

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
Local Plan  
July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2020**

**Local Area:** [WorkLink](#)

**Counties within the Local Area:** [Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties](#)

**Local Area Administrator and Contact Information:**

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## Attachment B: Local 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. The local plan must include:

- 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**

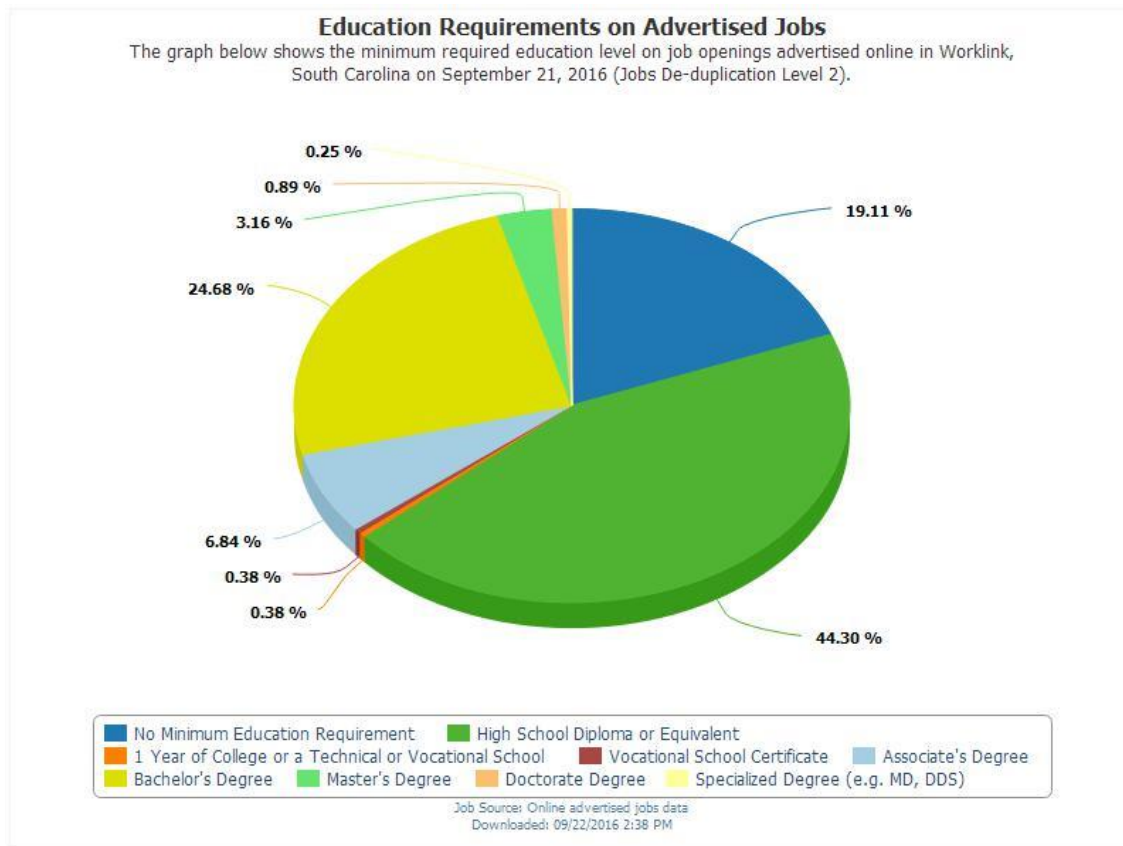
1. An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions, to include existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis shall include:
  - The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including those in in-demand industry sectors and 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. The chart below further details minimum education requirements for advertised job opening in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties.



- An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment; and

### Employment data

According to the DEW Community Profile for the WorkLink area (published April 29, 2019), for 20185, the unemployment rate in the WorkLink local area was 5.63.3%, which is slightly lower than the state average for South Carolina of 63.04%, but and just above the national average of 5.3.9%. Coincidentally, the current employment data (July 2016April 2019) for WorkLink also indicates an unemployment rate of 53.2.3%, with 173,630178,587 persons employed and 9,7205,852 persons unemployed.

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

### 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 TradeRetail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Educational ServicesAccommodation and Food Services. The report also indicates strong employment in the transportation/warehousing industryeducational services as well as the Administrative, Support, and Waste Remediation Services,

which is noteworthy as a result of their strong link to the manufacturing industry, Construction, and Public Administration.

The same report also identifies these same categories as industries with the largest projected number of employees in 2022.

### **Educational Attainment**

Of those 25 years and older, the largest percentage of persons in the WorkLink region, 31.74% are identified as having a high school diploma, 20.13% have attended some college courses, 12.96% have a bachelor's degree, 7.89% have a graduate degree, 9.43% have an associate's degree, and the remaining 17.86% do not have a high school diploma.

### **Barriers to Employment**

Typical barriers to employment that exist in the WorkLink local area include:

*Persons with disabilities under 65* (47,000-61,462) - These persons may, for a variety of reasons, have limited access to traditional training resources and/or require accommodation both during the search for employment and after gaining employment.

*Ex-Offenders* (542) - Often this population can face extended periods of unemployment and/or challenges overcoming their status as an ex-offender during the hiring process.

*Veterans* (51,973) - While those returning to civilian life possess many marketable job skills and education that is desirable to employers, veterans may need assistance understanding how to present their experience in a way that transfers to traditional jobs.

*Persons living below the poverty level* (67,005) - For persons living in poverty, challenges related to transportation, childcare, reliable infrastructure (phone, power, internet access) and stable living conditions all contribute to challenges gaining employment.

- An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

Workforce Development is seen as an economic development strategy focused on the people and their skills and how they contribute to industry demands. Workforce development seeks to address issues of low-skilled workers and employers' need for more employees in various industries. Workforce Development also seeks to address participants' many barriers and the overall needs of the region.

WorkLink has adopted a workforce development strategy focused sector based industry training. Sector based programs look at the specific skills gaps industries are facing, and as a result develop both training programs for incumbent workers and career pathways for job seekers to enhance their skills. Employers dialogue with the community network to enhance the skills of those needing the most

assistance. These partnerships are designed to connect low-income or disadvantaged individuals with employment in jobs that offer the promise of financial stability and significant growth in the industry in the near future. A sector-based strategy must focus on a specific industry in order to be successful. We have chosen four-five specific industry clusters to focus our resources on: Administrative, ~~Wastewater, Remediation~~ and Support Services; Construction; Healthcare Assistance; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Manufacturing; and two-one specific occupational exceptions – ~~Heavy Equipment Operator and Truck Driving~~.

As part of this strategy, community partners come together within the region to form a network of activities and services to support both employers and potential employees. At the table with the employers, we have several educational partners in the region offering skills training, both secondary and postsecondary, as well as remedial. In the WorkLink region, these educational partners include:

Secondary and Remedial	Post-Secondary
Anderson School District 1 & 2 Anderson School District 3,4 & 5 Pickens Adult Learning Center Oconee Adult Education	Anderson University Clemson University Forrest College Tri-County Technical College Southern Wesleyan University

WorkLink conducted a self-assessment as part the strategic planning process. The WorkLink Workforce Development Board identified the following strengths and weaknesses as seen below:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job growth</li> <li>• Growth in modern manufacturing jobs</li> <li>• Growth in service industry</li> <li>• EEDA – career clusters</li> <li>• Increase in 2-year technical school enrollment</li> <li>• Continue to maximize use of resources</li> <li>• Major change in dynamics of Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ More involvement</li> <li>○ Better understanding of their roles</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase in number of individuals entering the skilled workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care issues</li> <li>• Extended UI benefits</li> <li>• Change in WIB membership</li> <li>• Major changes in WorkLink staff</li> <li>• Increased demand for health care services</li> <li>• Industrial skill sets changing require more education</li> <li>• Lack of affordable housing</li> <li>• Increase in poverty level</li> <li>• Larger skill gap</li> </ul>
Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher skills required for new jobs</li> <li>• Continued state budget constraints</li> <li>• Retirement plans shrinking or going away</li> <li>• Regulation challenges</li> <li>• Issues for veterans returning from active duty needing jobs</li> <li>• Decrease in WIOA funding</li> <li>• Decrease in education and other agency funding</li> <li>• Attitude regarding spending has changed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth in Hispanic Population</li> <li>• Regional education centers</li> <li>• Increase in minimum wage</li> <li>• Increased opportunity for grant funding</li> <li>• Increase in regionalism</li> <li>• New leaders on many levels</li> <li>• Demographic shifts</li> <li>• TAA reauthorization</li> <li>• Technical base occupations</li> </ul>

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GED requirements increasing</li> <li>Income disparity increasing</li> <li>Strong case management needed</li> </ul> |  |
|---|--|

Several potential barriers exist for the current workforce. The most glaring is the skills gap that exists between what workers know and what employers need. What WorkLink has discovered is that the most in need may not be the most suitable to train for existing industry demands. Instead dialogue is needed with partners and employers to develop a system of upskilling incumbent workers, and then providing skills to those with the most needs to back-fill the lower levels positions created by the vacating of low skilled positions to the middle skills careers.

Another threat that makes industry training a challenge is rapid changes in technology that can make a training program obsolete in a few years. In addition to this is the specific equipment and technology that a company may utilize but may not necessarily be generalized enough to create into a seamless training program that can address both an employers' need and a job seekers' skill levels.

The most daunting barrier is that of current job seekers that demonstrate low levels of literacy or educational levels. WorkLink has a small demographic of those that need basic skills like reading or English as a second language. Very few literacy programs are offered in our area, and those that are offered have limited numbers of hours. Typically, these job seekers stay with a literacy program for several months (if not years) with minimal progress.

WorkLink also faces a unique challenge in regards to transportation. We have two main transportation bus lines that run through Anderson County to Clemson to Oconee County. The vast majority of Pickens County and the outer reaches of Anderson and Oconee Counties are not serviced by these bus lines. Many employers are not located on the bus transportation lines, instead opting for more mainline transportation avenues, such as I-85. Job seekers without transportation and that are not located on one of the bus lines find it difficult to travel in the region. As a result, these low-income individuals find work in one of the lower skilled jobs (such as retail or fast food) that is located on the bus line, making it that much harder to reach them and help them see the value in upgrading their skills. WorkLink has made some progress towards this in PY17 and PY18 with a state funded grant for transportation. The Electric City Transit instituted a new bus line that connects Anderson with Belton and Honea Path providing access to training and employment opportunities along the existing bus routes. Anderson County plans to sustain this bus route with the next fiscal year's budget.

## Section II: Strategic Vision and Goals

1. A description of the Local Board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency, including:

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.

**Youth Committee Vision:**

**“To have youth, educated and prepared for self-sufficiency in work and in life.”**

**Mission:** The WorkLink Youth Committee facilitates collaboration and the delivery of services for youth, leading to educational, workplace and personal success. WorkLink Youth Service Provider (Eckerd-Palmetto Youth Connection-PYC) strive to deliver all WIOA youth program services and components to eligible youth within our three county area with purpose, quality of service, customer centered, and per the WIOA rules and regulations.

- Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and

The board’s goals grew out of an analysis of the region’s focus group and survey results, recent and potential changes within the community and the workforce development industry, our identification of the characteristics of successful/winning workforce systems, and a SWOT analysis.

As a result of this planning process, the following goals were established to address the most immediate challenges:

- 1) Increasing system-wide coordination and interaction between workforce development partners, business partners and the education system.
- 2) Improving coordination between partners and reduce fragmentation of services within the workforce development delivery system.
- 3) Increasing the number of residents who obtain a marketable and industry-recognized credential or degree.

The goals address the immediate challenges identified and present objectives to strive for through continuing initiatives and strategies. These four goals are as follows:

- Improve the skill level of the workforce to meet the demands of business and industry.
- Increase employer engagement in ~~WIB-WDB~~ and ~~WDBWIB~~ Activities.
- Build upon existing partnerships and collaborations between workforce system service providers to better integrate the workforce development system.

- Increase and improve outreach to inform and promote the SC Works Centers services and activities pertaining to workforce development.

The objectives for each goal are the measurable statements towards which our efforts are directed. Each objective contains three elements: a specific statement of what is to be accomplished, a standard by which we can measure the accomplishment, and a timeframe and deadline within which to accomplish the objective. Finally, Strategies are the specific steps which need to happen to bring completion to the objective, and eventually, the goal.

Each goal was assigned to one of the WorkLink Workforce Development Board Committees and will oversee the achievement of each Strategic Plan goal through carrying out the strategies and objectives adopted.

- A description of the Local Board's strategy to work with entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align local resources available to the area to achieve the strategic vision and goals referenced above.

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board will endeavor to engage core programs and required partners through Board membership participation and assignment to committees. Other partners will be brought in as ad hoc members of each committee as necessary to pursue Strategic Planning initiatives.

Furthermore, core and required partners meet quarterly as a group to discuss system ideas, issues, and initiatives. In an effort to align local resources, each partner is engaged in Memorandum of Understandings and Individual Funding Agreements robust Resource Sharing Agreement that details referral processes and resources available through each organization. Over the next several years, partners will be reviewing the current agreements and striving for process improvement along with resource mapping. This partner's group has already begun the process of fine-tuning our relationships, not just with the Board, but also with community organizations that directly and indirectly support employment and training activities.

- Step 1: Finalize SC Works System Resource Sharing Agreements for 2016 Memorandum of Understanding to include: Cost allocation, referral processes, mutually beneficial services, relevant release of information forms, and co-location/system contributions as well as grievance procedures.
- Step 2: Map out services available in the community. Determine needs and communication protocols.
- Step 3: Evaluate the SC Works System in the WorkLink region and determine what areas we excel in and what areas need improvement. Evaluation and implementation of OneStop Certification Standards will be a group effort.
- Step 4: Provide appropriate training to the Partners.

Other steps will be added as these are accomplished.



WorkLink's Local Board Youth Program strategies consist of: further development of resources, identifying/addressing gaps in the community (service integration), awareness/education, outreach, work readiness, emphasis on work-based learning opportunities, and emphasis on career pathways. These strategies will assist in carrying out the WIOA youth core programs and involve partners to align local resources.

### Section III: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

1. A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the local plan. The description must include how the chief elected officials and Local Board were involved in the development of the plan.

WorkLink staff relied upon an amalgamation of board policies, strategic planning, partner relationship documents (MOUs, RSAs, IFAs, statements of work, etc.) and collaborative exercises to develop the bulk of the local plan.

Through their participation in the strategic planning process, development of local policies and general engagement during board and committee meetings, board members heavily influenced the process. Board members are also presented with an opportunity to review and recommend edits and ultimately approve the local plan draft in advance of a final signature from the board chair.

The Chief Local Elected Officials, via their quarterly meetings with the WorkLink board chair and Executive Director, provided guidance regarding the overall direction of local workforce activities, governance of the board and commitment to serving the people of Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties.

2. A description of the workforce development system in the local area, including:

The one-stop delivery system brings together a series of partner programs and entities responsible for workforce development, educational, and other human resource programs to collaborate in the creation of a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services. Partners, programs, and providers will collocate, coordinate, and integrate activities so that individuals seeking assistance will have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes for individuals seeking services.

The system is broader than the SC Works Centers in a given area. The system brings together partners and programs to provide universal access to career and training services in a seamless fashion. The goal is to increase system access for all customers. Not all system programs will be universal; that is, all programs will not be able to serve all people. However, all people can be served somewhere in the system. The system is about defining "common turf" across programs and integrating career and training services provided by partners into the SC Works Centers. No individual program is required to cede its "unique" turf or to violate its governing statute. The law defines the responsibilities for being a partner. They are as follows:

With approval of the Local Board and chief elected officials, the following workforce development system was established in the WorkLink local area.

#### COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

SC Works WorkLink **Employment** Center  
 1376 Tiger Blvd, Suite 102  
 Clemson, SC 29631  
 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday

#### SATELLITE CENTERS

Anderson SC Works Satellite Center Tri-County Technical College Anderson Campus Quickjobs Development Center 512 Michelin Blvd Anderson, SC 29624 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday	Seneca SC Works Satellite Center Tri-County Technical College Oconee Campus Quickjobs Development Center 104 Vocational Drive Seneca, SC 29678 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday	Easley SC Works Satellite Center Tri-County Technical College Easley Campus Quickjobs Development Center 1774 Powdersville Road Easley, SC 29642 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday & Tuesday
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#### ACCESS POINTS

Access Points for job search services are also available at local libraries, adult education centers, and other community centers. **These are unmanned Access Points locations that** offer access to a computer, through which job seekers will find online links to the several of the career services or job seeker services available at WorkLink SC Works Centers in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties. **These access points offer information and basic career service access only.**

Official Access Point locations include Anderson County Library System, Oconee County Public Library System, Pickens County Library System, United Way of Pickens, Goodwill Job Connection of Anderson, Pickens County Adult Education, Oconee County Adult Education, Anderson County Adult Education – Districts 1 & 2, Anderson County Adult Education – District 3, 4, & 5, SHARE of Oconee County, and **Anderson Interfaith MinistriesAIM.**

#### SERVICES

Career services will be provided by all partners in the SC Works Centers. Career Services include but are not limited to:

- **Initial Assessment:** Begins with intake and an initial assessment that sorts for customer needs and available options. A focus will be on determining customer's job readiness, including workforce skills, and available appropriate services.
- **Job Counseling:** Either individually or in group sessions that helps the jobseeker make the best use of the information and services available.

- **Job Referral:** Services that are tailored to the needs of specific employers and jobseekers. Both workers and employers may also choose to post job announcements and resumes on an electronic system that is open to all.
- **Employer Services:** Access to labor market information; recruitment, screening, and referral of qualified applicants; assisting employers with regulations; access to economic development information and resources; allocating job vacancies; brokering customized job training; connecting firms to SC Works information; technical assistance on assessment, recruitment, and human resource strategies; advocacy for targeted employers in key economic sectors; assistance with major layoffs and plant closures.
- **Labor Market Information:** Current and projected occupational supply and demand information, current occupational wage information; occupational skill standards; nonproprietary information on employers; and information on education and training program outcomes, including completion rates, placement rates, and wage rates of graduates.
- **Information and Referral:** Access to information regarding services needed by jobseekers, such as income assistance, housing, food, or medical care. Referrals to off-site services within the system will be made electronically.
- **Training and Retraining Information:** Access to and information about vocational exploration, basic skills and literacy training, job search skills, self-employment/entrepreneurial training, training leading to the award of skills certificates, work-based learning, two-year or four-year degree programs and state-approved apprenticeship programs.
- **Unemployment Insurance Information:** Phone accessibility to file for unemployment insurance benefits. Internet Claims filing can be done via the internet. Partner staff will assist those with disabilities in filing their initial claim.
- **Eligibility Determination:** Access to information regarding employment and training services needed by job seekers – eligibility for federal and state funded programs.
- **Outreach/Intake/Orientation:** Local activity, website is one source marketing. Intake—ability to register for programs. Orientation to services – description to state’s SC Works services/link to areas.
- **Performance Information on Local SC Works Centers:** How the local area is performing on the local performance measures and any additional performance information with respect to the SC Works delivery system in the local area.
- **Follow-up Services:** Including counseling regarding the workplace. Local responsibility – retention services.

SC Works centers provide services to individual customers based on individual needs, including the seamless delivery of multiple services to individual customers. There is no required sequence of services.

- Identification of the programs that are included in the system; and

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

- How the Local Board will support the strategies outlined in the State Plan to support service alignment among the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs.

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board seeks to support the strategies outlined in the WIOA State Unified Plan. The Plan says, "Many of the strategies that will be used to align programs will also strengthen the delivery of workforce activities and the system as a whole and help overcome the weaknesses identified in the Workforce, Education, and Training analysis." The state plan includes the following additional initiatives as strategies for strengthening the workforce:

- Implementation of regional sector strategies
- Continuation of Partner Work Groups
- Implementation of SC Works certification standards
- Implementation of improved Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)

These strategic actions will close the skills gap illustrated in the preceding economic and workforce analysis, and increase the financial stability and economic prosperity of employers, individuals, and communities."

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board has already begun embracing these items. A few Regional Sector Strategies partnerships have begun in our region. One example is being facilitated through Tri-County Technical College for the Highway Construction industry. South Carolina has seen a huge demand for Highway Construction workers. This industry offers opportunities to jobseekers that have barriers to employment, such as criminal backgrounds, low education levels, and spotty work histories. As a region, partners, employers, and education providers have met to discuss how we can fill immediate openings for employers in the area. Another has begun to form in recent months surrounding the Energy Sector. Duke Energy, Blue Ridge Electric and other energy brokers from around

the Upstate have come together to discuss hiring needs and training expectations for those workers. Further, WorkLink's Business Representative participates in the Regional Sector Partnership Strategies specifically focused on manufacturing. This group held their first partnership rollout meeting in March 2019, and will be following up with Manufacturers at the next meeting in June 2019.

WorkLink has already begun the process of implementing SC Works Certification Standards. **We are required to re-certify every two years.** A workgroup formed in 2013 and 2014 and began working to evaluate needs and integrate changes in order to ensure we were ready for the certification process. **The Clemson SC Works Center was certified for PY17 and PY18, and we annually review progress and adapt as needed. we are in the process of certifying all of the Centers for PY19 and PY20. We annually review progress and adapt as needed. We anticipate having all four WorkLink SC Works Center certified by June 30, 2019.**

The Eligible Training Provider List is currently under review and being massaged for our local area. The local area has decided to focus our efforts on short-term, stackable, portable credentials and eligible training providers must offer these types of courses in in-demand occupations in order to be approved by our local area. A review process for training providers and their curriculum has been developed and will be followed by the Board.

3. A description of how the Local Board works with the entities carrying out core programs to:
  - Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment;

#### Engaging Core Partners

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board has engaged each of the Core partners through membership on the WorkLink Board, and its committees. Partners have a direct say in how initiatives are implemented in the local area. Furthermore, WorkLink staff facilitates partner meetings with our OneStop Operator to discuss gaps in services, special populations, and grant funding opportunities in the local region.

#### Expanding access to employment, training, education

**The WorkLink WDB recently awarded a state-funded initiative grant in the amount of \$130,000 to Electric City Transit to provide expanded bus route services from downtown Anderson to Belton and Honea Path. The sole pursue was to ensure these outlying communities had access to employment and training resources available in the community. As a result of this grant, 1,332 (or 44%) of 3,088 bus riders used the bus service to find or keep a job, and/or was able to use the bus system to further their education. Further, an additional \$30,000 was awarded to Electric City Transit to sustain the route until Anderson County could finalize their plans to sustain the route and their fiscal budget for PY19. We are currently in partnership with Tri County Technical College, Greenville Technical College, and Northeastern Technical College to provide training to those seeking advanced manufacturing careers like Welding, CNC and Mechatronics through a U.S. Department of Labor grant called Make It In America. This regional collaboration has infused the WorkLink region with training funds that would not otherwise have been available to our community. This has led to other collaborations between partners for grant opportunities.**

One such collaboration was formed with Tri-County Technical College to write a grant for low-income individuals seeking to pursue Technology specific careers. Although we were not awarded the grant, the partnership has been established and common ground has been identified, making us more prepared to pursue grant funding in the future.

At this time, WorkLink does not offer minimal supportive services, such as childcare, materials for employment, and transportation for low-income individuals. To supplement what we offer, but the Board and committee will be discussing how supportive services may need to once again supplement available training dollars as we are able to leverage additional grant funding. We our service provider has have identified available supportive services for participants that may not qualify for supportive services under our Board adopted policies in the community and have found some gaps specifically related to transportation, childcare, and emergency assistance related to work. This past program year 2017, our Operator our service provider was able to leverage approximately \$161,203 \$40,000 in outside training funds, and so far in PY18, \$110,749 in outside training funds, and. We anticipate being able to do the same going forward in PY16.

### Engaging Low-Income Populations

Below is a snippet of things that the SC Works Centers are doing to actively engage low-income populations.

- Partners in the Worklink area have received grants or donations that the SC Works system has had the opportunity to access on behalf of customers in the area. Tri-County Technical College offered Workforce Pathways scholarships up to \$2100 per student. Through their partnership it has assisted in leveraging training dollars so that additional participants could be served in the area.
- Oconee County Service Association meets monthly with various partners in the area to share resources that are available. Roundtable meetings are held once a month in Oconee County where a speakers from non-profit and/or state agencies share resources that can be accessed. These resources include Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens areas. One Stop Manager and WIOA Career Coach attend meetings.
- Ride to Work Ministry of Oconee County provides temporary affordable transportation to residents so they can transition to stable employment and become self-sufficient. DEW has a representative that attends the meetings when held.
- SNAP/TANF Case Managers were co-located in the Comprehensive Center as of July 1, 2018 to serve those in need. Referrals are made to workshops, to WIOA Adult/Dislocated program and job searches may be completed on site.
- Financial workshops are offered monthly in the Comprehensive Center.
- Department of Employment and Workforce Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist assists with the Stand Down Homeless Veteran event held for homeless veterans and their families. In addition to current available WIOA funding and Make It In America Funding led by the WorkLink Workforce Development Board, other partners have received grants that the SC Works System has been able to leverage on behalf of its customers. Both Anderson Interfaith Ministries and Tri-County Technical College currently has SNAP2Work grants that offers training to low income SNAP recipients. We have formalized agreements for referrals between the two grants to offer tuition assistance and case management through co-enrollment with WIOA. This has assisted us with leveraging training dollars, but we have also enrolled more SNAP recipients due to referrals from these Grants. Other grants available thought Tri-County Technical College are communicated through the Business Service Team and the SC Works email notification system that has been internally developed.

~~We also have a grant to bolster our financial literacy workshops for the next program year. Our Operator applied as a non-profit to serve 100 low-income participants through financial literacy grants and was awarded an amount to fund the literacy workshops throughout the course PY16.~~

~~In an effort to engage more low-income individuals, we are in discussion with DSS for plans to co-locate a SNAP/TANF person in our Centers for PY16. We will be working out referral processes with them which could lead to an increase in number of low-income/public assistance recipients being served through the WIOA program. Details will be finalized upon co-location.~~

### Engaging those with Disabilities

**The SC Works Center staff have been engaged in training to better understand the wide variety of needs that an individual may have, some of which may be related to a disability. In preparation of how to tactfully and sensitively address those needs, the following actions have been taken:**

- Staff training for employees scheduled on appropriate etiquette concerning disabilities and service animals held April 5, 2019. Chris Sparrow of AbleSC provided the training for staff.
- ADA equipment continues to be obtained for Comprehensive Center and satellites to ensure those with disabilities have accessibility. This program year (PY18) equipment was obtained by a grant through Department of Employment and Workforce.
- Department of Employment and Workforce Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist assists with the Stand Down Homeless Veteran event held for homeless veterans and their families; many of whom have an underlying disability.

**Our Priority Populations Committee continues to educate themselves and the SC Works Center staff on services that are available in the community and explore how we might better meet the needs of those coming through our doors.**

~~Last year we started an initiative to have the Clemson LIFE program come to the centers to interface with staff, and see the opportunities the centers and its partner programs provide. In addition to this, we have trained staff and committee members on appropriate etiquette regarding handling sensitive issues surrounding disabilities and service animals.~~

- Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in core programs, as appropriate; and

Under WIOA, the WorkLink WDB in coordination with service providers and partners will continue to lead efforts in the area to develop and implement career pathways by aligning the employment, training, education and supportive services that are needed by adults and dislocated workers to gain employment. Initiatives will be developed to identify employment needs of employers within identified sectors and occupations. Efforts will include enhancing communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, educational partners, economic development entities, and service providers to develop and implement strategies for meeting the employment and skill needs of workers and employers.

WorkLink has been working closely with core partners, Adult Education and Tri-County Technical College, to implement Career Pathways. A lot of work has gone into this process over the course of the last five years at Tri-County Technical College. The following Career Pathways for high school students to college have already been developed:

- Pathways in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Cluster
- Pathways in Architecture and Construction Cluster
- Pathways in Arts, A/V Technology and Communications Cluster
- Pathways in Business, Management and Administration Cluster
- Pathways in Education and Training Cluster
- Pathways in Health Science Cluster
- Pathways in Information Technology Cluster
- Pathways in Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security Cluster
- Pathways in Manufacturing Cluster
- Pathways in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) Cluster

Our local Adult Education partners have been leading the way on realizing the Career Pathways for GED participants to college and beyond, focusing primarily on manufacturing and healthcare to begin with. WorkLink WDB has been supporting their efforts through collaboration and labor market information.

Co-enrollment has been a work in-progress. Partners have been meeting quarterly to discuss co-enrollment processes and how to facilitate the best services we can provide in a seamless manner to jobseekers. Further processes will be mapped up for co-enrollment along the Career Pathways as they become available to Adult jobseekers. A specific case in which co-enrollment supported client needs involves a partnership with SC Vocational Rehabilitation. When training costs exceeded the annual cap for VR clients, co-enrollment in the WIOA Adult program allowed the clients to move forward with their training goals.

- Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including an industry-recognized certificate or certification that is portable and stackable.

With shrinking WIOA dollars, the WorkLink Workforce Development Board has sought to expand access to training dollars through other identification of other grants that may fund training. Examples include:

- Application for 501c3 status – WorkLink is in the process of exploring how a non-profit corporation could benefit its operation.
- Pursuing Grant opportunities – We have been awarded a Make It In America grant from Department of Labor that fund training for middle skills jobs in Welding, Manufacturing, CNC, and SCMC. The focus on this grant is stackable and portable credentials. WorkLink was awarded a transportation demo grant with The Electric City Transit to expand bus service to Honea Path and Belton. Further, we are applying for the State Workforce Development Board's Re-entry initiative to help those re-entering the workforce after being involved with the justice system and anticipate hearing about this grant in the next month.
- Partnering with other organizations – we have partnered with DSS, TCTC, and ~~Anderson Interfaith Ministries~~ AIM on identifying other available grant funding that participants and job seekers can tap into for training opportunities. In addition to this, we have partnered with our other Core partners on other grant funding applications that would benefit the local area.
- Adult/DW Program – Furthermore, the WorkLink Workforce Development Board has identified short-term stackable, portable credentials offered through Tri-County Technical College in



their continuing education division. We primarily target short-term trainings in programs that lead to stackable credentials in our identified industry clusters.

- WorkLink Local Board supports our Youth Service Provider (Eckerd-Palmetto Youth Connections-PYC) in utilizing community resources when and where available, development of new partnerships and existing partnerships (business, adult education, K-12, post-secondary education institutions, community agencies, etc.), referral process, collaboration(s) as appropriate and/or as necessary to improve or develop access to career pathway activities, industry recognized certifications, and ensure delivery of core youth program services including supportive services per WIOA rules and regulations without duplication.
- WorkLink has been invited to hold informational meetings with SC Vocational Rehabilitation which is currently involved and participating with the Project Search initiative to serve in-school youth with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:**

- Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

Key to the engagement of employers in the local area is outreach, largely consisting of employer site visits, participation in business focused organizations such as chambers of commerce, economic development activities and the Society of Human Resource Management local chapters.

WorkLink recently achieved 142% of the local area goal to engage 685 new businesses during Program Year 2015 by engaging 975 employers, increasing the reach of workforce development programs in the area.

WorkLink has also placed special emphasis on quarterly and ad hoc hiring events for local employers. The success of these events has also been an important outreach tool, by which a number of employers that were not engaged in local workforce development activities have become active in the system.

- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;

The process of ensuring that the local workforce development system meets the needs of employers in the local area begins with the engaged business representatives on the WorkLink Workforce Development Board. These members influence policy decisions and rulemaking within the WorkLink area in such a way that the system positively affects both employers and job seekers.

WorkLink also reviews relevant labor market information to ensure staff and board members are aware of current and future market trends. This information is validated through regular visits with employers and meetings with partners such as local and regional economic development entities and chambers of commerce.

The attached Employer Service Strategy and Business Engagement Plan further outline WorkLink's business service strategy.

- Improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development; and

In addition to having representation from each county's economic development entity serving on the workforce development board, WorkLink staff and service provider staff meet regularly to coordinate business and industry outreach efforts, to plan hiring events, and generally to remain up-to-date regarding recruitment and retention efforts.

Economic development entities participate in the monthly Business Service Integration Team meetings and WorkLink staff also provides technical support and labor market information as a means of supplementing economic development initiatives.

- Strengthen linkages between the SC Works delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

In the Spring of 2013, SC Department of Employment and Workforce made a business decision to move Unemployment Insurance services to a call center environment. With this change, the SC Works Centers saw an immediate decrease in traffic. However, WorkLink and SC Department of Employment and Workforce came together to discuss how we may continue to support the community by providing Unemployment Insurance information to those that have lost their jobs. Out of this discussion, SC Department of Employment and Workforce established a UI presence in our Comprehensive Center to provide eligibility reviews and provide some assistance to claimants in regards to work search requirements.

The SC Department of Employment and Workforce also provided Unemployment Insurance filing guides and packets to be handed out to those claimants using in-person services through the SC Works Centers. WorkLink also met with the local Unemployment Insurance program manager and discussed referral processes with the SC Works Centers for the WorkLink region. In addition to this UI access portals established throughout the community also double as an SC Works Center Access Point as well.

5. A description of the strategies and services for employers that may include the implementation of initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs, On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers and support the Local Board's strategic vision and goals.

WorkLink Workforce Development Board adopted an Employer Service Strategy and Business Engagement Plan that outlines WorkLink's general employer service strategy. In a nutshell, the Business Service Representative will serve as the convener of Business service partners in the community and will assist with facilitating and coordination of business services to employers. This strategy leverages existing relationships with partners ranging from Chambers of Commerce to the Department of Employment and Workforce to local chapters of the Society of Human Resource Management. These partnerships ensure the swift dissemination of relevant information, the efficient use of resources and the broader engagement of employers in the WorkLink area.

Our aim is to eliminate duplication of efforts and outreach to employers. A Business Service Integration Team has been formed to address this effort. A complete list of current team members for the local Business Services Integration Team, whose ~~monthly~~ **quarterly** meetings and communications are coordinated by the WorkLink staff, can be found with the Business Service Plan. The ~~monthly~~ **quarterly** meetings, and the relationship curated within them, serve to foster an even greater spirit of cooperation among partners.

WorkLink offers the following Employer Services:

### **Registered Apprenticeship (RA)**

WIOA emphasizes the importance and value of Registered Apprenticeships as a component of potential training and employment services that the workforce system can provide to its customers. A two-fold benefit, Registered Apprenticeships may be used as a career pathway for job seekers and as a job-driven strategy for employers and industries.

Section 122(a)(3) of WIOA provides a new opportunity for Registered Apprenticeship programs to be more directly connected to the public workforce system. Registered Apprenticeships automatically qualify to be placed on WorkLink's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), allowing ITAs to support participants in Registered Apprenticeship programs, and more directly connect those programs to SC Works centers. Staff is strongly encouraged to promote registered apprenticeships in our area and work with Apprenticeship Carolina in order to register apprenticeship programs with Department of Labor.

In order for WIOA funds to be invested in Registered Apprenticeships, the employer or intermediaries providing the Apprenticeship training has:

- (1) An Apprenticeship registered with Department of Labor (DOL);
- (2) Has applied, been approved, and placed on the Eligible Training Provider List; and
- (3) And has met all qualifications consistent with the Work Place Safety checklist.

### **On-the-Job Training**

OJT continues to be a key method of delivering training services to adults and dislocated workers. WIOA allows for up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant to be reimbursed to employers for the costs of training while the participant is in the program. However, WIOA also allows local areas to increase the reimbursement level to up to 75 percent when taking into account the following factors:

- The characteristics of the participants (e.g. length of unemployment, current skill level, and barriers to employment);
- The size of the employer (e.g. small and medium-sized business often have more barriers to participation at lower reimbursement rates);
- The quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities; and
- Other factors the State or local boards may determine appropriate (e.g. the number of employees participating in the training, wage and benefit levels of the employees (both pre and post participation earnings)), and relation of the training to the competitiveness of the participant).

WorkLink will reimburse according to the following:

Employers providing an OJT can receive reimbursement for a portion of the hourly pay rate – typically up to 50%--which is considered payment for extraordinary costs to the employer associated with training a new employee.

WorkLink will increase the employer reimbursement for on-the-job training (OJT). This waiver permits the following reimbursement amounts: 1) up to 75% for employers with 1-250 employees. For employers with more than 250 employees, the statutory requirement of up to 50% applies.

WorkLink will also use a sliding scale for employer reimbursement based on the length of the participant's unemployment. Reimbursement amounts are as follows: 1) up to 75% employer reimbursement where OJT is provided to individuals unemployed for 16 weeks or more, and 2) where OJT is provided to individuals unemployed less than 16 weeks, the current statutory requirements of 50 percent will apply.

Staff will evaluate each business based on employee counts first, and then based on the number of weeks the jobseeker being placed on the OJT contract is unemployed. The OJT contract may be written for whichever provides the highest reimbursement rate. A staff member may evaluate each employer and reimburse at a lower percentage amount if warranted. Justification should be documented in the case file.

### **Incumbent Worker Training**

Incumbent Worker training provides both workers and employers with the opportunity to build and maintain a quality workforce. Incumbent Worker training can be used to help avert potential layoffs of employees, or to increase the skill levels of employees so they can be promoted within the company and create backfill opportunities for the employers. Under section 134(d)(4) of WIOA, local boards can use up to 20 percent of their adult and dislocated worker funds to provide for the federal share of the cost of providing Incumbent Worker training. Incumbent Worker training needs to take into account the following factors:

- The characteristics of the participants in the program;
- The relationship of the training to the competitiveness of a participant and the employer; and
- Other factors the State or local boards may determine appropriate (e.g., the number of employees participating in the training, wage and benefit levels of those employees (both pre- and post-participation earnings)), and the existence of other training and advancement opportunities provided by the employer).

Employers are required to pay for a significant cost of the training for those participants in incumbent worker training; this can be done through both cash and/or in-kind payments. The wages paid to participants, while in training, may be considered as a source of matching funds.

Rules for matching funds are provided in the Uniform Guidance and DOL exceptions at 2 CFR 200.306 and 2 CFR 2900.8, respectively. Under section 134(d)(4)(D) of WIOA, the minimum amount of employer share in the Incumbent Worker Training depends on the size of the employer:

- At least 10 percent of the cost, for employers with 50 or fewer employees;
- At least 25 percent of the cost, for employers with 51 to 100 employees; and
- At least 50 percent of the cost, for employers with more than 100 employees.

In order for Incumbent Worker to be funded at this level, the Board must first approve up to 20% of local allocations to be designated by the Board in its budget.

An ad hoc committee will determine the process for soliciting and allocating IWT contract awards. The committee will also be charged with highlighting the WDB's priorities by potentially including additional local priorities or preferences to the IWT award process.

### Transitional Jobs

Transitional jobs are a new type of work-based training that is allowed under WIOA.

Transitional jobs are time-limited work experiences that are subsidized and are in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history, and are combined with comprehensive career and supportive services. The goal of transitional jobs is to establish a work history for the individual that demonstrates success in the workplace, and develops the skills that lead to entry into and retention in unsubsidized employment. Unlike OJT, there is no assumption that the individual will be retained in their transitional job after the experience is over, though that would be a successful experience and outcome. Under section 134(d)(5) of WIOA, local boards may use up to 10 percent of their adult and dislocated worker funds to provide transitional jobs to individuals.

### Career Pathways

According to Department of Labor's Career Pathway Toolkit, "career pathway development is a broad approach for serving populations that may experience significant barriers to employment...Career pathway programs offer a clear sequence, or pathway, of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies." They put forth that there are six elements to career pathway development:

1. Build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles
2. Identify industry sectors and engage employers
3. Design education and training programs
4. Identify funding needs and sources
5. Align policies and programs
6. Measure system change and performance

WorkLink has been involved with the development of Healthcare and Manufacturing career pathways for contextualizing Adult Education and GED programs. Our main role is providing feedback on labor market information and providing information about grant funding available in the area.

### Sector-based Strategies

Sector-based Strategies take Career Pathways one-step further, "by aligning educational offerings with business needs, career pathways systems engage business in the development of educational programs up front." Thus, the employer becomes a partner and a co-leader and co-investor in the development of the workforce, instead of a customer. WorkLink has begun to partner with employers and community agencies to convene employers in a setting that provides a voice to the employer's needs, gives them the power to develop programs that lead to the skills that they need.

The WorkLink Business Services Liaison serves as a core team member of the Greater Upstate Sector Partnership Initiative. The Greater Upstate Sector Partnership team, which is comprised of 14 counties, has chosen Diversified Manufacturing as the focus industry. This industry-led partnership

launched on March 14, 2019 and over 25 manufacturers participated. The forum provided these employers with an opportunity to identify shared issues, network and troubleshoot together, and to define solutions moving forward. As a result of the launch meeting, three action areas were recognized: Build a Workforce Pipeline into Manufacturing, Address gaps in Middle-Skill Technical Jobs, and Infrastructure & Regulations. WorkLink's role is to join other partners in understanding the needs of the business community and help implement shared solutions effectively.

~~One~~ Another example of this was led by Tri-County Technical College. TCTC convened a group of Pre-Highway Construction companies in the upstate region in order to be able to find out what their needs were and how we as partners and education providers could meet those needs. WorkLink was at the table partnering and brainstorming how to move forward.

6. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area, including how the Local Board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

To ensure the coordination of economic development with workforce development activities, the chief elected officials in the WorkLink region have appointed a board member from each county representing Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties' professional economic development efforts. These board members serve as an additional conduit to local, regional and statewide economic development efforts.

South Carolina is fortunate to have readySC, a division of the South Carolina Technical College System, as a training resource for new and expanding industry. Dealing largely with the manufacturing industry, readySC provides eligible companies with the training, recruiting and marketing resources needed to meet their workforce needs.

Locally and regionally, readySC partners with the SC Works system to create a unique training and recruitment plan for eligible new and expanding industry, creating a thorough support system for the employer.

Further, the South Carolina Department of Commerce has engaged Regional Workforce Advisors which act as liaisons between business and K-16 education, advocate for industry needs within the education system and serve as a support system for the emerging workforce. The Regional Workforce Advisor that serves the WorkLink area is actively involved the WDB's plan of work and is an ad hoc member of the Youth Committee.

Other partner agencies: Apprenticeship Carolina, local business and education partnerships (WorkLink has one in each county), Partnership for Academic and Career Education (PACE) board is convened by Tri-County Tech, which includes economic developers, K12 and Technical College members.

Palmetto Youth Connections promotes and offers entrepreneurial skills training which is listed as one of the fourteen (14) youth program elements. PYC has a free online entrepreneurial skills training resources available for one/one and self-directed training options to be offered to the youth in the service area. Examples of these resources are: Business Majors.about.com and myownbusiness.com. For students who are on the career pathway to own their own business, a certificate course option can be explored through Corporate and Community Education and the local technical college.

Other efforts that promote and offer resources for entrepreneurs include local chambers of commerce and South Carolina Small Business Development Centers, one of which is located on the campus of Clemson University.

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

1. A description of the SC Works delivery system in the local area, including:

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.

- How the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers;

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.



- How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the SC Works delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means;

Eckerd Workforce Development Services uses technology to provide information and basic job seeking/career planning assistance to the public in a cost-effective manner. In addition to our Clemson SC Works Comprehensive Center located geographically central to our three counties, we have one Satellite Center in each of the most populated cities of each county: Seneca, Easley and Anderson. We also established Access Points throughout the harder to reach communities. Our access points are computers available for use to do a job search on located within our partners' facilities.

- How entities within the SC Works delivery system, including center operators and partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities; and

WorkLink and Eckerd Workforce Services will ensure that the local area meets all requirements regarding compliance with State and Federal disability laws and procedures for ensuring universally accessible physical and program environments for all customers. It is required that the Program Manager ensures that the WIOA program adhere to the standards and expectations under the ADA. The sites are monitored annually for compliance. Service Provider staff is required to attend training in program access for customers with disabilities and access to employment programs and services for those with a disability. The Service Provider will ensure that program services are accessible to all customers by meeting ADA requirements. An EO office/contact to handle all complaints has been established in writing.

- Identification of the roles and resource contributions of the SC Works partners.

Funding	Program Administrator	Resource Contributions
Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs	WorkLink Workforce Development Board	Oversight
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs	Adult Education Centers: Anderson 1&2, Anderson 3,4&5, Easley, Seneca	TABE, WIN, and WorkKeys testing and Proctoring, GED classes on site, cash payment
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities	SC Vocational Rehabilitation	Brochures, Referrals as appropriate, Cash payment
Post-Secondary Education Programs (Perkins)	Tri-County Technical College	Reduction in SC Works Satellite Center costs
Community Services Block Grant	SHARE	Access Point location



Employment and Training Activities		
Native American Programs	Indian Development Council	Brochures and referrals as appropriate
HUD Employment and Training Activities	Housing Authority of Easley	Referrals as appropriate
Job Corps Programs	Dynamic Educational Systems, Inc	Brochures, referrals as appropriate
Veterans Employment and Training Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs	Telamon	Brochures, referrals as appropriate
Senior Community Service Employment Programs	AARP, Goodwill	Work experience participants to serve in the resource rooms
Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
Unemployment Compensation Programs	SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Cash Payment
YouthBuild Programs	Partner being identified	Referrals as appropriate
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs	SC Department of Social Services	FacilitateFacilitate workshops, Business Service Representative, cash payment
Second Chance Programs	Partner being identified	Referrals as appropriate

2. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

WorkLink's SC Works Centers will help all area job seekers and employers. Eckerd Workforce Services uses technology to provide information and basic job seeking/career planning assistance to the public in a cost-effective manner. Job Seekers are encouraged to help themselves, but staff is available to answer questions. SC Works Centers provide Orientations to the SC Works System and short soft skills workshops to the general public.

Adults (those 18 and older) and Dislocated Workers who cannot find a suitable job may wish to participate in career counseling sessions in a one-on-one atmosphere. Enhanced, individualized career services offered by SC Works Center partners are available to those that qualify. These career counseling services assist those that have barriers to getting and keeping a job. Workshops, job clubs, short-term skills upgrading, GED preparation, and work experience assignments may be part of the individualized career services offered through the Centers.

Those who still cannot find a job, or who are not yet economically self-sufficient and meet eligibility criteria, may receive Training Services if the participant needs remedial and/or occupational skills in order to obtain employment. Under WIOA, priority of service is permanently in effect. Therefore, the following individuals will be served: those that are basic skills deficient, low-income, or public assistance recipients, as well as other locally and State defined priority populations. Eligibility Determination is completed prior to participants receiving any staff-assisted services. The Workforce Development Board has defined self-sufficiency as "household income 150% above the Lower Living Standard Income Level." Individuals who have been assessed in need of training and meet the eligibility/priority of service guidelines will be issued an Individual Training Account (ITA). All efforts for training and placement of participants are made with the self-sufficiency guidelines in mind. Participants make informed decisions after reviewing local Labor Market Information (LMI) and the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

The following types of services available in the WorkLink local area:

**Career Services** include referrals to partner programs, initial assessments, and labor exchange services. In addition, services such as career counseling and the development of an individual employment plan, must be made available if appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services are categorized as "Individualized Career Services." Appropriate follow-up services must be made available to a participant placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months following the participant's first date of employment. Follow-up services can be useful for participants in order to maintain employment. SC Works Center staff can provide workplace information and tips for success in a workplace environment. Additionally, follow-up services provide a continuing link between the participant and workforce system; these services allow the one-stop to assist with other services the participant may need once he or she obtains employment. Examples may include assistance with employer benefits, health insurance, and financial literacy and budgeting assistance.

**Training services** are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Training services may include, for example, occupational skills training, OJT, registered apprenticeship which incorporates both OJT and classroom training, incumbent worker training, pre-apprenticeship training, workplace training with related instruction, training programs operated by the private sector, skill upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, and transitional jobs. Training services are available for individuals who, after interview, evaluation or assessment, and case management are determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or higher wages from previous employment through career services alone. The participant must be determined to be in need of training services and to possess the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program. Some participants may need additional services to assist their vocational training, such as job readiness training, literacy activities including English language training, and customized training. Training Services pays job-training costs associated with WIOA-approved training programs. WIOA funds should be coordinated with other resources, such as Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), federal Pell Grants and partner funds. All WIOA and TAA participants approved to enter training must meet the Six Criteria of Training as outlined in the Trade Adjustment Act.

Priority consideration is given to programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the WorkLink area. WorkLink has identified four in-demand, high-growth industry clusters for which WorkLink WIOA classroom training funds can be invested on behalf of participants. These industry sectors are: Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation and Support Services; Construction; Health Care and Social

Assistance; Manufacturing; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; and ~~two specific~~ occupation ~~sal exception~~: CDL and Heavy Equipment Operator.

3. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

Rapid Response Services, as mandated by DOL, are services delivered to businesses and employees of companies that are experiencing downsizing through layoffs or closure and may have also been impacted by a Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification (WARN) issued by the State. The Department of Employment and Workforce operates the Trade Adjustment Assistance program and coordinates the Rapid Response teams across the State of South Carolina. The Operator participates as necessary in Rapid Response outreach teams, arranging for WIOA Services to be presented on-site as requested by the Employer.

The WorkLink SC Works Centers provide the following Rapid Response Services to employees of businesses issuing WARN notices, in conjunction with the Department of Employment and Workforce and the local Economic Development offices in the WorkLink region. Services include:

- Developing a plan for averting layoff(s) with the affected business and/or in consultation with State or local economic development agencies, including private sector economic development entities;
- Reviewing affected workers' assistance needs;
- Coordinating and conducting Rapid Response workshop presentations to assist with career transition, job search tools and skills, résumé preparation, and interviewing techniques;
- Assessing re-employment prospects for workers in the WorkLink region;
- Providing information on available resources to meet the short and long-term needs of affected workers;
- Establishing a process of referring affected employees to the SC Works System;
- Developing recruitment/job development activities including job fairs, positive recruitments, job lead development, and general recruitment notifications;
- Providing Rapid Response Information Packets with appropriate information relating to potential dislocations, available adjustment assistance, and the effectiveness of Rapid Response strategies; and when appropriate, including information on TAA program and the North American Free Trade (NAFTA) – TAA program; and
- Developing a business visitation program that improves service coordination, or a workforce transition committee comprised of representatives of the employer, the affected workers and the local community.

4. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

Palmetto Youth Connections provides case management to ensure all youth are successful. Case Management is a participant-centered, goal-oriented approach to the delivery of services designed to coordinate comprehensive educational, employment, career pathway goals, and plans to ensure that participants have access to necessary training and support services. The Fourteen (14) Youth Program Elements is the foundation of the youth comprehensive delivery of services. WorkLink Local Area focus

on serving out-of-school youth ages 17-24 in our three counties (Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens) that are WIOA eligible. Palmetto Youth Connections provides case management to ensure all youth are successful. Case Management is a participant centered, goal-oriented approach to the delivery of services designed to coordinate comprehensive educational, employment, career pathway goals, and plans to ensure that participants have access to necessary training and support services. Each school district has a special education division within each Adult Education Center (Palmetto Youth Connection (PYC) sites) to address needs of youth who are individuals with disabilities and/or work with youth participants with IEP. Currently, there is a PYC staff represented on the Oconee Transition Committee, PYC has an existing partnership with South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVR) agencies in each county, as well as potential for collaboration and partnership with the school district and SCVR involving the Project Search initiative in our local area. WorkLink Youth Committee is in the process of adding two (2) new Ad Hoc members representing SCVR (Transition to Work) and ABLE SC (Equip Young Adult Leader). The new members will bring value and compliment the Youth Committee by both primarily working with students with disabilities preparing for employment. The Fourteen (14) Youth Program Elements is the foundation of the youth comprehensive delivery of services. WorkLink Local Area focus on serving out-of-school youth ages 17-24, with the option to serve a small number of in-school youth (seniors, age 18) in our three counties (Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens) that are WIOA eligible.

5. A description of how the fourteen (14) youth program elements are integrated in program design.

Intensive case management must be provided to ensure all youth are successful. Services provide transitional support including occupational information, job search assistance, placement, job development, and follow-up (retention) services. Participants who are eligible for more structured occupational training will be provided information, and where appropriate, referred or assigned to the following:

- 1) **Tutorial, study skills training, basic skills:**

Palmetto Youth Connections (PYC) uses Learning Express-Workforce Skills for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Success. Learning Express offers a multitude of items: GED test prep, practice for career certification exams, tutorials for computer skills and software, comprehensive job search platform, resume and letter writing, workplace and job skills improvement, and offers progressive lessons to improve skills. This approach offers constant immediate feedback reporting for each student to acknowledge his/her progress.

In the WorkLink area all Basic Skills Remediation, GED preparation, High School Diploma preparation, study skills, and tutoring support are provided and/or coordinated by Adult Education in all three counties. PYC focuses on small group or individualized instruction through direct instructor support and the use of interactive software that will accelerate outcomes. Academic deficiencies are addressed, and each online learning platform is documented to establish

benchmarks for progress. The software ensures positive feedback, detailed administrative reporting, and proper documentation will be placed in the participant's hard file.

Students work independently and as a group in instructor led activities. PYC provides ongoing, consistent support to maximize each student's effort and performance.

**2) Alternative secondary school, or drop-out recovery services:**

As a primary task, PYC assists enrolled youth to attain a level of academic proficiency needed to succeed in the workplace. The partnership with the Adult Education Centers in the three counties provides a unique opportunity for participants to receive GED preparation with a familiar community based organization. Adult Education staff is highly trained to work with all levels of learners and resources to provide a quality academic program.

At the direction of the Local WDB and/or Youth Committee, formal collaboration with the Alternative Schools or Education Programs such as Title-One High Schools and At-Risk programs within the School Districts will be developed to serve in-school youth with those most in need as the priority. Alternative Schools or Education Programs will continue to be a referral resource if a student should leave/drop-out of school. High School students will be targeted in the spring of each school year to increase WIOA awareness in the area to reach graduates who need one/one career coaching to move forward towards a Career Pathway.

**3) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences, including internships, job shadowing, on-the-job training or pre-apprenticeships:**

PYC seeks Work Experience opportunities year round for youth beginning with the PYC Career Coach input, evaluation, identification, preparation, and referral of youth who are in need of obtaining work experience before entering the workplace, and/or for work related to the identified Career Pathway. Hourly Stipends are paid to participants during work experience. Private, Public and Non-Profit Businesses offer these work experience opportunities. The PYC Workforce Specialist establishes these opportunities and seeks businesses that may offer the opportunity for full time employment afterwards. Unpaid work experience will be a component of the program as needed, and/or as a teaching method for soft skills after verbal and written opportunities for improvement have been given to the participant.

At the direction of the Local WDB Youth Committee, PYC will pursue the establishment of Pre-apprenticeship programs, Internships and on-the-Job training. Job shadowing opportunities will be offered, as warranted by the chosen Career Pathway.

A Summer Work Experience component will be offered based on the need and funding available. Our Out-of-School Youth and In-School Youth program model runs year round and does not include a designated summer component. We do focus on these months for placement into work experiences and/or employment as there is often an influx of part-time opportunities to gain necessary work experience prior to permanent job placement. Summer related services can also

include GED/high school diploma classes, **WIN/**WorkKeys assessment/classes, work related soft skills training, and academic tutoring.

**4) Occupational skills training:**

Local area in-demand industry sectors or occupations drive occupational skills training and are a part of the Career Pathway process. PYC has developed a voucher system in which participants seeking short-term vocational training at the Technical College or through any approved training provider. All of our participants will have the opportunity for career exploration and planning based on the desired outcome of self-sufficiency. Staff will work with each student to provide them with the necessary knowledge including labor market information to pursue post-secondary education programs and will assist students in linking with the local resources available to assist them in completing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications, Pell Grant application, and Lottery Tuition Assistance if they choose to pursue post-secondary education. PYC provides occupational skills training by using the structured guidance of the WorkLink Workforce Development Board approved high growth, high demand industries: Administrative and Support and Waste Management and remediation Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, **Retail—TradeConstruction**, etc. Youth participant training requests outside of the WDB approved in-demand industries must be verified to be in-demand, allowable, and submitted for final approval by WorkLink Executive Director. Effort is placed on training for jobs requiring competencies to compete in the labor market. Particular emphasis is placed on training for jobs requiring skill and technology offering higher wages, benefits, and self-sufficiency.

**5) Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster:**

PYC provides education with concurrent workforce preparation within the local in demand career clusters (as funding allows). **Palmetto Youth Connections provides/offers integrated education and training that includes workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills and hands on occupational skills training that are taught within the same timeframe and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway.**

**6) Leadership Development Opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and civic behaviors, soft skills, decision-making, and team work:**

The Grantee provides leadership development activities to all youth. Leadership Development may include, but is not limited to, the following:

Exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities

- A tour of the regional technical college, which includes financial aid information and exploration of their resource center.
- A tour of other local post-secondary institutions, which includes financial aid information and exploration of their resource center.
- A presentation of military service opportunities by recruiters representing all branches.

Peer centered activities including peer mentoring and tutoring

- Tutoring provided through peer groups, such as the National Honor Society of the participant's school.

Citizenship training

- Attending a City or County Council meeting(s) within the participant's home community.
- Registering to vote.
- ~~Workforce Skills Tutor~~ Citizenship Component
- Budgeting of Resources

Employability activities

- At least one tour of the local SC Works to explore the employability resources available to participants.

Positive social behaviors and training in decision-making, including determining priorities

- Presentation of local Drug and Alcohol Abuse programs
- Presentation of Pregnancy Prevention/Safe Sex programs
- Motivational/self-esteem programs
- Career Development programs
- Participation on the Youth Committee

All Leadership Development Opportunities are developed in conjunction with the county's appropriate agencies through linkages, and should be designed to be fun, informative, and motivational.

## 7) Supportive Services:

PYC understands many of the needs of the youth population. As these participants' may not have adequate resources, we look to community linkages to assist each youth. One of the most important linkages we help put in place for every youth is knowledge of and registration with the SC Works Center where many community resources are co-located. This also brings other professionals into our network of support and opens the door for a variety of referral services. We feel that this strategy is the most effective in that it prevents duplication of services being provided in any area and helps to connect the youth to a system that can assist them in their adulthood.

Whether we have to coordinate a tour for our youth at a SC Works facility or if their staff can visit our classroom sites, we make certain every youth is offered opportunities to learn of all available SC Works resources. Certainly every youth have access to and will be made aware of the 211 community resources system as a guide to services and learn how to access needed services.

PYC provides supportive services based on the funding available and the direction of the WDB Youth Committee. Examples of supportive services include, but are not limited to transportation reimbursement, incentives, child care, purchase of work related clothing/equipment, work related pre-screenings, and emergency assistance.

Our program includes a unique Supportive Service system in an incentive based structure called Skill Invoices. Skill Invoices are discussed with students up front and designed around the benchmarks of their ISS. The rationale for this system is that students have the opportunity to EARN an incentive or supportive service by the attainment of goals they established with their Career Coach when designing their ISS. Skill Invoices replace traditional Supportive Service payments for transportation, childcare, stipends, etc. The Skill Invoice concept promotes pay for productivity and accountability the same as students will encounter when they enter the workplace.

Based on the WorkLink Workforce Development Board's Supportive Service Policy, childcare and transportation assistance is an allowable supportive service. However, childcare needs are coordinated first by the participant through referrals to other applicable agencies. The participant may request supportive services through the Grantee only after documenting that no other resources are available in the local area and that such supportive services are required in order for eligible youth to participate in Title I WIOA. Supportive Services are identified and driven by the youth participants Individual Service Strategies (ISS) plan.

Note: A separate service from supportive services that is offered and allowed are incentives earned and designed around the youth participant's benchmarks and attainment of goals they have established on their ISS. (See attachment of the Local Youth Supportive Services and Incentive Policy)

#### 8) **Adult Mentoring:**

Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation.

PYC provides youth with adult mentoring through teachers, instructors, job shadowing or work site supervisors, tutors, and community organizations. An established partnership with a community based agency that provides mentoring is a referral source for interested youth. PYC provides youth with adult mentoring through teachers, instructors, job shadowing or work site supervisors, tutors, and community organizations such as senior volunteers, fraternities and sororities, faith based organization, etc. The Grantee will be responsible for identifying and developing these relationships in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties. Mentors will develop a mentoring schedule and meet with their mentoring students at least two times per month to discuss goal setting, school issues, and problem solving.

Key to the success of any youth program or activity is an adult or adults within the community who are committed to serving as mentor(s) or role model(s) for all participating youth. Adult mentors should serve as role models and impart standards or expectations for these youth with respect to employment decisions, life skills, self-sufficiency and/or education achievement.

The adult mentors assigned to participants at the completion of the PYC program will have the responsibility of contacting participants approximately two (2) times per month (by telephone or in person) during the year. The role of the adult mentor is that of coach, advocate, counselor, and



friend. The parent/guardian will be notified for participants under the age of 18, and/or when appropriate and together (participant, parent and mentor) will attempt to identify community resources that might provide assistance.

**9) Follow-up (Retention) Services:**

Follow-up (Retention) services are provided by PYC for each participant, and may occur both during and after WIOA program participation. Every exited participant will have a 12-month follow-up completed, which reviews his/ her needs, status, and progress. PYC documents such services in the participants' files and SC Works Online Services. All youth must receive follow-up services.

Follow-up (Retention) services may be different for each individual based on his/her needs. Follow-up (retention) services, for not less than 12 months after completion of participation, include but are not limited to, the provision of on-going support, encouragement, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, and other non-financial support and personal assistance as necessary to enable these youth to obtain or retain employment, enroll and attend training, enlist in the military, maintain their grades in school or training, etc.

PYC will provide 12 month follow-up tracking on participants who complete the year round training components. Quarterly progress reports will be obtained on all participants. These reports will be maintained in participant's files and SC Works Online Services.

**10) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling:**

To include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual.

PYC provides comprehensive guidance counseling to youth that will take place in the form of follow-up calls, coordination of services, ISS updates, issuance of support services, mentor updates, etc.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, must be provided to each youth participant in any youth activity and tracked to ensure assistance is received and needs met.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling strategies should include, but are not limited to:

- Regularly scheduled contact with the participants (a minimum of bi-weekly).
- Support and intervention in time of crisis, assistance in development and implementation of a crisis plan.
- Intensive and personal follow-up activities which will be based upon the needs of the individual and documented in the case notes.
- Use of the ISS benchmarks to measure progress

- Provision of linkages, coordination of services, and resources that support the achievement of participants individualized goals (ISS).

The basic objective of this component is to monitor participant progress in fulfilling the ISS. Where progress is slow or in reverse, Career Coaches must be proactive in identifying the problem and solving it before the participant quits without achieving a recorded positive outcome. Referrals to outside agencies may be needed.

**11) Financial Literacy Education:**

PYC currently has a Financial Literacy component requirement through the Career Smart workshops offered to students as a pre-requisite to work experience training. Participants are exposed to financial management techniques that are building blocks to lifelong self-sufficiency and long term financial planning. PYC will pursue other community resources, such as financial institutions, as appropriate, to provide financial guidance and education in the form workshops/Seminars to youth in the service area.

PYC has numerous and free online financial literacy education and training resources available, for one/one and self-directed training options. Examples of these money smart resources are: [fdic.gov](http://fdic.gov) and [khanacademy.com](http://khanacademy.com). Other resources will be explored based on the differing learning styles of the youth served and the available funding.

**12) Entrepreneurial Skills Training:**

Palmetto Youth Connections currently has an entrepreneurial component requirement through the Career Smart Workshops offered to youth as a pre-requisite to work experience training. PYC has numerous and free online entrepreneurial skills training resources available for one-on-one and self-directed training options to be offered to the youth in the service area. Examples of these resources are: [BusinessMajors.about.com](http://BusinessMajors.about.com) and [myownbusiness.com](http://myownbusiness.com). Other resources will be explored based on the differing learning styles of the youth served and the available funding. For students who are on the career pathway to own their own business, a certificate course option can be explored through corporate and community education and the local technical college.

**13) Service that provide labor market and employment information about local in-demand industry sectors or occupations:**

As a part of the Career Pathway process, each participant is required to review one/one with their career coach the local in-demand career clusters for informed decision making concerning the local job market. Other resources, such as [Careeroutlook.us](http://Careeroutlook.us), can also be used to provide self – directed virtual career coaching and state by state career outlook information/comparisons.

**14) Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education:**

As a part of the Career Pathway exploration process, the steps to enter post-secondary are reviewed. Students are encouraged to pursue post-secondary education as related to the career pathway. Participants have the support of a one/one career coach to assist with the following: scheduling tours, financial aid workshops through the institution, and follow up and support during

the transition to college. Staff will also outreach to the post-secondary education institutions and career institutes to expose youth to the various options they have to continue their education. PYC staff will also connect youth who are interested to the armed forces and the Job Corps program.

6. A description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board has coordinated with secondary and post-secondary education programs in the following ways:

- Adult Education Centers house our Palmetto Youth Connections WIOA Youth program, as well as host a member of the Adult/DW WIOA program staff only a weekly if not permanent basis. This allows students participating in a GED program to have easy access to Career Coaches.
- Tri-County Technical College has provided facilities to us at a reduced rate for the three SC Works Satellite Centers in Anderson, Seneca and Easley. These facilities offer mutual customers access to short-term training, job search services, and WIOA Career Coaches only in one place.
- The Clemson SC Works Center offers GED classes throughout the school year as a service provided by Adult Education of Pickens County.
- WorkLink staff facilitates the annual Anderson – Oconee – Business and Industry Showcase in cooperation with the Showcase Board. The event exposes approximately 5,000 8<sup>th</sup> graders from the region to potential career paths in the months before they begin to make decisions about their high school career.

7. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

At this time, only training support materials are offered for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. Due to limited funds, the WorkLink Workforce Development Board has opted to ~~not~~ provide minimal transportation or childcare, in favor of funding classroom and work-based learning opportunities. However, Eckerd Workforce Services has identified supportive services in the local area as well as public transportation access and made information available to the community through the SC Works Centers.

Palmetto Youth Connections coordinates transportation, child care, and other supportive services (such as one-time emergency costs and training related materials) in the local area as identified on the youth participants Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Service Strategies (ISS).

8. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the SC Works delivery system.

Our Operator ~~is in the process of sitting~~s down with all of our SC Works Center Partners to map out ways to better serve our customers. A quarterly partner meeting has been established, and during these meetings each partner discusses referral processes, eligibility requirements and the like. As a result of this, we are making strides to streamline co-enrollment processes.

Another key element of WorkLink's operational plan is a strategy for serving employers. WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff share an integrated job matching system called the SC Works Online System (SCWOS). SC Works partners will utilize job listings and will encourage their customers to register for work in SCWOS. The workforce system will develop outreach materials to encourage employers to list jobs through the SC Works Centers (<https://jobs.scworks.org>). Efforts to contact and market workforce development programs to employers will be coordinated with WorkLink Staff. ~~Employer performance measures are forthcoming from DOL.~~

Furthermore, WorkLink has developed a Business Services team to address employer needs in the community. This team comes together to collaborate and coordinate efforts in order to avoid duplication.

9. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II, including how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA requirements.

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board over the years has established good relationships with our Adult Education providers in the WorkLink region. The Adult Education Centers have been designated in such a way that residents are referred to the closest Adult Education Center to them. The Adult Education Centers currently offer WorkKeys, Literacy, HSD and equivalencies, and English as a Second language. Other than WorkKeys, at this time, there are no other providers of these services in this area.

Both the Adult Education Center Providers and Tri-County Technical College offers WorkKeys ~~and WIN~~ testing. In order to eliminate confusion, we inform each participant and customer about their options on where they may go to be WorkKeys ~~or WIN~~ tested, and allow them to make the choice. We have established a referral process between both entities in order to streamline the process.

Furthermore, the following services and collaborations are currently in place in the WorkLink area:

- Adult Education Centers house our Palmetto Youth Connections WIOA Youth program, as well as host a member of the Adult/DW WIOA program staff only a weekly if not permanent basis. This allows students participating in a GED program to have easy access to Career Coaches.
- The Clemson SC Works Center offers HSD equivalency and English as a Second Language classes throughout the school year as a service provided by Adult Education of Pickens County.

~~WorkLink has not yet established~~has already established a review process for the Adult Education service providers. The State disseminates the responses with the scoring matrix and instructions. The WorkLink staff gathers a group of reviewers from the Board, representing each county, and reviews the process for reviewing and rating the proposals. Staff sets a deadline for all reviewers to submit

their scores and their comments. Staff then compiles the scores and then officially enters the final into the State database. However, upon instruction from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, the Board will form an ad hoc committee to address the RFPs for Adult Education.

## Section V: Operations and Compliance

1. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local SC Works system. This includes agreements between the local board or other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as the cross-training of staff, technical assistance, the use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.
2. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the chief elected official(s).

The Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) 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.

3. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

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.

4. Local Boards will not be required to include proposed performance goals for Program Years 2016 or 2017 in the local plan. Further guidance will be issued by the State regarding the negotiation of local levels of performance. Agreed upon performance goals must be incorporated into the local plan after negotiations are finalized.
5. A description of actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce area, including:

WorkLink achieved the high-performing workforce board status in 2010, and will seek to maintain that status over the coming years. The key elements that we are pursuing are as follows: Strategic Planning, Resource Alignment, Support of a Quality OneStop System, Support for Youth, LW+DB Funding Oversight, and Fiscal and Performance Accountability. As part of this process, WorkLink has maintained a Strategic Plan since 2009, updating it to a new five year plan in 2015. We are in the process of resource alignment with our partners through our MOU process, and have come a long way with securing a Service Provider that offers quality services to our participants and customers. We have also established a methodical way of overseeing our LWDB funding, and have established processes and procedures to be accountable to the community both fiscally and in performance.

- The effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the Local Board will implement to assess their one-stop centers;

The WorkLink Workforce Development Board will evaluate each SC Works Center and certify according to the standards developed by the State. The Board will determine how they will handle this process, whether by an ad hoc committee or the SC Works Center Operations committee. The evaluation process will include areas for improvement as a result of the findings.

- A description of the methodology used by the Local Board to allocate SC Works center infrastructure funds; and

WorkLink allocated infrastructure funds based on procurement of the Clemson SC Works Centers and negotiations with Tri-County Technical College for the Satellite costs. Furthermore, we procured an Operator for a set amount of funding.

- A description of the roles and contributions of SC Works partners, including cost allocation.

Most of our partners are in-kind contributors; however, Adult Education, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, SC Department of Social Services, and WIOA are paying partners. In order to determine total fair share of costs, WorkLink Workforce Development Board split the Center into shared and non-shared costs based on square footage/FTEs. Remaining non-shared costs were split by full-time equivalencies.

#### Shared Partner Costs

Quick Job Center Costs: Shared vs. non-shared costs are based on actual costs listed in the MOA with TCTC. Any resource room area or shared resource that a partner, employer or job seeker may use is listed as a shared cost. All other costs are attributed to the specific partner that benefits.

Clemson Center Costs: For shared costs, square footage for shared space is used to determine fair share for each partner. Shared space includes those commonly used areas for the general public, partners, jobseekers, and employers: reception area, training room, conference room, resource rooms, hallways, and bathrooms.

- Total space of center = 8,995
- Total shared space = 4,008 (45% of total space)
- Total cost per Sq Ft = \$12.23 (Rent portion only)

#### Each Partner's Share of Costs

- 19 distinct fund streams specified in the WIOA law included in the cost sharing pool
- 6 fund streams determined to not be present in our area (\$0 employment and training funds received, or physically not located in our service area)
- 13 partners share costs equally
- Each of 13 partners responsible for 7.69% of shared costs ( $1/13 = 7.69\%$ )
- Each partner's cost can be accounted for through cash or in-kind resources

#### Non-Shared Partner Costs

Clemson Center Costs: For non-shared costs, FTE counts are used to determine fair share for each partner. Non-Shared Space includes those areas used by a particular partner (rent, utilities and telecommunications).

- Total number of FTEs = 23.0 FTEs located in Clemson
- FTEs are calculated by dividing the number of hours worked by an individual by the number of hours the Center is open.
  - Example
 

Adult Ed staff member works 4 hrs/week	=	0.1 FTE
Clemson SC Works Center Open 40 hrs/week		

6. A description of how Adult and Dislocated Worker training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including:
  - If contracts for training services will be used;
  - How the use of training service contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts; 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.

Classroom training for individual adults and dislocated workers is provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITA's). WIOA funds for an ITA can only be paid for training programs that are listed on the South Carolina State eligible Training Provider list (ETPL). ITA funds are paid directly to the training provider using a WIOA program operator's fiscal system for vouchers or purchase orders. The Service Provider has established relationships with each Eligible Training Provider, and is able to guide participants to appropriate programs of study, based on likelihood of participant success, cost of training, Training Provider success rates (placement in unsubsidized employment), and customer choice.

The Service Provider is required to track all expenditures, obligations, and encumbrances in a timely, accurate fashion. The State has issued a Training Cap per participant's lifetime to be \$14,000. WorkLink has further defined the Training Cap as not to exceed \$5,000 per program year, not to exceed \$10,000 in a lifetime. All expenses associated with the training and supportive services are not to exceed the training cap. If the training cap is exceeded, a waiver must be approved by the Executive Director. In addition to this, WIOA participants may not exceed the State's training cap regardless of which region in South Carolina they access WIOA funds. All funds must be easily reported to other regions in the State. Obligations and expenditures must be available at any time at the request of WorkLink, SC DEW or US DOL. The Service Provider uses ~~Efforts to Outcomes (ETO)~~Empyra to track the ITAs, obligations and expenditures as well as an internal method of capturing any data not reported by SCWOS.

Customer choice is a guiding principle of WIOA where participants have freedom in making informed decisions about their ITA training/occupational goal. Participants are expected and required to take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of ITA's. Adults and dislocated workers who request an ITA must complete career exploration activities to ensure that they obtain the information they need to choose training for a demand occupation. Career exploration activities include comprehensive assessment, informational interviews with employers, and research of the labor market, demand occupations and Eligible Training Providers. The Case Manager provides guidance to the participant on reasonable cost of training. All participants determined in need of classroom training have a financial plan (ITA) in the participant's hard file prior to their training start date.

7. A description of the process used by the Local Board to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, labor organizations, and education.



WorkLink informs stakeholders and the general public of the 30-day public comment period by utilizing email, posting information on social media (i.e. Facebook), sending notices to local media outlets and by posting the local plan on the WorkLink website.

8. A description of how SC Works centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by SC Works partners.

WorkLink uses **SC Works Online Services (SCWOS)**, the **M**anagement information system (MIS) by Geographic Solutions (<https://www.geographicsolutions.com/>). WorkLink provides training and technical assistance to service providers and partners. We use a Staff Account Request Form and Confidentiality Agreement with each user. Our MIS system has four levels of security.

At this time, WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance are using the same system, Geographic Solutions, while other partners have view only access, and have separate intake and case management systems. At the State level, partner negotiations include discussions regarding integration of partner intake and case management systems into one system, but at this time, there are no confirmed plans to integrate others into the system.

9. A description of how the Local Board ensures compliance with the Adult priority of service requirements under WIOA Title I.

The strengthened priority of service provision in WIOA provides an opportunity for more low-income and lower skilled individuals to succeed. WorkLink serves adults who are most in need of employment and training services. A summary of our Priority of Service policy is provided below.

In order to be enrolled into WIOA in the WorkLink region, all participants must meet the residence requirement (currently lives or last worked in the WorkLink region), and at least one of the following priorities. All adult funded enrollments will be completed in order of the priority listing below.

#### **First Priority**

**Low-Income Veterans and Eligible Spouses** - Veterans and eligible spouses who are low-income, to include recipients of public assistance, or who are basic skills deficient.

#### **Second Priority**

**Low-income Individuals, including Public Assistance Recipients or Basic-Skills Deficient**

#### **Third Priority**

**Veterans and eligible spouses who are not low-income, or are not recipients of public assistance, and are not basic skills deficient.**

#### **Last Priority**

**Individuals outside of the groups listed in the priorities** – Eligible individuals who do not meet the above priorities may still be enrolled as participants in the WIOA adult program. However, effective July 1, 2016, seventy percent (70%) of newly enrolled adult participants must be low-income, to include public assistance recipients, or basic skills deficient.

WorkLink Workforce Development staff performs a monthly check of priority of service status via SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), and at a minimum, annually review the hard file documentation. The Service Provider monitors enrollments and associated priorities on a continual basis.

10. A description of how the Local Board is serving special populations, including those with barriers to employment, as required by WIOA.

WorkLink is serving these special populations: Individuals with Disability; Veterans; Youth with Barriers; Long Term Unemployed; Ex-Offenders; and Homeless. WorkLink has a “Persons with Disabilities Committee”, which focuses efforts on serving members of special populations.

WorkLink uses comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of workers; facilitates the development of an individual employment plan; offers counseling; case management; short-term pre-career services; internships and work experience; and literacy activities. WorkLink also leverages established partnerships with other agencies and is constantly evaluating opportunities for new partnerships.

Some examples of how we are serving special populations include:

- ~~Collaboration with Clemson Life – Once each year we invite Clemson Life to the Clemson SC Works Center to tour our facilities and learn about SC Works Center services. Clemson Life is a college program for those with disabilities.~~
- We offer workshops to ex-offenders for expungement on an as needed basis.
- Veterans receive priority of service at all SC Works Center events including job fairs and hiring events.
- Financial workshops are offered to those who struggle with credit challenges, which can be a barrier to employment.
- We work closely with Vocational Rehabilitation and other agencies that serve those with disabilities by referring services, partnering for services, and attending planning sessions as needed. (i.e. Our Operator attended a planning session for a high school student with a disability who was aging out of school).
- Assisted the homeless population by providing workshops and direct outreach to shelters (i. e. Haven of Rest –Anderson).
- Participate in events that target those living in neighborhoods with higher than average unemployment (Homeland Park Job Fair/Community Resource Fair event in Anderson).

11. Copies of current Local Board policies and definitions, including:

- 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.

12. Copies of current local workforce area documents, including:

- 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.

Local Plan Signatures

***Local Workforce Development Board:***

WorkLink Workforce Development Board  
**Ms. Brooke Dobbins, Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature                      Date

***Local Grant Recipient Signatory Official:***

WorkLink Workforce Development Area  
**Mr. Steve Pelissier, Executive Director, SC Appalachian Council of Governments**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature                      Date