



WESTERN MARYLAND CONSORTIUM
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
(WIOA)
STRATEGIC PLAN
PERIOD 2020 – 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014. The Opportunity Act supersedes the Workforce Investment Act (1998). The Opportunity Act is designed to empower local areas and private sector-led workforce Boards by developing a strategic and integrated plan in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials. The Workforce Development Board is required to create a four-year plan that describes the strategies, activities, and programs used to implement WIOA.

WIOA strengthens engagement with the business community to align workforce services and training programs to produce the needed skills and abilities that result in qualified workers meeting the business needs.

The Western Maryland Workforce Development Area is a three-county workforce development area that includes Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties and is part of the American Job Center network. The Western Maryland Workforce Development Board (WDB) is a volunteer Board whose members are nominated by the Board and appointed by the Executive Council. WDB works throughout the community, bringing employers, job seekers, youth, labor groups, educators, training providers, and other organizations to find and fund solutions to workforce challenges.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and public health crisis, this Local Board has been operating within Governor Hogan's Executive Orders and the declared State of emergency, our County Executive's orders. Procedures and policies referenced in this plan may be amended to effectively reflect the State of Emergency Declaration and any public health orders. The local workforce system will maintain flexibility and ensure accessibility of services and programs.

<http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi4-20.pdf>

Section 1: Economic Analysis

(A) An analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations¹ and the employment needs of businesses in those industry sectors and occupations.² The analysis should identify local priority industries based on employer (and WIOA partner) input as well as how the Local Board plans to maximize opportunities for sustainable employment through those local industry priorities and needs.

Regional & Local Economy of Western Maryland

Western Maryland is consists of Washington, Allegany, and Garrett counties. The Mason-Dixon line bounds the region to the North, Preston County, West Virginia, and the Potomac River to the South. The Washington metropolitan area is generally considered its eastern border, though some organizations stretch the region further east.

Western Maryland is much more rural than the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan Area, where most of the State's population lives, and is noted for its mountainous terrain. The area is generally regarded as part of Appalachia, with the extreme western section having more of an affinity to Pittsburgh than the rest of the State. Washington, Allegany, and Garrett counties are part of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Western Maryland Economic Overview 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has been marked as an immense public health crisis and an economic problem. Lockdowns and social distancing caused many individuals to lose their jobs, seek alternative employment, or file for unemployment. The COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020 and has been marked by an immense public health crisis and an economic crisis. Lockdowns and social distancing measures caused many individuals to lose their jobs and seek alternative employment. From March 2020 to April 2020, Allegany County's unemployment rate jumped to 14.1%, Garrett County to 13.2%, and Washington County to 12.1%. Western Maryland Unemployment rate was higher than the National and Maryland's unemployment rate. The drop in employment was most concentrated throughout the food, travel, lodging, arts, and entertainment industries. These positions entail person-to-person interaction and are not telework positions.

As of 2020, the region's population has declined by 0.2 since 2015, falling by 557. Moreover, the population is expected to decrease by 0.1 % between 2020 and 2025, losing 212.

From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 2.8% in 3 Maryland Counties, from 116,631 to 113 376. This Change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2%by 9.0%. As the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 59.8% to 53.9% between 2015 and 2020.

Concerning educational attainment, 11.4% of the selected regions' residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (7.7% below the national average), and 8.7% hold an Associate's Degree (0.6% above the national average).

Based on labor market information, the top three industries of 2020 are Health care and Social Services, Government, and Retail Trade. Western Maryland's growth is above the national average in all three industries.

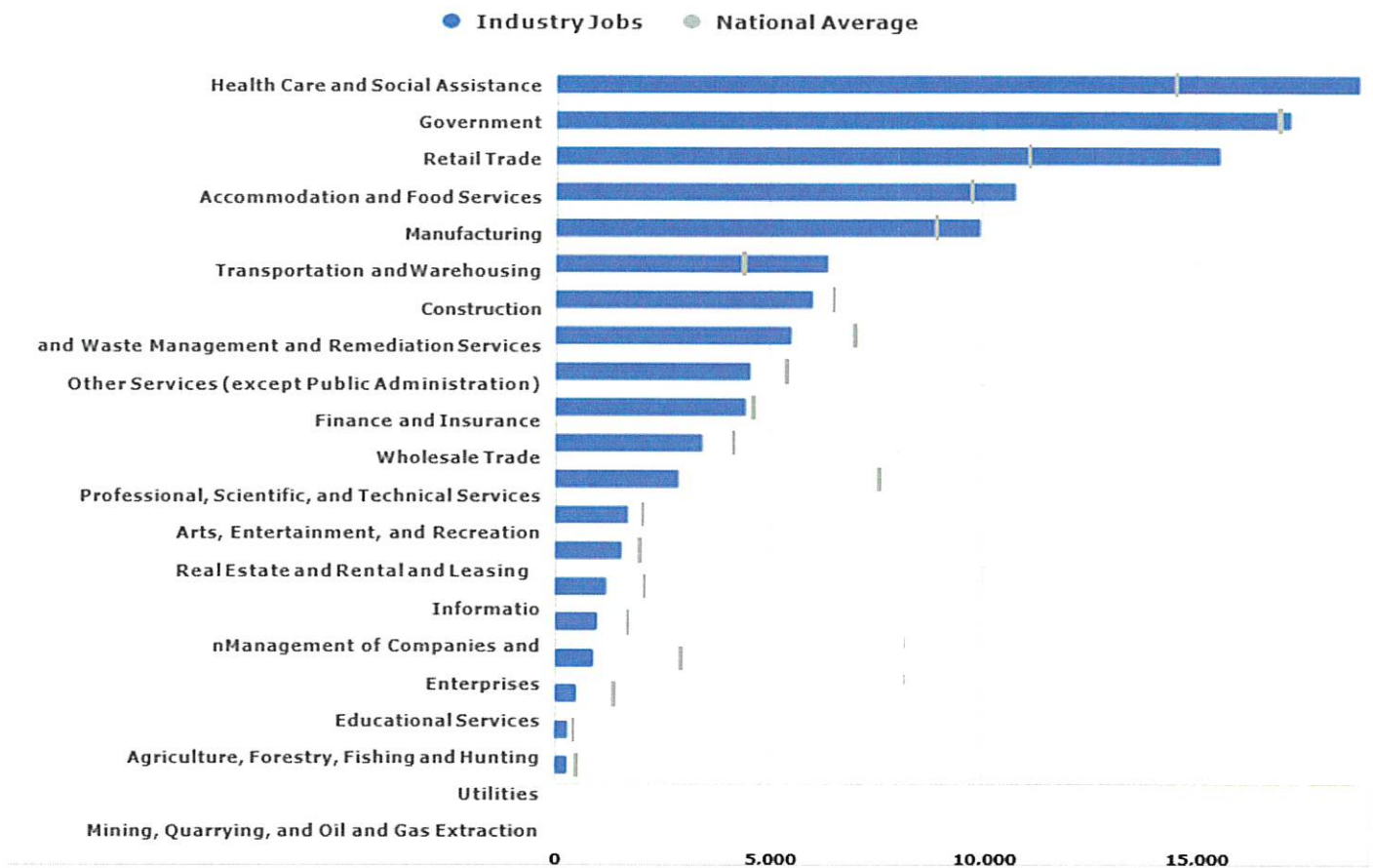
The Top Industry LQ is Transportation and warehousing, Retail Trade, Health Care, and Social Assistance.

Population	Total Regional Employment	Av. Earning Per Job (2020)
250,401	113,376	\$51.9K

Emsi Q4 2020 Data set/ www.exonomicmodeling.com

².

Largest Industries



The local economic conditions have significantly been dictated and impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Hospitality, food service, and retail have been the hardest hit with layoffs and furloughs. Economic development in all three counties continues to help businesses access local, state, and federal grants, loans, and workforce development programs.

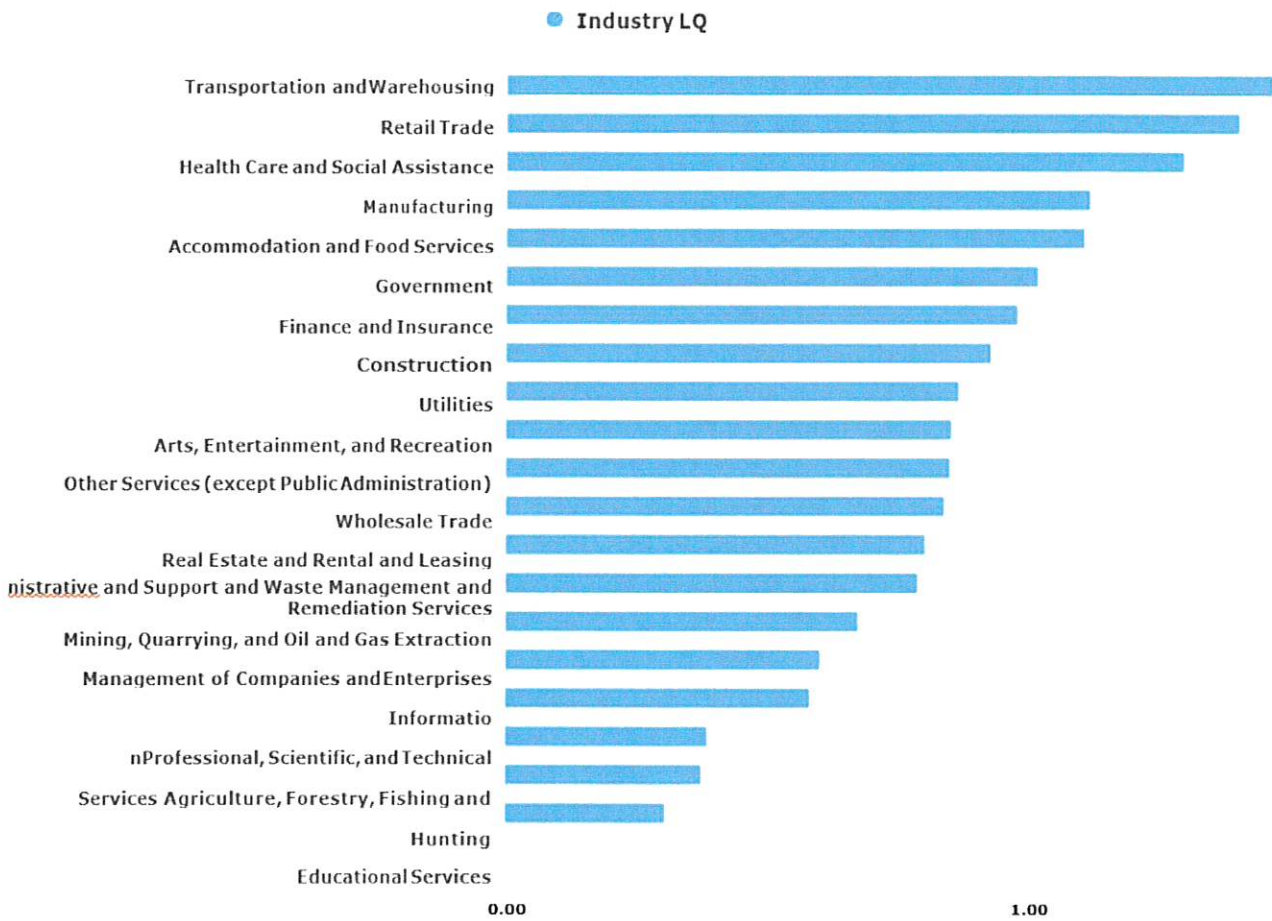
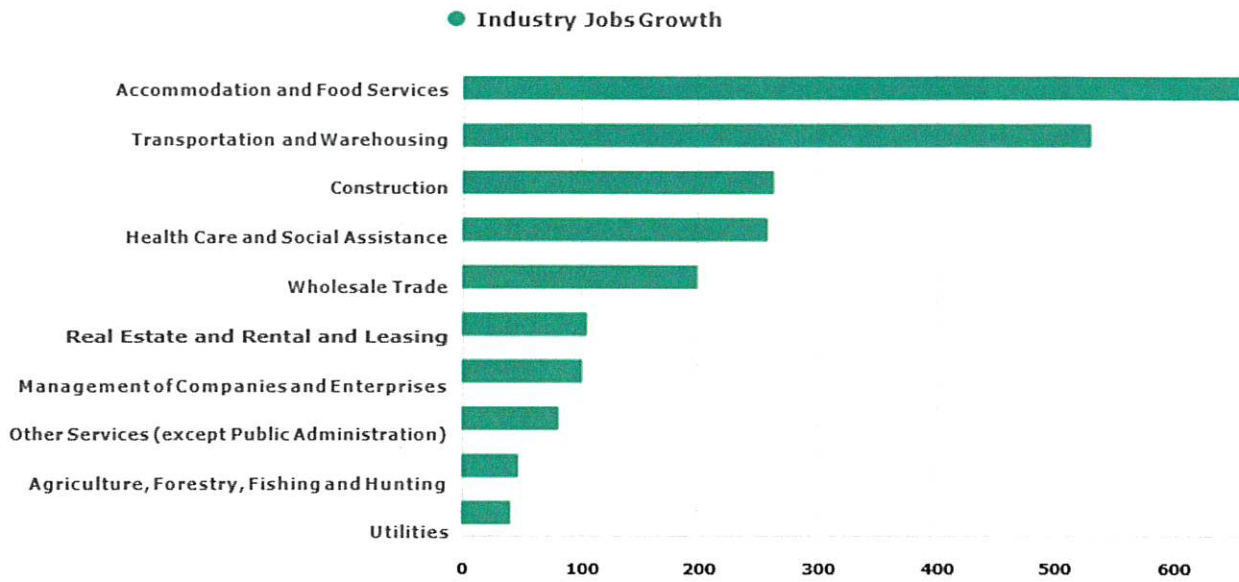
When reviewing the region, commonalities do emerge that allow for collaborative efforts in workforce development strategic planning. In all three counties, the economy is focused on the industry Sectors of Trade, Transportation, and Warehousing, Education and Health Services, Manufacturing, and Leisure/Hospitality. By looking at these sector groupings, strategies have been developed that complement the skill sets necessary for feeding the workforce pipeline.

Washington County has become a well-established crossroads and hub location for distribution and logistics because of the intersection of I-70 and I-81. Garrett County has a well-developed transportation network, creating easy customer access. U.S. Interstate 68 runs through the northern portion of the County and intersects with U.S. Route 79 to the west and U.S. Interstate 70 to the east, which provides easy access to Interstate 81. U.S. Routes 40, 50, and 219, a spur of U.S. Route 19, also run through the County.

The largest Major occupation group in Western Maryland is Health Care and Social Services, Government, and Retail Trade.

The major groups with the largest LQs in the region are LQ for Western Maryland is Transportation and Warehousing, Retail Trade and Health Care and Social Assistance, with Manufacturing coming in fourth.

Top Growing Industries



Allegany County Overview

As of 2020, the region's population has declined by 3.4% since 2015. The population is expected to decrease by 2.5% between 2020 and 2025, losing 1,718.

From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 2.7% in Allegany County, MD, from 31,644 to 30,799. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2% by 8.9% in Allegany County, from 31,644 to 30,799. The change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2 % by 8.9%. As the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 51.9% to 49.1% between 2015 and 2020.

Concerning educational attainment, 9.7 of Allegany Count residents possess a bachelor's degree (9,4% below the national average), and 9,6 hold an Associate Degree (1.4% above the national average).

The top three industries in 2020 are restaurants and other Eating Places, General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, and Educational and Hospitals (local government).

Population (2020)

69,977

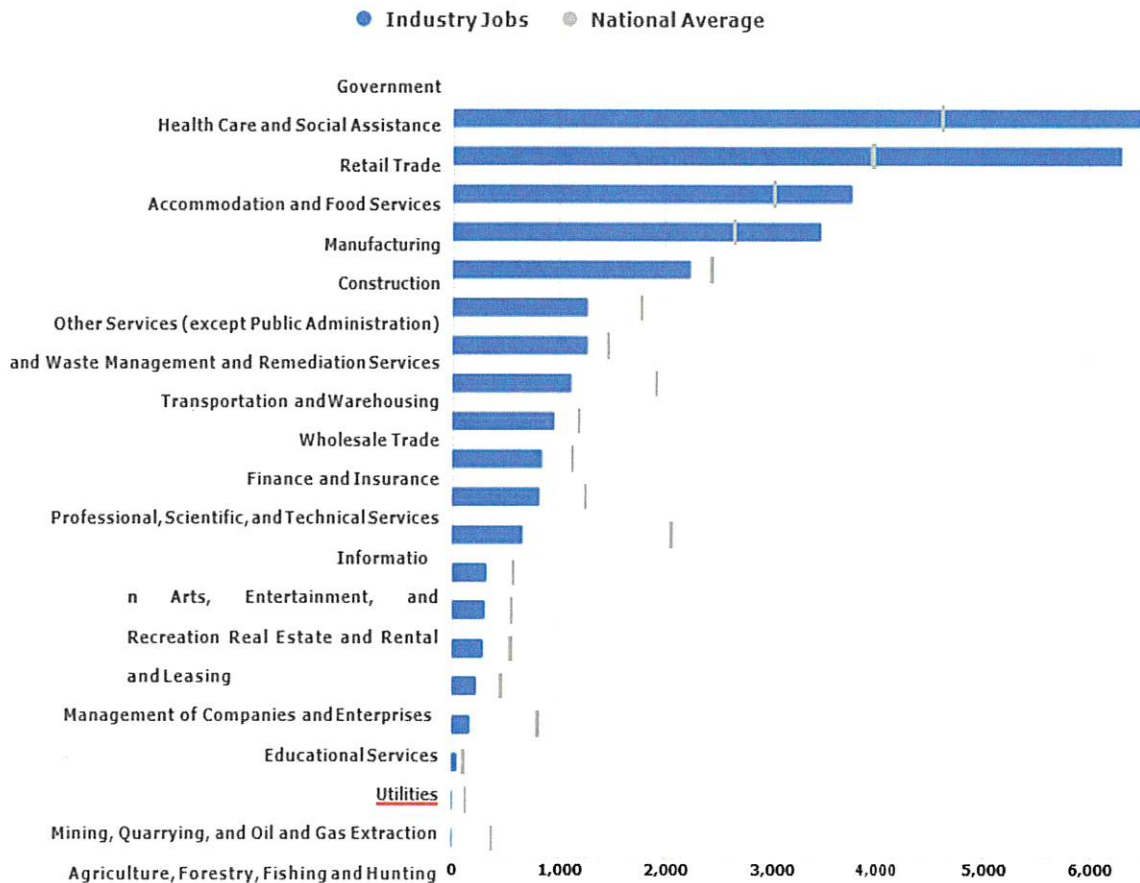
Total Regional Employment

30,799

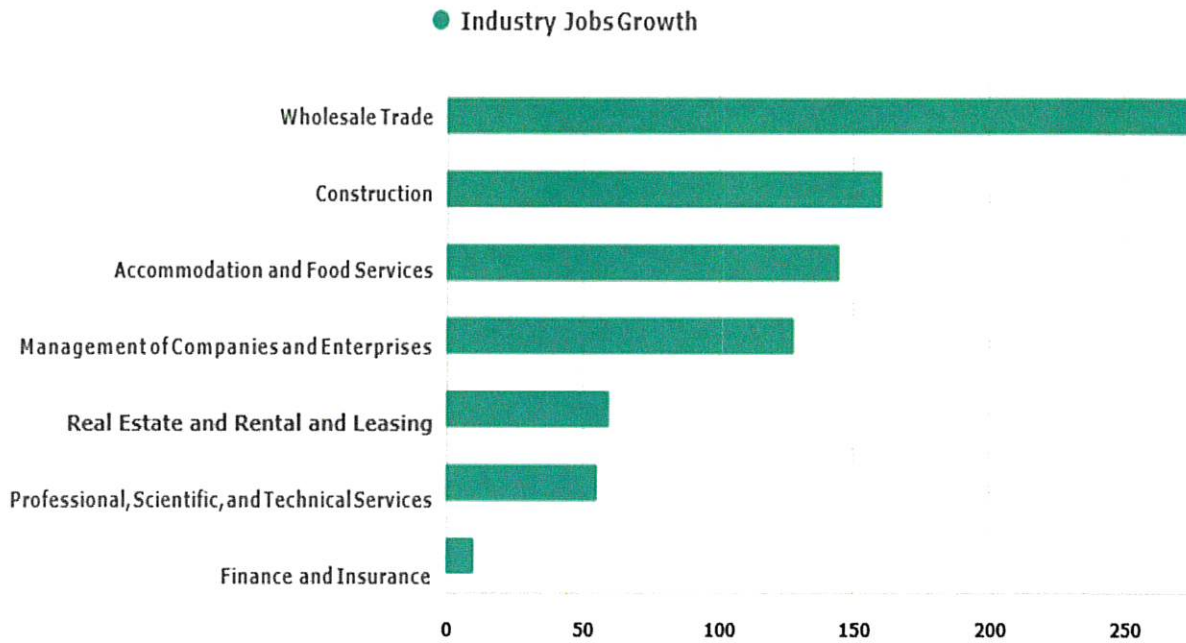
Median Household Inome

\$44.1K – (2018)

Largest Industries



Top Growing Industries



Garrett County Overview

As of 2020, the region’s population has declined by 1.8% since 2015, falling by 516. The population is expected to decrease by 1.3% between 2020 and 2025, losing 366

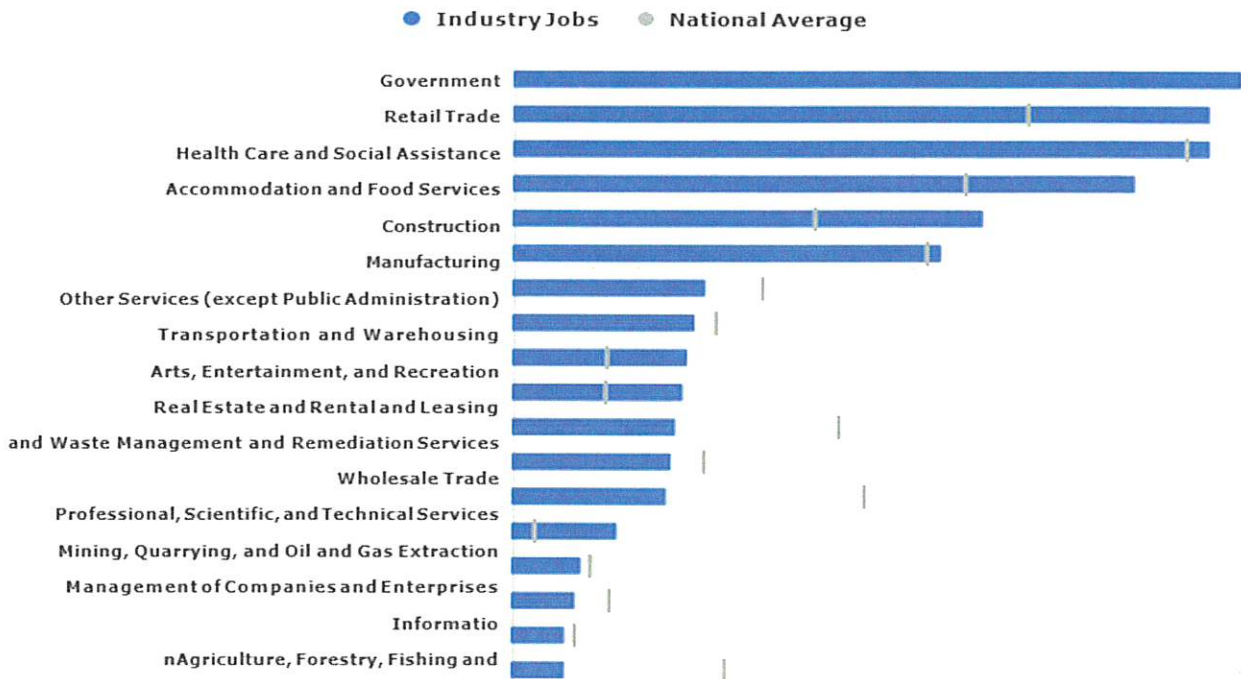
From 2015 to 2020, jobs increased by 1.2% in Garrett County, from 13,028 to 13,190. This change fell short of the national growth rate 6.2% by 5.0%. As the number of jobs increased, the labor force participation rate decreased from 63.3% to 57.2 between 2015 and 2020.

Concerning educational attainment, 10.8% of Garrett County residents possess a Bachelors's Degree (8.3% below the national average), and 8.8% hold an Associate’s Degree (0.7% above the national average.)

The top three industries in 2020 are Restaurants and Other eating Places, Education and Hospitals (local Government), and Excluding Education and Hospitals.

Population	Total Regional Employment	Median Household Income
28,909	13,190	\$49.6K – (2018)

Largest Industries



Top Growing Industries



Washington County Overview

As of 2020, the region’s population increased by 1.6% since 2015, growing by 2,458. The population is expected to increase by 1.2% between 2020 and 2025, adding 1,872.

From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 3.6% in Washington County from 71,960 to 69,387. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2% by 9.8%. As the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 63.1% to 55.5% between 2015 and 2020.

Concerning educational attainment, 12.3% of Washington County residents possess a bachelor’s degree (6.8% below the national average), and 8.3% hold an associate degree (0.1% above the national average.).

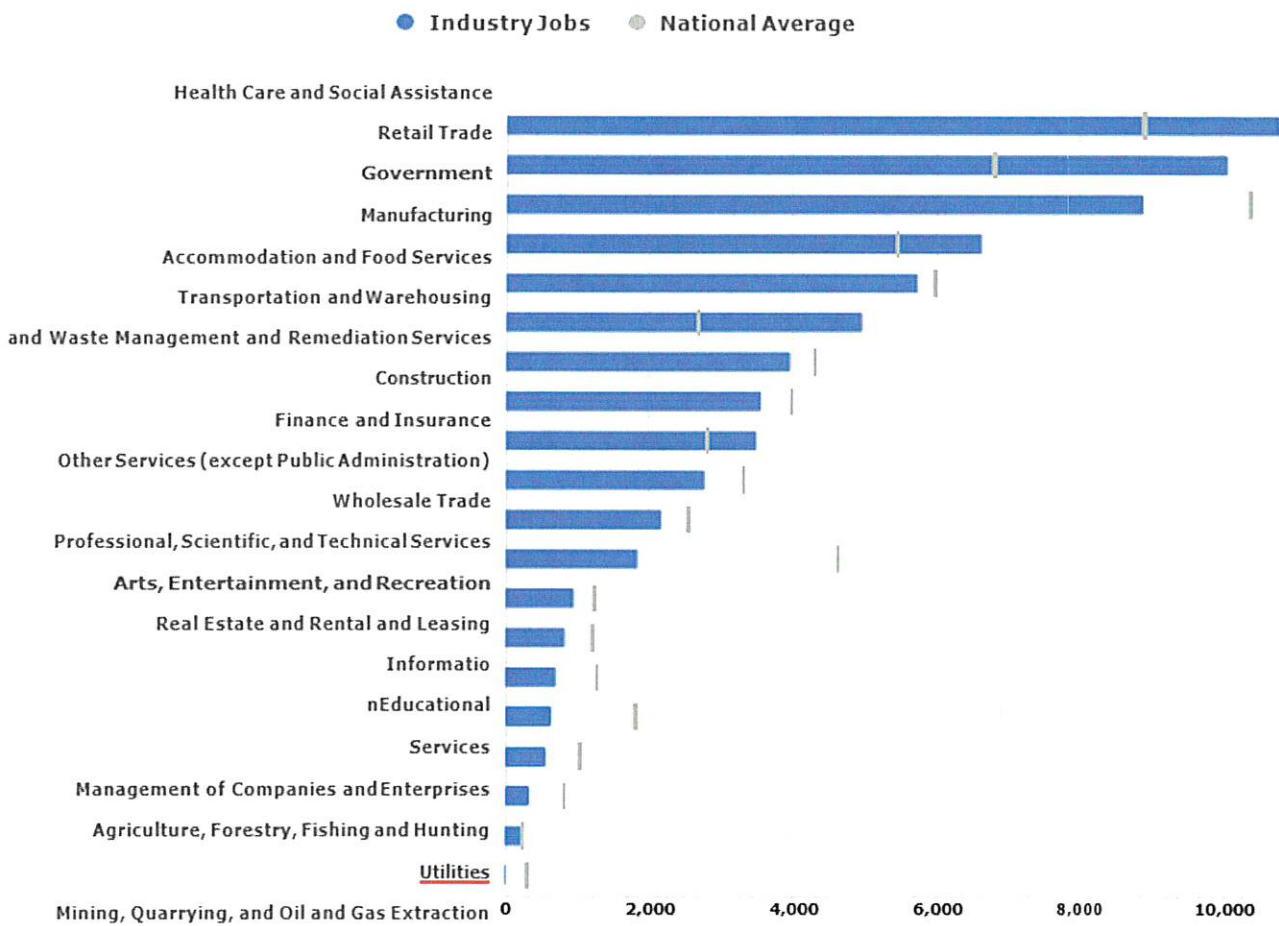
The top three industries in 2020 are Restaurants and other Eating places, Education and Hospitals (local Government), and Couriers and Express Delivery Services.

Washington County is a prime location for many key industries, and we also welcome entrepreneurs at heart who come equipped with innovative ideas. Washington County’s government, business, and community organizations partner to help diversify the local economy by providing specialized support to industries that have been identified to benefit from the area’s assets.

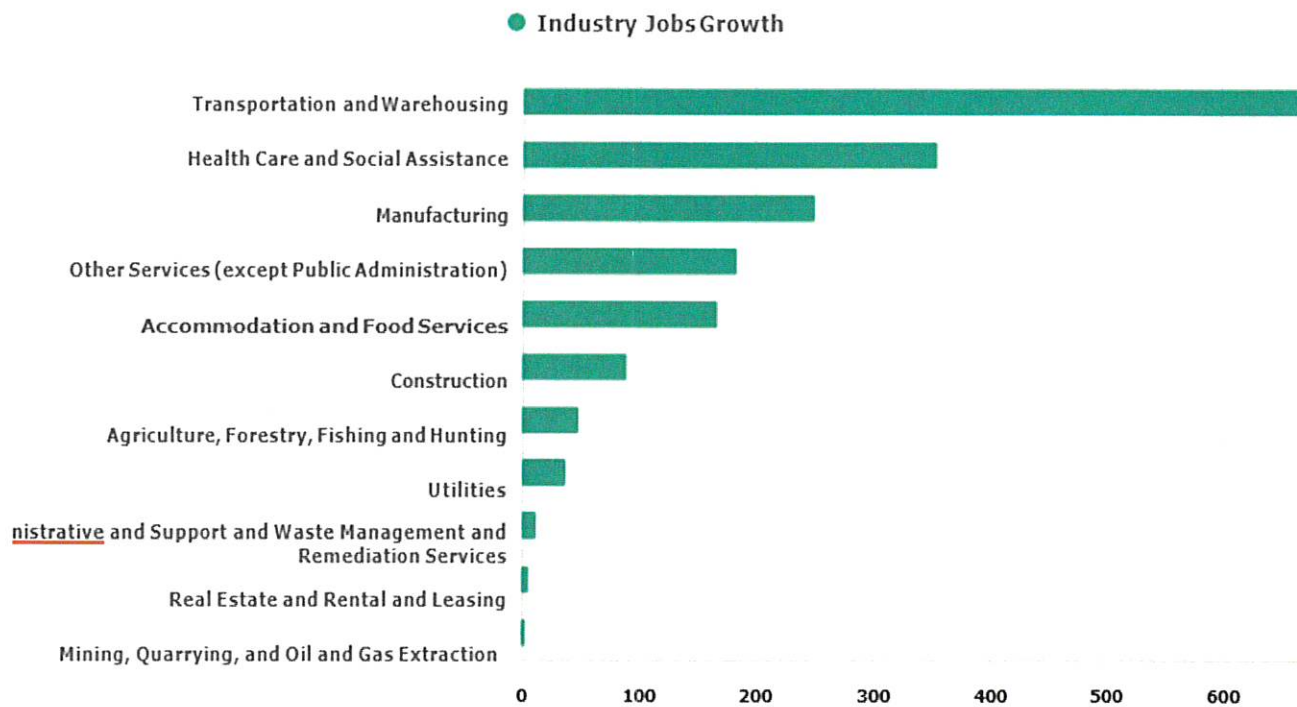
The top growing industries in Washington County is Transportation and Warehousing are being built, such as Amaxon (3 Warehouses), . Many

Population (2020)	Total Regional Employment	Median Household Income
151,516	69,387	\$59.7K (2018)

Largest Industries



Top Growing Industries



Section 2 – Strategic Planning to Maximize the Earning Capacity of Marylanders

The vision for the State of Maryland, as laid out in the State Workforce Plan and the *Benchmarks of Success*, is to increase the earning capacity of Marylanders by maximizing access to employment, skills and credentialing, life management skills, and supportive services. The vision requires the State to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's workforce system. The first four Strategic Goals of the *Benchmarks of Success* are to:

- (A) Increase the earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by maximizing access to employment;
- (B) Increase the earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by maximizing access to and use of skills and credentialing;
- (C) Increase the earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by maximizing access to and use of life management skills; and
- (D) Increase the earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by eliminating barriers to employment.

This section of the plan should speak to the first four Strategic Goals of the *Benchmarks of Success* and include a description of the strategic planning elements consisting of –

- (A) An analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the needs of the businesses in the Local Area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.³
- (B) An analysis of the workforce in the Local Area, including current labor force employment (and

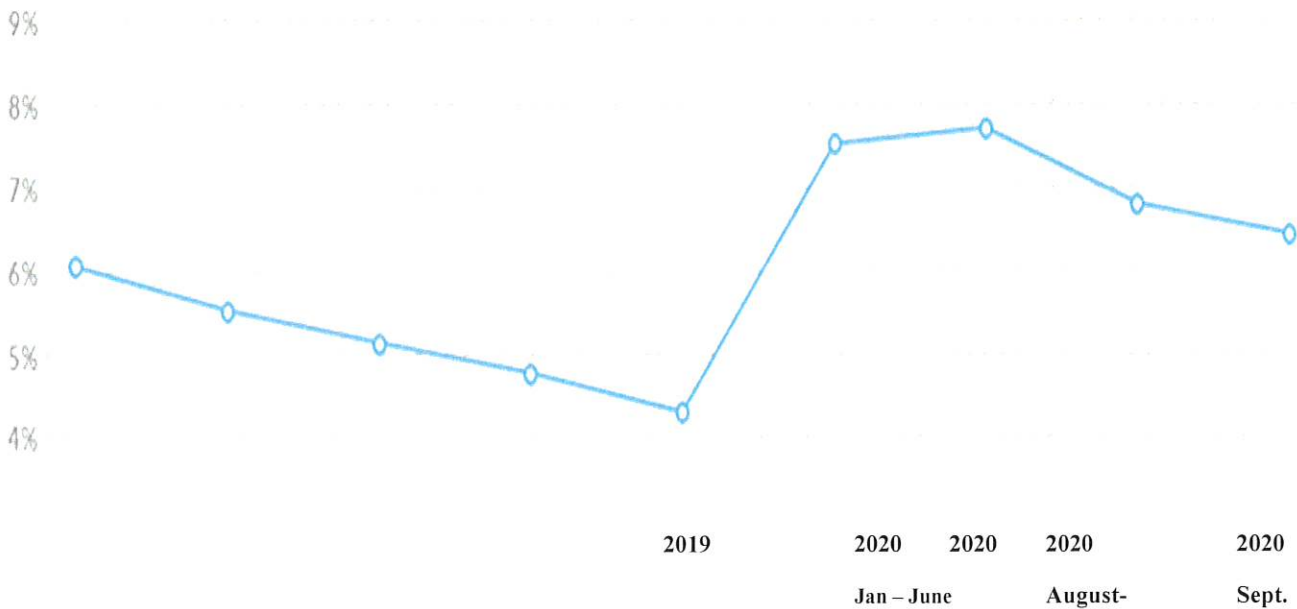
unemployment) data,⁴ information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the Local Area,⁵ including individuals with barriers to employment.

Note: Individuals with barriers to employment, as defined by the WIOA and Maryland include the following:

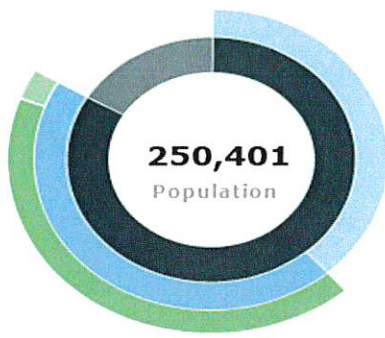
- *Displaced homemakers;*
- *Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers;*
- *Ex-offenders;*
- *Homeless individuals;*
- *Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;*
- *Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities;*
- *Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act;*
- *Individuals who are English language learners;*
- *Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed;*
- *Individuals who have low levels of literacy;*
- *Individuals without a high school diploma;*
- *Low-income individuals, including TANF and SNAP recipients;*

Western Maryland

Western Maryland had a September 2020 unemployment rate of 6.42%, increasing from 6.04 % five years before.



Western Maryland Labor Force Breakdown 2020



	Population
● Total Working Age Population	208,977
● Not in Labor Force (15+)	96,367
● Labor Force	112,610
● Employed	105,382
● Unemployed	7,228
● Under 15	41,424

The table below shows the top advised job skills in job openings that were advertised in Western Maryland. Customer Service was the most needed service, along with being Flexible and problem-Solving.

Rank	Advised Detailed Job Skill	Advised Skill Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	<u>2,390</u>
2	Must be flexible	Basic Skills	<u>2,072</u>
3	Problem solving	Basic Skills	<u>684</u>
4	Attention to detail	Basic Skills	<u>629</u>
5	Time management	Basic Skills	<u>517</u>
6	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	<u>429</u>
7	Positive attitude	Interpersonal Skills	<u>413</u>
8	Critical thinking	Basic Skills	<u>379</u>
9	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation	Registered Nurse (RN) Skills	<u>341</u>
10	Work independently	Basic Skills	<u>333</u>

The top three job openings in Western Maryland are Registered Nurses, retail salespersons and laborers, and Freight Stock and material movers hand.

Rank	Occupation	Job Openings	Green Job Count
1	Registered Nurses	<u>237</u>	0
2	Retail Salespersons	<u>119</u>	0
3	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	<u>108</u>	1
4	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<u>89</u>	14
5	Nursing Assistants	<u>83</u>	0
6	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	<u>83</u>	0
7	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	<u>71</u>	0
8	Customer Service Representatives	<u>61</u>	6
9	Physical Therapists	<u>61</u>	0
10	Stock Clerks- Stockroom, Warehouse, or Storage Yard	<u>53</u>	0

Area Name	Job Openings	Green Job Count	Candidates	Candidates per Job
Western Maryland Workforce Region, MD	<u>4,731</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>6,561</u>	1.39

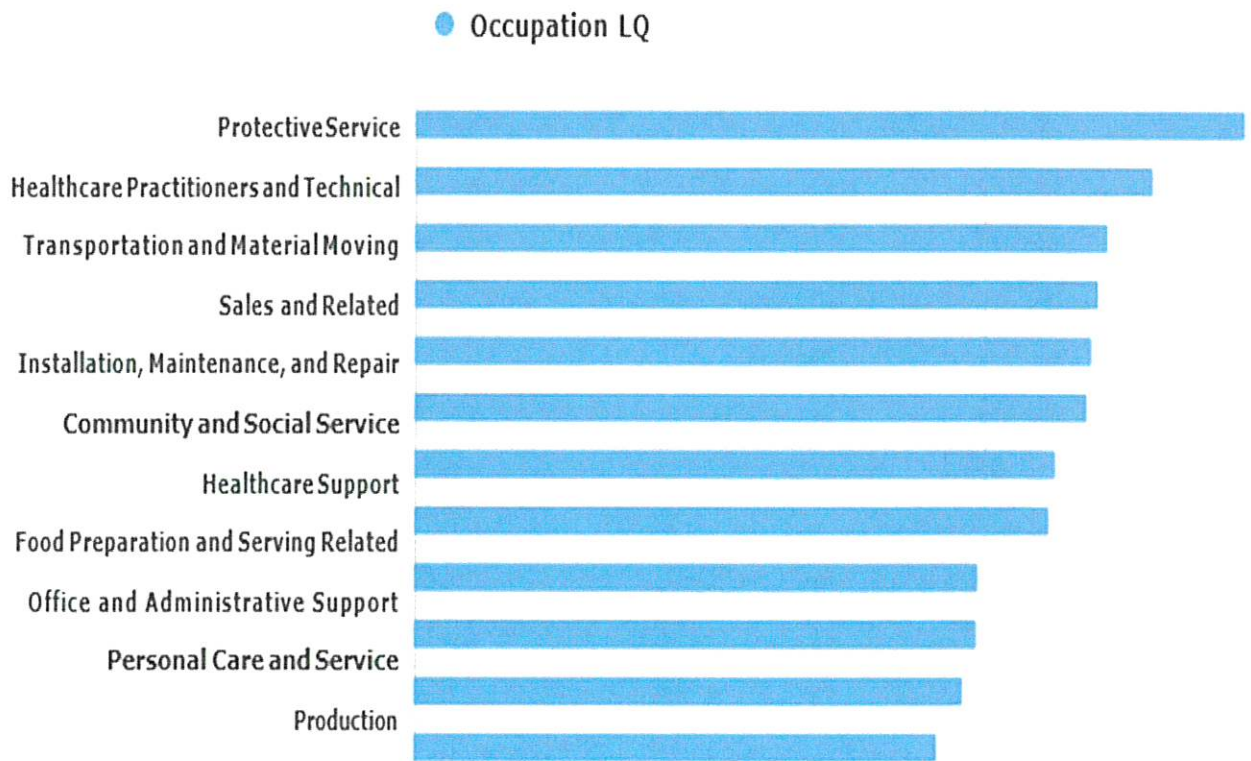
This section shows the top advertised detailed tools and technologies found in job openings advertised online in the Western Maryland Workforce Region.

Rank	Advertised Detailed Tool or Technology	Advertised Tool and Technology Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Scanners	Scanners	<u>1,329</u>
2	Industrial trucks	Hand Trucks or Accessories	<u>1,268</u>
3	Powered industrial trucks	Powered Platform Truck	<u>1,268</u>
4	Refrigerators	General Purpose Refrigerators or Refrigerator Freezers	<u>1,264</u>
5	Forklift	Forklifts	<u>674</u>
6	Microsoft (MS) Office	Office Suite Software	<u>429</u>
7	Motor vehicles	Automobiles or Cars	<u>375</u>
8	Ladders	Ladders	<u>327</u>
9	Personal protective equipment	Hazardous Material Protective Apparel	<u>265</u>
10	Pallet Jack	Pallet Trucks	<u>196</u>

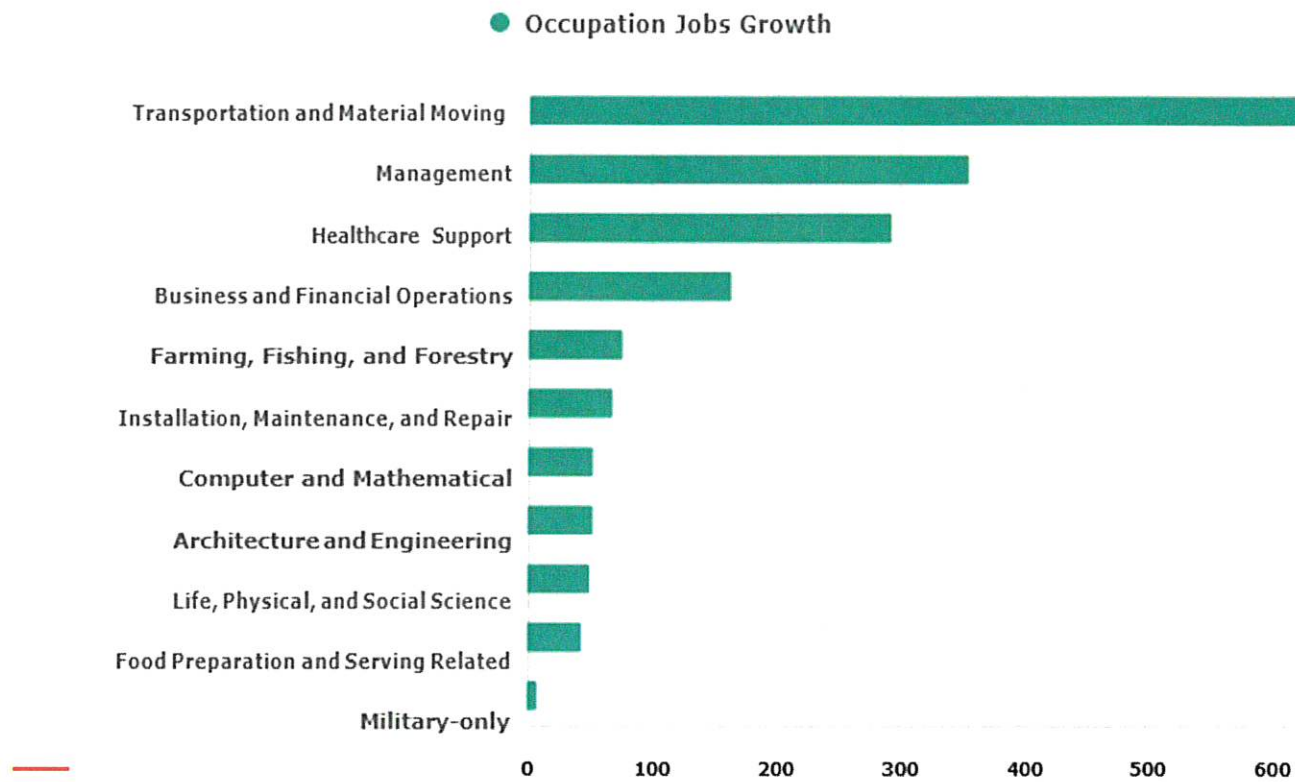
This section shows the industries with the highest job openings advertised in the Western Maryland Region.

Rank	Industry	Job Openings
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	<u>962</u>
2	Retail Trade	<u>492</u>
3	Manufacturing	<u>273</u>
4	Accommodation and Food Services	<u>193</u>
5	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	<u>184</u>
6	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	<u>175</u>
7	Transportation and Warehousing	<u>167</u>
8	Wholesale Trade	<u>142</u>
9	Finance and Insurance	<u>82</u>
10	Educational Services	<u>59</u>

Using the occupational growth in combination with LQ, Eight major occupations clusters were identified for Western Maryland.

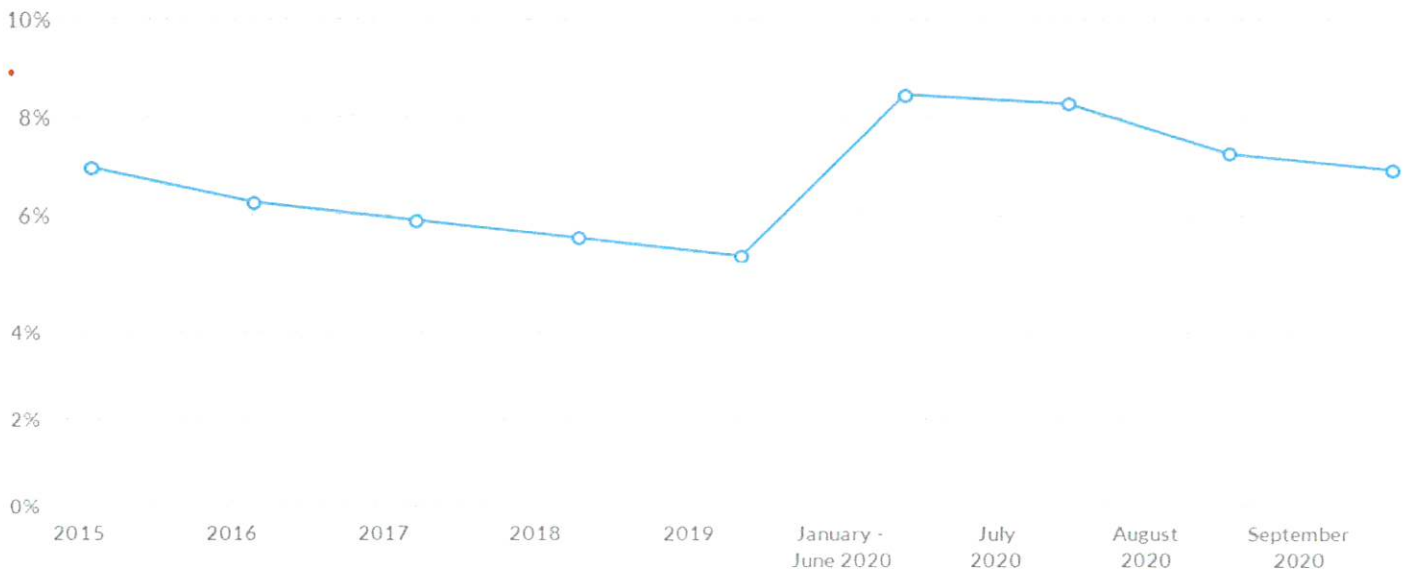


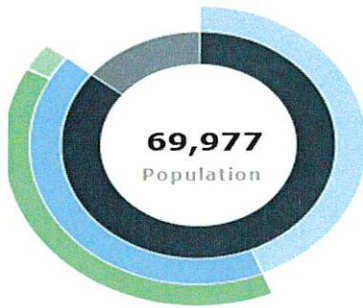
Below is a chart showing the top occupation jobs growth. Transportation and Material Moving is number one.



Allegany County

Allegany County has a September 2020 unemployment rate of 6.93%, decreasing from 6.96% 5 years before.





	Population
● Total Working Age Population	59,961
● Not in Labor Force (15+)	30,537
● Labor Force	29,424
● Employed	27,384
● Unemployed	2,040
● Under 15	10,015

The table below shows the number of job openings advertised online, green jobs, and advertised salary data in Allegany County, MD in 2020 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Area	Time Period	Job Openings	Green Job Count	Mea
<u>Allegany County, MD</u>	<u>2020</u>	5,340	58	

This section shows the top advertised certification groups on the job openings advertised in Allegany County.

Rank	Advertised Certification Group	Advertised Certification Sub-Category	Job Opening Match Count
1	American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications	Nursing	<u>594</u>
2	Nursing Credentials and Certifications	Nursing	<u>589</u>
3	Commercial Drivers License (CDL)	Ground Transportation	<u>54</u>
4	Social Worker Credentials & Certifications	Social and Human Services	<u>26</u>
5	National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT)	Fire Rescue	<u>25</u>
6	American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Certifications	Laboratory and Research	<u>19</u>
7	State Licensed Counselors	Counseling	<u>10</u>
8	American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) Certifications	Nursing	<u>10</u>
9	National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) Certifications	Medical Professional	<u>9</u>
10	American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Certifications	Healthcare - All Other	<u>9</u>

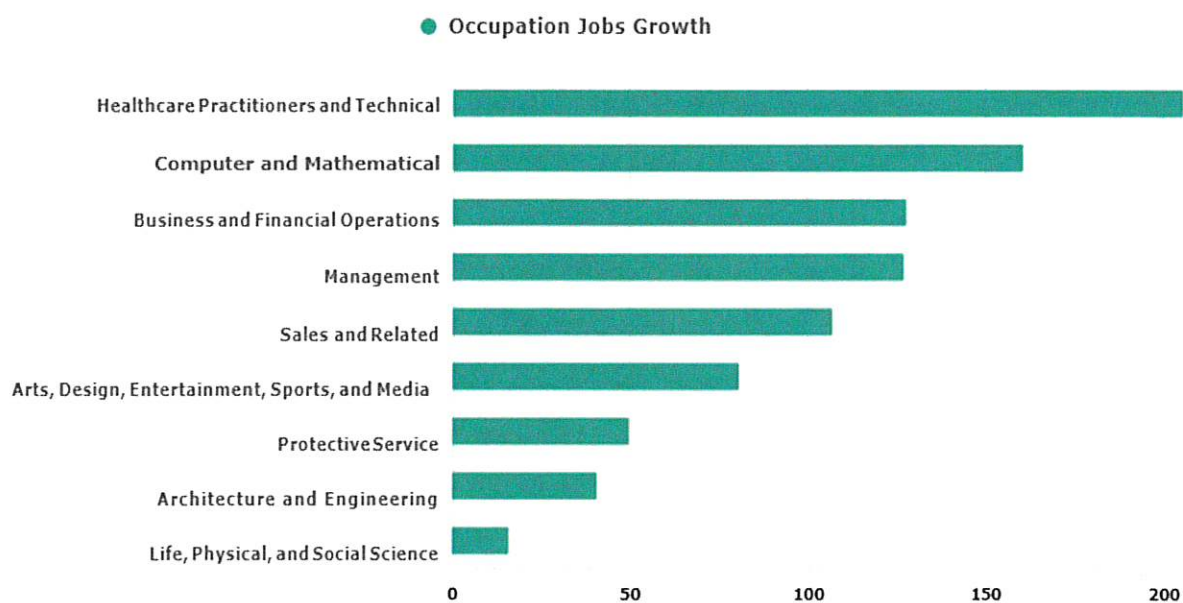
This section shows the minimum level of education requested by employers on job openings online in Allegany County.

Rank	Education Level	Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings	Gr
1	No Minimum Education Requirement	<u>19</u>	1.89%	
2	Less than High School	0	N/A	
3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	<u>115</u>	11.45%	
4	1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	<u>1</u>	0.10%	
5	2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	<u>2</u>	0.20%	
6	Vocational School Certificate	<u>4</u>	0.40%	
7	Associate's Degree	<u>3</u>	0.30%	
8	Bachelor's Degree	<u>15</u>	1.49%	
9	Master's Degree	<u>3</u>	0.30%	
10	Doctorate Degree	0	N/A	
11	Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	0	N/A	
12	Not Specified	<u>842</u>	83.86%	

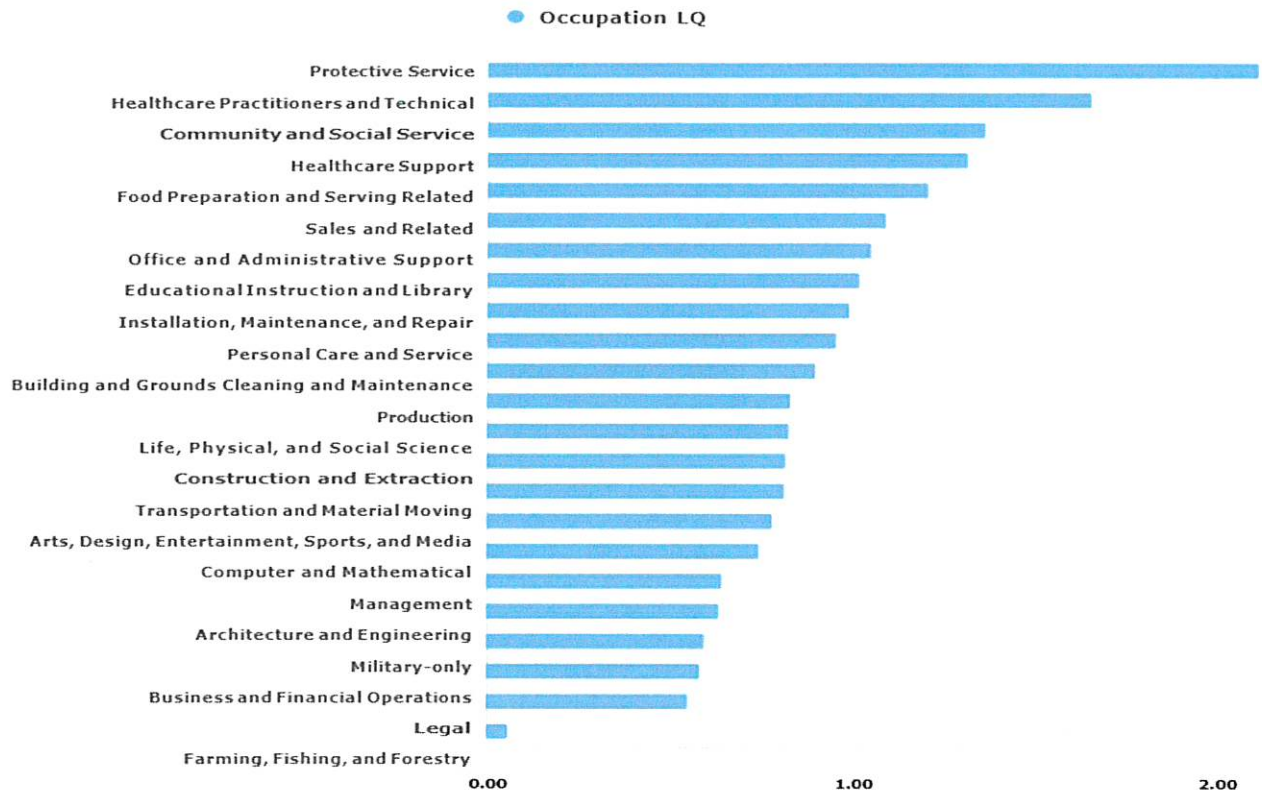
In-Demand/Emerging Occupations

Using the occupational growth in combination with LQ, eight (9) major occupations clusters were identified for Allegany County, Maryland

Top Growing Occupations

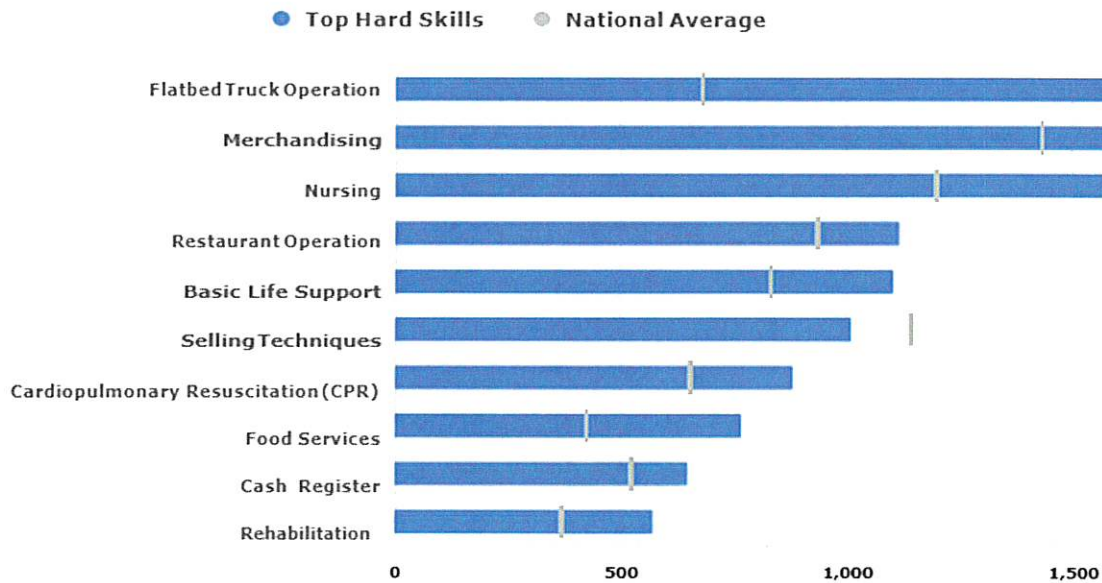


Top Occupation LQ



In-Demand Skills

Allegany County passes the national average in 9 In-Demand Skills; truck operators, merchandising, and nursing are the top three.



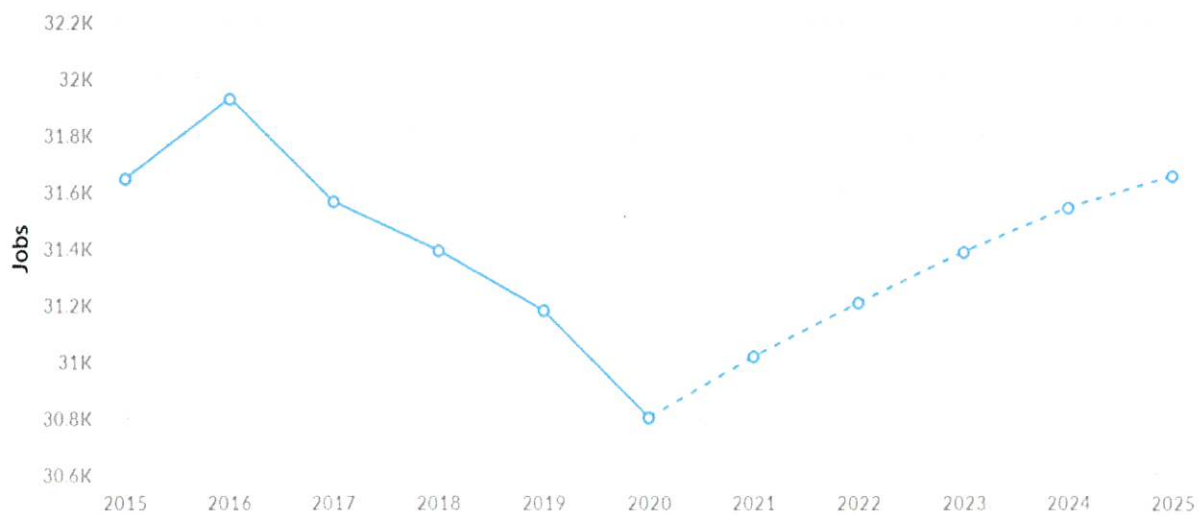
Educational Attainment

Concerning educational attainment, 9.7% of Allegany County, MD residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (9.4% below the national average), and 9.6% hold an Associate's Degree (1.4% above the national average).

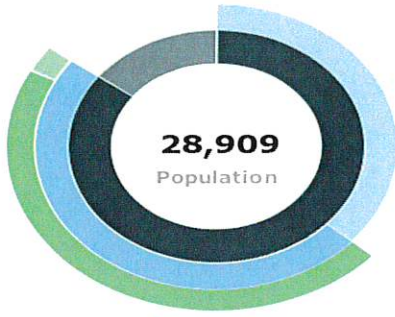


Job Trends

From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 2.7% in Allegany County, MD from 31,644 to 30,799. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2% by 8.9%.



Garrett County



	Population
● Total Working Age Population	24,643
● Not in Labor Force (15+)	10,545
● Labor Force	14,098
● Employed	13,331
● Unemployed	767
● Under 15	4,266

The table below shows the number of job openings advertised online, green jobs, and advertised salary data in Garrett County, MD in 2020 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Area	Time Period	Job Openings	Green Job Count
<u>Garrett County, MD</u>	<u>2020</u>	1,938	21

Garrett County had a September 2020 unemployment rate of 5.44%, decreasing from 6.31% 5 years.



This section shows the top advertising certification groups found in job openings advertised online in Garrett County.

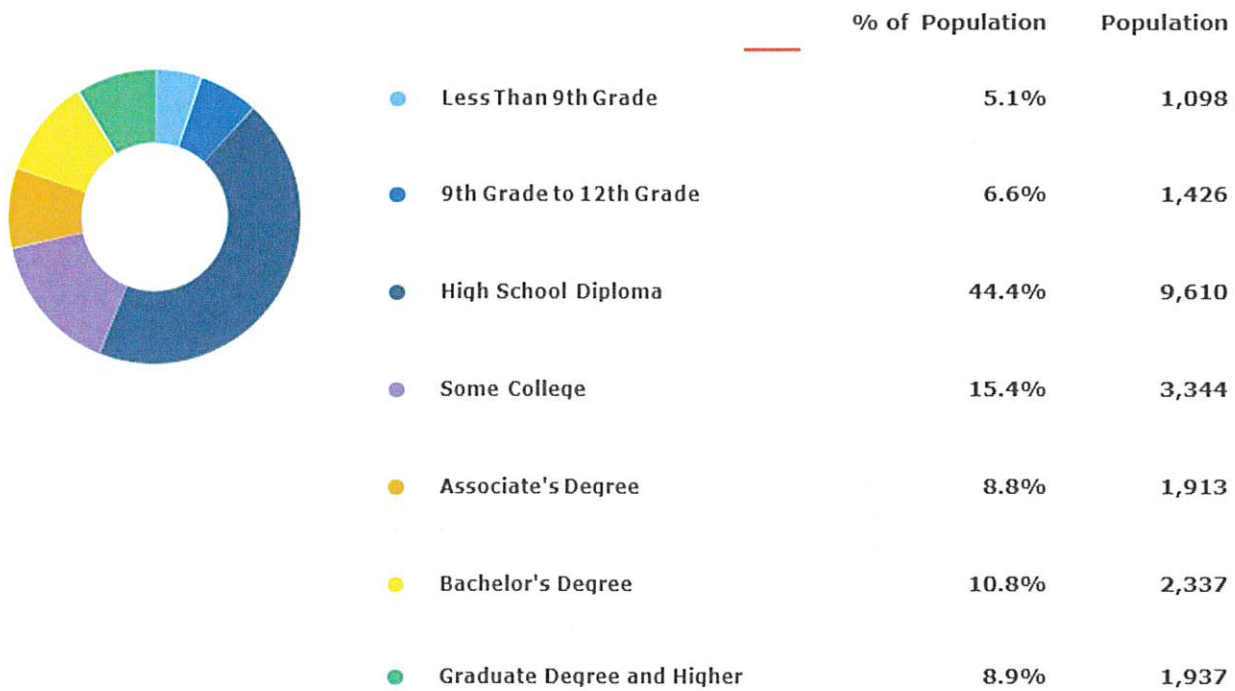
Rank	Advertised Certification Group	Advertised Certification Sub-Category	Job Opening Match Count
1	Nursing Credentials and Certifications	Nursing	<u>83</u>
2	American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications	Nursing	<u>26</u>
3	Commercial Drivers License (CDL)	Ground Transportation	<u>22</u>
4	Board of Christian Life Coaching (BCLC) Specialist Certifications	Religious Workers	<u>3</u>
5	National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Certifications	Nursing	<u>3</u>
6	CompTIA Certifications	Information Technology - All Other	<u>2</u>
7	Addiction Professionals Certification Board	Counseling	<u>2</u>
8	Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)	Pharmaceutical	<u>2</u>
9	Insurance Agent Licenses	Insurance Services	<u>1</u>
10	ASE Parts Specialist Certifications	Automotive	<u>1</u>

This section shows employers' minimum level of education on job openings advertised online in Garrett County.

Rank	Education Level	Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings
1	No Minimum Education Requirement	<u>13</u>	5.83%
2	Less than High School	0	N/A
3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	<u>29</u>	13.00%
4	3 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	<u>2</u>	0.90%
5	Vocational School Certificate	0	N/A
6	Associate's Degree	0	N/A
7	Bachelor's Degree	<u>2</u>	0.90%
8	Master's Degree	0	N/A
9	Doctorate Degree	<u>2</u>	0.90%
10	Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	<u>1</u>	0.45%
11	Not Specified	<u>174</u>	78.03%

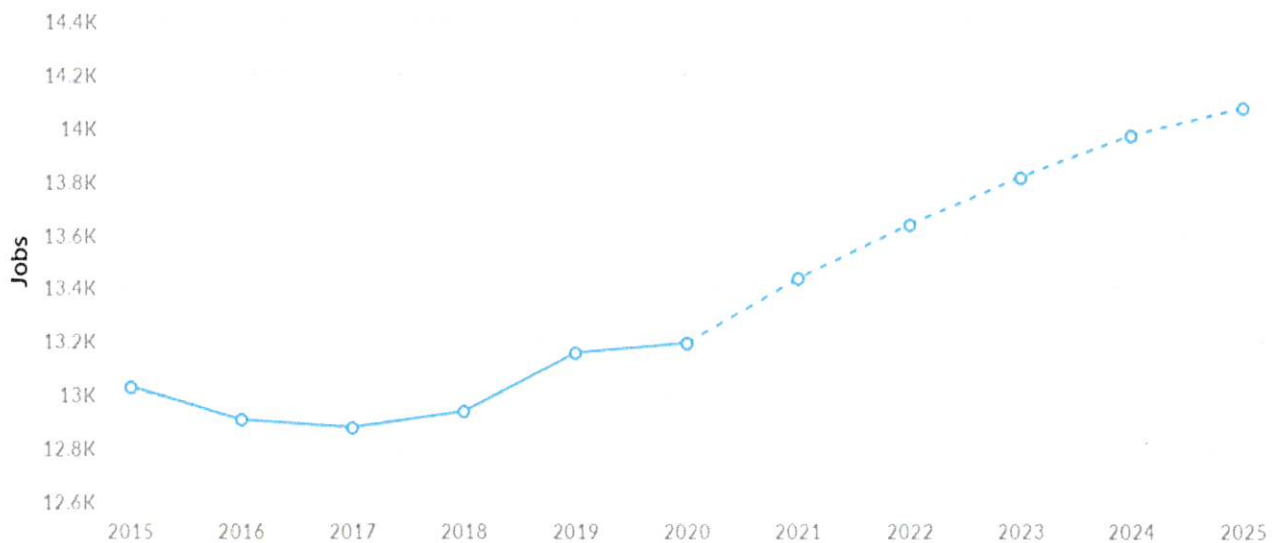
Educational Attainment

Garrett County residents with a Bachelor’s Degree are 10.8% (8.3% below the national average), and 8.8% hold an Associate’s Degree (0.7% above the national average).



Job Trends

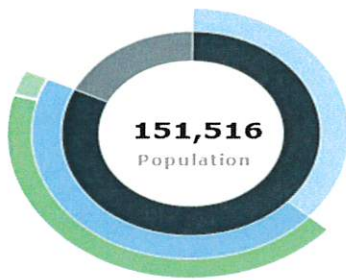
Jobs increased by 1.2 % in Garret County from 2015 to 2020, from 13,028 to 13,190. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2% bt 5,0%.



Emsi Q4 2020 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.com

Washington County

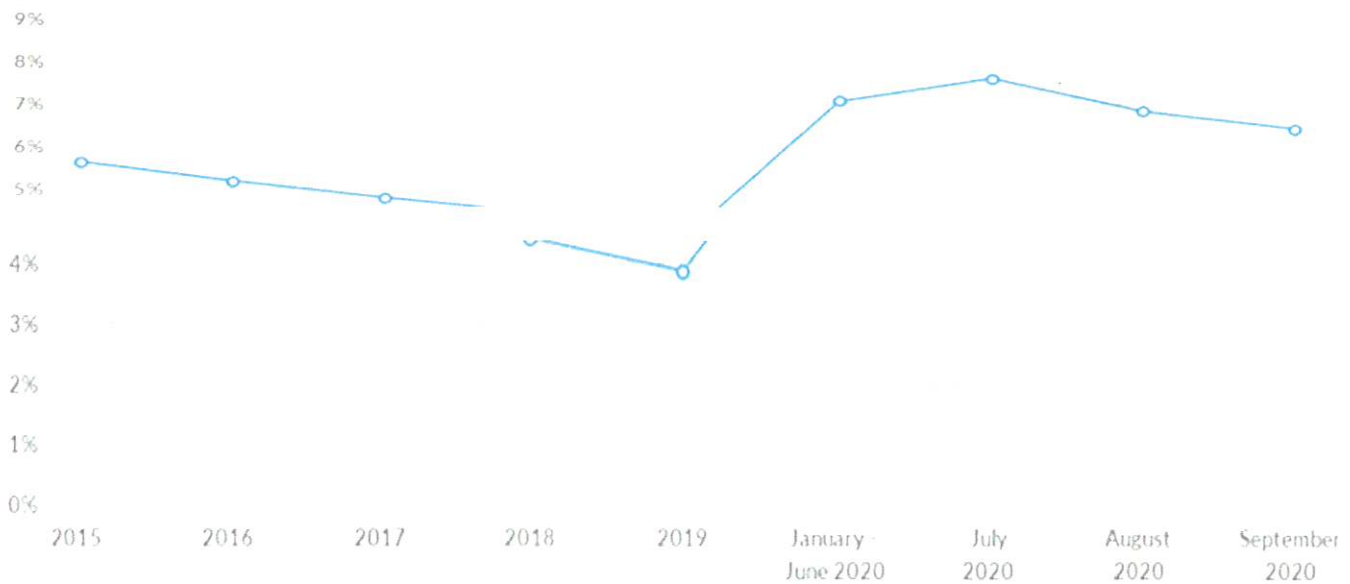
2020 Labor Force Breakdown



	Population
● Total Working Age Population	124,373
● Not in Labor Force (15+)	55,285
● Labor Force	69,088
● Employed	64,667
● Unemployed	4,421
● Under 15	27,143

The table below shows the number of job openings advertised online, green jobs, and advertised salary data in Washington County, MD in 2020 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Area	Time Period	Job Openings	Green Job Count
<u>Washington County, MD</u>	<u>2020</u>	21,087	170



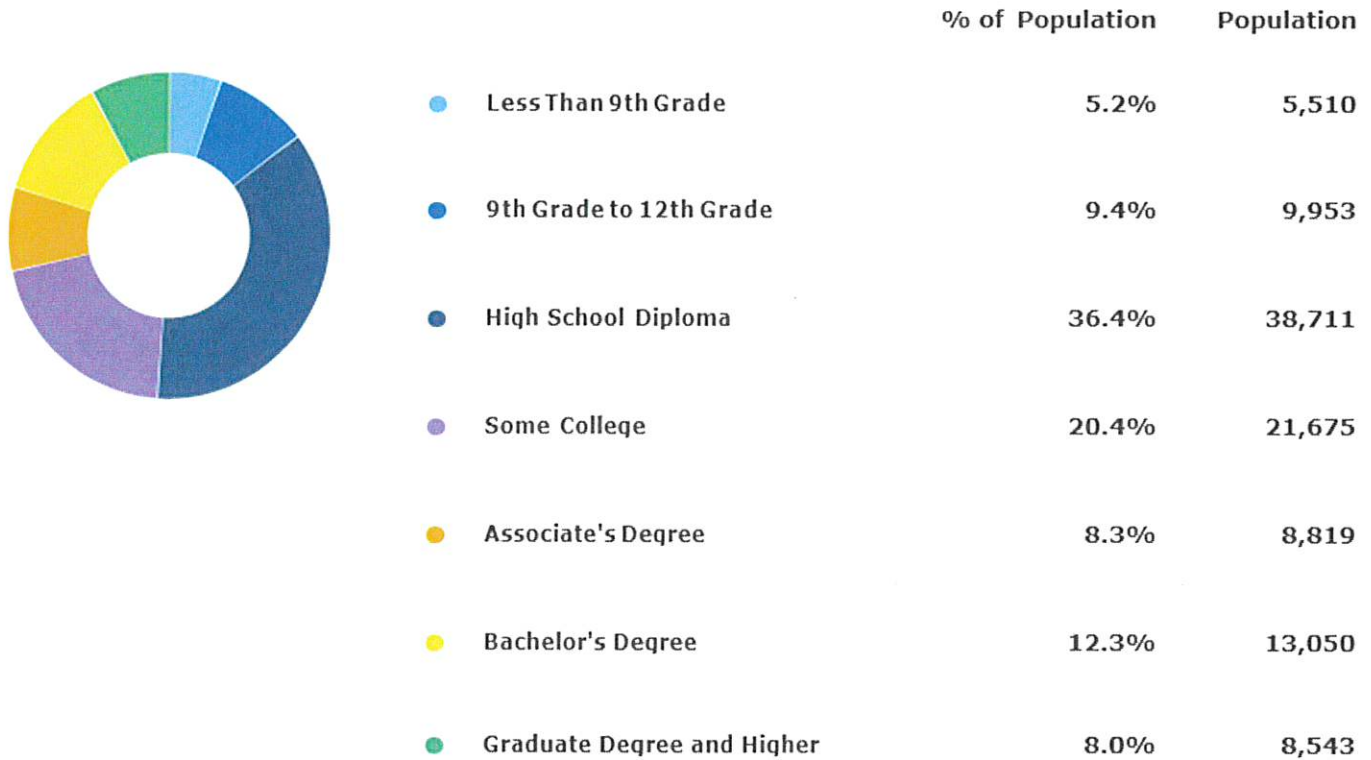
This section shows the top advertised certification groups found in job openings advertised online in Washington County

Rank	Advertised Certification Group	Advertised Certification Sub-Category	Job Opening Match Count
1	Nursing Credentials and Certifications	Nursing	1,084
2	American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications	Nursing	705
3	Commercial Drivers License (CDL)	Ground Transportation	482
4	Social Worker Credentials & Certifications	Social and Human Services	140
5	State Licensed Counselors	Counseling	64
6	National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT)	Fire Rescue	54
7	American Red Cross - First Aid Certifications	Nursing	48
8	CompTIA Certifications	Information Technology - All Other	25
9	Cisco Associate Certifications	Computer Network	24
10	(ISC) ² Certifications	Information and Cyber Security	19

Rank	Education Level	Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings	Green Job Count	Percentage of Green Jobs
1	No Minimum Education Requirement	18	1.89%	1	5.00%
2	Less than High School	0	N/A	0	N/A
3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	115	11.45%	0	0.00%
4	1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	1	0.10%	0	0.00%
5	2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	2	0.20%	0	0.00%
6	Vocational School Certificate	4	0.40%	0	0.00%
7	Associate's Degree	3	0.30%	0	0.00%
8	Bachelor's Degree	15	1.49%	0	0.00%
9	Master's Degree	3	0.30%	1	5.00%
10	Doctorate Degree	0	N/A	0	N/A
11	Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	0	N/A	0	N/A
12	Not Specified	842	83.86%	18	90.00%

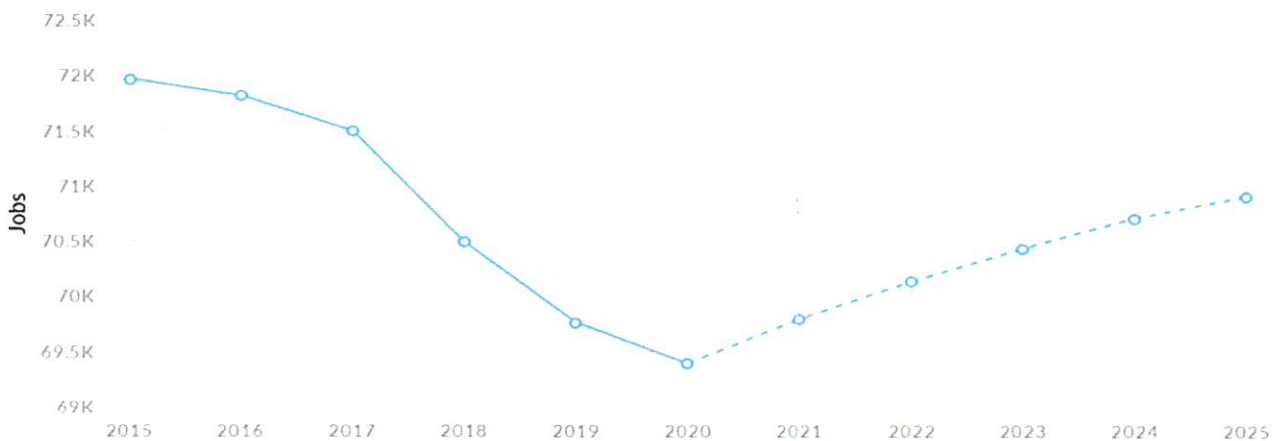
Educational Attainment

Concerning educational attainment, 12.3 % of Washington County residents possess a Bachelor’s Degree(6.8% below the national average), and 8.3% hold an Associate's Degree (0.1% above the national average).



Job Trends

From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 3.6 % in Washington County, from 71,960 to 69,387. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2% by 9.8%.



Emsi Q4 2020 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.com

(C) An analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the Local Area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the Local Area.

Western Maryland's workforce development system strives to align workforce activities with business needs. Western Maryland has three colleges, one in each county (Allegany, Garrett, Hagerstown), that these providers prepare people for careers in business, healthcare, science, and much more. However, we are limited by the number of programs in our area on the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL). Fortunately, due to the pandemic, classes were offered virtually. This allowed for access to additional training opportunities because travel was not a factor.

The Board and Western Maryland Consortium will continue to work with providers to maximize customer choice even outside the local area. It is a priority to support job seekers in need of technology or other assistive supports that can help them successfully participate in training activities.

Employers in many industries are facing challenges in finding qualified and skilled employees. The Board plans to support a diverse array of services and activities to meet employers' needs better and prepare a skilled and employment-ready workforce.

Activities planned :

- Individual Training Accounts (ITA) for eligible and suitable individuals that maximize choices of programs and vendors
- Collaborate with training providers for quicker access to employment opportunities
- Contract Training to build pipelines of workers who have skills and credentials required by our local business;
- Work-based learning, On the Job Training (OJT), and transitional employment programs from experience-based opportunities to secure employment;
- Supports for individuals who possess barriers to employment.

Strengths:

- Strong linkages with Economic Development
- High Qualified and certified workforce development practitioners possessing Global Career Development (GCDF), Certified Professional Resume Writer (CPRW), and Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP)
- Knowledge of local and regional labor markets
- Professional facilitated Workshops on job search

Weakness

- Need to increase outreach and recruitment efforts to business, and job seekers, including targeted population under WIOA
- Improve the marketing of services
- Limitations of ETPL
- Need to complete the Referral process
- Outreach and working with the Libraries

Working with individuals with barriers will require a lot more resources. The Board recognizes that those with significant barriers to employment may need additional and more extended-term assistance than those who do not face such barriers.

The Board and the WIOA partners will develop collaborative approaches to serving those with barriers to maximize employment opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency.

WIOA partners plan to increase the staff training on awareness of partners' resources and training opportunities, which will help the staff with the needed tools to assist the individuals.

The Board and WIOA partners intend to work with community organizations to develop strategies and supportive service programs that target needs across these learning and skill deficits and other barriers tied to an individual's life.

Due to the COVID-19 health pandemic, the economic impacts will be seen for months or even years to come. Western Maryland's diverse economy could lead to re-training opportunities for workers in the hospitality, restaurant, and retail industries. Cross-training with other WIOA partners may include the Division of Rehabilitation Service Staff, Department of Social Services/Family Investment Programs, Adult Education, and Literacy programs. The One-Stop Operator will coordinate training on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Professional Development is planned for staff training, but topics may vary.

(D) A description of the Local Board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the *Benchmarks of Success*, and the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in Section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA in order to support Local Area economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The vision of the Board and the core partners is to provide leadership to meet the education, skills, and employment needs of job seekers, employees, and employers. We are committed to having an integrated system that is responsive to the regional workforce needs. In alignment with Maryland's Benchmark for success goals that seek to maximize access to services to sustain and promote economic self-sufficiency. The Board is committed to working within the workforce system to align and support strategies that prepare an educated and skilled workforce. The Board and its partners will collaborate to create the necessary conditions for moving all job seekers to high-quality and sustained employment, including youth and adults with barriers.

Workforce services will use Title I funded programming directed at delivering career pathway models for training and leveraging its incumbent worker program to elevate the skills and earning potential of currently employed individuals, therefore increasing their earnings and increasing the competitiveness of its local employers.

Referrals will be made to the WIOA partners to assist individuals in maximizing access to supports, including life and crisis management resources, transportation assistance, mental and behavioral healthcare assistance, social services, adult education, and English as a Second Language educational assistance, and others.

Maryland's Benchmark

<p>Increase earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by maximizing access to employment</p>	<p>Customers have access to both virtual and physical assistance with locating job opportunities, responding to job announcements, supportive services, job coaching, and training that leads to careers with family-sustaining wages. Through the series offered by AJC and local workforce partners</p>
<p>Increase earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by maximizing access to and use of skills and credentialing</p>	<p>Title I and local county funds are used to support incumbent workers who need more skills and credentials to keep their job and/or get promoted in their careers. Title-I training funds will support individuals seeking careers in high-demand industries with career mobility potential. Training will lead to increased skill sets and credential attainment.</p>
<p>Increase earning capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by maximizing access to and use of life management skills</p>	<p>Appropriate referrals are made to mental health or behavioral health providers, and other community supports that can help address immediate crises and get customers to access to the life management assistance needed to pursue employment successfully. Local area and AJC staff use assessment techniques to determine the readiness of customers for employment,</p>
<p>Increase earnings capacity of Maryland's workforce system customers by eliminating barriers to employment</p>	<p>Appropriate referrals are made, and customers are given access to information on assistance with housing, mental or behavioral health, transportation, social services, including childcare vouchers, access to expungement workshops and re-entry services, career guidance, and exploration, employment, and training. Local area and AJC staff use assessment techniques to determine any barriers to employment.</p>
<p>Strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's Workforce System.</p>	<p>There is a conscientious effort to avoid duplication and focus on partners' strengths in the workforce development area so each partner can use its limited resources effectively and efficiently to deliver customer-centered services. Local area partners meet regularly to discuss programming, services, and referrals.</p>

Target Populations

The Board will develop strategies to provide intensive, individualized services to WIOA eligible and suitable. Efforts related to this goal include providing work-based learning opportunities, access to in-demand industry certifications, job readiness training, and relevant skill-building measures. In addition, we will seek to widen access and tailor services to people with disabilities, veterans, out of school youth, young adults with limited work history, those facing language barriers, those with criminal justice involvement, or who have other challenges to securing meaningful employment as defined by the WIOA and the Governor in Maryland's WIOA Plan:

- **Displaced homemakers**
- **Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers**
- **Ex-offenders**
- **Homeless individuals**
- **Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers**
- **Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities**
- **Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act**
- **Individuals who are English language learners**
- **Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed**
- **Individuals who have low levels of literacy**
- **Individuals without a high school diploma**
- **Low-income individuals, including TANF and SNAP recipients**
- **Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians**
- **Older individuals**
- **Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)**
- **Veterans**
- **Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system**

The Board will prepare its customers and integrate the vision of partner organizations to be inclusive for youth and individuals with barriers to employment. The board will collaborate with its WIOA core program partners to apply job-driven strategies in the one-stop system and innovatively align employment, training, and education programs to meet performance and accountability measures.

Performance

For PY 2020 & 2021, Maryland's overall performance goals for the State are provided in the following chart. For Title I & III, MD Labor negotiated these performance goals with the USDOL in June 2020. Since then, the local area has met or exceeded those measures.

The most recent negotiated performance is included below. Meeting or exceeding these goals will be a primary basis for measuring success across WIOA programs.

Western Maryland Performance Goals for PY 2020 and 2021	
WIOA Adult	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	76%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter After Exit	72%
Median Earnings 2 nd quarter after exit	\$6,500
Credential Attainment Rate 4 Quarter After Exit	62%
Measurable skills gain	55%
WIOA Dislocated Worker Program	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	80%
Employment Rate 4 th quarter After Exit	76%
Median Earnings 2 nd quarter after exit	\$7,500

Credential Attainment Rate 4 Quarter After Exit	56%
Measurable Skills Gain	55%
WIOA Youth Program	
Education and Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	70%
Education and Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after exit	65%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after exit	\$3,500
Credential Attainment 4 quarter after exit	56%
Measurable Skills Gain	55%
Wagner-Peyser Act Activities	
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	59%
Employment Rate 2 nd quarter after exit	58%
Median Earnings 2 nd quarter after exit	\$5,00 in PY 20 \$5,100 in PUY 21

Section 3 – Strategic Planning to Strengthen the Local Workforce System

The fifth Strategic Goal of the *Benchmarks of Success* is to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's workforce system.

This section should speak to the fifth Strategic Goal and include –

(A) Taking into account analyses described in Section 2, a strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the Local Area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The Board will use the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Resources Sharing Agreement (RSA) process to specify additional expectations and conditions as it related to the provision of WIOA partner services in the American Job Center (AJC). WIOA partner staff would receive regular service and program updates and work together to coordinate resources and services for the customer.

The Workforce Board's membership, committee structure, core partners and professional staff, and other community organizations will collaboratively work to align and access resources available to the region to support the Workforce Board's strategic focus areas and system objectives. In addition, the local Board and WIOA partners are committed to:

- Convening and Engaging industry and business leaders to continue to analyze workforce needs
- Provide career pathways approaches to workforce development
- Working on designing programs and solutions that meet the needs of job seekers and employers.

Western Maryland has an Executive Council that maintains a financially sound and fiscally responsible workforce system. The Board has four committees, Business Engagement, Youth Committee, Referral committee, and Executive Committee. The Executive Committee provides leadership on Workforce Board, policies, organizational goals, priorities, and oversight functions. The Youth Committee's objective is to offer recommendations to the Board on youth policy and initiatives. The Business Engagement Committee ensures close coordination with area business and Economic Development to evaluate and expand services as needed and promote resources of system partners and recruit Business for the Board memberships.

The One-stop operator will develop a continuous improvement plan and coordinate with partners. Customer Service Training and frequent presentations from all the WIOA partners to ensure staff has the tools necessary to deliver effective services.

(B) A description of 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 workforce development programs identified in the State Plan. The description should also include how the Local Board and the programs identified plan to align and integrate to provide services to customers. The description should also include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq)

Partners	Local Area Partners
WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth	Yes – Western MD Consortium
WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy	Yes – Hagerstown Com. College – Allegany College and Garrett College
Title III – Wagner-Peyser Act Program	Yes - Maryland Department of Labor
Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Yes – Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services
Senior Community Service Employment Program	Yes – Maryland Department of Labor
Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Program	Yes – Maryland Department of Labor
Jobs for Veterans	Yes – Maryland Department of Labor
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Temporary Cash Assistance/TCA	Yes Washington County Department of Social Services Allegany County Department of Social Services Garrett County Department of Social Services
State Unemployment Compensation	Yes – Maryland Department of Labor
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Yes =- Maryland Department of Labor
Employment & Training Community Services Block Grant	Yes – Garret County Community Action Council HRDC – Allegany County
Job Corps	Not in area
Youth Build	Not in Area
Native American Program	Not in Area
Perkins Career and TechEd	Yes – Hagerstown Community College Allegany College of Maryland

WIOA partner staff will receive regular service and program updates and work together to coordinate resources and services for customers.

Western Maryland is a robust workforce development system with established partnerships. We work with numerous partners, including those identified above.

Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) process to specify additional expectations and conditions related to the provisions of WIOA partner service in the American Job Center (AJC). Many local WIOA convenings have increased program staff and knowledge across the WIOA core Partner program.

Western Maryland received a grant-funded that specialized in partnering and working with Adult Education and Literacy to develop Career Pathways. As a result, partnerships with the Adult and Education Literacy classes are held at the Western Maryland Consortium in all three counties. In addition, each county has a Transition Specialist, which provides a direct connection between program participants and a natural pathway from education to career planning and job training supported by Title I.

With the focus of WIOA on enhanced integration and collaboration in developing relationships beyond the Core Program Partners is vital, To provide further clarification on the alignment of workforce partnerships to provide integration and shared services. The WIOA Stakeholders Chart clarifies the core partner's roles and responsibilities and the identified additional community organizations in the regional workforce system. These other partnerships add resource value to the local and regional strategies. The Board will be looking at every possible option for enhancing the services to employers, workers, and other customers by engaging these added partners. Building depth and diversity into the products and services provided is key to incorporating new partners. Based on the extent of these additions, the WMC board will establish formal agreements for the integration, collaboration, and coordination of programs, service delivery, and resources.

Additional Workforce System Partners Include (but are not limited to):

- County and City Offices of Economic Development
- Entities serving those involved with the justice system
- Local Management Board – Washington County & Garrett County
- Goodwill Industries
- Hagerstown Community College
- Allegany College of Maryland
- Garrett College
- Entities serving those involved with the Justice System
- City and County offices of Economic Development

All partners continue to communicate regularly to ensure services are provided seamlessly, collaboratively, and without duplication. All identified partners in the State Plan are either on the Workforce Development Board, attend partner meetings or participate on a committee. On-Stop-Operator sets up quarterly meetings with combined staff training. In addition, information is shared about services and resources available for participants and businesses or topics relevant to the local workforce system.

Western Maryland Workforce will continue to strengthen the linkage between U.I. and AJC. AJC staff, along with Title I. staff, assists with helping job seekers file U.I. claims and setting up appeal requests. Staff Training will be requested from U.I. for the AJC and Title I. There is a specific point of contact from the U.I. system to help with RESEA, ROW, and U.I. issues. Having a direct point of contact will strengthen the linkage between programs. RESEA and ROW are implemented locally, which has direct ties with U.I.

The Western Maryland Workforce region will create and coordinate a comprehensive system of referral that will include the development of a community-level conduit to increase collaboration among local partner organizations that streamline local, county, and regional level services. The conduit will be inclusive of a user-friendly electronic platform. It will include a standard referral process that will expedite service fulfillment and provide an assurance that client needs are met while decreasing the duplication of partner services

(C) A description of how the Local Board, working with the entities identified in A, 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, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

In collaboration with the Executive Council, the Local Board will serve as the convener for all three local area workforce development initiatives. The Board is developing deeper connections with programs that support individuals to match employment programming more closely to each person in need

Expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services has begun understanding each partner agency's services. Front line staff will be trained on the services the partner agency offers.

Individuals with barriers to employment will benefit from agency cooperation by connecting those individuals to additional services. Co-Enrollment will also directly benefit from analyzing the services available since the staff will know each partner agency. Knowledgeable staff will play a key role in facilitating the coordination of services and linking participants to post-secondary activities.

The Board and WIOA partners will further discuss strategies for developing career pathways, leveraging supportive services, and co-enrollment of customers with barriers to employment. Continued outreach to individuals with barriers to employment. This may include, Justice System with youth and young adults, the Department of Social Services/TCA/Foster/Food Stamp customers. With the goal of leading to self-sustainable employment.

Western Maryland Consortium used a combination of training, incumbent worker training, and job seekers training Co-enrollment in programs will be considered based on partner service offerings and individual circumstances. Another focus will be on virtual services. Our system had to shift quickly to virtual service in response to COVID-19. We discovered that, for many jobseekers, the availability of virtual workshops and career counseling alleviated barriers such as transportation or lack of children and continued to be just as helpful as they are in-person for participants.

In partnership with the WIOA service providers and partners, the Board, One Stop Operator that WIOA basic and individualized services are offered to all priority populations WIOA Title I youth programs are delivered through a combination of programming. The 14 elements are included for all youth. Activities and materials are developed that are aligned with the regional labor market information. Training provides access to paid and unpaid work experience and related workshops and activities that allow youth opportunities.

All three colleges in Western Maryland (Allegany College, Garrett College, and Hagerstown Community College) are WIOA Title II Adult Basic Education and Literacy service works in collaboration. One-on-one basic skills remediation and tutoring is provided to Title I Center in all three Counties

Carl D Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act of 2006 (Perkins), and other not Perkins programming, Allegany College and Hagerstown Community College is the primary post-secondary carer technical education provider. The Board and the colleges work to strengthen CTE and occupational skills training offerings, which helps ensure alignment of program offerings consistent with in-demand occupations.

(D) A description of the steps taken by the Local Board to engage entities identified in A in the formulation of its Local Plan.

Four workgroup meetings were held with attendance by representatives of the Local Board, Wagner-Peyser, Department of Social Services, Adult Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services (all three counties) to have input

in the plan. In addition, the draft plan was shared with partners for assistance in editing. All the local partners provided information and often co-authored portions of the Local Plan. Each Board member received a copy of the draft plan during the 30-day comment period.

LWDB and all the core partners participated and discussed the needs and changes that needed to be noted in the plan.

The One-Stop Operator coordinated WIOA convenings and pieces of training.

Representatives from WIOA core programs serve as members of the Board. Additionally, area/regional directors and managers of the same program partner with other workforce stakeholders have begun to meet regularly. Local Board representation allows for formal input on the direction of workforce activities and resource alignment. At the same time, the program leaders regularly convene to address Center activities, service integration, and the implementation of area-wide workforce development initiatives.

Partners mentioned in the plan met and asked for input and feedback for the local plan revisions. The revised plan was shared in the draft with all board members and core partner

The Local Board and the One-Stop Operator will be provided regular opportunities to review and update the plan and its related activities.

(E) A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the Local Area—

- **To facilitate engagement of businesses, including small companies and businesses in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs;**
- **To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the Local Area;**
- **To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development; and**
- **To strengthen linkages between the AJC delivery system and Unemployment Insurance programs.**

The Board engages businesses in strategic decision-making to ensure we meet the needs of businesses. Services are delivered and coordinated through a thriving network system of partners in all three counties, including, Department of Business Development, the Department of Community and Economic Development, and other business committees. In addition, both the State and local entities will be invited to assist the Board in engaging employers.

A variety of Strategies and Outreach activities are used to:

- Participate in business and industry associations and community organizations, including sponsoring industry-related events, participating in industry-related events, and coordinating events.
- Develop and facilitate training using Industry Sector Partnerships
- Facilitate work and Learn opportunities
- Business Representatives actively participate in the statewide Business services workgroups, including streamlining services offered to businesses,
- The local Board will continue to seek out methods of sharing data and outcomes related to serving and engaging businesses.
- Increase awareness of services available to business, OJT and Incumbent Worker
- Visiting organization to help t establish relationships
- Monitor WARN notices

A focus area will be helping businesses recover from the impacts of COVID-19—the variety of strategies that differ for each industry. For example, one of the industries that had a big hit was the Hospitality Industry, which laid off or furloughed many employees who may have left the industry for good.

WIOA Title I utilize several strategies to align and integrate their services with the American Job Centers. Information on all the programs and initiatives is presented during the workshops. Referrals are being made from one partner to another, and the outcomes are shared.

Through a partnership with the MDOL staff at the AJC centers, we maintain supplies of information pamphlets and how to apply for benefits, work search waivers, Rapid Response layoff events, and notifications of services available to employers and claimants. Staff share information with the unemployment insurance claimants on hiring events and jobs and connecting to the business services team to increase participant access to employment opportunities. Staff briefings are conducting Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) and the Reemployment Opportunity Workshop (ROW) unemployment insurance programs offered at the American Job Center. WIOA programs, including training, are provided information at the workshops.

(F) A description of how the Local Board will ensure jobseekers have a role/voice in the Board's decision-making process and in informing the services the Local Area provides.

The area partners will ensure that the jobseekers' voice is included with various committees and formal and informal customer feedback. In addition, the One-Stop Operator will conduct service surveys and feedback shared with the Board. A variety of communication methods to share with the Board to have the input and/or inform job seekers of any changes.

(G) A description regarding the implementation of initiatives designed to meet the needs of businesses in support of the strategy described in Section 1, including, where applicable:

- **EARN Maryland,**
- **Pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship,**
- **Incumbent worker training programs,**
- **On-the-job training programs,**
- **Customized training programs,**
- **Industry and sector strategies,**
- **Integrated education and training,**
- **Career pathways initiatives,**
- **Utilization of effective business intermediaries, and**
- **Other business services and strategies.**

Western Maryland implements a variety of initiatives to carry out our strategies:

On-The-Job (OJT) Training

The purpose of the OJT is permanent, unsubsidized employment at a sustaining wage. In the initial phase of employment, Western Maryland Consortium provides reimbursement to the employer for a portion of the employee's wage. The reimbursement amount depends on the size of the organization and the employee's training needs, and the needs of the position.

Incumbent Worker Training

The Business Services Team promotes and facilitates incumbent work training for the area businesses. Along with Maryland Business Works. Western Maryland provides up to 20% of its WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker resources.

EARN Maryland

Western Maryland is partners s with the following EARN Maryland Program:
IT Center for Excellent, Western Maryland Move, Washington Co. Manufacturing Partnership and Solar Installation Training and Examination Partnership.

Apprenticeships

The Community Colleges in the region support the opportunities for registered apprenticeship programs. In addition, The workforce staff and system partners consistently make referrals to the existing registered apprenticeship program and align with MD DOL efforts to grow the Apprenticeship program in the workforce area.

Career Pathways

Western Maryland is committed to creating a career pathway in industries with growth and potential. All three counties in Western Maryland have a strong partnership with Title II Adult Education and Literacy to work with jobseekers and create a career pathway.

Sector Strategies

WMC, the Board, and partners will continue to focus on building business service strategies to meet employers' skilled recruitment and retention needs and career advancement needs of the workers. Sector strategies have been supported to include Healthcare, Manufacturing, Warehouse and Distribution, Information Technology, and Construction.

We have held and continue to hold industry-specific recruitment events. Since the pandemic, we have partnered with MD DOL to have employers in the same industry talk about their business needs and job openings. As time goes on, we hope to develop more industry sector partnerships.

(H) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities with economic development activities for the Local Area and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The WMC has cultivated relationships with several programs, entities, and organizations focused on entrepreneurs, small businesses, and start-ups. WMC and its partners work to offer credible options for those customers seeking self-employment or business-owner options. In addition, the Board uses its relationships with these opportunity creators to cultivate realistic options for jobseekers.

Western Maryland Works is a full-service makerspace, training facility, and small-business incubator project that provides access to state-of-the-art technology and equipment to help you make ideas into reality.

We partner with Technical Innovation Center (TIC), Western Maryland's largest and most comprehensive technology-based business incubator.

We work with the following to promote entrepreneurial skills and training:

SCORE – is a resource partner of dedicated volunteers that proved education and mentorship

(I) A description of how the Local Board will leverage and coordinate supportive services in the delivery of workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area. Specifically, the Local Plan should address how the Local Board will work with Local Management Boards and other providers to deliver supportive services to jobseekers.

The Board is aware that many existing job seekers represent the county's most challenging serve populations. Therefore, the Board expects that employment attainment for these jobseekers will require supportive services.

Supportive Services provide financial assistance to participants who would not participate or excel otherwise. In addition, the Board has approved the utilization of WIOA funds to provide short-term supportive services to eligible participants.

Services are approved on an individual basis when determined necessary and reasonable. The services include transportation, business attire, tools, work or training equipment, child care, graduation fees, licensing and testing fees, union fees, medical and healthcare needs, and more.

Western Maryland currently receives some funding under the Local Management Board, and WIOA staff are on the advisory committee, and in Washington County, the Director is on the Board.

We provide training for recipients of DSS Services, and we work closely with the Community Action Council, Library, Office of Aging, and many others to further leverage and coordinate supportive services.

(J) A description of how the Local Board intends to provide a business voice in the delivery of workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area. The description should include how the Local Board will engage businesses on decisions regarding the type and content of training activities.

The Board is committed to engaging employers in the analysis of the workforce development activities, sector strategy research, continuous business engagement to develop programming that will assist job seekers in finding a job, keeping an appointment, and learning the job

The Business Engagement Team continuously accesses the needs of the specific industries. As a result, particular training needs are identified, validated, and reaffirmed once a training curriculum is found and developed. In addition, the team will continue to form industry coalitions to support the economic growth and relevancy in the region.

The Board comprises business representatives (51% membership) who oversee and set priorities for training policies, including the demand-driven approach.

(K) A description of how the Local Board will promote and cultivate industry-led partnerships, such as career pathways, Registered Apprenticeship, and EARN Maryland, in the delivery of workforce training opportunities.

Career Pathways and Industry partnerships are integral parts of the Board's Sector Strategies definition. There s a system and support that allows a participant to step on a career pathway at an on-ramp and proceed to the next level.

We are working with multiple industry groups to assist and develop strategies to respond to the shortage of skilled entry-level direct care staff.

Partnerships with schools, health care, and job seekers to spread the word about apprenticeships and engage more individuals and businesses.

Earn opportunities are promoted in the local industry groups. The following Earn opportunities in Western Maryland that the Board partners with are the It Center for Excellent, Western MD Move, Manufacturing Partnership, and Solar Installations training and examination partnership.

(L) A description of the role (if any) of local faith or community-based organizations in the local workforce development system.

Gatekeepers is an organization whose mission is to motivate, empower, and encourage ex-offenders through mentoring services by challenging them to make positive decisions and ultimately help facilitate the process of a successful transition back to their communities. WMC is connected through its WIOA Wagner-Peyser Partner at the Hagerstown AJC.

Lasting Change is a private not-for-profit residential and outpatient community substance agency that provides a full range of chemical dependency services to women ages 18 and over. Programs assist individuals struggling with addiction problems, better understand the illness, and manage symptoms, thereby improving the quality of day-to-day living.

Brooke's House provides a community-based, safe, stable, and emotionally supportive living environment for adult women in the early stages of substance abuse recovery. Ensuring a tranquil, home-like facility, Brooke's House provides state-of-the-art treatment and recovery services and resources to help residents move forward to achieve their dreams of living drug-free and productive lives.

Section 4 – American Job Center Delivery System

This section should include a description of the AJC delivery system in the Local Area, including —

(A) A list of the AJCs in the Local Area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the One-Stop Operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center.

Allegany County One-Stop Job Center McMullen Building 138 Baltimore Street Suite – 102 Cumberland, MD 21502 Phone: 301-777-1221	Comprehensive
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Western Maryland Consortium 152 Baltimore Street, Suite 100 Cumberland, MD 21502 301-262-7329	Satellite Center
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Washington County One-Stop Job Center 14 North Potomac Street Hagerstown MD 21740 Phone: 301-393-8200	Comprehensive
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Western Maryland Consortium 33 W. Washington Street Hagerstown, MD 21740 Phone: 301-791-3164	Satellite Center
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Western Maryland Consortium
Garrett County Office
14th North 8th Street
P O Box 516
Oakland, MD 21550
Phone: 301-334-8136

Satelite Center

Western Marland is in the procurement process for a One-Stop Operator (OSO). The link to see the most up to date info is at our website: WesternMarylandConsortium.org

(B) A description of the customer flow system and process used in the Local Area. This description should include eligibility assessment, individualized training plans, and case management.

The partner agencies agreed upon a "no wrong door" approach to providing common steps regardless of access. When a customer enters the American Job Center, a greeter works with the customer with an informal assessment and overview of Career Services and center resources and then connects the customer to the appropriate service. Western Maryland has developed partnerships with mandated partners and other resources to ensure uniformity and minimize duplication of services. Through numerous means of assessment, staff and partners determine the customer's level of job readiness and identify which resources apply to the customer's needs and goals. Referrals are made to the appropriate partner or partners

Veteran customers immediately meet with a staff person to receive a needs assessment of Significant Barriers to Employment; other customers needing assistance or accommodations are set up accordingly. In addition, all customers receive instruction and staff assistance on registering in the Maryland Workforce Exchange.

In addition to Workshops on resume writing and interviewing, workshops on understanding the labor market, using social media to further one career, using Maryland Workforce Exchange to identify opportunities, and Career development are held regularly, either in person or virtual.

Many clients seek immediate assistance with employment attaining, and They will assist with resume writing, review, job search, and interview preparation. Clients may also participate in essential workplace skills to ensure they have the businesses' attributes. In addition, staff will determine the need for additional training to establish in-demand skills or improve that lead to industry-recognized credentials. Clients requiring additional training are referred to Title I staff.

Cross agency training is conducted to provide the knowledge and necessary skills of the agencies' primary services. This creates access for all the clients.

Clients that are referred to Title 1 services will work with a Career Counselor that will utilize assessment tools to determine eligibility and suitability and identify any barriers to training or employment. In addition, the Career Counselor is knowledgeable about the workforce resources available in the community to help address the challenges

Supportive services will be used with clients with barriers that make it difficult for them to become successful in pursuing employment or training.

Training will be focused on on-demand or high-growth industries provided through classroom training or thought Individual Training Accounts. All clients should apply for available grant funding to pay the cost of eligible training programs, including the Federal Pell Grant/ WIOA tuition assistance is capped and is only available two years or less in length. For programs that cost more than the WIOA caps, a financial aid plan from the school must provide details on how any cost above the WIOAcap will be covered. In addition, the tuition assistance above will be considered on a case-by-case basis and submitted to the Executive Director for approval.

If the local Board determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers, the Board determines a training program that has demonstrated effectiveness, offered in the local area by a community-based organization or other private organizations to serve individuals with barriers to employment.

Needs-Related payments may be used using WIOA funding to adults and dislocated workers who are not receiving income and are unemployed and do not qualify for or have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation to enable such individuals to participate in programs of training services.

Clients will be assessed to determine if work experience working directly with a business to help them require and prepare them to enter the workforce. This is beneficial to both the clients and the business of seeing how the client works within the industry or occupation. In addition, a business requiring training within the context of their needs may receive On-The-Job Training (OJT) contracts that secure employment while in training.

Clients will be assigned to a Business Service Team that works directly with employers that are seeking qualified talent. Clients that the assessment of training needs do not require occupational training will work with the Business Rep which works directly with employers and is knowledgeable about the local market information.

Staff will periodically contact the business to assess the client's success and ensure they continue to be employed with the business. WIOA requires twelve months of follow-up to ensure retention. In addition, staff will address any concerns or challenges the client may face in the workplace.

Unemployment wage records will be the primary data source for tracking entered employment, employment retention, and earnings change or replacement; in addition to UI wage records, Supplemental Data can be used.

The Board recognizes that it is essential to provide exceptional services to businesses seeking skilled and qualified talent. The Business Service Team will serve by guiding posting job announcements in Maryland Workforce Exchange; engaging businesses in labor market information to clients; assisting in identifying qualified candidates; hosting hiring events, and assisting in upskilling the existing workforce through incumbent worker training,

(C) A description on the process the Local Board intends to provide for the solicitation and selection of a One-Stop Operator as identified in Section 107 of WIOA.

With the agreement of the Chief Elected Officials and consistent with section 107 of WIOA, the Board shall designate or certify a One-Stop Operator. The selection of the One-Stop Operator will be through a competitive process. The Board's Executive Committee will perform the initial analysis of the options. To ensure no conflict of interest, organizations applying or One-Stop Operator must disclose any potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships with other service providers. The solicitation for the One-Stop Operator is done in accordance with local procurement rules.

(D) A description of how the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers, and jobseekers.

The Board utilizes standing committees and WIOA partners to ensure continuous improvement of service delivery areas and eligible service providers. We encourage training providers to place in-demand training programs on the ETPL and encourage job seekers to use eligible training providers to meet the regional demand.

Staff will ensure clients are accessing all funding sources to best leverage and maximize the WIOA funds. Guidance will be provided to all clients about the many options, including financial aid

Benchmarks standards will be used around all job placements with providers.

(E) A description of how the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the AJC delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

WIOA partners will collaborate with the One-Stop Operator to provide outreach and services to target populations who may not be accessing services through the Physical AJC.

The Board hosts a Website, Facebook, LinkedIn, and additional social media platforms on behalf of the AJC to share employment-related information such as recruitment events, workshops, job search tips, and job openings.

We partner with the Library system, Department of Social Services, Horizon Goodwill, and more to reach more clients. Since the COVID-19 impact, increased use of technology provided services to individuals who choose not to access the physical location.

Accessibility by email and phone and virtual platforms (crowd cast) has increased. In addition, free WiFi is available in many areas, which allows for ease of communication.

(F) A description of the roles and resource contributions of the AJC partners.

Western Maryland is striving for a comprehensive and integrated system that is a no wrong door approach. Resource sharing will be accomplished through a mutually agreed upon and WIOA compliant Resource Sharing Agreement. The role of the partners is to assist clients in meeting employment and training goals.

To provide access through the One-Stop delivery system to such programs or activities carried out by the entity.

A portion of the funds available for the program activities to maintain the one-stop delivery system, including payment of the infrastructure costs associated with the centers.

The goal is to ensure that businesses have skilled workers and job seekers have access to employment and training centers. Available programs and services include but are not limited to:

- Internet, , copying, faxing
- Business Consultation
- Career Assessment, Counseling and Planning
- Resume & Interviewing Assistance
- Veteran Services Program
- Trade Act
- Eligibility for services
- Financial Aid Information
- Career planning, Counseling
- Internships, Work Experience
- Unemployment Insurance Information
- Senior Community Service Program
- Customized Training
- Job Readiness Training
- Occupational Training
- Supportive Services
- Labor Market Information
- Maryland Workforce Exchange
- GED & National External Diploma Program
- English Language Learner
- Adult Basic Education
- Tax Credit Information
- Referrals to programs
- Comprehensive Assessment
- Financial Literacy Services
- Follow-up Services
- Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program
- Skill upgrading and Training
- Incumbent worker Training
- Combine training w/ related instruction
- On-The-Job Training

(G) A description of *how* the Local Board will use Individualized Training Accounts based on high-demand, difficult to fill positions identified within local priority industries identified in Section 1(A).

Training services will be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or occupation in the local area. The services are designed to be responsive to the clients and the business. Occupations in high-demand growth or high-wage industries are targeted. Local efforts are focused on the county's in-demand industries.

The length of training can be up to two years or less and is capped at \$6,000. In addition, clients must maintain good academic standing and be making satisfactory progress to remain in the selected program. The local Board reserves the right to adjust the ITA dollar limitations if deemed in the best interest of the client and the Local Board.

Engagement with business is necessary and will be in the discussions and development of occupational training in line with local needs. Staff and Board members are continuously active in engaging interactions in identifying occupational skill training that will lead to occupational growth and demand.

(H) A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of service that conforms to the State Plan. This should include a description of additional local requirements or discretionary priorities including data to support the need and how the local requirement and/or priority will be documented and implemented for the Adult program.

The Board will ensure that the participants in the WIOA Adult program meet the definitions for veterans, low-income, public assistance, and or basic skills deficiency.

1st Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses (who also are included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds). This means that veterans and eligible spouses who also are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds
2nd Priority	Individuals who are non-covered persons (not veterans or eligible spouses) are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
3rd Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups
4th Priority	To any other populations identified by the Governor or Local Board for priority
5th Priority	non-covered persons outside the groups are given priority under WIOA.

To participate in the WIOA Adult program, an individual must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. 18 years of age and older
2. U. S citizens or non-citizen authorized to work in the U.S.
3. Meet Military Selective Service Registration, if applicable.

Other population categories that have barriers to employment will also have priority of service. Local priority of service will come after Federal and State priorities have been addressed:

Targeted Populations
Veteran & Eligible Spouses
Individuals who do not have an HS diploma -
Individuals with disabilities, including youth
Ex-Offenders
Homeless Individuals
Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
Individuals who are English language learners
Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed
Low-Income Individuals (including TANF and SNAP recipients)
Native American, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians
Older individuals
Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)
Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
Individuals who have low levels of literacy
Displaced Homemakers

(I) A description of how the Local Board will utilize funding to create incumbent worker training opportunities.

The Incumbent worker training allows individuals to stay marketable and progress in their careers and will enable businesses to remain competitive. The Local Board may utilize up to 20% of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker resources to support incumbent work training. This training strategy will use a cost-reimbursement methodology.

The Business Services Teams lead the development in incumbent-worker training.

(J) A description of how the Local Board will train and equip staff to provide excellent, WIOA-compliant customer service.

The Board works on maintaining successful client relationships. The staff attempts to resolve any inquiries or complaints by the clients, either by telephone or email, and by contacting the on-stop center staff to obtain additional information or documentation to resolve the issue at hand if needed. The Board has invested in staff development training to enhance the proficiency of the staff. All staff that provides direct service to job seeking and business customers are encouraged to obtain recognized credentials in resume writing, job coaching, and career facilitation.

Section 5 – Title I – Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Functions

This Section should include –

(A) A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area.

The Workforce Board designated the Western Maryland Consortium to provide WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services in Western Maryland. The Consortium has an office in each county (Allegany, Garrett, and Washington County)

The Adult and Dislocated Worker services are designed to start, advance or transition the county residents to a pathway to employment. The goal is to train and be employed in in-demand and in middle and High-skill occupations.

Western Maryland Consortium participants receive orientation on services provided and eligibility determination to receive assistance along with employment and training assistance. Information on job vacancy listings, resume review, and mock interviews, along with resource room usage and basic knowledge and assistant filing claims for unemployment compensation Referral to partners as appropriate.

Case Management prepares and coordinates an Individual Employment Plan. Counseling during the program on education, job, and career counseling during program participation. Career planning provides a customer-based approach in the services designed to prepare and coordinate individual employment plans. Discussion of career pathway to attain career objectives. Availability of internships, work experience linked to careers in high growth/high demand industries.

Supportive Services are available to support job search and successful employment. Supportive services help alleviate barriers to successfully completing training and credential attainment and barriers to successful employment following the local policy.

Training Services assist in establishing eligibility for financial aid assistance programs for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA. Available funding, comprehensive and skill levels assessments, and service needs are used to determine appropriateness and training needs. All participants have access to the ETPL and help with coordination with the training vendor. To enhance the participant choice, out-of-area training, contract training, industry partnerships, and cohort training may be used to develop a well-trained workforce that meets the need of the business in the local area.

Follow-up services are designed to support job retention and address a specific situation. They are provided according to policy.

Activities	Partners
Eligibility of Services	Core Partners
Outreach, intake, orientation,	Core Partners
Initial assessment	Core Partners
Labor Exchange services	MDOL
Referrals to programs	Core Partners, Library
Supportive Services Information	Core Partners
Unemployment Insurance Information and Assistance	MDOL
Financial Aid Information	Core Partners
Comprehensive Assessment	Core Partners
Individual Employment Plan	WMC, DORS
Career Planning and counseling	WMC, DORS
Short Term prevocational services	WMC,DORS, DSS
Financial literacy services	WMC, CBOs,
English language acquisition	Adult Education Providers, CBO's
Workforce preparation	WMC, DSS
Occupational Skill Training q	Training Providers, DORS
Work and Learn	WMC, DORS
Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction	WMC, DORS, Training Providers
Skill upgrading and retraining	Training providers, DORS
Customized training	WMC, Training Providers, DORS
Incumbent Worker Training	WMC, MDOL, Training Providers
Adult education and literacy Activities	WMC, Adult Education Providers, DORS
Job Readiness training	Core partners

(B) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in Section 134(a)(2)(A).

The primary goal of Rapid Response is to transition workers to reemployment as quickly as possible. Rapid response is a pro-active, business-focused, and flexible strategy designed to help grow business access and the available pool of skilled workers who have been trained in the skills that the business needs to be competitive.

Rapid Response activities are to be carried out in conjunction with the Local Board, chief elected officials, and other stakeholders. As a result, the workforce area partnership with the Business Engagement Team and staff are positioned to the local enterprises experiencing closures and or significant loss of personnel resulting in downsizing.

Rapid Response teams will work with businesses and employee representative(s) to quickly maximize public and private resources to minimize the downsizing of businesses. The Team also responds to layoffs and plant closing by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to businesses and their affected workers.

(C) A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the Local Area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

Western Maryland administers WIOA funded youth workforce development activities. However, due to the lack of service providers to meet the need of the youth in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties, Western Maryland Consortium is the WIOA service provider and will provide the 14 elements for the youth program. In addition, the Board continues to support the youth as an individual and is designed and planned for each youth.

The program is designed to provide services to youth who have barriers to education and employment. The Board will continue to support a model that includes career exploration, essential skills training, job readiness training, aptitudes, skills, and barrier assessment. In addition, we partner with Adult Ed to assist youth with GED preparation and remediation. In two of the three counties, the Adult Ed staff are in our office.

All youth who completes any activity, of the 14 elements, for participation in and successful completion of the 14 elements will receive an incentive.

Work and learn are being developed at this time but were put on hold due to the pandemic. So instead, workshops were designed for online usage.

Western Maryland partnered with the Washington County Public school system to work with at-risk youth at risk of dropping out. Career Counselors work with the Intervention Specialist at each High School to help with barriers, tutoring, work experience, and more to help the youth exceed and stay in school. WMC hopes to partner with the Allegany and Garrett public school system.

In partnership with DORS, facilitate work-based learning opportunities for youth with disabilities with summer activities and year around work experience.

All three counties have a Summer Work Experience; a paid six to eight-week summer employment opportunity offered to both in-school (ISY) and out of school (OSY). Program participants can work up to 35 hours a week in a career field of interest, along with workshops for employability and job readiness.

(D) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

We will work closely with the public schools for referrals to our youth program, and they often refer families in need of workforce services. Relationships with the Counselors at the high schools who refer students dropping out of school are potential clients. Close connections with the high schools will also assist with getting referrals for those students who will be leaving high school and don't have existing career plans. Connecting with these students before graduation will help the student not become a disconnected youth. It will help increase the pipeline of job seekers into skilled trades and apprenticeships to be skilled and job-ready.

We work closely with our community college partners to refer students to each other and coordinate service whether working virtually or in person. Our community colleges in all three counties are partners and are active partners on the Board.

Open communication among all partners allows for unduplicated service and enhanced coordination among partners.

(E) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the Local Area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the Local Area.

Supportive services may be provided to those participating in programs and activities authorized by WIOA and who are unable to obtain such supportive services through other programs. Clients are referred to the appropriate organization providing the services before accessing WIOA funds for supportive services.

Public transportation has always been a challenge in three counties. Garrett County does not have public transportation. However, Allegany is limited, and Washington county does have transit around the county. We continue to partner with transportation offices to identify gaps in services.

Provision of supportive services is subject to WIOA and WMCs funding availability. Participants eligible for supportive services may be approved for a maximum amount of \$1500 and not exceed six (6) months in duration for adults and dislocated workers and youth. Exceptions to these limits may be made with appropriate justification and leadership approval.

Supportive Services may include, (but are not limited to)

- Childcare/dependent care
- Job or training related business uniforms attire, tools, or related equipment
- Housing resources
- Mental Health counseling and support
- Academic fees
- Technology including internet service, tablets, or other tools which enable individuals to participate in activities authorized under WIOA
- Linkages to community services
- Transportation – (Mileage, bus passes Second chances)
- Needs-related payment – to participate in career and training services.

(F) A description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Adult Funding, based on adult priority groups as specified in the State Plan.

The Board intends to provide a full array of workforce services to all eligible adults with priority given to targeted populations in the chart below:

Targeted Populations
Veteran & Eligible Spouses
Individuals who do not have an HS diploma -
Individuals with disabilities, including youth
Ex-Offenders
Homeless Individuals
Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
Individuals who are English language learners
Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed
Low-Income Individuals (including TANF and SNAP recipients)
Native American, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians
Older individuals
Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)
Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
Individuals who have low levels of literacy
Displaced Homemakers

Successful implementation of priority of service for the targeted population in the State Plan will be achieved from the Board and policy development from the Board, cross-training of all staff partners operating within the local workforce system, and continuous monitoring and evaluation by the One-Stop Operator.

Through the initial assessment, we will identify if an individual qualifies for priority of service. Then, funding will be used to provide a full array of WIOA services which may include outreach staff services, work and learn opportunities, coursework, training apprenticeships, assessment, support services, incumbent work training, ITA's and classroom training, and other allowable workforce services that will benefit the job seeking client and regional economy.

Through community forums, strategic outreach, and policy development, the Board ensures that priority services and targeted groups in the State Plan are engaged in all WIOA funded programs and services. In addition, the Board will ensure strong collaboration and alignment of supportive services with partners.

Incumbent work training also will be provided to current employees who need additional upskilling and new certifications. This will allow clients to progress on their career pathway. This strategy is vital for employed clients but doesn't make enough to be self-sufficient. It also allows them to work while acquiring the skills to help them progress along a career pathway or begin a new career.

(G) A description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Dislocated Worker Funding.

The Board's vision is to provide the individual who lost their jobs through no fault on their own with an opportunity to gain the skills that would allow them to reconnect with employment quickly. The focus will be on re-employment services that will return impacted workers to career-oriented in-demand and growing occupations that will return to self-sufficiency. Additionally, resources will be utilized to expand education and training services, provide effective employment activities, encourage the career pathway approach and sector initiative that support postsecondary education and training for dislocated workers.

Dislocated Worker funding is also used as a primary funding source for the local incumbent worker program.

(H) A description of how the Local Board will define "self-sufficiency" for employed Adult and employed Dislocated Worker participants.

The Board will define self-sufficiency for adults as an annualized income level of at least 250% of the Health and Human Services poverty guidelines or Lower Living Standard Income Level (whichever is higher).

Employed adults must be low-income individuals. The term "low-income individual" means an individual who received an income, or is a member of a family the received a total family income, for the six months prior to registration for the program that, in relation to size, does not exceed 250%.

The 250% LLISL begins July 1, 2021, and may be adjusted if needed to reflect a change in economic conditions.

A Dislocate work self-sufficient definition is a wage equal to at least 80% of the worker's wage at dislocation.

(I) A description of the Local Board's definition of "unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation" when required for eligibility for Dislocated Worker services.

- The determination is made when the dislocated workers are laid off from positions with skill sets that are considered obsolete
- If the local market is saturated with similar skill sets and retraining would increase their chances for successful employment at a self-sufficient or previous wage or better.
- The industry or occupation requires additional training for the job seeker to have the skills the current labor market demands to obtain employment
- Labor market information, both formal and informal, has shown the industry or occupations as delining
- Individuals can not return to their previous industry or occupation because they have physical or other limitations which would prevent reentry into the former sector or occupation, as documented by the physician or other applicable professional
- Individuals that may have worked seasonally can be considered unlikely to work in a previous industry, or occupation as a temporary or seasonal worker.
- Individuals laid off temporarily, with a specific return date, and the recall date has passed fall into one of the above.

(J) A description of how the Local Board will interpret and document eligibility criteria for in-school youth "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment" as set forth in the State's Youth Policy and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). DWDAL's policy on the Title I Youth Program can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi8-15.pdf>.

The Board and Western Maryland Consortium define in-school youth who require additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment as low income, in-school youth with one or more of the following characteristics;

- Are youth in danger of not graduating from high school without having to take additional coursework and/or summer school or
- Are youth deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official; or
- Are youth with court agency/referrals mandating school attendance; or
- Are youth who do not have parental support to adult mentoring in the home, at school, and/or in their critical areas of the student's life

(K) A description of how the Local Board will interpret and document eligibility criteria for out of school youth "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment" as set forth in the State's Youth Policy and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). DWDAL's policy on the Title I Youth Program can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi8-15.pdf>.

The Board and Western Maryland Consortium define out of school youth who require additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment as low income, out of school youth with one or more of the following characteristics;

- Are youth who does not have parental support or adult mentoring in the home and/or in other critical areas of the youth's life; or
- Are youth with poor work history, to include no work history, or have been fired from a job within the last six months before application; or have never held a full-time job for more than 13 consecutive weeks; or
- Are youth with an incarcerated parent or guardian; or
- Are youth facing significant cultural challenges within the family or community
- Has been referred to or treated by an agency for substance abuse/psychological problems

Documentation to substantiate the eligibility criteria will include school records or referrals, court agency or partner referrals, work history, and/or applicant statements. It will be recorded and made part of the client's management file.

(L) A description of the documentation is required to demonstrate a "need for training."

The documentation required to demonstrate a "need for training" includes informal assessment and a youth individual Employment Plan completed by the Career Counselor. In addition, Case notes should document the need for training.

If a potential employer requests specific training to hiring youth, that will be considered a "need for training."

Area, Labor Market information, may be used to demonstrate a "need for training." In addition, job openings, employment opportunities, business, or other relevant information may be used to demonstrate" the need for training."

(M) A description of how the Local Board will provide access to the 14 required program elements for the WIOA Youth program design, including whether the Local Board has contracted with youth service providers or not:

The Board will provide the 14 required program elements through a combination of contracted services, Title I funded staff delivery of service, partner referrals, and community partner collaborations.

Title II is unable to provide services to youth under the age of 18 unless they meet the exceptions to Maryland’s compulsory education law.

<i>Program Element</i>	<i>Providers</i>
Tutoring, skills training, and dropout prevention	Title I Funded staff, training providers
Alternative secondary school services	Title II partner - Title I Funded staff
Paid and unpaid work experiences;	Title I Funded staff
Occupational skills training	Training providers
Leadership development opportunities	Title I Funded staff - American Job Center partners and Community Partners
Supportive services	Core Partners – Title I funds – Community Partners
Mentoring	Volunteers, Community Partners Title I Funded staff -
Follow-up services	Title I Funded staff
Counseling	Title I funded staff – Community partners
Concurrent Education and Workforce Prep Activities	Title I Funded staff – Community Partners
Financial literacy education	Title I Funded staff – Community Partners -
Labor Market Information (LMI)	American Job Center partners – Title I Funded staff - Community partners
Preparing for Post-Secondary Education and training	Title I Funded staff
Entrepreneurial Skills Training	Partner with Score, EDC, and self-employed business owners

(N) A description of the steps the Local Board will take to ensure at least 20% of Youth Funds are used for work-based training activities.

Work Base training as a core element in the program's design, we will use multiple strategies to ensure that 20% of the Title I youth program funding is used for work-based learning. Plans may include but are not limited to internships, and job shadowing, summer employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training.

The fiscal Manager and the Youth Coordinator will review expenditures every quarter to ensure that at least 20% of the youth funds are for work-based learning activities.

(O) A description of the Local Board's plan goal to serve out of school youth and identify specific steps that have been taken to meet this goal. Local Boards whose goal is under 75 percent must include a description of how they will implement the waiver and how they will enhance connections to Youth Apprenticeship programming, increase DORS co-enrollment, and any changes for In-School-Youth (ISY) services.

Note: The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has approved Maryland's request to waive the obligation outlined in WIOA Section 129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410 that not less than 75 percent of funds allotted under Section 127(b)(1)(c), reserved under Section 128(a), and available for statewide activities under subsection (b), and not less than 75 percent of funds available to Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Areas) under subsection (c), shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for out-of-school youth. Under this waiver, both the required State and local percentage for Out-of-School Youth (OSY) expenditures has been lowered to at least 50 percent. This waiver is effective July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022.

Outreach strategies are focused on disconnected youth who are high school drop-outs, not meaningfully connected to employment or postsecondary education, justice connected, pregnant and/or parenting, youth with disabilities and homeless or foster youth, or youth who have aged out of the foster system. Western Maryland leverages strong relationships with partner agencies and locally focused organizations to serve local youth with barriers to employment through WIOA program services. Strong Partnership with the Local Management Board,

DORS, DSS, and DJS are strong partners that foster referrals to WMC.

We intend to increase the number of in-school youth, using up to 50% of funds on this population based on the waiver received from the U.S. Department of Labor. Taking advantage of this flexibility will allow the local areas to provide workforce development services to this population, including needed dropout prevention services. In-school youth efforts will prioritize Youth Apprenticeship.

(P) A description of how the Local Board will provide basic and individualized career services to customers. The description should explain how individualized career services will be coordinated across program/partners in the AJCs, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Community Action Agencies, and Adult Education and Literacy activities. This description should specify how the Local Area will coordinate with these programs to prevent duplication and improve services to customers.

Basic career services are provided at the first entry point into the workforce system based on the customer's needs identified in the initial assessment. An orientation to the American Job Center System services is offered to customers seeking employment and training information. They are also provided during the Reemployment Series, and Eligibility Assessment Orientations are facilitated by WIOA Title 1 and or Wagner Peysler staff. The orientation process provided access to system-wide resources, including partners and community services.

If a customer accessed services through a partner program not co-located at the AJC, the partner agency might provide basic career services at that location.

Any assessments performed through partner programs will be shared between programs as long as release information is available or for the client to share a copy of the assessment results with the partner agencies. For example, an individual employment plan may be developed and shared jointly and provide joint case management.

TANF staff attends the partner's quarterly meetings and provides an overview of the offerings. In addition, the workforce system staff is familiar with the TANF program offerings and may assist the clients with the online TANF or SNAP (Food Stamps) eligibility application.

Regular joint meetings will continue to be held between partner programs to share information about services and improve the non-duplicative and customer-focused process. The same level of the partnership continues even working remotely.

(Q) Describe the Local Board's follow-up services policy. This should include follow-up requirements, frequency of contact, and required documentation.

We will provide quarterly follow-up services as required or participation who exit the program for up to 12 months after exit. Career Counselors will perform follow-up through various means, including telephone, email, virtual meetings, personal contact, and mailings. Follow services include guidance and counseling, career development and further education planning, referral to community resources, and assistance securing better-paying jobs if the client dictates. Title I funded staff provides the follow-up and is tracked in the MWE and clients' case notes.

Section 6 – Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Functions

This Section should include –

(A) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities in the Local Area integrating the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA, including, but not limited to, the implementation of the career pathways model. The description should include a discussion of how the Local Board will comply with requirements to review local applications submitted under Title II as set forth in guidance provided by the DWDAL's Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services. Once a review

has been conducted, the Local Board will submit documentation (MD Labor WIOA Alignment Form) of the review and any recommendations for increased alignment to the applicant for Title II services in a timely manner.

Western Maryland has a collaborative working relationship with the Adult Education and Literacy Services in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties. In line with the development of the WIOA MOU, the Board intends to ensure coordination of workforce development services with the local Adult Basic Education and Literacy partner(s) and other partners in the system.

Key stakeholders throughout the workforce system met to establish priorities, goals, and strategies. The process continues as partners work to streamline entry points, common intake, standardized assessment, effective and timely information sharing, and determine which workforce needs must be developed to prepare jobseekers in our economy.

The sharing of assessments scored is currently done and with the informed consent of the participant. In Washington County, a Title II representative is housed at the Consortium to administer the Assessment testing and provide basic skills for GED and literacy. In Garrett County, the Consortium is in the same office and works closely with Title II. In Allegany, County works closely with the workforce system.

The comprehensive Intake and assessment process includes a program overview, diploma options in Maryland, individual interviews to gather more information about school history, work history, work goals, future educational goals, goal setting, skill assessment in math, and reading. For the students that qualify, the GED ready is offered free of charge. Adult Basic Education classes are intended to support basic literacy and financial skills focused on life skills, reading, and math. Some students need to improve basic literacy skills for the workforce or enter a career or training program.

We use a career pathways model to develop a skilled workforce that meets employers' needs and creates economic self-reliance for our clients. The Board will coordinate with the Adult Education provider and other partners to identify industry sectors and occupations that offer career pathways with accessible entry points for low-skilled workers and workers at all levels.

The Title II partners in Garrett County, Allegany and Washington Counties, and other WIOA Core partners will meet quarterly to ensure continuing service alignment. Additionally, the Adult Ed providers meet to discuss service.

The Workforce Director will review applications in accordance with the guidance provided by the Maryland Department of Labor's Division of Workforce Development' Office of Adult Education and Literacy Service and will submit appropriate documentation.

Western Maryland's Title II partners:

Allegany College of Maryland
Adult Basic Education
Melanie J. Chapman,
12401 Willowbrook Road, SE
Cumberland, MD 21502
mchapman@allegany.edu
301-784-5446

Garrett College
Adult Basic Education
Kaitlyn Glotfelty,
687 Mosser Road
McHenry, MD 21541
kaitlyn.glotfelty@garrettcollege.edu
301-387-3770

Hagerstown Com. College
Adult Basic Education
Dawn Schoenenberger
11400 Robinwood Drive
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Dmschoenenberger@hagerstowncc.edu
240-500-2304

(B) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate efforts with Title II providers to align basic skills and English language assessments. The description should include:

- **An outline of the agreed-upon steps that will be taken to align basic education skills and English language assessments within the Local Area, including, but not limited to, any MOU entered into by the workforce development and adult learning partners;**
- **An identification of how assessment scores will be shared among WIOA Title I areas and Title II providers (Consideration must be given to the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA));**
- **An identification of who will conduct which of the approved assessments (including for Trade Participants) and when such assessments will be conducted, consistent with this policy;**
- **An outline of how the Local Area will coordinate testing between workforce development and adult education providers; and**
- **An outline of how the Local Area will ensure that test administrators are to be trained in accordance with MD Labor's policy and applicable testing guidelines as set forth by the applicable test publisher.**

Basic skills and English language assessment are part of the menu of services provided by multiple partners and need to be standardized for common usage. AEFL partner experts and other Core Partners will be reviewing the current structure for developing a consistent delivery of basic skill programs and English language assessment. Through this analysis and discussion, partners will determine the best tools, resources, and components to be used region-wide. The WMC will ensure that AEFL is more fully integrated into the AJC menu of services and partnerships with this alignment project. Along with developing basic skill services and English language assessment commonality, other resource sharing and establishment of standard operating protocols make services seamless and not duplicative. Through training, review, and evaluation that the publisher's standards and process for testing are strictly adhered to by all partners

The Title II AEFL Adult Education partner in the three counties in our region will provide assessment, advising, and instructional services for adult basic education, adult secondary education, and/or English language skills. All assessments will be implemented according to the Maryland Assessment Policy for Basic Education Skills and English Language Assessment using NRS-approved tests and utilizing the same procedures that follow NRS guidelines. This alignment of services will increase the likelihood that customers will stay engaged with the overall WIOA workforce system, decrease the possibility of duplication of assessment for customers, and support efficiency in the comprehensive workforce system.

Through the partnership, the Adult Education and WMC in each county will administer TABE assessments for all Adult Education students and clients from other core partners as requested, including Trade participants. Assessment delivery for each local area will be offered based on demand for services in each county to meet the clients' needs. Testing procedures and protocols are instituted in each local area based on the collaborative structures within each county. In addition, each county has established practices to include Title II provision of on-site assessment for workforce partners and the approved assessment for Trade participants. WMC or the Adult Education provider

Agreed upon steps was taken, and WMC will conduct the approved assessment for Trade participants

All test administrators will be trained in accordance with the assessment policy and applicable testing guidelines as set forth by the appropriate test publisher. The Adult Education Staff have all been formally trained by attending an MDOL sponsored TABE Assessment Training where participants received certification in the administration of TABE Assessments. If the AJC Providers administer the standard assessment, they will be trained by the Title II provider to ensure compliance with the MDOL shared assessment policy. WMC and Adult Education will regularly offer assessments and multiple locations in all three counties.

A formal agreement will be executed along with a signed referral form to include the sharing of assessment scores for our common customers, including adults, out-of-school youth, dislocated workers, and students enrolled in a Title II Program. Title II providers will continue to use the common practice and request that students sign FERPA release forms so that educational records,

including assessment data, can be shared with Workforce partners and other community partners as needed.

(C) A description of how the Local Board will ensure that the individual appointed to represent Title II services on the Board will coordinate with all Title II Grant Administrators in the Local Area in a uniform, regular, and consistent manner.

The Board has county-based committees that have local representation for each required partner. Allegany College, Garrett College, and Hagerstown Community College participate in the county-based committees. When the Board meets, one of the three AEFL providers is chosen to represent all three on the board. The three Adult Education Program Administrators agree to alternate according to the length of term as the voting member on the Western Region WMWDB. To ensure all three Adult Education Program Directors are represented, the One-Stop Operator will publish an agenda one week prior to the scheduled WMWDB meeting and list all items that will require a vote. The selected Program Administrator will request written input from the other two Adult Education Program Administrators before the board meeting and provide a written summary of information after the board meeting. It is further agreed that all three Adult Education Program Administrators are welcome to attend the regional WDB meetings. The designated board member will team and communicate with the other AEFL partners on Board issues. The negotiated MOU and Board will define the rotation of each term, the length of each term, and the required official capacity for serving on the board.

(D) A description of how adult education services will be provided in the AJC system within the Local Area.

As part of the core partners' meetings, the Adult Education Services integration will be discussed, and strategies for incorporation will be explored. The partners will be working diligently to negotiate MOUs and RSAs that ensure these valuable Adult Education Services become an integral part of the AJC. These additional Adult Education Services become part of the worker and jobseeker transition assistance in the Western Maryland AJC system.

Title II Adult Education Providers will attend ROW sessions to communicate information about Adult Education and training opportunities as determined by the AJC partners. The Adult Education Program Administrator or Intake and Assessment Specialist will participate in individual or group client meetings if requested. Efforts to collaborate in and offer integrated orientation sessions will occur as determined by the needs of the local workforce areas. The AJC and the Title II Adult Education provider will collaborate to maintain a coordinated presence of agencies that reflect the services provided by core workforce partner agencies. This will be maintained by physical presence or through cross-training staff's efforts to best understand and represent the services through shared knowledge and/or print materials. A referral process and protocol between the Title II AEFL provider and core workforce partners will be determined and approved as part of the regional effort to support the 'no wrong door' enrollment process.

As mentioned previously, the AEFL Title II provider is a resource to complete the assessment of reading and math skills for Title I clients. The AEFL will also provide remediation for math and reading skills for clients not meeting the requirement to participate in a WIOA approved training. This service is also available for underemployed and/or incumbent workers with academic barriers to advancement.

"The AEFL program can partner with the Title I partner to provide Integrated Education and Training (IET) using Title II funds to support students eligible for Title I funding." For example, Title II may partner with Title I to fund the training component of the IET for participants who are Title I eligible. However, Title II may also pay for training if no other partner is identified and the participant is not eligible for Title I services.

(E) A description of how adult education providers in the Local Area will use the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program under section 243(a) of WIOA to prepare adults who are English language

learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Note: Local Areas should check with all Title II-funded providers in their area; not all adult education providers receive IELCE funds.

In Western Maryland, Washington County is the only local area to have Integrated Education and Training (IET) & Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE).

Integrated Education and Training (IET) & Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)

- Offer 2 – 3 Bridge classes that will allow ESL learners to explore the general careers affiliated with the Advanced Manufacturing sector (identified as an in-demand industry in Washington County) supported through the Program of Adult Literacy Services at Hagerstown Community College.
- Offer pathways of Welding and Transportation as a formal IET.
- Continue to build an ELL Community of Practice committee in Washington County to share resources, information and provide a space for discussing challenges, barriers, and solutions to address the needs of English Language Learners in the community.
- Will utilize the program, Path2Help (Aunt Bertha) as a referral process between WIOA core partners to recruit eligible ELL's for the Advanced Manufacturing pathways listed above.
- To meet current requirements of training programs outlined by Workforce Solutions & Continuing Education (WS&CE) at Hagerstown Community College, classes will incorporate ACT WorkKeys Curriculum and culminate with a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).
- The Adult Education component will be free of charge to students. Funding will be available to students who meet eligibility requirements for the career training and the NCRC assessment through various scholarships offered through WS&CE and WIOA partners.

All AEFLA funded classes will provide contextualized instruction incorporating basic academic skills, critical thinking, digital literacy, and self-management skills in all instruction levels. This ensures that students are prepared for a successful transition to post-secondary education, training, and employment opportunities and build career pathways.

All AEFLA will be administered according to MDOL Division of Adult Learning and Workforce Development guidelines and approved standards.

Section 7 – Title III – Wagner-Peyser Functions

This Section should include –

- (A) A description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the AJC delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.**

Western Maryland has partnered with the AJC delivery system and will continue to coordinate customer-centered services in-person and/or virtually. Through joint WIOA meetings, a collaborative standard has been developed to provide seamless services to all partner programs. We are streamlining and coordinating the procedures or processes for customer flow. Wagner Peyser and WIOA Title I handle basic and individualized services.

Wagner Peyser's functions will include labor exchange services and career guidance that is included as

carer services under Title I and assists workers in identifying and obtaining jobs in in-demand industries and occupations.

Western Maryland's Business Service team works to provide a comprehensive service approach to the business community. The core team is Wagner Peyser, WIOA Title I, Division of Rehabilitation Services. The local team works together, and that any Regional representatives will coordinate with the local are when reaching out to businesses and actively participating. The team addresses employer needs, outreach, recruitment efforts, and any other items the business needs.

Western Maryland and the American Job Center has created s a seamless, customer-focused service delivery system that aligns service delivery across the board and enhances access to program services. By realizing on-stop opportunities together, partners can build community benefiting bridges rather than silos of programmatic isolation. These partnerships will reduce unnecessary duplication of services.

(B) A description of how the Local Board will ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers in its Local Area will be provided employment services.

Few Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) are available in Western Maryland. Many farms use the Foreign Labor Program (H2A guest worker) in the area. Outreach programs are conducted during the primary preparation and growing seasons to seek out MSFW.

Visits to farms are coordinated to assist farmers and identify opportunities to assist farm workers. Communication with farm workers is facilitated through Language Line if the workers require that service.

Pre-Occupancy housing inspections are provided by Wagner Peyser staff for MSFW with interstate job orders active or by Rural Agricultural staff if H2A workers are involved.

Compose the appropriate reports and deliver services in accordance with MD Policy Issuane 2018-04

(C) A description of who is responsible for conducting migrant and seasonal farmworker housing inspections.

Pre-occupancy housing inspections are provided by Wagner-Peyser staff for MSFW with interstate job orders active or by Rural Agricultural staff if H2A workers are involved.

Section 8 – Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Functions

This Section should include –

- (A) A description of the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11)) between the Local Board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121(f) in accordance with section 101(a)(11) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) 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.**

The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), in accordance with 29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11), will provide the following services to **youth and adults** with disabilities:

- Provide intake, orientation, and assessments for disabled job-seekers;
- Promote the employment of persons with disabilities;
- Based on a comprehensive assessment of an individual's disabilities, determine an individual's eligibility for services in accordance with the Division's Order of Selection criteria;
- Develop an Individualized Employment Plan;
- Provide guidance and counseling, physical restoration, and training to eligible persons with disabilities;
- Provide follow-up services to enhance job retention;
- Provide other services as may be available and appropriate;
- Provide Pre-Employment Transitioning Services for students with disabilities, as defined by WIOA;
- Provide Supported Employment Services for youth and adults with disabilities as defined by WIOA;
- Provide independent living services to enhance the capacity of persons with disabilities to live unaided in the community;
- Provide performance information as required by WIOA;
- Provide cross-training of workforce staff on disability-related issues;
- Provide technical assistance on disability-related issues and on assistive technology;
- Engage employers through the Division's Business Services Representatives;
- Work collaboratively to coordinate services among the Workforce Partners for **youth and adults** with disabilities.

(B) A description of how individuals with disabilities will be served through the AJC system in the Local Area

As with all individuals, whether they have a disability or not, who access the American Job Center, the goal is to have a universal referral form to enable individuals to select the services they feel they need. DORS is committed to working with WIOA partners in Garrett/Allegany Counties to develop and implement a universal referral process to ensure seamless service delivery. In addition, the goal is to ensure that all information and services are accessible, regardless of the individual's disability. DORS will provide training to the partners in such areas as programmatic and physical accessibility, serving individuals with disabilities that require support services, disability etiquette, and sensitivity training, assistive technology.

Partner Summary

DORS prepares people with disabilities to go to work and helps them to stay on the job. Rehabilitation counselors in DORS Region 1 (Western Maryland) field offices in Garrett/Allegany County Area provide or arrange for services that may include career counseling, assistive technology, vocational training, and/or job placement assistance. DORS staff have specific areas of expertise to work with populations with significant disabilities. Some technical specialists work with individuals with chronic illness, learning disabilities, traumatic brain injury, orthopedic issues, and intellectual disabilities.

In addition to services delivered via field offices, DORS staff assist with arranging and providing services with local community rehabilitation programs and our local community colleges and universities.

Capacity to Meet the Workforce Development Needs of Job Seekers and Employers

Approximately 464 Garrett/Allegany County residents receive services from DORS annually at the field office locations and/or through contracted providers. (See the *Challenges* section for information on the current Waiting List.)

DORS has employment counselors and relationships with employers in the community. The organization also works closely with other local workforce development system partners to connect clients with appropriate employment opportunities.

Connections

DORS has not established a physical presence in the Garrett/Allegany Workforce Services AJC. However, DORS is consistently available to meet with consumers on an as-needed basis at those locations. DORS has also participated in and provided cross-training to AJC staff and other WIOA Partners to familiarize them with DORS services and processes.

Strengths

- DORS staff have specialized expertise in working with specific disability populations.
- DORS reaches difficult to serve populations barrier by a range of disabilities at a variety of locations.
- DORS staff has the ability to arrange and coordinate needed rehabilitation and adaptive technology required for individuals to successfully return to work.
- DORS' subject matter experts can offer AJC staff cross-training to educate them on best practices in providing services to individuals with disabilities.

Opportunities and Challenges

DORS is under an Order of Selection. DORS can only initiate employment service plans for individuals who meet our selection order as most severely disabled. There is currently approximately 1 Garrett/Allegany County resident on the DORS waiting list for services.

Section 9 – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Functions

With guidance and technical assistance from DHS and MD Labor, Local Areas will use a functional approach to integration which may include revised practices and policies related to:

- Eligibility,
- The range and sequence of services,
- The use of funds for supportive services,
- Income support,
- Performance measurement,
- Reporting requirements, and
- Administrative structures and decision making.

Data snapshots on the TANF population, statewide and by county, is available on the MD Labor website at: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/wioatca.shtml>.

This Section should include –

(A) A description of how TANF is integrated in the AJC system (e.g., customer intake, service coordination, client monitoring, and tracking, targeting employment services to low-skill, low-wage workers, etc.).

Western Maryland aims to ensure that Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) recipients have the skills needed to become self-sufficient and advance on a career path to middle -and high-skill jobs. We have been and will continue to work locally in all three counties to serve the TANF customers.

The role of TANF in the One-Stop system, as specified in the WIOA regulations, 678.430, is the starting point for TANF agency participation. Maximizing access to and eliminating barriers to employment from those job seekers

In addition, another goal is to increase coordination across the programs to improve efficiency in service delivery and increase the effectiveness of the provided services. TCA/TANF have full access to the AJC resources and are

encouraged to use the services of the AJC and Title I. caseworkers share the progress with clients. We, partner to provide orientation and employment services to the DSS clients, both virtually and in person.

Services provided will include determining eligibility for DSS services or programs and assisting current DSS customers with questions regarding their benefits. Title I and TCA/TANF caseworkers regularly communicate and share progress with participants as appropriate. Continued progress meetings will identify opportunities for more collaboration in staff training opportunities, Data sharing and participants confidentiality, Common intake, and referral. During the pandemic, all meetings were virtual.

(B) A description of the implementation and coordination process to enhance the provision of services to individuals on TANF that includes:

- **Potential co-location of LDSS and/or WIOA Partners at AJCs or LDSS depending on the nature of local partnerships and operations;**
- **Leverage existing financial and in-kind contributions to the WIOA system to ensure coordination of services provided by multiple programs, creating a seamless approach to delivering services;**
- **Cross-train and provide technical assistance to all WIOA Partners about TANF;**
- **Ensure that activities are countable and tracked for the TANF Work Participation Rate;**
- **Access to business services and employer initiatives to attract and better serve employers by marketing joint services, minimizing the burden on employers who use the centers, and provide employer-focused services through a single point of entry rather than through all partnering programs; and**
- **Contribute and provide outcomes data to the WIOA system through collecting and reporting varied program reporting requirements.**

Western Maryland has provided job readiness and placement services for the TANF for many years and is committed to building upon the exciting relationship with DSS. WMC staff provided work-based training services and job placement services funded through Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties. Throughout the three counties, customers are referred to and participate in the activities through the workforce system.

The Local Board and the local DSS are committed to building upon existing relationships and services, job placement, and follow-up services. Discussions have occurred and will be ongoing regarding a TCA/TANF caseworker located at the AJC.

We meet with partners to identify ways to leverage existing financial and in-kind contributions through the Resource Sharing Agreement. Through the partners meeting, we explore ways to share baseline outcome data for the WIOA system, including employment outcomes

DSS is one of the mandated core partners and attends the core partners quarterly meetings, and we discuss cross-training and ways to share information between all partners on a regular basis.

The WDB will discuss coordinating dual enrollment and co-case management to increase -services, integration, and resources. In addition, WIOA partners will perform the following tasks:

- Monitor their attendance and participation
- Monitor and track their activities
- Obtain weekly participation timesheets from the clients
- Assist clients in registering in Maryland Work Exchange System (MWE)
- Guide participants with the completion of the Ready to work Assessment tool.

(C) A description of the LDSS representation on the Local Board to ensure that TANF expectations, roles, and responsibilities are addressed in the Local Area.

The local Assistant Directors for the Department of Social Services serves on the Board and the core partners' meetings.

(D) Provide a description of what strategies the Local Board employs to support TANF recipients in accessing skills and credentialing, life management skills, and employment to improve the financial status of those exiting the TANF program.

The Board will follow and work with the DSS partner on the Board and DSS staff to develop a local workforce system that offers the support services and strategies carried out by AJC and partners.

By working together, we are able to coordinate services and create a more seamless system. The Local AJC, local partners, and DSS collaborate to develop strategies to maximize service to TANF customers and streamline communication. We cross-train partner staff to share knowledge, promote commonalities across partners, and expand direct service options that are available for participants. Recruitments and job search activities, which occur in the AJC, are shared with TANF staff.

Section 10 – Community Service Block Grant Functions

This Section should include –

(A) A list of Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) providers in the Local Area and whether they provide employment and training activities.

In Western Maryland, two Agencies receiving the Community Service Block Grant that provides employment and training activities are Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc and Allegany County Human Resource Development Commission.

Services provided by the two local Community Action Agency include:

- Food & Nutrition Services
- Housing Counseling & Housing First
- Transitional Shelter& Homeless Services
- Outreach & Transportation Services

(B) A description of the implementation and coordination process to enhance the provision of services to individuals on CSBG that includes:

- **Potential co-location of CAAs and/or WIOA Partners at AJCs or CAAs depending on the nature of local partnerships and operations;**
- **Leverage existing financial and in-kind contributions to the WIOA system to ensure coordination of services provided by multiple programs, creating a seamless approach to delivering services;**
- **Cross train and provide technical assistance to all WIOA Partners about CSBG;**
- **Ensure that activities are countable and tracked for CSBG performance metrics;**
- **Access to business services and employer initiatives to attract and better serve employers by marketing joint services, minimizing the burden on employers who use the centers, and provide employer-focused services through a single point of entry rather than through all partnering programs; and**
- **Contribute and provide baseline outcomes data to the WIOA system through strategies for collecting and reporting varied program reporting requirements.**

The Community Action Council and AJC are partners and already refer individuals between programs on the client's need. Workforce Development staff may provide services at the CAC facility, and the referral process will ensure a seamless approach to service delivery. The plan includes the CAC in partner meetings and training to address services to businesses and individuals.

Washington County Community Action Council does not provide employment and training activities for adults and dislocated workers. Allegany and Garrett County receive the funding for employment and training activities, which are both on the board and the core partners meeting.

Staff participates in partner meetings to learn about each other's programs and education on the CAC programs. These meetings allow partners to discuss and present their services, eligibility, and operations to the AJC Workforce along with Title I. WMC and CAC staff will leverage existing financial and in-kind contributions to the WIOA system to provide customers with access to Electric Assistance, Food Assistance, Energy Assistance, and Emergency Housing Assistance.

One-stop Operator will provide opportunities to cross-train and provide technical assistance to all WIOA partners about the CAC. Electronic Referral forms are being developed used for all three counties and core partners.

(C) A description of the CAA representation on the Local Board to ensure that CSBG expectations, roles, and responsibilities are addressed in the Local Area

The Garrett County CAC has a representative to the local board. Allegany and Garrett both attend the core partners' meetings.

Section 11 – Jobs for Veterans State Grants Functions
This Section should include –

(A) A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of service to veterans and their eligible spouses.

The AJC provides “Priority of Service” to veterans and their eligible spouses in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 and the Veterans’ Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006. The purpose of Priority of Service is to give first consideration for program participation to covered Veterans and eligible spouses who also meet the eligibility criteria of a federal Department of Labor training, employment, or placement service in any workforce preparation program. Western Maryland Local Workforce Board will ensure all vendors follow Priority of Service provisions.

To receive Veterans Priority of Service for a specific program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must meet the statutory definition of a “covered person” and also must meet any other statutory eligibility requirement applicable to the program. For all USDOL-funded programs, Priority of Service means access to services or resources earlier than others, or if resources are limited, it may mean access to services and resources instead of general service individuals.

Veterans Priority of Service will take precedence before applying WIOA Priority of Service for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Programs with specific eligibility criteria, such as the WIOA Title I Adult program, will ensure covered persons meet all statutory eligibility requirements for the program before receiving Priority of Service.

Note: All criteria for veteran and spouse eligibility will be applied as written in Maryland’s WIOA State Plan, Section 9. (review for more details on veteran and spouse eligibility)

In accordance with Maryland’s State Plan, veterans and eligible spouses will continue to receive priority of service for all USDOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. However, as described in TEGL 10-09, when programs are statutorily required to provide priority for a particular group of individuals, such as the WIOA priority described below, priority must be provided in the following order:

1. First, veterans and eligible spouses are included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
2. Second, to non-covered persons (individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA’s priority groups.
4. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

1 st Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who are also low-income, recipients of public assistance, and/or basic skills deficient
2 nd Priority	Individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient
3 rd Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who did not meet "first priority" conditions
4 th Priority	Individuals who are residents of the Western Maryland Local Area and who are not veterans and do not meet the criteria to be considered a target population

Customer Service Flow for Veterans

AJC staff provides core services and initial assessments to veterans. The receptionist or other AJC staff who work at the front desks are trained to determine whether any customers are veterans. Information can also be gathered on veteran status when the AJC front desk has customers complete their county’s “Customer Activity Sheet. Customers who self-attest to veteran status shall receive priority of service from this point forward.

AJC staff conduct the initial Personalized Needs Assessment with all new customers (including veterans). If a customer self-attests to veteran status, AJC staff complete MD Labor’s Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) Checklist to determine whether the veteran qualifies as having one or more SBE.

When the Personalized Needs Assessment is completed, veterans choose from the following options:

1. If the customer qualifies as SBE, and requires intensive services to overcome a barrier to employment, AJC staff assists in setting up an appointment for them to meet with a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist.
2. If the customer does not require intensive services, they are then referred to Basic Career Services resources, WIOA Title I resources, an AJC Job Service Specialist, or other resource as determined appropriate based on the Personalized Needs Assessment.

Note: When a veteran seeks services at an AJC where the DVOP is not currently available because of their rotation schedule, the receptionist provides the customer with the card and contact information of the DVOP and

contacts the DVOP via email to provide them with the contact information of the customer so the two can coordinate a meeting time when the DVOP will be stationed at the AJC if desired.

Verifying Veteran Status

Any individual **self-identifying** as a covered person should be **provided immediate priority** in the delivery of employment and training services. It is neither necessary nor appropriate to require an individual self-identifying as a veteran or eligible spouse to verify their status at the point of entry unless the individual who self-identifies as a covered Veteran or eligible spouse:

1. Is to immediately undergo eligibility determination and must be registered or enrolled in a program; or,
2. The applicable Federal program rules require verification of covered Veteran or eligible spouse status at that time.

Similarly, a covered person should not be denied access on a priority basis to any services provided by program staff in order to verify covered person status. Rather, an individual self-identifying as a Veteran or eligible spouse should be enrolled and provided immediate priority and then be permitted to follow-up subsequently with any required verification of his or her status as a Veteran or eligible spouse.

For services that require eligibility verification, such as classroom training, verification only needs to occur at the point at which a decision is made to commit the use of outside resources. For example, to receive training services under WIOA Title I programs, veteran status must be verified. In cases, such as these verification is only necessary where a decision is made to commit outside resources to a covered person over another individual. For all other purposes, covered persons should be enrolled and provided immediate priority before providing verification as a covered person.

To receive Priority of Service for career services, covered persons may **self-attest** their veteran or eligible spouse status.

Veterans and Spouses as Dislocated Workers

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Funds can help Veterans, separating service members and eligible spouses to enter or reenter the civilian labor force. To receive services under the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must be a dislocated worker. By definition, according to WIOA, a dislocated worker is an individual who:

1. Has been terminated or laid off, or received a notice of termination or layoff from employment;
2. Is eligible for, or has exhausted, unemployment insurance (UI) benefits;
3. Has demonstrated an appropriate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for UI and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation;
4. Has been terminated or laid off, or **received notification** of termination or layoff from employment as a result of a permanent closure or substantial layoff;
5. Is employed at a facility where the employer has made the general announcement that the facility will close within 180 days;
6. Was self-employed but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community or because of a natural disaster;
7. Is a displaced homemaker as defined by WIOA 3(16); or,
8. Is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty (as defined in section 101(d)(1) of Title 10, U.S.C.), and who has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on

active duty and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Generally, service members exiting the military, including, but not limited to, recipients of Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Military members (UCX), qualify as dislocated workers. Active duty service members who separate by retirement may also qualify as dislocated workers. However, an active duty service member taking early retirement as an incentive must be taken on a case by case basis. In some cases, this type of separation may be the only choice a service member may have. Thus, the service member's retirement could be considered a dislocation. However, if the service member's separation is voluntary, then the service member would not qualify as a dislocated worker.

If a Veteran meets the definition of a dislocated worker, then they may also be eligible to receive Priority of Service. For WIOA Title I programs, Priority of Service is available to any Veteran who has served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. AJCs may consider documentation of a service member's release from active duty on a specific date as equivalent to a layoff notice for WIOA Dislocated Worker Program eligibility. However, service members are not eligible for Priority of Service until they leave active duty.

In the case of separating service members, because they may be on a terminal leave from the military, a separating service member may begin to receive career services while the service member may still be part of the Active Duty military, but has an imminent separation date. It is appropriate to provide career services to separating service members who will be imminently separating from the military, provided that their discharge will be anything other than dishonorable.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Funds Are Provided to Fund Two Staff Positions

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists -- Under 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a), a DVOP specialist provides intensive services and facilitates placements to meet the employment needs of veterans, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the USDOL Secretary; and

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) -- Under 38 U.S.C. 4104(b), the LVER's principal duties are to: (1) conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; and (2) facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in a State under the applicable State employment service delivery systems.

Monitoring Priority of Service

To ensure priority of service is implemented and operating correctly, it will be monitored by the Regional Local Veterans Employment Representative (RLVER) and by the Labor Exchange Administrator or whomever they designate.

(B) A description of how the Local Board will engage Local Veterans Employment Representatives in engaging and providing services to local businesses.

Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of veterans. The Local Board will promote LVER services through social media, job fairs, and email blasts based on information provided to the Local Board by the LVER. The Local Board will include the LVER in employer meetings convened in support of determining employer needs related to Career Services, Training Services, or Educational Services. The LVER will be included in meetings and efforts convened by and on behalf of the AJC Partners, including meetings and efforts convened by the One-Stop Operator.

Section 12 – Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Program Functions

The Trade program provides aid to eligible workers who lose their jobs, or whose hours of work and wages are reduced because of increased imports or exports or production transfers abroad. The purpose of the program is to return trade-affected workers to suitable employment as quickly as possible with the seamless provision of coordinated resources, support, skills and training they may need.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Employment and case management services include:

- Interview and review training opportunities for each trade-affected worker;
- Inform trade-affected workers of the services and allowances available;
- Register in Maryland Workforce Exchange and complete Trade Adjustment Assistance application;
- Provide initial assessments;
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan with the affected worker;
- Help them secure appropriate training;
- Monitor their training progress;
- Devise a training waiver process;
- Provide access to workshops and other employment resources;
- Coordinate other employment benefits that workers may be eligible for;
- Inform trade-affected workers about supportive services available through partner programs;
- Co-enrollment with Adult, Dislocated Worker, or other appropriate partner program to provide comprehensive wrap-around services and reduce barriers;
- Rapid Response Services;
- Follow-up Services;
- Facilitate the early filing of petitions for any workers that are likely to be eligible for benefits under the Trade Act; and
- Perform outreach to affected workers, intake of, and orientation for adversely affected workers and adversely affected incumbent workers covered by a certification.

This Section should include –

(A) A description of how Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) services will be provided in the AJC system within the Local Area.

Trade-affected workers will be co-enrolled with the WIOA dislocated worker program or other appropriate programs to ensure the availability of a comprehensive array of services and the integration of workforce development programs. Trade staff and WIOA partners will coordinate efforts to provide opportunities for Trade affected workers to obtain skills, services, resources, and support quickly and effectively to return the trade-affected worker back to suitable employment.

(B) A description of how Title I staff will provide the TAA services listed above in an integrated manner. (Note: Services such as initial assessments, access to information on workshops, job search activities, inform participant of all the services and allowances available under TAA, Rapid Response, LMI, assist in securing appropriate training, monitor training progress and benchmarks, IEP, obtain credentials, follow-up, etc. may be provided by a partner program. Decisions such as the affected worker's TAA training program and training contracts need approval by state merit staff). Describe what your process/flow will look like.

Partnering staff in the American Job Center will be responsible for providing the initial meeting and assessments, ensure enrollment in MWE, labor market information, and delivering Rapid Response service, if not already provided and to make the participants aware of all the available services and allowances that the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program can provide. Trade staff will work with the trade affected worker on training options, completing TAA application MWE and to ensure the six criteria for training have been met, as well as create or review participants'

IEP. Trade staff will also provide approval of all TAA training programs, training contracts and training waivers. Efforts will be coordinated to monitor progress, provide Bench marks every 60 days and ensure a service is provided every 90 days for the Trade affected worker, as well as ensure any needs and barriers are addressed. Staff will coordinate on all employment, case management and follow-up activities.

(C) A description of how Trade participants will be co-enrolled in other programs. Note: co-enrollment with WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program is a requirement under the TAA Final Rule.

By following an established process flow within the AJC, co-enrollment of Trade affected workers will be ensured to allow for more efficient use of public workforce system resources and reduce barriers to program integration. Participants will be made aware of their co-enrollment. In the event that a Trade affected worker declines co-enrollment or is not eligible for co-enrollment, documentation must be provided and maintained. Declining co-enrollment has no effect on eligibility for benefits and services under the TAA Program.

Section 13 – Unemployment Insurance Functions

This Section should include –

(A) A description of how WIOA Title I and Title III partners will support Unemployment Insurance claimants and provide meaningful access to Unemployment Insurance claimants, as required by WIOA.

MDOL Wagner- Peyser and Title I staff are the designated partner in the AJC to provide counsel to individuals regarding basic information on Unemployment Insurance questions and who can determine how best to explain necessary claim information. In addition, the AJC has consistently updated with Unemployment Insurance brochures, Unemployment Insurance information for staff and job seekers.

(B) A description of the Local Board will utilize the Wagner-Peyser program and the RESEA and ROW programs to provide access to local workforce development services for Unemployment Insurance claimants.

Wagner -Peyser staff facilitators provide workshops to unemployment insurance claimants. The workshops are designed to offer career services assistance to help the participant return to work. Title I staff participates in the RESEA and ROW programs to provide access to those workforce development services for Unemployment Insurance claimants.

The Covid -19 pandemic has resulted in services being delivered virtually. Western Maryland Title I participates in the virtual RESEA/Row workshops, a valuable recruitment tool for WIOA Title I training services.

Section 14 – Senior Community Service Employment Program Functions

This Section should include –

(A) A list of Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) providers in the Local Area. Explain how SCSEP is administered in the Local Area, including grantee and subgrantee information, if applicable.

MD Labor DWDAL is the State Grantee for SCSEP. There are no sub-grantees; however, MD Labor employs an Employment Specialist in each Local Area for which the State Grantee is responsible for administering the SCSEP Program. Note: The jurisdictions for which the State grantee is responsible for administering the SCSEP Program are Baltimore City, Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties), Southern Maryland (Calvert, Charles and St. Mary’s Counties), and Eastern Maryland (Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties).

(B) A description of how SCSEP services will be provided in the AJC system within the Local Area. Include the components of the SCSEP program that are offered in the Local Area.

SCSEP utilizes the AJC's system by registering participants with the Maryland Workforce Exchange system to track their progress in narrowing their job interest, host agency search, and employment search. The employment specialists use the Maryland Workforce Exchange to follow the participants' progress and maintain case notes for each participant.

AJC staff train SCSEP participants to provide assistance at the front desk and in the resource area. SCSEP participants have access to a full range of services offered, such as assistance in finding full-time employment, job readiness skills, interviewing and resume, and the use of labor market information.

When inquiring about the SCSEP Program at an AJC, the applicant meets with the employment specialist and is assisted with registering in Maryland Workforce Exchange. The employment specialist also explains the program and process of becoming a participant to the applicant. The employment specialist tries to ensure the best match for both participant and host agency.

Section 15 – WIOA Section 188 and Equal Opportunity Functions

MD Labor's Nondiscrimination Plan can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/ndp/>. MD Labor's Language Access Plan can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/wioa-access.pdf>.

It is against the law for this recipient of federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. This Section should include –

- (A) A designation of the local Equal Opportunity Officer, including their name, location, email, telephone number, and TTY or equivalent – Dial 7-1-1 or 800 735-2258**

Pam Kunkle
Western Maryland Consortium
33 W. Washington Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Email: pkunkle@westmdcon.org
Phone: 301-791-3164

The facilities and equipment are ADA compliant and have a designated Equal opportunity officer (EO)

There are signs posted in the Centers that language assistance is available for non-English speakers. In addition, the centers use the Language Identification Card to help identify the language the individual Speaks. Finally, we use the language line over the phone interpreting services and policies related to translation and interpretation.

The Board ensures that the One-Stop Carer Centers partners with organizations that openly promote equal opportunity in their programs.

- (B) A description of how entities within the AJC delivery system, including AJC operators and the AJC partners, will comply with Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities and individuals**

with Limited English Proficiency, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities and for individuals with Limited English Proficiency.

The Board will ensure that services will be accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Each Workforce center will conduct assessments of accessibility to their center to ensure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for individuals with a disability and limited English Proficiency in the administration of programs and activities. Based on Section 188 regulations and forthcoming guidance, necessary adaptations to this process will be made as further guidance is provided.

The facilities and equipment are ADA compliant and have a designated Equal opportunity officer (EO)

There are signs posted in the Centers that language assistance is available for non-English speakers. In addition, the centers use the Language Identification Card to help identify the language the individual Speaks. Finally, we use the language line over the phone interpreting services and policies related to translation and interpretation.

The Board ensures that the One-Stop Carer Centers partners with organizations that openly promote equal opportunity in their programs.

The staff has been trained to use and utilize the Language Line services for effective communication with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) customers; three AJC staff members speak and write fluent Spanish. Language Line posters are displayed throughout the center. Front line staff is also trained in using language identification flashcards to assist customers with LEP. In-person foreign language interpreters are also utilized as needed/requested. In addition, the AJC makes sign language interpreters available for deaf and hard of hearing customers who use the services of the AJC. Finally, ACJ staff have been trained to assist individuals with auxiliary aids and computer workstations that offer accessible software and tools. Additional training will be provided to AJC staff in collaboration with DORS and community partners.

Partners and AJC staff offer assistance to all individuals who seek to utilize the center. The newly renovated AJC incorporates customer-centric design principles to be universally accessible to all customers, including new ADA push-button automatic opening doors, wheelchair-accessible computer stations in the center's resource room, and purpose-built computer stations for our deaf hard of hearing customers. In addition to onsite auxiliary aids, customers may request reasonable accommodations to the EO Officer and/or Partners. AJC and Partners distribute materials and collateral informing customers and the public of their rights to request reasonable accommodations under the ADA.

(C) An acknowledgment that the Local Board understands that, while Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38 ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities, sub-recipients may also be subject to the requirements of:

- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance;**
- **Title I of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability;**
- **Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability;**
- **Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; and**
- **Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws, including 5 Md. STATE GOVERNMENT Code Ann. §10-1101, which stipulates that oral language services must be delivered on-site for those in frequent contact with a service provider.**

The Board understands that sub-recipients may be subjected to the above requirements

(D) A description of how the Local Board will ensure meaningful access⁶ to all customers.

The Board, One-Stop Partners (Partners), and One-Stop Operator (Operator) are committed to ensuring that all eligible individuals can access the Allegany and Washington County American Job Center (AJC) and WIOA programs without regard to disability. Equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and universal access are cornerstones of each Partner's mission focus and staff training.

The WMWDB will ensure in its oversight of the WIOA Title I operations will ensure staff are providing access to resources and services as described by the Equal Employment

Western Maryland is committed to ensuring clients have meaningful physical and programmatic access to services, including those with disabilities and limited English Proficiency.

Cross-agency training will provide the staff of various points of entry/locations the necessary skills and knowledge so the same essential services could be provided in those locations, which would be meaningful access for all the clients.

(E) A description of the Local Board's procedures for handling grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by the local AJC system, including partners and service providers. Federal regulation on grievances and complaints can be found at: 29 CFR 38.69-97. Provide a separate description for the:

- **Complaints alleging discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in any WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity;**
- **Complaints and grievances not alleging illegal forms of discrimination. This includes grievances from individuals alleging labor standards violations; and**
- **Remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement under WIOA Title I, limited to, suspension or termination of payments under the title; prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under WIOA Title I; reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment (where applicable); and other equitable relief as appropriate.**

The Board, One-Stop Partners (Partners), and One-Stop Operator (Operator) are committed to ensuring that all eligible individuals can access the Allegany and Washington County American Job Center (AJC) and WIOA programs without regard to disability. Equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and universal access are cornerstones of each Partner's mission focus and staff training.

- Recipient Discrimination complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination
- Each complaint must be filed in writing and contain the following information;
 - Complainant's Name and address, or alternate means of contact
 - Identity of the individual or entity the complainant alleges is responsible for the discrimination
 - Description of the complainant's allegations include enough detail to determine if the CRC or Recipient has jurisdiction over the complaint, the complaint was filed in time, and that the complaint has apparent merit

⁶ The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission provides an example of "meaningful access" as it relates to language access for individuals with Limited English Proficiency as "Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the LEP individual. For LEP individuals, meaningful access denotes access that is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior compared to programs or services provided to English proficient individuals," available at: <https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/plan/lap.cfm>.

- Complaint signature or the signature of the complainant's authorized representative
- Complaints may be filed by completing the submit the CRC's Complaint information and Privacy Act Consent Form
- Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to be represented by an attorney or other representative
- If a complaint filed with the Western Maryland EO Officer is determined not to be under the local's are's jurisdiction, the EO office will immediately notify the complainant, in writing, providing a statement of the reason for the determination, notice that the complainant has the right to file a complaint with RC within 30 days of the date which the cmanatn received this notice.

(F) A description of how an individual can request an accommodation.

Individuals with disabilities, including those who are deaf or blind, may request auxiliary aids and services. For accommodations in Western Maryland, please contact the counties Equal Opportunity Officer:

Pam Kunkle
Western Maryland Consortium
33 W. Washington Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Email: pkunkle@westmdcon.org
Phone: 301-791-3164

When a limited English proficient (LEP) individuals, "I Speak" cards are used to identify the language needed. Participants can point to the language needed. Phone interpretation services will be used.

(G) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment; include a statement of assurance that you will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

Employees, customers, and members of the public may request reasonable accommodation from the center's EO Officer or any staff member:

- Will Provide reasonable accommodations or reasonable modifications of policies, practices, and procedures for individuals with disabilities;
- Use the same processes for all customers, including individuals with disabilities, for selecting participants for all programs, including training programs, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), and auxiliary projects (e.g., grants, limited community resources);
- Administer programs in the most integrated setting appropriate;
- Ensure effective communication, including by providing auxiliary aids and devices where necessary; and
- Provide program and architectural accessibility and access to information and communication technology.
- Maintain a list of agencies and other local resources designed to assist individuals with disabilities (e.g., agencies providing interpreters for individuals who are deaf; financial capability services; information on applying to the state Medicaid Buy-in program; and how to access housing and transportation services), and makes that information available to both staff and customers.

Work with the local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) for individuals with disabilities consider how getting a job will affect any disability benefits they may receive

- Advises customers that information on Ticket to Work (TTW) and Employment Network (EN) services authorized under the Social Security Act, including benefits planning, are available to customers who are SSI and SSDI beneficiaries
- Staff uses a variety of assessment tools, approaches, and strategies for assessment, discovery, and exploration of individual strengths and abilities and selects those that are most appropriate for the specific job seeker
- Modification to an application/registration process with a disability to be considered for the aid, benefits, services, training, or employment that the qualified applicant desires.

WIOA Partners have implemented policies to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with disabilities.

(H) A description of how the Local Board will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The description should include how the Local Board will provide reasonable accommodations regarding materials, technology, and physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities. The description should also include how the Local Board will provide staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. *The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Existing Facilities can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/ndp/nbp9-AADAChecklist.pdf>.*

Equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and universal access are cornerstones of each partner's mission focus and staff training. Therefore, the Board, partners, and the One-Stop Operator are committed to ensuring that all eligible individuals can access the Western Maryland Job Centers and WIOA program without regard to disability.

Staff and Partners offer assistance to all individuals who seek to utilize the centers. The ADA push-button automatic opening doors, wheelchair-accessible computer stations in the resource area, and computer stations for our deaf and hard of hearing customers.

Collaboration with DORS and the community partners for additional training will be used

(I) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures in place to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments, are as effective as communications with others.

WMWDB takes appropriate steps to ensure that persons with disabilities, including persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, or who have other sensory or manual impairments, have an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs, and other benefits.

Procedures:

- The WMWDB provides notice of the availability of and procedure for requesting auxiliary aids and services through notices on our letterhead and e-mail signature. Individuals who identify as a person with a disability that affects the ability to communicate or access or read written materials or request an auxiliary aid or service staff will consult with the individual to determine what aids or services are necessary to provide effective communication in particular situations.
- For deaf or hard of hearing persons and who use sign language as their primary means of communication, the Equal Opportunity Officers, 301-790-3164, are responsible for providing practical interpretation or arranging for a qualified interpreter. Partnership with Deafnet. Deafnet has qualified interpreters and will contact the appropriate interpreter to interpret for the participant. Children and other residents will not interpret to ensure confidentiality of the information and accurate communication

- Relay services for external telephone with TTY users are utilized; Dial 711 or 800-735-2258
- For a person who is blind or who has low vision, staff will communicate the information contained in written materials concerning services, benefits, treatment, waivers of rights, and consent to reading aloud and explaining these forms.
- Staff will assist those who have difficulty manipulating print materials by holding the materials and turning pages as needed or by providing computer-aided transcription services, speakerphones, or other methods that help ensure communication.
- Language needs of individuals with Limited English Proficiency are available using the USDOL Limited English Proficient (LEP) Toolkit.

A description of the steps the Local Board will take to meet the language needs of individuals with Limited English Proficiency who seek services or information. The description should include how the Local Board proposes that information will be disseminated to individuals with Limited English Proficiency, including using oral interpretation and written translation services in accordance with Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws, including 5 Md. STATE GOVERNMENT Code Ann. §10-1101, which stipulates that oral language services must be delivered on-site for those in frequent contact with a service provider.

The Board is committed to ensuring that the AJC welcomes all, including LEP customers. “I Speak” and/or Language Line posters are posted throughout the AJC, listing 38 identifiable languages to aid in the procurement of interpreters. Additionally, AJC staff utilize language flashcards at their workstations to help communicate with LEP customers. Coordinated by the EO Officer, procedures are in place to provide in-person foreign language interpreting services via the State’s contract with Ad Astra, Inc. In addition, the center utilizes phone interpretation services via the State’s agreement with the Language Line, which can be used with little or no advanced planning for “walk-in” customers. Three AJC staff members are fluent in Spanish and available for “walk-in” customers.

Several key documents have been translated into Spanish, including the ‘Equal Opportunity is the Law’ notice. In collaboration with the Board and Partners. Grievance Policy and Procedure was completed 09/25/2019.

Section 16 – Fiscal, Performance, and Other Functions

This Section should include –

(A) An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under section 107(d)(12)(B)(i).

As Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO), the Washington County Executive has designated the Workforce Services Department as its Fiscal Agent, authorized to manage funds on behalf of the CLEO.

The Western Maryland Consortium administers all WIOA Title I grant funds in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties. In addition, the WMC disburses and manages the WIOA Title I Grant Funds for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth.

The dependence of all WIOA Partners on the federal budget process, federal budget funding levels, and allocation methodologies results in a level of risk for the sustainability of the American Job Centers

The allocation formula(s), implemented by WIOA Law, is a driving factor in the sustainability of the American Job Centers in that the formula allocates funding based on local economic conditions. The event funding levels change for

Western Maryland Consortium will burden Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding. As a result, it may be necessary to adjust the budgets, serve fewer individuals, and offer fewer training expenditures and supportive services opportunities.

Western Maryland Consortium and the Local Board will be pursuing various grants to diversify funding.

(B) A description of financial sustainability of the AJC services with current funding levels, and a description of the ability to make adjustments should funding levels change.

The allocation formula(s), implemented by the Governor, is a driving factor in the sustainability of the American Job Center(s). The formula allocates funding based on local economic conditions. Therefore, WIOA partner and Board evaluation will include an analysis of factors including but not limited to :

Reduction in days of services, reduction in lease costs, reallocation of the expenses among AJC partners, fund transfer requests, and colocation with other entities to reduce costs.

The dependence of all WIOA Partners on the federal budget process, federal budget funding levels, and allocation methodologies results in a level of risk for the sustainability of the American Job Centers

To adjust costs in the event that funding levels change, WIOA partner and Board evaluation will include an analysis of factors including but not limited to reduction in days of services, reduction in lease costs, reallocation of the expenses among AJC partners, fund transfer requests, and colocation with other entities to reduce costs.

Western Maryland Consortium and the Local Board will be pursuing various grants to diversify funding.

(C) A description of the competitive process to be used to award the subgrants and contracts in the Local Area for activities carried out under this title, including risk assessment of potential subgrantees and contractors.

The Western Maryland Consortium has been designated as the fiscal agent for grant funds by all required elected officials as described in Section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) of WIOA. WMC is committed to equitable and responsible fiscal practices and will comply with fiscal and administrative requirements as mandated by WIOA.

WMC is committed to following all federal, state, and local procurement policies and processes. WMC has established procurement policies and procedures, which the board has approved. Services are announced for bid or proposal and evaluated by an independent team of either staff, board members, and/or community members based on procurement thresholds. Contracts are awarded based on pre-established qualifications and scoring protocols. A competitive process will be used in accordance with guidelines set forth in CFR 200.318-326 of the Uniform Guidance.

In addition, WMC will review the risks associated with a potential sub-grantee prior to making an award. Risk analysis tools could include:

- Potential conflicts of interest
- Financial stability
- Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in this part.
- History of performance.
- Reports and findings from audits
- The Applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed

(D) A description of the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State board pursuant to Section 101(d)(6); this should include a

description of the process used by the Local Board to review and evaluate performance of the local AJC(s) and the One-Stop Operator.

Workforce Services and partners in the American Job Center will work together to ensure seamless service delivery to customers and demonstrate the “people before performance” philosophy. Customers will be at the center of service delivery

The Board has utilized Feral performance and local metrics to evaluate performance in the Region’s Workforce Centers and Operations. Through its NAWB membership, plans to take advantage o resources and other technical assistance related to reviewing and evaluating the One-Stop Operator if sufficient technical assistance and funds are available. WorkforceGPS and State resources will be utilized

(E) A description, including a copy of, the Local Area’s Individual Training Account policy. The description should include information such as selection process, dollar limits, duration, etc. and must be in accordance with the State’s WIOA Title I Training and the Eligible Training Provider List policy found at: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi9-17.pdf>.

Western Maryland clients that are seeking training assistance through the utilization of WIOA Title I funds will be allowed to choose training courses approved by the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). There are several exemptions to this policy that is supported and approved by the Board:

Individuals have choices in deciding the training program that best fits their needs. The organization that will provide the services Staff at the AJCs will ensure that individuals have access to the “State List of Occupational Training Providers” and information about how well these training providers performed. In addition, the WMC will promote customer choice with the assistance of professional career counseling staff.

The ITA will cover the costs of tuition and fees for an approved training program offered by an approved occupational training provider. Limits on dollar amounts and time in training are contained in the ITA policy.

Individuals will be required to first apply for Pell Grants and other funding sources prior to determining the value of an ITA. In some cases, supplemental resources such as Pell Grants will be combined with WIOA funds to fully cover an approved training program's tuition and fee costs.

After a WIOA client is authorized by Title I staff to attend a training program with an eligible ITA provider, the Title I staff will provide the individual with a signed copy of a billing authorization form for the selected training program. The billing authorization form will include the total amount of costs for tuition and fees that the Western Maryland Consortium will pay. After receiving the billing authorization form, the training provider can submit a “Request for Payment” form to the Western Maryland Consortium, which sets forth all approved tuition and fees for the WIOA client. The Western Maryland Consortium shall make payments for proper charges for tuition and fees in a timely manner.

The tracking of ITA obligations and ITA payments will be managed at the Western Maryland Consortium Administrative Office. This obligation and expenditure information will be regularly disseminated to staff at the local AJC centers to ensure that up-to-date information is available to the customer services staff and clients.

ITAs are limited in the amount of \$6,000 total cost and two years of approved training

(F) A description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with Section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

It uses the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) program to track WIOA funded activities and outcomes. The training services will be delivered to eligible clients to ensure clients' choice and is consistent with priority and/or demand industries and occupations in the region.

Together the client and the counselor determine the best training option for the client. For example, a contract for training services or classroom size training may include being timelier and cost-effective in certain circumstances. An example is if employers need specific skills, then contract or class-sized training may be delivered. Likewise, if it is more effective to train a group than individuals, then a contract or class-sized training may be used. Other training services clients may benefit from:

- On-The-Job Training (OJT)
- Incumbent worker training
- Transitional Training
- Internships and Work Experience

All contract training will be leveraged to build on client choice and responsiveness to the industry needs

(G) A description of how the AJCs are utilizing the Maryland Workforce Exchange as the integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and programs carried out by AJC partners.

Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) is the labor exchange, case management, and performance accountability for Title 1 and Wagner Peysner staff.

Job seekers register in MWE and are encouraged to complete the online resume, job search, labor market information, education and training options, along career and workforce information.

Staff completes the WIOA program enrollment applications, tracks services, and documents program participation through case notes,

Partners will also use the MWE as a tool to assist job seekers and businesses.

(H) A description of the Local Board's procedures for conducting oversight and monitoring of its WIOA activities and those of its subgrantee and contractors. *DWDAL's policy on monitoring can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi7-19.pdf>. The monitoring plan shall address the monitoring scope and frequency and shall include the following:*

- **The roles and responsibility of staff in facilitating this procedure;**
- **A requirement that all subgrantee agreements and contracts be monitored at least annually;**
- **Procedures for determining that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and WIOA regulations;**
- **Procedures for determining compliance with other provisions of the Act and regulations and other applicable laws and regulations, including the method of monitoring to be used for subgrantees and contractors;**
- **Monitoring risk factors and risk assessments;**
- **Provisions for the recording of findings made by the recipients' monitor(s), the forwarding of such findings to the subgrantee or contractor for response and the recording of all corrective actions;**
- **Provisions of technical assistance as necessary and appropriate; and**
- **Specific local policies developed by the Local Board for oversight of the AJC system, youth activities and employment and training activities under Title I of WIOA.**

To maintain efficient and effective programming and monitoring, program administrators, One-Stop Operators, Local Workforce Development Boards, and sub-recipients must:

- Ensure compliance with WIOA, Uniform Guidance, federal guidance, the Maryland Workforce Plan, Regional and Local Plans, and state and local policies and procedures, including through internal monitoring;
- Maintain a system of local policies and procedures, where applicable; • Monitor sub-recipients, where applicable;
- Monitor sub-recipients, where applicable. Monitoring risk factors and risk assessments could -include: years of service, status of Good Standing with the state, A-133 audit results if applicable, appropriate policies and procedures in place, weakness in Internal Controls, any consistent/repeated findings, agreed-upon performance measure attained, completion rate, timely fiscal operation reporting, or any major changes in program or operations.
- Submit monthly or quarterly programmatic and fiscal reports, where applicable;
- Report data in appropriate databases;
- Maintain records for relevant retention periods
- Make necessary information available to monitors for monitoring and audits;
- Develop and implement Corrective Action Plans to respond to any concerns or findings, if appropriate, in monitoring reports;
- Notify DWDAL of incidents and security breaches;
- Provide technical assistance and training on program requirements and design, as applicable; and
- Maintain compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38; Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and other applicable laws and regulations concerning nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.

Pursuant to WIOA section 107(d)(8), the Local Board, in partnership with the chief elected official for the Local Area, must:

- Conduct oversight for local youth workforce investment activities, local employment and training activities for adults and dislocated workers, and the one-stop delivery system in the Local Area;
- Ensure the appropriate use and management of the funds provided for the activities;
- For workforce development activities, ensure the appropriate use, management, and investment of funds to maximize performance outcomes under WIOA section 116; and
- Develop a policy addressing how the Local Area will monitor their sub-recipients, according to 2 CFR 200.331, and how they will engage their Local Board in monitoring and oversight activities.

(I) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures regarding the safeguarding and handling of personally identifiable and confidential information (ex., physical and electronic files), including the incident response plan for loss of records. *DWDAL's policy on privacy and data security can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi4-19.pdf>.*

Western Maryland Consortium makes every effort to protect personally identifiable information, including name, address, social security number, and other related data elements that indirectly lead to identification.

The Local Board complies with local government policy regarding PII and TEG 39-11. It is the practice of the office to secure any PII in a locked storage area. Files and documentation beyond the retention date are shredded. Computers are password protected and quickly time out to prevent unauthorized access to PII.

Western Maryland Policies & Procedures for Privacy and Data Security was written and in place on 06/01/2019.

Breaches for both physical and electronic data must be reported. Examples of warning signs that a breach has occurred include:

- Missing or changed files or documents;
 - Signs of a break-in or attempted break-in in office or cabinets;
 - Device tampering;
 - Locked user account;
 - Fake messages; and
 - Unusually slow device or internet.
- Report any breach or suspected breach of PII to the director.
 - Director must notify organizations (local, State or vendor) as soon as possible and within three (3) business days if a breach occurs and notify the MD DOL DWDAL Manager of Monitoring and Compliance as soon as possible.
 - Director will follow MD DOL Policy Issuance 2019-4 Privacy Data Security.
 - Director must also notify the MD DOL DWDAL Director of the Office of Workforce Information and Performance of any electronic breach that involves MWE. The notification should include the following information:
 - The encrypted notifications should be brief and contain the following elements:
 - A brief description of what happened, including the date(s) and time of the breach and its discovery;
 - To the extent possible, a description of the types of PII and/or sensitive information involved in the breach (e.g., full name, social security number, date of birth, home address, account, disability code, etc.);
 - What the agency and point of contact is doing, if anything, to investigate the breach, to mitigate losses, and to protect against any further breaches;
 - The contact information for the organization experiencing the breach; and
 - Legal approval documentation for notifications to the affected customers and/or employees, advising them of steps to take to protect themselves from potential harm.

(J) A description of the Local Board's procurement system, including a statement of assurance that the procedures conform to the standards in USDOL regulations set forth in 29 CFR Part 95, Part 97 and 2 CFR 200. Note that this should include details on how the Local Board would award emergency contracts when current contracts have been eliminated for just cause, in accordance with the Local Board's procurement system.

The Western Maryland Consortium follows guidelines outlined in CFR Part 200 by Uniform Guidance Procurement Standards for Non-Profit Organizations Federal procurement standards are written to promote "full and open competition" among vendors.

The guidelines provide for four distinct types of Non-Governmental procurements:

Small purchases, Sealed Bids, Competitive Proposals, and Non-Competitive Proposals

A process has been established to assure that any vendor providing services that may exceed \$25,000 within a fiscal year has been examined for compliance.

See Attachment # 1 – Fiscal Policy Manual

(K) A description of any documentation to demonstrate that the acquisition, management, and disposition of property adhere to the Property Management Procedures taken from USDOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and 29 CFR Part 95.

WMC adheres to the acquisition, management, and disposition of property as prescribed in the DOL Regulations outlined in 2 CFR Part 200. Therefore, a Policy was developed and put in place.

(L) A description of any policies or procedures the Local Board adopted to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts in the exercise of their responsibilities, particularly those related to the awarding of contracts.

A Local Board member may not vote on or participate in any matter under considerations by the Local Board if it:

- Would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the immediate family of the member.
- Is regarding a service provided by that member (or by an entity that the member represents)
- Would constitute a conflict of interest as specified in the law
- Participate in the negotiation of, or decision to award contracts or grants with or for any entity in which the member has a financial or personal interest.

All Local Area Board members sign a Conflict of Interest.

(M) Description of the Local Board or fiscal agent's accounting procedures, including the procedures used in preparing reports to the State. In addition to the requirement that all financial transactions be conducted in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the fiscal management system must include the following in the accounting procedures. This description must address how the fiscal system:

- Tracks funding types, funding amounts, obligations, expenditures and assets;
- Permits the tracking of program income, stand-in costs, and leveraged funds; and
- Is adequate to prepare financial reports required by the State.

The Accounting procedures for Western Maryland are prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Western Maryland Consortium has the Quick Books to track and report actual costs against established cost categories, (administration, training, etc.) Every funded activity requires a detailed budget and alignment with appropriate cost categories and account codes. The pre-approval of expenditures and effective monitoring of financial transactions, supporting documents and records all aid in ensuring timely and accurate accounting reporting.

The Fiscal Reporting System – monthly receipts and expenditures report generated by the Quickbook is the basis for accruals recorded and reported to MDOL and others.

Obligation Control System – initiates a planning cycle prior to the beginning of each program/fiscal year to plan for anticipated funding. This planning process allows for control of the total obligation level of each funding source. The obligation report is monitored and anticipated expenditure levels of each of its programs and grants to ensure that costs are in line with available funding. Review processes are put in place to monitor and control the level of obligations and subsequent expenditures.

All three counties utilize a Microsoft Excel base format for tracking and compiling the Obligation Report. The information will be used to generate Requisitions for Cash Quarterly Status Reports, Final Closeout Reports, and any other ad hoc reports as needed.

(N) An identification of key staff who will be working with WIOA funds.

Western Maryland Fiscal Administration is the primary key staff who will be responsible for the recording and reporting. The Fiscal Manager, Fiscal Specialist, and the Executive Director.

(O) A description of how the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) financial system will permit tracing of funds to a level adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of WIOA standards or USDOL regulations.

Western Maryland Consortium uses QuickBooks Enterprise Solutions: Nonprofit 18.0 to record and track the use of funds. This system is maintained by qualified fiscal staff. It is supplemented by manual and electronic (using Microsoft Office Suite) record-keeping, helping to assure that all financial transactions are executed, and all records are maintained according to relevant standards and can be traced back through internal systems.

All expenditures are reviewed and approved by both Executive and Fiscal staff to ensure they are appropriately categorized, are appropriately charged, and are allowable costs. An internal code (GL) assignment identifies the expenditure category and line of expenditure, and a secondary system (class) identifies the grant charged prior to data entry into the QuickBooks database. Items are entered into the accounting system by a fiscal staff and are subsequently reviewed for accuracy against invoices and approving documents after a second fiscal staff entry.

WMC maintains an adequate separation of duties and multiple levels of review per written fiscal policy. In addition, supporting documentation is maintained, allowing for tracking any transaction to its points of review and origin, establishing that no funds are used in violation of WIOA standards or USDOL regulations.

(P) A brief description of the following:

- **Fiscal reporting system,**
- **Obligation control system,**
- **ITA payment system,**
- **Chart of account system,**
- **Accounts payable system,**
- **Staff payroll system,**
- **Participant payroll system, and**
- **Participant stipend payment system.**

Fiscal Reporting – Management reports are prepared each month by each subsection of the grant, for each county, and then by total Consortium. These reports are reviewed by the Fiscal Director for accuracy and compared to the general ledger ad trial balance to ensure all expenses have been recorded to the proper cost classification. In addition, the required Quarterly State Financial reports are prepared from this report to enable a detailed audit trail to present.

Obligation control system – The Western Maryland Consortium accounting system identifies a revenue account for each funding source in addition to the expenses associated with each funding source. Each month, Management Reports, including Trial Balance and Income Statements, are prepared and reviewed to ensure against the over expenditure of any funding source. These reports are reconciled to the general ledger each month. In addition, each county office maintains a record of and produces a monthly report of ITA for all participants, which includes any accrued expense or liquidated obligation. This report is submitted to the Administrative office for review and reconciliation each month. The Executive Director reviews the trial balance and income statements each month.

ITA Payment System – After the required contracts have been completed, the Western Maryland Consortium will adhere to the payment policy of the respective vendor. This contractual agreement describes the roles and responsibilities of the training providers, including the ITA payment system. Any pre-payment is based on the

terms of each individual training contract. The training providers are required to refund tuition and fees paid by WMC when a WIOA participant drops out of training. Payments will be processed with the regular weekly disbursement of accounts payable. The training providers will submit invoices referencing the WIOA participant, the training provided, and the contractual agreement. The award and payment of the Pell Grant funds must be accounted for the reported by the Training Provider to assure that WIOA funds are only used to supplement these award payments.

The Executive Director approves the contracts and agreements. And then, a copy is placed in each participant's file. Finally, all the information is tracked on an Excel spreadsheet.

Chart of Accounts System -

- Assets
- Liabilities
- Fund Balance
- Revenue
- Administration Expenses
- Program expenses, including but not limited to training expenses.

Accounts Payable System – Purchase Orders are issued and approved by the Fiscal Manager and Executive Director for purchases. Invoices are checked for accuracy, and the appropriate purchase order is attached. Vendor numbers are assigned, and the invoices are processed by-weekly in the central office through the computerized accounts payable program for payment.

Staff Payroll System – Employees are required to sign in every day or call in for an absence. Employees maintain and submit a daily attendance time report at the end of the bi-weekly payroll cycle. The county supervisor reviews the time records and submits them to the central office for additional processing. Each timesheet is totaled for administrative and/or program hours and benefit hours. Time distribution is entered in the computerized payroll program that generates all reports and paychecks. Employee checks/direct deposits are issued every two weeks, and the payroll taxes are deposited as required by federal and state regulations.

Participant Payroll System – Bi-Weekly time cards are issued to each worksite, and the Worksite Supervisor enters the Work Experience/Summer Youth time for each participant daily. The time cards are collected at the end of each pay period and checked by the counselor responsible for a worksite. The participant and the worksite supervisor sign time and attendance reports. Each county has a staff person assigned to review the timecards for accuracy and proper signatures After this review, Summer Youth time cards are totaled, and individual participants totaled hours are transferred to a worksheet and sent to the central office for payroll processing. Work Experience timecards are sent directly to the primary office for processing. After processing, the checks are mailed directly to the participants from the central office. Payroll taxes are deposited as required.

Participant Stipend Payment System - The termination of Participant Stipend Payments had eliminated the processes previously used to provide document these payments. Payment for participant transportation is made directly to the vendor.

(Q) A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) cash management system, providing assurance that no excess cash will be kept on hand, and that procedures are in place to monitor cash.

All invoices are generally processed upon receipt for payment. All grant expenditures and staff payroll are reviewed on a monthly basis to determine a trend of the actual expense. This information, combined with the approximate known times of training vendor invoices, allows an accurate forecast of the immediate cash need of the Western Maryland Consortium. Based upon this information, cash is requisitioned weekly and then sent to MD DOL. The end of the fiscal year, holidays, and the summer youth program affect the requisition for cash

process. All these factors are included the cash requisition procedure to ensure adequate cash balances and to prevent excessive cash balances

(R) A description of the Local Board's cost allocation procedures including:

- **Identification of different cost pools,**
- **Procedures for distribution of staff costs between cost categories (Administrative cost, program cost, and indirect cost),**
- **Procedures used for distribution of funds from each cost pool,**
- **Description of funds included in each cost pool, and**
- **Description of cost allocation plans for AJCs.**

Allowable costs will be measured by the following:

- Reasonable and necessary to the grant award
- Conform to any limitations found in the Uniform Cost Principles or grant award.
- Consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to all activities.
- In accordance with GAAP and the required OMB circulars

Cost are identified and directed as either:

Assigned Direct costs – Costs that benefit a single funding source and/or cost category will be directly charged to a subsection of the grant.

Unassigned Direct Costs – These are costs (both staff and operation) that cannot be directly charged to a specific funding source or cost category will be assigned to an intermediate Program Cost Pool (PCP) for accumulation and distribution. WMC will maintain adequate documentation to support the distribution of costs to the various funding sources and cost categories. The distribution of the cost pools will be based upon an acceptable cost allocation methodology. Examples of these costs include rent, equipment, insurance, and communications.

Indirect Costs – These are costs that cannot be directly charged to a subsection of the grant but are incurred for a common purpose benefiting more than one cost objective. These costs are usually administrative and are accumulated in an intermediate Administrative Cost Pool (ACP) for distribution. The distribution of the cost pools will be based upon an acceptable cost allocation methodology.

Staff Time Allocation – Staff performing administrative functions as defined in the WIOA regulations will be charged to Administration, except for documented time devoted to program/client services. Staff performing program services will be charged to the appropriate grant subsection based on the percentage of participants served that month from each funding stream. These times sheets will be given to the accounting department every two weeks (payroll cycle) to distribute payroll expenses.

Cost pooling involves accumulating costs to intermediate pools for later allocation to the final cost objectives.

Program Cost Pools (PCP) consisting of both staff and operation costs will be distributed monthly by WMC. This pool will be distributed to the various WIOA (and other DOL administered) funding sources based upon program participant data. A monthly participant matrix is prepared monthly by MIS staff containing numbers of individuals for each program. The Program Cost Pool for the month is distributed to the grants based on the program participant data contained in this report.

Washington County Dropout Prevention Program will not be represented in the PCP participant numbers as most case management, instructional and overhead costs are paid through these subgrants. WMC staff time and related

expenses incurred servicing these youth (eligibility determination, case management, MIS record keeping) will be directly charged to the category using time records.

Administrative costs will be accumulated in the Administrative Cost Pool (ACP). They are first distributed to the maximum allowed to non-DOL administered grants for services discrete from those provided under DOL administered grants. The remaining administrative costs are distributed over DOL Administered non WIOA grants proportionate to spending after all direct costs (direct assigned, indirect assigned, and staffing) have been assigned. WMC assures the method used to distribute cost from the pools to the various funding sources and cost categories will be reasonable and consistently applied.

Funds in Each Cost Pool – WIOA funds included in each cost pool are Youth funds, Adult funds, Dislocated Workers funds, Administrative funds, other WIOA grant funds, Administrative funds, and other WIOA discretionary awards.

Cost Allocation Plan for the American Job Center – For any co-location costs, the method of this allocation will be negotiated between and among the partners and the operator with the approval of the LWDB, Local Elected Officials, and the agencies which the various partners are accountable to ensure an equitable allocation.

(S) A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) procedure for collecting debts involving WIOA funds.

The Local Board has given the Fiscal Staff of Western Maryland Consortium authority to collect debts on its behalf. Any reports of delinquency in recovering debts will be directed to the finance committee, who then reports them to the Board for legal action

Acronym List	
ABC	Associated Builders & Contractors
ABE	Adult Basic Education
ABEL	Adult Basic Education and Literacy
ACE	Accelerating Connections to Employment
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AJC	American Job Center
AMS	Administrative Management System
BDR	Business Development Representatives
BOSS	Business Outreach Services Strategies
BSC	Business Services Consultant
CBO	Community Based Organization
CC	Career Counselor
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CLEO	Chief Local Elected Official
CRC	Civil Rights Center
CRS	Career Resource Specialist
DEWD	Department of Economic and Workforce Development
MD Labor	Maryland Department of Labor
DOL	Department of Labor
DORS	Division of Rehabilitative Services
DSS	Department of Social Services
DVOP	Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist
DWDAL	Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning
EARN	Employment Advancement Right Now
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
EOO	Equal Opportunity Officer
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETP	Eligible Training Provider
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures
GED	General Equivalency Diploma
HCC	Hagerstown Community College
HPO	High Priority Occupations
HHS	(U.S. Department of) Health and Human Services
ICS	Individualized Career Services
IEP	Individual Employment Strategy
ISS	Individual Service Strategy
JAWS	Job Access With Speech
ITA	Individual Training Account
LEA	Labor Exchange Administrator
LLSIL	Lower Living Standard Income Level
LMB	Local Management Board

LQ	Local Quotient
LVER	Local Veteran Employment Representative
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSFW	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
MTC	Maryland Tech Connection
MWE	Maryland Workforce Exchange
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
OFCCP	(DOL) Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
OJT	On-the-job Training
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PII	Personal Identifiable Information
POS	Priority of Service
QCEW	Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
RESEA	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments
RFP	Request for Proposal
ROW	Re-employment Opportunity Workshop
RRES	Rapid Re-employment Services
RS	Retention Specialist
RSA	Resource Sharing Agreement
SBDC	Small Business Administration's Small Business Development Center
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
TAA	Trade Adjustment Act
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
TCA	Temporary Cash Assistance
VRI	Video Remote Interpreting
WP	Wagner-Peyser
WARN	Worker Adjustment and Training Notification
WbL	Work-based Learning
WDB	Workforce Development Board
WIOA	Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act

2020-2024 Local Plan Assurances

The following checklist and signed certification must be included in the submitted Local Plan. Check the following boxes to accept the assurances listed below.


		Assurance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1.	Consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), for the 2020-2024 Plan, the Local Board has held at least one public comment period of no less than 30 days to obtain input into the development of the Local Plan and to provide the opportunity for comment by representative of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2.	The final Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4.	The Local Board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the Local Area, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.	The Local Board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the Local Board and each American Job Center partner concerning the operation of the American Job Center delivery system in the Local Area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.	The Local Board has written policy or procedures that ensure American Job Center operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8.	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9.	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10.	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11.	The Local Board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service American Job 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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12.	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 the Local Area's American Job Centers for individuals with disabilities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13.	The Local Board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from American Job Center services.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14.	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15.	The Local Board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	16.	The Local Board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188 of WIOA.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17.	The Local Board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the American Job Center environment for political activities, and the Local Board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18.	The Local Board ensures that American Job Center staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers that are demand-driven and consistent with MD Labor policy.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19.	The Local Board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records including, but not limited to, 20 C. F. R. 603, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable State laws, Departmental regulations and policies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	20.	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.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21.	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 and the Wagner-Peyser Act funds.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22.	The Local Board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23.	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	24.	The Local Board has a written policy and procedures for ensuring management and inventory of all properties obtained using WIOA funds, including property purchased with JTPA or WIA funds and transferred to WIOA, and that comply with WIOA, and, in the cases of local government, Local Government Property Acquisition policies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	25.	The Local Board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	29.	The Local Board has a written policy for priority of service at its American Job Centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites and 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.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30.	The Local Board has developed plans and strategies for maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the American Job Center delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31.	The Local Board will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

The Local Workforce Development Board for Western Maryland certifies that it complies with all required components and assurances of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act plan development guidelines issued by the state of Maryland. The Local Board also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, and their regulations, written U.S. Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, Office of Management and Budget circulars, and all other applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and policies.




 Local Chief Elected Official(s)⁷
 Jeffrey A. Cline - President



 Date



 Local Workforce Development Board Chair
 Amos A. McCoy



 Date

⁷ Additional signature lines should be added to accommodate Local Areas that require more than one local chief elected official signature.