

**Workforce Development Board**  
*of Eastern Arkansas*

**Transitional Plan**

**Program Years**  
**2016 – 2017**

## Transitional Regional Plan PY 2016 – PY 2017

WIOA requires regional planning – a broad strategic approach to planning focused on the overarching vision, goals, alignment and shared responsibilities within the region. Arkansas intends to implement a two-tiered regional approach to meeting this requirement by allowing a two-year transitional plan. This approach provides latitude for regions that may not yet be able to fully address all of the outlined elements required in a four-year regional plan.

### 1.1. Provide the following:

#### A. A reference name for the planning region

- Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area (EAWDA)

#### B. Identification of the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region

- Crittenden
- Cross
- Lee
- Phillips
- St. Francis

#### C. Identification of the county(ies) each local workforce development area serves

- Crittenden
- Cross
- Lee
- Phillips
- St. Francis

#### D. Identification of the key planning region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan

- Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas
- Executive Committee
- One-Stop Committee
- WIOA Partners Committee (WIOA Title I, II, III and IV)
- CEOs

#### E. Indication of the local workforce development area each committee member is associated with

- Crittenden
- Cross
- Lee
- Phillips
- St. Francis

*(Note: Committee members are associated with the Eastern Region.)*

F. A list of key planning region committee meeting dates. [WIOA Sec. 106(a) and (c)]

- March 23, 2016
- April 13, 2016
- May 25, 2016
- June 14, 2016
- June 16, 2016
- June 23, 2016
- June 24, 2016
- July 20, 2016
- July 29, 2016
- August 29, 2016
- September 20, 2016
- September 29, 2016

*Note: The various meetings were held with the core 4 partners (WIOA Title I, II, III and IV), board committees, local board and area Workforce Board Directors.*

1.2. Provide a labor market and economic analysis of the workforce development planning region.

This regional analysis must include:

A. The economic conditions:

Eastern Arkansas is an area of lush farms, rich heritage and diverse population. It's a region of contrasts: areas of economic growth versus severe decline; fertile land versus extreme poverty; and a variety of educational options versus low educational attainment. The counties and communities in the Eastern Arkansas region share many commonalities. While each town has its individual traits, there are collective themes that have made growth and progress. The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area has a population of 123,464 which makes up 4.4 percent of Arkansas' population. Chart 1 shows the county, population, personal income, per capita income and median household income.

2014 Census Population and income data from Discover Arkansas <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=144>

| County                    | Population | Personal Income | Per Capita Income | Median Household Income |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Crittenden County</b>  | 49,548     | \$1,651,661,000 | \$33,335          | \$35,455                |
| <b>Cross County</b>       | 17,227     | \$612,596,000   | \$35,560          | \$38,597                |
| <b>Lee County</b>         | 9,860      | \$276,945,000   | \$28,088          | \$28,006                |
| <b>Phillips County</b>    | 19,930     | \$655,171,000   | \$32,874          | \$28,171                |
| <b>St. Francis County</b> | 26,899     | \$682,400,000   | \$25,369          | \$30,489                |

The workforce in our region has a diverse set of people with adaptable skills. With three community colleges (Arkansas State University Mid-South, East Arkansas Community College and Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas); selected Bachelor's degrees from University Centers on each Community College campus; and Crowley's Ridge Technical Intuition, individuals have an opportunity to receive various degrees and certifications to create career pathways.

With five major highways, the Eastern Arkansas region offers a range of transportation advantages including two Class-I rail carriers (UP and BNSF). Major employers in the region include Schneider National Carriers, Hino Motors LTD, Family Dollar Distribution, Bosch Power Tools, Southland Park, Boar's

Head, Core Mark, Mueller Industries, Addison Shoe Company, Amerimax, BPS, Doughboy Pools – with a host of successful local upstarts, including Enviro Tech and Sediver.

Eastern Arkansas is also the birthplace of the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC) – an award winning, nationally recognized workforce training model in the U.S. ADTEC is comprised of the Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University-Newport, Eastern Arkansas Community College, Arkansas State University Mid-South and Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas. ADTEC offers state-of-the-art training in Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation, Logistics and Renewable Energy Technology and has developed pathways in Allied Health and Aviation Maintenance Technology as well.

**B. Labor force employment and unemployment data:**

The labor force increased by 287 to 48,829 in 2015 but has decreased by 4,730 from 2011 to 2015. Employment also increased during 2015, gaining 851 workers to 45,556. Unemployment and the unemployment rate saw significant decreases from 2014 to 2015, having 564 fewer unemployed and the unemployment rate dropping by one and two-tenths of a percentage point to 6.7 percent. Over the five-year period, the area saw the unemployment rate drop by three and nine-tenths of a percentage point from 10.6 percent to 6.7 percent. Chart 2 shows the labor force employment and unemployment data by the Workforce Development Area and county. (Source: 2016 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report - State and Workforce Development Areas and produced by the Occupational/Career Information Unit of the Labor Market Information Section (labor market information web portal: <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>).

Labor Force Statistics and Unemployment Rates

| <b>Chart 2: June 2016</b> |                             |                           |                             |                          |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>County</b>             | <b>Civilian Labor Force</b> | <b>Number of Employed</b> | <b>Number of Unemployed</b> | <b>Unemployment Rate</b> |
| <b>Eastern LWDA</b>       | 49,012                      | 46,087                    | 2,925                       | 6.0                      |
| <b>Crittenden County</b>  | 21,802                      | 20,646                    | 1,156                       | 5.3                      |
| <b>Cross County</b>       | 8,107                       | 7,656                     | 451                         | 5.6                      |
| <b>Lee County</b>         | 3,235                       | 3,042                     | 193                         | 6.0                      |
| <b>Phillips County</b>    | 6,897                       | 6,387                     | 510                         | 7.4                      |
| <b>St. Francis County</b> | 8,971                       | 8,356                     | 615                         | 6.9                      |

<http://www.discoverarkansas.net/PAGEID=67&SUBID=144>

Employers of all sizes in the Eastern Arkansas WDA had an estimated entry wage of \$17,946 in 2015. Employers with 250 to 499 employees had an estimated mean wage of \$37,459. Employers of 50 to 99 employees had an estimated entry wage of \$17,650, while estimated experienced wages were \$39,848 for 2015.

Of the 36,768 estimated employees in the Area, those earning \$7.50 to \$9.99 an hour was the largest group on the list, with an estimated 13,554 employees. The estimated number of employees earning \$12.00 to \$14.99 an hour was 4,896 (Source: 2016 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report).

C. Information on labor market trends:

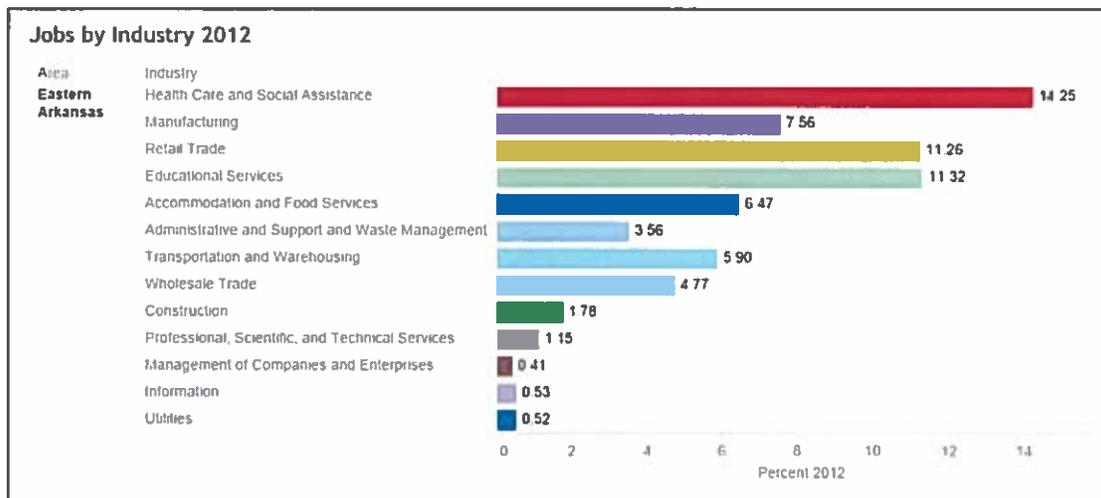
Chart 3 indicates the Top 5 Industry Supersectors for the Eastern Arkansas WDA (Source: 2016 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report).

Chart 3: Top 5 Industry Supersectors

| Title                              | Employment     |                | Net Growth | Percent Growth |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|                                    | 2015 Estimated | 2017 Projected |            |                |
| Professional & Business Services   | 2,445          | 2,718          | 273        | 11.17%         |
| Trade, Transportation, & Utilities | 9,355          | 9,582          | 227        | 2.43%          |
| Education & Health Services        | 10,377         | 10,585         | 208        | 2.00%          |
| Manufacturing                      | 3,241          | 3,374          | 133        | 4.10%          |
| Leisure and Hospitality            | 3,527          | 3,633          | 106        | 3.01%          |

Based on information from the Arkansas Research Center, Chart 4 shows the current job estimates for the percentage of workers in major industries in Eastern Arkansas WDA. Eastern has a higher percentage of workers in Health Care, Retail Trade, Educational Services, Manufacturing and Food Services. However, we have a much lower percentage of workers in the area of Management of Companies and Enterprises, Utilities, Information and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services.

Chart 4



Graphs and Charts sourced from Arkansas Research Center

<http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?ciD=153>

**Chart 5**

Chart 5 is the Eastern Workforce Development Area projected job growth by industry in 2022. The size of the bubble represents the number of jobs which are expected to be created in those industries. The Y axis is the number of jobs in those industries in 2022. The X axis is the percent of growth by industry.

Industries identified include Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services and Manufacturing.

*Graphs and Charts sourced from Arkansas Research Center <http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cid=153>*

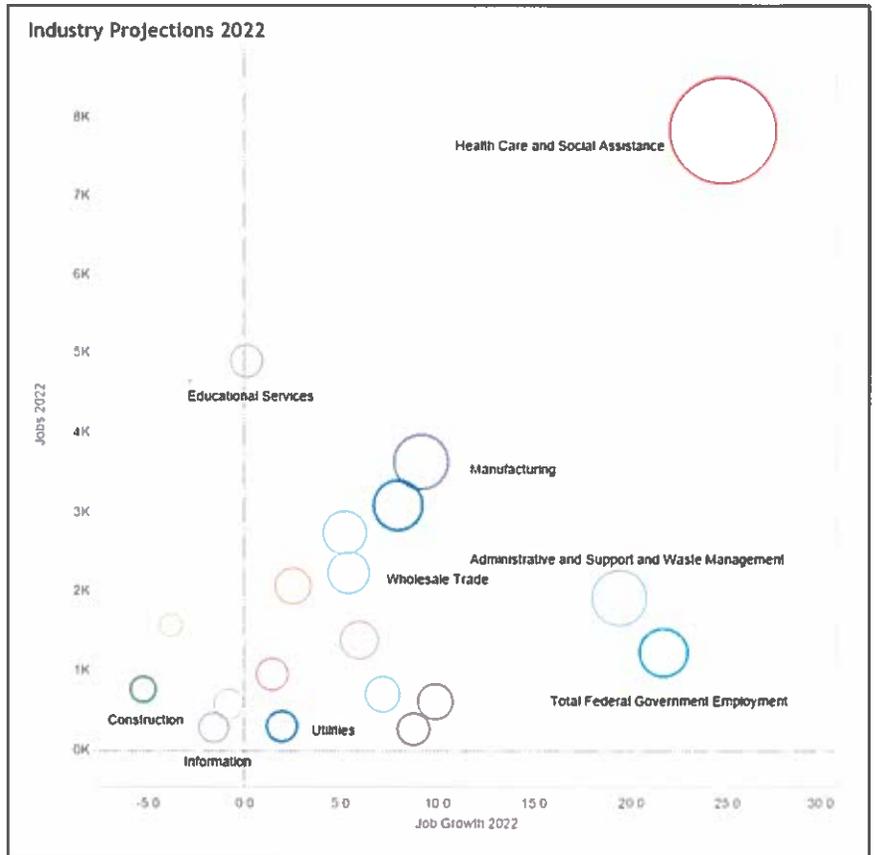


Chart 6 indicates the Projected Growth 2012-2022 Industries Ranked by Net Growth.

| Chart 6: Projected Growth Industries 2012-2022 Ranked by Net Growth    |            |          |
|--|------------|----------|
| Industry   | Net Growth | % Growth |
| Social Assistance  | 396        | 50.97    |
| Food Services and Drinking Places                                      | 292        | 40.22    |
| Nursing and Residential Care Facilities                                | 161        | 18.76    |
| Federal Government, Excluding Post Office                              | 141        | 12.30    |
| Administrative and Support Services                                    | 109        | 9.51     |
| Ambulatory Health Care Services  | 87         | 11.93    |
| Transportation   | 70         | 14.14    |
| Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods                                 | 67         | 8.10     |
| Food Manufacturing   | 63         | 17.65    |
| Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations | 55         | 24.02    |

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ((QCEW), Labor Market Information

Chart 7 indicates the Top Ten Growth Occupations 2012 – 2022 Ranked by Net Growth.

| Occupation   | 2012<br>Base<br>Employment | 2022<br>Projected<br>Employment | Net<br>Growth | %<br>Growth |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Personal Care Aides  | 777                        | 1,173                           | 396           | 50.97       |
| Home Health Aides  | 726                        | 1,018                           | 292           | 40.22       |
| Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers,<br>Including Fast Food              | 858                        | 1,019                           | 161           | 18.76       |
| Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers,<br>Hand                          | 1,146                      | 1,287                           | 141           | 12.30       |
| Heavy and Tractor -Trailer Truck Drivers   | 1,146                      | 1,255                           | 109           | 9.51        |
| Correctional Officers and Jailers  | 729                        | 816                             | 87            | 11.93       |
| Childcare Workers  | 495                        | 565                             | 70            | 14.14       |
| Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except<br>Legal, Medical, and Executive | 827                        | 894                             | 67            | 8.10        |
| Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses                                  | 357                        | 420                             | 63            | 17.65       |

<http://www.discoverarkansas.net/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=144>

**D. Workforce Development Activities:**

Eastern Arkansas's workforce development activities are coordinated through the following agencies at the local level: the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS), the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ADCE) Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Adult Education programs and the Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of County Operations (DCO) and Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) and the Title I Service Provider, Eastern Arkansas Certified Development Company. These agencies are responsible for all the core and non-core programs.

Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities, and represent Arkansas's version of the American Jobs Center. There are two workforce centers in the Eastern area providing access to Arkansans and others. In addition to these locations, Arkansas has six mobile workforce center units that travel the state and provide service locations in rural parts of the State.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are overseen at the regional/local level by the local workforce development boards. Local boards are composed of local businesses, labor, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The boards, in alignment with the State's goals and vision, provide front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to their locally-determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development, youth programs, targeted sector partnerships, work-based learning, and others.

Local boards are tasked with procuring a one-stop operator for the daily operation of their perspective center(s) in accordance with WIOA 121(d). These boards carry out workforce activities by partnering locally through Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) to implement core, non-core, and other partner programs. Arkansas Workforce Centers are fully integrated with WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Adult Education and Family Literacy and Vocational

Rehabilitation. Local partnerships and integration also exist in many areas with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Programs and others.

Typical customers entering the center are engaged by an intake process that is designed to identify the needs of the individual by gathering information and then utilizing the appropriate resources for those needs. In some cases, the resources are initiated by a referral to a partner program. Customers are given solutions and next steps to their questions, barriers, and issues by connecting directly with the appropriate workforce system partner as part of this philosophy.

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ACE/AED) funds three local adult education programs in the Eastern area. The service delivery systems are diverse. Programs are funded through a variety of local administrative entities, including public schools systems, community based organizations, colleges, community colleges, technical institutes, and the Arkansas Department of Corrections. Local programs provide adult education services such as teaching academic skills to people who function from beginning reading through a 12.9 functioning grade level and English as a Second Language (ESL). These services are free and provided in classes held in locations throughout each program's service area. Additional programs such as family literacy and Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) are also offered in workplaces and correctional institutions. In the 2015 program year, 735 adult Eastern Arkansans received services from programs receiving adult education funding; 29 were ESL students and 177 were individuals in institutional settings such as correctional facilities or community corrections programs.

### **Workforce System Services – Unemployed and Underemployed**

Arkansas Workforce Centers offer the full array of career services outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers. Career services available at the centers vary because of local area inflexion and needs of particular communities. Basic career services are available at approximately 46 locations throughout Arkansas. Each center has computers, printers, copiers, printed resources, and staff to assist jobseekers. Many of the services, including Arkansas JobLink and Discover Arkansas LMI Portal, can be accessed virtually though the internet via computer, smart phone, or tablet. Arkansas JobLink is the state job matching system and the virtual one-stop-shop where Arkansans can centralize all their career search activities. It allows jobseekers to self-enter his/her resume(s) and job search 24/7. Arkansas JobLink also provides access to a toolbox of job search assistance links, including career exploration, training resources, self-marketing tools, Unemployment Insurance information, and additional job banks. The built-in event calendar communicates upcoming hiring events, job fairs, and other workforce activities.

### **Jobseeker Services**

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the region, but all the offices offer a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modern workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require such as:

- Labor exchange services must also provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information must be accurate and include information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as job vacancies; skills necessary to obtain the jobs in-demand occupations and related earning potential and opportunities for advancement in those occupations.
- Workforce Centers provide the following career services including outreach, intake and orientation; initial assessment; labor exchange services; eligibility determination; referrals to programs; performance and cost information; information on unemployment insurance; financial aid information and follow-up services.
- Workforce Centers and partners must provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to Individual Employment Plan (IEP); career planning and counseling; comprehensive assessment; occupational skills assessment; short-term prevocational services; internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships; workforce preparation; out-of-area job search; English language acquisition and financial literacy.

## **Training Services**

Career services are not always enough to enable job seekers to obtain self-sufficient employment. In some instances, formal training is required. Arkansas Workforce Centers offer multiple training services such as occupational skills training; on-the-job training (OJT); Registered Apprenticeships; incumbent worker training; skill upgrading and retaining; entrepreneurial training, and adult education and family literacy activities.

Training services are funded through WIOA programs, Pell Grants, partner programs, and state and local grants. The Eastern area is responsible for establishing and implementing local policies for eligibility, Individual Training Account (ITA) limits, and the identification of in-demand sectors or occupations. Through multiple initiatives and projects, Arkansas has focused training and career development activities on sector strategies/partnerships and career pathway development. At the state level, the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) has been updated pursuant to WIOA Sections 122 and 134. This list ensures that Arkansans are able to make informed decisions on training providers and programs based on accurate data including completion and placement rates; labor market information; and wage expectations.

## **Supportive Services**

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Eastern region is responsible for establishing a supportive service policy that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include child care; transportation; needs-related payments; housing; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, Eastern has developed relationships with community partners that assist with food, shelter, and other basic needs.

## **Business Services**

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place statewide and may include:

- **Access to Facilities** – Use of Workforce Center facilities by a business for a variety of purposes such as meetings, trainings, orientations, interviews, etc.
- **Assessments** – Any test or assortment of tests used to measure the skills, interests and/or personality traits of a jobseeker, potential employee, or current employee.
- **Business Education** – Seminars, round tables, workshops, focus groups, etc.
- **Business Information** – information given to a business pertaining to a variety of incentive programs or other information requested that provides a benefit to that business.
- **Hiring Events** – A customized event for a single employer that assists with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions.
- **Job Fairs** – Event for multiple employers that assists with the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions.
- **Job Postings** – Staff-entered or web-entered job orders approved by staff.
- **Labor Market Information** – Information on state and local labor market conditions, industries, occupations, and characteristics of the workforce; area business identified skills needs; employer wage and benefit trends; short and long-term industry and occupational projections; worker supply and demand, and job vacancies survey results.
- **Rapid Response** – A variety of services to businesses that are facing restructuring and downsizing including onsite workshops for employees in transition; job placement assistance; and information on unemployment benefits.

- Screening – Any service that involves the initial evaluation of applications or resumes that assists the employer in the recruiting process.
- Training and Retraining - Any service provided to a business that involves the training or retraining of current or future employees including OJTs, Work Experiences, Incumbent Worker Training, etc.

**Services to Disabled Persons**

The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ACE/ARS), provides vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC1) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities. Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. ARS in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities in order for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

Through the Governor’s Executive Order 10-17, the Department of DSB coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansans with disabilities. The order also aims to focus consumer services toward the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

**E. The educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers:**

Chart 8 displays the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers.

| Chart 8: Educational & Skill Levels |                              |                              |                             |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| County                              | Population 25 years and over | % high school grad or higher | % bachelor degree or higher |
| Crittenden                          | 31,293                       | 80.5 %                       | 14.6 %                      |
| Cross                               | 11,910                       | 78.5 %                       | 12.4 %                      |
| Lee                                 | 7,010                        | 63.3 %                       | 7.4 %                       |
| Phillips                            | 13,197                       | 74.8 %                       | 6.1 %                       |
| St. Francis                         | 18,841                       | 77.3 %                       | 13.3 %                      |

Data from 2014 American Fact Finder <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/american-factfinder/>. Data includes individuals 25 years and over.

**F. The development and implementation of sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region:**

Eastern is in the process of developing and implementing sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas (WDBEA) approved advanced manufacturing, transportation, distribution and logistics as sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region. The WDB also works with ADTEC to address other initiatives and industry sector initiatives.

Arkansas contracted with Mayer and Mayer to support the deployment of sector strategies statewide and provide support for the local areas. Over the next 12 months or so, they will be launching a wide array of consulting services to help the agencies in Arkansas at all levels – state and local – move forward to build world-class sector strategies.

Chart 9 presents long-term projected employment data for advanced manufacturing and transportation occupations which are indicated as in-demand by the discoverarkansas.net labor market database.

| Chart 9: Long-Term Projected Regional Employment Data |               |               |              |              |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Manufacturing/Related Occupations                     | 2012          | 2022          | Increase     | % Change     |
| Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators            | 1,076         | 1,365         | 289          | 26.86        |
| Machinists  | 623           | 671           | 48           | 7.7          |
| Assemblers and Fabricators                            | 4,909         | 5,331         | 422          | 8.6          |
| Team Assemblers                                       | 3,856         | 4,290         | 434          | 11.26        |
| Industrial Machinery Mechanics                        | 1,750         | 2,055         | 305          | 17.43        |
| Maintenance Workers, Machinery                        | 282           | 342           | 60           | 21.28        |
| Production Occupations                                | 35,548        | 37,649        | 2,101        | 5.9          |
| <b>Total manufacturing/Related</b>                    | <b>48,044</b> | <b>51,703</b> | <b>3,659</b> | <b>7.62</b>  |
| Transportation/CDL Occupations                        | 2012          | 2022          | Increase     | % Change     |
| Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers                 | 7,126         | 7,714         | 588          | 8.25         |
| Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers      | 6,517         | 7,372         | 855          | 13.12        |
| Transportation & Material Moving Operations           | 20,826        | 28,812        | 7,986        | 38.35        |
| <b>Total Transportation/CDL</b>                       | <b>34,469</b> | <b>43,898</b> | <b>9,429</b> | <b>27.36</b> |

1.3 Based upon the regional labor market and economic conditions analysis and *Arkansas's Workforce Development Plan (PY 2016 –PY 2019)* describe the planning region's economic and workforce development oriented vision and strategic goals. [WIOA Sec. 106(c) and Sec. 107(d)]

Eastern adopted the State's Vision and Goals and adapted them to the local area.

### Vision

Eastern Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas's economy competitive in the global marketplace.

### Goals

**STRATEGIC GOAL 1:** *Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.*

#### Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action between all workforce related boards.
6. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
7. Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
8. Partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
9. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).
10. Expand small business participation.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Utilize a common intake process developed by the State for jobseekers and businesses that will efficiently connect them with services available from all workforce development partner programs and identify any barriers to employment that need to be addressed.
2. Utilize an integrated data system developed by the State that will enable the sharing of information between partner agencies to more efficiently service both employers and jobseekers.
3. Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
4. Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
5. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
6. Expand service delivery access points by the use of virtual services.
7. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by all workforce system partners.
8. Develop a menu of services available at each service delivery access point that provides a list of the services and training opportunities available through Arkansas's talent development system.
9. Utilize customer satisfaction surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the State's talent development system.
10. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Increase awareness of the State's Talent Development System

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services.
2. Work to change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
3. Utilize an image-building outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the State.
4. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
5. Develop a user-friendly website that provides a common repository of information about career development opportunities that are relevant to K-12 education, parents, educators, adults, employers, government agencies, and the general public.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Address Skills Gaps

Goal 4 Objectives:

Participate in a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue.

Help to implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas. Analyze the effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

- 1.4 Describe regional strategies used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the regional workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

Eastern has made concerted efforts to develop partnerships and alliances through the Chambers of Commerce, ADTEC and educational institutions at all levels, business and industry, taskforce groups, East Arkansas Planning and Development District, apprenticeship and labor organizations in our communities.

We are using the Arkansas Delta Accelerating Pathways Together (ADAPT) model that is a result of extensive planning and collaboration among the local board, ADTEC, employers, K-12 CTE/school districts and other regional workforce alliance partners.

The ADAPT model will address regional labor needs in the following ways:

- Target industries with significant projected employment needs
- Challenge primary workforce skills gaps through a comprehensive workforce readiness solution
- Deliver relevant technical training through enhanced or new career pathway models
- Emphasize and assure that students who are potential employees have access to attain a full roster of stacked credentials, employer/industry certifications, and value-added certifications
- Create new regional workforce alliances driven by collaboration and commitment

The local board continues to meet quarterly and works with these groups to provide shared training, networking and research resources among other things.

1.5 Describe how the planning region will define and establish regional workforce development service strategies. Describe how the planning region will develop and use cooperative workforce development service delivery agreements. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(B)]

Eastern will define workforce development strategies by working with partners to determine the best ways to provide services with guidance from the State regarding requirements and opportunities. Cooperative service delivery agreements can be memorandums of understanding for the local workforce system.

1.6 Describe how the planning region will define and establish administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(E)]

Eastern will use resource sharing agreements and the memorandums of understanding for the local workforce system to define how the cost of workforce center operations is shared.

1.7 Describe how the planning region will determine and coordinate transportation and other supportive services for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(F)]

Partner programs within the Eastern region will determine and coordinate transportation and other supportive services as allowable by their program.

1.8 Describe strategies and services the planning region will employ to coordinate workforce development programs/services with regional economic development services and providers. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(G)]

Eastern will continue to partner with regional economic development services and providers by leveraging resources with the Eastern Arkansas Planning and Development District, Chambers of Commerce and other economic development organizations.

1.9 Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the State on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)(H)] [proposed 20 CFR 677.210(b) and (c)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2)]

Since the planning region is a single Workforce Development Area, Eastern will follow the federal and state guidance regarding negotiation and agreement with the State.

## **Transitional Local Plan PY 2016 - PY 2017**

WIOA requires each local workforce area to develop a local plan that supports and is submitted as a component of its associated regional plan. The narratives framed in the local plan will include more detailed, actionable plans and objectives, consistent with the local plan’s respective regional plan strategic visions and goals.

In addressing the elements outlined below, if the local board is not prepared to provide a complete response to a specific element at the time of plan submission, a response must be provided that indicates how the local board plans to fully address that particular element in the multi-year plan.

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## Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

- 1.1. Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

*Note:* Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services is contracting with Maher and Maher to provide training and guidance in developing Sector Strategies throughout the State and local Workforce Areas.

During this time of transition -- Eastern is focusing on Manufacturing, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics. These sectors were selected because of the high level of regional and employer demand, importance in the region, and the interdependence of the sectors.

- 1.2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Basic knowledge and skills that employers need include literacy and math, problem solving, computing, communication, work readiness and other skills. These are things that almost every employer requires. In addition skills that are particular to each job are varied. For example, advanced manufacturing employers are seeking individuals that have more technical skills and have the ability to work with computerized systems; transportation skills include customer service, understanding of physics and logical thought; and for distribution and logistics individuals should possess decision making, planning and organizing skills.

- 1.3. Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

See *Transitional Regional Plan*: Section 1.2 -- B. (page 4) for labor force employment and unemployment, Section 1.2 -- C. (page 5-7) for labor market trends, and Section 1.2 -- E. (page 10) for data on educational and skill levels including individuals with barriers to employment.

- 1.4. Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

**Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers** - The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities, and represent Arkansas's version of the American Job Centers. There are three workforce centers spread throughout the five county region to ensure access to all Arkansans residing in the region. Two centers in the Eastern Arkansas Region are comprehensive and one is an affiliate.

**Eastern Arkansas Workforce System Services - Unemployed and Underemployed** - The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a full array of career services which are outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed. The workforce centers have computers, printers, copiers, and resources

along with staff to help jobseekers. However digital services are offered as well just as Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas's Labor Market Information portal. These two tools allow for jobseekers to search for jobs 24/7 and make data informed decisions about which path is best for them.

**Jobseeker Services** - Career services, found through the Eastern Arkansas region, offer a full line of services to help prepare jobseekers for the regional workforce. Soft skills and technical training are two examples of these services which are provided and which employers look for in a good candidate for a position.

Labor Market Information is updated regularly to ensure accuracy is provided to individuals seeking services. This data includes information pertaining to job vacancies, skills needed to obtain said jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential. In addition, information on career ladders which exist within those occupations is provided to help participants.

Other career services provided through the one-stop centers are outreach, intake, and orientation. Upon the completion of the initial assessment, eligibility will be determined and the career advisors will begin to provide recommendations for various programs along with financial aid information. Services are also provided to individuals to assist them in obtaining and retaining employment.

*These types of services may include:*

- Career Planning and Counselling
- Occupational Skills Assessment
- Short-term prevocational services
- Internships and work experience
- English language acquisition
- Financial literacy

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the region, but all the offices offer a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modern workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require such as:

Workforce Centers provide the following career services including outreach, intake and orientation; initial assessment; labor exchange services; eligibility determination; referrals to programs; performance and cost information; information on unemployment insurance; financial aid information and follow-up services.

Labor exchange services must also provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information must be accurate and include information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as job vacancies; the skills necessary to obtain jobs within In-demand occupations and related earning potential and opportunities for advancement in those occupations.

Workforce Centers and partners must provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to Individual Employment Plan (IEP); career planning and counseling; comprehensive assessment; occupational skills assessment; short-term prevocational services; internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships; workforce preparation; out-of-area job search; English language acquisition and financial literacy

**Training Services** - Career services help equip a jobseeker with the skills they need to find sustainable employment, however such skills may not be enough to obtain sustainable employment. In those circumstances formal training may be required. Many training opportunities exist through the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers, such as occupational skills training which can be obtained from numerous educational opportunities at post-secondary schools and universities, and on-the-job opportunities. Registered Apprenticeships are also available in a wide variety of traditional sectors, and are in the process of being expanded into non-traditional sectors such as information technology and nursing.

These training services are funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and other local and state partners. The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Board has established policies for the determination of eligibility, Individual Training Account Limits (ITAs) and targeted training aimed at in-demand industry sectors throughout the region such as advanced manufacturing, transportation, and distribution and logistics. Sector strategies has taken on a new role in the region, with the Eastern Arkansas Workforce

Development Board using data-driven decision making to enhance the likelihood of employment of participants.

**Supportive Services** - In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Eastern Board is responsible for establishing a supportive service policy that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include child care; transportation; needs-related payments; housing; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing.

**Business Services** - The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place statewide and include a broad array of services to employers. Business Services assistance is broad, however they are tailored to the individual needs of each employer. The services provided to businesses can be categorized into three broad categories:

**Assessments and Information** - Through the Arkansas Workforce Centers, businesses can utilize assessments and test to measure the skills, interests, or personality traits of job seekers or current employees. Businesses can also receive a variety of information pertaining to incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Labor Market Information is available to businesses on market conditions, industries, occupations, and workforce characteristics as well. Also short and long term industry trends and occupational projections are available.

**Direct Assistance** - Businesses have access to Workforce Center locations for the purposes of meetings, trainings, orientations, and interviews. The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Area can also host hiring events which are customized to the specific needs of businesses. Job orders which have been approved by staff can be placed through the workforce areas in Arkansas Job Link, along with job placement assistance and information on unemployment benefits. Businesses can also receive assistance with applicant screening, which involves the initial evaluation of applicants.

**Response and Training** - The Workforce Areas provide rapid response measures in the event of a business downsizing or restructuring. These include a variety of workshops to assist employees who are in transition. Training and retraining services are also available for both current and future employees. The governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force is the lead program.

**Services to Disabled Persons** - The Arkansas Department of Career Education and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ACE/ARS), provides vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC1) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities. Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. ARS, in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities to enable them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

Through the Governor's Executive Order 10-17, the Department of DSB coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansans with disabilities. The order also aims to focus consumer services first toward the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

*Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities:*

## STRENGTHS

- The Eastern Arkansas Region has a strong workforce program to provide assistance to jobseekers.
- The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas has a strong representation of private industry.
- The private industry representatives who serve on the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas represent the businesses in the region.
- Economic development organizations are represented on the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas.

- The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area has a broad range of One-Stop partners who provide value-added services to jobseekers who enter the Workforce Centers.
- Despite continued budgetary cuts, staffing levels have not only been able to be maintained, but also expanded.
- The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas has embraced and implemented sector strategies.

#### WEAKNESSES

- The Arkansas labor force is shrinking and being accelerated by the retirement of baby boomers.
- Quality of life issues exist in rural areas throughout the region.
- Marketing and outreach activities, while improving, are below where they should be across the region to promote the State's talent delivery system.
- With some eligible training providers, relationships do not go beyond training jobseekers.
- Staff training programs are not in place across the workforce region.

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Expanded current Registered Apprenticeship opportunities present a major opportunity for the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Region.
- The expanded Business Services Team has the resources needed to enhance industry sector partnerships.
- Tailored curricular development opportunities exist in wake of strengthened industry sector partnerships.
- Governor Hutchinson's commitment to creating jobs in the State of Arkansas provides more opportunities for job seekers.

#### CHALLENGES

- Younger generations do not have the job or work readiness skills in place to replace the aging workforce.
- Many Industries may not feel the public sector can assist them in their workforce needs.
- Duplication of workforce development efforts not only causes redundancy for jobseekers and industry, it is also a major waste of resources.
- Industries may relocate if they do not have the workforce needed to thrive in the Eastern Arkansas region.
- A weak workforce makes business attraction difficult.
- Budgetary cuts restrict the capabilities of the Workforce Centers, and over burden staff.

**Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area Capacity to Provide Services** - The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area is equipped with the resource and staffing needed to provide workforce development activities throughout the region. The region has benefited significantly from the State Workforce Board's continued strides for improvement and innovation. The local boards capacity is further amplified by its broad array of partners, both who co-locate in the workforce centers and those that do not. Some of those partnerships include:

- Adult Education Providers
- Department of Human Services
- Post-Secondary Colleges and Technical Institute
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission

Out of school youth is an area where the region has struggled in the past. This has partly been due to the lack of staffing capacity to target and conduct outreach activities, aimed specifically at this logistically challenging demographic. This is a priority of the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas and youth committee to better serve Out of School Youth.

## Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Section 2 responses will require input from members of the local workforce development board and other local stakeholders. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

- 2.1 Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

Eastern has adopted the State's Vision and Goals and adapted them to the local area. The local board will strive to prepare an educated and skilled workforce through partnerships with all core partners through various means including adult education, apprenticeship, institutional training, literacy training, on-the-job training and work experience.

### Vision

Eastern Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas's economy competitive in the global marketplace.

### Goals

- Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce; development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers;
- Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers;
- Increase awareness of the State's Talent Development System; and
- Address Skills Gaps.

The local board will strive to prepare and educate a skilled workforce through partnerships with all core and other partners. Strategies for achieving these goals are found in the Regional section of the Plan.

- 2.2 Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision and goals for the State's workforce development system as established by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)

The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas' vision and goals align with the State's and will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled and working in order to keep Eastern Arkansas competitive in the global marketplace.

- 2.3 Describe how the local board's vision and goals contributes to each of the governor's goals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)

Note: The State Plan includes a number of objectives under each goal.

The Eastern Workforce Development Area shares the Governor's vision for Economic Development and the State's Strategic Plan that defines a stronger partnership between education, economic development and the State Workforce system to attract, retain and grow Arkansas' high growth industries.

- 2.4 Describe how the local board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

For participants enrolled in educational/skills training the goal is completion of training, obtain their credential and have measurable skills gain. These participants will be directed toward higher paying jobs which have a livable wage to help ensure a higher retention rate well beyond program exit. For participants receiving basic and individualized career services the same goal applies.

**Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies**

Many of the responses in this section, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

3.1 Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, describe the local board’s strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:

- A. A description of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another;
  - The Chief Elected Officials of Eastern Arkansas include 13 county judges and mayors of first class cities. They selected Mayor Jimmy Williams as their chair and signatory.
  - The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas is comprised of 12 business representatives with a total of 23 members. Standing committees include the executive committee, youth committee, one stop and disability committees.
  - The Chief Elected Officials selected the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas as the Fiscal and Administrative Entity for the Eastern Workforce Development Area
  - The Title IB program operator of the Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth programs is Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas.
  - Required program partners include Title II Adult Education providers (ASU Mid-South, Crowley’s Ridge Technical Institution, East Arkansas Community College, and Phillips Community College – UA); Title III Wagner-Peyser Arkansas Department of Workforce Services; Title IV Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Arkansas Department of Human Services, Services for the Blind.
  
- B. A list of all Arkansas Workforce Centers in the local area; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation; and

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><u>Arkansas Workforce Center</u><br/> <u>at West Memphis</u><br/>                 2003 W. Broadway<br/>                 West Memphis, AR 72301<br/>                 870.400.2269<br/>                 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p> | <p><u>Arkansas Workforce Center</u><br/> <u>at Forrest City</u><br/>                 300 Eldridge Rd., Suite 2<br/>                 Forrest City, AR 72336<br/>                 870.633.2900<br/>                 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p> | <p><u>Arkansas Workforce Center</u><br/> <u>at Helena</u><br/>                 819 Newman Dr.<br/>                 Helena, AR 72342<br/>                 870.338-7415<br/>                 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p> |
|---|--|---|

C. An attached organization chart that depicts the local board, administrative and fiscal entities, and service providers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

Please see Section 7, Attachment A, page 37

- 3.2 Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et. seq), that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

*Note:* The six (6) core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Eastern Workforce Development system includes the required core, required partners and other partners. The local board will coordinate work with the core programs through a referral process that ensures an individual seeking services is made aware of the available core program services.

In developing the talent pipeline the Board and system are working closely with the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC), Crowley's Ridge Technical Institution, Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce and others.

- 3.3 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

Workforce center partners staff will review the individual's needs to determine what programs may be able to provide the appropriate services and then refer that individual to the corresponding program or programs.

- 3.4 Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

- A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs in addition to targeted sector strategies;

Strategies and services that are being used to facilitate engagement with employers continues to be developed by outreach, participation in events such as career and technical education summits, continuous development of growing sectors understanding. Current targeted sectors include advanced manufacturing, transportation, distribution and logistics. Partnerships with ADTEC and CRTI enhance the facilitation. Apprenticeships, on-the-job training, work based learning, career pathways are some of the services provided. The State of Arkansas has contracted with Mayer and Mayer to provide training and guidance in developing Sector Strategies throughout the State and local Workforce Areas.

- B. Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses;

Better educating the businesses of the full array of services at the Arkansas Workforce Centers through business services, outreach, job fairs, business expos, open house at workforce centers, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, work-based learning are ways that the local workforce development system may meet the needs of businesses.

- C. Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development; and

With the intersection and delivery of the local workforce development programs and the economic development system services – an enhanced system falls in place while working with the Chambers of Commerce, Arkansas Economic Development Commission staff, and economic developers throughout the region.

D. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

Unemployment Insurance is co-located in all of our Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers. Partners at the workforce centers meet routinely and discuss methods to better serve all customers, including unemployed individuals.

This may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in element 3.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B)].

3.5 Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

Entrepreneurial efforts are supported and promoted through the East Arkansas Planning and Development District, Arkansas Human Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce's and more.

3.6 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

The local board and youth committee will coordinate education and workforce investment activities with secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities through input at partner meetings. There is also collaboration between the board and secondary and postsecondary education programs providing services to the youth.

3.7 Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Support services and transportation needs are coordinated with the partners and through optional programs as well as other resources available in the area.

3.8 Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State's employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), and the local board's service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

Wagner-Peyser staff and the Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth staff are collocated in all the Eastern Workforce Centers.

Eastern has strong partnerships among state agencies, community colleges, economic development, and community-based organizations. A priority of the local board and central to the implementation of the strategic plan is to prevent and eliminate duplication across programs and align core programs.

Alignment of core and optional programs will be made possible by the following strategies:

Reflect Robust Partnerships – Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The Arkansas Workforce Center dynamic facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners. They have regular partners meeting in each of the comprehensive centers.

Organize Service by Function – Organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating staff communication,

capacity building and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having workforce center staff who cross-trained to serve all customers seamlessly (including target populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope and requirements of each program.

- 3.9 Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

A meeting was held on September 28 in Little Rock with Dr. Trenia Miles, Arkansas Career Education Deputy Director for Adult Ed and it was agreed the Arkansas Department of Career Education will forward, to the local areas, the local applications that have met requirements to the RFP's for review and approval by the local board.

- 3.10 Based on the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, identify the industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Categorize the sector partnerships as active, emerging, or exploring as defined below.

- Active
  - Has a clear coordinator, convener, or convening team;
  - Is led by industry as demonstrated by private sector members playing leadership roles;
  - Has broad industry engagement as demonstrated by industry members attending meetings, partnering on activities, providing in-kind or financial resources, or similar;
  - Includes critical and engaged partners across programs from workforce development;
  - Can demonstrate that the partnership is not “just a workforce thing,” “just an economic development thing,” or “just an education thing.”
  - Operates in a true labor market region, not within the confines of a workforce area or other geopolitical boundaries;
  - Operates under some kind of shared strategic plan, road map, etc.;
  - Can demonstrate clearly identified priorities and an action plan, be able to demonstrate recent or current activities, services or products that are a direct outcome of the partnership.
  
- Emerging
  - Has at least an interim coordinator, convener, or convening team;
  - Has engaged at least one private sector champion to help drive the launch and implementation of a sector partnership;
  - Includes individuals from workforce development, education, economic development and other programs or organizations in strategic partner roles;
  - Actively working to implement strategic priorities outlined in a launch meeting.
    - ✓ Advanced Manufacturing, emerging and ongoing
    - ✓ Transportation, emerging and ongoing
    - ✓ Distribution & Logistics emerging and ongoing
  
- Exploring
  - Is in the infancy stage, but actively considering or planning the preparation needed to launch a partnership;
  - Working to identify partners who would be involved;
  - Determining if the partnership really makes sense for the community.

- 3.11 Does the local board currently leverage or have oversight of funding outside of WIOA Title I funding to support the local workforce development system? Briefly describe the additional funding and how it will

impact the local system. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any future plans to pursue them.

The WDBEA continuously researches grant and funding opportunities for the Eastern Workforce Development Area. The board has secured additional funding through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training (E&T) Grant, Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT)/Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce (GMACW) Grant, and Arkansas Sector Partnership (ASP) grant. We will apply for future opportunities grants as they become available.

#### **Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation**

Many of the responses below should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and one-stop partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

##### **4.1 Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:**

- A. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted service providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]

Ongoing monitoring of services and the evaluation of eligible training providers and applications are conducted to ensure the training provided is meeting the needs of employers and that employers are hiring from those training programs. Additionally, meetings with the educational institutions are held to ensure needs are understood and conveyed on a regular basis. Using a report created by the Arkansas Research Center for the Department of Workforce Services pursuant to Act 852 of 1025 which provides Employment and Earnings Outcomes for Arkansas graduates of State supported higher learning institutions:

<http://dws.arkansas.gov/News/PDF/Act%20852%20Economic%20Security%20Report.pdf>

- B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]

With three Workforce Centers across the five county area -- access to a comprehensive Center may be limited in very remote areas. In those cases staff will travel to work with participants and employers on an as needed basis. Arkansas Job Link is the State's technology system that allows participants and employers to access many services on a self-serve basis as well as in Centers. As technology continues to evolve Eastern will continue to utilize it to reach out and serve participants and employers alike. As needed the Arkansas Mobile Workforce Unit is available.

- C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)] (See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources*)

The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development system will comply with WIOA section 188 by ensuring accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities by providing staff training and support by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Services for the Blind. The JAWS system is available at all Centers as assistance for visually impaired customers.

- D. List all required and optional program partners; indicate the program(s) each partner provides and the physical location where the program(s) can be accessed. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]

Roles and contributions will be described in the memorandum of understand and resource sharing agreements.

**Partners in the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area**

| Program   | Provider  | Location   |
|---|---|--|
| Title I   |   |  |
| Adult   | WDB of Eastern Arkansas                                       | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |
| Dislocated Worker   | WDB of Eastern Arkansas                                       | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |
| Youth   | WDB of Eastern Arkansas                                       | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |
| SNAP E&T  | WDB of Eastern Arkansas                                       | Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis  |
| Job Corps   | Job Corps   | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |
| Youthbuild  | N/A   | N/A  |
| Native American   | N/A   | N/A  |
| Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker                           | Arkansas Human Development Corporation                        | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |
| Title III   |   |  |
| Wagner-Peyser Employment Services                         | Arkansas Department of Workforce Services                     | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |
| Title II  |   |  |
| Adult Education and Family Literacy                       | ASU Mid-South   | Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis  |
|   | Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute                           | 1620 New Castle Road, Forrest City   |
|   | East Arkansas Community College                               | 1700 New Castle Road, Forrest City   |
|   | Phillips Community College - UA                               | 1000 Campus Drive, Helena  |
| Title IV  |   |  |
| Vocational Rehabilitation                                 | Arkansas Rehabilitation Services                              | By appointment at Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena. |
|   | Arkansas Department of Human Services, Services for the Blind | By appointment at Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena. |
| Other partners  |   |  |
| Senior Community Service Employment Program               | Experience Works/Black Caucus                                 | By appointment at Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena. |
| Career and Technical Education postsecondary Carl Perkins | ASU Mid-South   | 2003 West Broadway, West Memphis   |
|   | Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute                           | 1620 New Castle Road, Forrest City   |
|   | East Arkansas Community College                               | 1700 New Castle Road, Forrest City   |
|   | Phillips Community College - UA                               | 1000 Campus Drive, Helena  |
| Trade Adjustment Assistance                               | Arkansas Department of Workforce Services                     | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena                    |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Jobs for Veterans State Grants                        | Arkansas Department of Workforce Services                                  | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena |
| Community Services Block Grant Training and Education | ASU Mid-South/Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce (GMACW) | Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis                           |
| Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training | Eastern Arkansas Regional Housing Authority                                | By referral   |
| Unemployment Insurance                                | Arkansas Department of Workforce Services                                  | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena |
| Second Chance programs                                | N/A  | N/A   |
| Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)        | Arkansas Department of Workforce Services                                  | Arkansas Workforce Centers at West Memphis, Forrest City and Helena |

**E. Describe how the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system for core programs [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]**

The State of Arkansas is in the process of implementing a common intake and case management system for the core partners. Eastern uses the required Arkansas Job Link system for intake and case management.

**4.2 Describe the local board’s assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]**

Eastern’s adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities are provided through the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas program staff at the Workforce Centers located across the region. The WDB of Eastern consistently provides customers with case management, scholarships for institutional training, work experience, and supportive services. ASU Mid-South, Crowley’s Ridge Technical Institute, East Arkansas Community College, Phillips Community College - UA -- as well as other schools provide a wide choice for those entering education.

**4.3 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]**

Rapid Response is an early intervention designed to coordinate transitional services at the earliest point possible, for employers and workers affected by mass layoffs or plant closure. Rapid Response works closely with the Local Workforce Development Board and Local Elected Officials in adversely affected areas to insure that dislocated workers receive program information and services.

Governor’s Dislocated Worker Task Force division of Business Retention & Workforce Transition is responsible for the statewide rapid response and layoff aversion activities. Immediately upon receiving notice of a closure or workforce reduction, the Task Force contacts company officials. A community meeting is scheduled with elected officials and business leaders to create action plans to assist both the community and dislocated workers. To avoid duplication and confusion, local AWC staff do not initiate contact with an employer regarding a layoff without first speaking with the Task Force Coordinator.

The Business Retention & Workforce Transition team may conduct a worker assistance workshop, attended by representatives of local and state agencies and affected workers to review available resources. Services and needs discussed at the workshop may include retraining and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, social service programs, credit counseling, insurance options and resources to find a new job.

The Task Force Coordinator also serves as the liaison to the local chambers of commerce throughout the area. Information is provided to them about the affected workers, including their occupations and their

educational and skill levels. The local AWC staff builds on the services provided through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce by providing information and services to the affected employees.

Dislocated workers are given a full array of services available to them through the Arkansas Workforce Center partnership and community organizations.

State and local WIOA partners will continue to build and maintain relationships with the business community to help with early warning of potential layoffs and promote early intervention. Together, the following services will be provided:

*Layoff aversion activities.*

- Immediate and on-site contact with employers and local community representatives
- Assessment and planning to address the layoff schedule, assistance needs of impacted workers, re-employment prospects, and available resources
- Information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, AWC services, and employment and training activities, including Trade Act, Pell Grants, GI Bill, WIOA DLW Program, and other resources
- Necessary services and resources, such as workshops, resource and job fairs to support re-employment assistance
- Trade Act petition services through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce

**4.4 Describe the local board’s assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]**

*Note:* This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

**WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

*(Note: Services may be provided by the provider or on a referral basis if needed.)*

|    | <b>Element</b>   | <b>Implementation</b>   |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to high school completion, including dropout prevention strategies. Dropout prevention strategies can include, but are not limited to, placement in an alternative secondary school services setting, facilitating involvement of families and community, taking an individualized approach based on youth’s individual needs. | Provision of on-line coursework, one-on-one instruction, peer-to-peer interaction, or in a group setting<br>Referrals to partners providing educational services and the use of on-line tutorials. The WDB authorizes incentives for the participants that achieve goals that contribute to their success. The primary goal of local WIOA youth programming is to insure youth completion of a HSD/GED. |
| 2. | Alternative high school services which offer specialized, structured curriculum inside or outside of the public school system which may provide work, study and/or academic intervention for students with behavior problems, physical/mental disabilities, who are at risk of dropping out, and/or who are institutionalized or adjudicated youth                                     | WIOA youth programs will work closely with alternative schools throughout the area. Alternative schools will be one source for referrals for eligible WIOA Youth participants. WIOA youth services will be designed to complement activities occurring within alternative schools. The primary goal will be for the youth to obtain their high school diploma or a GED.                                 |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 3. | <p>Summer youth employment that takes place between May 15th and September 30th and consists of employment for which youth are paid a wage. Summer employment should be coordinated and linked with academic and occupational learning that leads to the career or employment goal as stated in the individual service strategy.</p>  | <p>Participants will prepare for employment opportunities through the provision of various services including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic skill remediation;</li> <li>• supervised work experiences;</li> <li>• pre-employment abilities such as career planning, resume preparation, use of labor market information, completing applications, and interviewing skills attainment ;</li> <li>• attainment of core employability/work maturity skills such as dependability, honesty, problem solving skills, initiative, enthusiasm, team player;</li> <li>• Interpersonal skills, appearance, leadership, and cultural sensitivity. emphasis on jobs in in-demand and emerging industries;</li> </ul> |
| 4. | <p>Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing are short-term, planned, structured learning experiences that occur in a workplace and are focused on career exploration and the development of work readiness skills. The primary purpose of work experiences is to expose youth to the requirements of work and to employers expectations. An employer may benefit from the work done by a youth, but the primary benefit must be to the youth.</p>  | <p>Work opportunities with an emphasis on jobs in in-demand and emerging industries;</p>  |
| 5. | <p>Occupational skills training constitutes an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. These include programs that lead to the attainment of a certificate or credential, participation in Job Corps, apprenticeship programs, and training programs that provide skills necessary to enter or advance in a specific occupation.</p>  | <p>Enrollment into programs that provide recognized degrees, certifications, or marketable skills for in-demand and emerging occupations;</p>   |
| 6. | <p>Leadership development opportunities, which include community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. Examples include community volunteering, peer mentoring or tutoring, character education, citizenship education, including how and why to vote, serving on a youth council, community or advocacy organization board, leadership training consisting of how to work in a team, how to run meetings, diversity training, and life skills training such as parent education, financial education, goal setting and conflict resolution</p> | <p>Participation in community service learning projects, peer centered activities, teambuilding, life-skills training, healthy lifestyle choices, etc.;</p>   |
| 7. | <p>Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months; this service may occur during program participation or during the Follow-up period. Adult mentoring is a one-to-one supportive relationship between and adult and a youth that is based on trust. High-quality adult mentoring programs include an adult role model who builds a working relationship with a youth and who fosters the development of positive life skills in youth.</p>   | <p>Referral to community-, faith-based, and/or other organizations to provide one-on-one encouragement and direction;</p>   |

|     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 8.  | Supportive services to enable an individual to participate in WIOA youth program activities. These may include, but are not limited to, housing, meals, medical care, day care, transportation, school related supplies, training related supplies, etc.  | Assistance with transportation, childcare, clothing, supplies, and related needs;   |
| 9.  | Follow-up services include activities after completion of participation to monitors youths' success during their transition to employment and further education and to provide assistance as needed for a successful transition. Follow-up services must be provided for not less than 12 months after obtaining employment and/or completion of participation.   | Frequent interaction, including guidance and counseling, support services, and other assistance for at least 12 months after exit;  |
| 10. | Comprehensive guidance and counseling to help youth make and implement informed educational, occupational, and life choices. It includes imparting skills through counselor-directed learning opportunities that help youth achieve success through academic, career, personal, and social development.   | Career counseling will be an integral part of youth programming and provide the basis for individual employment plans.  |
| 11. | Financial literacy education to help youth gain the skills needed to create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals. An example of financial literacy education is the FDIC approved Money Smart curriculum.  | Financial literacy education is supported by activities such as partnerships with financial institutions and to provide workshops at the local one stop.  |
| 12. | Entrepreneurial skills training including the use of curriculum based training modules that teach youth the value of being skilled and applying those skills to meet a consumer need or demand; to think creatively and critically; to problem solve; how to recognize opportunities, and other skills related to entrepreneurialism.   | Entrepreneurial skills training is supported by activities such as partnerships with economic development agencies and referrals to business development organizations.   |
| 13. | Services that provide career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration by using labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area.   | Workshops and other services that prepare youth for careers in in-demand and/or emerging occupations. Information is provided in the local one-stops or on-line systems such as the Arkansas Job Link. Information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations is available in areas, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. |
| 14. | Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training includes the delivery of activities listed within the 14 WIOA program elements and other activities that provide exposure to post-secondary education options; assisting youth with placement into post-secondary education; and placement into training opportunities such as apprenticeships and occupational training | Individual guidance and counseling, including career pathway discussion; assistance with applications for FAFSA; and referral to enrollment and career counseling services at Post-secondary institutions.  |

4.5 Describe local board actions to become and/or remain a high-performing local board, consistent with the factors developed by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. **These factors have not been determined but will include effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria for local boards.** [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)]

Board member training was provided by Rick Mayer April 27, 2016 in Little Rock. The Board worked through the basics of how to become a strategic rather than tactical board. Additionally webinars and training was continued by Mayer and Mayer to Board Directors to continue the development process.

Board meeting agendas have been restructured so that the tactical requirements are handled first then time is allowed for the board to have discussions strategies for effectiveness and continuous improvement.

- 4.6 Describe how training services will be provided in accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), the process and criteria for issuing individual training accounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

Training services will be provided to eligible participants and may be for various types of training including on-the-job training, work experience, apprenticeship, classroom training, customized training or incumbent worker training.

The individual training accounts (ITA) system is used by participants who are eligible for training services and choose to attend training. A career advisor uses the ITA request form to determine a participant's financial need. The individual selects the course of study from the eligible training provider list. The individual must have made application and received determination from other funding sources and present the award letter to the career advisor to show the monetary amounts of unmet financial need. He/she must also present a statement of how much the family will be able to contribute to the cost of the training. Consideration of all available funds, excluding loans, will determine the person's overall need for WIOA funding. The ITA may be used to cover expenses for tuition, books, fees, supplies and/or tools. Employment/Training Advisors will make sure that there is no duplication of services.

The amount of monies available from all sources, the financial status of the family and the potential of the applicant prior to a determination of qualification are also taken into consideration. If approved, the ITA is completed by the career advisor. The Eligible Training Provider bills the WIOA Program each semester. ITA's may be adjusted up or down based upon case necessity. ITA's are not issued if the training program is not on the Arkansas Consumer Report System (ACRS) list.

- 4.7 If contracts for training services are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

The primary avenue for training services is through the Individual Training Account; however, contracts may be used but should reflect a training program that is in demand.

- 4.8 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)] and [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

The Board uses the Projected Employment Opportunities List as the basic guide for determining in-demand occupations. Additionally demand occupations and targeted industry sectors specific to the Eastern area are focused on. Employer feedback regarding the employment success may also be a considering factor. Demand occupations from neighboring Workforce areas may be used as well.

## Section 5: Compliance

Responses are focused on the local area's compliance with federal or state requirements. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

- 5.1 Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated in the area with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross

training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

Interagency agreements typically are memorandums of understanding. These will be developed by the State Transition Roundtable Policy Committee as part of the Workforce Certification document.

Local ARS Field offices or other ARS organizational units will replicate cooperative agreements in part or in whole with local divisions of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act core programs. These may include the following:

- provision of staff training and technical assistance with regard to;
- the availability and benefits of, and information on eligibility standards for, vocational rehabilitation services; and
- the promotion of equal, effective, and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through the promotion of program accessibility, the use of nondiscriminatory policies and procedures, and the provision of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and services, and rehabilitation technology, for individuals with disabilities;
- use of information and financial management systems that link all components of the statewide workforce development system, that link the components to other electronic networks, including nonvisual electronic networks, and that relate to such subjects as employment statistics, and information on job vacancies, career planning, and workforce innovation and opportunity activities; use of customer service features such as common intake and referral procedures, customer databases, resource information, and human services hotlines;
- establishment of cooperative efforts with employers to:
- facilitate job placement; and
- carry out any other activities that the designated State unit and the employers determine to be appropriate; identification of staff roles, responsibilities, and available resources, and specification of the financial responsibility of each component of the statewide workforce investment system with regard to paying for necessary services (consistent with State law and Federal requirements); and
- specification of procedures for resolving disputes among such components.

Development of these agreements at the local level must include the local manager (field office district manager or the top executive at the organizational units of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services). The agreement must be signed by the local manager, the supervising Senior Leader from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services or his/her designee. Copies of the agreement will be maintained by the local manager and Chief Fiscal Officer of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

- 5.2 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas is responsible for disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Officials.

- 5.3 Describe the competitive processes to award the subgrants and contracts for activities funded by WIOA Title I programs within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

The local board uses an RFP or RFQ process to award subgrants and contracts. The notice advertising the RFP or RFQ is placed at least twice in a statewide newspaper. Additional media sources may be used. Each proposal submitted is rated based on specific criteria. After the evaluation, the rating of each proposal is presented to the full board. The provider is selected by the local board with agreement by the chief elected officials.

- 5.4 Describe the local area’s negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

*(Note: Local performance measures for each local area will be the same as the State goals.)*

| Eastern WIOA Performance Measures                                   | Eastern Area<br>PY16 &17 Performance<br>Goals |
|---|---|
| <b>Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) Negotiated Goals</b>      |   |
| Adult   | 82.5%   |
| Dislocated Worker   | 77.0%   |
| Youth   | 75.0%   |
| <b>Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) Negotiated Goals</b>      |   |
| Adult   | 78.0%   |
| Dislocated Worker   | 74.5%   |
| Youth   | 71.2%   |
| <b>Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit) Negotiated Goals</b> |   |
| Adult   | \$5,842                                       |
| Dislocated Worker   | \$6,400                                       |
| Youth   | \$  |
| <b>Credential Attainment Rate Negotiated Goals</b>                  |   |
| Adult   | 75.3%   |
| Dislocated Worker   | 75.0%   |
| Youth   | 70.0%   |
| <b>Measurable Skill Gains Negotiated Goals</b>                      |   |
| Adult   | Baseline                                      |
| Dislocated Worker   | Baseline                                      |
| Youth   | Baseline                                      |
| <b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers Negotiated Goals</b>          |   |
| Adult   | Baseline                                      |
| Dislocated Worker   | Baseline                                      |
| Youth   | Baseline                                      |

- 5.5 Describe the indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Local and state monitoring of the fiscal agent, Title I provider and one-stop operator will be conducted at least annually. The local board will be made aware of any issues or concerns that may arise from the monitoring. The fiscal agent, Title I service provider and one-stop operator shall be audited on an annual basis. The board will be presented the eligible training provider list and programs quarterly for their review.

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

During the month of March 2016, meetings were held with the board, CEOs, committee members and partners to discuss the local plan and compliance requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act along with an overview of the Governor’s vision for the system.

During the June 2016 meetings, the board and CEOs were asked for input into the development of the local plan. The local plan guidance and template from Arkansas Department of Workforce Services was emailed and discussed during the September 2016 Workforce Development Board meeting with a request for help with the development of the plan. The One-Stop committee was designated to assist with the local plan. An initial draft of the regional plan was forwarded to the board volunteers, including the executive committee, for input and review.

CEO's had the opportunity to provide input during scheduled meetings and through review via email.

Workforce Center partners provided input into the plan during regularly scheduled monthly meetings. Businesses, labor organizations, partner agencies, educators and economic developers from throughout the local area are all represented on the board and had the opportunity to comment.

- 5.7 Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan, the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.
- A. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(1)];  

A public notice was placed in the newspaper advising that the public has 30 days from that date to submit comments on the proposed plan. It was also available through email notification and at the WDB of Eastern Arkansas physical address.
  - B. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and  

Following the conclusion of the public comment period, comments collected during the public comment period will be presented to the board for review and consideration.
  - C. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan's attachments. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(3)]  

Disagreements or concerns received during the public comment period will be addressed following the Board's review of said concerns. Those concerns will also be included in the attachments of this plan.

- 5.8 List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each workforce center within the local area.

Eduardo Lemm  
Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas  
Arkansas Workforce Center at Forrest City  
300 Eldridge Rd # 2, Forrest City, AR 72335  
870.633.2900  
[eduardo.lemm@arkansas.gov](mailto:eduardo.lemm@arkansas.gov)

**Section 6: Plan Assurances**

| <b>Planning Process and Public Comment</b> |  | <b>References</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.1 The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.                               | WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.2 The final local plan is available and accessible to the general public.  | Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.3 The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.  | WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550                                     |
| <b>Required Policies and Procedures</b>    |  | <b>References</b>  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.4 The local board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.   | Proposed 20 CFR 679.390  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.5 The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts.  | WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c)  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.6 The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.  | WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.7 The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one-stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.  | WIOA Section 121(c)(v)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.8 The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and the Governor.  | WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); proposed 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b)                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.9 The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting one-stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA. | WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.10 The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts  | WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | 6.11 The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all                    | WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600   |

|                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
|                                     | partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.   |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.12 The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.   | WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.13 All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities.                  | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.14 The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services.   | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.15 The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.   | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.16 The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.  | WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.17 The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.   | WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.18 The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements                       | 2 CFR Part 225 Appendix B; 2 CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.19 The local board ensures that one-stop Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven.        | WIOA Section 167   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.20 The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.   | WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603                     |
|                                     | <b>Administration of Funds</b>  | <b>References</b>  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.21 The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process. | WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6.22 The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are  | WIOA Section 108(b)(15)  |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program funds.  |   |
| ☒ | 6.23 The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.   | WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410                                       |
| ☒ | 6.24 The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.  | WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750                           |
| ☒ | 6.25 The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.  | WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850   |
|   | <b>Eligibility</b>  | <b>References</b>   |
| ☒ | 6.26 The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.                                  | Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A                                   |
| ☒ | 6.27 The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.   | WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320  |
| ☒ | 6.28 The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.   | WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570                  |
| ☒ | 6.29 The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its workforce centers for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services. | Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010; TEGL 10-09 |

**Section 7: Attachment A**

**EASTERN ARKANSAS  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA  
ORGANIZATION CHART**

