

# WorkLink Workforce Investment Board

## 2016 – 2020 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Area Plan

### Executive Summary

#### Background / Plan Requirements

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

State Instruction Letter 15-16 from the Department of Employment and Workforce and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) also require a public comment period of 30 days prior to submitting the local plan. Local plans are due to DEW by November 1, 2016.

#### Local Plan Contents

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

#### Section I – Workforce and Economic Analysis

##### Summary

For 2015, the unemployment rate in the WorkLink local area was 5.6%, which is slightly lower than the state average for South Carolina of 6.0%, but just above the national average of 5.3%. Coincidentally, the current employment data (July 2016) for WorkLink also indicates an unemployment rate of 5.3%, with 173,630 persons employed and 9,720 persons unemployed.

The unemployment rate in the WorkLink region has continued to decline since peaking in 2009.

##### Knowledge, Skills & Education – In Demand Occupations

In the WorkLink local area, the South Carolina 2015 Skills Gap Update identifies Business, Management & Administration; Health Science; Manufacturing; Marketing; Transportation, Distribution & Logistics; and Hospitality & Tourism as key Career Clusters with the largest percentage of job openings in the period between 2012 and 2022.

When the same report compares the projected job openings to the Career Cluster choices in WorkLink's service area, it was found that while students are electing to enroll in courses related to Health Science, there are deficits in the areas of Business, Management & Administration (-6.3%); Manufacturing (-10.1%); Marketing (-13.1%); Transportation, Distribution & Logistics (-2.9%); and Hospitality & Tourism (-12.2%).

Current advertised job openings in the WorkLink local area require varying degrees of experience including 39.03% that are listed as entry level, 9.9% that require less than 1 year, 33.79% 1-2 years, 16.31% 2-5 years and less than 1% that require 5-10 years of experience.

The level of education required for current advertised job openings in the local area varies. Positions without a listed education requirement total 19.11% of the job openings, 44.30% require a high school diploma or equivalent and 24.68% of the job openings in the WorkLink local area require a bachelor's degree.

### Labor Market Trends

The recently updated Department of Employment and Workforce Community Profile for the WorkLink region lists the industries employing the largest number of persons as Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance and Educational Services. The report also indicates strong employment in the transportation/warehousing industry as well as the Administrative, Support, and Waste Remediation Services, which is noteworthy as a result of their strong link to the manufacturing industry.

### **Section II – Strategic Vision and Goals**

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board (WorkLink) finalized its five year strategic plan in the fall of 2015. Out of this Strategic Plan, the Board reconfirmed our vision and mission developed in the Spring of 2009 with our first five-year strategic plan.

Our vision provides a directional statement; a “picture” of a future state of the organization (what we are striving to become); it provides inspiration; it gives us a framework for our area of influence/responsibility. **Our vision is “To have a fully-employed, skilled workforce in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties, SC.”**

Our mission is a brief description of the organization's fundamental purpose of our reason for what we do and our existence, articulated for those inside and outside of the organization. **“We develop the link between employers and the workforce in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties, SC.”**

WorkLink has worked to develop a strategy grounded in local and regional demographic and economic data. We looked to a variety of sources to identify county and regional issues for both economic and workforce development. Through an ongoing analysis of economic and industry

trends as well as program performance and outcomes, we will ensure that our strategies, sectors and occupations are the most appropriate for the populations and industries we serve.

### **Section III – Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies**

The SC Works system will bring together a series of partner programs and entities responsible for workforce development, education, and other human resources programs to collaborate in the creation of a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services. Partners represented in the following programs:

1. Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs
2. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs
3. Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Programs
4. Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities
5. Post-Secondary Education Programs (Perkins)
6. Community Services Block Grant Employment and Training Activities
7. Native American Programs
8. HUD Employment and Training Activities
9. Job Corps Programs
10. Veterans Employment and Training Programs
11. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs
12. Senior Community Service Employment Programs
13. Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs
14. Unemployment Compensation Programs
15. YouthBuild Programs
16. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs
17. Second Chance Programs

### **Section IV – Program Design and Evaluation**

The WorkLink Workforce Development has procured an Operator, Eckerd Workforce Services to operate the SC Works Centers located in Clemson, Easley, Anderson, and Seneca. We have also procured Eckerd to provide Workforce Development activities under WIOA Title I-B for both Adult and Dislocated Worker Services. On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training are both facilitated within the WorkLink office.

Across the SC Works Center system, continuous improvement is supported through evaluation, accountability, identification of best practices, and data-driven decision-making. The purpose of the adult programs is to prepare people for the workplace. Programs will be evaluated based on performance measures negotiated with the State and with DOL. Adults and Dislocated Workers performance measures are entered employment, employment retention, median earnings, in-program skills gains, and credential attainment. Customer Satisfaction Surveys will be issued as part of the SC Works Certification Standards set forth by the State. Individuals and

employers will be surveyed, and programs will be evaluated based on participant satisfaction measures.

WorkLink ensures the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services monitoring the local recipients annually. We have established internal controls that have the provider continuously monitoring as well. We seek to improve our services through Partner Quarterly meetings, WorkLink Workforce Development Board Committee meetings, and by having our Service Providers attend conferences in order to network and obtain best practices. We encourage our providers to research and visit other areas to bring back to our area.

In addition to this, the WorkLink Workforce Development Board has a five-year strategic plan for the system to deliver workforce development services to job seekers and employers, which includes continuous improvement measures.

## **Section V – Operation and Compliance**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act permits the Chief Local Elected Official(s) to designate an administrative entity to become the grant recipient and to be responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. In the WorkLink region, the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) has been designated as the administrative entity.

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

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

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

- Budget preparation and administration
- Cost allocation
- Payroll/Fringe Benefits
- Grants and Contract administration
- Monitoring and Technical assistance to service providers
- Accounts Payable and Billing
- Property inventory, General accounting and fixed assets records
- Custody of funds

- Distribution of pass-through funds
- Cash flow
- Investments
- Debt administration and Risk management
- Internal and External financial reports, statutory and tax reports.

Each Fall/Winter the Board reviews the progress of the Service Provider to determine the adequacies of services delivered to participants and customers in the SC Works Centers and WIOA programs. Upon review, the Board will determine whether or not to extend the contract (unless the maximum number of extensions has been reached) or to release a request for proposals to the public. Once a determination has been made to release a request for proposals, a committee is formed to review how the services should be delivered and what the expected outcomes should be as a result of a grant award. The RFP is then released for approximately 6-8 weeks. Upon the closing of the RFP process, all proposals are reviewed by the RFP committee and a recommendation is made to the full Board. The Board votes to enter into negotiations with the recommended service provider, and then votes to accept the final budget upon completion of negotiations.

## Section VI – Attachments

When submitted, the local plan may include some or all of the documents outlined below as attachments.

- Supportive Services policy;
- On-the-Job Training (OJT) reimbursement policy;
- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) policy, when using local funds;
- Youth Incentives policy;
- Local training cap policy;
- Local definition for youth who “require additional assistance”; and
- Adult and Dislocated Worker Self-sufficiency definition(s) for training.
- Memorandum(s) of Understanding, including signature sheets;
- Resource Sharing Agreements, including signature sheets;
- All service provider grants, including statements of work and budgets;
- Statements of work for in-house operational staff (where applicable);
- Current or most recent Grant Application Request(s)/Request(s) for Proposals;
- Local Workforce Development Board By-Laws;
- Local Workforce Development Board and Committee meeting schedules;
- Local Workforce Development Board budgets; and
- Local monitoring schedule.