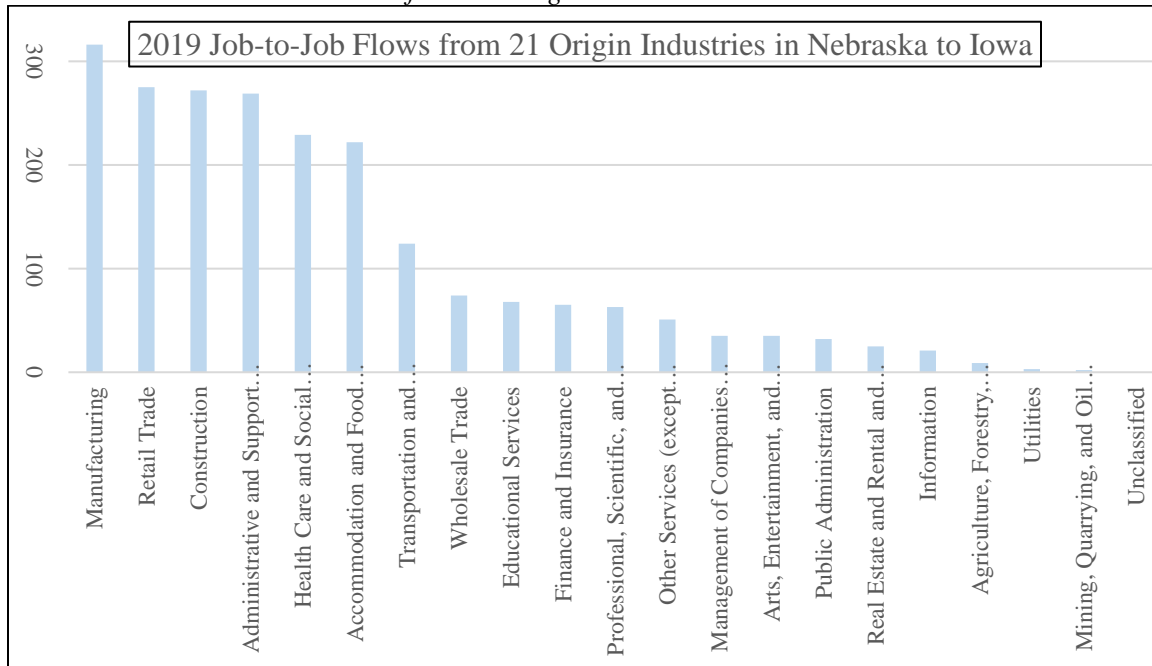
The states with the highest number of jobs moving from Nebraska include Iowa, Texas, Colorado, Kansas, Florida, California, Missouri, South Dakota, Arizona, and Illinois.

Table 36: 2019 Job-to-Job Flows from Nebraska to 50 States



Source: US Census Bureau, Job-to-Job Flow Analysis

Table 37: 2019 Job-to-Job Flows from 21 Origin Industries in Nebraska to Iowa

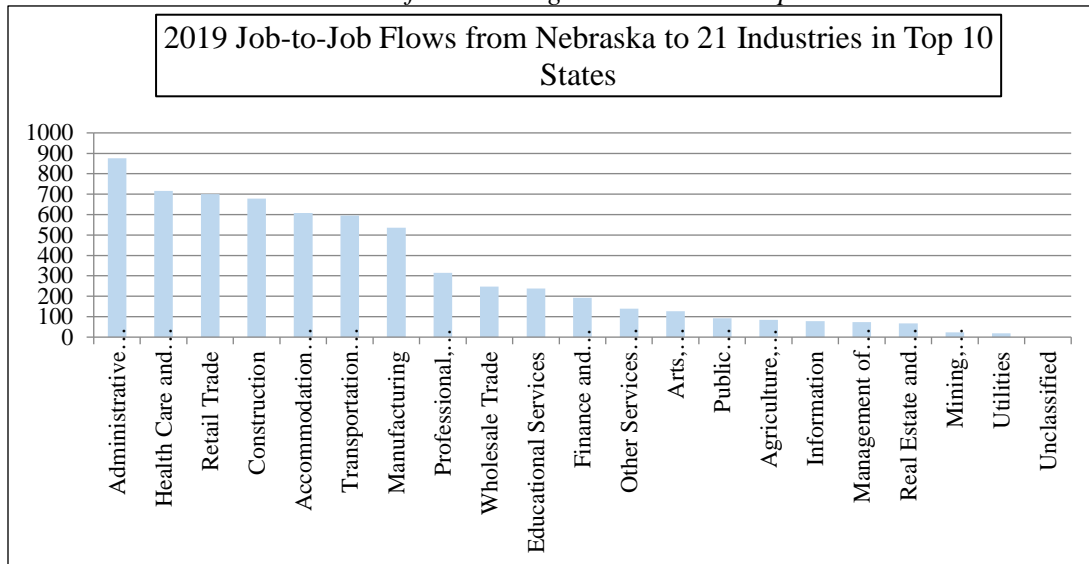


Source: US Census Bureau, Job-to-Job Flow Analysis

The most common industries that people went to work for in Iowa include:

- manufacturing
- retail trade
- construction
- administrative and support
- waste management and remediation services
- health care and social assistance
- accommodation and food services

Table 38: 2019 Job-to-Job Flows from 21 Origin Industries in Top 10 States



Source: US Census Bureau, Job-to-Job Flow Analysis

When viewing the top ten states job seekers left for in 2019 (Iowa, Texas, Colorado, Kansas, Florida, California, Missouri, South Dakota, Arizona, and Illinois), these are the top five industries:

- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Retail Trade
- Construction
- Accommodation and Food Services

### **Nebraska Thriving Index**

In the Nebraska Thriving Index (<https://ruralprosperityne.unl.edu/thriving-index>), a project of the Rural Futures Institute at University of Nebraska – Lincoln, regions were compared to communities similar in fundamental economic characteristics to determine how well they are thriving. A score of 100 indicates a region ranked as average compared to peers, 0 means one standard deviation behind its peers, and 200 means one standard deviation ahead of its peers. This study looked at three indexes of economic prosperity and five indexes of economic conditions. For the purpose of this plan, scores related to the following were considered:

- Growth Index: total employment growth, private employment, private wage growth, growth in households with children, and growth in dividend, interest, and rent income
- Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index: entrepreneurial activity, industry diversity, occupation diversity and share of telecommuters
- Education & Skill Index: high school and college attainment, labor force participation, employment in knowledge-based occupations
- Demographic Growth & Renewal Index: long-term population growth, dependency ration, median age, millennial and Gen Z balance, and population diversity

#### *Economic Growth*

The majority of regions ranked ahead of their peers. The Panhandle scored lowest with a 4 and Southwest scored just behind its peers with 85.

#### *Education & Skill*

Five regions ranked behind their peers:

- Southwest (13)
- Siouland (22)
- Tri-Cities (81)
- Northeast (89)
- Southeast (96)

#### *Economic Opportunity & Diversity*

- Siouland (-29)
- Northeast (45)
- Southeast (89)

#### *Demographic Growth & Renewal*

- Panhandle (46)
- Southwest (74)
- Sandhills (-91)



Tables 39 and 40 provide a historical view of unemployment and poverty rates in each district.

*Table 39: Historical unemployment rates by District*

Economic Development District	2019 Labor Force	Unemployment Rate 2019	Unemployment Rate 2018	Unemployment Rate 2017	Unemployment Rate 2016
Central	26941	2.77%	2.58%	2.52%	2.6%
Lancaster County	177186	2.77%	2.66%	2.64%	2.8%
MAPA	407465	3.17%	3.11%	3.07%	3.2%
Northeast	112402	2.86%	2.75%	2.79%	3.0%
Panhandle	43594	3.35%	3.03%	3.10%	3.3%
Siouxland Interstate Metro. Planning Council	10791	3.91%	3.66%	4.03%	4.1%
South Central	108014	3.05%	2.85%	2.88%	3.1%
Southeast	92165	3.10%	2.93%	2.98%	3.1%
West Central	56682	3.09%	2.86%	2.79%	2.9%

Source: NE Dept of Labor, Labor Market Information, LAUS Program

*Table 40: Historical poverty rates by District*

Economic Development District	2019 Poverty Rate	2018 Poverty Rate	2017 Poverty Rate	2016 Poverty Rate
Central NE Economic Development District	9.7%	10.2%	10.3%	10.8%
Lancaster County	12.5%	13.1%	14.0%	14.3%
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency	10.5%	10.8%	11.4%	12.2%
Northeast NE Economic Development District	11.3%	12.0%	12.0%	12.0%
Panhandle Area Development District	12.7%	12.5%	12.5%	13.2%
Siouxland Interstate Metro. Planning Council	16.2%	16.6%	16.8%	16.0%
South Central Economic Development District	11.7%	12.3%	12.4%	12.5%
Southeast Nebraska Development District	9.7%	9.7%	9.7%	10.3%
West Central Nebraska Development District	10.9%	11.6%	12.3%	12.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

**iii. educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment;**

Tables 38 through 46 show the median earnings by education level for both males and females. There is a correlating increase in income compared to increased education. In most areas, women are paid less than men.

**Central**

*Table 41: Median earnings by education level for males and females*

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$32,626	\$39,689	\$25,746
Less than high school graduate	\$16,164	\$14,104	\$9,165
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$28,197	\$35,838	\$19,377
Some college or associate degree	\$33,104	\$42,447	\$22,487
Bachelor's degree	\$37,709	\$44,034	\$32,163
Graduate or professional degree	\$52,762	\$43,355	\$44,826

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## Lancaster

Table 32: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$40,855	\$46,573	\$34,955
Less than high school graduate	\$26,022	\$31,245	\$19,531
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$30,781	\$35,268	\$24,272
Some college or associate degree	\$36,820	\$45,115	\$30,857
Bachelor's degree	\$47,477	\$56,059	\$41,343
Graduate or professional degree	\$58,269	\$64,953	\$52,913

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

Table 43: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$46,345	\$54,474	\$37,666
Less than high school graduate	\$28,808	\$38,183	\$19,891
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$35,742	\$42,892	\$26,637
Some college or associate degree	\$41,278	\$51,806	\$32,802
Bachelor's degree	\$56,951	\$73,028	\$49,225
Graduate or professional degree	\$68,347	\$82,765	\$59,561

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## Northeast

Table 44: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$36,432	\$43,061	\$29,483
Less than high school graduate	\$27,151	\$29,538	\$18,247
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$31,928	\$39,474	\$23,658
Some college or associate degree	\$35,513	\$44,387	\$28,652
Bachelor's degree	\$43,249	\$53,019	\$37,317
Graduate or professional degree	\$57,005	\$61,370	\$54,119

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## Panhandle

Table 45: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$34,063	\$41,560	\$26,060
Less than high school graduate	\$22,287	\$25,884	\$9,047
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$29,152	\$39,462	\$20,798
Some college or associate degree	\$32,847	\$40,227	\$24,980
Bachelor's degree	\$40,629	\$50,210	\$34,255
Graduate or professional degree	\$56,042	\$58,842	\$48,079

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## Siouxland

Table 46: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$32,150	\$39,540	\$27,077
Less than high school graduate	\$26,524	\$28,524	\$25,605

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$34,345	\$41,268	\$22,017
Some college or associate degree	\$33,584	\$45,446	\$28,333
Bachelor's degree	\$50,000	\$68,066	\$39,891
Graduate or professional degree	\$61,625	\$60,375	\$65,000

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## South Central

Table 47: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$36,682	\$43,857	\$29,473
Less than high school graduate	\$24,280	\$25,210	\$16,478
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$31,051	\$38,215	\$22,031
Some college or associate degree	\$35,361	\$44,400	\$28,112
Bachelor's degree	\$43,996	\$54,805	\$38,326
Graduate or professional degree	\$60,615	\$58,019	\$59,007

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## Southeast

Table 48: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$37,493	\$45,685	\$29,234
Less than high school graduate	\$27,596	\$32,246	\$18,285
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$31,832	\$41,563	\$23,982
Some college or associate degree	\$37,321	\$47,250	\$28,748
Bachelor's degree	\$45,536	\$55,117	\$37,885
Graduate or professional degree	\$58,254	\$66,713	\$55,865

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

## West Central

Table 49: Median earnings by education level for males and females

Median Earnings	Total	Male	Female
Estimate Total	\$34,290	\$42,534	\$26,391
Less than high school graduate	\$23,171	\$22,622	\$11,070
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$30,830	\$37,421	\$18,983
Some college or associate degree	\$33,015	\$42,756	\$24,046
Bachelor's degree	\$39,032	\$47,174	\$35,411
Graduate or professional degree	\$50,093	\$43,525	\$41,994

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B20004

- e. **workforce development activities in each district, including education and training activities which must include descriptions of:**

- i. **the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities; and**

### Strengths

- **NEworks, Nebraska's Management Information System**, equipping the AJC network partners with a powerful technological tool that offers a wealth of workforce data as well as resources for both employers and current/prospective workers. Beyond its present use, this technology can serve to potentially improve coordination of program services, enhance communication between partners, and track relevant participant outcomes. The system pulls job postings and other resources from a wide array of third-party sites,

providing jobseekers with the most up-to-date tools and resources needed to find employment. The system is user friendly and features a robust toolkit for employers and case managers across various workforce programs. The mobile app version affords users easy access from anywhere.

- **Cost-efficiency in the delivery of services.** Delivering workforce development services across the entire state of Nebraska is a challenge due to the geographic distribution of its towns and cities, which are often isolated from one another by sheer distance. Nebraska is also a low populated state with a low unemployment rate, and as such, receives significantly lower amounts of WIOA and other workforce funding as compared to most other states. Despite geographic, financial, programmatic, and other constraints, the AJC network partners have cost-efficiently delivered their services to job seekers and workers throughout the state. The extent to which these entities have continually maximized the quality and reach of their services is a strength. Remote services and mobile accessibility have increased in response to COVID-19. The continued use of such technology will help to enhance the capacity of the local areas, while keeping costs low.
- **Use of technology,** as previously mentioned, has kept many programs active throughout the pandemic, allowing staff to continue serving job seekers and employers. Use of virtual platforms and mobile access forms has allowed partner programs to create more efficient processes, in addition to increasing accessibility by minimizing the need for transportation to a physical office or staff time spent traveling. Each local area will continue to invest time and resources into identification and implementation of technology to further improve processes and increase capacity.
- **Strong partnerships between workforce partners** as well as public and private partners to provide a comprehensive range of high-quality workforce development services. From initial assessment to job placement, the AJC network programs offer an array of high-quality, targeted services that are geared toward the needs of the state's employers and those seeking employment. Service providers leverage funding and strengthen staff-provided services through co-enrollment and co-case management across programs. Through coordination of funding and resources, cross-training of partner staff, and steps made toward alignment of processes, programs are better able to provide true wrap-around services to participants while reducing the duplication of services between partner programs.

These partnerships support the goals for alignment as outlined within the Combined State Plan through collaboration with the State Board, local boards, one-stop partners, and all other workforce system partners across Nebraska.

### **Goals for alignment**

Through collaboration with the state board, local boards, one-stop partners, and other workforce system partners across the state, all plan partners will work together to:

- coordinate workforce development activities statewide, as well as regionally and locally;
  - identify solutions for technology integration;
  - broaden use of the state's common intake system;
  - develop policies that support program and technology alignment;
  - develop and disseminate online resources and information to support fully integrated customer service;
  - develop and implement state-level cross training and technical assistance and cross training; and
  - further the efforts of the state's public sector partnership.
- **Forward-thinking programming** with multiple partners involved. Nebraska's local areas have partnered closely with several key initiatives aimed at proactively approaching workforce issues through forward-thinking programming. SNAP Next Step is an example of this type of collaborative and proactive approach. This employment and training program was developed from a close collaboration between the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and NDOL to help SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance

Program) recipients reach self-sustainability through more active participant involvement in training programs. Other examples include JAG Nebraska (Jobs for America's Graduates program operating in Nebraska), a state-based program currently operating in the Greater Nebraska and Greater Omaha Workforce Development Areas with plans to expand statewide. JAG is dedicated to preventing high-school dropout among young people who have significant barriers to graduation or employment. Currently, programs are operating in the following schools:

1. Columbus High School
  2. Fremont High School (9-10)
  3. Fremont High School (11-12)
  4. Grand Island High School
  5. Hastings High School
  6. Nebraska City High School
  7. UMO HO Nation School (Macy)
  8. York High School
  9. Monroe Middle School (Omaha Public Schools)
  10. Bryan Middle School (Omaha Public Schools)
- **Nebraska's education and training providers** offer an extensive range of programs to meet the training needs for all in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Collectively, the four-year institutions, private postsecondary career schools, community colleges, and Registered Apprenticeship programs offer more than 700 programs on Nebraska's Eligible Training Provider List that provide occupational skills training and career pathways for in-demand occupations in Nebraska. The system of community colleges throughout Nebraska offers highly coordinated educational pathways reaching every region of the state in a way that most other states cannot match. Similarly, the University of Nebraska system and the public state college system have strong leadership organizations and high presences in many major communities.

Nebraska boasts a strong, collaborative, and innovative post-secondary community college system throughout the state. The Nebraska Community College System serves the Panhandle, Central, West Central, South Central, Northeast, Southeast, and Siouland districts with 22 locations and is comprised of Central Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College and Western Nebraska Community College. Metropolitan Community College serves the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency and Northeast districts with 10 locations throughout Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties. Each college offers high-quality and affordable education and training programs along career pathways, in addition to programs and services such as:

- Community Learning Centers; created by SCC in Wahoo, York, Plattsmouth, Nebraska City, Falls City, and Hebron;
- Dual-credit secondary and postsecondary programs;
- Career Placement Pipelines and National Career Readiness Certificate opportunities, expanded through a partnership with Metropolitan Community College;
- Coordination of programming with four-year institutions;
- Working with regional and local employers to align curriculum with industry and occupational needs;
- Coordination of bridge and other programs to increase access; and
- Job placement support for students.

Nebraska's four-year institutes offer comprehensive, accessible, and challenging programs.

- The Nebraska State College System (NSCS) consists of the three state colleges; Chadron State College, Peru State College, and Wayne State College;
- The University of Nebraska System consists of University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Nebraska at Kearney, University of Nebraska Omaha, and University of Nebraska Medical Center;
- Programs on the ETPL include Agriculture, Business, Medical and Nursing;

- Nebraska as 13 private colleges, including Creighton University, Nebraska Wesleyan University, College of Saint Mary, and many more; and
  - Occupational training providers.
- **High demand industry sectors** are well represented throughout Nebraska. All sectors have employers who are very eager and responsive to convene, develop, and execute activities that support growth, expansion and retention through Industry sector strategies and industry-led partnerships. There have been several examples of successful partnerships, including the Healthcare sector partnership among employers and training providers in the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Area. This partnership matches occupational skills training opportunities with job seeker and worker skills needs. Another example is the Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) Legacy Program, a program offered to high school seniors to provide opportunities for students to learn about character development and jobs available within high demand industries has increased the length of the program to begin working with students earlier and expanded to include a Nursing track. All three local areas have been actively involved in creating targeted partnerships with multiple employer driven initiatives focused on in-demand and growth occupations.
  - **Business-focused services** are paramount to our successful programmatic strategies. Seeking out and understanding the needs of businesses helps the workforce system to more easily recognize the jobs of the future and bridge skills gaps among jobseekers to help fill those needs in the present and in the future. Nebraska's three local areas and statewide system have prioritized employer incentives and programs that help businesses grow. These business-focused programs include the Worker Opportunity Tax Credit, Federal Bonds, On-the-Job Training wage reimbursements, grants from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and grants from Nebraska's state-funded Worker Training Grant program.

The local areas have been successful in developing business-focused services in various areas, including helping businesses and their employees when there are economic downturns or when layoffs occur. All three local areas have played an integral role in creating a highly collaborative coordination of Rapid Response services with workforce partners, including required and optional one-stop partners, community-based organizations, local workforce development boards and chief elected officials, economic development organizations, education institutions, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and additional government programs such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

All local areas have worked both together and internally to improve recruitment and retention activities for local businesses. Some of these activities include hiring events, assistance with development of Registered Apprenticeship program, Veteran-specific services, career placement pipelines, and guidance on adjusting shifts or hours to make positions more appealing and accessible by public transportation.

- **Engaged local workforce development boards and chief elected officials** have been instrumental to the continued improvement of services across all three local areas as well as the ability of each local area to collaborate and learn from other local areas within Nebraska. Local area workforce development boards are made up of individuals who volunteer their time and expertise to help improve the local workforce system. Many of these individuals are high-level business representatives who bring an important perspective to the planning, implementation, and rollout of workforce programs. All members of the local boards, as well as the chief elected officials for each local area, have shown a strong commitment to strengthening the quality of the workforce system by reducing barriers to serving individuals and fostering collaborative efforts. They meet frequently as boards, and all three local areas have incredibly active standing committees that help guide the overall system improvement.

## Weaknesses

Key weaknesses limit the partner programs' ability to achieve the highest level of functioning, efficiency, and service provision. Weaknesses are seen as opportunities for improvement or where local areas face challenges

(common or otherwise) that they are working to overcome. For this plan, Nebraska's local areas have identified these common weaknesses that we are working to improve individually and collectively:

- **Underutilized strategies**, including incumbent worker training, dislocated worker programming, and customized training services. There is a need to improve services in many areas that are currently underutilized. This underutilization in some instances may be related to employer education about the services provided. For other underutilized strategies, such as the dislocated worker strategies, there may be missing connections between job seeker and the service providers implementing the programs. For customized training services, there may simply be a disconnect between identifying employer needs and bridging skills gaps for job seekers to meet those needs. The local areas agree that action steps need to be implemented and monitored to track the usage of these under-utilized strategies. In support of the State plan, the local areas and all plan partners will work together to identify and implement best practices regarding development of new and existing career pathways. The aforementioned strategies, in addition to Registered Apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training, and internships, will be fundamental in the development and implementation of career pathways in Nebraska for in-demand sectors and occupations. Each local area will identify key entities for the development of selected pathways and identification of best practices. Plan partners will collaborate with the Strategy and Innovation Subcommittee of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board, as well as local boards and local area administrative entities, required and optional one-stop partners, and training partners.

Business Service teams will refine regional marketing strategies to better fit employer needs with a business first philosophy to promote and educate employers on various reemployment service components. Strategies will be specific to the current needs of the employer and focused on improving business stability and growth. Marketing strategies will include:

- Entrepreneurship and Business Startup support
  - Expansion support through OJT, Customized Training, and Apprenticeship
  - Retention Services
  - Information Exchange
  - Human Resource Support
  - Candidate Recruitment
  - New Hire Training
  - Layoff Aversion and Incumbent Worker Training
  - Rapid Response
  - Public Policy
  - Needs Assessments and Workshops to increase competitiveness in a job seeker market
- **Strategies for serving the widespread dispersion of various populations within the state.** The placement of Nebraskans who face barriers to employment (e.g., low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; justice involved; experiencing homelessness; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy; single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; and the long-term unemployed) present unique challenges in communicating and coordinating services to areas where these populations reside. This includes remote rural areas, areas with capacity issues, and those affected by other factors that complicate workforce service delivery.

Cost efficiency in the delivery of services to a widespread population was listed as a strength in the section above because so many of the workforce partners do an exceptional job of delivering services at a low cost-per-participant rate despite the fact that there is such a challenge to deliver services over such a large and dispersed service area. Despite this low cost-per-participant, it still is an active challenge for all three local areas to ensure that their services are connecting with the populations that face the biggest barriers to employment.

- **Opportunities in industry sector involvement in the workforce system.** Collaborative efforts between industry and the public sector to work collaboratively in promoting workforce development within each local area has been growing, with several initiating strategies showing promising outcomes. Yet, more needs to be done to provide support to these efforts and fully leverage the potential contributions of the industry sector. Some of these initiatives have continued to gain momentum, but the majority of the sector initiatives have not. High demand industries are a strength of our system. Connecting better with industry leaders and providing a value proposition to them is going to be essential for continued growth. Continuing to educate employers and industry leaders on the full spectrum of services available to them and how to access those services is important, however, learning to adapt to work within our program parameters and to adapt to the needs of businesses is also going to be key to our success.

The local areas will work with employers on the development of career pathway programs and systems. Employers will help to drive regional and local industry sector partnerships through identification of barriers and needs, followed by solutions implementation. Employers will also be involved in the process to identify barriers to participation in the selected and prioritized career pathways both among employers, as well as job seekers and workers (including veterans and unemployed workers).

- **Barriers to integrated intake processes, co-enrollment, co-case management, and coordination of workforce services.** Current local area processes across workforce partner programs are often cumbersome and can pose a barrier to enrollment in some programs. The local areas have identified this as an opportunity area for improvement, and plan to work collectively to engage workforce partners in making system collaboration improvements at the local and statewide level.

The lack of a streamlined co-enrollment and co-case management process results in inefficiencies between programs, contributing to a duplication of efforts and lack of communication. An additional barrier includes the lack of generally accepted protocol for inter-organizational data analysis, which hinders stakeholders from identifying areas of opportunity and will remain a weakness for regional workforce development activity until resolved.

- **Areas of opportunity to increase the collaborative efforts between Workforce agencies and other stakeholder organizations.** In order to build a more comprehensive system of workforce services, the local areas and the AJC network partners need to increase their collaborative efforts in a meaningful way and look to a comprehensive collective design of delivery services. This challenge is not unique to any one local area but is faced in each local area and in each office location at varying levels depending on the number of stakeholders involved and the history of active collaboration. There are many one-stop required partners, but there are also many workforce stakeholders who are not required one-stop partners but who are major players in workforce development in a local area or in a service area. The local areas strive to identify ways to collaborate with all workforce stakeholders who help make the system stronger and enhance the ability of the local areas to provide resources to job seekers and businesses.
- **The Cliff Effect and helping workers transition into self-sustaining employment.** Although Nebraska has an extremely low unemployment rate, it has a high number of underemployed workers who must hold two or more jobs to earn a living wage. There are also a large number of workers who hold full- or part-time employment and receive some level of social assistance benefits, including SNAP, childcare assistance, housing assistance, utility assistance, or other forms of assistance. The fear of losing much needed assistance, and the stability associated, by taking on a new job or getting a raise at a current job is prevalent among many underemployed Nebraskans. The local areas see an opportunity to continue to find ways to better connect the individuals we serve with the right training to increase their ability to earn a livable wage, as well as to connect them with any resources related to their continued eligibility for these assistance programs. SNAP Next Step has helped in this process, but there is still a lot of room to improve on our service delivery model to the underemployed. Development of career pathways can help individuals determine a trajectory to sustainability within their chosen field. Through Registered Apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training, individuals will increase their skills and income, while being supported



by programs that can help them understand the impact of each wage increase and provide services to overcome gaps.

- **Employer perception of lack of workers especially in certain skill areas.** Businesses throughout Nebraska are in need of skilled workers to handle a variety of in-demand occupations. With Nebraska's stagnant population growth, it is more and more difficult for businesses to recruit a workforce using traditional methods to meet their growth needs, such as screening candidates using extensive background checks. Certain populations have been often overlooked by employers, including individuals with criminal records, homeless individuals, English language learners, or individuals with other barriers to employment. The local areas are committed to trying to help businesses meet their recruiting needs by developing programs to skill up these workers and providing outreach to businesses regarding best practices to hire and retain a qualified workforce that includes these individuals.

Plan partners will work together to collectively identify five or more key barriers to employer participation in career pathways and regional and local industry sector partnerships; including barriers relating to:

- industry sectors and occupations;
- geographic isolation, especially for employers in remote rural areas;
- limited English proficiency;
- skills gaps;
- cultural gaps;
- transportation;
- unrealistic expectations regarding hours, wages, and workplace benefits;
- worksite modifications to accommodate the needs of individuals with special workforce needs;
- access to and availability of necessary and related training services;
- and financial constraints.

All plan partners will work to address these barriers to career pathway participation with the Strategy and Innovation Subcommittee of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board; local boards and local area administrative entities, required and option one-stop partners; employers and regional and local industry sector partnerships; and training providers across the state.

**ii. capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce in each district, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.**

Each of the local areas has the capacity to deliver services in their respective economic districts, both in person and through technology. Use of virtual platforms and mobile accessible forms have expanded due to COVID-19, increasing participant access to programs and services, as well as the ability to serve employers, job seekers, and other workforce stakeholders more quickly and at a greater geographical distance. The continued use of such technology will help to enhance the capacity of the local areas to address the education and skills needs of the workforce throughout the entire state.

Employers are able to access business services via remote technology, at one of the American Job Centers or Career Centers near them, or in-person at their worksite. Local area programs partner with corrections facilities to offer services to individuals nearing release. Staff also travel to alternative sites, including rural locations to meet with individuals unable to travel to the office or access services remotely. Partners provide cross-training and professional development opportunities across programs, both virtually and in-person. Program partners collaborate on various committees and task forces to address issues including serving high barrier populations, system and program alignment, industry sector needs, and the benefits cliff. These task forces often cross local area boundary lines.

The state will continue to work to integrate technology across all plan partner programs and other required and optional one-stop partner programs to improve data sharing that provides time data necessary to initiate services

across one-stop delivery system programs, assess service delivery, and meet performance-reporting requirements. Integrated technology would also support program refinements necessary for continuous improvement across the state's workforce development and one-stop delivery systems, including development of common intake procedures for the common intake system.

### **Individuals with Barriers**

The local area boards emphasize services to individuals with barriers to employment.

JAG Nebraska (the Jobs for America's Graduates program operating in Nebraska), a state-based program, currently operating in the Greater Nebraska and Greater Omaha Workforce Development Areas with plans to expand statewide, is dedicated to preventing high-school dropout among young people who have significant barriers to graduation or employment

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) provides a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) with Reemployment Services Coordinators in Grand Island, Scottsbluff, Columbus, Norfolk, Beatrice, North Platte, Lincoln, and Omaha. One of their responsibilities is to align the WIOA programs with other veteran's service programs. Additionally, Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) are located in Hastings, Norfolk, Lincoln, and Omaha who work with Nebraska businesses to promote hiring veterans. Activities include collaboration with SSVF and other programs to create Veterans First initiatives and facilitate wrap around services.

Each local area, in collaboration with the NDOL, has a Limited English Proficient (LEP) plan to ensure programs are accessible in multiple languages.

The WIOA Title 1B programs work in conjunction with Nebraska VR to assist individuals with disabilities (both developmental and physical) to obtain and maintain employment. This partnership works toward competitive employment that includes pay that is not less than what others without a disability are receiving for the same type of job. The partners work to place an individual in an integrated setting where the employee interacts with other employees without disabilities in comparable positions and has opportunities for advancement, when appropriate. The partnership also provides career counseling, employment information, and referrals for individuals with disabilities who want to work.

Workforce partners cooperate with the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI) to create opportunities and guarantee services are accessible for the visually impaired. Part of this commitment involves cross-training staff on how to assist individuals in general with disabilities and specifically for the blind, making JAWS (Job Access with Speech) screen readers available in each office.

All facilities are physically accessible, in compliance with ADA standards for accessible design. Each center is also equipped with assistive technology, including computers outfitted with Job Access with Speech (JAWS) screen reader, Dragon Speech Technology voice to text, Acrobat LCD screen magnifier and adaptive keyboard with roller mouse. Additional auxiliary devices and services available in each center include qualified interpreters, video remote interpreting service, text and video-based telecommunications products and systems, videotext displays, and telephone handset amplifiers.

Program accessibility involves the provision of reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures, administering programs in the most integrated setting appropriate, communicating with persons with disabilities as effectively as with others, and providing appropriate auxiliary aids or services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity.

In determining what types of auxiliary aids and services are necessary, job centers and program partners must give primary consideration to the requests of individuals with disabilities. In order to be effective, auxiliary aids and

services must be provided in accessible formats, in a timely manner, and in such a way as to protect the privacy and independence of the individual with a disability.

In accordance with 20 CFR 681.290 and TEGL 21-16, Greater Nebraska ensures usage of assessment instruments that are valid and appropriate for the target population. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities when administering assessments. This may include, but is not limited to administration in the most integrated setting appropriate, use of previously described adaptive technology, or use of less formal alternative assessment techniques such as observation, folder reviews, or interviews. The Greater Nebraska Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy available at [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov) further outlines universal access.

The Greater Lincoln Accessibility Policy is available at on Greater Lincoln's website under Policy Manual. This policy discusses the requirements for Universal Access, National Origin and/or Limited English Proficiency, Disabilities, Programmatic and Physical Accessibility, Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications, Communication with Individuals with Disabilities and Auxiliary Aids or Services and Service Animals.

The Greater Omaha Accessibility Policy is available on Heartland Workforce Solutions on the "About Us" under "View Policies." The policy addresses these topics under the policy subcategories of Prohibition on the Basis of Disability, WIOA Program Accessibility, Auxiliary Aids and Assistive Technology, Facility Accessibility, Reasonable Accommodations, Employment Related Placements, and Helpful Resources.

Many workplace accommodations cost very little and often involve minor changes to a work environment, schedule, or work-related technologies. Examples include, but are not limited to (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/programareas/employers/accommodations>):

- Physical changes
  - Installing a ramp or modifying a rest room
  - Modifying the layout of a workspace
- Accessible and assistive technologies
  - Ensuring computer software is accessible
  - Providing screen reader software
  - Using videophones to facilitate communications with colleagues who are deaf
- Accessible communications
  - Providing sign language interpreters or closed captioning at meetings and events
  - Making materials available in Braille or large print
- Policy enhancements
  - Modifying a policy to allow a service animal in a business setting
  - Adjusting work schedules so employees with chronic medical conditions can go to medical appointments and complete their work at alternate times or locations

**2. Describe service strategies established by the local boards in each district, including the establishment of cooperative service delivery agreements, which are required under WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(B) and 20 CFR § 679.510(a)(1)(ii). In this context, a cooperative service delivery agreement is an agreement among the local boards and CEOs in the statewide planning region regarding service delivery that crosses local area boundaries.**

Nebraska currently has no formal cooperative service delivery agreements in place between local areas, however there are mechanisms the three local areas have put in place to ensure the highest quality of service to every customer served. These mechanisms include:

- Allowing customers to apply and enroll in workforce programs outside of the local area where the individual may reside. We understand that sometimes it may be more convenient for an individual to be served in another location for a variety of reason.

- When a customer is served and enrolled in a WIOA Title I program in a local area outside of where the individual lives, a case note is entered into that individual's NEworks case file and an email is sent to the administrative staff overseeing the WIOA Title I program in the local area where the individual resides. This email allows the local area administrative entity to see patterns and trends that may be emerging related to customer program enrollments.

**3. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements by the local boards in the statewide planning region, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.**

Nebraska does not currently pool administrative costs. Funds are allocated by the State of Nebraska to the three local areas, Greater Lincoln, Greater Nebraska, and Greater Omaha. Program participant costs are administered by the local area boards through their respective service providers.

**4. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives by the local boards for in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the statewide planning region.**

The Workforce Strategy and Innovation Committee (WSIC) of the Heartland Workforce Solutions Board actively reviews the most up to date to labor market information for local and regional in-demand industry and occupations at each of its meetings. The WSIC partners with staff from NDOL to provide these LMI updates. Information gained from these updates and committee conversations may lead to recommendations to the full board to make systemic or programmatic improvements based on identified trends or projections. The committee is comprised of members from partner programs, Greater Omaha Chamber, educators, business leaders, community-based organizations, and board members. It reviews initiatives and proposes potential strategies. Industry leaders provide input for the sector strategies and the best workforce system role to further an industry sector. The WSIC will bring the recommendation to the board to ask for board support and leadership with the initiative. Industry sector initiatives may already have momentum through initiatives led by industry associations, the Chamber, or others. Business must always inform the industry sector and occupation needs. The workforce system will respond by coordinating to meet the need and measure the results of the strategy.

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board's Strategic Planning Committee utilizes data and business input to drive sector initiatives. The development of initiatives and career pathways occurs through the convening and coordination of Greater Nebraska staff, Economic Development, Career & Technical Education, partners, businesses, and educators. Efforts are focused toward industries and occupations trending in growth or experiencing a shortage of qualified workers. The Board considers the following elements when evaluating initiatives presented by Greater Nebraska staff and partners:

- employer need within a regional labor market;
- impact on economic stability and growth;
- benefit to low income individuals; and
- stakeholders involved.

The Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board's Strategic Initiatives Committee works with the Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development to identify sector strategies. To support sector strategies, the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board (GLWDB) also works with community coalitions like:

- Bridgeway to a Better Life;
- New Americans Task Force;
- Lincoln Manufacturing Council; and
- EmployLNK.

**5. Describe how the local boards coordinate transportation and other supportive services in the statewide planning region, as appropriate.**

**Transportation**

Each of the local boards recognize the need to reduce barriers that hinder the progress of the individuals we serve. Numerous entities in each of the local areas provide supportive services, which the respective Title IB providers and One-stop operators make known to workforce professionals and to job seekers through one-on-one assistance, the provision of information at the American Job Centers, as well as on-line.

Transportation challenges are similar throughout Nebraska, with service limitations including hours that don't serve second and third shift workers and limited to no route accessibility in some areas. The local area boards have implemented service delivery based on community resources and participant needs.

Greater Lincoln is served by the StarTran and provides bus passes, mileage reimbursement to participants who have a vehicle or an approved driver/vehicle arrangement, Uber/Lyft credits, or assistance through the Ponca Express. Greater Lincoln uses a Coordination of Services form for every individual enrolled in a WIOA Title 1B program to ensure that funds are maximized and that WIOA is the payer of last resort. Career planners are cross trained in TAA to maximize Co-enrollment with the Dislocated Worker program. Career Planners identify other funding sources for supportive services before they open a supportive service activity in NEworks. Greater Lincoln also has written policy and procedures for supportive services. Fourteen Greater Nebraska communities have public transit within city limits, in addition to intercity routes connecting 30 Nebraska communities and four communities in neighboring states. Despite this transit system, the vast geographic area of the local area and the lack of public transit in rural areas complicates the ability to meet the needs of employers and job seekers. Where possible, the GNWDA provides bus passes and mileage reimbursement to eligible participants to attempt to mitigate this primary barrier. WIOA Title 1B staff coordinate services with partners in their respective communities. Current policy and procedure dictates participants in need of supportive services should first be referred to other community resources before using WIOA Title 1B to fund the service. Staff are trained to utilize WIOA Title 1B as last resort funding once all other resources have been exhausted. For individuals co-enrolled into SNAP Next Step, National Dislocated Worker Grant, and other programs, partner staff are consulted to determine the availability of funds and to coordinate services. A procedure manual has been developed and will be continuously updated. Policies and manuals are available for review at [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov).

Greater Omaha, which is served by the Metro Transit, provides bus passes, gas card, and Uber/Lyft credits. These supports are limited to \$1500 per participant and require additional collaboration with other community partners to leverage this resource. These requirements are outlined in the Supportive Services Policy, are defined in further detail in the Transportation Assistance subcategory of that policy. Referrals to other community partners who provide transportation resources is a requirement of the program. GO participates on the Metro Area Planning Agency (MAPA) Community Transportation Council to promote creative transportation methods to meet career seeker needs. Businesses also initiate creative transportation options through Enterprise Rental Car and employer shuttle systems.

The lack of a comprehensive and reliable transit system in all Nebraska communities is widely recognized. Efforts exist in Nebraska to address these shortfalls. The Nebraska Department of Transportation launched Phase 3 of the Mobility Management Project (<https://nebraskatransit.com/index.php/mobility-management/>) in July 2019. This phase consists of three stages, scheduled for completion in 2022. Stage One of this phase, consisting of seven projects, including several studies, coordination, public relations, and selection of a technology vendor, is currently underway.

Greater Omaha is a part of the Heartland 2050 initiative which is a community-driven initiative, pulling in stakeholders from across the region to think big picture and work towards a common vision for the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area. One of the areas of focus is the lack of transportation access to jobs and education. Work is being done with this group to increase options for multi-modal transportation, such as walking, biking, and public transit. More information on this initiative can be found at <http://heartland2050.org/>.

## **Other Supportive Services**

The needs and resource accessibility of each community vary widely. Assistance with linkages, referrals, and accurate information about the availability of supportive service assistance not provided or funded by WIOA includes, but is not limited to, Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program (SNAP) benefits, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Community Action Partnerships, SCSEP, Voc Rehab, Job Corps, veteran's assistance funds, financial assistance for education, county public assistance funds, etc. Where able, participants are co-enrolled into SNAP Next Step E&T, dislocated worker programs, Voc Rehab, TANF, and other partner programs. Partnerships exist and continue to be developed in each area to coordinate service delivery and address gaps. Staff are trained to utilize WIOA Title 1B as last resort funding once all other resources have been exhausted. For individuals co-enrolled into other programs, partner staff are consulted to determine the availability of funds and to coordinate services. Each local area maintains policies and procedures to ensure this coordination of funds.

### Greater Lincoln

To maximize the use of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds, participants must be unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs for training or supportive services or require WIOA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance. Potential sources for other funding may include state-funded sources, Pell Grants, or Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). In addition, supportive services funds are provided only when necessary to enable the participant to take part in career services, training services, or youth employment and training activities.

Greater Lincoln uses a Coordination of Services form for every individual enrolled in a WIOA Title 1B program to ensure that funds are maximized and that WIOA is the payer of last resort. Career planners are cross trained in TAA to maximize Co-enrollment with the Dislocated Worker program. Career Planners identify other funding sources for supportive services before they open a supportive service activity in NEworks. Greater Lincoln also has written policy and procedures for supportive services.

Costs for supportive services must be allowable, reasonable, and necessary. Assistance for supportive services includes:

- transportation;
- childcare and dependent care;
- housing and utilities;
- medical services;
- protective and other clothing, eyewear, tools, or equipment required to participate in a training program, employment, or pre-employment activity; and
- education related books, supplies, and fees.

### Greater Nebraska

Supportive services such as work uniforms, tools, health screenings, childcare, and license fees are prioritized on an individual participant need basis. Partnerships with programs such as Families First Partnership in North Platte, Norfolk Family Coalition, and others throughout the state have been developed to coordinate provision of supportive services and ensure individuals requesting assistance from partner programs are connected with employment assistance to help them obtain self-sufficiency. Greater Nebraska maintains both a supportive service policy and procedure manual (both available for review at [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov)) instructing staff to first determine if all other resources have been exhausted before utilizing WIOA Title 1B funds.

### Greater Omaha

Supportive services are provided by many different partners within the workforce system. Co-enrolled participants are case managed collaboratively and supportive services are coordinated by the primary case manager to avoid duplication of services and maximize braiding of funding streams.

Coordination of various supportive services includes housing assistance, transportation, tools, and childcare. Through collaboration and ongoing partner meetings, workforce system partners receive updated information and cross training on available services. Through collaboration of services, programs reduce duplication and increase access for participants to enhance their training and employment opportunities.

**6. Describe how the local boards in the statewide planning region coordinate services with economic development services and providers in each district.**

**Greater Lincoln**

The Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board has close ties to multiple economic development services.

Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force

Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and members of the Economic Recovery Task Force released a report on October 09, 2020 with recommendations to support Lincoln's economic recovery in the face of COVID-19. Mayor Gaylor Baird appointed the 18-member Task Force in May and charged it with developing strategies to support local businesses, workforce development, and sectors of the economy that have been strongly impacted by the pandemic, while fostering public health, inclusion, and resilience in Lincoln. The Task Force issued recommendations in six main areas:

**Developing opportunities for business-to-business support.** The Task Force recommends the organization of business-to-business town halls in which businesses directly share information, resources, and experience with one another on topics relevant and timely to the business community, including supporting mental health and social connectedness, accessing financial assistance, and creating a safe working environment.

**Investing in local, small, and diverse businesses, including women- and minority-owned businesses.** The Task Force recommends, in the spirit of economic resilience and inclusion, that residents, employers, and public and private sector leaders target spending toward local businesses, small businesses (less than 50 employees), and diverse businesses, including women- and minority-owned businesses. It recommends that the City reevaluate its procurement policies and practices to enhance access to City contracting opportunities, and it encourages employers in a position to do so to pledge to spend 1 percent more locally. The Task Force also encourages employers to continue to support employee childcare by providing flexible work arrangements and subsidizing childcare where possible, in the spirit of economic resilience and inclusion.

**Leveraging local workforce assets.** The Task Force recommends the simplification and amplification of employer participation in local workforce programs and networks that are designed to connect jobseekers with employment opportunities, such as EmployLNK, the American Job Center, and NEworks. It encourages employers to eliminate potential barriers to employment by revising and simplifying job descriptions with the help of organizations like the Lincoln Human Resource Management Association and Society of Human Resource Management.

**Upskilling and reskilling Lincoln's workforce.** The Task Force recommends that the City of Lincoln create incentives for reskilling workers who have lost jobs as a result of COVID-19 and for upskilling low-wage workers, to allow them to advance into higher positions. The Task Force also recommends that workforce and education partners, in collaboration with employers, develop "ready to work" courses that prepare residents for new industries and lead to employment opportunities, like the Lincoln Manufacturing Council's six-week manufacturing class that culminates in a manufacturing jobs fair.

**Promoting workplace safety and consumer confidence.** The Task Force recommends the development of an awareness campaign to highlight local businesses that are advancing public health by employing common sense and innovative public health strategies. The Task Force also recommends that public and private sector leaders help businesses gain access to personal protective equipment.

**Providing financial assistance to impacted businesses and investing in new businesses.** The Task Force recommends that the City establish a fund to provide grants to businesses that have been particularly impacted by COVID-19, and that the community continue to invest in new businesses and support a culture of entrepreneurship.

Task Force subcommittees were led by Jasmine Kingsley (Local Business Strategies), Cori Sampson Vokoun (Local Workforce Strategies), and Maribel Cruz, Ph.D. (Local Sector Strategies). Other task force members were Marco Barker, Ph.D., Matt Bavougian, Wendy Birdsall, Quentin Brown, William Cintani, John Croghan, Shannon Harner, José Lemus, Susan Martin, Dan Marvin, Kim Russel, Nader Sepahpur, and Bud Synhorst.

#### Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development

The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) is a public-private collaboration charged with fulfilling Lincoln's Economic Development goals. Job growth and business expansion are critical components of a vibrant and thriving community. The Lincoln Partnership is committed to supporting Lincoln's continued success as a place of business expansion, growing talent and endless opportunities. Our primary areas of focus are Business Development, Business Retention & Expansion, Entrepreneurship & Innovation and Talent Strategy in Lincoln. Bryan Seck, Director of Workforce Development at Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development serves on the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board. LPED 2021 Goals

- to assist companies in recruiting, retaining, and growing a skilled workforce;
- to grow and recruit primary businesses, jobs, and investment; and
- to continue to build and sustain the Lincoln startup ecosystem with community and companies.

#### Prosper Lincoln

Prosper Lincoln has several data-informed strategic initiative areas including early childhood, innovative workforce, affordable housing, strong neighborhoods, and civic investments.

Action strategies for Innovative Workforce include:

- streamlining job training and placement programs;
- attracting talent through recruitment and retention resources; and
- creating entrepreneurship opportunities.

Through its relationship with LPED, the Board is able to gather information on workforce issues and concerns through a regional development group known as the Lincoln Area Development Partners (LADP). LADP is a diverse group of community partners committed to investing in the success of industry and business in southeast Nebraska. This group is comprised of economic development organizations representing Lincoln, Crete, York, Seward County, Gage County, Fillmore County, Auburn, Falls City, Black Hills Energy, and Southeast Community College.

The GLWDB and AJC also partner with education and training providers and local business to collaborate on development of special initiatives and training to meet the shortfalls of a skilled workforce.

#### **Greater Nebraska**

Dan Mauk, Executive Director of the Nebraska City Area Economic Development Corporation, serves as an active member of the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board. Additionally, Pat Comfort, Regional Manager of the Scottsbluff office serves on the Panhandle Area Development District Board of Directors.

Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) Field Representatives are working regionally with employers throughout Greater Nebraska to identify business barriers and refer businesses to appropriate resources. Workforce needs are among the top issues employers face, particularly in the rural areas. DED Field Staff have established relationships with DOL staff and have been trained on recruitment, hiring, training, retraining, and



retention services available at the local AJCs, career centers and other partner agencies throughout Greater Nebraska.

DED Field Staff work closely with local and regional economic development staff and partner agencies and have long standing working relationships that connect existing businesses, as well as startups and business recruitment prospects, to the local resources available. Many of these local resources include workforce development and training. Appropriate referrals or collaborations are made to assist businesses with workforce challenges.

## **Greater Omaha**

The Greater Omaha area coordinates workforce services with local economic development groups and organizations. The Omaha metropolitan area is served by approximately 10 full- or part-time chambers of commerce, with the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce as the biggest and most active chamber of commerce in the area. Sarah Moylan, Senior Director for Talent serves on the Board and is the Chair for the Economic Development Subcommittee of the Workforce Strategy and Innovation Committee (WSIC). This close partnership has allowed the board to be connected closely with economic development activities throughout the entire local area.

Greater Omaha also works closely with the new North Omaha office of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED). Trevon Brooks is the Business Development Manager for the North Omaha office, Trevon serves on the Economic Development Subcommittee of the WSIC also and closely collaborates with the HWS Director of Business Relations to coordinate economic development activities and identify workforce solutions to meet the needs of new businesses potentially relocating to the area, or actively seeking skilled workers to grow their business. Additionally, Greater Omaha is preparing for the announced opening of the DED South Omaha office.

Greater Omaha has organized meetings between workforce partners and the local chambers of commerce to collaboratively share information about business resources, major events, and opportunities. These meetings have been held recently with the following chambers:

- Greater Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- Gretna Area Chamber of Commerce
- Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Ralston Area Chamber of Commerce
- Sarpy County Chamber of Commerce
- Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- West O Chamber

## **Statewide**

### EmployLNK, EmployOMA, EmployNebraska

EmployLNK is a collaboration of workforce development agencies in Lincoln including Equus/American Job Center, Nebraska Department of Labor, Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development/Prosper Lincoln, Lutheran Family Services, Catholic Social Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Center for People In Need, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Veterans Affairs and more. EmployLNK is the single point of contact for business to interact with the agencies that serve others and to organize job fairs and other employment-focused events. In addition to monthly meetings to share common issues and hear from Lincoln businesses on their openings, this group also plans career fairs for veterans, adults and students and plans a reverse pitch job fair for case managers to learn about jobs in the community. In total, the agencies serve 5,000+ Lincoln residents.

EmployLNK has expanded to the remainder of the state through EmployOMA and EmployNebraska (EmployGI, EmployKearney, EmployHastings, et al.) groups.

## Blueprint Nebraska

Blueprint Nebraska is an economic development initiative made up of diverse business, industry, and civic leaders who developed a statewide economic development blueprint based on both data and surveys of leaders statewide. Strategic initiatives include leading job growth, improving quality of life, retaining individuals who are new in their careers in Nebraska, leading income growth, and increasing research and development investment.

Blueprint Nebraska developed 15 economic development strategies that it is now transitioning to three entities to implement. Those three organizations include: 1) The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry, 2) The Platte Institute, and the 3) The Aksarben Foundation.

### *The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry*

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry is Nebraska's representative organization to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. It has increased its collaboration in recent years in workforce development partnerships and is well positioned to take on many of the signature initiatives adopted by Blueprint Nebraska.

### *The Platte Institute*

The Platte Institute is a nonprofit organization that focuses on advancing policies that remove the barriers to growth in Nebraska. The organization focuses on the areas of regulatory reform, tax policy, and government efficiency.

### *The Aksarben Foundation*

The Aksarben Foundation is focused on leadership development and promoting education and career training. Priority initiatives include: Regional efforts in Northeast and Central Nebraska, as well as a technology collaborative and a transportation and trade initiative.

The three local areas have played a major role in helping to create the 15 signature initiatives of Blueprint Nebraska. Board members and workforce partners from all three local boards were active in the undertaking of identifying the priorities of Blueprint Nebraska. As these three organizations now seek to implement the Blueprint Nebraska strategies, our board members and workforce partners will attend events, seek to provide input related to the workforce system, help collaborate on economic development projects and strategies, and will ensure that Blueprint Nebraska progress is being reported back to each of our individual boards.

## Nebraska Tech Collaborative

The Nebraska Tech Collaborative (NTC) – an Aksarben workforce initiative – is business-led, and comprised of over 100 business, government, education, and non-profit partners all working together to drive results and scale to build a world class tech ecosystem in Nebraska. Tech jobs are found in every company and industry sector. Agriculture, Nebraska's biggest industry, has a significant tech component and is a huge growth sector for careers in tech. The tech sector is the fastest growing sector in the country and world. However, tech jobs in Omaha, Lincoln, and Nebraska overall have grown more slowly than other, similar cities and states. The reality is that the fastest-growing sector is leaving and will continue to leave Nebraska behind if we don't act now. The NTC's goal is to increase the number of tech jobs in Nebraska by 10,000 and the number of new tech companies in Nebraska by 300 by 2025.

The three local areas plan to convene a workgroup with the consultation of Nebraska Tech Collaborative to identify career pathways within the tech sector. NTC will also be consulted to assist in the development of Customized Training and OJT partnerships with Nebraska businesses, to support their efforts toward growing this industry in Nebraska.

**7. Describe the agreement established among the local boards that addresses how the local boards in the statewide planning region will:**

- a. collectively negotiate and reach agreement with NDOL on local levels of performance for the performance indicators described in WIOA Sec. 116(c); and**

Greater Lincoln, Greater Nebraska, and Greater Omaha will meet prior to negotiations with NDOL to discuss performance levels and coordinate on areas of concern. Furthermore, Greater Lincoln, Greater Nebraska, and Greater Omaha agree to meet quarterly to review local area performance and strategize on areas of opportunity to ensure statewide goals are met.

- b. report local area performance on those indicators.**

Program performance will be reported utilizing NEworks, the State of Nebraska's management information system of record.

**8. Describe the process followed by the local boards in the statewide planning region to provide an opportunity for the public comment on the development of the regional plan or any subsequent modification of the plan before submitting the plan to NDOL. To provide adequate opportunity for public comment, local boards must:**

Notice of Public Hearing was posted in the Lincoln Journal Star (2/11/2021), Omaha World Herald (2/25/2021), Grand Island Independent (2/19/2021), Scottsbluff Star-Herald (2/20/2021), North Platte Telegraph (2/20/2021), Sidney Sun-Telegraph (2/24/2021), Norfolk Daily News (2/25/2021), Beatrice Daily Sun (2/23/2021), Columbus Telegram (2/19/2021), Hastings Tribune (2/22/2021), Kearney Hub (2/22/2021).

- a. make information about and copies of the plan and subsequent modifications available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;**

A draft of the regional plan was made available for review within Board materials for meetings held by each local area February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Materials were also posted March 1, 2021 at <http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan>, [www.hws-ne.org](http://www.hws-ne.org), <https://dol.nebraska.gov> and at the City of Lincoln, 555 South Street, Suite 301, Lincoln, NE 68508; 5752 Ames Ave, Omaha NE 68104; and 941 O St, Suite 400, Lincoln NE 68508.

- b. include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.**

The public was given the opportunity to comment on the plan at the March 1, 2021 public hearing. Board meetings held by GLWDB Executive Committee Meeting on February 25, 2021, the GOWDB meeting on February 25, 2021, and the joint CEOB/GNWDB meeting on February 25, 2021 were also open to the public with time for public comment.

- c. provide no more than a 30-day period for comments on the plan and subsequent modifications before submission to NDOL, beginning on the date on which the plan and modifications are made available to the public;**

The plan was made available for public comment from March 1 - March 30, 2021. Public comments were directed to Erin Porterfield at [eporterfield@hws-ne.org](mailto:eporterfield@hws-ne.org) or 402-218-1163; Tim Bornemeier, 555 S 10<sup>th</sup> St., Ste 301 Lincoln, NE; Dylan Wren, [dwren@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:dwren@lincoln.ne.gov); and Bobbi Jo Howard, [bobbijo.howard@nebraska.gov](mailto:bobbijo.howard@nebraska.gov) or 402-580-2311 during the public comment period.

- d. submit to NDOL any comments that represent disagreement with the plan or subsequent modifications or indicate that disagreeing public comments were not received, if that is the case; and**

No comments were received pertaining to this plan.

- e. ensure that all open meetings are held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.**

All meetings were held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

# Local Plan

**Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Area**  
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2025

Submitted by the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board  
to the Nebraska Department of Labor on 04-01-2021

Executive Committee Approved: 02-25-2021

[lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan](https://lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan)

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**Equal Employment Opportunity**

WIOA Title I financially assisted programs and activities are equal opportunity employer/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

1. Describe the strategic vision of the local board to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency, which must include goals that align with the goals and strategies defined in the current state plan or subsequent modification of the state plan for the following factors:<sup>1</sup>
  - a. preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment); and
  - b. relating to the performance accountability measures based on the performance indicators described in 20 CFR § 677.155(a)(1).

## Combined State Plan Vision and Goals

### Vision

Nebraska's vision is to be a national model for the delivery of workforce development services.

### Goals

Nebraska's two-part statewide goal for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers is:

- selection and prioritization of development of career pathways; and
- alignment of the state's workforce development system.

## Greater Lincoln Local Plan Vision and Goals

### Vision & Goals

The workforce board's vision is: *Empowering Nebraskans to achieve economic independence and thrive in work and life in partnership with local employers.*

The workforce board has identified the following goals and strategies to support their vision.

#### Goal 1 - Advancing living wages and inclusivity

Individuals that work full-time should achieve a measure of stability. The workforce board is committed to reducing poverty among our working people. We are committed to building career pathways what will support our people in achieving economic independence. We will foster economic inclusivity by investing in people with unrealized potential including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

“Hard work is a core value in Nebraska. Our state boasts one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and one of the highest rates of parents participating in the workforce. But our economy has left too many hard-working Nebraskans behind, risking family stability.” – Rebecca Gould, Nebraska Appleseed.

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<sup>1</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(a)(5)

Goal 2 - Create Service Alignment.

The workforce board is committed to supporting the advancement of TEN 13-20: *Advancing a One Workforce Vision and Strategy* ([https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN\\_13-20.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_13-20.pdf)), which also parallels with the State Combined Plan's goals for alignment of the state's workforce development system.

Goal 3 - Meet or exceed the negotiated performance of WIOA Title 1B programs to maximize community impact

The local area will strive to meet and exceed the negotiated performance goals during the term of this local plan.

**2. Taking into account the analyses described in Section 1 for regional plan elements, describe the local board's strategy to:**

- a. work with entities that carry out core programs and required one-stop partner programs in the local area to align resources available to the statewide planning region and the local area; and**

The American Job Center will align the following resources:

Co-enrollment of individuals in partner programs

The WIOA Title 1B services provider will ensure that co-enrollments are part of the WIOA Title 1B enrollment process. The new American Job Center website will provide tools for identifying potential opportunities for co-enrollments. This is helpful for a system wide approach. The one stop operator will work to educate the workforce system on opportunities for co-enrollments including written desk guides.

Coordination of funding for program participants taking part in occupational skills training, including those participating in Registered Apprenticeship programs

WIOA requires that training funds be coordinated with other grant sources for training. The local area will work with the Nebraska Department of Labor to identify opportunities to support the Registered Apprenticeship program.

Coordination of funding for supportive services for program participants, including transportation services

Like co-enrollments, the WIOA Title 1B services provider will ensure that coordination of funding for supportive services is part of the operational guidance for the program. Local policy requires that funds are coordinated. The EmployLNK app (<https://mylnk.app/home>) identifies potential sources for additional funding for supportive services. The one stop operator will work to educate the workforce system on opportunities for leveraging supportive services including development of written desks guides.

Cross-training of partner program staff on program eligibility requirements and program services

The one stop operator will develop/coordinate cross-training of American Job Center partner program staff.

Connecting employers with work-based training resources available through the Nebraska Department of Education Continuing Education Program and the US Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship

The business service representative/service provider, administrative entity, and Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development will work to connect employers with work-based training resources. This will be incorporated into the new American Job Center webpage.

Coordination of Rapid Response services with plan partners

The local area will support and coordinate Rapid Response services. See [section 9](#).

Coordination with economic development entities that support development and implementation of industry sector partnerships

The local area will continue to work closely with Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development to seek ways to identify shared goals and leverage resources. See [section 7](#).

- b. achieve the strategic vision and goals described directly above in section 1 for local plan elements.<sup>2</sup>**

Strategies to Support Goal 1 - Advancing living wages and inclusivity.

The workforce board has defined success to be the creation of 380 job training opportunities that provide a living wage or prepare the jobseeker for a career that pays a living wage. These training opportunities would be parceled out as follows over the 4-year plan period.

- 144 on-the-job trainings (three a month, average cost of \$2,500)
- 144 work experiences (three a month)
- 52 occupational skills trainings
- 20 transitional jobs
- 20 internships

Strategies for supporting the above goal are identified below.

*Strategy 1 – It Starts with a Living Wage*

The service provider will identify living wage standards for all participants. This will be the baseline for all individual service strategies (ISS) or individual employment plans (IEP). (See <https://livingwage.mit.edu/metros/30700> for living wage calculations). We will emphasize the use of the H3 website (<http://H3.ne.gov>) to help participants identify, acquire skills, and enter high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand (H3) careers in Nebraska. All program participant activities will be centered on the achievement of this primary goal.

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<sup>2</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(a)(6)

### *Strategy 2 - Development of Career Pathways*

To support our participants in achieving economic independence, the development of career pathways is key. This model truly empowers participants to thrive in work. The Strategic initiatives Committee with workforce partners will create four career pathways during this plan period in the following sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Agribusiness and Natural Resources (especially positions addressing conservation and energy efficiency)
- Healthcare
- Technology

Coordination and the development of these career pathways may be completed in partnership with:

- Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development;
- The Mayor's Taskforce for Economic Recovery;
- EmployLNK;
- Lincoln Manufacturing Council;
- Southeast Community College;
- Nebraska Workforce Development Board;
- Blueprint Nebraska; and
- existing industry sector partnerships.

### *Strategy 3 – Inclusivity*

The workforce board will support the career pathways goal in the state plan by working with plan partners to identify barriers for job seekers and workers (including unemployed workers), Veterans, and individuals with barriers to employment from participating in the workforce, including the acquisition of skills and knowledge that create career pathways. The Strategic Initiatives Committee will work to identify five or more barriers to participation and address those barriers.

### *Strategy 4 - Increase the awareness of workforce programs and services throughout Lancaster and Saunders Counties.*

The workforce commits to investing in higher usage of social media to reach potential employers and jobseekers. We will work to have a visible presence in Saunders county by collaborating with more organizations and employers. We will keep a focus on issues of race, equity, inclusion, and diversity. We will strengthen branding and outreach partnerships, expand the use of technology tools to reach more customers, and identify opportunities to promote programs through the media.

### *Strategy 5 - Enhance youth employment opportunities by expanding partnerships with businesses, schools, and other community organizations.*

The workforce board plans to increase promotion of the Title 1B program and the American Job Center through allowable outreach efforts. We will build stronger partnerships with Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development, school counselors, and other youth programs, including those from state agencies. We will keep a focus on issues of race, equity, inclusion, and diversity. We aim to make the program elements as “work-like” as possible to help build soft skills, industry knowledge, and financial literacy. We will show and talk about success stories with more employers.

## Strategies to Support Goal 2 - Create Service Alignment

Strategies for supporting the above goal are identified below.

### *Strategy 1 – Coordination of business services*

Strengthening the business service team by working with the Nebraska Department of Labor Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, Nebraska VR, WIOA Title 1B service provider, and Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development to create a functional team with shared outreach strategies including outreach materials.

### *Strategy 2 – Technology integration*

The local workforce board will create a website that connects residents in Lancaster and Saunders Counties to workforce services in our local area and state-wide. This include a platform to schedule services and provide services virtually. Additionally, program specific information will be available, and an interactive questionnaire will be available to help customers identify services and program that might best meet their needs. There will be a workforce system directory as well as interactive forms.

### *Strategy 3 – Common intake system*

The local area will follow and support Nebraska Department of Labor's guidance for common intake among partner programs.

### *Strategy 4 – Policy development*

The local area will work with Greater Nebraska and Greater Omaha Workforce Development Areas to develop policy that is consistent or similar to improve ease of access for employers and job seekers. This includes on-the-job training, enrollment documents, and coordination of funding.

### *Strategy 5 – Shared Terminology*

The local area will work with partners to create shared terminology for services and ensure standard use through the workforce system.

### *Strategy 6 – Cross training and technical assistance*

The One Stop Operator will work to incorporate cross training into the partner forums.

### *Strategy 7 – Co-enrollment*

Co-enrollments are required whenever eligibility permits for:

- local Title I youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs;
- Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant program;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance program; and
- Dislocated worker Grant programs, whether administered at the state- or local-level.

*Strategy 8 - Public sector partnership*

The workforce board will work with the other local areas to develop industry sector strategies within the region. The Strategic Initiatives Committee in partnership with Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development will develop sector strategies. Strategies will align with the development of the career ladders. These sector strategies will help individuals with barriers to employment enter the labor market and support and strengthen employers. Individuals with barriers to employment include Veterans, low-income individuals, individuals who speak English as a second language, single parents, farmworkers, in-school and out-of-school youth, the unemployed and other disadvantaged populations.

Strategies to Goal 3 - Meet or exceed the negotiated levels of performance for WIOA Title 1B programs to maximize community impact

The workforce board has defined success to be meeting or exceeding 100% of the adjusted levels of performance for the:

- individual local-area single indicators scores,
- overall local-area single program scores, and
- overall local-area single indicator scores.

See [section 18](#) – Local Levels of Performance for the current negotiated levels of performance for Program Years 2020 and 2021.

Strategies and action steps for supporting the above goal are identified below.

*Strategy 1 - Conduct board monitoring of WIOA Title 1B programs to identify continuous improvement opportunities.*

The local area compliance coordinator will publish a monitoring schedule for each program year. Findings will be reviewed by the administrative entity and Compliance and Accountability Committee. Corrective action will be required as needed.

*Strategy 2 - Require WIOA service provider(s) to run and work NEworks predictive reports monthly.*

A summary of action steps will be sent to the administrative entity three (3) business days prior to the monthly performance meeting.

*Strategy 3 - Establish a monthly meeting between the administrative entity, mayor's aide, and the service provider(s) to review WIOA performance including NEworks predictive reports.*

The administrative entity will set the agenda and schedule this meeting.

*Strategy 4 - Compliance and Accountably Committee will regularly review WIOA performance during the program year.*

This committee will meet two (2) weeks prior to all scheduled full board meetings to review and identify any required board action.



*Strategy 5 - The service provider(s) will create improved operational guidance for ensuring better outcomes.*

The service provider(s) will implement operational guidance for identifying customers in follow-up that are not employed to bring them back into the American Job Center and assist them in finding employment. The service provider(s) will implement operational guidance for exiting customers from the program to ensure that their employment goals have been met and recorded correctly in NEworks.

*Strategy 6 - A summary of where the local area is (including enrollments and scheduled exits) will be sent to the Compliance and Accountability Committee monthly.*

The administrative entity will send this email.

*Strategy 7 - Incentivize service provider for meeting negotiated performance goals.*

The workforce board will incorporate pay-for-performance into service provider contracts for Program year 2021 for meeting or exceeding 100% of the negotiated performance goals.

### **3. Describe the workforce development system in the local area, including:**

#### **a. the partners and programs that are included in the workforce development system;<sup>3</sup> and**

The following organizations play a role in the local workforce development system:

#### EmplyLNK

This is a collaboration of workforce development agencies in Lincoln including the American Job Center, Nebraska Department of Labor Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development/Prosper Lincoln, Lutheran Family Services, Catholic Social Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Center for People In Need, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Veterans Affairs, and more. EmplyLNK is the single point of contact for businesses to interact with the agencies that serve others and to organize job fairs and other employment-focused events. In addition to monthly meetings to share common issues and hear from Lincoln businesses on their openings, this group also plans career fairs for Veterans, adults and students and plans a reverse pitch job fair for case managers to learn about jobs in the community. In total, the agency serves 5,000+ Lincoln residents.

#### Lincoln Literacy

Lincoln Literacy serves adults who want to improve their language skills. These students may be working toward a GED, seeking advancement in employment, or preparing to become a CNA or teacher.

#### Lincoln Manufacturing Council

The Lincoln Manufacturing Council's Manufacturing Tech program includes 10 Lincoln manufacturers that are hiring in our community. The council provides training to individuals with no experience in manufacturing and are willing to learn more.

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<sup>3</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(1)(i). *Workforce development system* refers to the entirety of the workforce development system in the local area, which may include partners other than required one-stop partners.

The 6-week class includes information about measurement, reading work orders, manufacturing workplace protocols and more. The final class will be a career fair giving students an opportunity to interview and be considered for a position.

Manufacturers include:

- Agility Fuel Systems
- Bison
- ContinentalContitech
- Deeter Foundry
- General Dynamics
- Kawasaki
- LI-COR
- Lincoln Industries
- Lincoln Machine
- Mapes
- Molex
- Nature's Variety
- Teledyne Isco
- TCMCO

#### Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development

The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) is a public-private collaboration charged with fulfilling Lincoln's Economic Development goals. Job growth and business expansion are critical components of a vibrant and thriving community. The growth of Lincoln is in the skyline, in the voices of its entrepreneurs, and in the spirit of its people. Incredible things are ahead for this growing city. Due to its expansion of new business, influx of talent, and economically sound environment, Lincoln offers endless opportunities for success.

#### New Americans Task Force

NATF (New Americans Task Force) is a network of public and private organizations and community members, dedicated to supporting New Americans in our community. NATF members strive to welcome all newcomers, assisting them in building the lives they seek through the removal of barriers and the provision of culturally competent support services. New Americans Task Force Career Ladder Project has been selected as [Google.org Impact Challenge](#) Nebraska People's Choice winner and will receive an additional \$125,000 in funding to connect skilled immigrants and refugees to career pathways, digital resources, and a professional network while fostering economic opportunity and restoring dignity through work.

#### South of Downtown Association

South of Downtown Community Development Organization enriches the quality of life for residents of Near South and Everett neighborhoods through collaboration, economic opportunities, and community development.

- b. how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core programs and other one-stop partner programs to support service alignment, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2301 et seq.).<sup>4</sup>**

The workforce board will support service alignment in the workforce development system through the American Job Center and One Stop Operator by:

#### Generating Walk-in Traffic

The One Stop Operator, in partnership with EmployLNK, Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1B service provider will host at least one hiring event in the American Job Center per month.

Additionally, the OSO will host other monthly events that will draw in walk-in traffic. Events might include:

- Pro Bono Week
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance
- National Apprenticeship Week
- Resume workshops
- Job club
- Classroom training opportunities including Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical programs
- Open house events for partners
- Public health screens
- Affordable Care Act registration event
- SNAP registration event
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month

The OSO shall also host on-line events and promote virtual efforts to draw traffic to the AJC website and related services. This will include online hiring events, workshops, and job clubs.

#### Improved Communication

The OSO is responsible for communicating to the workforce system staffing changes, upcoming events and workshops, and general operations of the AJC. The OSO will maintain and create social media content. The OSO will direct outreach to recent customers of the AJC. The OSO is responsible for maintaining and updating partner information on the AJC website. Additionally, the OSO is responsible for maintaining a one-stop partner staff directory on the AJC website.

#### Resource Room

The OSO must ensure that all partner programs are available at or through the AJC. The OSO will create and maintain operational guidance on how to deliver each program in the resource room. Meaningful service must be provided onsite, during a customer's first visit. Customers using the resource room must be able to access all basic career services on the day of their visit. The resource room and other services will also be provided to English language learners and appropriate accommodations may be necessary. Additionally, the OSO, working with Nebraska VR and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and

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<sup>4</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(1)(ii)

Visually Impaired, must ensure that all staff working in the resource room are confident in navigating and using the assistive technology.

### Customer Surveys

The OSO is responsible for collecting, administering, and reporting all local customer satisfaction surveys, including employer surveys. Results will be shared with the partners.

### Referral Tracking

The OSO is responsible for overseeing and reporting referrals sent in the workforce system. Partners can send referrals via NEworks, AJC website portal, or email. A clear method for sending and receiving referrals for each partner must be established, communicated to the system, and maintained.

### Common Identifier

All workforce system partners must operate under the “American Job Center” or “proud partner of the American Job Center Network” logo. The OSO will work with partners to use the common identifier.

Additionally, the OSO will ensure that all workforce system staff working in the AJC have/use name tags that are provided by the City and that partners that want to use the AJC email domain may do so.

### Partner Forum

The OSO must conduct and host routine partner forums. Partner forums are intended to build system capacity by educating workforce system staff on available programs and services in the local area and encourage the coordination of service delivery. This forum should also include discussion of data collection and goals for continuous improvement.

### Complaints and Equal Opportunity

Complaints and grievances of a non-discriminatory nature are to be managed by the OSO. This includes keeping and maintaining a complaint log. The OSO will work with the City of Lincoln Equity and Diversity Officer and Ombudsman to ensure that all activities in the AJC comply with the [Equal Opportunity-Non-discrimination and Complaints/Grievances of a Non-discriminatory Nature Policy](#). This policy provides the local area processes for handling complaints.

### Shareholders Report

The OSO will put together an annual shareholders report, that will be published each August. The report will share success stories, referrals, number of customers served, performance metrics, and other related information for each workforce partner. The shareholders report is intended for one-stop partners, board members, and the community.

### Service Delivery

The OSO must ensure that access to all one-stop partners is available in the AJC either via direct-linkage or in the center. Written procedures must be maintained and all staff working in the resource room must be familiar with these procedures. Services may be delivered virtually. The OSO will support and coordinate virtual services delivery.

### Priority of Service

The OSO must ensure that priority of service is honored in the center. The OSO is responsible for developing written operational procedures including a process for staff to follow to identify priority of service in the American Job Center. These written procedures will be posted on the AJC's webpage and staff training will be provided by the OSO. See [section 22](#) for details on order of service.

### Program Performance

The OSO will support the WIOA Title 1B programs and other partner programs in achieving their respective negotiated levels of performance as established with their Federal partners through:

- 1) coordinating the delivery of basic and individualized career services in the American Job Center resource room;
- 2) ensuring that meaningful assistance for one-stop partner programs, including Unemployment Insurance, is available in the American Job Center resource room; and
- 3) and the coordination of services and referrals in the local area.

#### **4. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:**

The workforce board is the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board (GLWDB) and the current One-Stop Operator for the local area is Equus Workforce Services.

Our American Job Center is currently located at:

Southeast Community College-Education Square  
1111 O Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Services are provided in Suites 205 (includes the Resource Room), 219, 222, 229 and 233. The local area has no affiliate one-stop center or specialized center.

Partners and programs included in the one-stop delivery system are listed below. Partners denoted by an asterisk (\*) have staff working at the American Job Center and those without an asterisk provide services through direct linkage (by phone, virtually, etc.).

#### **Proteus, Inc.**

<http://www.proteusinc.net/>

The Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker partner assists migrants and other seasonally employed farmworkers and their families achieve economic self-sufficiency through job training and other services that address their employment related needs. Migrant and seasonal farmworker services in Nebraska are provided by Proteus, Inc. Proteus provides the services and financial assistance that can remove the barriers to help farmworkers qualify for better jobs and enjoy a higher standard of living. Programs include educational services, On-the-Job Training, and Job Readiness Assistance.

## **National Able Network**

<http://www.nationalable.org/jobseekers/>

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is designed to help low-income job seekers age 55 and older. SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities, including schools, hospitals, day-care centers, and senior centers. Participants work an average of 20 hours a week and this training serves as a bridge to unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants. The SCSEP service provider for the State of Nebraska is the National Able Network. Their programs are designed to assist eligible job seekers from all backgrounds, including the unemployed, career changers, military veterans, seniors, and aspiring IT professionals.

## **Adult Education\***

<https://www.education.ne.gov/aded/>

<https://www.southeast.edu/continuing/basicskillsgedeslandcitizenship/>

Mission Statement: To provide direct and equitable access to Adult Education programs that are focused on high quality English language acquisition, adult basic skills improvement, and high school equivalency credentialing that promote opportunities to transition to postsecondary education, job training opportunities, and life-long careers.

Southeast Community College (SCC) is the Adult Education and Family Literacy provider in the Greater Lincoln local area through a grant from the Nebraska Department of Education.

Classes offered at the following locations:

- SCC Main Campus: 8800 O Street, Lincoln, NE
- SCC Education Square: 1111 O Street, Lincoln, NE
- SCC Learning Center at Wahoo: 536 N. Broadway St. Wahoo, NE

SCC offers instruction to help adults 16 years of age and older, improve in the following areas:

- Basic Skills Improvement
- High School Equivalency Preparation
- English as a Second Language
- The rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.
- Workforce Preparation Activities

## **Carl Perkins Career & Tech Ed\***

[www.southeast.edu](http://www.southeast.edu)

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act supports the development of academic and career and technical skills among secondary education students and postsecondary education students who elect to enroll in career and technical education (CTE) programs, sometimes referred to as vocational education programs. Programs of study incorporate secondary and postsecondary education elements into a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses leading to an industry-recognized credential, certificate, or degree.

Programs of study at Southeast Community College include:

- Agriculture/Food/Natural Resources
- Business
- Communications and Information Technology
- Construction and Electronics
- Health Sciences
- Transportation and Manufacturing

The GAP Assistance Program (<https://www.southeast.edu/gap/>) provides financial assistance for need-based tuition and other eligible costs for approved, non-credit short-term training programs for in-demand occupations. Depending on financial eligibility, an individual may receive full or partial assistance with direct training costs including tuition, books, required fees and equipment.

Approved programs of study in training solutions include:

- Machining
- Electrical Maintenance
- Welding
- Microsoft Applications
- Leadership Certificate
- Lean/Six Sigma
- Computer Networking
- Fiber Optics
- Concrete in Practice

#### **Wagner-Peyser (Employment Services) \***

<http://dol.nebraska.gov/>

This partner program is provided by the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL). Employment Services focus on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, and reemployment services to unemployment insurance claimants.

Job seekers who are Veterans receive priority referral to jobs and training as well as special employment services and assistance.

The services offered to employers, in addition to referring job seekers to available job openings, include assistance in developing job order requirements; matching job seeker experience with job requirements, skills and other attributes; assisting employers with special recruitment needs; arranging for Job Fairs; helping employers analyze hard-to-fill job orders; assisting with job restructuring and helping employers deal with layoffs.

### **Unemployment Insurance Benefits\***

<http://dol.nebraska.gov/>

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) program operated by the Nebraska Department of Labor pays benefits to workers who have lost jobs and meet the program's eligibility requirements.

Services in Lincoln are provided on-site and through a dedicated phone line in the AJC's Resource Room.

### **Jobs for Veterans State Grant program (JVSG)\***

<http://dol.nebraska.gov/>

The program is provided through the Nebraska Department of Labor and assists Veterans with significant barriers to employment. Funds are used to hire dedicated staff to provide individualized career and training-related services and case management to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers in filling their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans. These services are provided by the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP). The Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) provides outreach to area businesses.

### **Trade Adjustment Assistance Program\***

<http://dol.nebraska.gov/>

This program serves individuals who have lost their jobs due to increased foreign imports or shifts in productions to foreign markets and who have been determined eligible for federally funded Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). Nebraska Department of Labor TAA staff conduct informational meetings for Trade-affected workers and coordinate reemployment efforts and classroom training benefits. Additional benefits from TAA may include job training, income support, job search and relocation allowances, a tax credit to help pay the costs of health insurance, and a wage supplement to certain reemployed trade-affected workers 50 years of age and older.

### **Nebraska VR\***

<http://www.vr.nebraska.gov/>

Nebraska VR helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs. Nebraska VR also helps businesses recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. Through this "dual client" approach, Nebraska VR assists individuals with injuries, illness, or impairments in achieving competitive employment and increased independence. Nebraska VR also assists business owners and employers through full-service business consultation on a variety of business and disability-related areas. Nebraska VR clients meet with a counselor and develop a work plan. Services can include career planning, training, job placement, on the job supports, and counseling.

### **Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI)**

<https://ncbvi.nebraska.gov/>

NCBVI operates a comprehensive and coordinated program designed to assist individuals who are blind in gaining remunerative employment; enlarge economic opportunities; increase the range and diversity of available occupations; stimulate other efforts that aid blind persons in becoming self-supporting; and



provide training in the skills of blindness for independent living. NCBVI provides the training, counseling, and resources needed for a positive understanding of blindness and visual impairment. The program's expectations include employment and fulfillment in all aspects of life. The website provides information about the Commission and about blindness in general: for blind and visually impaired individuals, their families, and for businesses seeking job candidates to fulfill Nebraska employment needs.

### **Community Action Partnership of Lancaster & Saunders Counties**

<http://www.communityactionatwork.org/>

This agency empowers people living in poverty to reach economic stability. Services include Emergency Services, Early Childhood Education, Community Services, Financial Well-Being, Housing Services, and Homelessness Prevention. Programs at Community Action are designed to create a continuum of services that can work independently, but also function as a pathway to self-reliance. The continuum begins with meeting basic needs, moves to skills development, and finally economic stability. Case Managers empower participants to resolve individual and systemic barriers through a culturally respectful, family-focused approach that uses a household's strengths as a foundation for progress. Community Action continues to build on its successes through collaboration and innovation, while maintaining the integrity and quality of service delivery.

### **Lincoln Housing Authority – Family Self Sufficiency Program**

<http://www.l-housing.com/FSS.html>

The Family Self-Sufficiency program (FSS) helps individuals and families support themselves so they no longer need public assistance. The program is voluntary and available to most adults who participate in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program or who live in public housing through LHA. Participants must have a desire to become self-sufficient and a willingness to take the steps necessary to make it happen. Participation is open to anyone: employed or unemployed, students or those wanting to attend school, married couples, or single persons.

The FSS case manager can help provide the services needed to become self-sufficient. These may include:

- Educational programs (GED, ESL, ABE, and college)
- Career assessments
- Job training
- Childcare
- Counseling
- Case management
- Credit counseling
- Home ownership preparation
- Coordination with other service providers and agencies
- Ticket to Work Program

### **WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth\***

<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/urban/workforce/onestop.htm>

Equus Workforce Services is the WIOA Title IB provider. Assistance is provided for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. The purpose of the WIOA Title IB programs is to provide workforce investment

activities to eligible individuals that will increase employment retention and earnings of program participants, increase occupational skill level attainment by program participants, and ultimately result in unsubsidized employment that provides family-sustaining wages. Services include but are not limited to assessment, labor market information, career planning, work-based training, occupational skills training, and supportive services.

Services are provided at the AJC, 1111 O Street, Suite 205, Lincoln, NE 68508.

### **Ponca Tribe of Nebraska**

<https://www.poncatrIBE-ne.org/>

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 166 Indian and Native American (INA) grantees and others are interested in economic self-sufficiency through employment and job training programs for Native Americans. The Section 166 programs are designed to support employment and training activities in order to develop more fully the academic, occupational and literacy skills; make individuals more competitive in the workforce; and promote economic and social development in accordance with the goals and values of such communities. These programs are administered in a way that not only meets regulatory requirements, but also in ways that are consistent with the traditional cultural values and beliefs of the people they are designed to serve. Programs for adults include Assessments, GED Support, Career Development and Advising, Academic Counseling, Job Coaching, Resume Development, Computer Lab, Supportive Services, Case management, and Occupational Training.

### **TANF & SNAP\***

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/pages/accessnebraska.aspx>

Both programs are provided by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The program provides cash assistance to low-income families with minor children. TANF income is used to pay for family living expenses like rent, utilities, food, clothing, and other necessities. TANF is often the only source of cash assistance for a family. All individuals who are defined as a work-eligible individuals are required to participate in the Employment First program. Once a family applies for TANF cash assistance, all work-eligible individuals, unless they otherwise qualify for an exemption from Employment First, are referred to the Employment First program at the time of the intake interview. The work-eligible individual is required to complete an Employment First Self-Sufficiency Contract within five days of the referral and immediately engage in approved work activities. Dependent children age 15 or younger (including an emancipated minor) and dependent children age 16, 17, or 18 who are full-time students regularly attending an elementary or secondary school or a dependent child age 16 or 17 who is a full-time student and regularly attending college, are not required to participate in the Employment First program.

The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low-income people buy food. It's not necessary to be receiving other public assistance to be eligible, but people don't receive SNAP benefits automatically—they must apply and be found eligible. Households that meet the program guidelines for income and resources receive SNAP benefits for free. A household can be one person or a group of people who purchase and prepare meals together.

**a. how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of providers in the one-stop delivery system and ensure that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers;<sup>5</sup>**

The workforce board will evaluate the effectiveness of the American Job Center (this includes all partners providing services in-person or via direct-linkage) and WIOA Title 1B programs and the development of continuous improvement as required by 20 CFR § 678.800 (c), 34 CFR § 361.800, and TEGL 16-16, including policy development, procedures, and implementation of strategies.

The workforce board will complete evaluation of service delivery at the American Job Center including engagement with one-stop partners, participants, employers, other customers, and Greater Lincoln's one-stop delivery system to better understand what is working and what may need improvement. The workforce board must ensure that all customers receive services in a compliant, efficient, and meaningful manner. We desire to create a customer-centric service delivery strategy. As the labor market environment is rapidly evolving, we will step up and constantly look for new ways to innovate on behalf of the public.

The evaluation will include the following approaches.

Secret Shopper

Evaluators called "secret shoppers" will be sent to the American Job Center to evaluate service delivery of basic and individualized career services in the resource room, referral/delivery of WIOA Title 1B Programs and other one-stop partner programs.

Evaluators will review the coordination of services to ensure that practices do not disincentivize providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services.

Evaluators will receive training on available services at the American Job Center prior to visiting the center. A score card will be created to measure their experience. Many evaluators will be referred to the Title 1B program and/or attend the American Job Center orientation. Evaluators will meet with Title 1B career planners to explore training opportunities. This experience will be evaluated. When all of the "secret shopping" is completed, evaluators will come together again to discuss their experience and identify trends.

Workforce System Focus Group

Evaluators will conduct a short online survey to assess Title 1B staff and one-stop partners' satisfaction and overall involvement with the American Job Center. In addition, the survey will be used to evaluate their overall interest and perceived challenges with meeting internal and external customer needs. Additionally, work with the leadership team to schedule a staff and partner focus group. Evaluators will coordinate a time, provide invitation information and any other logistic details to schedule the focus group. The focus group will not exceed an hour. The purpose of the focus group session is to gain additional information on how the American Job Center can better meet the needs of staff, partners, and stakeholders. A report will be created including summary of discussions, identification of common themes, and any recommendations.

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<sup>5</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(i)

### Business Focus Group

Evaluators will conduct a focus group of employers that have utilized services at the Lincoln American Job Center. Board staff will assist in identifying at least 20 employers to invite to the four focus group sessions. This focus group will be designed to collect feedback on business services. Employers that have received services recently especially those that have hosted work-based learning experiences will be targeted. Employers that participate in EmployLNK hiring events will also be invited to participate.

### Job Seeker Focus Group

Create a focus group of job seekers that have accessed multiple services at the Lincoln American Job Center. Board staff will assist in identifying at least 20 individuals to invite to the four focus group sessions. This focus group will be designed to collect feedback on services not evaluated in the secret shopper program and to evaluate program benefits and barriers for users that use the center repeatedly.

All evaluations activities listed above will be completed by a third-party. The workforce board will use the City of Lincoln's procurement process to identify, select, and award this contract to a vendor. The third-party vendor will be responsible for hosting focus groups, creating a scoring rubric (in conjunction with the workforce board), selecting evaluators, running the surveys, and reporting out results to the workforce board. This level of review will be completed at least once during this planning period.

### Customer Satisfaction Surveys

The OSO will administer job seeker and employer satisfaction surveys during this plan period as well to assisting in identifying areas for improvement. Survey results will be shared with the Strategic Initiatives Committee on a routine basis. This committee will make recommendations for improvement to the workforce board.

#### **b. how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system through the use of technology and other means, including access in remote areas;<sup>6</sup>**

The workforce board will create a virtual platform for the American Job Center and Title 1B programs to provide career services. The website will meet ADA standards (per Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards), 508-compliance, and will be available in Spanish. Since services will be provided virtually, a system of identifying priority of service must be established. Customers may self-identify their priority group when scheduling an appointment to establish an order of service. Additional timeslots may be reserved but not listed, to allow capacity for priority groups. Virtual services will be provided in addition to in-person service delivery.

### Scheduling Assistant

A key component of making the site actionable is a scheduling assistant. This will allow employers and jobseekers to make appointments with American Job Center staff (either virtually or onsite), reserve interview and hiring event space, and register for workshops.

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<sup>6</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(ii)

## Questionnaire

Another key component to the site is the ability for jobseekers to complete an interactive questionnaire to determine what programs in the American Job Center network might be a good match. This is not a tool to determine actual eligibility but rather a tool to make a quality referral. Upon completion of the eligibility matrix, the jobseeker will be able to schedule an appointment with the appropriate programs.

- c. how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC § 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including the provision of staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities;<sup>7</sup> and**

The American Job Center is programmatic and physically accessible and compliant with ADA standards for accessibility.

Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities when administering assessments. Outreach materials and website content will be developed in accessible way. The website will meet ADA standards (per Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards), 508-compliance, and will be available in Spanish.

Aisles in the American Job Center will be kept clear of furniture. A phone is stationed at the main entrance to the building to allow customers to request assistance in entering the building. Resource room navigators can assist job seekers that lack computer skills. Additionally, assistive technology is available in the resource room to help individuals search and prepare for jobs.

The workforce board is committed to improving accessibility and is actively working to relocate the American Job Center. [Section 17](#) provides details on the relocation process.

A disability “expert” on staff (other than Nebraska VR), will be identified by the one stop operator. This person will become an expert about overall accessibility. In addition, an individual with a disability who works at the American Job Center can provide a valuable example both for the other staff and for customers of someone with a disability who has achieved employment success. The workforce board will encourage the Title 1B service provider to proactively recruit people with disabilities for staff positions.

The One Stop Operator will work to involve people with disabilities in American Job Center. People with disabilities can bring valuable knowledge and first-hand experience to American Job Center’s efforts to maximize accessibility. Few American Job Center’s make a point of actively involving people with disabilities in the ongoing work of making the American Job Center more accessible. For example, the One Stop Operator can ask a person who is blind or dyslexic to visit the American Job Center and provide feedback to gain first-hand insight that cannot be captured with accessibility measures or checklists alone. People with disabilities also can consult with the American Job Center to improve its outreach to the disability community.

The Director of Equity and Diversity and the City Ombudsman/LGBT liaison collectively serve as the EO Officer for issues related to the grant.

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<sup>7</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(iii)

Notice and communication of non-discrimination is posted in the American Job Center and is given to each WIOA Title 1B participant in an accessible format, this includes the babel notice.

All brochures, pamphlets, and other publications which promote, or broadcast WIOA program information include the following tag line: “This WIOA Title I-financially assisted program/activity is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.” Where a telephone number is provided, the materials also include a TDD/TTY or relay service number. Additionally, use of the common identifier is required for all materials, physical, digital, etc.

The one stop operator will coordinate staff training for all American Job Center staff on an annual basis. Training topics will include how to use the assistive technology, disability awareness training opportunities including: how to make reasonable modifications for service delivery, voluntary disclosure of disability, effective communication, and standards for confidentiality.

**d. roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.<sup>8</sup>**

The following one-stop partners provide programmatic and service contributions:

<b>Partner Program</b>	<b>Partner Entity</b>	<b>Services/Resources</b>
Adult Education	Nebraska Department of Education; Southeast Community College;	Access to educational services and activities
Adult, DLW, Youth	City of Lincoln/ Dynamic Workforce Solutions	Resources for training and employment
Career and Technical Education (Perkins)	Nebraska Department of Education; Southeast Community College;	Vocational curriculum, career counseling, academic-vocational integration, and experiential learning
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties	Financial wellbeing, basic needs services, emergency assistance, supportive services, early childhood education
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Lincoln Housing Authority	Housing services & financial wellbeing
Job Corps	Pine Ridge Job Corps/ Denison Job Corps	Residential education and job training
Jobs for Veterans State Grant	Nebraska Department of Labor	Veterans’ services: Local Veterans’ Employment Representative; Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Proteus	Job training, health care, education assistance
Native American Programs	Ponca Tribe of Southeast Nebraska	Health services, social services, education
Senior Community Services Employment	National Able Network	Resources for training and employment
TANF	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	Resources for training and employment

<sup>8</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(iv). The term *resource contributions* refers to programmatic and service contributions, rather than contributions pursuant to funding agreements.

<b>Partner Program</b>	<b>Partner Entity</b>	<b>Services/Resources</b>
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Nebraska Department of Labor	Resources for training and employment
Unemployment Insurance	Nebraska Department of Labor	Unemployment benefits
Vocational Rehabilitation	Nebraska VR & Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	Job training, employment accommodations, skills coaching Accessibility training for staff
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	Nebraska Department of Labor	Business and Job Seeker services

**5. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out the core programs to:<sup>9</sup>**

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

The workforce board is in the process of redesigning the American Job Center webpage. The website will be accessible for the visually impaired and will be available in Spanish and Farsi. This redesign will enable customers to access career services virtually. It is the workforce board’s hope that core partners and other required partners will participate in providing these services virtually. The one stop operator will be responsible for coordinating virtual services. The new website will feature a scheduling assistant that will allow customers to request virtual meetings after hours and in-person meetings in Wahoo at the Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties field office. Core partners and other required partners will be encouraged to utilize the scheduling assistant. Customers will also be able to reserve a computer in the resource room. The new site will include a questionnaire that can be utilized by customers to identify services that may be beneficial. There will also be a workforce guide highlighting programs and services. Partner programs that are not co-located will be encouraged to keep virtual office hours, which will be posted on the website. Additionally, business services will be promoted. Employers will be able to reserve interview and conference room space online. There will be a questionnaire that will help identify job seekers and employers that may be eligible to host/participate in work-based learning.

American Job Center services are available to individuals with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities. Materials are made available in multiple languages and the American Job Center certification process conducted by the board ensures programmatic and physical accessibility. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities. The one stop operator is expected to ensure that staff are properly trained in the use of the assistive technology and the best way to assist individuals in the use of this technology, such as the JAWS screen readers available in the Resource Room.

The Strategic Initiatives Committee will work to identify future opportunities to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

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<sup>9</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(2)

- b. facilitate the development of career pathways, in accordance with the goals and strategies defined in the state plan and subsequent modifications of the state plan, and co-enrollment in the core programs; and**

[Section 2 \(b\)](#) identifies the workforces boards strategy for the development of career pathways.

In accordance with the *Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System*, the Strategic initiatives Committee will work with plan partners, employers, and regional and local industry sector partnerships to:

1. Select and prioritize the development of career pathways.
2. Identify barriers to participation in selected career pathways.
3. Address/ create solutions to participation in selected career pathways.

- c. improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

Strategies described in [Section 5 \(b\)](#) regarding development of career pathways will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates, industry-recognized certificates, licenses, certifications, and credentials that are portable and stackable.

A recognized postsecondary credential includes both educationally awarded credentials as well as a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, and a license recognized by the state or federal government.

The workforce board will work with Nebraska VR, Adult Education, Nebraska Department of Labor, Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Southeast Community College to ensure understanding of the broad scope of these credentials and to improve access to activities leading to these recognized postsecondary credentials. This includes the promotion of H3 careers and aligning education and credentialing with occupation requirements.

## **6. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area:<sup>10</sup>**

- a. to facilitate employer engagement with workforce development programs, including engagement of small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**

Employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, are encouraged to participate in EmployLNK. This participation includes the hosting of case manager tours, taking part in job fairs including the Veterans Career Fairs, and presenting at EmployLNK meetings.

Business service representatives from the core partners and other partners promote the use of NWorks and various training programs to the employer community. Presentations are made to business and education groups to encourage employer engagement.

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<sup>10</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(c)(i)-(v)



The redeveloped American Job Center website will promote employer services including:

- Recruit & Hire
  - Job Fairs
  - Reserve Interview Space
  - Online Job Postings
  - Job Description Writer
  - Hiring a Diverse Workforce
- Work-based Training Services
  - Work Experience
  - Try-Out Employment
  - Internships
  - Registered Apprenticeship
  - Customized Training
  - Worker Training Grant
  - Incumbent Worker Funds
- Incentives
  - Disabled Access Credit
  - Barrier Removal Tax Deduction Work Opportunity Tax Credits
  - Federal Bonding Program
- Layoffs and Closures
  - Rapid Response
  - Shared Work Program

**b. to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;**

The workforce board will host employer focus groups as described in [section 4\(a\)](#) to better understand the need of employers. Results will be shared with the Strategic Initiatives Committee to implement solutions.

Business surveys results will be reviewed by the Compliance and Accountably Committee to identify areas for improvement.

The workforce board will work to utilize customized training and incumbent worker training funds to meet specific needs of employers.

**c. to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development;**

The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) serves as the economic development agency for the City of Lincoln and includes many private sector investors. The workforce board has a member that is a LPED staff member. Additionally, two board members serve on the LPED advisory board. These three board members will work collectively with the administrative entity to coordinate of economic and workforce development activities.

The workforce board will work to align goals and outcomes with Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development as described in [section 7](#) to better meet the needs of employers.

WIOA Title 1B Service Provider Staff and the one stop operator will participate in EmployLNK activities.

**d. to strengthen linkages between the local one-stop delivery system and the Nebraska's unemployment insurance programs; and**

The American Job Center is committed to providing meaningful unemployment insurance assistance in the resource room. During the COVID pandemic this commitment has been validated.

Computers at the American Job Center are available to use in filing/updating Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims. American Job Center staff assist customers in getting started in the process and with computer literacy issues. Additionally, there is a phone dedicated to unemployment insurance that directly connects to their call center.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits has committed to having a staff member work in the American Job Center resource room daily. This has built public confidence in the center and increase traffic into the center.

The one stop operator will coordinate American Job Center staff training from the Unemployment Insurance to help facilitate the delivery of services.

**e. that may include the implementation of initiatives (which must support the strategies described above in Sections 6.a. through 6.d.), such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training 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.**

The workforce board seeks to roll out the following initiatives to support strategies for business services listed in [section 6](#).

Customized Training/Incumbent Worker

Working with Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development and the Mayor's Aide for Economic Development the workforce board will identify opportunities to utilize customized training and incumbent worker training funds.

On-the-job Training

By the completion of Program Year 2024, the workforce board plans to expend at least 60% of all direct aid to customers on on-the-job training for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs.

Career Pathways

The workforce board will build, and support career pathways as described in [section 2 \(b\)](#).

Sector Strategies

The workforce board will create sector strategies as described in [section 2 \(b\)](#).

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

**Integrated workforce activities**

The workforce board works closely with Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED). The one stop operator and WIOA title 1 service provider support economic development activities by providing staffing at EmployLNK events including hiring events and job fairs. The workforce administrator, mayor's aid, and LPED have routine meetings on how to coordinate, leverage, and support economic development in the community.

**Promote entrepreneurship**

The local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise opportunities via social media. Additionally, the new website will feature a section dedicated entrepreneurship resources including:

- One Million Cups-weekly networking event for local entrepreneurs (<https://www.1millioncups.com/lincoln>)
- StartupLNK-website to celebrate Lincoln's startups (<https://startuplnk.com/>)
- Turbine Flats Project-start up and small business collaborative (<https://turbineflats.org/>)
- Union Bank Catalyst Program (<https://catalyst.ubt.com/>)

Additionally, the Southeast Community College (SCC) Entrepreneurship Center (<https://www.southeast.edu/entrepreneurship/>) hosts weekly networking events to spotlight small business owners, start-up owners, and the companies that support entrepreneurs. The SCC Entrepreneurship Center is a resource hub for anyone interested in doing business for real. Services include office rental space in the Focus Suites, customized Focus Coaching sessions, and drop-in office space in the Suite Spot

**8. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.<sup>11</sup>**

Adult and Dislocated Worker activities include basic career services, individualized career services, training services, and follow-up services. As activities within the AJC certification process and the MOU negotiations process, one stop partners and the board have been able to assess an acceptable level of availability of basic and individualized career services, training services and follow-up services and are working to further define how these services are being delivered: on-site or through direct linkage.

**Basic career services**

- Determination of program eligibility to receive assistance from Title IB adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs;
- Outreach and intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system, including an opportunity to initiate an application for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) assistance and non-assistance benefits and services, which could be implemented through the provision of paper applications forms or links to the application website;

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<sup>11</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(6)

- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skill gaps), and supportive service needs;
- Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance and career counseling when needed by an individual, including provision of information on:
  - in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
  - non-traditional employment;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop delivery system and other workforce development programs when appropriate;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas such as
  - job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
  - information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
  - information relating to local in-demand occupations and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training and workforce services, delineated by program and type of providers;
- Provision of information, in useable and understandable formats and languages, on how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's one-stop delivery system;
- Provision of information, in useable and understandable formats and languages, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including:
  - childcare
  - child support
  - medical or child health assistance available through the state's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program;
  - benefits under Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
  - assistance through the earned income tax credit;
  - and assistance under a state program for TANF and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA; and
- Provision of information and meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing an Unemployment Insurance compensation claims.

### **Individualized career services**

- Comprehensive assessments of the skills and the service needs to help the customer obtain high wage employment, which may include: 1) diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools, and 2) in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goal, including the list of, and information about, the eligible training providers;
- Group or Individual counseling;
- Career planning;

- Workforce preparation activities and short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
- Financial literacy services;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers, including transitional jobs;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

### **Follow-up services**

Services are to be provided to adults and dislocated workers who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for a up to 12 months after the first day of unsubsidized employment. Follow up services may include:

- Career guidance
- Referrals and other services based on the needs of the individual (does not include supportive services)
- Follow-up services must be more than just an attempt to contact the participant and must not be just an attempt to secure documentation to support or report a performance outcome.

### **Training services**

- Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment; For OST, programs of study are selected from the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) which includes those training institutions assessed as eligible by the Nebraska Department of Labor to receive WIOA funds.
- Work-based learning including on-the-job training (OJT), incumbent worker training, customized training, and Registered Apprenticeships and may be long-term or short-term based on individual need.
- Skills upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training
- Job readiness training provided in combination with 1 or more training services
- Adult education and literacy activities, including English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs provided concurrently or in combination with 1 or more training services

## **9. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities.<sup>12</sup>**

The workforce board will follow and work within the parameters of the [Nebraska Rapid Response Guide](#) including when a rapid response is required, required services, and reporting requirements.

The local Title 1B Business Services Representative will coordinate Rapid Response events in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Labor.

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<sup>12</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(7)

## **Notification**

Rapid Response begins when a potential job loss or closing becomes known. The knowledge of a layoff or closing can be prompted by both the formal and/or informal information received by a one-stop partner.

It is the responsibility of all one-stop partners if they become aware of a potential layoff or closure to notify the local Title 1B Business Services Representative.

- Email: [support@ajc.lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:support@ajc.lincoln.ne.gov)

## **Sources of Information**

Any hint that a closing or layoff is occurring will be followed up on and verified by the Title 1B Business Services Representative. Some firms may file a WARN or mass layoff notice, these notices will be sent to the Nebraska Department of Labor and/or the City of Lincoln and then forwarded to the Title 1B Business Services Representative. The following sources can be used to find out about a potential closing or downsizing:

- Employer files a WARN
- Employer notifies the local workforce system
- Media (written, television, radio)
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local Workforce Agencies
- Local Elected Officials
- Local Government and Community Agencies
- Union Officials
- Individual Workers
- General Public

## **Initial Employer Contact**

It is the responsibility of the Title 1B Business Services Representative to contact the employer to gain a clear understanding of the situation, once they become aware of a potential or definite layoff or closure. Rapid Response services are provided to both private and public companies. Information needed to confirm a potential layoff with the employer should include, at the minimum, the following:

- Number of employees affected
- Contact person including title & phone number
- Worksite address
- Date of layoff or closure

## **Layoff Announcement**

Once the Title 1B Business Services Representative verifies the layoff or closure, the following individuals will be notified about all layoffs or closures:

- Workforce Administrator, City of Lincoln
- Regional Manager, Nebraska Department of Labor

- Project Director, Title 1B Service Provider
- Reemployment Services Administrator, Nebraska Department of Labor
- One Stop Operator, City of Lincoln Service Provider
- Employer Service Team
- Unemployment Insurance Representative, Nebraska Department of Labor
- State Rapid Response Team, via [NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov)
- TRADE Program Coordinator, Nebraska Department of Labor

### **Media Inquiries**

Even if the information is considered public, staff should not speak to the press about any layoffs or closures. All media inquiries should be directed to the City Workforce Administrator or their designee.

### **Notice of Confidentiality**

Maintaining the confidence of the employer is critical to gain access to provide services for the workers and show respect for the employer and workers. Information regarding the layoff or closure should be kept confidential when the employer has indicated that the information is not public. The Layoff announcement email will clearly indicate the confidentiality nature of the information.

### **Rapid Response Event**

Based on the response and willingness of the employer, the Title 1B Business Services Representative will determine the best options for services to provide. See below:

#### **Information**

The Rapid Response team will provide information to the employer and their employees regarding services and programs available in the State and in their community. This information will ideally be provided via email but can also be provided via hardcopy and will be mailed.

#### **Onsite Meeting**

The Rapid Response team will present to every employer who has over five employees impacted with the option of an on-site meeting.

- The Onsite Meeting is described as one hour in length where representatives from different programs/services discuss re-employment services, training opportunities, and unemployment insurance to the affected workers.
- Ideally, this onsite meeting occurs at the workplace, on company time, and prior to the layoff.
- This onsite meeting can include additional topics/representatives such as: Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Security, Health Insurance, Community Colleges, Economic Development, etc.
- Representatives can come to the facility multiple times to provide a general overview of services or assistance with a specific program/service such as filing for unemployment insurance, creating a resume, a job fair, etc.
- This onsite meeting is to be tailored to meet the company's needs.

## Meeting Agenda

The standard agenda for each Rapid Response meeting will include:

Topic	Position
Introduction and Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose of a Rapid Response</li> <li>• What a Dislocated Worker is</li> <li>• Our Location</li> <li>• Labor Market Information – Where the jobs are</li> </ul>	Title 1B Business Services Representative, Local Area Service Provider
Employment Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume and Cover Letter Assistance</li> <li>• Job Search Techniques</li> <li>• Preparing for an interview</li> </ul>	Workforce Coordinator, Nebraska Department of Labor
Job Training Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore a new Career</li> <li>• Skill and Interest Assessments</li> <li>• Work-based Learning</li> <li>• Classroom Training</li> <li>• Supportive Services</li> </ul>	Career Planner, Local Area Service Provider
Unemployment Insurance Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details on eligibility and how to apply</li> </ul>	Unemployment Insurance Benefits
Assistance registering in NEworks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunity for collect of information for enrollment into Dislocated Worker</li> </ul>	Workforce Coordinator and Career Planners

## Meeting Packet

The Title 1B Business Services Representative is responsible to putting together meeting packets with all of the one-stop partners information.

## Follow-Up with Affected Employees

The purpose of follow-up is to ensure each individual that is affected by a layoff or closure is aware of the services and programs available to assist them during this transition.

A Title 1B Career Planner will review the list of employees provided by the employer or the sign-in sheet from the Rapid Response Orientation, and provide follow-up services that include, but not limited to:

- Encourage individuals to complete the initial registration of NEworks,
- Referring the client to the appropriate partner resources
- To assist the individual with writing a resume
- Utilizing NEworks
- Unemployment Insurance
- Training opportunities.



Title 1B Career Planners will attempt to contact these employees at least three times via phone, email, or mailing. Contact with the impacted employees needs to be completed within 3 business days after the Rapid Response Orientation or 3 business days after receiving the employees list.

**10. Describe and assess 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 identification of successful models of such activities.<sup>13</sup>**

**Program Elements**

The work board ensures that the fourteen (14) youth program elements required under WIOA Sec. 129(c) are made available to all eligible youth participants:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have an academic and occupational education component;
4. Occupational skill training which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors/occupations;
5. Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities;
6. Leadership development opportunities;
7. Supportive services;
8. Adult mentoring;
9. Follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months after completion of participation, and may be provided beyond 12 months at the Local Board's discretion;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Labor market and employment information for in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; and
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

The board does not require that the youth provider must provide all fourteen elements but does require that the youth provider provides access to all of the fourteen required elements either through self-delivery or as a leveraged resource. This availability has been and will continue to be a review element in the youth program monitor. The list of eligible youth service providers is posted on the board's webpage. <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/workforce/index.htm>.

**Serving Individuals with Disabilities**

For individuals with disabilities, co-enrollment in Nebraska VR or the Nebraska Commission for the Blind may be done to leverage resources and improve outcomes. There are opportunities to improve and strengthen the relationship with our rehabilitation services partners. Additional staff training, technical assistance, and general feedback on how to improve service delivery from these partners will be solicited. The American Job Center is physically accessible, in compliance with ADA standards for accessibility. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities when

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<sup>13</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(8)

administering assessments. Additionally, assistive technology is available in the resource room to help individuals search and prepared for jobs.

The workforce board is in the process of relocating the American Job Center to improve physical accessibility.

### **Identification of Successful Models**

The local area will implement services strategies identified in *Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System*.

#### Strategy 1 – Leveraged & Coordinated Resources

Funding will be braided with partner resources to best meet the needs of Youth. Each Individual Service Strategy (ISS) will document the coordination of resources along with short and long-term goals for credential attainment and/or work-based training leading to unsubsidized employment.

#### Strategy 2 – Joint Case Management & Co-enrollment

For co-enrolled OSY, case management will be coordinated across the programs serving the OSY and a primary case manager will be identified. Case management (including joint case management) will be designed around the needs of the OSY to ensure career pathways are developed based on needs assessments to ensure ongoing and successful progress and achievement of short- and long-term goals identified in the Individual Service Strategy, including soft-skills and basic skills development, credential attainment (including high-school diplomas or equivalents), and participation in occupational skills training or work-based training. The youth service provider will coordinate with local Title II Adult Education providers, Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, Title IV vocational rehabilitation programs, and other state plan partner programs, including TANF and SNAP, to coordinate services, eliminate duplication of services, and maximize use of partner resources in order to provide OSY with access to the full array of workforce investment activities available through the public workforce system. ISY must be co-enrolled in adult in order to use an Individual Training Accounts for occupational skills training. Co-enrollment Title I youth program providers must co-enroll youth program participants when eligibility permits. Partner programs in which participants may be co-enrolled include all of the programs listed in [section 4](#).

### **11. Describe how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to align strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.<sup>14</sup>**

The workforce board will work to coordinate secondary and postsecondary education. The coordination of services and resources among the WIOA Title 1B programs, PROJECT HELP (<https://www.projecthelpcareers.com/>), The Career Academy (<https://home.lps.org/tca/>), Pell grants, and other education programs/ funding sources is key.

The Strategic Initiatives Committee will work to convene partners to identify opportunities to coordinate activities, identify best practices, and measure successful outcomes. Additionally, the development of career pathways, promotion of H3 careers, and expanding work-based learning opportunities (including Registered Apprenticeships) will be prioritized when convening partners.

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<sup>14</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(9)

The GLWDB will market our services to and develop referral networks with educational entities including but not limited to Lincoln Public Schools, The Career Academy, Adult Education Programs, Lincoln Literacy, and Southeast Community College.

**12. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.<sup>15</sup>**

**Transportation**

Mileage reimbursements, gas cards, bus passes, and reimbursement for taxi/ride share are available to enable the participants to participate in WIOA activities.

StarTran is the City-owned bus system that provides transportation to the residents of Lincoln. The current American Job Center is located across the street from their main bus terminal on 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

Participants that use the parking garage connected to the American Job Center, can get their parking fee reimbursed or validated when visiting the center.

**Supportive Services**

The WIOA Title 1 Program avoids duplication and maximizes funding streams by co-enrolling participants when possible. Career Planners use MyLink, (<https://centralne.mylnk.app/home>) to identify wrap around services. The MyLink app provides a free, one-stop guide of participating cities' resources for people in need. This app makes it easy for families, career planners, and agencies to learn about, connect, and utilize services. MyLink works without a data plan or Wi-Fi. It is available to download for both Android and Apple phones. The app is available in several languages and includes the following categories:

- Children and Family
- Coronavirus
- Disability Services
- Domestic Violence
- Education
- Employment
- Food
- Health
- Housing
- Legal
- Military & Veterans
- Senior Services
- Transportation

The *Coordination of Services and Supportive Services Policy* has established the following criteria:

- Supportive services may only be provided after it has been determined such services are necessary to enable the participant to participate in WIOA activities under career or training services, or youth employment and training activities.

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<sup>15</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(10)

- Supportive services may only be provided after it has been determined the participant is unable to obtain supportive services through other partner programs providing such services.

**13. Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.<sup>16</sup>**

WIOA Title 1B service providers must coordinate available funds to pay for training and prevent duplication of payments. See Greater Lincoln’s [Coordination of Services and Supportive Services policy](#).

The one stop operator will ensure that services provided in the American Job Center resource room are not duplicated by providing written operational procedures and coordinating staffing/services of Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title 1B, Unemployment Insurance, and other one stop partners program services. The One Stop Operator in the local area will lead the coordination of services between the Title IB provider, the Wagner-Peyser staff and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system. One-stop partners are expected to assist in working in the Resource Room and may serve as the customer-point-of-contact for a majority of the clients. It stands to reason that positive customer service, presenting a welcoming introduction, and interacting as a workforce professional are all keys to the success of the AJC. Maximizing coordination in the areas of assessments, job search workshops, and employer outreach will be determined by the partner and the One Stop Operator. The goal is to enhance, not duplicate services. The goal remains the creation of functional teams to improve service delivery.

It is the responsibility of the one-stop partner, workforce board, and the one stop operator to continually evaluate success and modify any practices as necessary.

To the extent permitted under law and regulation the one stop operator will act as a “functional leader” for all staff working in the American Job Center. This will reduce duplication. The one stop operator will work to streamline services as outlined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter 16-16 ([https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL\\_16-16.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_16-16.pdf)).

**14. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities provided under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the local board will carry out the review of local adult education service provider applications, consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and 232.<sup>17</sup>**

**Coordination**

The workforce board will work to strengthen and improve shared service delivery with Adult Education. Strategies for supporting the above goal are identified below.

1. Work collaboratively to develop strategies to assist adults achieve their goals identified through onboarding activities and to minimize barriers.
2. Improve workforce preparation activities by utilizing common standards for NEworks, resumes, individualized learning and employment plans, skills improvement, and career exploration.
3. Work jointly with adults to set SMART employment goals when appropriate yet remain receptive to the immediacy of the adult learner population.
4. Increase co-enrollments and identify how services can be leveraged.

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<sup>16</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(11)

<sup>17</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(12)

5. Host an annual training/workshop to increase awareness of programs.
6. Create a process to share customer information in a secure manner and reduce duplication.
7. Utilize the same vocabulary and terminology with customers.
8. American Job Center to conduct job search workshops in collaboration with Adult Education classes.
9. Improve the direct referral process for adults in need of basic skills improvement, high school equivalency credentialing and English language learning as well as workforce preparation activities and job placement services.

### **Application Review**

The workforce board carries out a review of specific portions of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II by eligible service providers seeking a grant for the provision of adult education and literacy activities to determine whether such applications are in alignment with the local plan.

The Adult Education State Director will instruct the board on the process and procedures for the review. The State Director will also provide the appropriate application sections of all eligible applicants serving in the identified workforce area along with the necessary determination forms to assist the board in reporting their findings. The workforce board chair will designate a review team of no less than three board members to participate with the workforce administrator in the review of the submitted applications. The review team will document on the appropriate alignment form, whether the application is found to be consistent with the local plan. These evaluations will be provided to the board chair for final recommendations to the State Director. On behalf of the workforce board, the board chair will notify the Adult Education State Director in writing of the final recommendations no later than 15 working days after receipt of the applications.

- 15. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements, as attachments to the local plan, which define how all local service providers will carry out requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in through local one-stop delivery system.<sup>18</sup> In this context, cooperative agreement means a legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity that is, consistent with 31 USC §§ 6302-6305:<sup>19</sup>**
  - a. used to enter into a relationship, the principal purpose of which is to transfer anything of value from the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity to the non-Federal entity to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States (refer to 31 USC § 6101(3)) and not to acquire property or services for the Federal government or pass-through entity's direct benefit or use; and**
  - b. distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and the non-Federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award.**

There are currently no cooperative agreements.

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<sup>18</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(13)

<sup>19</sup> 20 CFR § 675.300

**16. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) as determined by NDOL or the local CEO, as applicable.<sup>20</sup>**

The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds is the City of Lincoln.

**17. Describe the competitive process that will be used to award local area subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.<sup>21</sup>**

The competitive process to procure a One Stop Operator and WIOA Title IB service providers is through a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the City of Lincoln Purchasing Department. Current awards were made through RFPs 17-143; 17-144; and 17-145.

The workforce board is currently in the process of issuing RFP's for Youth Program services, Adult and Dislocated Worker Program services, and One Stop Operator services.

An RFP was also issued for the Website Redesign.

Additionally, workforce board may use sole-source procurement to lease space in a city owned property as they have been unsuccessful using the RFP process.

The City of Lincoln/Lancaster County Purchasing Department utilizes several procurement processes to acquire commodities and services which are of the best quality and at the lowest cost. The following processes are used in a manner which will best serve the City for the particular acquisition. One of the goals in the procurement process is to utilize common-sense measures which meet the requirements of City Code, City Charter, and any other applicable Local, State, or Federal regulations. This guide provides a definition of each procurement process utilized, the procedure followed during the procurement process, and examples of how the process has been used in the past. As a starting point, here is an overview of each type of procurement:

**Request for Information (RFI)** is used when you think you know what you want but need more information from Vendors in order to initiate an effective specification which will allow for a fair and open competitive process. This process is used very infrequently. The use of a Request for Proposal (RFP) is normally utilized since it expedites the contracting process.

**Request for Qualification (RFQ)** is used when you have a somewhat specific need for a service and want to develop an RFP or some type of selection process limited to industry-related qualified Vendors only. The use of a Request for Proposal (RFP) is normally utilized since it expedites the contracting process.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)** is used when you know you have a need, but don't exactly know how you can meet that need, or you need a specific service which requires selection criteria not totally related to price. This process is more formal than the RFI or RFQ process and usually results in the selection of a firm or company deemed as "most qualified" and/or "most qualified and at the lowest cost".

**Informal Bids (Quotes)** are used when you know exactly what type of commodities or services are needed which cost between \$3,000.00 and \$25,000.00. These bids are issued by Purchasing on the ebid site for as little as 24 hours depending on the cost, number of Vendors available, and complexity of the purchase. Award is made to the lowest, responsible, responsive bidder.

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<sup>20</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(14)

<sup>21</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(15)

**Formal Bids** are used when you know exactly what type of commodities or services you need which will cost over \$10,000.00 as a single purchase or combined purchase in a one-year period of time. These bids are issued by Purchasing and listed in the Lincoln Journal Star and posted on the ebid site for normally a minimum of 10 business days. Award is made to the lowest, responsible, responsive bidder.

**Cooperative Bids** are issued when the City of Lincoln and another government entity are interested in the same, or similar, products and services from which quantities are combined and a single bid is issued. If the total amount is over the formal bid threshold, these bids are listed in the Lincoln Journal Star and posted on the ebid site for normally a minimum of 10 business days. An award is made by each entity according to their needs to the lowest, responsible, responsive bidder. Separate contracts are issued by each entity and neither entity is obligated to the terms of the other.

**Sole Source (Noncompetitive Process)** is used when a single product or service can only be provided by one (1) Vendor due to various reasons such as territorial distribution, proprietary software, or installation into a piece of equipment already in place.

**Piggybacks** are used when a specific product or service is required and can be acquired by utilizing a contract which has already been executed by another entity. The advantages include an expedited purchase process in some cases and the potential for lower costs based on additional quantities from multiple agencies.

**Departmental Acquisitions** are those purchase requests issued by the department when there are no current contracts issued by the City for the same or similar products, and you know exactly what type of commodities or services are needed. These purchases are limited to commodities and services, which cost less than \$3,000.00 in a single year. These are mainly one-time purchases which do not require insurance or other contract terms.

General purchasing information, electronic bidding and contact information can be found at <https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/Departments/Finance/Purchasing>.

**18. Describe the current local levels of performance negotiated with NDOL, consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used by the local board to measure the performance of:**

**a. local WIOA Title I programs; and**

The local levels of performance were negotiated with the Nebraska Department of Labor for Program Years 2020 and 2021. The Mayor's aide, workforce board chair, and workforce administrator represented the workforce board during negotiations. Local levels of performance were reviewed and approved by the full board.

Factors that were considered in the negotiation process included:

1. Compared levels of performance with negotiated levels of performance established for other local areas.
2. Review of adjusted levels of performance using the objective statistical adjustment model.
3. Consideration if the levels of performance promoted continuous improvement.
4. Accounted if levels of performance supported state-wide levels of performance.

The current negotiated levels of performance for Program Years 2020 and 2021 are listed below, in table 2.

**Table 2**

<b>Performance indicator</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	<b>Youth</b>
Employment rate 2nd quarter after exit	79.0%	89.0%	79.0%
Employment rate 4th quarter after exit	79.0%	92.0%	78.0%
Median earnings 2nd quarter after exit	\$7,749	\$8,590	\$3,550
Credential attainment rate within 4 quarters after exit	77.0%	66.0%	55.0%
Measurable skill gains	42.0%	55.0%	50.0%

**b. Section 18 (b) performance of the local fiscal agent, if applicable, local Title I service providers, and the local one-stop delivery system.<sup>22</sup>**

Measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent is not applicable.

Local levels of performance are incorporated into the Adult & Dislocated Worker Program and Youth Program contracts. The workforce board works with its local area WIOA Title IB service provider, One Stop Operator, and public workforce system partners, particularly core partners, to align programs and services to achieve these performance goals.

**19. Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing local board, consistent with factors developed by the state board.<sup>23</sup>**

The Nebraska Workforce Development Board has not established guidelines for becoming a high-performing local board at this time.

**20. Describe how training services for adults and dislocated workers outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts,<sup>24</sup> including:**

**a. whether contracts for training services will be used;**

No contracts for training are currently used in the local area.

The workforce board will consider exceptions to the use of ITA's. Although no exceptions have occurred since approval of the last 4 Year Plan in 2017, the board is willing to continue its recognition that exceptions may exist and will follow the process as detailed in the workforce board's [classroom training and individual training accounts policy](#) for those limited exceptions to use of ITAs.

In general, once the consumer choice requirements described below have been met, taken on a case by case basis, the board will evaluate if one or more of the five exceptions apply:

1. When the services provided are on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training, or transitional employment;
2. When the local board determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers in the local area; the board's process used to select providers includes a 30-day public comment period;

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<sup>22</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(16)

<sup>23</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(17)

<sup>24</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(18)



3. When the local board determines that there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve individuals with barriers to employment; with board criteria for determining demonstrated effectiveness having been developed;
4. When the local board determines that it would be most appropriate to contract with an institution of higher education or other eligible provider of training services that will facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations, provided that the contract does not limit consumer choice; or
5. When the local board is considering entering into a pay-for-performance contract, and the local board ensures the contract is consistent with WIOA requirements on pay-for-performance contracts

**b. how the use of contracts for training services will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts; and**

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are funded by WIOA Title I adult program, dislocated worker program and youth program for OSY. ISY must be co-enrolled in adult to use an ITA and the adult funding stream pays for the ITA.

ITAs pay for training services for occupational skills in in-demand occupations provided by training providers on the approved list of Eligible Training Providers (ETP).

Providers approved by NDOL and listed on the ETPL are the only entities eligible to receive funding through ITAs.

Use of ETPs is mandatory except where the board workforce board has established a contract with a training provider in compliance with Federal law and regulation, state policies, and local policy.

The One Stop Operator and Title IB service provider will coordinate the use of contracts for training services with the use of ITAs. When using WIOA federal funds, it is always a requirement to coordinate with other grant assistance such as Pell grants, local philanthropic and industry-based scholarships, employer tuition assistance, and any other federal, state, or local resources in order to sufficiently meet the training and education-related costs of services. Staff must record all training-related costs and funding sources through use of NWorks and ECM to document that training was coordinated and maximized with other fund sources. The provider(s) will determine the appropriate method of payment including electronic transfer of funds, use of vouchers, etc.

**c. 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.**

The workforce board requires the provision of training services in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice in selecting an eligible training provider in accordance with the goals and objectives included in the participant's Individual Employment Plan or Individual Service Strategy. The requirements for consumer choice are listed below:

1. The local board, through the one-stop operator, will make the ETPL available to customers. Nebraska's ETPL is accessible online at [NWorks.nebraska.gov](http://NWorks.nebraska.gov) under the Education Services menu, look for ETPL Approved Programs. This list is available and current at all times on NWorks by the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL). Training providers that would like be included on the ETPL can learn more at [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov) under Eligible Training Providers in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act tab.

2. An individual who has been determined eligible for training services may select a program from the ETPL after consultation with a career planner/case manager.
3. Consultation with a career planner/case manager will include
  - a. either an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning informed by local labor market information and training provider performance information
  - b. appraisal of the participant's need for training services based on an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning informed by local labor market information and training provider performance information or any other career service received; and
  - c. documenting the participant's need for training services in the participant's case file.
4. There is no requirement that career services be provided as a condition for receipt of training services. However, if career services are not provided before training, the career planner/case manager must document the circumstances that justified the decision to provide training services without first providing the services described in item 3 above.
5. Priority consideration will be given to programs that:
  - a. lead to recognized postsecondary credentials; and
  - b. are aligned with in-demand occupations in the local area.
6. Unless the program has exhausted training funds for the program year, the career planner/case manager will refer the individual to the selected provider and establish an Individual Training Account (ITA) for the individual to pay for training.
7. The costs for training services paid through an ITA to a training provider will be funded by out-of-school youth, adult, or dislocated worker program funds, depending on the program in which the participant is enrolled or co-enrolled.
8. The local board, through the one-stop center, may coordinate funding for ITAs with funding from other Federal, State, local, or private job training program or sources to assist the individual in obtaining training services, subject to requirements for coordination of WIOA training funds under 20 CFR § 680.230.

The One Stop Operator is expected to ensure that customer choice is available and oversee its usage. Case Managers serve as career planners and are consultants during this process and thoroughly document the consumer choice process. This documentation is an element that is monitored by the local board's Compliance Coordinator and feedback is given to the Service Provider, with corrective action required if appropriate.

**21. Describe how the local area one-stop center(s) is implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by other one-stop partners.<sup>25</sup>**

**NEworks**

The local area uses NEworks, the state's management information system of record for sign-in by one-stop customers (via the NEworks Virtual One Stop Greeter) and case management of WIOA Title 1B participants.

**Assistive Technology**

There are two assistive technology workstations with updated software for visual and hearing-impaired job seekers in the resource room.

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<sup>25</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(20)

## Virtual Services

The workforce board is in the process of redesigning the American Job Center website to improve virtual access to career services. A key component of making the site actionable is a scheduling assistant. This will allow employers and jobseekers to make appointments with American Job Center staff (either virtually or onsite), reserve interview and hiring event space, and register for workshops and workforce activities online.

### 22. Describe the direction given by NDOL to the local board and by the local board to the one-stop operator will ensure that:

- a. priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and 20 CFR § 680.600;<sup>26</sup> and
- b. Veterans receive priority of service in all USDOL-funded training services, which includes training services provided through Title I programs.<sup>27</sup>

### Priority Requirements for WIOA Title 1B Adult

The Title 1B adult program must give priority for career services, training, and employment services to Veterans, eligible spouses of Veterans, and non-Veterans who are:

- Recipients of public assistance;
- Other low-income individuals; or
- Individuals who are basic-skills deficient

Services to eligible WIOA Adult Program participants must be provided in the following order:

<b>First, Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low-income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient;

<b>Second, Individuals who are not Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans but are:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low-income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient;

<b>Third, Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are not:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low-income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient

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<sup>26</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(21)

<sup>27</sup> 20 CFR § 680.650

<b>Last, to persons who are not:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low- income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient.

**Priority Requirements for WIOA Title 1B Dislocated Worker**

Services to eligible WIOA Dislocated Worker Program participants must be provided in the following order:

1. First, the individual must meet the eligibility criteria described in WIOA Section 3(15) ([see local policy on dislocated worker eligibility](#)); and
2. Second, if the individual meets the dislocated worker eligibility criteria and is a Veteran or eligible spouse of a Veteran, the individual must be given priority over dislocated workers who are non-Veterans.

**Priority Requirements for WIOA Title 1B Youth**

WIOA prioritizes expenditures and enrollment of individuals in the WIOA Youth Program:

- at least seventy-five (75) percent of Youth program funds must be spent to provide services to OSY; and
- all ISY must be low-income individuals, except as described in 20 CFR 681.250(c)

**Monitoring & Compliance**

The local area includes service to priority populations and priority of service in their monitoring scheduled as required by the local area [Monitoring Policy](#).

The local board has established a goal that 75% of adult enrollments will meet the priority of service criteria. It is the Project Director’s responsibility to report NEworks enrollment data to the local board quarterly. If actual performance falls below 51% in any quarter, the IB Adult Project Director must submit a written corrective action plan to the board within 30 days.

The Title IB Project Director will coordinate within the one stop system to educate community stakeholders, such as the Center for People in Need and Prosper Lincoln, on the priority of service requirements for basic career services and for Title IB Adult services. Outreach efforts will be made in collaboration with other program partners and with community initiatives such as the South of Downtown neighborhood project, an initiative of the Lincoln Community Foundation. Outreach success will be measured by attainment of the 75% enrollment goal.

**23. Describe the process used by the local board to provide an opportunity for the public comment on the development of the local plan or any subsequent modification of the plan before submitting the plan to NDOL. To provide adequate opportunity for public comment, local boards must:**

**a. make information about and copies of the plan and subsequent modifications available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;<sup>28</sup>**

A draft for the local and regional plan was available for review on March 1, 2021 at: [www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan) and at the City of Lincoln, 555 South Street, Suite 301, Lincoln, NE 68508.

A copy of the plan was shared with the Lincoln Partner Forum on February 22, 2021, the plan was reviewed and approved by the workforce board's executive committee on February 29, 2021.

**b. include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.<sup>29</sup>**

A public hearing was held on March 1, 2021 at 3:00pm at the Lancaster County Health Department, Lower Level Room 212/213/214, 3131 O Street, Lincoln, NE, 68510. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on February 19, 2021. The plan was posted online at [www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan) on February 10, 2021 in preparation for the Executive Committee review. The purpose of having a public meeting so early in the public comment process was intended help the public and other workforce partners to understand how to fully access the plan and how to submit public comments in an effort to increase the number of public comments received.

The Executive Committee reviewed and approved the plan on February 25, 2021 at 10:30 at the Lancaster County Health Department, Lower Level Room 212/213/214, 3131 O Street, Lincoln, NE, 68510. The public was given the opportunity to comment on the plan at this time. Notice of the meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on February 11, 2021. A draft copy of the plan was posted online at: [www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/workforceplan) prior to the meeting (February 10, 2021).

**c. provide no more than a 30-day period for comments on the plan and subsequent modifications before submission to NDOL, beginning on the date on which the plan and modifications are made available to the public;<sup>30</sup>**

The plan was available for public comment from March 1, 2021 and until expiration of the 30-day comment period on March 30, 2021.

Written comments on the plan could be sent to Tim Bornemeier, Chairperson of the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board, at the City of Lincoln address listed or sent via email to Dylan Wren, Workforce Administrator at [dwren@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:dwren@lincoln.ne.gov).

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<sup>28</sup> 20 CFR §§ 679.510(b)(1) and (5)

<sup>29</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(2)

<sup>30</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(3)

- d. submit to NDOL any comments that represent disagreement with the plan or subsequent modifications<sup>31</sup> or indicate that disagreeing public comments were not received, if that is the case; and**

March 1, 2021 – Tate Lauer

*As the State Director of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, I am writing to formally reject the current draft of the local plan. The local plan does not contain accurate information regarding Title II and was not approved by Nebraska Adult Education prior to being released to the public for comment. Although some of the recommendations for revision submitted to Greater Lincoln have been addressed in the current version of the plan, there are additional areas in need of correction.*

No other comments of disagreement were received.

- e. ensure that all open meetings are held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.<sup>32</sup>**

The public hearing and executive committee meetings were held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

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<sup>31</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(4)

<sup>32</sup> Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 84-1407 through 84-1414

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**Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area  
Local Plan for Program Years 2021-2024**

**(July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2025)**

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## **Combined State Plan Vision and Goals**

### **Vision**

Nebraska's vision is to be a national model for the delivery of workforce development services.

### **Goals**

Nebraska's two-part statewide goal for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers is:

- Selection and prioritization of development of career pathways; and
- Alignment of the state's workforce development system.

### **1. Describe the strategic vision of the local board to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency, which must include goals that align with the goals and strategies defined in the current state plan or subsequent modification of the state plan for the following factors:**

#### Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board

### **Mission**

To establish a workforce system that provides data-driven and employer-validated talent solutions through the integration of education, workforce, and economic development resources across systems

### **Vision**

To deliver local coordinated, proactive, responsive, and adaptable services for job seekers and employers to maximize opportunities for earning, learning, and living.

Greater Nebraska recognizes and supports the State's current vision to be a national model for the delivery of workforce development services. The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board's strategy to fulfill this vision is to increase efforts to eliminate barriers for participants and businesses, provide the support businesses need to thrive, strengthen provider partnerships, and work toward system alignment with a goal of helping individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency while supplying businesses with a strong workforce.

Greater Nebraska will ensure focus areas and action items fall under one of the three following:

1. Coordinated partnerships focused toward working collaboratively, sharing information, and aligning policies across programs to ensure efficiency and enhanced access.
2. Data driven initiatives concentrated on the needs of employers and the community.
3. Continuous improvement to meet the changing needs of job seekers and employers.

### **Goals**

In support of Nebraska's two-part statewide goal, Greater Nebraska has identified the following objectives and action items for contributing to the achievement of this goal:

#### Selection and prioritization of development of career pathways

State Goal: Selection and prioritization of the development of career pathways for three or more in-demand sectors or occupations identified in [Nebraska's Combined State Plan](#), Tables 9 through 12 of Section II.1.A.

Greater Nebraska will use data to drive decisions when creating new and building upon existing initiatives to prepare individuals for the workforce. Strategies will focus on:

- Health Care and Social Assistance;
- Manufacturing;
- Educational Services;

- Information Technology; and
- additional industries essential to the economic vitality of each community.

State Goal: Identification of three or more barriers to participation in the selected and prioritized career pathways among job seekers and workers (including unemployed workers), Veterans, and individuals with barriers to employment.

Greater Nebraska will work to address barriers to enrollment by reducing paperwork, implementing remote processes, and creating a more efficient process for co-enrollment. All staff have been provided with laptops for greater mobility to meet with clients, which will allow teams to better serve individuals in rural areas.

The State of Nebraska will be implementing a Reentry Program Coordinator to strengthen service provision to justice involved individuals and better track the effectiveness of initiatives. Greater Nebraska staff have received training by Nebraska Department of Corrections and will be expanding services in partnership with the State's Coordinator and additional staff to assist individuals with overcoming barriers related to background checks, lack of work history, and lack of resources.

The Greater Nebraska team is also part of the Nebraska Economic Mobility Task Force (NEMTF). This group brings partner staff together to address such issues as gaps in service, community needs, and potential solutions. In addition to participation in NEMTF, a work group led by the One-Stop Operator will be convened to determine best practices to address known barriers as outlined in the State plan. This group will also work to learn hidden barriers and will focus efforts on the benefits cliff.

State Goal: Identification of five or more key barriers to participation in the selected and prioritized career pathways by employers and regional and local industry sector partnerships.

Greater Nebraska participates in business services groups, including EmployNebraska, which has local area chapters in Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, Beatrice, Columbus, Norfolk, Sidney, and the Panhandle. Local area partnerships include Department of Economic Development offices and Chambers. These groups work with local areas businesses and schools to identify workforce needs. The One-Stop Operator will work with partners, including the Greater Nebraska business services group, Department of Economic Development, Nebraska VR, and State programs to create a functional team. This team will determine best practices to address known barriers as outlined in the State plan and will work to learn additional barriers and identify/implement solutions specific to the needs of area employers.

#### Alignment of the State's workforce development system

State Goal: Coordination of workforce development activities

Greater Nebraska will work to coordinate with plan partners, community partners, and other local areas to develop a more efficient and effective system. This will include:

- coordination of workforce development activities and services statewide to maximize service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers;
- process improvement projects to identify and remedy areas of inefficiency; and
- implementation of technological resources that will support:
  - integration of supportive services available throughout the One-Stop delivery system; and
  - participation in career pathway programs by job seekers, workers, employers, and industry sector partnerships.

### State Goal: Technology Integration

Greater Nebraska will work with the State and partners to identify and implement technological solutions, striving for efficiency and program alignment. Projects will include:

- working with partners to identify common technological resources and gaps. This includes identification of individual program and co-enrollment needs and participation in training and testing of proposed solutions;
- implementation of mobile teams utilizing mobility kits;
- expansion of rural partnerships to remotely connect individuals with Greater Nebraska reemployment services staff; and
- development of online enrollment processes.

### State Goal: Common Intake System

One-Stop partners will explore ways to streamline and integrate initial intake processes. Greater Nebraska will work to reach efficiency and seamless service delivery in co-enrollment, and co-case management with all partner programs through:

- increased cross training;
- development of procedures for system usage;
- evaluation of program alignment;
- leveraging of common process to eliminate unnecessary action items; and
- identification and implementation of best practices to address areas of opportunity.

Greater Nebraska acknowledges the State is refining its common intake system technology. Greater Nebraska will readily support the implementation of such when available.

### State Goal: Policy Development

Greater Nebraska will work to fully implement all State policies in a timely manner, in addition to updating or creating regional and local area policies that specify clear courses of actions, set clear expectations, guide decision-making, and support outcomes. Policy coordination will occur among partners and other local areas.

Greater Nebraska is currently working to improve its monitoring policies to align with State guidelines and ensure a more comprehensive local area oversight.

### State Goal: Online Resources

Greater Nebraska has greatly expanded its remote technological capabilities as a result of the pandemic allowing reemployment services to better serve previously underserved populations in rural areas. Greater Nebraska will work to increase mobile access to programs and staff through the support and development of:

- remote Reemployment Services presentations
- online program orientation
- accessible and fillable enrollment forms
- initiatives geared toward increasing technological access in remote areas, including expanding services provided through partnerships with public libraries

### State Goal: Cross Training and Technical Assistance

#### *Cross Training*

Greater Nebraska will work with the State and all partners to develop, implement, and expand cross-training. At the time of writing, Greater Nebraska is planning a seminar on co-enrollment and co-case management to be held in March of 2021, which will include partner program staff. This seminar will

be followed by online presentations focused on reemployment services, which will be open to job seekers, employers, and partners.

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board has contracted with Nebraska Department of Labor to hire a One-Stop Operator. A key component of this person's duties will be to ensure all partners are cross trained and receive continuous training opportunities for stronger partnerships and a more effective workforce system.

#### *Technical Assistance*

Greater Nebraska will continue to host TA calls with WIOA staff monthly, covering issues affecting performance, collaborative opportunities, and reinforcement of or changes to processes. To increase collaboration and coordination, these calls will be expanded beyond WIOA staff to include other Title I and partner programs in which participants can and should be co-enrolled accordingly.

#### State Goal: Co-enrollment

Greater Nebraska will work with all partners to align programs and reduce barriers to co-enrollment and co-case management. Referral processes will be tested and refined for easier connection to partner programs. Teams will meet regularly to examine processes for simplification and alignment. Co-enrollments in partner programs are and will continue to be reported to the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board, along with suggestions for policy and procedural changes to better support these efforts. The One-Stop Operator will develop and coordinate cross training of partner program staff. The Columbus office has seen great success with the WIOA and SNAP Next Step partnership at 76.6% co-enrollment. This partnership is currently being expanded to include TANF. Lessons learned, such as team bonding, treating all goals as team goals, presentation of co-enrollment, and coordinating communication with clients, are currently and will continue to be shared with other local areas and partners.

#### State Goal: Public Sector Partnership

Greater Nebraska will contribute toward, and work to implement, strategies identified by the Nebraska Partner Council, including:

- coordination with local workforce development areas to strengthen workforce system alignment
- targeted outreach to disadvantaged populations
- continuous improvement
- alignment of systems

As part of a coordinated approach to workforce development, the plan partners will meet regularly for planning purposes, information sharing, resource coordination and continuous workforce system improvement.

#### **a. preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment)**

With the growth of business needs outpacing the flow of workers in all Greater Nebraska economic areas of concentration ([NEworks - Nebraska Labor Availability Study Publications](#)), the Board's strategies to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency will focus dually on the needs of employers and preparing individuals to meet those needs. The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board's goals are designed to facilitate a staff approach to meeting people where they are, connecting them with opportunities to increase their skills, and putting them on a path to self-sufficiency. Greater Nebraska staff are prepared to help individuals achieve their career goals through the path best suited to them.

Partnerships between programs, education, and workforce will continue to be developed to provide youth with the support they need to enter the workforce and continue to grow, becoming contributing members

to the economic growth of their communities. Through relationships such as Nebraska Department of Education Career and Technical Education (CTE) and other local area secondary school programming, Greater Nebraska will expand its offerings to further connect with youth to provide work-based learning, labor market information, and supportive services.

Example: Grand Island Public Schools offers students Career Pathways (Apprenticeships), partnering with Greater Nebraska staff to provide the participant with supportive services and the employer with OJT (on-the-job training) wage reimbursement.

Columbus Public Schools offers students an array of Career Pathways in fields such as Engineering, Manufacturing, Finance, Mechatronics, Construction. The local office partners to support workplace experiences (via apprenticeships and internships) through supportive services and OJT wage reimbursement. Future pathway plans include a video production pathway and exploring potential Health Sciences and Education pathways.

Future goals for Work Based Learning in partnership with Greater Nebraska staff include:

- Provide students exposure to occupations with guest speakers, field trips, job shadows and other industry related opportunities
- Research best practices and other relevant instructional practices related to career readiness for students by engaging in industry partnerships and promoting work-based learning among students

In collaboration with EmployNebraska groups, Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, SNAP Next Step, homeless services, Veteran transition service providers, literacy programs, providers of disability services and other partners, Greater Nebraska works to effectively serve individuals with barriers to employment through comprehensive evaluation and development of a plan with involvement from all service providers that make up a participant's "team." Greater Nebraska will continue these partnerships with a goal of moving individuals and families toward self-sufficiency and stability.

Staff work with each participant to identify barriers that may prevent the individual from successfully completing training or obtaining and maintaining employment and develop a plan to overcome those barriers through program support, co-enrollment, and referrals. Staff will receive continuous training on rapport building, resources, and tools for overcoming barriers to strengthen the services provided. Training on the "benefits cliff" will also be implemented to provide staff the tools they need to effectively counsel participants through the transition from public assistance to self-sufficiency.

Example: Greater Nebraska's North Platte office has created a relationship with Families First Partnership in North Platte/Lincoln County. Individuals who request supportive services from Families First are connected with Reemployment Services Coordinators at the North Platte office to begin working on steps to a stable income. When appropriate, the individual is further connected with SNAP Next Step and other partners for co-enrollment.

Greater Nebraska's relationships with post-secondary institutions, short term training providers, and employers provide participants with a range of occupational skills and on the job training opportunities in all industries. Nebraska has a strong and innovative community college system, which provides participants with a supportive and engaging learning environment. The colleges are responsive to sector-based initiatives throughout Nebraska, ensuring coursework is relevant to industry needs.

Example: Greater Nebraska staff have partnered with Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation to provide individuals with the preparation they need to apply for status as a Journeyman. Vocational Rehab assists these individuals with the cost of training at Central Community College, while Greater Nebraska staff provide OJT placement with employers. Central Community College has developed a program focused on helping the individual be successful on their career path, without unnecessary courses. This model will be replicated in other areas and industries.

**b. relating to the performance accountability measures based on the performance indicators described in 20 CFR § 677.155(a)(1).**

Greater Nebraska leverages community partnerships and business relationships to address the needs of youth and individuals with high barriers to employment. Collaborative relationships with co-enrollment partners and resources are fostered to ensure performance is achieved. WIOA Title I programs and SNAP Next Step are currently working toward the alignment of processes and performance measures, including the timing and definition of a successful exit, to improve performance for both programs. This model will be expanded to TANF and other partners.

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board and subcommittees regularly review performance, identifying areas of opportunity. The Strategic Planning committee will utilize data to identify employer needs, anticipate industry growth, and determine strategies and focus areas for talent development. The System Performance committee will expand its review of the data to include identification of best practices and mobile accessibility to programs and services to support the State's vision of becoming a national model. The Board will prioritize funding based on the needs of the community and in relation to performance measures to ensure program staff are able to implement appropriate services with the highest impact.

**2. Taking into account the analyses described in Section 1 for regional plan elements, describe the local board's strategy to:**

**a. work with entities that carry out core programs and required One-Stop partner programs in the local area to align resources available to the statewide planning region and the local area; and**

Cooperation, collaboration, and coordination will continue to be key themes of the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board. Greater Nebraska will focus efforts toward the alignment of programs, including leveraging of resources, definition of success, and coordinated participant exit. Workforce system strategies include expanding active outreach to individuals with disabilities, Veterans, youth, English language learners, and other target populations to make them aware of services. Additionally, partners will work to develop a co-case management process that will provide for more effective coordination of resources. Each partner commits to cross-training of staff, as appropriate, and to providing other professional learning opportunities that promote continuous quality improvement. The Board will review reports of activities regularly to identify progress and areas of opportunity.

The One-Stop Operator will work with partners across the system to ensure referrals are substantive and appropriate, in addition to coordinating cross training and ongoing communication. The OSO will convene partners to facilitate integrated partnerships that seamlessly incorporate services for the common customers served by multiple program partners of the American Job Center (AJC). The Board will determine One-Stop Operator activities and outreach based on analysis of community, employer, and job seeker needs.

**b. achieve the strategic vision and goals described directly above in Section 1 for local plan elements.<sup>1</sup>**

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board will capitalize and expand on existing partnerships to develop specific action items in its strategy to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Data sources including labor market information, Rural Prosperity Nebraska (<https://ruralprosperityne.unl.edu>), studies provided by Nebraska Department of Labor, and other resources will be used to drive decision making.

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<sup>1</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(a)(6)



Greater Nebraska will involve business, partners, and other stakeholders every step of the way. Work will continue to strengthen existing sector partnerships focused on Manufacturing and Healthcare. Additional initiatives will incorporate STEM careers and awareness of growth opportunities.

### **3. Describe the workforce development system in the local area, including:**

The AJC network includes six core programs: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; the Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program; the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES) program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA; and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV of WIOA. The AJC network also includes other required and additional partners identified in WIOA. Through the American Job Centers, these partner programs and their direct service providers ensure businesses and all job seekers—a shared client base across the multiple programs—have access to information and services that lead to positive educational and employment outcomes. Greater Nebraska AJCs and partner staff strive to:

- provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with wages that sustain themselves and their families;
- provide access and opportunities to job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3(24) of WIOA, such as individuals with disabilities, individuals who are English language learners, and individuals who have low levels of literacy, to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and high-demand careers;
- enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance, including education and training for their current workforce:
  - Examples may include assistance with pre-screening applicants, writing job descriptions, offering rooms for interviewing, consultation services on topics like succession planning and career ladder development, and other forms of assistance.
- participate in rigorous evaluations that support continuous improvement of AJCs by identifying which strategies work better for different populations; and
- ensure that high-quality integrated data informs decisions made by policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

Management of the AJC network is the shared responsibility of the local Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board (GNWDB), the Chief Elected Officials Board (CEOB), the six WIOA core program partners, required One-Stop partners and other additional One-Stop partners, AJC operators, and service providers. Through the AJC, the One-Stop operator carries out the activities described below:

- facilitates integrated partnerships that seamlessly incorporate services for the common customers served by multiple program partners of the AJC;
- develops and implements operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management;
- uses technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings;
- organizes and integrates AJC services by function (rather than by program), when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and, as appropriate, through coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having AJC staff who perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams (e.g., skills development teams or business services teams); and
- service integration focuses on serving all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staff.

**a. the partners and programs that are included in the workforce development system;<sup>2</sup>**

Greater Nebraska has a fully integrated system involving Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program, National Dislocated Worker Grant, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and RESEA. Unemployment Insurance, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, and SNAP Next Step are collocated in most offices, with plans for expansion. Strong relationships exist through direct linkage to colleges within the Nebraska Community College Association, Nebraska Department of Education (Carl D. Perkins), Community Action Partnerships (CDBG), Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program. Greater Nebraska staff provide services within the correctional system to help prepare individuals returning to the community and workforce. Community partners include TANF and Bring Up Nebraska, focused toward helping families reach self-sufficiency; and EmployNebraska, focused toward connecting employers with job seekers.

**b. how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core programs and other One-Stop partner programs to support service alignment, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2301 et seq.)<sup>3</sup>**

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board System Coordination Committee acts to align and leverage services and resources of WIOA core and partner programs, prevent duplication of services, monitor One-Stop System performance, and form strategies to ensure continuous improvement of the system. The Board will convene with core programs and other One-Stop partners to work toward service alignment and creation of workforce strategies. The Board Strategic Planning Committee guides employer engagement, sector strategies, and development of career pathways. Data will be analyzed regularly to drive decision making and goal setting.

Greater Nebraska staff participate in EmployNebraska groups throughout Nebraska, which brings business service teams from core partners together to work toward a common goal. These groups meet regularly to identify employer, job seeker, and community needs; develop strategies to address barriers faced by employers and job seekers; and work toward system alignment and coordination for programs and services targeting employers.

Greater Nebraska Title I and Wagner-Peyser programs coordinate workforce services geared toward Nebraska secondary and postsecondary schools with Nebraska Department of Education under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education act. The reVISION program links schools with career education and industry professionals, providing educators the support and resources needed to implement and adjust curriculum to meet the needs of the workforce in a changing economy. Greater Nebraska will continue to support NDE's plan, including the promotion and alignment of programming targeting occupations leading to family-sustaining wages, as outlined in the Nebraska Perkins V State Plan. Several strategies include:

- industry sector partnerships;
- public sector partnerships;
- promoting career pathways, including career readiness;
- focusing on high-demand industry sectors and occupations during the provision of career services;
- increasing co-enrollment of program participants and coordinating funding across partner programs;
- expanding work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships; and
- implementing joint partner initiatives.

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<sup>2</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(1)(i). *Workforce development system* refers to the entirety of the workforce development system in the local area, which may include partners other than required One-Stop partners.

<sup>3</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(1)(ii)

#### **4. Describe the One-Stop delivery system in the local area, including:**

The Greater Nebraska One-Stop system is comprised of full-service American Job Centers as well as a network of other service delivery points. There are two (2) comprehensive American Job Centers and ten (10) Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) offices throughout the 88-county region.

The Beatrice American Job Center is located in Southeast Nebraska. Reemployment services include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Trade Adjustment Assistance; National Dislocated Worker Grant program; Jobs for Veterans State Grants; Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance. Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation is collocated and direct linkages are provided to Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program; the Nebraska Community College System; SNAP; TANF; SCSEP; Pine Ridge Job Corps; Ponca and Winnebago Tribes; Fairbury Housing Authority; and Blue Valley Community Action Partnership (CSBG). The Regional Manager of this center also oversees the Nebraska City affiliate site and provision of services at Nebraska Correctional Center for Women.

The Grand Island American Job Center is located in Central Nebraska. Reemployment services include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Trade Adjustment Assistance; National Dislocated Worker Grant program; Jobs for Veterans State Grants; Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance. Collocated partners include SNAP Employment and Training; SCSEP; and Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation. Direct linkages are provided to Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program; the Nebraska Community College System; SNAP; TANF; Pine Ridge Job Corps; Ponca and Winnebago Tribes; and Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership (CSBG). The Regional Manager of this center also oversees the Hastings and Kearney affiliate sites.

The AJC network includes six core programs: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; the Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program; the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES) program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA; and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV of WIOA. The AJC network also includes other required and additional partners identified in WIOA. Through the American Job Centers, these partner programs and their direct service providers ensure businesses and all job seekers—a shared client base across the multiple programs—have access to information and services that lead to positive educational and employment outcomes. Greater Nebraska AJCs and partner staff strive to:

- provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with wages that sustain themselves and their families;
- provide access and opportunities to job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3(24) of WIOA, such as individuals with disabilities, individuals who are English language learners, and individuals who have low levels of literacy, to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and high-demand careers;
- enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance, including education and training for their current workforce.:
  - Examples may include assistance with pre-screening applicants, writing job descriptions, offering rooms for interviewing, consultation services on topics like succession planning and career ladder development, and other forms of assistance.
- participate in rigorous evaluations that support continuous improvement of AJCs by identifying which strategies work better for different populations; and
- ensure that high-quality integrated data informs decisions made by policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

The management of the AJC network is the shared responsibility of the local Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board (GNWDB), the Chief Elected Officials Board (CEOB), the six WIOA core program

partners, required One-Stop partners and other additional One-Stop partners, AJC operators, and service providers. Through the AJC, the duties of the One-Stop operator include:

- facilitation of integrated partnerships that seamlessly incorporate services for the common customers served by multiple program partners of the AJC;
- development and implementation of operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management;
- use of technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings;
- organization and integration of AJC services by function (rather than by program), when permitted by a program’s authorizing statute and, as appropriate, through coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having AJC staff who perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams (e.g., skills development teams or business services teams); and
- service integration focused on serving all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staff.

*Table 1: Required One-Stop and Additional Partners*

<b>Partner Program</b>	<b>Partner Organization</b>
Adult, DLW, & Youth WIOA Programs	Nebraska Department of Labor
Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program	Nebraska Department of Labor
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	Nebraska Department of Labor
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Nebraska Department of Labor
Unemployment Insurance	Nebraska Department of Labor
Career and Technical Education Programs at the Postsecondary Level	Central Community College
Career and Technical Education Programs at the Postsecondary Level	Mid-Plains Community College
Career and Technical Education Programs at the Postsecondary Level	Northeast Community College
Career and Technical Education Programs at the Postsecondary Level	Southeast Community College
Career and Technical Education Programs at the Postsecondary Level	Western Nebraska Community College
Employment and Training Activities Carried Out Under the Community Services Block Grant	Blue Valley Community Action Partnership
Employment and Training Activities Carried Out Under the Community Services Block Grant	Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Inc.
Employment and Training Activities Carried Out Under the Community Services Block Grant	Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska
Employment and Training Activities Carried Out Under the Community Services Block Grant	Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership
Employment and Training Activities Carried Out Under the Community Services Block Grant	Southeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership
Employment and Training Activities Carried Out Under the Community Services Block Grant	Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Fairbury Housing Authority
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Housing Authority of the County of Scottsbluff
Job Corps	CHP International / Pine Ridge Job Corps Center
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs	Proteus, Inc.
Native American Programs	Ponca Tribe

<b>Partner Program</b>	<b>Partner Organization</b>
Native American Programs	Winnebago Tribe
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Central Community College
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Southeast Community College
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Crete Public Schools
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Metropolitan Community College
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Mid-Plains Community College
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Northeast Community College
Nebraska Department of Education, Adult Education, Adult Secondary Education	Western Nebraska Community College
Senior Community Service Employment Program	National Able Network / Nebraska Department of Labor
Second Chance Act	Siouxland Human Investment Partnership
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Vocational Rehabilitation	Nebraska VR
Vocational Rehabilitation	Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
National Dislocated Worker Grants	Nebraska Department of Labor
SNAP Next Step Employment & Training	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

**a. how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of providers in the One-Stop delivery system and ensure that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers;<sup>4</sup>**

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board is committed to continuous improvement, as are the workforce partners. The Board monitors the effectiveness of the local workforce system through regular committee meetings and report outs of performance, enrollments, compliance, and customer satisfaction. Continuous improvement is a factor in all Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance negotiations. Partner performance is supported through coordination of service delivery and cross training. The Board established the following to track and assure continuous improvement.

- The System Coordination Committee acts to align and leverage services and resources of WIOA core and partner programs, monitor One-Stop System performance, and form strategies to ensure continuous improvement of the system.
- The Strategic Planning Committee guides employer engagement, sector strategies, and development of career pathways, in addition to monitoring of program finances and the One-Stop System.

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<sup>4</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(i)

One-Stop Operator Activities include:

- joint planning, input on policy development, and coordination of system design processes to ensure delivery of integrated services, program alignment, a multi-entry or “no wrong door” approach, and elimination of duplication;
- regular evaluation of the availability of career services and referrals to system partners;
- accessibility and effectiveness of service provision to populations with barriers to employment, veterans, and employers;
- development and implementation of effective communication tools to increase information sharing and collaboration with the partners;
- collection and evaluation of input from customers, employers, internal partners, and community partners to develop specific improvement strategies;
- recommendations to the board, based on customer and employer surveys, activities in the community, and partner needs; and
- participation in regularly scheduled partner meetings, local area task forces, and other collaborative opportunities to exchange information and encourage program and staff integration.

Activities the board will participate in to ensure that service providers are meeting the needs of local employers include:

- review of labor market trends to anticipate employer needs;
- evaluation of workforce system performance measures;
- determination of baseline data to track outcomes;
- review of employer satisfaction surveys; and
- use of data to drive strategic planning and operational efficiency.

Activities the board will participate in to ensure that service providers are meeting the needs of local workers and job seekers include:

- increase co-enrollments in partner programs;
- evaluation of workforce system performance measures;
- review of customer satisfaction surveys;
- determination of baseline data to track outcomes;
- review of development and implementation of co-enrollment, assessment, referral, and case management processes; and
- expansion of work-based learning to improve access to employment that concurrently prepares individuals with the skills needed for employment.

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board will also review results of local, state, and federal monitoring. The respective programs will be expected to meet monthly QA review (internal audit) and quarterly data validation requirements to ensure all information entered into NEworks is accurate and documented in the customer file. When services are not meeting the needs of local employers, workers, job seekers, or partners, the board will work with the Administrative Entity to create a corrective action plan.

**b. how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system through the use of technology and other means, including access in remote areas;<sup>5</sup>**

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board will work with the Greater Nebraska team to develop mobile processes and expand access to the One-Stop system. Staff will be equipped with needed equipment

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<sup>5</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(ii)

and support to increase outreach and service delivery efforts to remote areas. Partners and libraries will be connected with the workforce centers via video conferencing platforms to provide job seekers access to workforce staff for quick assistance and scheduled program appointments. Reemployment Services orientation videos will be available online via the [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov) website and social media platforms. The State of Nebraska Department of Labor is currently working toward making available a reentry component of NEworks, which will allow staff to provide individuals currently incarcerated with almost all the same services available in the centers. Additional initiatives include identification of virtual hiring event best practices and expansion of this tool to better serve employers and job seekers.

The partners of the AJC will make employment and training services available through the one-stop delivery system. All services will be made available to those individuals with the greatest barriers to employment, to include individuals with disabilities.

Direct access to partner programs and services will be made available at the AJCs in person or through direct linkage via real-time technology whenever the partner services are not made available on site.

The One-Stop Operator's responsibilities include the organization and coordination of partner staff to optimize and streamline service delivery efforts. Operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, including uses of technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings will be created and implemented.

- c. how entities within the One-Stop delivery system, including One-Stop operators and the One-Stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC § 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including the provision of staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities;<sup>6</sup> and**

All facilities are physically accessible, in compliance with ADA standards for accessible design. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities when administering assessments. Each site is equipped with assistive technology for individuals with visual and/or mobility impairments.

Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation is collocated at both Greater Nebraska Comprehensive American Job Centers and direct linkage has been established with Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. These partnerships will enable the One-Stop system to utilize their expertise to help identify issues and develop strategies for correcting any access issues to programs and facilities including training of staff.

All centers will work proactively with community partners who have specialized training and/or expertise regarding the design of services for individuals with disabilities to improve upon adaptive service offerings. Referral processes and resource lists will be implemented to quickly connect individuals with accommodations.

At point of entry, all customers will be provided the notice of Equal Employment Opportunity rights and grievance procedures to ensure Greater Nebraska is in compliance with 20 CFR 683.600. Currently, documentation is scanned into the State's document manager. The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board will work with Nebraska Department of Labor to implement a more efficient technology-based acknowledgement of these rights and procedures.

Greater Nebraska utilizes Language Line for individuals who are not fluent in English.

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<sup>6</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(iii)

**d. roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners.<sup>7</sup>**

In accordance with 20 CFR 678.420, each of the required One-Stop partners (see Table 2) contributes funds toward the provision of career services, collaboration with Workforce Development Boards, and the One-Stop delivery system. Required One-Stop providers and other partners are working toward full integration of all services available throughout the One-Stop delivery system.

*Table 2: Required One-Stop Partners and Services/Resources Provided*

<b>Partner Program</b>	<b>Partner Entity</b>	<b>Services/Resources</b>
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	Nebraska Department of Labor	Business and Job Seeker services
Adult, DLW, Youth	Nebraska Department of Labor	Resources for training and employment
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Nebraska Department of Labor	Resources for training and employment
Jobs for Veterans State Grant	Nebraska Department of Labor	Veterans services: Local Veterans Employment Representative; Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
Unemployment Insurance	Nebraska Department of Labor	Unemployment benefits
Adult Education	Nebraska Department of Education; Central Community College; Northeast Community College; Southeast Community College; Mid-Plains Community College; Western Nebraska Community College; Metropolitan Community College; Crete Public Schools	Access to educational services and activities
Vocational Rehabilitation	Nebraska VR; Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	Job training, employment accommodations, skills coaching  Accessibility training for staff
TANF	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	Resources for training and employment
Career and Technical Education (Perkins)	Nebraska Department of Education; Central Community College; Northeast Community College; Southeast Community College; Mid-Plains Community College	Vocational curriculum, career counseling, academic-vocational integration, and experiential learning
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	Blue Valley Community Action Partnership; Central Community Action Partnership;	Basic needs services, emergency assistance, supportive services, early childhood education

<sup>7</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(iv). The term *resource contributions* refers to programmatic and service contributions, rather than contributions pursuant to funding agreements.



Partner Program	Partner Entity	Services/Resources
	Community Action Partnership of Mid-NE; Northeast Community Action Partnership; Southeast Community Action Partnership	
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Fairbury Housing Authority; Scotts Bluff County Housing Authority	Housing services
Job Corps	Pine Ridge Job Corps	Residential education and job training
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Proteus	Job training, health care, education assistance
Native American Programs	Ponca Tribe Winnebago Tribe	Health services, social services, education
Second Chance Act	Siouxland Human Investment Partnership	Reentry Employment Opportunities
Senior Community Services Employment	National Able Network	Resources for training and employment

**5. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out the core programs to:<sup>8</sup>**

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

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board will utilize data, in addition to State, Regional, and Local plans to drive initiatives for expansion, including strategic coordination with core programs. It is the position of the Board that full integration of services is key to expanding access. The Greater Nebraska North Platte office has implemented a “light case management” model across all onsite programs to increase staff awareness of job seeker needs and knowledge of available resources. All staff have received training and been empowered to meet one on one with an individual to determine basic eligibility and make referrals. Staff are specifically trained to notice when an individual is struggling or may benefit from an evaluation. Greater Nebraska will work to expand this model and establish full integration through technology, comprehensive cross training, and streamlined co-enrollment processes.

While much of Nebraska is within commuting distance of a One-stop Center, there are several counties that are underserved. Greater Nebraska staff have recently been fully equipped with laptops and will have greater mobility to provide Title I and Title III services within these counties. This extension of services will be done in collaboration with Title II and Title IV programs to capitalize on the strengths and capacity of all core partners.

The Board will also work with core programs to utilize partnerships with other partner programs to expand access. Initiatives will include:

- Bring Up Nebraska – Partnerships with community collaboratives under the Bring Up Nebraska umbrella will be established to provide services to individuals in need of income stability;
- Expansion of the Columbus WIOA/SNAP partnership to include TANF – this expanded case management model will provide participants true wrap around services and a team focused on their individual and family self-sufficiency;

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<sup>8</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(2)

- Reentry – Staff have been trained by the Nebraska Department of Corrections and cleared to expand service offerings within the walls of the institutions. As COVID measures are reduced, Greater Nebraska staff will work with the State Reentry Program Coordinator to coordinate service delivery; and
  - Homeless services – The Board will work with local area Continuum of Care partners to coordinate workforce offerings in support of the State of Nebraska Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development.
- b. facilitate the development of career pathways, in accordance with the goals and strategies defined in the state plan and subsequent modifications of the state plan, and co-enrollment in the core programs; and**

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board will work with the Nebraska Workforce Development Board and partners to determine development and prioritizations of career pathway initiatives, in addition to convening Greater Nebraska staff, partners, and other stakeholders to address barriers to participation for both job seekers and employers. Greater Nebraska will work toward identification and implementation of best practices for both development of career pathways and co-enrollment.

Greater Nebraska will utilize the Business Services Team, consisting of both internal and partner Business Services Reps (BSRs) to provide baseline data to the Board for consideration of new or enhanced Sector Partnerships, including the development of career pathways. BSRs will provide feedback from businesses to the Board to help guide decisions. Trend analysis of location quotients and other labor market data will provide the Board an indicator of the health of industries and occupations critical to the stabilization and growth of Nebraska’s economy. This data will help the partners to focus efforts on career pathways most relevant and beneficial to Nebraska businesses and job seekers.

At the time of writing, Greater Nebraska Title I and Title III staff were recruiting job seekers and employers for a pilot partnership with Facebook Career Connections. This opportunity was also made available through Title II and Title IV programs. Through this program, participants are enrolled into WIOA Title I Adult and Youth and receive six weeks of training on digital marketing through LinkedIn and Facebook, followed by 12 weeks of work experience/transitional jobs, and concluding with an industry recognized certificate. Recruitment has involved partners to identify individuals for co-enrollment into WIOA.

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) currently supports, with the aid of lead and local boards, five Next Generation Sector Partnerships. Next Generation Sector Partnerships are comprised of businesses, from the same industry and in a shared labor market region, who work with education, workforce, economic development, and community organizations to address the workforce and other competitiveness needs of the targeted industry. There are two active manufacturing partnerships in Central and Northeast Nebraska, and over 120 business leaders and public partners working together to creatively problem-solve and grow their industry and region. Additional initiatives include Healthcare in the Northeast, Southeast, and Panhandle regions. Greater Nebraska will work to expand these initiatives to the Tech Sector in efforts to proactively keep talent in the State of Nebraska.

Additional career pathways partnerships include:

- Aksarben Foundation – Priority initiatives include: Regional efforts in Northeast and Central Nebraska, as well as a technology collaborative and a transportation and trade initiative;
- Blueprint Nebraska – Strategic initiatives include leading job growth, quality of life, building the population of 18-34 year olds, leading income growth, and increasing research and development investment;

- Nebraska Tech Collaborative – business led, and comprised of over 100 business, government, education, and non-profit partners all working together to drive results and scale to build a world class tech ecosystem in Nebraska; and
  - existing industry sector partnerships.
- c. improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

The Board will work with local area partners, businesses, and training providers to coordinate efforts toward industry and job seeker needs. Through alignment of programs and the elimination of duplication of services, job seekers will have access to more comprehensive program assistance and supportive services. Collaboration with employers, Economic Development, and training providers will aide in the development of career pathways and programs leading to industry-valued credentials identified as essential to a stronger workforce. The Strategic Planning Committee will drive discussions to identify, prioritize, and take action to address sector and career pathway needs.

**6. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area:<sup>9</sup>**

- a. to facilitate employer engagement with workforce development programs, including engagement of small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**

Employer engagement strategies will incorporate the proactive use of available workforce and industry data to help determine future industry needs, potential workforce disruptions, and to ensure the availability of a skilled workforce to drive growth within the state’s high-wage, high-skill and high-demand industries and occupations. Industry focus in Manufacturing and Healthcare will continue through the collaboration of groups such as the Central Nebraska Manufacturing Partnership. Greater Nebraska will also expand initiatives to that of technology through a partnership with Nebraska Tech Collaborative.

Greater Nebraska has designated business services staff trained to conduct thorough employer needs assessments and provide comprehensive and strategic services, including connection with appropriate workforce development programs and service offerings. Employers are recruited and engaged through offerings including individual company account management; recruiting, screening and hiring services, assessments and training (incumbent worker, occupational skills, and on-the-job training); consulting services (labor market information); tailored workshops. Staff have expanded hiring events to include more creative offerings in response to the pandemic. Statewide, drive-thru and virtual events were held, which garnered positive responses from employers. The Greater Nebraska Beatrice office successfully held a Tailgate Job Fair in coordination with Department of Health and Human Services and will continue this offering seasonally.

There is a need for more specialized training, particularly in the development of strategies to respond to more localized issues, including layoff aversion. Incumbent worker training and customized training are largely underutilized in Nebraska despite a low unemployment rate that makes it difficult for employers to find qualified workers.

- b. to support local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;**

Greater Nebraska partners will engage with businesses to identify current and upcoming skills/training needs to support local area stability and growth. Community based postsecondary education and training providers will be involved to develop relevant training programs and resources. Program alignment around

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<sup>9</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(c)(i)-(v)

business needs will incorporate work-based learning and customized trainings to develop a talent pipeline solution for employer hiring needs. Staff are currently trained to conduct a thorough needs assessment and help employers build a recruitment and retention strategy. Additional training on Business Consultation and the development of workshops geared toward businesses will be implemented.

The workforce system in the region will work collectively with the Nebraska Manufacturing Advisory Council (NeMAC), other trade councils, and local employers to identify and address workforce needs. Greater Nebraska staff are involved in EmployNebraska groups throughout the local office regions. These groups are focused on the collective needs of businesses and job seekers to connect employers more efficiently with talent. The One-Stop Operator will engage with local chambers of commerce and economic groups to identify additional opportunities to participate in community initiatives. All initiatives will be data driven, utilizing LMI, location quotients, and research studies such as the Rural Prosperity report to determine current and future needs and mitigate potential workforce disruptions.

**c. to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development;**

The One-Stop Operator will incorporate the following strategies as part of an initiative to better coordinate workforce programs with economic development programs:

- staff and board member attendance at chamber and economic development functions;
- staff and board member attendance at the annual Governor’s Summit on Economic Development;
- Board updates on each local office area economic development activities, sector partnerships, economic planning;
- active participation in State and local economic development planning;
- relationship building between workforce professionals and economic development professionals; and
- expansion of access to entrepreneurial and small business development offerings through technology, promotion, and referral of workforce customers to these local resources.

**d. to strengthen linkages between the local One-Stop delivery system and the Nebraska’s unemployment insurance programs; and**

Workforce center staff have been cross trained to provide meaningful assistance to unemployment insurance claimants. Staff are trained to assist claimants with navigating the unemployment application and answering questions pertaining to most communication received. Resource rooms are equipped with dedicated UI computers and ringdown phones to connect claimants directly with UI staff during hours of operation. Additionally, UI staff are collocated at most centers, providing claimants and workforce services staff a direct resource for more technical questions. Most workforce services staff assisted with UI benefits functions during the height of claims resulting from COVID. This direct exposure has better equipped staff with an understanding of how to help claimants proactively provide needed documents for increased efficiency of claim processing.

Collocation of Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff has created a stronger partnership between unemployment and One-Stop partners. UI will continue to be incorporated in programs such as Neres and Rapid Response. Moving forward, the One-Stop Operator will work with UI to educate staff about the program to help facilitate better customer service.

All UI claimants are required to participate in Nebraska Re-employment Services. The program, also called Neres, includes one-on-one job coaching and other assistance for getting back to work. During these sessions, claimants and other voluntary participants are provided information about One-Stop partner programs, including WIOA Title I services.

An area of opportunity with UI customers includes ensuring that they are aware of all the avenues available to them through the AJCs and career centers, not just UI services. A reemployment services presentation is currently in development. This presentation will be made available on resource room computers, to partners, via social media, and other avenues to educate claimants on all programs and services available through the One-Stop. The One-Stop Operator will also be implementing the provision of a handbook outlining all programs and services, which will be made available through these same channels.

- e. that may include the implementation of initiatives (which must support the strategies described above in Sections 6.a. through 6.d.), such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training 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.**

Greater Nebraska will utilize data including timely labor market information, employment projections, and information gathered directly from employers to help devise strategies that ensure Nebraska businesses have the talent needed to thrive in a global economy. Initiatives may include, but are not limited to: new and customized training options, incumbent worker training, on the job training, industry specific assessments, work-based learning opportunities, collaboration with state and local economic development agencies to implement industry sector strategies, and other initiatives that respond to the needs presented in the data and expressed directly by employers.

The local area will use labor market data and NEworks.nebraska.gov to provide information to students, unemployed and underemployed individuals, and new workers on high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand (H3) jobs in Nebraska. This information will help to guide individuals onto career pathways that meet their needs and interests.

The GNWDB has identified the expansion of work-based learning models as a key strategy for improving access to employment that concurrently prepares individuals with the skills needed for employment and addresses business needs. GNWDB will work with businesses, business intermediaries such as the chambers of commerce, and organized labor to develop new work-based learning models in the region's target industries. Greater Nebraska will work across programs and with other local areas to simplify the process for employer participation in these programs and reduce duplication of services and paperwork. GNWDB has implemented an additional commitment to expanding work-based learning (including on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships, transitional jobs, customized training, work experience, job shadowing, and pre-apprenticeship) with a goal of reaching a 35% caseload in the WIOA Title 1B program by June 30, 2021. *Update: COVID hindered progress toward this goal. However, there has been promising movement in this direction, particularly in the Grand Island and Hastings areas. This goal will remain a part of the plan with a new target date of June 30, 2025.*

**7. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.<sup>10</sup>**

This is an area of opportunity for Greater Nebraska. In addition to the strategies described in 6.c., and under guidance from the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board, the One-Stop Operator will increase efforts toward the development and implementation of programs and strategies that are focused on microenterprise and entrepreneurial training. This will include:

- increased participation in economic development activities focused on entrepreneurship;
- enhanced training for Greater Nebraska staff; and

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<sup>10</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(4)

- cross training with providers of entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Greater Nebraska’s Sidney office is relocating to Western Community College in late 2021 and will be located within the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center. With the merger of Cabela’s with Bass Pro Shops in 2017, many high skilled workers have struggled to find suitable employment, leaving them to take lower paying jobs or relocate to other communities. This move will strengthen the collaborative approach toward the provision of ongoing entrepreneurial training and assistance throughout the area.

Partners in these efforts include:

- WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth;
- Title IV – Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired;
- Community Colleges – Western Nebraska Community College; and
- University of Nebraska – Lincoln Center for Entrepreneurship.

**8. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.<sup>11</sup>**

Greater Nebraska provides high quality employment and training services to assist job seekers with acquiring essential skills to compete for in-demand jobs. Services are coordinated by partner providers to ensure goals are in alignment and services are not duplicated. Nebraska’s Eligible Training Provider List provides a comprehensive and robust offering of long-term and short-term occupational skills training (OST) for most occupations. Work based learning, which includes on the job training, registered apprenticeships, transitional jobs, customized training, work experience, job shadowing, and pre-apprenticeship, is also available to participants.

Adult and DLW programs actively conduct outreach to individuals with barriers to employment.

All facilities are physically accessible, in compliance with ADA standards for accessible design. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities when administering assessments. All information is provided in an accessible, understandable, and usable format.

Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers fall under three categories: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services.

*Table 3: Basic Career Services*

<b>Basic Career Services</b>
Outreach, intake, and orientation of information and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system
Opportunity to initiate an application for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families assistance and non-assistance benefits and services
Determination of eligibility for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services
Initial assessment of skills including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service’s needs
Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance and career counseling. Information will include in-demand industry sectors and nontraditional employment
Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services

<sup>11</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(6)

<b>Basic Career Services</b>
Provision of workforce and labor market employment data, including provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas
Provision of performance and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers
Provision of information on local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information relating to the area's One-Stop delivery system
Provision of information and meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation
Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals, including: child care, child support, medical or child health assistance available through Nebraska's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program, benefits under Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, earned income tax credit, and assistance under a state program for TANF and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program
Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA

*Table 4: Individualized Career Services*

<b>Individualized Career Services</b>
Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill level and service needs
Individual Employment Plan to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services
Group counseling
Individual counseling
Career planning
Short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct
Job readiness preparation that provides basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources
Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers, including transitional jobs
Workforce preparation activities
Financial literacy services
Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance
English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs

### **Follow-up Services**

Greater Nebraska provides follow-up services for adults and dislocated workers for up to 12 months after the first date of unsubsidized employment. (It is important to note this varies from youth, who are provided follow-up for a minimum of 12 months.)

In general, Follow-up Services are intended to provide support and guidance to:

- Facilitate sustained employment
- Assist the participant with advancement along a career or educational ladder
- Promote personal development
- Problem solve barriers to successful employment

Follow-up services vary by type and intensity as they are based on the individual needs of each participant, but may include referrals for supportive services, job search assistance, and job retention coaching.

**9. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities.<sup>12</sup>**

Business Services Representatives in the local areas have received training and support to coordinate Rapid Response events within their assigned service areas. All Rapid Response activities will be reported to the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board. If current investment activities do not support the current need, the Board will convene to set aside specific funds for activities including layoff aversion strategies such as incumbent worker training and customized training. Greater Nebraska will ensure that:

- If a local representative becomes aware of a potential layoff or closure, they will notify the State via [NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov).
- A representative of the dislocated worker program provides program specific information at all onsite meetings.
- When an onsite meeting cannot be arranged, content for outreach to employees and employers is provided to the Rapid Response Unit.
- The One-Stop Center or affiliated site will provide additional follow-up with employees to connect them with appropriate and requested resources.
- Workshops and career fairs, based on identified affected workforce needs, are coordinated in partnership with the Wagner-Peyser Program.
- Additional community resources, outside of the mandated partners, are identified.

In cases where a Rapid Response event is not held, the local area office will promote and host a community presentation to market reemployment services available to job seekers. State partner programs will be developing Rapid Response videos. These videos will be implemented in Resource Rooms, with individuals unable to attend a live Rapid Response, and as part of a monthly initiative to connect with Dislocated Workers. Furthermore, staff will receive comprehensive training on layoff aversion strategies to better identify appropriate opportunities and respond with effective strategies.

**10. Describe and assess 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 identification of successful models of such activities.<sup>13</sup>**

Greater Nebraska strives to serve all youth through an integrated service delivery system. Partnerships with organizations including Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired are integral to ensuring staff are equipped to think inclusively and provide accommodations, if needed. High quality services for in-school and out-of-school youth begins with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, and opportunities for skills training. Participants are provided opportunities for work-based training through work experience, on the job training, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and customized training.

Many youths have multiple challenges to employment and may need a variety of support and services. The Board ensures that each American Job Center is universally accessible and that physical, programmatic, and communications access is available to everyone, including persons with disabilities. Universal design is incorporated into the board certification process of each AJC and affiliate site.

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<sup>12</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(7)

<sup>13</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(8)



Greater Nebraska provides all youth with the 14 youth program elements as described in the State plan. It is important to note that, while follow-up services are provided to adults and dislocated workers for up to 12 months, follow-up is provided to youth for a minimum of 12 months. In general, Follow-up Services are intended to provide support and guidance to:

- Facilitate sustained employment
- Assist the participant with advancement along a career or educational ladder
- Promote personal development
- Problem solve barriers to successful employment

The types of Follow-Up Services provided, and the duration of the services provided must be determined based on the needs of the individual and align with their Employment Plan. As a result, the type and intensity of follow-up services may differ for each participant. Follow-up Services are required for a minimum of 12 months. Follow-up Services may be extended beyond the 12-month period if the participant is in need of such services beyond the 12-month period. Follow-up Services are limited to:

- Supportive services;
- Adult mentoring;
- Financial literacy education;
- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in demand industry and career exploration services; and
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

Participants in need of more intensive services will be evaluated for an extension, if within 90 days of last active service, or re-enrollment.

*Table 5: Youth Program Elements*

<b>WIOA 14 Youth Program Elements</b>
Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention activities
Alternative secondary school and dropout recovery services
Paid and unpaid work experience
Occupational Skills Training (OST)
Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation
Leadership development opportunities
Supportive services
Adult mentoring
Follow-up services
Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling
Financial literacy education
Entrepreneurial skills training
Services that provide labor market information
Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities

**11. Describe how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to align strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.<sup>14</sup>**

Greater Nebraska Title I and Wagner-Peyser programs coordinate with Nebraska Department of Education under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education act. Workforce staff work closely with local area education providers to integrate services and connect students and job seekers with career pathways determined by participant interest and labor market information. Each office is connected with local area secondary schools to coordinate presentations, tours, career fairs, and other activities geared toward youth exploring career opportunities as part of the reVISION initiative. Work Experience funds are used to help youth gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the workforce, in addition to providing an opportunity to explore career paths they may be interested in pursuing. Secondary schools in Nebraska have been expanding career and technical programs to expose students to Nebraska industries and prepare them to meet the needs of local area businesses. The local area will work to support initiatives such as the Grand Island Public School's Career Pathways Institute. Through this project, students of Grand Island Public Schools are connected with the Grand Island American Job Center for support during their apprenticeship with a local area employer.

Local area postsecondary providers are receptive to business/industry needs, ensuring coursework offerings are relevant to industry needs. The local area will work with its community colleges to share data that informs the development of new courses, curricular modifications, and recruitment efforts. The Board will make every effort to support community college proposals for grants and attempts to integrate services into the proposals will be made.

**12. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.<sup>15</sup>**

Current policy and procedure dictates participants in need of supportive services should first be referred to other community resources before using WIOA Title 1B to fund the service. Greater Nebraska partners with TANF, Community Action Partnerships, SNAP, SCSEP, and Job Corps to coordinate assistance for clients. Staff are trained to utilize WIOA Title 1B as last resort funding once all other resources have been exhausted. For individuals co-enrolled into SNAP Next Step, National Dislocated Worker Grant, and other programs, partner staff are consulted to determine the availability of funds and to coordinate services. Each office is also building a relationship with Bring Up Nebraska coalitions throughout the state to increase access to supportive services. Provision of supportive services is prioritized based on availability through partner programs and the immediacy of the need. A procedure manual has been developed and will be continuously updated. Policies and manuals are available for review at [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov).

Fourteen Greater Nebraska communities have public transit within city limits, in addition to intercity routes connecting 30 Nebraska communities and four communities in neighboring states. Despite this transit system, the vast geographic area of the local area and the lack of public transit in rural areas complicates the ability to meet the needs of employers and job seekers. Where possible, Greater Nebraska provides bus passes and mileage reimbursement to eligible participants to attempt to mitigate this primary barrier. WIOA Title 1B staff coordinate services with partners in their respective communities.

The lack of a comprehensive and reliable transit system in all Nebraska communities is widely recognized. Efforts exist in Nebraska to address these shortfalls. The Nebraska Department of Transportation launched Phase 3 of the Mobility Management Project in July 2019. This phase consists of three stages, scheduled for completion in 2022. Stage One, consisting of seven projects, including several studies, coordination,

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<sup>14</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(9)

<sup>15</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(10)

public relations, and selection of a technology vendor, is currently underway. This initiative can be found at <https://nebraskatransit.com/index.php/mobility-management/>.

**13. Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser services and other services provided through the One-Stop delivery system.<sup>16</sup>**

As described in [TEGL 16-16](#) the One-Stop Operator activities will include:

- facilitation of integrated partnerships that seamlessly incorporate services for the common customers served by multiple program partners of the American Job Center;
- development and implementation of operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and uses technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings; and
- organization and integration of American Job Center services by function.

Greater Nebraska will work to align services across programs and ensure ongoing cross training is completed with all partners to eliminate duplication of services. The North Platte office has developed a model for collaborative service integration through implementation of “light case management” across all programs. This has resulted in a stronger understanding of partner programs and resources, increasing referrals, co-enrollments, and coordination of services. Strategies learned will be implemented throughout the State.

Nebraska Department of Labor will be implementing a Wagner-Peyser Job Seeker Program Coordinator in 2021. The Greater Nebraska One-Stop Operator will work closely with this individual to coordinate services throughout the One-Stop delivery system. MOU’s have been established to define a detailed process among AJC partners.

**14. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities provided under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the local board will carry out the review of local adult education service provider applications, consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and 232.<sup>17</sup>**

Adult Education is available to adults through direct referrals and direct linkage as well as through the workforce system partners to provide basic skills improvement, high school equivalency preparation, English as a Second Language, rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and workforce preparation activities. The foundational knowledge imparted through the workforce system and educational services form a basis that is applicable across a range of industries and occupation.

Partners will work collaboratively to develop strategies to assist adults achieve their goals identified through onboarding activities and to minimize barriers. Partners will also improve the direct referral process for adults in need of basic skills improvement, high school equivalency credentialing and English language learning as well as workforce preparation activities and job placement services.

**Application Review**

The workforce board carries out a review of specific portions of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II by eligible service providers seeking a grant for the provision of adult education and literacy activities to determine whether such applications are in alignment with the local plan.

The Adult Education State Director will instruct the board on the process and procedures for the review. The State Director will also provide the appropriate application sections of all eligible applicants serving in

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<sup>16</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(11)

<sup>17</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(12)

the identified workforce area along with the necessary determination forms to assist the board in reporting their findings.

The workforce board chair will designate a review team of no less than three board members to participate with the workforce administrator in the review of the submitted applications.

The review team will document on the appropriate alignment form, whether the application is found to be consistent with the local plan. These evaluations will be provided to the board chair for final recommendations to the State Director. On behalf of the workforce board, the board chair will notify the Adult Education State Director in writing of the final recommendations no later than 15 working days after receipt of the applications.

**15. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements, as attachments to the local plan, which define how all local service providers will carry out requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in through local One-Stop delivery system.<sup>18</sup> In this context, cooperative agreement means a legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity that is, consistent with 31 USC §§ 6302-6305:<sup>19</sup>**

- a. used to enter into a relationship, the principal purpose of which is to transfer anything of value from the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity to the non-Federal entity to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States (refer to 31 USC § 6101(3)) and not to acquire property or services for the Federal government or pass-through entity's direct benefit or use; and**
- b. distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and the non-Federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award.**

Greater Nebraska does not have any cooperative agreements.

**16. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) as determined by NDOL or the local CEO, as applicable.<sup>20</sup>**

The fiscal agent for the Chief Elected Officials Board and Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board is the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) Finance Division. Select Finance Division staff are responsible for disbursement of grant funds.

**17. Describe the competitive process that will be used to award local area subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.<sup>21</sup>**

A competitive process, based on Nebraska Department of Administrative Services procurement policies and procedures, will be and has been used when issuing a request for purchase (RFP). The State follows the same policies and procedures it uses for its non-Federal procurements.

Nebraska's procurement model contains six phases including procurement types, procurement planning, market research, solicitation and award, contract management and completion and closeout. There are numerous steps involved with each phase. The competitive bidding process is a fourteen-step process outlined below:

1. Complete the RFP/ ITB
2. Public Notice

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<sup>18</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(13)

<sup>19</sup> 20 CFR § 675.300

<sup>20</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(14)

<sup>21</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(15)

3. Pre-Bid Conference
4. Question and Answer Period
5. Final Preparations
6. Receipt of Bids
7. Bid Opening
8. Bid Review
9. Distribution of Bids
10. Evaluation Process
11. Oral Interviews/ Demonstrations
12. Best and Final Offer
13. Evaluation and Award
14. Contract Finalization

**18. Describe the current local levels of performance negotiated with NDOL, consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used by the local board to measure the performance of:**

- a. local WIOA Title I programs; and**
- b. performance of the local fiscal agent, if applicable, local Title I service providers, and the local One-Stop delivery system.<sup>22</sup>**

The Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) negotiates state performance levels with the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA). NDOL utilizes a local area statistical adjustment model as the basis for performance negotiations with each local area following NDOL’s negotiation of levels of performance with ETA. Greater Nebraska local area performance levels are negotiated between NDOL’s State WIOA Team and the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area, represented by the Reemployment Services Administrator and Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board Chair.

*Table 6: Negotiated Levels of Performance for Greater Nebraska’s WIOA Title I Programs*

<b>Adult</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY 2021</b>
Employment Q2 after exit	83%	83%
Employment Q4 after exit	79%	79%
Median earnings Q2 after exit	\$6,300.00	\$6,300.00
Credential Attainment Rate	63%	63%
Measurable Skills Gains	62%	62%

<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY 2021</b>
Employment Q2 after exit	89%	89%
Employment Q4 after exit	86%	86%
Median earnings Q2 after exit	\$8,250.00	\$8,250.00
Credential Attainment Rate	61%	61%
Measurable Skills Gains	68%	68%

<b>Youth</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY 2021</b>
Employment Q2 after exit	83%	83%
Employment Q4 after exit	81%	81%
Median earnings Q2 after exit	\$5,290.00	\$5,290.00
Credential Attainment Rate	55.8%	55.8%
Measurable Skills Gains	56%	56%

<sup>22</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(16)

**19. Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing local board, consistent with factors developed by the state board.<sup>23</sup>**

The Nebraska Workforce Development Board has not established guidelines for becoming a high-performing local board at this time.

**20. Describe how training services for adults and dislocated workers outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts,<sup>24</sup> including:**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates that all training services, except in cases of limited exception identified in the Contracting with Training Providers Policy, be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and that eligible individuals shall receive ITAs through the one-stop delivery system, which must be used to receive occupational skills training from providers on the State's Eligible Training Provider List.

Under WIOA, training services may be provided to adults, dislocated workers, and out of school youths if AJC staff, including partner program staff, determine after conducting an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning, that an individual meets each of the following criteria:

1. is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
2. is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment;
3. has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services;
4. is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training, including such sources as state-funded training funds or Federal Pell Grants established under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, or requires WIOA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance, including Federal Pell Grants;
5. is determined eligible in accordance with the state and local priority system in effect for adults under WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) if training services are funded by the adult program; and
6. has selected a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or the planning region, or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or relocate.

In school youths must be co-enrolled into adult, and the adult funding stream must be used to pay for the ITA. For co-enrolled participants, follow-up services are provided to adults and dislocated workers for up to 12 months; and to youths for a minimum of 12 months.

Training services may also be provided to a member of a worker group covered under a petition filed for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) that is awaiting a determination, provided that AJC staff, including partner program staff, have determined after conducting an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning and the individual meets each of the six criteria listed above.

There is no "income test" for determining eligibility for, continued receipt of, or funding of training services by adult and dislocated worker programs.

**a. whether contracts for training services will be used;**

No contracts for training are currently used in the local area. The board has established a local policy for providing training outside of ITA's. Specific criteria have been established for contracting with training providers that are not part of the ITA process.

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<sup>23</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(17)

<sup>24</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(18)

Contracts for services may be used instead of ITAs when one or more of the following five exceptions apply and the local area has fulfilled the consumer choice requirements. Exceptions to ITA’s are intended to meet special needs and are used infrequently. The Strategic Planning Committee must review all programs before making a recommendation to the GNWDB.

*Table 7: Exceptions to Individualized Training Account Requirement*

<b>Exception Number</b>	<b>Exception Description</b>
1.	When the services provided are on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training, or transitional employment
2.	When the local board determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs
3.	When the local board determines that there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness serving individuals with barriers to employment offered in the area by a community-based organization or another private organization
4.	When the local board determines that it would be most appropriate to contract with an institution of higher education or other eligible provider of training services that will facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations, provided that the contract does not limit consumer choice. Providers of training services must be authorized by accrediting or governing authorities to provide training services in Nebraska or to Nebraska residents
5.	When the local board is considering entering into a pay-for-performance contract, and the local board ensures the contract is consistent with WIOA requirements on pay-for-performance contracts (see 20 CFR § 683.510)

**b. how the use of contracts for training services will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts; and**

Contracts for trainings listed under Exemption Number 1 may be approved by the local office Regional Manager and Program Coordinator. All other exemptions must be reviewed by the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board Strategic Planning Committee to ensure criteria pertaining to consumer choice and exemptions for the use of contracts have been met. Priority will be given to training provider institutions that are approved to be on the ETPL, where the individual program is not. The committee will:

- Ensure the training program falls under one of the exempt categories listed above.
- Ensure the program was not approved as an eligible training program by NDOL.
  - *The committee may exclude this factor if the training is in response to a mass layoff.*
- Training is limited to short-term training (no more than six months).
  - *The committee may exclude this factor if the training is in response to a mass layoff.*
- Ensure the training program serves to provide needed training to participants in order to follow a career path that will lead to high wage, high skill, and high demand (H3) employment.
- Determine if there is an insufficient number of eligible providers following the criteria set forth in the policy posted on [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov).
- Ensure the training demonstrates effectiveness, particularly as it applies to individuals with barriers to employment to be served. Effectiveness is outlined in the policy available on [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov).

Once the Strategic Planning Committee is satisfied the above criteria has been met, a recommendation will be made to the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board to approve the contract.

**c. 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.**

The Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board requires informed consumer choice in a participant's selection of an eligible training provider. The requirements for consumer choice include:

- availability of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to customers through the One-Stop system;
- an individual who has been determined eligible for training services may select a program from the ETPL after consultation with a career planner:
  - consultation with a career planner will include:
    - an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning informed by local labor market information and training provider performance information;
    - appraisal of the participant's need for training services based on an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning informed by local labor market information and training provider performance information or any other career service received; and
    - documenting the participant's need for training services in the participant's case file.
- Priority consideration must be given to programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials and are aligned with in-demand occupations in the local area.
- Unless the program has exhausted training funds for the program year, the career planner must refer the individual to the selected provider and establish an ITA for the individual to pay for training.
- The costs for training services paid through an ITA to a training provider will be funded by out-of-school youth, adult, or dislocated worker program funds, depending on the program in which the participant is enrolled or co-enrolled.
- Training services for eligible individuals are typically provided by training providers who receive payment for their services through an ITA. The ITA is a payment agreement established on behalf of a participant with a training provider. Individuals may select training programs that cost more than the maximum allowed amount for an ITA if they have other funding sources available to supplement the ITA. Other sources may include Pell Grants, scholarships, loans, severance pay, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), SNAP Next Step, etc. Training services must be provided in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice.
- The local board, through the One-Stop center, may coordinate funding for ITAs with funding from other Federal, State, local, or private job training program or sources to assist the individual in obtaining training services, subject to requirements for coordination of WIOA training funds under 20 CFR § 680.230.
  - The One-Stop Operator is expected to ensure this availability and to oversee its usage. Reemployment Services Coordinators serve as career planners and are consultants during this process and thoroughly document the consumer choice process.

**21. Describe how the local area One-Stop center(s) is implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by other One-Stop partners.<sup>25</sup>**

Greater Nebraska is working with the State to ensure processes to be implemented are compliant, as well as learning best practices from other states. It is the goal of the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board to develop and implement an integrated, technology-enabled intake process as part of a process improvement plan focused toward making WIOA services more accessible, efficient, and effective.

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<sup>25</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(20)



Greater Nebraska currently utilizes NEworks as a case management information system. This system is also used by State programs, including TAA and NDWG, as well as SNAP Next Step. Additional partners are working with the State to determine how usage of the system may benefit their program(s).

**22. Describe the direction given by NDOL to the local board and by the local board to the One-Stop operator will ensure that:**

- a. priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and 20 CFR § 680.600;<sup>26</sup> and**

WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) states that priority for individualized career services and training services funded with title I adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in the local area.

Following the Priority of Service chart below, individuals will be enrolled into career and training services based on their category. Staff will case note priority of service determination at enrollment. Should capacity or funds become an issue, program resources will be focused toward participants with the highest priority levels in descending order.

Services to eligible adult participants must be provided in the following order:

<b>First, Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low-income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient;

<b>Second, Individuals who are not Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans but are:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low- income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient;

<b>Third, Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are not:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low- income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient

<b>Last, to persons who are not:</b>
A. Recipients of public assistance;
B. Low- income; or
C. Basic-skills deficient.

- b. Veterans receive priority of service in all USDOL-funded training services, which includes training services provided through Title I programs.<sup>27</sup>**

One-Stop partner staff must give Priority 1 status for career services, training, and employment services to Veterans, eligible spouses of Veterans, and non-Veterans who are:

- recipients of public assistance;
- other low-income individuals; or
- individuals who are basic-skills deficient.

<sup>26</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(21)

<sup>27</sup> 20 CFR § 680.650

Veterans without the barriers listed above are given Priority 3 status. Veterans do not have bumping rights for individuals already enrolled into a program or registered for a service. However, they are added to the top of list for next available services.

**23. Describe the process used by the local board to provide an opportunity for the public comment on the development of the local plan or any subsequent modification of the plan before submitting the plan to NDOL. To provide adequate opportunity for public comment, local boards must:**

- a. make information about and copies of the plan and subsequent modifications available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;<sup>28</sup>**

### **Public Comment Process**

A public notice was issued in the following newspapers:

#### **Beatrice Daily Sun**

200 North Seventh Street  
Beatrice, NE 68310  
(402) 223-5233

[beatrice.legals@beatricedailysun.com](mailto:beatrice.legals@beatricedailysun.com)

*Published 2/23/2021*

#### **Scottsbluff Star-Herald**

1405 Broadway  
Scottsbluff, NE  
(308) 632-9000

[casey.harvey@starherald.com](mailto:casey.harvey@starherald.com)

*Published 2/20/2021*

#### **Columbus Telegram**

1254 17th Avenue  
Columbus, NE  
(402) 564-2741

[col.clerk@lee.net](mailto:col.clerk@lee.net)

*Published 2/19/2021*

#### **Sidney Sun-Telegraph**

817 12th Ave  
Sidney, NE 69162  
(308) 254-2818

[legals@suntelegraph.com](mailto:legals@suntelegraph.com)

*Published 2/24/2021*

#### **Grand Island Independent**

422 W. First  
Grand Island, NE  
(308) 382-1000

[legals@theindependent.com](mailto:legals@theindependent.com)

*Published 2/19/2021*

#### **Kearney Hub**

13 E 22nd St  
Kearney, NE  
(308) 233-9707

[legals@kearneyhub.com](mailto:legals@kearneyhub.com)

*Published 2/22/2021*

#### **Hastings Tribune**

908 W 2nd  
Hastings, NE  
(402) 462-2131

[legals@hastingstribune.com](mailto:legals@hastingstribune.com)

*Published 2/22/2021*

#### **Norfolk Daily News**

PO Box 977  
Norfolk, NE 68702  
(402) 371-1020

[legals@norfolkdailynews.com](mailto:legals@norfolkdailynews.com)

*Published 2/25/2021*

#### **North Platte Telegraph**

621 N Chestnut St.  
North Platte, NE  
(308) 535-4731

[jmurrish@nptelegraph.com](mailto:jmurrish@nptelegraph.com)

*Published 2/20/2021*

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<sup>28</sup> 20 CFR §§ 679.510(b)(1) and (5)

- b. include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.<sup>29</sup>**

Copies of the proposed plans were made available to the public February 19, 2021 through the NDOL website and by request.

Regional partners and the public were invited to a public meeting on March 1, 2021 via videoconference to discuss the proposed plan, allowing for the opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education.

GNWDB/CEOB hosted a joint public meeting via videoconference February 25, 2021. This meeting was also open to the public, with the local and regional plans available for comment. The public received notification of this meeting via the publications as indicated above.

- c. provide no more than a 30-day period for comments on the plan and subsequent modifications before submission to NDOL, beginning on the date on which the plan and modifications are made available to the public;<sup>30</sup>**

The plan was made available for public comment from March 1 – March 30, 2021.

- d. submit to NDOL any comments that represent disagreement with the plan or subsequent modifications<sup>31</sup> or indicate that disagreeing public comments were not received, if that is the case; and**

Greater Nebraska received one public comment from Title II. Requested changes were made to the plan and a subsequent approval for submission was received by the Title II partner.

- e. ensure that all open meetings are held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.<sup>32</sup>**

All meetings were held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

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<sup>29</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(2)

<sup>30</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(3)

<sup>31</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(4)

<sup>32</sup> Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 84-1407 through 84-1414



**Greater Omaha Local Workforce Development Plan  
for Program Years  
2021-2024**

**[Updated 6.1.2021]**

**Mission: To promote and develop a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of business and career seekers resulting in economic prosperity**

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## Greater Omaha Local Plan Elements

1. **Describe the strategic vision of the local board to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency, which must include goals that align with the goals and strategies defined in the current state plan or subsequent modification of the state plan for the following factors:<sup>1</sup>**
  - a. **preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment); and**
  - b. **relating to the performance accountability measures based on the performance indicators described in 20 CFR § 677.155(a)(1).**

### Combined State Plan Vision and Goals

Nebraska's vision to be a national model for the delivery of workforce development services for all Nebraskans.

Nebraska's two-part statewide goal for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers is:

- selection and prioritization of development of career pathways; and
- alignment of the state's workforce development system.

### Greater Omaha Local Plan Mission, Vision and Goals

Heartland Workforce Solutions (HWS) serves as the Greater Omaha Workforce Development Board (GOWDB).

Mission: to promote and develop a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of business and career seekers resulting in economic prosperity.

Vision: Heartland Workforce Solutions, with our partners, will lead, through alignment and coordination, collectively impacting economic and workforce development in the greater Omaha area that includes Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties.

To achieve this vision the GOWDB collaborates throughout the local & regional area with community organizations, businesses, education and training providers, workforce development affiliates and one-stop delivery system partners. The GOWDB aligns with the goal and strategies defined in the state plan.

### GOWDB Goals

#### **Goal for Career Pathways**

HWS, with our partners, including the state workforce development board and state plan partners, will lead, through alignment and coordination, collectively impacting economic and workforce development in the greater Omaha area that includes Douglas, Sarpy, and

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<sup>1</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(a)(5)



Washington Counties. GO is working with the state board and state plan partners through participation in the workgroups.

- Select and prioritize three or more career pathways or in-demand sectors or occupations that have been identified as such in the state plan.
- Identify three or more barriers to participation in the selected and prioritized career pathways among job seekers and workers (including unemployed workers), Veterans, and individuals with barriers to employment, including:
  - displaced homemakers;
  - low-income individuals;
  - Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians;
  - individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities;
  - older individuals;
  - ex-offenders;
  - homeless individuals or homeless children and youths;
  - youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
  - individuals who are English language learners;
  - individuals who have low levels of literacy;
  - individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
  - eligible migrant and seasonal;
  - individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program;
  - single parents (including single pregnant women); and
  - long-term unemployed individuals;
- Identify key barriers to participation in the selected and prioritized career pathways by employers and regional and local industry sector partnerships; and
- Determine methods for addressing identified barriers to participation in the selected and prioritized career pathways among:
  - job seekers and workers, Veterans, unemployed individuals, individuals with disabilities, and other individuals with barriers to employment; and
  - employers, in general, as well as regional and local industry sector partnerships.

### **Goal for System Alignment**

HWS will lead an effort to actively work towards system alignment in support of the state's goal related to system alignment. GO is working with the state board and state plan partners through participation in the workgroups. HWS will organize a collaborative effort among the local board members, one-stop partners, the state workforce development board and state plan partners, and other workforce system partners across the local area to do the following items:

- Coordinate workforce development activities locally and with the other local workforce areas comprising our region;
- Identify solutions for technology integration;
- Broaden use of the state's common intake system
- Develop local policies that support program and technology alignment;
- Develop and disseminate online resources and information to support fully integrated customer service;

- Develop and implement local-level cross training and technical assistance and support state-level cross training and technical assistance; and
- Support the efforts of the state’s public sector partnership and develop similar partnerships at the local level.

**Strategies for Implementing Goals**

The local strategies for implementation of the goals described above include the following:

**Career pathways goal**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action Steps and Tactics</b>
Selection and prioritization of development of career pathways	Identify best practices regarding development of new and existing career pathways, including best practices focusing on industry, public, and private sector partnerships that create customized workforce solutions and work-based training opportunities.
Identification of barriers to participation in selected and prioritized career pathways	<p>All plan partners will work together to collectively identify five or more key barriers to participation in career pathways among job seekers and workers.</p> <p>All plan partners will work together and collectively identify five or more key barriers to participation in career pathways among employers and regional and local industry sector partnerships.</p> <p>All plan partners will work together with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Workforce Strategies and Innovation Committee</li> <li>• required and optional one-stop partners;</li> <li>• employers and regional and local industry sector partnerships; and</li> <li>• training providers across the local area.</li> </ul>

**System alignment goal**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action Steps and Tactics</b>
Coordination of workforce development activities	<p>GO will work to align partner programs, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and other resources available in the local area by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinating workforce development activities across planning regions and local areas;</li> <li>• inventorying and coordinating of services across the local area to maximize service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers;</li> <li>• researching and identifying technological resources that will support the integration of supportive services and the participation in career pathway programs by job seekers, workers, employers, and industry sector partnerships.</li> </ul>
Technology integration	<p>GO will continue to work to integrate technology across all plan partner programs and other required and optional one-stop partner programs to improve data sharing that provides time data necessary to initiate services across one-stop delivery system programs, assess service delivery, and meet performance-reporting requirements.</p>

Strategy	Action Steps and Tactics
Common intake system	GO will work with the state to implement, assess, and test any common intake technology developed.
Policy development	All plan partners will work individually and collectively to develop local-level policies that support program and technology alignment and collaboration.
Online resources	GO will continue work to develop and disseminate online resources and information for all plan partner programs and other required and optional one-stop partner programs to support fully integrated customer service.
Cross training and technical assistance	<p>GO will support and assist all plan partners and other required and optional one-stop partners as they work individually and collectively to develop and implement local-level cross training regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workforce system initiatives;</li> <li>• technology;</li> <li>• program policies;</li> <li>• program eligibility, services, and terminology;</li> <li>• program performance;</li> <li>• best practices; and</li> <li>• other workforce development activities.</li> </ul>
Co-enrollment	<p>Local area policies supporting the state's implementation of its strategies include a performance accountability policy that defines mandatory co-enrollment requirements, whenever eligibility permits, for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs;</li> <li>• Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Service;</li> <li>• Jobs for Veterans State Grant program;</li> <li>• Trade Adjustment Assistance program; and</li> <li>• Dislocated worker grant programs, whether administered at the state- or local-level.</li> </ul> <p>Plan partners will work together to boost co-enrollment numbers across all one-stop partner programs and other locally implemented or funded workforce programs.</p>
Public sector partnership	We will support the Nebraska Partner Council by seeking to replicate similar workforce partner collaboratives at the local level using existing board committee structures.

GO will continue to meet the unique needs of the local planning area of Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties. This includes coordinating with partners for customer service excellence, continuous improvement and promote employment opportunities for all individuals, including those with disabilities, English Language Learners, individuals who lack basic academic and computer skills, low-income individuals, veterans, and their spouses. Focused and deliberate collaboration among education platforms, in demand market segments and economic development networks will maximize resources for a robust workforce system. The area's population has shown a steady increase in all the GO counties. The highest population density is in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, which have also exceeded the percent change growth of the state.

GO will strive to meet and exceed the negotiated performance goals during the term of this plan. GO regularly reviews existing and past performance levels and works closely with its service providers to monitor progress and remediate any areas in which performance is in danger of not meeting negotiated goals.

**2. Taking into account the analyses described in Section 1 for regional plan elements, describe the local board's strategy to:**

- a. work with entities that carry out core programs and required one-stop partner programs in the local area to align resources available to the Statewide planning region and the local area; and**

Collaboration among one-stop partners is integral to the success of our workforce system. To achieve, sustain and assess the overall effectiveness and performance of the workforce system, GO will collaborate with the core programs and other workforce system partners. To better collaborate with core partners, GO will utilize the best available data to make effective data-informed decisions.

**Analyses of Regional Plan Elements**

While concurrently developing this local area plan, GO worked collaboratively with Greater Lincoln and Greater Nebraska to develop a regional plan for the same time period (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2025). The regional plan required a thorough analysis of industry and occupational labor market data and projections.

As cited in the regional plan, the combined population of our area is 779,252, with 47,116 worksite establishments. Median earnings for this area are \$46,345, with a 3.0% median earnings percent change.

The regional plan provides an analysis of current industries as well as projected industry growth (between 2018 and 2028). Industries consistently showing up on both lists include:

- Construction
- Finance and Insurance
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

Growth is also projected for:

- Healthcare
- Professional, scientific and professional services

The real estate and construction growth are tied intrinsically to each other. Additionally, many of the major construction projects in the local area over this time period were related to accommodations and food service. GOWDB has focused many initiatives on efforts related to the construction industry since it is tied to so many other growth industries and occupations. Sara Hansen is committee chair of the Workforce Strategy and Innovation Committee (WSIC) and works for a major construction firm at Turner Construction. Her leadership in this area has allowed us to partner closely on workforce-driven initiatives such as the Hardhat in Hand program and a planned industry listening session focused on construction in June 2021.

The GOWDB has several board members who represent either financial institutions or are in financial/insurance-related occupations. We have been able to tap into the financial expertise of

these board members through participation on our Finance Committee and through focused strategies to engage businesses in this industry in job fair participation and in providing industry-input to better our workforce system.

GO WIOA Title I service providers are working to promote training opportunities among in-demand occupations that can be found on the projected employment needs by H3 occupations table (Table 16) in the regional plan. The service providers have found success in connecting individuals with the Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Driver positions as well as with pathways leading to Registered Nursing positions.

The GOWDB will continue to utilize the best available data to help make more informed programmatic decisions, including from information that is found in the regional plan data tables, as well as other sources. The WSIC has established an LMI subcommittee which focuses on this area and informs the board members and core partners of this data monthly. As part of the full WSIC monthly meeting, which includes all core partners and many one-stop partners, an updated local area-specific LMI presentation is provided to all members.

As we continue to see projected growth in several STEM-related occupations, the GOWDB is focused on ensuring that the training we support are directly related to occupational needs being expressed by employers. Several GOWDB members as well as several members of the HWS team and one-stop partner programs participate in committees associated with the Omaha Stem Ecosystem to try to build more of an abundant talent pipeline of individuals ready to meet the STEM job demands of the future.

Core partners for the workforce system in Greater Omaha and in Nebraska include:

<b>Program</b>	<b>State Oversight Organization(s)</b>	<b>Local Service Provider(s)</b>
WIOA Title I Adult	Nebraska Department of Labor	National Able Network
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker	Nebraska Department of Labor	National Able Network
WIOA Title I Youth	Nebraska Department of Labor	Dynamic Education Systems, Inc.
WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy	Nebraska Department of Education	Metropolitan Community College
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser	Nebraska Department of Labor	Nebraska Department of Labor
WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Programs	Nebraska Department of Education and Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	Nebraska Department of Education (Nebraska VR) and Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

GO will work closely with all state-level core partners and local service providers of each of these core partner programs to ensure that the American Job Center (AJC) is linked as closely as possible to each of these programs. As WIOA core partners, these programs bring intrinsic value to the workforce system through their programmatic design, funding, and connectivity to other programs. GO will work with these programs to find ways to leverage resources, cross-train

employees, and find collaborative pathways to improving job seeker referrals, co-enrollments, and outcomes across all programs.

GO will align the following resources:

#### Co-enrollment in partner programs

WIOA Title I service providers will ensure that a system is in place for co-enrollments. Service providers will ensure that manuals include co-enrollment and staff receive training for co-enrollment practice. The one-stop operator will educate the workforce system partners on opportunities for co-enrollments during monthly cross training meetings.

#### Coordination of funding for program participants taking part in occupational skills training, including those participating in Registered Apprenticeship programs

WIOA requires that training funds be coordinated with other grant sources for training. GO will work with the Nebraska Department of Labor to identify opportunities to support the Registered Apprenticeship program and will help to create events and opportunities within the business community to promote apprenticeship programs.

#### Coordination of funding for supportive services for program participants, including transportation services.

WIOA Title I service providers will ensure coordination of funding for supportive services is part of the procedure manuals. The one-stop operator will facilitate partner discussion and information for cross training of staff about support service funding coordination as well as information partners of community support services funding available to the public and program participants.

#### Cross-training of partner program staff on program eligibility requirements and program services

The one-stop operator will develop/coordinate cross-training of partner program staff to better understand the eligibility requirements and referral processes for all WIOA core partner programs.

#### Coordination of Business Services and Work-Based Learning

The business service representatives of the WIOA core programs and one-stop programs work closely together through the EmployOMA collaborative and the EmployOMA Connector's group. These partners actively promote work-based learning and work together to meet the business-related requirements of each program. The one stop operator convenes this group to coordinate services to business customers.

#### Coordination of Rapid Response services with plan partners

GO will support and coordinate Rapid Response services.

#### Coordination with economic development entities that support development and implementation of industry sector partnerships

GO will continue to work closely with all local chambers of commerce, the Omaha Mayor's economic development and economic development staff and coordinate shared opportunities among WIOA core partner programs to engage in industry sector partnerships.

A major part of this collaborative strategy among partners will include cross-training of employees across various programs to help identify available resources and develop additional resources where those resources might be lacking. The one-stop operator will act as the central convener of the workforce partners to help develop this training, create resources, and provide adequate communication channels to best serve these jobseekers and businesses.

**b. achieve the strategic vision and goals described directly above in Section 1 for local plan elements.<sup>2</sup>**

GO has aligned its strategic vision and goals with the State’s two primary goals focused on career pathways and system alignment. GO has modified the state’s strategies for each of these goals to meet local area implementation needs for each of these goals. As such, GO has adopted tactics and milestones (outlined in Section 1) for each corresponding strategy related to each of these two overarching workforce goals.

GO will work with each of the core partner programs, the one-stop partner programs, and other local and regional workforce-related programs to build a workforce network that is focused on achieving these goals and measuring our success. Additionally, GO will leverage meeting time and agendas from its board and committee meetings to bring partners together carry out these identified strategies.

**3. Describe the workforce development system in the local area, including:**

**a. the partners and programs that are included in the workforce development system;<sup>3</sup> and**

HWS contracts for the AJC one-stop operator. National Able Network is the current contractor. The AJC is located at Heartland Workforce Solutions, 5752 Ames Avenue Omaha, NE 68104 and there is no affiliate or specialized one-stop centers.

The local area programs with associated partners include:

Local Area Program	Associated Partners
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act	Nebraska Department of Education, Metropolitan Community College (MCC)
WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker	National Able Network
WIOA Youth	Dynamic Educational Systems, Inc. (DESI)
Postsecondary & Technical Education	Metropolitan Community College (MCC)
Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training Programs	Omaha Housing Authority

<sup>2</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(a)(6)

<sup>3</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(1)(i). *Workforce development system* refers to the entirety of the workforce development system in the local area, which may include partners other than required one-stop partners.

Local Area Program	Associated Partners
Community Services Block Grant	Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership (ENCAP)
Ex-offender (Second Chance Act)	None
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Proteus
Native American Programs	Ponca Tribe
Unemployment Compensation Law	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)
Senior Community Service Employment	National Able Network
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)
Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and Equus Workforce Solutions
YouthBuild	Goodwill Industries
Job Corps	Job Corps
Small Business Administration	Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Providing Realistic On-ramps to Technology Occupations (PROTO)	Metropolitan Community College (MCC)
Career Readiness to Eliminate Disparities (CRED)	Heartland Workforce Solutions, Inc.
Vocational Rehabilitation Programs	Nebraska Department of Education - Nebraska VR and Nebraska Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired

**b. how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core programs and other one-stop partner programs to support service alignment, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2301 et seq.).<sup>4</sup>**

GO will increase the data available to school counselors and workforce professionals related to career opportunities throughout the Omaha metro area and Nebraska. GO will continue to work

<sup>4</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(1)(ii)



with our educational partners to infuse these career opportunities in high school and postsecondary career education classrooms/activities. This will include participation by the workforce system partners in the reVISION planning process sponsored by Career Technical Education (CTE), collaborating with local schools and post-secondary education to develop enhanced career awareness specific to Omaha's employers and career opportunities.

GO will utilize the work and partnerships of the GOWDB's Workforce Strategy & Innovation Committee (WSIC) to help develop strategies associated with supporting system alignment across partner programs that closely integrate the work of CTE into the efforts being completed by all partners to up-skill their participants and meet employer skill demands.

The launch of EmployOMA has helped to better connect business-focused representatives of workforce partners programs in our area. Within the monthly meeting of this group, the business representatives hear directly from businesses and work to develop common goals to help find ways to train individuals in areas of skill shortages that align with CTE's career pathway models.

GO provides employment and training services to assist career seekers with acquiring the skills to compete for careers in high demand industries. Individuals are encouraged to select a program that is directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in an area the individual is willing to relocate. The employment and training activities will be targeted to:

- Provide career seekers with the skills and credentials to compete and secure employment at a family sustaining/livable wage;
- Help career seekers access supportive services to address barriers to employment such as homelessness, criminal background, and/or lack of relevant education; provide businesses and employers with skilled talent and access to other human resource services to grow their business; and

The one-stop operator will convene monthly meetings with partners including Metropolitan Community College (MCC) as the Carl Perkins program representative, to identify evidence-based processes that will continuously improve service alignment and access. MCC is also collocated in the AJC. Local Perkins program collaborative partnerships include:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) between organizations;
- Ongoing analyses of economic and workforce trends to identify statewide (or regional) points of service to be created, expanded, or discontinued;
- Linkages into existing initiatives that promote workforce and economic development, such as sector strategies and other activities supported by WIOA; and
- Collaborative activities that identify, validate, and keep current the technical and workforce readiness skills that should be taught within a program of study.

#### **4. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:**

- a. how will the local board ensure the continuous improvement of providers in the one-stop delivery system and ensure that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers;<sup>5</sup>**

GO will use data-informed decision making to help with continuously improving the one-stop delivery system. GO will make more data available to the public and to the workforce partners to

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<sup>5</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(i)

better analyze performance metrics to identify areas that present an opportunity for improvement. Customer satisfaction data from employer and career seeker surveys will also be analyzed at least quarterly.

This increased transparency in data, performance, and customer satisfaction will help the board and partners make programmatic and service delivery decisions for the short- and long-term for continued improvement. GO will launch a new workforce system performance dashboard in Spring 2021. It will be the first unified dashboard, developed with partners to show the types of training completed that lead to positions obtained by workforce participants, across programs, and careers obtained by participants compared with local LMI for in-demand industries. The dashboard developed by Category One Consultants and shaped by partners, will be used to understand the output of the workforce system partners. This includes but is not limited to training completed, in-demand careers obtained and businesses engaged. Partners will review the data together and identify opportunities for action.

**b. how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system through the use of technology and other means, including access in remote areas;<sup>6</sup>**

The one-stop delivery system is bigger than the single AJC location in Omaha. The GOWDB is committed to providing effective one-stop services to individuals and employers across our three-county local area. Often, this means meeting people where they are, and finding ways to provide those services using technology. During the pandemic of 2020, GO learned how to better utilize technology to meet the needs of its customers, its board members, and its partners. Moving forward, leveraging this technology to continue to better serve our customers will be a priority and an opportunity to provide services to even more individuals within our local area.

GO will work closely with workforce partners to encourage them to use technology to serve customers. Because this is such an important issue, GOWDB will include this in the MOU process with partners. We will coordinate and collaborate with the other local areas to improve the use of technology among one-stop partners statewide.

In an evolving economy driven by innovation and technology, planning for potential workforce changes and disruptions will continue to play a key role in meeting the needs of employers. Education, economic development, and the GOWDB urges workforce system partners to utilize available technology, analytics, and labor market information to proactively plan for future workforce, industry, and educational needs within the local area.

Continued development and dissemination of online resources will include improvement and increased use of the HWS website, social media channels, radio, neighborhood publications, tv news and other methods available. The workforce system partners will promote online access and the distribution of essential workforce-related information to individuals facing barriers to employment. Resources will be available in English, Spanish and other languages. Cognizant that technology is a barrier for the disadvantaged populations, information will be available in print, in braille, and with a Babel notice.

Ease of access to individuals with disabilities will be informed by the leadership of the rehabilitation services partners, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. These statewide entities provide staff training, technical

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<sup>6</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(ii)

assistance to one-stop operator to improve service delivery to individuals with disabilities, recommendations, and instruction on assistive technology, based on individual needs and working together on outreach plans.

- c. how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC § 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including the provision of staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities;<sup>7</sup> and**

GO will identify and promote proven initiatives for meeting the needs of employers, and all career seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment. This includes ensuring the local workforce development system provides physical and programmatic accessibility in accordance with applicable WIOA non-discrimination requirements (and applicable provisions) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). In conjunction identify/implement ADA proven and/or innovative practices from other local areas. Key components of AJC compliance with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) are in effect:

- The AJC is physically accessible and in compliance with ADA standards for accessibility. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities.
- The local Equal Opportunity Officer is designated by the GOWDB.
- The AJC will provide universal access, reasonable accommodations, reasonable modifications to its program, programmatic, architectural and communication accessibility.
- The AJC has put in place policies and procedures that align with the provision of WIOA Section 188 to help ensure prohibitions are in place against discrimination on the basis of disability, sex, race, color, or national origin.
- The staff do not stereotype persons with disabilities when evaluating their skills, abilities, interests, and needs, taking into consideration the availability of reasonable accommodations, reasonable modifications, auxiliary aids, and services.
- The AJC provides reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities.
- It is made clear that disclosure is voluntary. All information regarding disability will be kept confidential.
- Staff working with persons with disabilities obtain permission from the individual before discussing information about their disability with other staff or agencies.
- All staff and individuals' discussions ensure the preservation of confidentiality.
- Staff provide appropriate assistance to individuals with disabilities so that they can effectively benefit from such services (to include utilizing technology).
- Reasonable modifications are made to eligibility criteria for training services. Staff ensures that individuals with disabilities have an opportunity to benefit from services that are as effective as those provided to nondisabled customers.
- The staff communicates with persons with disabilities as effectively as with others.
- The AJC provides programmatic and architectural accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- The AJC and the GO have established complaint processing procedures and will make materials available on the website, to partners, in the resource room, using a Babel

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<sup>7</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(iii)

introduction sheet, Braille introduction sheet, customers aware. Partners are asked to review with the public and participants.

- The GO will annually assess the AJC physical and programmatic accessibility, in accordance with applicable WIOA non-discrimination requirements and applicable provisions of the ADA.

**d. roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.<sup>8</sup>**

One-stop partners provide a multitude of programmatic and service contributions. The following table provides a list of contributions provided by one-stop partners.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Local Provider</b>	<b>Programmatic and Service Contributions</b>
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act	Nebraska Department of Education, Metropolitan Community College (MCC)	Access to educational services and academic instruction in support of many other programs
WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker	National Able Network	Staffing for job fairs, planning workforce-related events, referrals to other programs, job-readiness and business workshops, business response coordination, shared outreach efforts, co-enrollments, shared case management, developing cross-training materials for all program partners, participation in the creation of career pathways
WIOA Youth	Dynamic Educational Systems, Inc. (DESI)	Staffing for job fairs, planning workforce-related events, referrals to other programs, job-readiness and business workshops, business response coordination, shared outreach efforts, co-enrollments, and shared case management, cross training materials, participation in the creation of career pathways
Postsecondary & Technical Education	Metropolitan Community College (MCC)	Meeting space at multiple locations, shared programmatic promotion, participation in the creation of career pathways

<sup>8</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(5)(iv). The term *resource contributions* refers to programmatic and service contributions, rather than contributions pursuant to funding agreements.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Local Provider</b>	<b>Programmatic and Service Contributions</b>
Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training Programs	Omaha Housing Authority	Planning workforce-related events, referrals to other programs, job-readiness and business workshops
Ex-offender (Second Chance Act)	None	N/A
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)	Planning for Veteran's focused workforce-related events and job fairs, referrals to other programs, participation in the creation of career pathways
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Proteus	Staffing for job fairs, planning workforce-related events, referrals to other programs
Native American Programs	Ponca Tribe	Assistance with planning workforce-related events, referrals to other workforce programs
Unemployment Compensation Law	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)	Staff assistance in the resource room and direct linkages to our AJC
Senior Community Service Employment	National Able Network	Assistance with planning workforce-related events, referrals to other workforce programs
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)	Shared outreach efforts, co-enrollments, and shared case management, promotion of workforce events and referrals to participants
Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service	Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)	Coordination of business services, staff in the resource room, NEworks, ECM, and labor market information
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and Equus Workforce Solutions	Shared outreach efforts, co-enrollments, and shared case management, promotion of workforce events and referrals to participants, participation in the creation of career pathways
YouthBuild	Goodwill Industries	Meeting space, coordination and referral of programming with other workforce programs (especially WIOA)

Program	Local Provider	Programmatic and Service Contributions
		Youth)
Job Corps	Job Corps	Promotion and outreach for workforce events, coordination and referral of programming with other workforce programs (especially WIOA Youth)
Small Business Administration	Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce	Meeting space, promoting job fairs, planning workforce-related events, planning business workshops, partnering on business response coordination, shared outreach efforts
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	Promotion and outreach for workforce events, coordination and referral of programming with other workforce programs
Vocational Rehabilitation Programs	Nebraska Department of Education - Nebraska VR and Nebraska Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired	Providing customer connection opportunities through WIN meetings and the coordination of business service team through the EmployOMA meetings and EmployOMA Connector's meeting, training and advisement for service to people with disabilities

- 5. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out the core programs to:<sup>9</sup>**
- a. expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment;**

The Board is working with WIOA core programs (enumerated above) to expand access to services both in-person and virtually. The recent redesign of the HWS website has allowed the public to access and find relevant program information for all core partners and for additional one-stop partner programs more quickly. The site is accessible for the visually impaired and provides information in both English and Spanish, as well as providing quick functionality with Google Translate for other languages.

GO utilizes social media platforms to reach additional individuals who may not visit our AJC in person. Additionally, resources to encourage and support businesses to hire individuals with barriers have been created, with this being the focus of a few of the Better Business Workshops that have already taken place or are planned.

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<sup>9</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(2)

AJC services are available to individuals with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities. Materials are made available in multiple languages and the AJC certification process conducted by the board ensures programmatic and physical accessibility. Reasonable accommodations and modifications are provided to individuals with disabilities. The one-stop operator is expected to ensure that staff are properly trained in the use of the assistive technology and the best way to assist individuals in the use of this technology, such as the Job Access With Speech (JAWS) screen readers available in the resource room.

The WSIC, which has representation from core WIOA programs, will work to identify future opportunities to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

GO's alignment with the state goals and strategies will help to focus efforts on system alignment that creates the most accessible in-person and virtual environment for connecting to workforce programs for individuals with barriers to employment. This effort will involve close collaboration and coordination with many workforce partner programs at the one-stop location, including all core partner programs.

**b. facilitate the development of career pathways, in accordance with the goals and strategies defined in the state plan and subsequent modifications of the state plan, and co-enrollment in the core programs; and**

In the *Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System*, the state has a primary goal directly related to the development of career pathways. To support this statewide goal at the local level, GO has adopted local plan goals and strategies that support the facilitation and development of career pathways. These goals and strategies have been outlined in this plan and have specific measurements and tactics assigned to each.

The WSIC will work with the state workforce development board, state plan partners, employers, and regional and local industry sector partnerships to:

- Select and prioritize the development of career pathways;
- Identify barriers to participation in selected career pathways; and
- Address and create solutions to participation in selected career pathways.

GO will partner closely with the state to monitor any changes, updates, or new efforts to support career pathways and will update our efforts in accordance.

The *Performance Accountability Policy* released by the State has provided GO with guidance to develop local policies and procedures related to co-enrollment in the core partner programs. Co-enrolling participants in partner programs maximizes use of program funding, as well as the number of individuals served by Nebraska's one-stop delivery system. Co-enrolling participants also ensures participants have access to and receive the full spectrum of services available through the one-stop delivery system, including follow-up services. GO will align all co-enrollment policies and procedures with state and Federal guidance and will put in place strategies to increase co-enrollment numbers in core programs each program year.

**c. improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

The GOWDB has outlined several strategies that will lead to improved access to postsecondary credentials by:

- Promoting in-demand careers;
- Developing career pathways that clearly lead to postsecondary credentials;
- Aligning education and credentialing with occupational requirements;
- Expanding work-based learning opportunities to include Registered Apprenticeships; and
- Enhance access to available services across the regional workforce partners.

A recognized postsecondary credential includes both educationally awarded credentials as well as a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, or a license recognized by the state or federal government.

GOWDB continues to develop a system approach to providing services, individuals will have greater access to recognized postsecondary credentials because the workforce system partners will be aligning resources that result in the attainment of a postsecondary credential. GO will continue to promote and expand collaborative efforts like reVISION, a public school utilized local-level planning process involving employers, educators, and workforce system partners who identify the needed postsecondary credentials and skill levels for current and future H3 occupations.

WIOA outlines a vision for supporting young adults through an integrated service delivery system. This includes a vision for quality services for in-school and out-of-school youth. These services are provided through career exploration and networking, support for educational and credential attainment, skills training, and career pathways. GO will provide the fourteen services for eligible youth, further described in the Youth Program Design section.

In January 2016, Heartland Workforce Solutions launched "Career Readiness to Eliminate Disparities" (CRED). This initiative features a national-recognized system to match skilled labor to potential employers. The focus is to generate short term credentials attainment that leads to employment, thereby decreasing poverty/unemployment in the GO area. HWS collaborates with MCC to administer the National Career Readiness Certificate™ (NCRC). This credential is utilized by employers in forty states to identify qualified applicants. Career seekers complete education components tailored to the areas identified via credential testing. The assessment feedback identifies areas of improvement to increase the individuals career readiness. The individual may then participate in the follow-on KeyTrain® training, which allows career seekers to complete education components tailored to the areas of improvement identified by the NCRC.



**6. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area:<sup>10</sup>**

- a. to facilitate employer engagement with workforce development programs, including engagement of small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**

GO will enhance employer engagement between secondary and post-secondary education institutions/training programs to meet employers' workforce needs through industry-driven strategies. This strategy will incorporate the proactive use of available workforce and industry data to help determine future industry needs, potential workforce disruptions, and to ensure the availability of a skilled workforce to drive growth within the state's high-wage, high-skill and high-demand industries and occupations. Additionally, all workforce stakeholders, particularly those who have staff dedicated to employer outreach activity, should encourage and invite businesses to actively participate in their respective industry councils. This is a catalyst to the development of effective Industry Sector Partnerships and helps to inform the workforce system of the evolving needs/trends of in-demand industry.

EmployOMA is a resounding success as a coalition of workforce development program partners working collectively to better meet the needs of businesses in the Omaha metro area. It is not uncommon for over 50 participants to be involved in these monthly collaboration meetings. The EmployOMA LinkedIn page continues to grow, as does the email contact list as we work together to better engage businesses.

GO launched a healthcare-focused sector strategy in 2019. This initiative has brought together industry leaders to find ways to better identify the jobs of the future in healthcare, and to start building talent pipelines now. During this local planning period, GO will work to continue to focus on healthcare talent pipelines and connect more career seekers with H3 career pathways.

- b. to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;**

GO will enhance employer engagement between secondary and post-secondary education institutions and training programs to meet employers' workforce needs through industry-driven strategies. This strategy will incorporate the proactive use of available workforce and industry data to help determine future industry needs, potential workforce disruptions, and to ensure the availability of a skilled workforce to drive growth within the state's high-wage, high-skill and high-demand industries and occupations. Additionally, all workforce stakeholders, particularly those who have staff dedicated to employer outreach activity, should encourage and invite businesses to actively participate in their respective industry councils. This is a catalyst to the development of effective Industry Sector Partnerships and helps to inform the workforce system of the evolving needs/trends of in-demand industry.

GO is launching a monthly business workshop series in April 2021. This HWS Better Business workshop series will feature monthly presenters from an array of programs and partnering organizations. The goal of the series is to create monthly workshops that are designed to help businesses grow. This includes helping business leaders and entrepreneurs learn more about the workforce development programs that are available to them, as well as to help provide content that ensures businesses understand how to remain in compliance with various government

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<sup>10</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(c)(i)-(v)

requirements. This will also be a partnership between the Greater Omaha and Greater Lincoln workforce boards to present this series of business workshops.

These workshops are like the ones we host for jobseekers which provide them with the tools to increase their likelihood of finding employment, however, these ones are specifically made for businesses and focused on helping to increase the likelihood a business succeeds. We have these workshops scheduled for the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. for these presentations.

Some of the topics we have scheduled for the first seven months include:

- Hiring and Retaining Individuals with Disabilities
- Employment Discrimination Overview and Updates
- Worker Training Grants and Incumbent Worker Training
- Customized Training Programs for Businesses (for existing employees)
- Staying in Compliance with Worker Rights (Labor Law)
- Workforce Programs with Incentives for Hiring New Employees (OJT, Paid and Unpaid Internships)
- Nebraska SourceLink Resources for Entrepreneurs and Businesses

**c. to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.**

Workforce and economic development coordination include:

- The Greater Omaha Chamber maintains a seat on the local workforce agency's (HWS) Board of Directors.
- Members from the HWS team regularly attends the Economic Development Partnership's regional bi-weekly meetings to share and exchange data, leads, and employer outreach strategy.
- HWS is leading the regional Work Ready Communities initiative, and the local economic development entity is a required core partner. The economic development partnership has offered a designee to represent the regional partnership and the chamber of commerce.
- Efforts to align economic development and workforce stakeholders into industry sector partnerships are more efficient for business services activation.
- GO works closely with the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce (GOCOC) on several initiatives, including the REACH Construction Industry Certificate program. This is a 10-week course which covers the essential basics every small and emerging construction business needs to know. This program is aimed at scalable firms that aspire to enhance their business infrastructure. Firms participating usually have at least two (2) years in business and are past the start-up phase. In 2019 Reach members landed more than \$4 million in contracts.
- GO works closely with the GOCOC with their Startup Collaborative to help empower new tech businesses. Other partnerships include Careerokit, which provides students from more than five school districts the opportunity to have hands-on experience learning about careers. This unique skills pipeline initiative has the goal of connecting more young people with career-learning opportunities to better build tomorrow's workforce.
- As part of the response to the pandemic, GO played a role in helping to provide input and expertise as GOCOC developed its economic recovery plan called "We Rise" which is being used as the framework to help businesses survive during the pandemic and continue to grow after it.

- As part of the new HWS Better Business Workshop series, GO reaches out to partner with all nine local chambers of commerce serving businesses in our three-county area to find new ways to collaborate with economic development groups to better reach our business community.
- d. to strengthen linkages between the local one-stop delivery system and the Nebraska's unemployment insurance programs; and**

During this period of COVID-19 impact of pandemic related Unemployment Insurance (UI), the resource area is daily evaluating UI service delivery needs, balancing precautions of physical distancing, PPE, technology dependance for UI claims, trained staff, UI phone access capacity, resource room phone line capacity and service methods for people currently ill with COVID-19. With the leadership of the one-stop operator and the teamwork for NDOL UI and the one-stop staff, service is adjusted to meet changes daily and into the future through the duration of the pandemic and beyond. The one-stop operator and resource room team provide feedback to UI to solve tech, access, or training gaps for UI service.

The AJC staff receives training from the UI program administrative agency to help facilitate the delivery of services. Within the AJC there are four dedicated computers and four dedicated phone lines providing timely assistance to individuals applying for UI or tracking services from UI. One UI staff person is available in the resource room. As the public contacts HWS the UI call center is provided. As the pandemic unfolds, service needs are re-assessed ongoing. This teamwork will continue as the UI service delivery changes to meet the customer need.

- e. that may include the implementation of initiatives (which must support the strategies described above in Sections 6.a. through 6.d.), such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training 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.**

The GOWDB will carry out the following initiatives and strategies to meet the needs of businesses we serve:

- Customized Training: GO is working closely with MCC and Bellevue University to develop a Better Business Workshop related on the topic of customized training. This workshop will be made available live and will also be available on-demand as a recording on our website. GO is working to build partnerships to facilitate business connections to the customized training programs at these two institutions as well as at the Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC).
- Entrepreneurial Training: GO is partnering closely with the several projects at the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce that support entrepreneurial training, including the THRIVE and GROW initiatives, as well as the tech-focused business incubator spaces.
- Career Readiness: GO participates with Nebraska VR on a variety of programming related to career readiness through EmployOMA and the Virtual Career Exploration webinars.
- On-the-Job Training: GO has a Better Business Workshop session scheduled for the month of June related to On-the-Job training programs. The presenters for the session will include representatives from National Able and DESI, with the intended audience of businesses seeking to better understand how WIOA dollars can be utilized to hire new employees and train them as they learn.

The workforce board and the WSIC will work to add more strategies and resources designed to meet the needs of businesses. GO will utilize the Sector Strategy and Economic Development Subcommittees to set and monitor goals and strategies related to this effort.

**7. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.<sup>11</sup>**

The local board works closely with the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce and regional economic development. The Mayor's Economic Development Director serves on the board information local economic development activities. The board directs the one-stop operator to convene the local business development team made up of core partner and community business engagement representatives informed by economic development activities in the region. Information about the community initiatives is shared at the monthly partner meetings. The one-stop operator schedules on entrepreneurial micro enterprise training, in partnership with Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce REACH, MCC START and Nebraska Enterprise Fund for training. Information and referrals to these community resources are provided by the one stop operator to the partner network. The local board participates with community and state initiatives for economic development.

**8. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.<sup>12</sup>**

GO provides employment and training services to assist career seekers with acquiring the necessary skills to compete for positions in high demand industries. The GOWDB remains focused on strategizing and supporting our service provider as it seeks to place adult and dislocated worker participants in training that is considered in-demand. Individuals are encouraged to select a program that is directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in an area the individual is willing to relocate too. The employment and training activities will be targeted to:

- Provide job seekers with the skills and credentials to compete and secure employment at a self-sustaining wage;
- Help job seekers access supportive services to address barriers to employment such as homelessness, a criminal background, and/or lack of basic skills.
- Provide businesses and employers with skilled talent and access to other human resource services to grow their business; and
- Meet monthly identify best practices and strategies that would work better to continuously improve local one-stop operations.

There are three types of "career services" available for adults and dislocated workers:

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<sup>11</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(4)

<sup>12</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(6)

- **Basic Career Services** for anyone who comes into the AJC may receive basic career services. The staff will:
  - Determine eligibility for WIOA Adult and Dislocated worker services;
  - Provide outreach, intake, and orientation to other programs within the workforce system;
  - Assess skills including literacy, and English language proficiency;
  - Provide labor exchange services and information on in-demand industry sectors including accurate information about local, regional, and national labor market areas, job vacancy listings; information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed;
  - Provide career search and placement assistance;
  - Provide referrals and coordinate activities with other programs, including programs within the local workforce delivery system, and when appropriate, other programs that provide workforce support;
  - Provide connections to performance and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers;
  - Assist in establishing eligibility for educational and financial assistance programs for training and education programs not provided under WIOA;
  - Provide meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing an unemployment compensation claim.
- **Individualized Career Services** when it is determined that services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment, GO will provide the following services:
  - Comprehensive assessments of the skills and the services needed to help the customer obtain high wage and in-demand employment;
  - Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals.
  - Individualized employment and training counseling and mentoring;
  - Career planning, including case management;
  - Job readiness preparation that provides basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources;
  - Financial literacy services;
  - Customized training, work experience, or on-the-job training;
  - Incumbent worker training to help up-skill existing employees of businesses; and
  - English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
- **Follow-up Services** provided to all participants eligible for WIOA individualized or training services who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Follow up services may include:
  - Career guidance
  - Referrals and other services (not including support services)
  - Follow-up services provided are more than for documentation of contact or outcome reporting
- **Training Services** for both short term and long term occupational-skills training (OST). Clients are provided with information regarding programs available for training via NDOL's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Work-based training opportunities which include on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship, registered apprenticeships, transitional jobs, work experience, job shadowing, entrepreneurial training, job readiness, adult education and literacy services, and English acquisition opportunities are also available to participants.

**9. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities.<sup>13</sup>**

GO will follow the direction of the state entity responsible for providing rapid response activities. GO will:

- Notify the state Rapid Response Coordinator when a local partner becomes aware of a potential layoff or closure ([ndol.rapidresponse@nebraska.gov](mailto:ndol.rapidresponse@nebraska.gov))
- Ensure a representative of the dislocated worker program provides program specific information at all onsite meetings.
- Guarantee content for outreach to employees and employers is provided to the Rapid Response Unit when an onsite meeting cannot be arranged.
- Coordinate workshops and career fairs, based on identified affected workforce needs, in partnership with the one stop partner programs.
- Identify additional community resources.
- Assist the State Rapid Response team to make referrals to the WIOA Dislocated Worker program by providing DW program personnel on request and providing local program materials and contact information for the response team to distribute.

GO will follow the rapid response timeline, as described in Rapid Response Manual, to provide services to the employer.

**10. Describe and assess 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 identification of successful models of such activities.<sup>14</sup>**

The local area, through the contracted service provider, will make available to all youth program participants each of the services described below. The service provider will have the discretion to determine the services a youth program participant receives based on the participant's individual objective assessment and the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). There is no requirement to provide every service to each youth program participant.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a: secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities); or for a recognized post-secondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
3. Paid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences:
  - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
  - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
  - Internships and job shadowing; and
  - On-the-job training opportunities;

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<sup>13</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(7)

<sup>14</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(8)

4. Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors as identified by the GOWDB;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behavior;
7. Supportive services;
8. Adult mentoring;
9. Follow up Services;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;
11. Financial literacy education (ex: budgeting);
12. Entrepreneurial skills training to expose students to the skills and knowledge necessary to support self-employment, small business ownership, and entrepreneurship;
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
14. Post-secondary Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training, such as:
  - exploring post-secondary education options;
  - assisting youth to prepare for SAT/ACT testing;
  - assisting with:
    - college admission applications;
    - searching and applying for scholarships and grants; and
    - filling out FAFSA and other financial aid applications
    - connecting youth to postsecondary education programs.

The WIOA Title I Youth provider connects with AJC disability service experts including at least Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Additionally, the WIOA Title I Youth provider will establish the same high level of partnerships with all one-stop program partners to increase the quality of connections and supports available to youth served. The one-stop operator will work to actively recruit referrals, establish a customer flow that ensures individuals with disabilities are treated mainstream. All referred applicants receive an initial assessment, options in the WIOA program offerings, access to the 14 required elements of WIOA, an orientation to the program, and access to all basic options under WIOA.

In addition, the core partners and one-stop partners are invited to actively participate in case management meetings to discuss any co-enrollments and leveraged funds options.

**11. Describe how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to align strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.<sup>15</sup>**

As GO continues to develop a system approach to providing services, individuals will have greater access to recognized postsecondary credentials, and the workforce system partners will more

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<sup>15</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(9)

closely coordinate and align resources. In alignment with the statewide and local plan goal related to improving career pathways, GO has developed many strategies, tactics, and action steps listed above to improve the coordination of relevant secondary and postsecondary educational programs. The GOWDB has outlined focal points to improve attainment of secondary or postsecondary credentials:

- Promotion of in-demand careers to jobseekers at our AJC, between partners, at job fairs, and through promotional materials;
- Development of career pathways in partnership with educational institutions that clearly identify the importance of relevant postsecondary credentials;
- Work with businesses and educational entities to align education and credentialing with occupational requirements;
- Promote our programming and available funding to local educational institutions and organizations to create a referral network for recruitment and outreach;
- Expand work-based learning opportunities, including Registered Apprenticeships; and
- Enhanced access to available services across the regional workforce partners.

In addition, the WSIC and the Youth Committee will work to convene partners to identify opportunities to coordinate activities, identify best practices, and measure successful outcomes. Additionally, the development of career pathways, promotion of H3 careers, and expanding work-based learning opportunities (including Registered Apprenticeships) will be prioritized when convening partners.

**12. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.<sup>16</sup>**

To avoid duplication of services and maximize braiding of funding streams co-enrolled participants are case managed collaboratively. All supportive services are coordinated by the primary case manager. The location of the AJC is accessible by public transportation and directly on a bus route. Dedicated parking is available for customers with marked spaces closest to the door for those individuals with disabilities.

Transportation solutions are varied. Mileage reimbursements, gas cards, bus passes, and reimbursement for taxi or ride share are available to enable the participants to participate in WIOA activities. Community programs such as work release, homeless shelters, refugee services or others may coordinate their own shuttles from their locations to the AJC for specialized service events.

Metro Area Transit is the public agency that runs the bus system throughout the Omaha metropolitan area. The AJC is on the bus line, with many linked bus routes connecting to this location to help serve the transportation needs of customers visiting the AJC.

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<sup>16</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(10)



The WIOA Title I programs avoid duplication and maximize funding streams by co-enrolling participants when possible. The HWS Supportive Services policy outlines the coordination and allowability of supportive services for the following categories:

- Transportation Assistance
- Childcare and Dependent Care
- Emergency Housing
- Utilities
- Medical Services
- Career Wardrobe, Tools, and Equipment
- Education/Training Related Application or License/Certification Fees
- Textbooks
- Drug Screening
- Legal Aid Services
- Reasonable Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

**13. Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.<sup>17</sup>**

Through the AJC, the one-stop operator will act as a “functional leader” of the resource room interagency functional team. The one-stop operator is responsible for coordinating partner staff to optimize and streamline service delivery efforts. Formal leadership, supervision, and performance responsibilities remain with the function team’s employing agency. The one-stop operator, in collaboration with each partner, will at a minimum be responsible for the following activities:

- Facilitate integrated partnerships that seamlessly incorporate services for the common customers served by multiple program partners of the AJC.
- Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.
- When available use a “common intake” and communication tool to; integrate partner program services, increase co-enrollments across programs and eliminate duplication of services.
- Organize and integrate AJC services by function (when permitted by a program’s authorizing statute), as appropriate, through staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes AJC staff who perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams (e.g., skills development team or business services teams).
- Create a seamless model of service integration that focuses on serving all customers (including individuals with the highest barriers to employment, including those with disabilities). This will provide a full range of services staffed by relevant functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program.
- Manage daily operations, including but not limited to:
  - Coordinating partner responsibilities, as defined in the partnership agreements or any formalized MOUs.
  - Managing hours of operation, includes adding weekend and extended hours for specialized for population groups such as refugees, people re-entering from

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<sup>17</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(11)

- corrections. Events such as job fairs or expungement events occur during extended hours.
  - Coordinating daily work schedules and workflow based upon operational needs.
  - Coordinating staff absences with partner leadership staff to ensure service coverage by the center.
- Facilitate integrated services at the AJC by ensuring:
  - AJC staff are trained and equipped in an ongoing learning environment with the skills and knowledge needed to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery, consistent with the requirements of each of the partner programs.
  - AJC staff are cross trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. This allows staff from differing programs to understand the services from other partner programs, and share their own expertise related to the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers.
  - AJC staff are routinely trained on how their work function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the GOWDB, as well as within the AJC network. This enhances their ability to ensure that a direct linkage to partner programs is seamlessly integrated within the center.
- Assist GO in establishing and maintaining the AJC network structure. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Ensuring that defined AJC certification requirements are met and maintained.
  - Ensuring that career services such the ones outlined in WIOA sec. 134(c)(2) are available and accessible.
  - Ensuring that GOWDB policies are implemented and adhered too.
  - Adhering to the provisions outlined in the contract with GO.
  - Reinforcing strategic objectives of the GO and taking steps to achieve the goals.
  - Ensuring staff are properly trained by their organization and provided technical assistance, as needed.
- Oversee and coordinate partner, program, and AJC network performance. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Providing and/or contributing to reports of AJC activities.
  - Providing input to the partner programs on the opportunities for development of their own staff members.
  - Identifying and facilitating the timely resolution of complaints, problems, and other issues.
  - Collaborating with the GOWDB on efforts designed to ensure the meeting of program performance measures, including data sharing procedures to ensure effective data matching, timely data entry in the management systems, and coordinated data downloads (ensuring confidentiality requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 34 CFR 361.38 and 20 CFR part 603).
  - Ensuring open communication with the partners to facilitate efficient and effective center operations.
  - Evaluating customer satisfaction data and proposing service strategy changes to the GOWDB based on findings.

The one-stop operator will not assist in the preparation and submission of Regional or Local plans; however, they may be asked for input on specific workforce system topics. They cannot manage or assist in competitive processes for selecting or terminating the one-stop operator, Adult & Dislocated Worker services providers, or Youth services providers. The one-stop operator cannot

negotiate local performance accountability measures or develop and submit budgets for activities of the GOWDB. The GOWDB is responsible for negotiating performance measures, strategic planning, budgets, and one-stop operator oversight (including monitoring).

**14. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities provided under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the local board will carry out the review of local adult education service provider applications, consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and 232.<sup>18</sup>**

### **Coordination with Adult Education**

GOWDB will work to strengthen and improve shared service delivery with Adult Education through the following strategies:

- Work collaboratively to develop strategies to assist adults achieve their goals identified through onboarding activities and to minimize barriers.
- Improve workforce preparation activities by utilizing common standards for NWorks, resumes, individualized learning and employment plans, skills improvement, and career exploration.
- Work jointly with adults to set SMART employment goals when appropriate yet remain receptive to the immediacy of the adult learner population.
- Increase co-enrollments and identify how services can be leveraged.
- Host and coordinate trainings and information sessions to increase awareness of programs.
- Create a process to share customer information in a secure manner and reduce duplication.
- Work collaboratively to find ways to utilize the same vocabulary and terminology with customers.
- Partner to conduct job search workshops and other job-readiness activities in collaboration with Adult Education classes.
- Improve the direct referral process for adults in need of basic skills improvement, high school equivalency credentialing and English language learning as well as workforce preparation activities and job placement services.

Adult Education is available to adults through direct referrals and direct linkage as well as through the workforce system partners to provide basic skills improvement, high school equivalency preparation, English as a Second Language, rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and workforce preparation activities. The foundational knowledge imparted through the workforce system and educational services form a basis that is applicable across a range of industries and occupation.

In addition to the GOWDB strategies, one-stop partners will work collaboratively to develop strategies to assist adults achieve their goals identified through onboarding activities and to minimize barriers. Partners will also improve the direct referral process for adults in need of basic skills improvement, high school equivalency credentialing and English language learning as well as workforce preparation activities and job placement services.

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<sup>18</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(12)

## **Review of local adult education service provider applications**

The workforce board carries out a review of specific portions of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II by eligible service providers seeking a grant for the provision of adult education and literacy activities to determine whether such applications are in alignment with the local plan.

The Adult Education State Director will instruct the board on the process and procedures for the review. The State Director will also provide the appropriate application sections of all eligible applicants serving in the identified workforce area along with the necessary determination forms to assist the board in reporting their findings.

The workforce board chair will designate a review team of no less than three board members to participate with the workforce administrator in the review of the submitted applications.

The review team will document on the appropriate alignment form, whether the application is found to be consistent with the local plan. These evaluations will be provided to the board chair for final recommendations to the State Director. On behalf of the workforce board, the board chair will notify the Adult Education State Director in writing of the final recommendations no later than 15 working days after receipt of the applications.

**15. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements, as attachments to the local plan, which define how all local service providers will carry out requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in through local one-stop delivery system.<sup>19</sup> In this context, cooperative agreement means a legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity that is, consistent with 31 USC §§ 6302-6305:<sup>20</sup>**

- a. used to enter into a relationship, the principal purpose of which is to transfer anything of value from the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity to the non-Federal entity to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States (refer to 31 USC § 6101(3)) and not to acquire property or services for the Federal government or pass-through entity's direct benefit or use; and**

There are currently no cooperative agreements between GO and a federal awarding agency or pass-through entity as described in this question.

- b. distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and the non-Federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award.**

There are currently no cooperative agreements between GO and a federal awarding agency or pass-through entity as described in this question.

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<sup>19</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(13)

<sup>20</sup> 20 CFR § 675.300

**16. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) as determined by NDOL or the local CEO, as applicable.<sup>21</sup>**

Heartland Workforce Solutions distributes funds.

**17. Describe the competitive process that will be used to award local area subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.<sup>22</sup>**

Utilizing the requirements noted in the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR § 200.317 through § 200.326, a competitive procurement of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program and one-stop operator was initiated. The following is the process utilized by the GOWDB as represented by HWS:

1. A third-party vendor will be chosen to conduct the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the selection of provider(s) for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services, WIOA Youth Services, and a one-stop operator. This will include:
  - a. Needs identification
  - b. Solicitation of input from local stakeholders and the Local Workforce Development
  - c. Market research
  - d. RFP writing
  - e. Public notice regarding RFPs
  - f. Notification of potential vendors of the RFP opportunity
  - g. Bidders' conference
  - h. Closed bids
  - i. Bid review and scoring by team of board members
  - j. Team recommends winner to the board
  - k. Board votes to approve provider(s)
2. Criteria used to make the selection falls within these broad categories:
  - a. Understanding of Local Area's Needs
  - b. Corporate Overview / Contractor Qualifications
  - c. Professional Personnel
  - d. Technical and Soundness of Approach
  - e. Cost

**18. Describe the current local levels of performance negotiated with NDOL, consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used by the local board to measure the performance of:**

**a. local WIOA Title I programs; and**

<b>WIOA Adult Performance Goals</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY2021</b>
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	78.5%	78.5%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	79.5%	79.5%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,400	\$6,400

<sup>21</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(14)

<sup>22</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(15)

<b>WIOA Adult Performance Goals</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY2021</b>
Credential Attainment Rate within 4 Quarters After Exit	62%	62%
Measurable Skills Gains	42%	42%

<b>WIOA Dislocated Worker Performance Goals</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY2021</b>
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	87.4%	87.4%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	86%	86%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,400	\$8,400
Credential Attainment Rate within 4 Quarters After Exit	70%	70%
Measurable Skills Gains	46%	46%

<b>WIOA Youth Performance Goals</b>	<b>PY 2020</b>	<b>PY2021</b>
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	79%	79%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	78%	78%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,550	\$3,550
Credential Attainment Rate within 4 Quarters After Exit	55.8%	55.8%
Measurable Skills Gains	42.8%	42.8%

**b. performance of the local fiscal agent, if applicable, local Title I service providers, and the local one-stop delivery system.<sup>23</sup>**

Not Applicable.

**19. Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing local board, consistent with factors developed by the state board.<sup>24</sup>**

The Nebraska Workforce Development Board has not established guidelines for becoming a high-performing local board.

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<sup>23</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(16)

<sup>24</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(17)

**20. Describe how training services for adults and dislocated workers outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts,<sup>25</sup> including:**

**a. whether contracts for training services will be used;**

All training providers in the local area are utilized through the Eligible Training Provider List.

**b. how the use of contracts for training services will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts; and**

Contracts for training services are not being utilized at this time. However, if the GOWDB elects to use contracts for training services that will be done in compliance with WIOA and its implementing regulations.

**c. 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.**

GO works with its service provider to develop a process for career coaches to discuss the data available on the ETPL with customers to help match educational opportunities that meet the individualized career plan training goals. Factors for the participant and career coach to consider include, but are not limited to cost, length of training, proximity of training, transportation availability, satisfaction rate of students, data about employment after graduation, etc.

In accordance with customer choice requirements found under 20 CFR 679.380, GO takes on the following responsibilities:

- Working with the state to ensure there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of training services, including eligible training providers with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities and eligible training providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities.
- Ensuring the dissemination and appropriate use of the State ETPL found on NEworks through the local one-stop delivery system.
- Reviewing performance and cost information from the ETPL and disseminating this information through the local one-stop delivery system.
- Providing adequate access to services for individuals with disabilities.
- Determining the career services that are best performed by the one-stop operator.
- Identifying a wide array of potential career service providers and awarding contracts where appropriate including to providers to ensure:
  - Sufficient access to services for individuals with disabilities, including opportunities that lead to integrated, competitive employment for individuals with disabilities; and
  - Sufficient access for adult education and literacy activities.

Pursuant to local area policies and procedures, WIOA Title I service providers must document the conversation and how the participant selected the training program. Customer choice requirements are outlined in local policies, as well as in the procedural manuals for service providers.

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<sup>25</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(18)

**21. Describe how the local area one-stop center(s) is implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by other one-stop partners.<sup>26</sup>**

GO will follow the NDOL initiative to develop a common intake system. NEworks is the platform available for intake, case management and data sharing for WIOA programs and is utilized by WIOA service providers in GO. The management information systems in use by other one-stop partners are varied between programs and among one-stop partners. While the technology solution may not currently be in use for a common intake, GO is committed to working as closely as possible with one-stop partners and NDOL to share allowable information and provide the best services and resources to our customers.

**22. Describe the direction given by NDOL to the local board and by the local board to the one-stop operator will ensure that:**

- a. priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and 20 CFR § 680.600;<sup>27</sup> and**
- b. Veterans receive priority of service in all USDOL-funded training services, which includes training services provided through Title I programs.<sup>28</sup>**

GOWDB has developed policies that address priority of service for adult program participants regarding individualized career services and training services. In addition, GOWDB has developed policies that address priority of service requirements relating to Veterans and USDOL-funded training services.

For individualized career services and training services provided by the WIOA Adult program, priority is given to program participants who are recipients of public assistance, other low-income adults, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. For training programs for Veterans funded by USDOL, priority is given to Veterans and eligible spouses. Adult program participants and Veterans and eligible spouses must receive priority to access the services described above. The GOWDB will ensure priority of service regarding adult program participants and Veterans. Priority of service, in both cases, is provided as follows:

- First, to Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are:
  - Recipients of public assistance.
  - Low-income.
  - Basic-skills deficient.
- Second, to individuals who are not Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans but are:
  - Recipients of public assistance.
  - Low- income.
  - Basic-skills deficient.
- Third, to Veterans and eligible spouses of Veterans who are not:
  - Recipients of public assistance.
  - Low- income.
  - Basic-skills deficient

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<sup>26</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(20)

<sup>27</sup> 20 CFR § 679.560(b)(21)

<sup>28</sup> 20 CFR § 680.650



- Fourth, to persons who are not Veterans or:
  - Recipients of public assistance.
  - Low- income.
  - Basic-skills deficient.

**23. Describe the process used by the local board to provide an opportunity for the public comment on the development of the local plan or any subsequent modification of the plan before submitting the plan to NDOL. To provide adequate opportunity for public comment, local boards must:**

- a. make information about and copies of the plan and subsequent modifications available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media;<sup>29</sup>**

Public Comment Process

- Public notice in the Omaha World Herald was posted on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. GO provides a 30-day period for comment on the plan before its submission to the state. The public comment period was held between March 1, 2021 and March 30, 2021. All comments were reviewed to make improvements to the plan. The GOWDB completed the following tasks as part of the regional planning process:
  - Published means of accessing copies of the proposed regional and local plan through public hearings and local news media.
  - Facilitated public access to digital copies of the Regional and Local Plan via the HWS website.
- b. include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.<sup>30</sup>**

GO provided the following public comment opportunities:

- a public hearing in conjunction with the Greater Nebraska and Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Boards.
- members of the public, including representatives of business, representatives of labor organizations, and representatives of education were provided an opportunity to submit comments on the proposed local plan to the local board, not later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the March 1, 2021 on which the proposed local plan is made available
- public meeting held March 1, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. at Heartland Workforce Solutions American Job Center, Community Room, 5752 Ames Avenue, Omaha, NE with virtual access via published Zoom link. The public comment process and timeline for the local plan were discussed as an agenda item during the February 25<sup>th</sup> HWS Board meeting, which was also a public meeting, and open to public comment. The purpose of having a public meeting so early in the public comment process was in part to help the public and other workforce partners to understand how to fully access the plan and how to submit public comments in an effort to increase the number of public comments received.

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<sup>29</sup> 20 CFR §§ 679.510(b)(1) and (5)

<sup>30</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(2)

- c. provide no more than a 30-day period for comments on the plan and subsequent modifications before submission to NDOL, beginning on the date on which the plan and modifications are made available to the public;<sup>31</sup>**

GO provided a 30-day period for comment on the plan before its submission to the State, from March 1 through March 30, 2021. Comments were received by Erin Porterfield.

- d. submit to NDOL any comments that represent disagreement with the plan or subsequent modifications<sup>32</sup> or indicate that disagreeing public comments were not received, if that is the case; and**

Comments that express disagreement with the plan are provided below.

### **Public Comment**

*Title II Revisions by Tate Lauer's Public Comment, March 18, 2021*

“Adult Education is available to adults through direct referrals and direct linkage as well as through the workforce system partners to provide basic skills improvement, high school equivalency preparation, English as a Second Language, rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and workforce preparation activities. The foundational knowledge imparted through the workforce system and educational services form a basis that is applicable across a range of industries and occupation.

Partners will work collaboratively to develop strategies to assist adults achieve their goals identified through onboarding activities and to minimize barriers. Partners will also improve the direct referral process for adults in need of basic skills improvement, high school equivalency credentialing and English language learning as well as workforce preparation activities and job placement services.

Application Review (not included in Greater Omaha local plan)

The workforce board carries out a review of specific portions of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II by eligible service providers seeking a grant for the provision of adult education and literacy activities to determine whether such applications are in alignment with the local plan.

The Adult Education State Director will instruct the board on the process and procedures for the review. The State Director will also provide the appropriate application sections of all eligible applicants serving in the identified workforce area along with the necessary determination forms to assist the board in reporting their findings.

The workforce board chair will designate a review team of no less than three board members to participate with the workforce administrator in the review of the submitted applications.

The review team will document on the appropriate alignment form, whether the application is found to be consistent with the local plan. These evaluations will be provided to the board chair for final recommendations to the State Director. On behalf of the workforce board, the board chair

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<sup>31</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(3)

<sup>32</sup> 20 CFR § 679.510(b)(4)

will notify the Adult Education State Director in writing of the final recommendations no later than 15 working days after receipt of the applications.”

- e. ensure that all open meetings are held in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.<sup>33</sup>**

All open meetings were conducted in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. Notice of Publication: Adequate legal notice of GOWDB meetings was posted in the Omaha World Herald on February 25, 2021. The records reflect that the notice is published in accordance with the open meeting law requirements and published in the Tri County area.

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<sup>33</sup> Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 84-1407 through 84-1414