

Workforce Development Board *of Eastern Arkansas*

Regional & Local Plan

Program Years
2016 – 2019



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network

Regional Plan PY 2016 – PY 2019

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 | Local Board | • August 29, 2016 | WIOA Partners |
| • April 13, 2016 | One Stop Committee | • September 20, 2016 | Local Board |
| • May 25, 2016 | Business & Industry | • September 29, 2016 | WIOA Partners |
| • June 14, 2016 | WIOA Local Directors | • January 31, 2017 | Economic Development |
| • June 16, 2016 | Executive Committee | • February 27, 2017 | Executive Committee |
| • June 23, 2016 | WIOA Partners | • March 2, 2017 | WIOA Partners |
| • June 24, 2016 | CEOs | • March 7, 2017 | Local Board |
| • July 20, 2016 | WIOA Partners | • March 10, 2017 | CEOs |
| • July 29, 2016 | WIOA Local Directors | • May 2, 2017 | Economic Development |
| | | • May 11, 2017 | Youth Committee |

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 possible. 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
Crittenden County	49,548	\$1,651,661,000	\$33,335	\$35,455
Cross County	17,227	\$612,596,000	\$35,560	\$38,597
Lee County	9,860	\$276,945,000	\$28,088	\$28,006
Phillips County	19,930	\$655,171,000	\$32,874	\$28,171
St. Francis County	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 Institution, 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.

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. A reduction in the labor force can be contributed to the lack of skilled workers' and job requirements, skills and abilities to perform the job, and changes in demographics and culture. Also, jobseekers become less willing to accept job offers and require higher pay. The statistics below document an increase in employment and decrease in unemployment which indicates there is an optimistic future for the region. The Arkansas Workforce Center network and partner agencies are working with employers and job seekers to ensure the skills meet the needs of business and industry. This is done through surveys, business and industry and employer advisory groups, and economic development meetings.

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

Chart 2: June 2016

County	Civilian Labor Force	Number of Employed	Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Eastern LWDA	49,012	46,087	2,925	6.0
Crittenden County	21,802	20,646	1,156	5.3
Cross County	8,107	7,656	451	5.6
Lee County	3,235	3,042	193	6.0
Phillips County	6,897	6,387	510	7.4
St. Francis County	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:

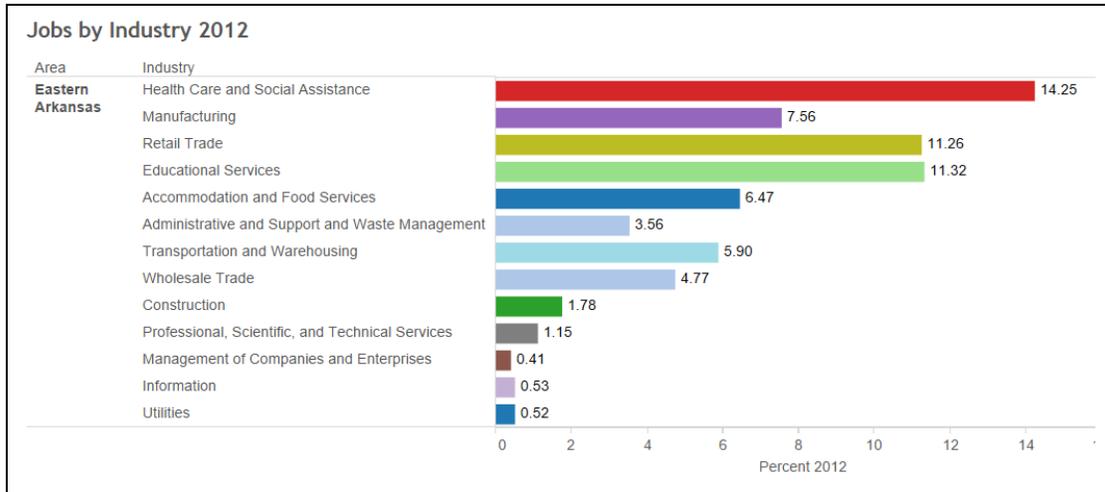
Chart 3 indicates the Top 5 Industry Supersectors for the Eastern Arkansas WDA (Source: 2016 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report).

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



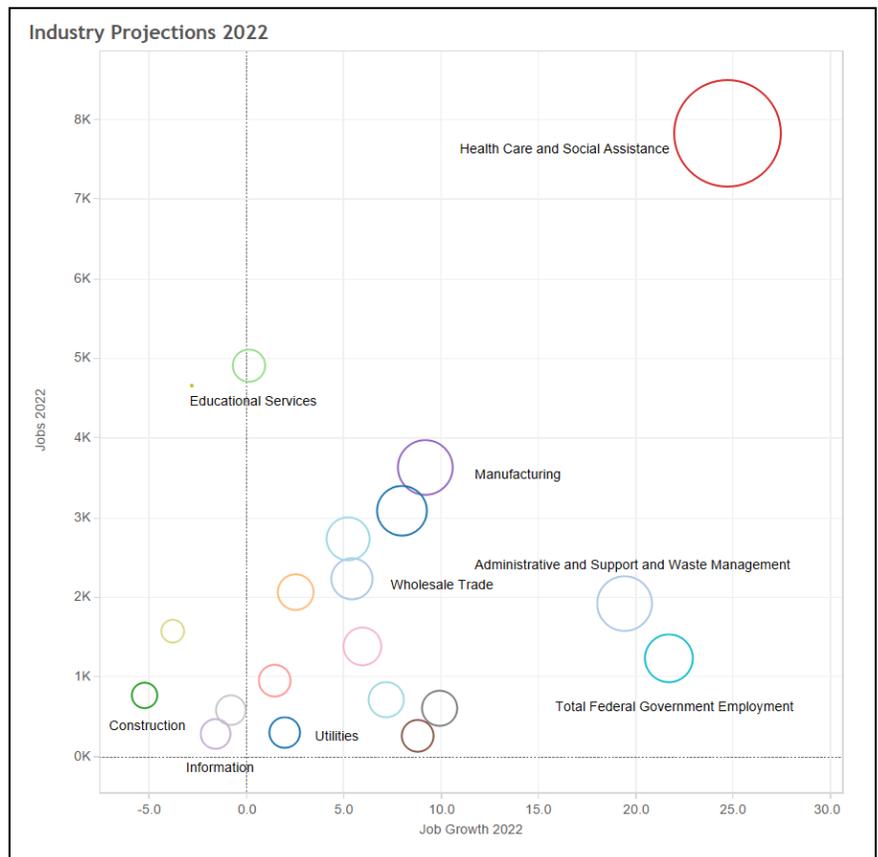
Graphs and Charts sourced from Arkansas Research Center

<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.

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 Base Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Net Growth	% 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, Including Fast Food	858	1,019	161	18.76
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, 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 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 WIOA Title I Service Provider. 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 provides services to customers 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. In alignment with the State's goals and vision, the boards 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, adult, dislocated worker and 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 Career Pathways, Job Corp 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, four-year colleges, community colleges, technical institutes, and the Arkansas Department of Correction.

Adult education and literacy activities include basic skill remediation; workforce preparation; integrated education and literacy; workplace literacy; correctional/institutional*; and English language acquisition activities (infused with digital and financial literacy)*. Basic academic skills classes are for all participants who are below 12.9 grade level. Workforce preparation classes include soft and employability skills needed to enter the workforce. Integrated education and training classes are offered through the Accelerating Opportunity Learning (AO) program and WAGE™. The Accelerating Opportunity class provides participants with basic academic skills preparation, workforce preparation, and workforce training. Workplace literacy classes are offered at the worksite as requested by a business or industry, and

are designed with the input of the local business to address and improve productivity issues related to deficiencies in basic academic skills. English as a Second Language courses are designed to give English learners opportunities to study and practice English communication skills such as, listening, speaking, reading, writing, and critical thinking. These skills play an integral part in earning a high school credential, entering employment, succeeding in college and career training programs through career pathways, becoming United States citizens, and participating in the community.

Adult Education provides services to prepare individuals for the workplace. These services include teaching students how to maintain appointments and schedules, teaching students to follow directions, setting goals, following through with goals and completion, soft skills training courses, basic educational skills in reading/writing/math, signing-in and out of class to log attendance hours, etc.

Adult Education and Literacy provides academic and employment training to out of school youth, adult, dislocated workers, and the unemployed/underemployed individual. These activities include basic skills remediation; soft skills and employability training; digital and financial literacy; career preparation and planning; WAGE and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) remediation; and integrated education and training. Services are coordinated between the programs and Title I to promote concurrent enrollment and provide participants with academic remediation and supportive services such as tuition, on the job training, transportation, and daycare.

The Adult Education WAGE Program is a work readiness program designed to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Arkansans have the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. WAGE programs coordinate classroom instruction and state certification, with pre-employment needs of local business and industry. WAGE programs meet with their Advisory Boards which is comprised of business/industry partners and partnering agencies. Through meetings and correspondence, local training needs are expressed to Adult Education centers and agencies in attendance which provides instructional guidance. Individuals can improve their basic academic skills, as well as learn job skills that prepare them for entry-level jobs through the WAGE program.

In the 2015 Program Year, 735 adult Eastern Arkansans received services from programs receiving adult education funding; 29 students were English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) 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 needs. 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 Labor Market Information Portal, can be accessed virtually through 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 conduct job search 24/7. Arkansas JobLink also provides access to an array 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.

Discover Arkansas LMI Portal allows jobseekers to make informed data-driven career decisions. This labor market system provides a wide variety of local and regional labor market services, such as labor trends, statistics, economics, demographics, salaries, and employer data.

Basic career services also extend beyond the virtual world. After the initial assessment, customers, as appropriate, may be provided with direct linkages to additional workforce activities, including multiple education and training opportunities across the workforce system through partner referrals. Many of these partners are housed within the workforce center.

Jobseeker Services

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the region. However, all the offices offer a menu of services to prepare jobseekers for the high-demand, high growth occupations.

Services:

- Labor exchange services must 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 career services such as outreach, intake and orientation, initial assessment; labor exchange services, eligibility determination, referrals to programs, performance and cost information, information on unemployment insurance information, 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 pre-vocational services; internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships; workforce preparation; out-of-area job search; English language acquisition and financial literacy.
- Job Seeker Services include: Job search, referral & placement; Veterans Employment Services; Unemployment Claim Filing; Resource Room for Job Preparation: computers & printers, phone, fax, and copy; Scholarship, FASFA and Job Training Information; Individual Career Counseling and Case Management; Occupational Skills and Abilities Assessment; National Career Readiness Certification; Microsoft Imagine Academy Training and Certification; Local area Labor Market Information and Job Vacancies; Services for individuals with Disabilities; Opportunities for Low-Income Families; Services for Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers; Trade Adjustment Assistance and Dislocated Worker Services; and Youth Opportunities.
- Efforts taken to increase services to special populations are provided in the following ways:

Adults

- ✓ *Not a high school graduate individual is recruited through adult education, Department of Human Services (DHS), SNAP E&T and Career Pathways as well as referrals from the colleges.*
- ✓ *Veterans through career advisors working with the veteran's representatives in the local workforce centers and also with the **Veterans of Foreign Wars** (VFW). Also through center partner meetings, community events and job fairs.*
- ✓ *Low Income through TANF and Career Pathways case managers and the partnership with DHS as well as recruitment through the workforce center resource room.*

- ✓ *TANF through the partnership with TANF and Career Pathways case managers.*
- ✓ *Receives Public Assistance (not TANF) through partnerships and/or referrals with DHS, SNAP E&T, Career Pathways and colleges. (NOTE: Almost everyone enrolled is low income and receives public assistance.)*
- ✓ *Offenders by participating in job search activities at the federal prison and partnership with the public defender.*
- ✓ *Single Parents through TANF and Career Pathways case managers and also the working relationship with the DHS as well as recruitment through the workforce center resource room.*
- ✓ *Disability efforts are coordinated through our partnership with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and Services for the Blind. Also through center partner meetings and all Arkansas Workforce Center events.*

Dislocated Workers

- ✓ *Displaced Homemakers through the partnership with the Department of Workforce Services, partner meetings and community events.*
- ✓ *UI Exhausted through the partnership with the Department of Workforce Services, Career Pathways case managers, partner meetings, community events and referrals from the colleges.*
- ✓ *Veterans through career advisors working with the veteran's representatives in the local workforce centers and also with the **Veterans of Foreign Wars** (VFW). Also through center partner meetings, community events and job fairs.*
- ✓ *Single Parent through TANF and Career Pathways case managers and also the working relationship with DHS as well as recruitment through the workforce center resource room and community events.*

Youth

- ✓ *Out-of-School individuals are recruited through high school counselors, adult education centers, partner meetings, community events and workforce center resource room.*
- ✓ *Dropouts are recruited through high school counselors, adult education centers, partner meetings, community events and workforce center resource room.*
- ✓ *Basic Skills Deficient individuals are recruited through high school counselors, adult education centers, partner meetings, community events and workforce center resource room.*
- ✓ *Offenders are recruited through the partnership with the public defender, high school counselors, adult education centers, partner meetings, community events and workforce center resource room.*
- ✓ *Pregnant/Parenting individuals are recruited through high school counselors, adult education centers, partner meetings, community events and workforce center resource room.*

- ✓ *Disability efforts are coordinated through our partnership with ARS and DSB. Also through center partner meetings, Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant and all Arkansas Workforce Center and community events.*

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; entrepreneurial training; Job Corp, Career Pathways 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 Workforce Development 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 support participants in career or training services, the Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Eastern Workforce Development Area is responsible for establishing a supportive service policy for WIOA program participants.

Eastern's local policy on supportive services includes: transportation, childcare, housing, tools, uniforms, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable participation in activities authorized under WIOA Title I of the Act. Supportive services under Title I may only be provided to WIOA clients who are enrolled in WIOA programs and who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs. No WIOA Title I program operator may provide supportive services until other local area programs (that generally provide the supportive service needed by the client) have been contacted. This referral to other providers must be documented in the customer's case file and reasonably justify the need for the provision of supportive services using WIOA Title I funds.

The Workforce Centers in Eastern have developed relationships with community partners that assist with food, shelter, and other basic needs regardless of any program enrollment.

Business Services

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. A local business services lead works with a designated business services team comprised of partner agencies to provide business development and job development assistance. Ongoing local and regional meetings are held at the Arkansas Workforce Center with discussions concentrating on business needs, and strategies to meet those needs. Subcommittees are designated (as needed) to work on specific areas of concentration or as identified by the business services team.

Employer Services include:

Listing in States Largest Free Job Bank-Arkansas JobLink; Assistance with Job Description Development; Applicant Screening (Occupational Skills & Abilities Assessment); Qualifies Applicant Recruitment & Referral; Participation in Job Fairs; Interviewing Facilities; Development of On-the-Job or Customized Training; Business Incentives & Tax Credits; Industry Growth Trends and Forecasts; Wage Data & Labor Market Information; Information on Federal and State Labor Laws; Information on Training Providers; National Career Readiness Certification; Microsoft Imagine Academy; and Services to People with Disabilities.

Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Arkansas Department of Career Education - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ACE/ARS), and the Department of Human Services - Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) provide vocational rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities. According to the March 2017 report on Disability Employment Statistics on individuals ages 16 and over from the Department of Labor Statistics, (<https://www.dol.gov/odep/>) nationwide there is a 20.4% labor force participation for persons with disabilities and a 68.7% participation rate of persons without disabilities. The unemployment rate of persons with disabilities is 10.6%, while the unemployment rate of people without disabilities is 4.3%.

Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (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 persons with disabilities in order for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to obtain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

Governor Asa Hutchinson decided to continue and build on former Governor Mike Beebe’s Executive Order 10-17 by creating the Employment First initiative to encourage state agencies to hire people with disabilities and serve as a hiring model to the private sector. The initiative also instructs agencies to provide consumer services with the goal of self-sufficiency through employment as the end result, rather than the service as an end in itself.

Department of Human Services - Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansas with disabilities. The order also to focus consumer services first 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.

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 based on data provided by the Department of Workforce Services' labor market division (see Chart 9 below). Statistics also show employer demand supports the decision to concentrate on these identified sectors and occupations. Example of largest manufactures include: Hino, West Memphis; Boar's Head, Forrest City; Robert Bosh, West Memphis; Schneider Trucking, West Memphis; Amerimax Coated Products, Helena; (This information is obtained from the USDOL sponsored Analyst Resource Center Employer Database from the Infogroup Government Division.) The board is also exploring health care as the next sector target.

The WDBEA works closely with ADTEC to address industry sector initiatives. ADTEC was created in 2005 by five Arkansas community colleges (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) in eastern Arkansas to use their collective resources to address current and future training needs of business and industry. The Consortium was first officially recognized with a \$5.9 million U.S. Department of Labor grant to develop advanced manufacturing training capacity in the ADTEC and Eastern region. Since that time, ADTEC has been successful in garnering more than \$63 million in external investments, mostly federal, to support regional workforce development.

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
Total manufacturing/Related	48,044	51,703	3,659	7.62
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
Total Transportation/CDL	34,469	43,898	9,429	27.36

The foundation of a sectors approach is that service delivery is based on demand. Each industry sector partnership will provide information on workforce needs and skill and credential requirements. This information becomes the basis for designing service delivery to provide services to WIOA customers supporting target sectors in the regional economy. The following are activities the regional partners have discussed as priorities concerning the implementation of sector initiatives. As ongoing meetings are held, the list will be modified.

Program Year 2017

Activities	Timeline
Ensure the board secures the most pertinent information related to regional sectors	Ongoing
Have consultant present at a regional meeting and facilitate a discussion around how partners can connect emerging sector strategies efforts and be more intentional about pursuing new joint efforts moving forward.	June 2017
Work with state leadership to secure “bridge” data that drives sector strategies decisions.	July 2016 – March 2017
Research and secure a data source/agency that can provide quarterly sector strategy specific reports that will be used by the board, CEOs, schools, economic development, etc.	April 2017 – August 2017
Schedule ongoing meetings with the partners, schools, economic development, etc. to discuss the needs of employers and sector strategies concepts.	Quarterly
Develop high-level concept on how a more unified approach can be accomplished in the region	July 2017 – August 2017
Develop informational materials to inform partners and business and industry on statistical data and outcomes.	July 2017 – September 2017
Develop an advanced manufacturing industry council.	July 2017 – September 2017
Schedule advanced manufacturing sector meeting (s) and identify chair.	September 2017
Discuss sector meeting outcomes with board, partners and committees.	September 2017 & December 2017
Continue the development of sectors	January 2018 – June 2018
Update and modify promotional materials	June 2018

Program Year 2018

Activities	Timeline
Improve awareness of existing employer-focused efforts taking place in the region	Ongoing
Screening and referral of candidates for industry sector partnerships.	July 2018
Leverage WIOA funds with Registered Apprenticeship programs in target sectors.	July 2018
Business services representatives keep One-Stop operator and center staff informed of industry needs.	Quarterly
Customized labor market data is available for target sectors.	July 2018 – September 2018
Discuss sector meeting outcomes with board, partners and committees.	September 2018

Advanced manufacturing sector meeting.	Quarterly
Business services develop long-term strategic relationships with companies.	October 2018 – June 2019
Information on career pathways in target sectors and assessment tools are available to help job seekers assess their fit for these careers.	Ongoing
Continue the development of sectors	January 2019 – June 2019
Improve awareness of existing employer-focused efforts in the region	March 2019 – June 2019

Program Year 2019

Activities	Timeline
Career counseling is available on target sectors	July 2019 – December 2019
Career preparation activities (work readiness, basic skills, pre-apprenticeship, etc.) are contextualized to meet business and industry needs.	July 2019 – December 2019
Research and secure a data source/agency that can provide quarterly sector strategy specific reports that will be used by the board, CEOs, schools, economic development, etc.	July 2019 – December 2019
Business services representatives provide comprehensive solutions to business beyond the traditional focus on hiring (i.e. to worker retention, advancement, work-based learning, etc.	January 2020
Continue the development of sectors	January 2020 – June 2020

Program Year 2020

Activities	Timeline
Partner coordinated business services are organized regionally by sector.	July 2020 – December 2020
Target Sectors are created with business advisory boards guiding services and training priorities	January 2021 – June 2021
Centers offer sector-based orientations to services	January 2021
Workforce system core partners build individual employment plans for customers focused on entering careers in target sectors.	January 2021

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)]

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: Establish integrated Arkansas Workforce Center Business Services Teams that are reactive to the needs of employers and are sector driven.

Goal 1 Objectives:

1. Business Services Representatives (BSRs) specialize in a particular sector.
2. Integrate Apprenticeship into the workforce development system and Arkansas Workforce Centers
3. Coordinating the number of workforce-related organizations reaching out to businesses.
4. Streamline services to business and industry.
5. Create business sector advisory groups.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Promote local and regional economic development and training.

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Achieve “ACT Work Ready Community” status in all five counties.
2. Develop a user-friendly website.
3. Labor market data is customized and focused on target sectors.
4. Explore larger trend data that provides businesses with valuable data in making decisions.
5. Prepare and train job seekers (including those with significant barriers and/or hard to serve) for positions that are considered in-demand in their target industries.
6. Develop a structure for economic development partnership ideas to get implemented in a coordinated way.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Provide a comprehensive regional approach to education and training.

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. The curriculum for education and training programs is developed based on the skill and credential needs identified by businesses.
2. Eligible training provider list includes all education/training programs needed to develop a skilled workforce or target sectors.
3. The majority of Individual Training Accounts are dedicated to train workers for in-demand jobs in target sectors.

In addition, the goals and objectives are in line with the Arkansas Delta Accelerating Pathways Together (ADAPT) model and the State’s strategic goals (<https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/workforce-innovation/wioa-plans-annual-reports-and-more-information/#toggle-id-1>).

- 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 workforce develop area.

The ADTEC workforce development model is driven by continuous industry input and feedback. Program areas are identified that support emerging and demand industries that are key to the regional economy, such

as advanced manufacturing. Industry input is obtained through mechanisms such as skills standards and competency surveys and facilitated DACUM (Developing A CurricuLUM) processes.

Through these processes, industry identifies job titles, job competencies, technical and professional skills standards, equipment/tool standards and other relevant information that is necessary for the development of workforce talent in that specific industry. That information then becomes the basis for the design of curriculum, course guides, and equipment standards for the education/career pathway for that particular program.

During and after program development, industry continues to provide input and feedback through regularly scheduled Advisory Team meetings, review of program materials, involvement in revisions and updates regarding program/curriculum content, work-based learning collaboration, participation in training/re-training of existing workers, and involvement in other activities that support the program.

The ADTEC workforce development model includes a continuous trained worker pipeline. This includes three major resource pools for workforce talent development:

- Emerging (those in secondary or post-secondary education)
- Transitional (those unemployed or in adult education)
- Current (those currently employed or underemployed)

The Arkansas Delta Accelerating Pathways Together (ADAPT) model will also be utilized as a result of extensive planning and collaboration amongst the local board, ADTEC, employers, K-12 , school districts and other regional workforce alliance partners. ADAPT is a regional workforce readiness concept which will be implemented by all of the ADTEC colleges.

The ADAPT model addresses regional labor needs in the following ways:

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

Local WDBEA board staff continues to meet quarterly and works with these groups to provide shared training, networking and resources.

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 and establish regional workforce development strategies by working with all partners (including chambers, economic development, ADTEC, Apprenticeship, etc.) and using the Arkansas Delta Accelerating Pathways Together model.

The ADAPT model addresses regional needs in the following ways:

- Targets industries with significant projected employment needs
- Challenges primary workforce skills gaps through a comprehensive workforce readiness solution
- Delivers relevant technical training through enhanced or new career pathway models

- Emphasizes and assures that students who are potential employees have access to attain a full roster of stacked credentials, employer/industry certifications, and value-added certifications
- Creates new regional workforce alliances driven by collaboration and commitment

The coordination of the infrastructure agreements and memorandum of understanding (MOU) is being development by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

Cooperative service delivery agreements will:

- Ensure that services are provided seamlessly and without duplication
- Expand the one-system capacity
- Accurately represent each partner’s contributions to the system
- Be reviewed and updated as necessary
- Others as identified.

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 TEGE 17-16 that provides guidance on the operating costs of the one-stop delivery system, which are comprised of infrastructure costs and additional costs (i.e. career services, shared operating costs, and shared services) in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its implementing regulations.

All one-stop partner programs must contribute to the infrastructure costs and certain additional cost of the one-stop delivery system based on their proportionate use. A partner’s contribution must be an allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable cost to the program, consistent with the Federal Cost Principles set forth in the Uniform Guidance.

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

Supportive services may include such services as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable participation in activities authorized under WIOA Title I of the Act.

Supportive services may only be provided to WIOA clients who are enrolled in WIOA programs and who are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs. No WIOA Title I provider may provide Supportive Services funded by a WIOA Title I program until other local area programs (that generally provide the Supportive Service needed by the client) have been contacted.

If a non-WIOA program is capable of providing the Supportive Service needed by a client, a referral will be made by the program operator. However, if an alternative resource cannot be found, then supportive services will be provided using WIOA funds if it is necessary to enable eligible individuals to participate. (Note: supportive services are coordinated through a referral process and also discussed during One-Stop partner meetings to ensure customers are receiving the necessary assistance they need to be productive and successful.)

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)]

The regional planning partners (economic development, chambers of commerce, business and industry groups, core and non-core partner agencies, ADTEC, etc.) will strive to hold quarterly meetings in various counties in the Eastern Region (Crittenden, Cross, Lee, Phillips and St. Francis Counties) to discuss processes, strategies and services. The local board, partner agencies and the college workforce development staff are working to ensure all strategies and services are addressed. Strategies and services range from organizing partner responsibilities, developing an integrated regional approach across all agencies, providing comprehensive workforce solutions, developing stronger business and industry partnerships, training needs, sector development, Apprenticeship, career services and assessments, career pathways in target sectors, soft skills, etc.

- 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)]

Eastern will follow the federal and state guidance regarding negotiation and agreement with the State.

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).

- 1.1. 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
Total manufacturing/Related	48,044	51,703	3,659	7.62
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
Total Transportation/CDL	34,469	43,898	9,429	27.36

The Eastern Workforce Development Area is targeting two pathways in the ADAPT model: advanced manufacturing (and related to advanced manufacturing) and transportation/distribution/logistics, with a TDL program focus in Commercial Driver Training (CDL). These sectors are targeted because of the high level of regional demand, importance in the region, and the interdependence of the two sectors. The decision is validated by a review of regional labor market information, input from workforce development boards, and employer feedback. ADTEC will also implement a regional consortium-driven approach to Commercial Driver Training. The ADTEC colleges have been in discussion with various trucking industry partners regarding collaboration in CDL program delivery.

The ADAPT model addresses 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

- 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.

In order to access high-demand, high-skill, and high-wage careers, individuals will need to develop a full menu of work readiness and industry-specific skills. The ADAPT model, coupled with the technical skills development and stacked credential attainment available through the targeted pathways, will help individuals conquer work readiness and technical skills deficiencies. Attaining these skills is not only necessary for entry into the advanced manufacturing and transportation industry sectors but also necessary for advancement to high-skill, high-wage jobs within these high-demand sectors.

- 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 12) 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)]

WIOA provides the framework for an integrated workforce system that is flexible, responsive, customer-focused, and locally managed. Program partners include: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Adult Education and Literacy; Vocational Rehabilitation; Career and Technical Education; Title V Older Americans; Department of Human Services; Job Corps; Native American Programs; Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers; Veterans; Youthbuild; Trade Act; Community Services Block Grant; HUD; Unemployment Compensation; Second Chance; and TANF.

Description of Workforce Development Activities:

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
- 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. Examples of supportive

services include child care; transportation; needs-related payments; housing; tools and equipment; uniforms; and other clothing.

Supportive services are coordinated based on program eligibility, the economic need thresholds of the partner agencies, and the availability of program funds. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind are mandated to research and apply all comparable benefits for services from other resources prior to applying vocational rehabilitation funds. The most frequently applied comparable resources come from sources outside of the core partner agencies. For example, tuition assistance in the form of grant funding, housing assistance from Housing and Urban Development, the individual's own medical insurance must first be applied to physical and mental restoration services.

The supportive services provided by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind are arranged and coordinated according to an individual plan for employment which specifies a career goal and the areas that the individual may need supports in order to reach that goal. The supports needed are determined through assessments, evaluations, as well as the analysis and application of state and federal regulations and policies. The following supports services are assessed, evaluated, and analyzed for applicability and comparable services/similar benefits to each individual case: maintenance assistance to participate in employment or training that leads to employment, personal care attendant services, physical and mental restoration services, rehabilitation engineering, rehabilitation technology, and transportation to participate in employment or training activities. These support services are time limited and must accompany a substantial service that is directly related to obtaining or maintaining employment.

Business Services - Business services serves as the primary point of contact and support for local businesses through the region. Business services establishes and maintains relationships with businesses and community organizations through various interactions. Business services assists with tours and informational overviews of the Arkansas Workforce Centers and performs various business activities/interactions.

Employer Services include:

Listing in States Largest Free Job Bank-Arkansas JobLink; Assistance with Job Description Development; Applicant Screening (Occupational Skills & Abilities Assessment); Qualifies Applicant Recruitment & Referral; Participation in Job Fairs; Interviewing Facilities; Development of On-the-Job or Customized Training; Business Incentives & Tax Credits; Industry Growth Trends and Forecasts; Wage Data & Labor Market Information; Information on Federal and State Labor Laws; Information on Training Providers; National Career Readiness Certification; Microsoft Imagine Academy; and Services to People with Disabilities.

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. *(Participating Partner Service: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Adult Education and Literacy; Vocational Rehabilitation; Career and Technical Education; Title V Older Americans; Department of Human Services; Job Corps; Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers; Veterans; Trade Act; and TANF.)*

Response and Training - Provides rapid response activities 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. *(Participating Partner Service: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Adult Education and Literacy; Vocational Rehabilitation; Career and Technical Education; Title V Older Americans; Department of Human Services; Job Corps; Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers; Veterans; Trade Act; and TANF.)*

Apprenticeship - Registered Apprenticeship is viable career option for WIOA participants. Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines on-the-job training with related classroom instruction that increases an apprentice's skill level and wages. It is a tried and true approach for preparing individuals for jobs, and meeting the business needs for a highly-skilled workforce. Businesses that use

apprenticeship reduce worker turnover by fostering greater employee loyalty, increasing productivity, and improving the bottom line. It is a proven solution for businesses to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers.

The National Apprenticeship Training Foundation and the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalitions hosted a Regional Apprenticeship meeting for the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Area. The meeting in the region focused on aligning the enrollment process and eliminating barriers to increase referrals to apprenticeship programs. All participating agencies discussed eligibility and enrollment to work out the conflicting requirements and to align the process for the benefit of the employers, workers, and program outcomes.

The Eastern Arkansas Workforce Development Board (WDBEA) has two members who are members of the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition. Additional information can be located on the Arkansas Apprenticeship website, <http://arkansasapprenticeship.com>.

Career Pathways Initiative - Aligns services with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Department of Human Services, Adult Education, community and faith based organizations, and other programs to ensure that barriers are overcome and that employment and educational needs are met without duplication of services. The program has enjoyed much success and is touted as a model program nationally. The career pathway approach is a paradigm shift in how we prepare individuals for work and lifelong learning. It reorients existing education and workforce services from myriad disconnected programs to a structure that syncs employers' workforce needs with individuals' education and training needs.

Arkansas Association of Colleges - Arkansas Association of Colleges (ACC) is a strong partner for workforce development. ACC has provided much needed funding to the colleges for equipment and curriculum alignment to address local business and industry needs. Representing colleges in the region include ASU Mid-South, East Arkansas Community College and Phillips Community College – UA.

Job Corps - Job Corps offers free-of-charge education and vocational training to young men and women ages 16 to 24. Job Corps assists young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality and satisfaction of their lives through vocational and academic training.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) program promotes long-term self-sufficiency and independence by preparing SNAP recipients for employment through work-related education and training activities. The goal of SNAP E&T is to assist SNAP recipients in obtaining employment, including provision of work opportunities for 18- to 50-year-old Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) through participation in work programs and education and training activities.

Adult Education/Literacy - The Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ACE/AED) funds four local adult education programs, two literacy councils. The local service delivery systems are diverse. Programs are funded through public schools systems and community colleges.-Adult education and literacy activities include basic skill remediation; workforce preparation; integrated education and literacy; workplace literacy; correctional/institutional*; and English language acquisition activities (infused with digital and financial literacy)*. Basic academic skills classes are for all participants who are below 12.9 grade level. Workforce preparation classes include soft and employability skills needed to enter the workforce. Integrated education and training classes are offered through the Accelerating Opportunity Learning (AO) program and WAGE™ (Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy). AO class provides participants with basic academic skills preparation, workforce preparation, and workforce training. Workplace literacy classes are offered at the worksite as requested by a business or industry, and are designed with the input of the local business to address and improve productivity issues related to deficiencies in basic academic skills. English Language Learning classes are designed to give English learners opportunities to study and practice English language communication skills, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and critical thinking, and earn a high school credential, enter employment, succeed in college and career training programs through career pathways, become United States citizens, and participate in the community.

Adult Education provides services to prepare individuals for the workplace in various ways such as the following: teaching students how to maintain appointments and schedules, teaching students to follow directions, setting goals, following through with goals and completion, soft skills training courses, basic educational skills in reading/writing/math, signing-in and out of class to log attendance hours, etc.

Adult Education and Literacy providers provide academic and employment training to out-of-school youth, adult, dislocated workers, and the unemployed/underemployed individual. These activities include basic skills remediation; soft skills and employability training; digital and financial literacy; career preparation and planning; WAGE and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) remediation; and integrated education and training. Services are coordinated between the programs and Title I to promote concurrent enrollment and provide participants with academic remediation and supportive services such as tuition, on the job training, transportation, and daycare.

ACT Work Ready Communities (WRC) Certification – The region is working towards an ACT Work Ready Communities Certification. The certification empowers states, regions and counties with data, processes and tools that drive economic growth. By achieving certified ACT's Work Ready Communities status, counties are demonstrating they have a robust workforce development effort aligned to their economic development needs. Counties identified are Crittenden, St. Francis and Phillips.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities:

STRENGTHS

- The local board and partners are working to certify the workforce development area as an ACT Work Ready Communities region. (ACT Work Ready Communities empowers regions and counties with data, and processes and tools that drive economic growth.
- The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas members are engaged.
- Strong working relationship with local and regional partners.
- Ongoing development of sector strategies and board approval of manufacturing and transportation, distribution and logistics).

WEAKNESSES

- Transportation options are limited.
- Development of job shadowing and/or internship programs for middle and high school students with local businesses and manufacturers.
- Marketing and outreach activities.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Ensure that employers are aware of any job training or hiring subsidies offered in Arkansas for unemployed workers.
- Sector strategy advisors groups.
- Develop better access to Apprenticeship programs (electricians, plumbers, carpenters, etc.)
- Provide certified workforce training programs directly tied to local industry needs.

CHALLENGES

- Keeping more students who graduate in the region in the region after completing their education.
- Improving the quality of K-12 programs in the region and increasing the graduation rate.
- Decreasing population.

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)]

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: *Establish integrated Arkansas Workforce Center Business Services Teams that are reactive to the needs of employers and are sector driven.*

Goal 1 Objectives: Business Services Representatives (BSRs) specialize in a particular sector.

1. Integrate Apprenticeship into the workforce development system and Arkansas Workforce Centers
2. Minimize the number of workforce-related organizations reaching out to businesses.
3. Streamline services to business and industry.
4. Create business sector advisory groups.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: *Promote local and regional economic development and training.*

Goal 2 Objectives:

1. Achieve “ACT Work Ready Community” status in all five counties.
2. Develop a user-friendly website.
3. Labor market data is customized and focused on target sectors.
4. Explore larger trend data that provides businesses with valuable data in making decisions.
5. Prepare and train job seekers (including those with significant barriers and/or hard to serve) for positions that are considered in-demand in their target industries.
6. Develop a structure for economic development partnership ideas to get implemented in a coordinated way.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: *Provide a comprehensive regional approach to education and training.*

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. The curriculum for education and training programs is developed based on the skill and credential needs identified by businesses.
2. Eligible training provider list includes all education/training programs needed to develop a skilled workforce or target sectors.
3. The majority of Individual Training Accounts are dedicated to train workers for in-demand jobs in target sectors.
4. The majority of occupational training is dedicated to train youth for in-demand jobs in target sectors.

Note: The local board will implement a priority enrollment policy for youth and individuals with barriers in order to reach and serve the targeted priority populations.

- 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 local board has tailored their vision and goals to align with the goals of the State workforce development system. This was accomplished by identifying the specific goals and needs of the Eastern region and insuring the alignment was met. The goals are based on business services, career exploration and preparation for job seekers, economic development and training.

- 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. The goal of the business services teams is to effectively serve employers as a unified group between all partners.

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 (CEO) of Eastern Arkansas include 13 county judges and mayors of first class cities. The CEOs roles and functional relationship include: Appointing a CEO chairman to act on behalf of all Eastern Arkansas CEO's, work with the Governor to appoint and certify a local board, revoke the appointment of a local board member, designate an entity to act as grant recipient and fiscal agent on their behalf, ensure local board complies with all Federal and State WIOA requirements, assume ultimate liability for any misuse of grant funds and/or disallowed costs, approve an annual local board budget, approve the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the partners, approve local WIOA plans and modification as required under WIOA and State policy and practice, and approve any request from the local board to provide services or to be the One-Stop Operator.
 - The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas is comprised of 51 percent business representatives and 49 percent of the required WIOA partners. The roles and functional relationship include: Act on behalf of the CEOs as the fiscal administrative entity for the Workforce Development Area, serve as the WIOA Title IB program operator (adult, dislocated worker and youth) and One-Stop Operator, ensuring effective services are provided that meet the needs of employers and job seekers, seeking guidance from the CEOs regarding all major decisions, give priority attention to their oversight responsibilities including program costs and results, oversee and maintain budgets approved by the CEOs, adopt and abide by the by-laws in compliance with the specific code of conduct and other requirements of WIOA, promote participation of all board members and partners, seek outside funding opportunities, sector strategies champion, business

services convener, and participate in regional planning. Standing committees include the executive committee, youth committee, one stop and disability committees.

- The Executive Committee shall have the authority of the Board to act on behalf of the Board during the interim between Board meetings but shall defer to the board, whenever practical, on matters of major policy implications.
- The Youth Committee provides information and assists with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which shall include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth.
- The One Stop Operations Committee provides information and assists with operational and other issues relating to the one-stop delivery system and also serves on the local board.
- The Disabilities Committee provides information and to assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including without limitation issues relating to compliance with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Pub. L. No. 113-128, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq., regarding providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the one-stop delivery system, as well as appropriate training for staff on finding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including providing the appropriate supports and accommodations to employment for individuals with disabilities.
- 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. This group of partners provides an array of services that provides job seekers with career services, education and training, and supportive services they need to get good jobs and stay employed and to help business find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training. These partners work together through the Arkansas Workforce Centers and referral system.

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> <u>at West Memphis</u> 2003 W. Broadway West Memphis, AR 72301 870.400.2269 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p><u>Arkansas Workforce Center</u> <u>at Forrest City</u> 300 Eldridge Rd., Suite 2 Forrest City, AR 72336 870.633.2900 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p><u>Arkansas Workforce Center</u> <u>at Helena</u> 819 Newman Dr. Helena, AR 72342 870.338-7415 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>
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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 50

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 local board works closely with the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC), Crowley's Ridge Technical Institution, and Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce to develop a comprehensive talent pipeline. These groups together to provide relevant hands-on, career focused activities to adults and youth, exposing them to career pathways information and resources.

The local board coordinates activates through a referral process that ensures an individual seeking services is made aware of the available services.

- 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)]

Arkansas Workforce Center staff will review the individuals' needs to determine which programs may be able to provide the appropriate services and then refer that individual to the corresponding program. Providing services to individuals with barriers to employment is a priority under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The local board will ensure that access to curriculum-aligned industry-recognized certificates verifying attainment of the critical skills that employers are looking for in order to match between job seeker and employment can be accelerated and career pathways will be obtained. Any individual who falls into the "individual with barriers to employment priority" will receive services as deemed appropriate for the individual.

- 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 for employers continue to be developed through outreach, participation in career and technical education summits, and business and industry meetings. Current targeted sectors include advanced manufacturing, transportation, distribution and logistics. Partnerships with Arkansas Delta Technical Education Consortium (ADTEC) and Crowley's Ridge Technical Institution (CRTI) assist with the facilitation of the meetings.

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

Business services serves as the primary point of contact and support for local businesses through the Arkansas Workforce Centers. Business services will listen to the employers concerns and needs and based upon what is learned from the employer, information to meet the employer's need will be provided.

In addition, business services establishes and maintains relationships with businesses and community organizations through various interactions that may include: business engagement, entering job orders, participating in job fairs & sector council meetings, prescreening referrals, and securing National Career Readiness Certificate Letters of Commitment. Business services also assists with tours and informational overviews of the Arkansas Workforce Centers and performs various business activities/interactions. Business services includes all required and no required partners.

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. In working with the economic development groups, discussions will involve efforts to engage employers and recruit new industry to 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 Arkansas State University's Small Business Development Center. Some of the elements will be done by partnering with organizations that are experts in specific areas such as entrepreneurial training. Arkansas State University's Small Business Development Center is an example of how we could partner to provide this element.

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. Supportive services are coordinated based on program eligibility, the economic need thresholds of the partner agencies, and the availability of program funds.

WIOA Title IIB Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services provide supportive services such as transportation assistance, child care assistance, needs related payments, and other supportive services (tools and equipment, uniforms, and other clothing), to job seekers to assist in obtaining and retaining employment.

Supportive services are coordinated based on program eligibility, the economic need thresholds of the partner agencies, and the availability of program funds. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind are mandated to research and apply all comparable benefits for services from other resources prior to applying vocational rehabilitation funds. The most frequently applied comparable resources come from sources outside of the core partner agencies. For

example, tuition assistance in the form of grant funding, housing assistance from Housing and Urban Development, the individual's own medical insurance must first be applied to physical and mental restoration services.

The supportive services provided by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind are arranged and coordinated according to an individual plan for employment which specifies a career goal and the areas that the individual may need supports in order to reach that goal. The supports needed are determined through assessments, evaluations, as well as the analysis and application of state and federal regulations and policies. The following supports services are assessed, evaluated, and analyzed for applicability and comparable services/similar benefits to each individual case: maintenance assistance to participate in employment or training that leads to employment, personal care attendant services, physical and mental restoration services, rehabilitation engineering, rehabilitation technology, and transportation to participate in employment or training activities. These support services are time limited and must accompany a substantial service that is directly related to obtaining or maintaining employment.

- 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)]

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Law states it is the responsibility of the local boards to review, evaluate and make comments on all Adult Education and Literacy RFP applications submitted by the Department of Career Education/Adult Education Division from the region (Crittenden, Cross, Lee, Phillips and St. Francis Counties). It was then the board's responsibility to submit the results to the State by March 10, 2017. The board chair selected an ad hoc committee which reviewed the applications and recommend to the full board for approval during the March 7, 2017 board meeting.

- 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

Note: Identifying sector chairs and industry councils is being discussed and will be developed. Dates with the partners are also being discussed to define roles and responsibilities.

- 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 grants as they become available.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training - The goal of this employment and training grant is to assist adults, referred by the Department of Human Services (DHS), with the tools they need to gain meaningful employment and/or get their GED or training to become self-sufficient. This grant services Crittenden County residents.

Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT)/Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce (GMACW) - The grant focuses on employer and participant engagement strategies.

Arkansas Sector Partnership (ASP) - The ASP grant targets dislocated workers individuals. It is the responsibility of the staff to determine program eligibility before individuals are referred to the pre-employment (W.O.R.K) training offered by East Arkansas Community College. The ultimate goal is to provide eligible individuals with the tools, skills and training to become self-sufficient.

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.

Qualified applicants with disabilities, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), are invited to request any needed accommodations to participate in the application process covered by area offices. This process includes information related to completing the application, intake/eligibility determination, assessment and testing. All Workforce Centers will be ADA compliant in Eastern Arkansas. In addition, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and Department of Human

Services, Division of Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) are available in the Eastern Arkansas Workforce Centers to serve the needs of workers with disabilities. The Eastern area will:

- Provide training to staff on applicable provisions of the ADA using material jointly developed by the partners and State entities.
- Bring together core program partners to integrate services and supportive services, and leverage resources to improve services to persons with disabilities and other protected groups.
- Explore changes in service delivery design and programs by establishing partnerships, alternate assessments, and programs that better connect education, training, workforce, and supportive services to improve employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities.
- Encourage active engagement with the business sector to identify the skills and support that workers with disabilities need and communicate these needs to the partners, education and training providers, as well as job seekers with disabilities.
- Continue to provide physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities.
- Assess the physical and programmatic accessibility of all our centers and training facilities.
- Work with Department of Career Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) to provide clients with disabilities extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain employment.
- Strive to improve the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities and other protected groups who are unemployed, underemployed, or receiving Social Security disability benefits, by utilizing services available through our local centers to connect them to existing successful career pathways programs.

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.

Adult and DLW employment and training activities will consist primarily of those available through the eligible training provider list. This list will contain certified providers offering training programs relevant to current labor market demands and will be customized for the local area. Dissemination of the provider list through area one-stops and their partners will ensure that providers meet the employment needs of local employers and job seekers. Once sector initiatives are fully implemented, the Eligible Training Provider's List will support the Employers need for training.

Upon determination of customer needs to receive training services, ITAs will be used in all available training programs. Participants will receive an ITA for the training program they have selected through the eligible training provider list to be presented to the individual school.

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

The Shared Work Unemployment Compensation Program provides an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in work force. It allows an employer to divide available work or hours of work among a specific group(s) of employees in lieu of a layoff, and it allows the employees to receive a portion of their unemployment benefits while working reduced hours.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a Federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. Work Opportunity Tax Credit joins other workforce programs that incentivize workplace diversity and facilitate access to good jobs for American workers.

For more information please visit: <https://doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/>

- 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.

The WIOA Title I provider will provide or make an appropriate referral to provide the fourteen required program elements to eligible youth participants in Eastern Arkansas. These services include:

WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS

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

	Element	Implementation
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.	<p>Provision of on-line coursework, one-on-one instruction, peer-to-peer interaction, or in a group setting. Referrals to partners providing educational services and the use of on-line tutorials. The primary goal of local WIOA youth programming is to insure youth completion of a HSD/GED.</p> <p>Clients in need of tutoring will be referred to Adult Education.</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <p>Adult Education Centers enroll 16-17 year-old students into the GED Program once eligibility requirements have been met. In order for 16-17 year olds to participate in educational services provided by Adult Education, they must provide a signed waiver with official seal from their high school along with guardian permission.</p> <p>The process for enrolling 16-17 year-old students is the following: 1.) Intake Application and Identification. 2.) Orientation. 3.) Minimum TABE scores of 8.5-9.5 depending upon county 4.) Guardian permission and signature. 5.) High School waiver form with signature and official seal.</p>

<p>3.</p>	<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"> ✓ basic skill remediation; ✓ supervised work experiences; ✓ pre-employment abilities such as career planning, resume preparation, use of labor market information, completing applications, and interviewing skills attainment; ✓ attainment of core employability/work maturity skills such as dependability, honesty, ✓ problem solving skills, initiative, enthusiasm, team player; ✓ Interpersonal skills, appearance, leadership, and cultural sensitivity; <p>Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) and the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) have youth programs for youth with disabilities that focus on employment. ARS and DSB have Supported Employment Program models that are appropriate for youth with disabilities and the Pre-Employment Transition Program, which serves youth that are also students in an educational program from ages 16 to 21 in the State of Arkansas.</p> <p>The Supported Employment model provides job placement assistance, on-the-job supports and job coaching through a third party vendor that is qualified and monitored through ARS or DSB. Regular meetings and updates are built into this program model. With the Pre-Employment Transition model ARS and DSB provide 5 core services to youth that are students.</p> <p>These services include: self-advocacy, work readiness, work-based learning, counseling on opportunities in post-secondary training, and job exploration. These services can be arranged through third party vendors, schools, or directly through ARS counselors. This program is qualified and monitored by ARS or DSB staff. Additionally, ARS offers a summer work program on the campus of the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) that will train students in work readiness skills and assist them work based learning while on the campus.</p>
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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> <p>ARS and DSB provide occupational skills training to youth with disabilities by arranging for or directly providing financial resources and assistance with entering a training program. Additionally, the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) offers a variety of occupational skills trainings that can be provided on campus to eligible applicants.</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> <p>The Pre-Employment Transition Program offered through ARS and DSB provide soft skills training which includes a focus on social behaviors intended to enhance the development of employment skills for transition age youth by fostering the knowledge and growth of independent living skills, communication, and interpersonal skills to gain understanding of employer expectations related to timeliness and performance on the job.</p> <p>ARS offers the Youth Leadership Forum at on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas which is open to youth with disabilities and designed to foster leadership skills. This is part of a nationwide effort to join youth with disabilities and promote empowerment.</p> <p>ARS will provide or coordinate students with disabilities.</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> <p>ARS and DSB can arrange for supportive services as related to the employment goal of the individual. This process and the types of supports available are detailed in section 3.7.</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.	<p>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</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Youth with disabilities that are receiving educational training can receive Pre-Employment Transition Services through ARS or DSB. One of the core component areas is counseling and guidance on post-secondary opportunities. This service can include exploration of available options, applying to schools, arranging for financial aid and supports to participate in the training. See section 3.7 for a description of the types of supports available for youth with disabilities.</p> <p>Youth are better equipped to compete for jobs with an educational credential. The area Adult Education Centers are available to assist youth aged 16 and 17 that are waived out of high school with earning the General Equivalency Diploma (GED).</p>
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- 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 Maher and Maher in April 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 Maher and Maher 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.

In addition, Apprenticeship is a workforce development career option. It is an employer-driven training model that combines on-the-job training with job related instruction. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) advances the use of apprenticeship as an effective work-based learning approach that builds worker skills and establishes pathways to higher levels of employment and wages. Note: In all instances, a participant's eligibility for WIOA must be established and document prior to the commitment of funds for Registered Apprenticeship programs.

- 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. The Eligible Training Providers list is available online in all workforce centers. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA. Contracts may be used if it reflects 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.

All training providers will complete an online electronic application through the automated Arkansas Consumer Reporting System. All training must be directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in an area to which an individual is willing to relocate. Any training for a participant that is paid for by WIOA funds must be on the Projected Employment Opportunities List for the state or local area. To be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), providers must submit an electronic application to the local board for their approval.

Employer feedback regarding the employment success may also be a considering factor. Demand occupations from neighboring workforce areas may be used as well.

In addition to this process, the local board is working with the Institute for Economic Advancement who will provide specific data that will identify our counties strengths and weakness so we can make the best possible decisions. This information will help the local board align training programs to the needs of industry for the benefit of the jobseeker and employers.

Targeted training opportunities will provide participants with the increased probability of obtaining a good in a high-demand occupation. The increased labor pipeline will provide businesses with the workforce they need to operate and grow their companies throughout the region.

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 will be monitored by the local board's rehabilitation committee at annual intervals to determine compliance with the objectives and tenants of the agreement.

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. An RFP/RFQ notice is placed in a statewide newspaper twice. 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.

In Section 107 of the legislation and in § 678.605 of WIOA Regulations Local Workforce Boards are required to competitively procure the One-Stop Operator role and responsibilities. The Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas has contracted with an independent consultant to assist a Procurement Task Force comprised of Chief Elected Officials in soliciting and selecting a One-Stop Operator and a Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Service Provider. The hiring of an independent contractor to conduct the procurement is required, as the Board is submitting qualifications to compete for the One-Stop Operator and Title I Service Provider role and responsibilities.

To ensure the integrity of the procurement process, the Chief Elected Officials will participate in the review and selection process rather than the Board because the Board is responding to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

- 5.4 Chief Elected Officials on behalf of the Workforce Development Area of Eastern Arkansas, with the release of this Request for Qualifications, are soliciting submittals to identify a single One-Stop Operator and Title I Service Provider for the Eastern Arkansas comprehensive and satellite One-Stop Centers 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 PY16 &17 Performance Goals
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) Negotiated Goals	
Adult	82.5%
Dislocated Worker	77.0%
Youth	75.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) Negotiated Goals	
Adult	78.0%
Dislocated Worker	74.5%
Youth	71.2%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit) Negotiated Goals	
Adult	\$5,842
Dislocated Worker	\$6,400
Credential Attainment Rate Negotiated Goals	
Adult	75.3%
Dislocated Worker	75.0%
Youth	70.0%
Measurable Skill Gains Negotiated Goals	
Adult	Baseline
Dislocated Worker	Baseline
Youth	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers Negotiated Goals	
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 on November 10, 2016 advising that the public had 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 office at 300 West Service Road, West Memphis, AR 72301.

- B. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and

After the public comment period expired on December 9, 2016, there were no comments submitted.

- 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)]

No comments received during the public comment period.

- 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

Section 6: Plan Assurances

Planning Process and Public Comment		References
<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
Required Policies and Procedures		References
<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

☒	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 partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600
☒	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
☒	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)
☒	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
☒	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
☒	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)
☒	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
☒	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
☒	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
☒	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
	Administration of Funds	References
☒	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

☒	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 followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program funds.	WIOA Section 108(b)(15)
☒	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
	Eligibility	References
☒	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**

