

COBB



# Workforce Development Board

## LOCAL PLAN 2020

Cobb



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## ACRONYM GUIDE

<b>ACS</b> American Community Survey	and Developmental Disabilities
<b>ADA</b> Americans with Disabilities Act	<b>DCA</b> Georgia Department of Community Affairs
<b>AEFLA</b> Adult Education & Family Literacy Act	<b>DCH</b> Georgia Department of Community Health
<b>AO</b> Accelerating Opportunity	<b>DCS</b> Georgia Department of Community Supervision
<b>AOP</b> Agricultural Outreach Plan	<b>DFCS</b> Division of Family & Children Services (DHS)
<b>ASL</b> American Sign Language	<b>DHS</b> Georgia Department of Human Services
<b>AWT</b> Assistive Work Technology	<b>DJJ</b> Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice
<b>BER</b> Benefits Eligibility Review	<b>DOAS</b> Georgia Department of Administrative Services
<b>BGLI</b> Burning Glass Labor Insight	<b>DOC</b> Georgia Department of Corrections
<b>BLS</b> Bureau of Labor Statistics	<b>DoDD</b> Division of Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)
<b>BSU</b> Business Services Unit (GDOL)	<b>DSU</b> Designated State Unit
<b>CAD</b> Computer Aided Design	<b>DVOP</b> Disabled Veteran Outreach Program
<b>CAP</b> Client Assistance Programs	<b>EG</b> Employ Georgia (GDOL)
<b>CAP</b> Corrective Action Plan	<b>ELPS</b> English Language Proficiency Standards
<b>CAPI</b> Customized Apprenticeships & Paid Internships	<b>EMSI</b> Economic Modeling Specialists Intl
<b>CCRS</b> College & Career Readiness Standards	<b>ERP</b> Eligibility Review Process
<b>CCSS</b> Common Core State Standards	<b>ES</b> Employment Services
<b>CE</b> Customized Employment	<b>ESP</b> Extended Services Plan
<b>CIE</b> Competitive Integrated Employment	<b>ETA</b> Employment & Training Administration (USDOL)
<b>CIL</b> Centers for Independent Living	<b>ETP</b> Eligible Training Provider
<b>CJCC</b> Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council	<b>ETPL</b> Eligible Training Provider List
<b>CLCP</b> Certified Literate Community Program	<b>EXCEL</b> Executive Commitment to Excellence in Leadership
<b>CLEO</b> Chief Local Elected Official	<b>FB</b> Federal Bonding
<b>CNC</b> Computer Numerical Control Operator	<b>FY</b> Fiscal Year
<b>CR</b> Customized Recruitment	<b>GaDOE</b> Georgia Department of Education
<b>CRC</b> Certified Rehabilitation Counselors	<b>GALIS</b> Georgia Adult Learners Information System
<b>CRCC</b> Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification	<b>GA-PRI</b> Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative
<b>CRP</b> Community Rehabilitation Programs	<b>GCDD</b> Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities
<b>CSB</b> Community Service Boards	<b>GDEcD</b> Georgia Department of Economic Development
<b>CSC</b> Cave Spring Center	<b>GDOL</b> Georgia Department of Labor
<b>CSNA</b> Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment	<b>GED®</b> General Educational Development test
<b>CSPD</b> Comprehensive System for Personal Development	1 GED® and GED Testing Service® are registered trademarks of the American Council on Education
<b>CSPM</b> Client Services Policy Manual	
<b>CSU</b> Constituent Services Unit	
<b>DBHDD</b> Georgia Department of Behavioral Health	

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**GEPS** Georgia Enterprises for Products & Services

**GLME** Georgia Labor Market Explorer

**GLRS** Georgia Learning Resource

**GOTSR** Governor's Office of Transition, Support & Reentry

**GPSC** Grant Program Support Coordinator

**GSE** Georgia Standards of Excellence

**GVRA** Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

**GVRs** Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services

**GWROPP** Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal

**GWS** Georgia Workforce System

**HDCI** High Demand Career Initiative

**HSE** High School Equivalency

**IATSE** International Association of Theatrical & Screen Employees

**IAWP** International Association of Workforce Professionals

**ICR** Information Collection Request

**IDEA** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IELCE** Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education

**IEP** Individualized Education Plan

**IET** Integrated Education and Training

**IPE** Individualized Plan for Employment

**IPS** Individualized Placement & Support

**ISY** In-School Youth

**ITA** Individual Training Account

**ITP** Individualized Transition Plan

**IWT** Incumbent Worker Training

**ITW** Internet Tax and Wage

**JFF** Jobs for the Future

**LEA** Local Education Agency

**LEOs** Local Elected Officials

**LVERS** Local Veteran Employment Representatives

**LWDA** Local Workforce Development Area

**LWDB** Local Workforce Development Board

**LWIA** Local Workforce Investment Area

**MHS** Migrant Head Start

**MIS** Management Information System

**MOA** Methods of Administration

**MOU** Memorandum of Understanding

**MSFW** Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers

**NAICS** North American Industry Classification System

**NASWA** National Association for State Workforce Agencies

**NDI** Non-Destructive Inspectors

**NDT** Non-Destructive Testers

**NDWG** National Dislocated Worker Grants

**NEG** National Emergency Grant

**NFJP** National Farmworker Jobs Program

**NPRM** Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

**NRS** National Reporting System

**O\*Net** Occupational Information Network

**O.C.G.A.** Official Code of Georgia Annotated

**OA** Office of Apprenticeship (USDOL)

**OAE** Office of Adult Education (TCSG)

**OCTAE** Office of Career, Technical & Agricultural Education (USDOE)

**OJT** On-the-Job Training

**OOS** Order of Selection

**OSY** Out-of-School Youth

**OWD** Office of Workforce Development (TCSG)

**PDTR** Professional Development & Transition Resources

**PIP** Performance Improvement Plan

**PLC** Programmable Logic Controller

**Pre-ETS** Pre-Employment Transition Services

**PWP** Personal Work Plan

**PY** Program Year

**REA** Reemployment Assistance Program

**RESEA** Georgia's Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment

**RFA** Request for Application

**RSA USDOE** Rehabilitation Services Administration

**SCSEP** Senior Community Service & Employment Program

**SDVS** Georgia Department of Veteran's Services

**SE** Supported Employment

**SEA** State Education Agency

**SES** Supported Employment Services

**SETA** Southeastern Employment & Training Association

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**SILC** Statewide Independent Living Council  
**SIWDG** Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant  
**SMA** State Monitor Advocate  
**SNAP** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
**SPC** Statistical Process Control  
**SPMI** Serious & Persistent Mental Illness  
**SRC** State Rehabilitation Council  
**SSDI** Social Security Disability Insurance  
**SSDR** State Service Delivery Regions  
**SSI** Supplemental Security Income  
**SSLO** Single Set of Learning Objectives  
**STAR** Staff Technical Assistance & Review  
**STAR** Student Achievement in Reading  
**STEM** Science, Technology, engineering and Math  
**SUP** State Unified Plan  
**SWAT** Special Workforce Assistance Team  
**SWDB** State Workforce Development Board  
**SWIS** Statewide Workforce Investment System  
**TAA** Trade Adjustment Assistance  
**TANF** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families  
**TCC** Technical College Credit  
**TCSG** Technical College System of Georgia  
**TEGL** Training Employment Guidance Letter  
**TFSP TANF** Family Service Plan

**UCX** Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service members program  
**UGA** University of Georgia  
**UI** Unemployment Insurance  
**UI and RO** Unemployment Insurance & Regional Operations  
**UIREA** UI Employment Assistance  
**USDA** United States Department of Agriculture  
**USDOE** United States Department of Education  
**USDOL** United State Department of Labor  
**USG** University System of Georgia  
**VR** Vocational Rehabilitation viii  
**VRP** Vocational Rehabilitation Program  
**WARN** Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification  
**WEx** Work Experience  
**WIA** Workforce Investment Act  
**WIG** Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter  
**WIOA** Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act  
**WOTC** Work Opportunity Tax Credit  
**WP** Wagner-Peyser Act/programs  
**WSC** WorkSource Cobb  
**WSP TANF** Work Support Program  
**YDC** Youth Detention Center



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CobbWorks (CW) is pleased to submit a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan for Fiscal Years 2020-2024 (7/1/20 through 6/30/2024). With a diverse demographic, economic and business make-up, the CobbWorks WIOA Local Plan aims to support this diversity and provide job seekers and employers with services, programs, resources and flexibility to meet their needs. We are committed to the advancement of economic development and economic mobility for individuals and families through talent development, employment, training and education that builds employer talent pipelines.

This local plan supports the State's vision and goals as described in State of Georgia Four Year WIOA Unified State Plan (see below). As such, CobbWorks has collaborated with one-stop partners, community organizations, and local businesses to develop a strategic plan that supports strengthening the workforce system's ability to align and coordinate among partners.

<b><i>State Goals</i></b>	
<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.</b>
<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.</b>
<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities.</b>
<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels.</b>
<b>Goal 5</b>	<b>Alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system</b>

The CobbWorks Local Plan leverages resources of core partners supporting a braided funding strategy that streamlines services and makes more efficient use of the workforce development ecosystem. A career planning strategy will assess and train adults and youth in career pathways for high demand industries. A youth-focused strategy will identify barriers, develop goals, and career pathways that will empower youth to make educated

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decisions and better prepare them for the workforce. Utilizing an employer-driven system will directly address job seeker and employers' needs, by identifying skill gaps and better preparing and training the region's workforce to best serve both individuals and companies to compete in today's and tomorrow's labor market.



### STRATEGIC ELEMENTS, GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

#### 1. Identification of the Fiscal Agent

Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official.

##### **Cobb County Board of Commissioners**

The Honorable Michael H. Boyce, Chairman

Administrative Contact: William Volckmann

Finance Director/Controller

Cobb County Finance Department

100 Cherokee Streets

Suite 400

Marietta, GA 30060

Local Workforce Development Area 4 is a single-county workforce area established by the State of Georgia to serve the residents and employers of Cobb County. In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the chairman of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, as Chief Local Elected Official under WIOA, has appointed the Cobb County Workforce Development Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board) to perform all duties required of workforce development boards under WIOA and state laws and regulations.

CobbWorks Inc., a non-profit entity recognized by the State of Georgia, administers the WIOA grant funds on behalf of Cobb County Government and the Board under a sub-recipient agreement. CobbWorks is considered the legal corporate entity for this function and WorkSource Cobb (WSC) is the name of the service delivery system as stipulated by the state administrative agency. Although CobbWorks Inc. is not a Cobb County Government department, it receives administrative and physical support from multiple local government divisions including Finance, Property Management, Economic Development, and Purchasing. This cooperative relationship between Cobb County Government and CobbWorks Inc. serves to maximize the use of WIOA resources to serve the largest number of individuals and employers in the most efficient manner.



#### **Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024**

Staff are employees of CobbWorks Inc. and provide support to the Board. One-Stop operator functions are provided by the CobbWorks One-Stop Operator who facilitates the coordination and management of all WIOA mandated partners. The One-Stop Operator works in collaboration with the CobbWorks Center Manager, who has responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the facility and scheduling of partner staff under the provisions of the Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the workforce area.

## **2. Description of Strategic Planning Elements**

Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.

WorkSource Cobb utilized a collaborative strategic planning process to assess the county and region's economic conditions. Working in collaboration with Cobb County Chamber, Cobb Select, Department of Economic Development, Metro-Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Atlanta Career Rise, the Metro Atlanta Industry Partnership which is made up of our regional workforce partner agencies (Fulton, DeKalb, ARC, and Atlanta) and WIOA required partners, that included but is not limited to:

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Department of Labor Veterans Services
- Job Corps
- AARP
- Chattahoochee Technical College
- Cobb Adult Education
- Cobb County CDBG Program

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these strong partnerships have fostered improved communications and established an inclusion and referral system that strengthens services to both employers and jobseekers in the region. Additionally, these partnerships have allowed WSC to leverage our partner's expertise and resources, which is an integral component of our overall workforce strategy, helping to reduce costs and improve services to job seekers and employers. With the support and input of the partners WSC has been able to take a thorough detailed look at regional labor market data and economic conditions. There are a variety of existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the region. Utilizing a variety of data sources coupled with employer input and labor market information (LMI) from the *Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Area Workforce Trends, WIA Area #4 - Cobb County*, and data from [JobsEQ<sup>®1</sup>](http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq), this plan has been well-informed and developed through a collaborative approach.

- a. **Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.**

Region 3 is home to WorkSource Cobb and four (4) additional local workforce development boards (WorkSource Metro Atlanta-WorkSource City of Atlanta (3), WorkSource DeKalb (5), WorkSource Fulton (6), WorkSource Atlanta Regional (7)), as part of the Metro-Atlanta community the five workforce boards work collaboratively to address economic conditions in the region.

Overall, employment in the region has grown steadily over the past 5 years, dipping slightly in 2019 and rising again in 2020. Employment growth has been even more dramatic if measured since 2010, as the recovery from the recession began.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>

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While growth is predicted to continue, according to an article in the Atlanta Associated Press, the Atlanta region economic forecast predicts fewer jobs will be created in Georgia during 2020. However, the state's economy will continue to grow. It will continue at a slower pace than originally predicted and the unemployment rate is forecast to rise to 4.2% in 2020, compared to an estimated 3.7% for all of 2019<sup>2</sup>. The report was created by University of Georgia Terry College of Business dean Benjamin Ayers.

This prediction has now been further exasperated as of the drafting of this plan, amid the

COVID-19 pandemic emergency - March 2020. While a full data report on the economic impact on the state and the country is still pending as the emergency currently persists, it is clear that the U.S. economy has entered a contraction whose effects are expected to be felt well through 2021. To-date over 20 million unemployment claims have been filed since March 2020 and over 170 WARN notices filed in Georgia alone. Georgia's job losses currently total 5.1 million, the largest over-the-month drop since March 2010. As of March, 2020, over 290,000 Georgian's are now receiving unemployment, according to Governor Brian Kemp<sup>3</sup> Those numbers are continuing to climb amid this emergency.

According to the Brookings Institute, "the current spread of the COVID-19 pandemic around the world reduces demand in the world economy and complicates supply chains," coupled with numerous other contributing factors have caused a significant halt in the U.S. economy"<sup>4</sup>. As such, these factors contribute to the likelihood of the United States experiencing one of the most severe economic contractions in its history in March and continuing beyond the second quarter of 2020. The data and full economic impact are still pending.

While the full impact of this anomalous economic disturbance has yet to be determined, prior to



<sup>2</sup><https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/georgia/articles/2019-12-14/university-forecasts-economic-slowdown-in-georgia-in-2020>

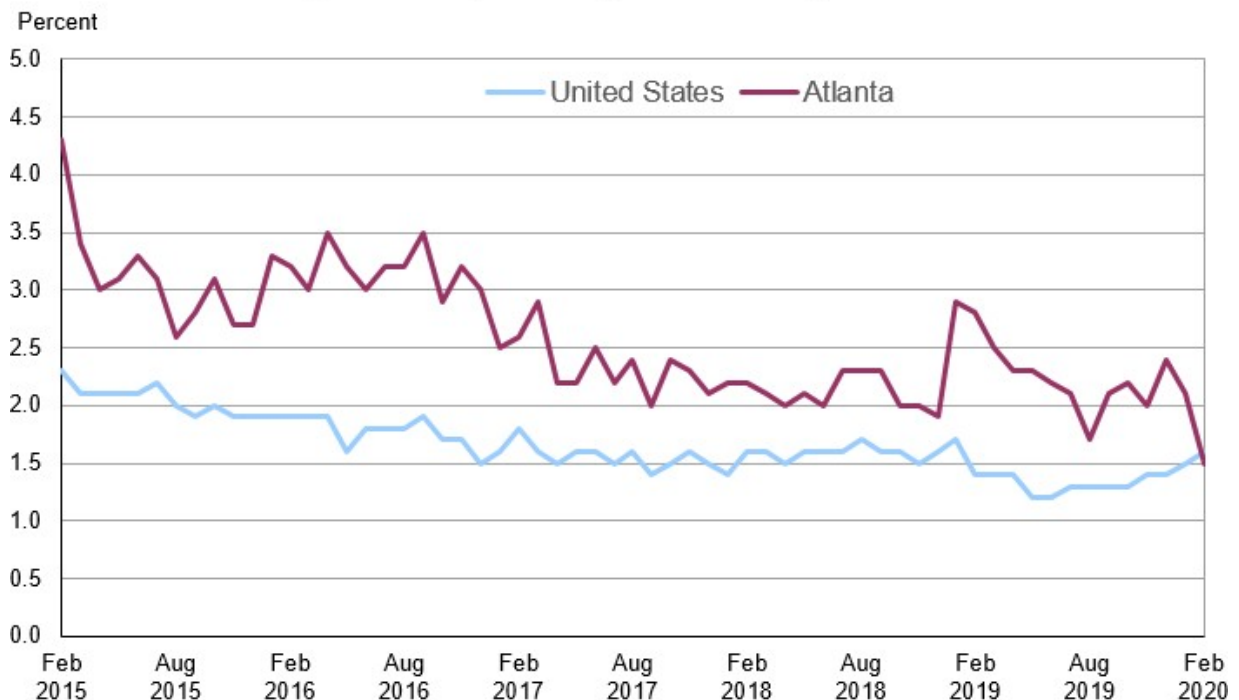
<sup>3</sup><https://twitter.com/GovKemp>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/03/23/covid-19-and-the-u-s-economy-faq-on-the-economic-impact-policy-response/>

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the declaration of a pandemic emergency, since 2019 the Metro-Atlanta region alone had added over 42,400 jobs in high-demand industries continuing a path of significant growth since the 2010 recession. According to the (BLS) Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell was one of the nation's twelve (12) largest metropolitan statistical areas in February 2020. Twelve (12) specific areas experienced over-the-year job growth during the period, with the rates of job growth in 6 areas exceeding the national average of 1.6 percent. Total nonfarm employment for the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA Metropolitan Statistical Area stood at 2,861,700 in February 2020, which is up 42,400, or 1.5%, over the year<sup>5</sup>. During the same period, the national rate of job growth was 1.6 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#)). Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that the Atlanta area has had over-the-year employment gains each month since July 2010.

**Chart 1. Total nonfarm employment, over-the-year percent change in the United States and the Atlanta metropolitan area, February 2015–February 2020**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast/news-release/areaemployment\\_atlanta.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast/news-release/areaemployment_atlanta.htm)

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- b. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

### Cobb County Industry Analysis

In 2018 Q2, total employment for Cobb was 394,341 (based on a four-quarter moving average). Over the year ending 2019 Q4, employment is expected to increase by 1.1% in the region annually. The largest sector in Cobb County, Georgia is Retail Trade, employing 42,718 workers. The next-largest sectors in

the region are Health Care and Social Assistance (41,593 workers) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (39,723). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Management of Companies and Enterprises (LQ = 2.32), Wholesale Trade (1.53), and Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (1.48).

### Area Profile for Georgia

#### Employment Wage Statistics Distribution Table

The table below shows counties with the highest average weekly wage in Georgia for the third quarter of 2019.

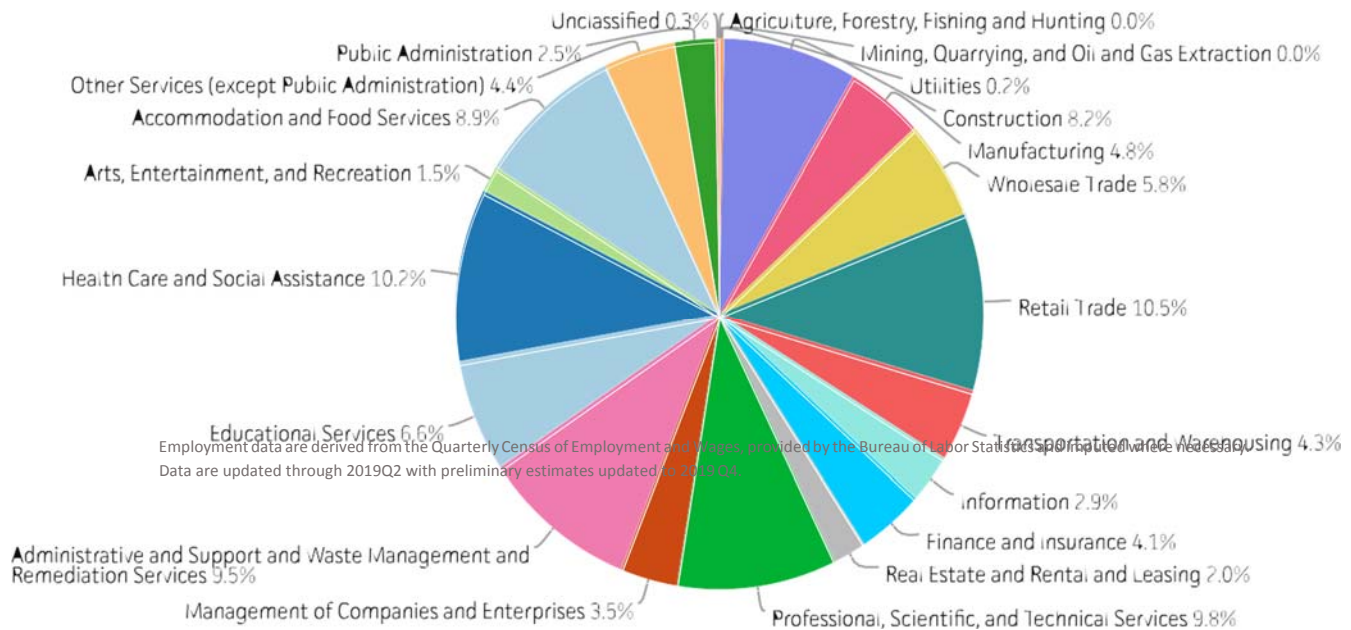
Rank	Area	Number of Employees	Average Hourly Wage†	Average Weekly Wage	Average Annual Wage†
1	Burke County	13,827	\$43.90	\$1,756	\$91,312
2	Fulton County	901,157	\$35.55	\$1,422	\$73,944
3	Cobb County	375,565	\$28.28	\$1,131	\$58,812
4	Clayton County	123,774	\$27.53	\$1,101	\$57,252
5	DeKalb County	302,619	\$27.48	\$1,099	\$57,148
6	Webster County	490	\$26.23	\$1,049	\$54,548
7	Gwinnett County	361,686	\$25.18	\$1,007	\$52,364
8	Forsyth County	77,443	\$24.20	\$968	\$50,336
9	Stewart County	1,417	\$23.13	\$925	\$48,100
10	Early County	4,251	\$23.10	\$924	\$48,048

† Assumes a 40-hour week worked the year round.

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program

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### Total Workers for Cobb County, Georgia by Industry



Source

Over the next 5 years, employment in Cobb County, Georgia is projected to expand by 22,662 jobs. The fastest growing sector in the region is expected to be Health Care and Social Assistance with a +2.0% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+4,344 jobs), Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+3,280), and Accommodation and Food Services (+2,836).

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### Cobb County's Five Year Forecast of Top Jobs and Salaries

NAICS	Industry	Current			5-Year History		5-Year Forecast				
		Empl	Avg Wages	Ann LQ	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
44	Retail Trade	42,718	\$37,460	1.02	1,998	1.0%	29,846	12,733	16,088	1,025	0.5%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	41,593	\$57,887	0.71	5,210	2.7%	24,851	10,083	10,424	4,344	2.0%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	39,723	\$85,960	1.45	6,560	3.7%	20,876	6,534	11,062	3,280	1.6%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	38,608	\$40,171	1.48	5,863	3.3%	24,783	9,634	13,142	2,007	1.0%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	36,380	\$20,450	0.99	5,579	3.4%	33,286	13,477	16,974	2,836	1.5%
23	Construction	33,230	\$67,339	1.43	8,028	5.7%	19,455	6,048	10,820	2,587	1.5%
61	Educational Services	27,009	\$49,701	0.82	672	0.5%	13,624	6,098	6,579	947	0.7%
42	Wholesale Trade	23,595	\$91,924	1.53	170	0.1%	13,046	4,708	7,803	536	0.4%
31	Manufacturing	19,367	\$74,577	0.58	1,114	1.2%	10,135	3,720	6,370	45	0.0%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	17,698	\$31,431	0.98	1,143	1.3%	11,034	4,684	5,592	757	0.8%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	17,451	\$44,332	0.94	5,111	7.2%	10,599	4,056	5,488	1,055	1.2%
52	Finance and Insurance	16,626	\$87,054	1.04	1,581	2.0%	8,772	3,000	4,925	846	1.0%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	14,281	\$118,030	2.32	958	1.4%	7,325	2,433	4,153	739	1.0%
51	Information	11,723	\$92,574	1.46	3,293	6.8%	5,879	2,051	3,638	189	0.3%
92	Public Administration	10,066	\$54,564	0.53	218	0.4%	5,100	1,989	2,706	404	0.8%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	8,295	\$69,272	1.17	979	2.5%	4,727	1,952	2,338	437	1.0%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6,250	\$23,766	0.77	801	2.8%	4,922	2,022	2,497	403	1.3%
99	Unclassified	1,052	\$55,441	2.46	-417	-6.5%	667	256	352	59	1.1%
22	Utilities	985	\$98,630	0.47	-112	-2.1%	448	161	283	3	0.1%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	120	\$29,181	0.02	7	1.1%	70	28	38	4	0.7%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	78	\$59,078	0.04	4	1.1%	44	13	27	4	0.9%
<b>Total - All Industries</b>		<b>406,848</b>	<b>\$58,566</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>48,761</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>249,860</b>	<b>97,105</b>	<b>130,093</b>	<b>22,662</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2019Q2 with preliminary estimates updated to 2019Q4. Forecast employment growth uses national projections adapted for regional growth patterns.



#### Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

- c. **Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.**

BLS states that industry employment in the Atlanta region identified education and healthcare services as leading in high-demand industry sectors, at 4.1% up 15,000 outpacing the national employment by 1.4% from February 2019-February 2020. Local employment gains were primarily in the ambulatory health care services (+4,300) and hospitals (+3,300) subsectors.

Atlanta's trade, transportation, and utilities super-sectors added 9,000 jobs, an increase of 1.5 percent since February 2019. Local job gains in the industry were primarily in the transportation and warehousing (+3,600) and retail trade (+3,300) sectors. The local wholesale trade sector added 2,000 jobs over the year.

Nationally, employment in the trade, transportation, and utilities industry was up 0.4 percent over the year. In the Atlanta area, the leisure and hospitality super-sector added 5,500 jobs from February 2019 to February 2020, up 1.9 percent. Job gains in the local area were concentrated in the food services and drinking places subsector (+6,100). In contrast, the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector lost 1,000 jobs over the year. Nationally, employment in leisure and hospitality was up 2.6 percent over the year<sup>6</sup>.

Two other super-sectors in the Atlanta area gained over 3,000 jobs since last February. Atlanta's financial activities super-sector added 3,600 jobs, up 2.1 percent; nationwide, employment in this super-sector rose 1.9 percent over the year. Atlanta's government industry added 3,100 jobs since February 2019. The 0.9-percent rate of local job growth was similar to the national gain of 1.0 percent.

Furthermore, according to the Atlanta Journal Constitution (AJC) 3 of 7 Cobb cities are listed as Atlanta's best suburbs<sup>7</sup> to live. Cobb is home to some of the most diverse areas to live, work and play. This vote of confidence is further enriched as the remaining seven (7) cities on the list of 10 are all a part of the Metro region and are regional partners to this local plan, informing strategies that address the regional conditions and developing collaborative solutions that benefit the full region.

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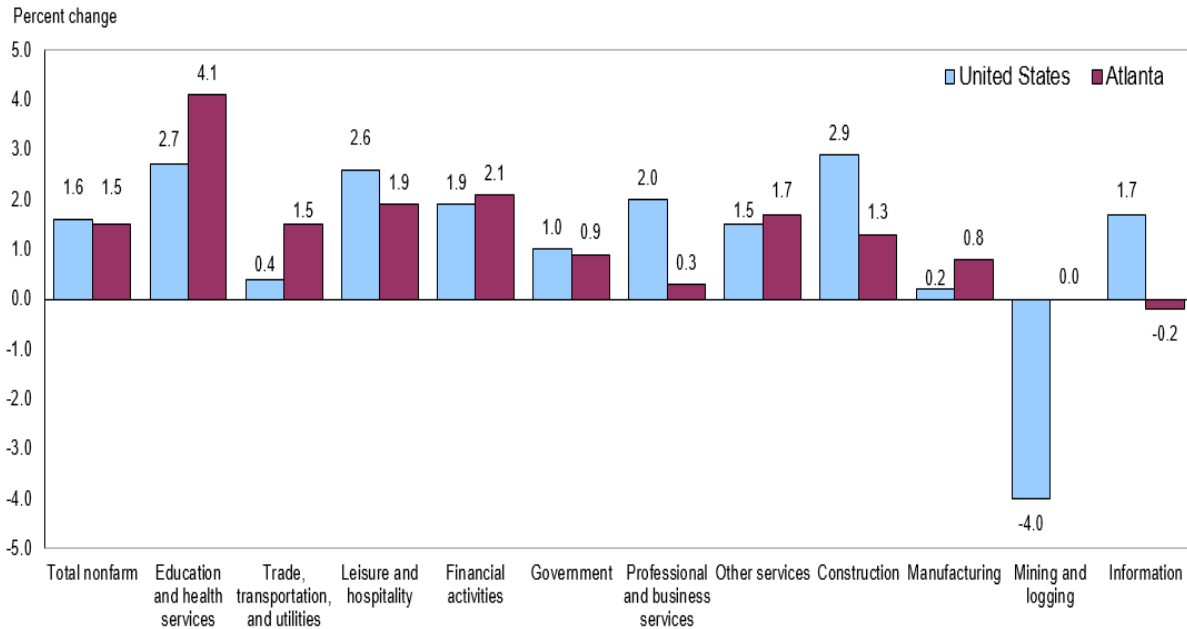
<sup>6</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast/news-release/2020/areaemployment\\_atlanta\\_20200408.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast/news-release/2020/areaemployment_atlanta_20200408.htm)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ajc.com/lifestyles/winner-best-suburb-atlanta-best-atlanta/f79GBZmpUAb3H7Xmpig30K/>



## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

**Chart 2. Total nonfarm and selected industry supersector employment, over-the-year percent change, United States and the Atlanta metropolitan area, February 2020**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Atlanta's trade, transportation, and utilities super-sector added 9,000 jobs, an increase of 1.5 percent since February 2019. Local job gains in the industry were primarily in the transportation and warehousing (+3,600) and retail trade (+3,300) sectors. The local wholesale trade sector added 2,000 jobs over the year. Nationally, employment in the trade, transportation, and utilities industry was up 0.4 percent over the year. In the Atlanta area, the leisure and hospitality super-sector added 5,500 jobs from February 2019 to February 2020, up 1.9 percent. Job gains in the local area were concentrated in the food services and drinking places subsector (+6,100). In contrast, the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector lost 1,000 jobs over the year. Nationally, employment in leisure and hospitality was up 2.6 percent over the year.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast/news-release/2020/areaemployment\\_atlanta\\_20200408.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast/news-release/2020/areaemployment_atlanta_20200408.htm)

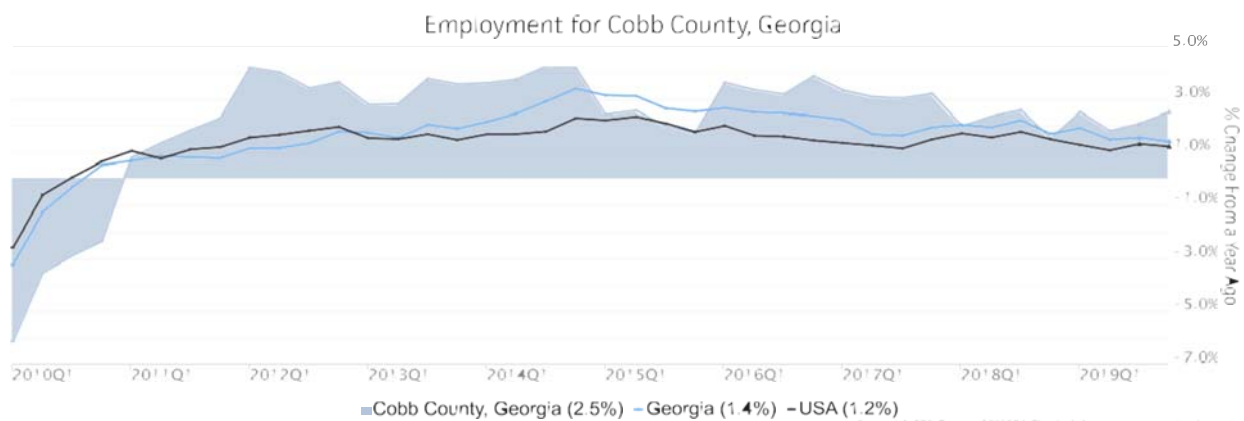
## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

**Table 1. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry super-sector, United States and the Atlanta metropolitan area, not seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands)**

Area and Industry	Feb 2019	Dec 2019	Jan 2020	Feb 2020(P)	Feb 2019 to Feb 2020(P)	
					Net change	Percent change
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA Metropolitan Statistical Area						
Total nonfarm	2,819.3	2,904.0	2,862.6	2,861.7	42.4	1.5
Mining and logging	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0
Construction	128.0	130.7	127.7	129.6	1.6	1.3
Manufacturing	170.3	172.1	172.1	171.6	1.3	0.8
Trade, transportation, and utilities	594.8	623.6	611.0	603.8	9.0	1.5
Information	101.9	102.0	100.4	101.7	-0.2	-0.2
Financial activities	174.8	179.2	177.6	178.4	3.6	2.1
Professional and business services	544.9	562.6	546.9	546.7	1.8	0.3
Education and health services	368.9	384.1	382.9	383.9	15.0	4.1
Leisure and hospitality	296.5	303.5	300.5	302.0	5.5	1.9
Other services	102.4	105.6	104.8	104.1	1.7	1.7
Government	335.3	339.1	337.2	338.4	3.1	0.9

## Employment Trends

As of 2019Q4, total employment for Cobb County, Georgia was 406,848 (based on a four-quarter moving average). Over the year ending 2019Q4, employment increased 2.5% in the region.

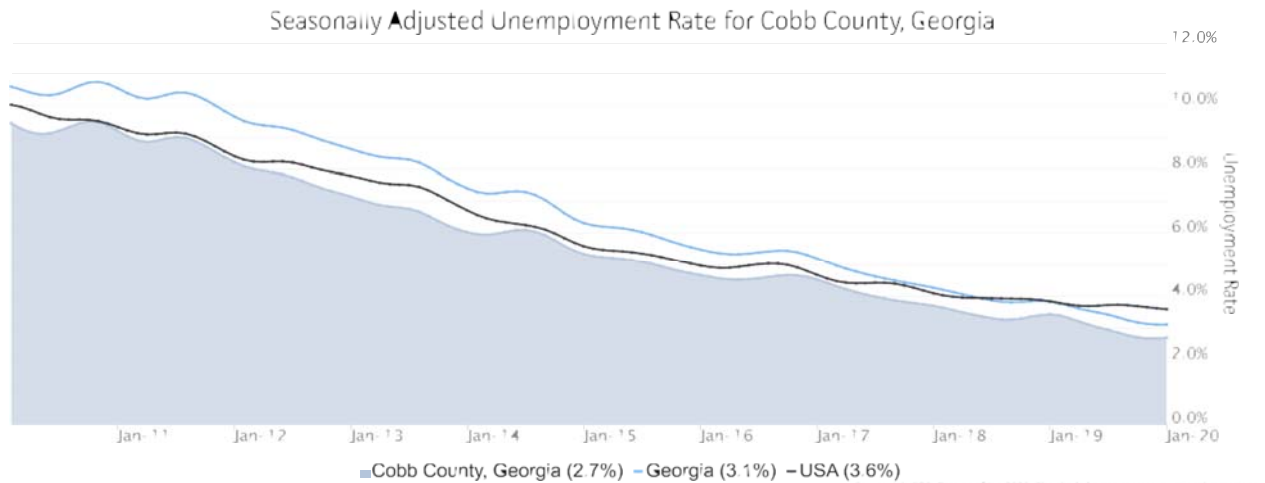


Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2019Q2 with preliminary estimates updated to 2019Q4.

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

### Unemployment Rate

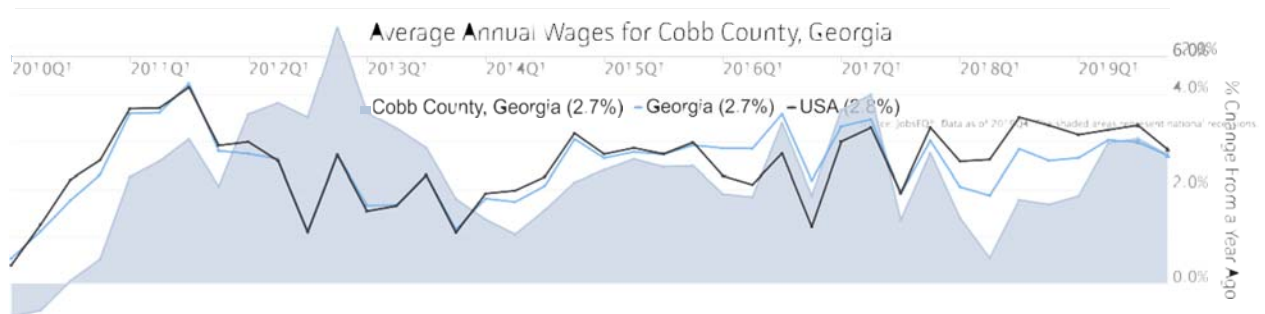
The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Cobb County, Georgia was 2.7% as of January 2020. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 3.6%. One year earlier, in January 2019, the unemployment rate in Cobb County, Georgia was 3.4%.



Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through January 2020.

### Wage Trends

The average worker in Cobb County, Georgia earned annual wages of \$58,566 as of 2019 Q4. Average annual wages per worker increased 2.7% in the region over the preceding four quarters. For comparison purposes, annual average wages were \$57,413 in the nation as of 2019 Q4.



Annual average wages per worker data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2019Q2 with preliminary estimates updated to 2019Q4.

**See Regional Plan for regional data**

### **Regional In-Demand Industries**

Regionally, the five Metro Atlanta Workforce Development Boards (City of Atlanta, Cobb County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, and the 7 counties included in the ARWDB) have identified five (5) industries to target. These industries are:

- Healthcare
- Information Technology
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics
- Construction and skilled trades
- Healthcare and Bioscience

These industries were selected for a variety of reasons, including: their size, past and projected growth, demand for workers, existing skill gaps, relevance to multiple counties in the region, and the accessibility and quality of the jobs offered. While these industries were selected for the Metro-Atlanta Region, each workforce board may also elect to select additional industries to focus on within its local area as well.

Working collaboratively through its partnership with Metro-Atlanta Industry Partnership (Atlanta CareerRise), area employers and local educational institutions, the regional partnership is able to utilize a data-driven approach to understand talent demands to better align and leverage resources for the development of worker skills for industry needs.

WSC is home to a diverse economy of manufacturing, service, retail, transportation, healthcare and constructions, and IT industry sectors. Ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 10 of the state's counties with the highest average wages<sup>9</sup>, Cobb County's economic outlook remains bright both locally as well as regionally. With an average hourly wage of \$28.28 and over 375,000 employees Cobb remains a bright light in the heart of the Georgia economy. Ongoing economic development continues to be a pillar of the Cobb Chamber, creating jobs and strengthening the economy and quality of life for both employers and the community.

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<sup>9</sup> Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic research

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

- d. **Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**

### **Education & Training Analysis<sup>10</sup>**

Cobb County is home to nine (9) institutions offering academic degrees and industry certifications. For Cobb County the average worker earned annual wages of \$58,566, which is an increase of 2.7% in the region over the preceding fourth quarters.

The top postsecondary programs combined awarded nearly 1,074 degrees and/or certificates linked to demand occupations during the 2017-2018 academic year. This number has increased by over 85% since 2010. Of these academic awards, nearly 50% were for Bachelor's degrees. Over 35% of the academic awards were for Associate's degrees or certificates.

More specifically, Kennesaw State University awarded 6,200 degrees and certificates in 2017, the most in the region. Nearly all of these awards were for Bachelor's degrees or higher. Chattahoochee Technical College awarded over 3,100 academic completions, most of which were certificates. Fortis College (Smyrna) awarded a total of 318 occupational skills certifications in industry sectors including healthcare, welding and maintenance technology. Gwinnett College – Marietta Campus awarded 56 certifications with the majority coming from the healthcare industry.

The largest industry sectors in Cobb County included Retail Trade, Healthcare and Technical Services. The best growth over the last five years is Construction with +8,028 jobs. The fastest growing industry in the next five years is expected to be Healthcare/Social Assistance by 2.0% or +4,4344 jobs.

A previous supply-demand assessment conducted during the previous plan year analyzed the number of awards by degree level and compared them to the number of job postings in related occupations. According to this analysis, previously the healthcare professions were awarding too many certificates relative to the number of job openings that require certificates of applicants. In light of the current emergency pandemic we are experiencing a higher demand for healthcare workers. According to BLS the projected growth of jobs in healthcare settings is 18%. However, the demand for home health and personal aides will far outpace the sector's growth, with an

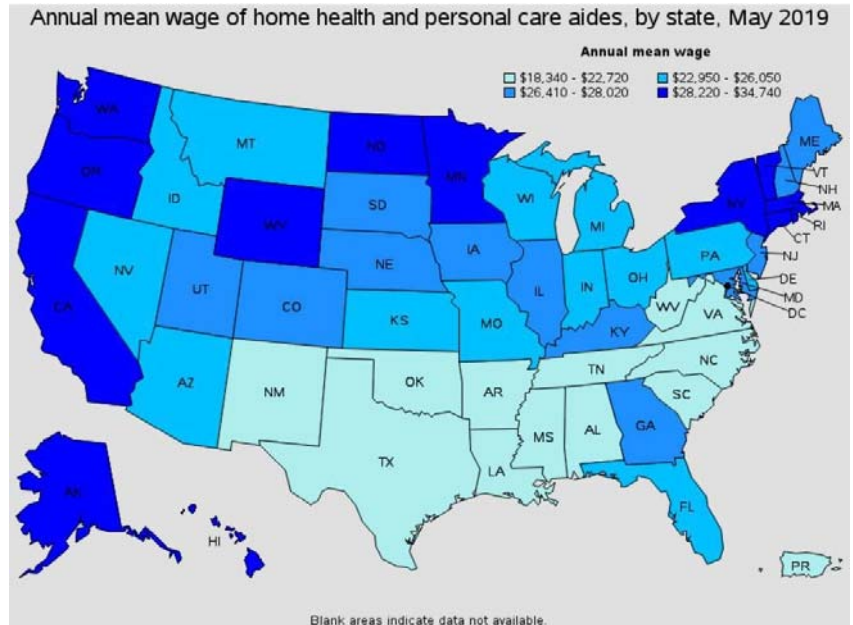
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<sup>10</sup> JobEQ

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

increase of 41% to more than 4 million jobs nationally.<sup>11</sup>

This is evident in WSC's local area as reflected in Cobb County's Five Year Forecast of Top Jobs. While opportunities in the fields with the highest-demand (retail and healthcare) retail requires no additional education and is therefore not impacted by training or education. However, opportunities in the healthcare industry range from the highest level of skilled nurses and



therapists to paraprofessionals, including home health and personal care aides. The largest demand continues to be for positions with the lowest earning potential. As such, challenges can be expected as many of the highest demand healthcare jobs have low earning potential, specifically CNAs, home health and personal aides, paying \$26,410-\$29,020. Lower-skilled positions may not require medical degrees, but they do often require training and a competency test. The region is well-positioned from a provider perspective to meet training needs. However, because of low-earning potential, training institutions can expect enrollment challenges if there is not an intentional effort made to address this issue.

Meeting the skills-gap for low-wage healthcare or other low-wage positions will prove challenging in Cobb County. According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, the annual income needed to afford a one-bedroom is \$38,640 in Cobb County,<sup>12</sup> which is 15% more than the average annual income needed to live in Georgia.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/home-health-aides-and-personal-care-aides.htm>

<sup>12</sup> <https://reports.nihhc.org/oor/georgia>

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

Compare Jurisdictions		
	SELECT JURISDICTION: Georgia	SELECT JURISDICTION: Cobb County
<b>Number of Households</b>		
TOTAL	Georgia	Cobb County
	3,663,104	274,361
RENTER	1,356,332	97,845
PERCENT RENTERS	37%	36%
<b>Housing Wage</b>		
ZERO-BEDROOM	Georgia	Cobb County
	\$15.18	\$18.12
ONE-BEDROOM	\$15.80	\$18.58
TWO-BEDROOM	\$18.42	\$21.27
THREE-BEDROOM	\$24.19	\$27.44
FOUR-BEDROOM	\$29.28	\$33.69
<b>Fair Market Rent</b>		
ZERO-BEDROOM	Georgia	Cobb County
	\$789	\$942
ONE-BEDROOM	\$822	\$966
TWO-BEDROOM	\$958	\$1,106
THREE-BEDROOM	\$1,258	\$1,427
FOUR-BEDROOM	\$1,523	\$1,752
<b>Annual Income Needed to Afford</b>		
ZERO-BEDROOM	Georgia	Cobb County
	\$31,578	\$37,680
ONE-BEDROOM	\$32,861	\$38,640
TWO-BEDROOM	\$38,319	\$44,240
THREE-BEDROOM	\$50,313	\$57,080
FOUR-BEDROOM	\$60,906	\$70,080
<b>Minimum Wage</b>		
MINIMUM WAGE	Georgia	Cobb County
	\$7.25	\$7.25

The fair market rent in Atlanta for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,031, **according to the NLIHC**, citing 2018 data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. To afford that (defining "afford" as not paying more than 30 percent of one's income on housing costs), an Atlanta renter would have to make \$41,240 a year – which is a "housing wage" of \$19.83 an hour.

To better address the skills gap for lower wage employment opportunities, the workforce agencies will need to take a multi-pronged approach. This approach will include working with training institutes to advocate for modifying training curriculums to include multi-certifications. This modification will make normally low-wage earning certifications more attractive as it will increase earnings potential for customers.

#### Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

Additionally, workforce agencies will also need to work with employers and employer associations to bring attention to this critical issue requesting an assessment and an increase in the wages for these positions if we are to meet the employment needs in the region.

While technical skills are still in demand, not much has changed since 2015 as it relates to top skills. According to an analysis of 2015 job postings data, baseline skills and work readiness skills are the most requested by employers. Still today, writing, problem solving, communication, and organizational skills are scarce everywhere. This skills gap represents talents that are not generally covered in traditional training programs, but are critical to employment performance and retention. These skills are in demand across nearly every occupation—and in nearly every occupation

they're being requested far more than expected based on standard position descriptions. Even fields like healthcare, IT and Engineering view writing and soft skills as integral to success.

TOP SKILLS BY 2015 JOB POSTINGS COBB COUNTY	
Customer Service	8,176
Communication Skills	13,567
Writing	6,557
Computer Skills	6,345
Organizational Skills	5,840
Microsoft Excel	4,635
Physical Demand	4,521
Problem Solving	4,299
English	4,147
Microsoft Office	3,732
Detail-Oriented	3,696
Team Work/ Collaboration	3,692
Time Management	3,549
Multi-Tasking	3,321
Planning	3,256

#### Forbes Magazine 2019 Top Skills

<b>Conflict management</b>	<b>Communication skills</b>	<b>Customer Service</b>	<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>
<b>Time management</b>	<b>Stress management</b>	<b>Change Management</b>	<b>Personal Productivity</b>

According to Forbes Magazine 2019 article, "What are the Top Skills for the Future of Work<sup>13</sup>," As presented in the above table, most still relate to "soft skills," such as Communication Skills, Problem Solving, and Teamwork/Collaboration. Several "hard skills" are also frequently requested, including Computer Skills, Microsoft Excel, and Physical Demand.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/adigaskell/2019/02/22/what-are-the-top-10-soft-skills-for-the-future-of-work/#4be1f77c7f1f>



## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

- e. Provide a description of the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economics self-sufficiency.

### VISION

The strategic vision of the Cobb County Workforce Development Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board) is a dynamic, integrated, and responsive workforce system in which businesses are connected with skilled workers and individuals have ready access to career development information, opportunities, and supportive services.

### VALUES

#### Collaboration and Community Involvement

Building relationships, developing partnerships, and leveraging resources are vital to our effectiveness and sustainability.

#### Customer Satisfaction and Providing Valued, Accessible Services

Proactively addressing customers' needs within policy and resource parameters with proven value as a community resource.

#### Relationships with the Business Community

Supporting employers to strengthen the local and regional economy.

#### Lifelong Learning

Promoting the continuous skill and educational development of customers, community and staff to create a culture of learning.

#### Excellence in Service

Continuous improvement validated by meaningful metrics and customer feedback to measure success of services to customer, partners, and stakeholders.

#### Human Resources

Recruiting, retaining and developing Board, staff and partner agency team members to achieve our Board's mission.

### GOALS

Seeking and leveraging opportunities to coordinate and collaborate on a regional level, the Board and WorkSource Cobb will:

- Promote the economic development of the local area and the region by assisting workers in retooling their skills and establishing themselves in viable career pathways
- Effectively market system services to business and individual customers in a regional context
- Maximize creativity and flexibility in providing WIOA allowable services in accordance with established policies and procedures.

#### Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

- Strive to meet and/or exceed negotiated WIOA performance standards.
- Leverage resources and partnerships to create a continuum of workforce development services.
- Provide regular, meaningful opportunities for board development.
- Increase the availability and quality of workforce development opportunities for youth.
- Align services with local and regional economic development and community development strategies.
- Provide quality, courteous and professional career advising, training, and placement services.

**f. Taking into account the analyses described in sections “2. a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.**

The plan period of 2020-2024 has been the continuation of an economic recovery of the local area and the broader Metro-Atlanta Region stemming from the 2010 recession. While the economy has demonstrated ongoing growth over the last 8 years, adding jobs and spurring economic development across the state, the pandemic emergency declared in March, 2020 has brought progress to a screeching halt, with unemployment rates at an all-time high over a 30-day period and expected to climb as the emergency persists impacting social, business and overall economic development around the world. As such, the major gains and marked improvement in unemployment rates made over the last 8 years within the regional workforce areas since the recession are no more.

The full overall impact is yet to be determined. Even still, prior to this emergency, many adults were still struggling to regain prior wage levels and could not find jobs. Additionally, employers were experiencing difficulty in finding applicants for jobs that are open, citing difficulties in both foundational (work ethics) and technical deficiencies of applicants. As a local workforce system, WSC will work to provide solutions for both the demand and supply-side issues while offering highly local solutions with partners in the broader regional context.

An Urban Institute publication (Understanding Local Workforce Systems, March 2016) stated that "local leaders encounter many challenges in building and developing their workforces. There is no single source of information for local leaders and other stakeholders to learn what a local workforce system is and how it can support local workforce priorities. Nor is there only one model for how a local workforce system should operate." Via this plan, Cobb County joins other workforce areas in the metro area in presenting a localized, unique approach for rising to the challenges of the next five years. This approach is built on local strengths, needs, opportunities and relationships in the complex and dynamic Metro-Atlanta region.

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

The Cobb County plan and the regional Metro-Atlanta plan continues to be built on leveraging and coordinating the work of multiple partners and funding sources tied to foundational pillars that include:

- **Sector-Based Strategies** to clarify and address employers' needs on a regional basis within the context of a regional plan with the other workforce areas in Metro Atlanta;
- **Career Pathways** that begin with literacy and foundational workforce skills followed by multiple on-ramps for youth and adults, aimed at precisely-defined needs of employers;
- **Work-Based Learning** opportunities that engage employers as full participants in training, not just end-users of the products of education and training providers; and
- **System Alignment** of partners within the Cobb County and throughout the region to maximize collective impact and present an integrated system to customers that is highly visible, easy to access, and easy to navigate.

### 3. Description of Strategies and Services

Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.

#### a. **How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?**

In alignment with WIOA, WSC envisions a high-performance workforce development system – a seamless system that is results oriented, flexible and continuously improving. Our approach places emphasis on the role of business as a primary customer. As such, strategies are demand-driven in their delivery of services to employers which is value added for the employer, the job seekers and the community as a whole. WSC prioritizes in-demand industries sectors, that have high earning potential and career pathways for future advancement.

The catalyst for expanded employer engagement and in-demand sector strategies is a response to the vision of former Governor Nathan Deal's "High Demand Career Initiative" (HDCI) to identify and understand the workforce needs of Cobb businesses so educational entities, economic and business development entities and workforce development organizations could align programs, curriculum and services to address and support those needs. At program inception, more than 30 Cobb businesses representing five industries participated in focus groups to identify workforce challenges, skills gaps, and opportunities.

#### Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

The University System of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government performed industry, economic and demographic data analysis and assisted in developing a plan to address the partnership priorities garnered through the assessment process:

- Building a World Class College and Career Academy
- Marketing and Communications about Career Options
- Soft Skills
- Sector Partnerships

A governance structure to execute the plan was created with broad involvement from educational institutions, workforce development entities and the business community.

In spite of new leadership at the state level, the HDCI has continued, recognizing that utilizing a demand-driven strategy is a categorical imperative to addressing the skills gap in Georgia. As such, WorkSource Cobb operates under the concept that workforce development is an essential function of the community's overall economic development efforts and embraces the USDOL's guidance for a "Demand-Driven Workforce System". To that end, WorkSource Cobb utilizes an expanded version of their six, key strategies in the DOL Career Pathways Toolkit<sup>14</sup>:

- Build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles
- Utilize data to identify industry sectors and engage employers
- Work with employers, education/training partners, K-12, etc. to design education and training programs
- Identify funding needs and sources and leverage partnerships and resources to support addressing skills gaps and employment needs
- Align policies and programs
- Measure system change and performance

The primary means by which the local board engages employers is through WSC's strong business services team which works closely with employers to assess and understand their needs. They work collaboratively to develop viable solutions that support recruitment, training and retention for addressing the skills gap in Georgia and helps to move individuals into career pathways which promote economic mobility. This demand-drive strategy is strengthened and sustained through

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<sup>14</sup> [https://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/PDF/career\\_pathways\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/PDF/career_pathways_toolkit.pdf)

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

strong partnerships with the Cobb Chamber of Commerce as well as the Cobb County Government Economic Development Division. The WSC Board also plays a key role in strengthening WSC's ability to service employers. Their ongoing participation and engagement is critical to expanding awareness of the resources and services to employers. Strong partnerships with the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, Metro-Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and the Metro-Atlanta Industry Partnership group.

Last but not least, the local workforce area also utilizes and promotes usage of the Georgia Department of Labor's labor exchange service, [employgeorgia.com](http://employgeorgia.com). This website allows job-seekers to post resumes and search for jobs while allowing employers to post available job openings. This online portal allows the workforce board to leverage the resources of the DOL partner and expand its available talent pool for talent sourcing and recruitment for available high-demand industry sectors.

- b. How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area's workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.**

WSC believes that employer engagement is key in meeting local and regional workforce needs. WIOA was designed to support LWDA's in assisting employers with finding skilled workers and enhancing access to critical workforce services. WSC's strategy and services support expanded employer engagement as well as expanded awareness of the multitude of valuable resources offered by the state's One-Stop Centers. This broad array of resources and services allows businesses to rapidly adapt to changes in technology and the marketplace, making them well-positioned and more competitive.

WSC's model is collaborative, flexible, nimble and uniquely designed to help employers achieve their goals. The model specifically targets small to mid-sized businesses (fewer than 500 employees) which account for 99.7% of businesses in the state, according to the GA Dept. of Labor, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2018<sup>15</sup>. WSC provides a broad range of services in collaboration with workforce partners, local chambers of commerce, and education and training institutions. These services and resources include but are not limited to:

### **Business Services Professionals (BSP)**

- BSPs work closely with employers to implement employment strategies that promote economic development through job retention and job creation

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.georgia.org/small-business/learn/quickfacts>

- BSPs foster positive and productive relationships with employers in the region by promoting job training programs, work-based training opportunities, providing access to funding sources, scheduling informative seminars and helping with employment related needs.

#### **Resources and Services and Work-based Training Models**

- Work-based learning models allow employers to receive reimbursement or funding for loss of productivity that often occurs when training or hiring new talent.
- Funding for **On-the-Job Training (OJT)** offers 50%-75% wage reimbursement for eligible new hires. This funding source allows employers to train new hires and allows the participant to engage in productive work, learning new skills and information necessary for full and adequate performance on the job.

OJTs are an attractive employer option for securing new talent that is trained to the employer's specifications. It also supports the employee in acquiring transferable skills that will support their ability to obtain and retain employment.

- Funding for **"Customized Training"** pays 50% of the cost of training. Customized Training supports employers with training in occupational skill training, computer and workplace literacy, etc. Employers can customize the training to meet the needs of their individual business or designed to meet the special needs of a consortium of businesses.
- **Youth and adult "Internships/Paid Work Experience"** can potentially provide 100% of the wages for a participant. WSC utilizes a career pathway approach to work experience (internships). Internships are aligned with the customer's career goals. Employers provide planned, structured learning experience in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experiences may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate. A work experience may take place in the private for-profit sector, non-profit sector, or public sector. Work experiences must include academic and occupational education.

Businesses can partner in improving the skills of the workforce by offering short-term work assignments, job shadowing or internships. These opportunities are designed to build work maturity skills and orient individuals to a specific occupation to assist them in determining a career choice. Although the opportunities are designed to improve individual skills, the business can use the opportunity to attract new or returning entrants to the labor market to careers in their field of business.

- **Apprenticeship** pays for up to (\$8,000) for Registered Apprenticeships. This model is an industry-driven model that combines on-the-job learning with job-related instruction. An “earn and learn” model, apprentices are employed and earn wages from the first day on the job. A flexible training strategy that can be customized to meet the needs of any business. Apprenticeships are no longer limited to skilled trades, but can include careers in health care, information technology, transportation, and energy, etc. to help meet the needs for qualified workers. Using apprenticeship as a workforce strategy contributes to higher performance outcomes in employment, retention, earnings, and credential attainment.
- **Rapid Response support**
- **Free online job postings**
- **Talent Recruitment and Sourcing assistance**
- **Access and engagement in the full-array of government resources and services that support employer needs.**
- **Free and low-cost job fair participation**
- **Candidate screening and assessment assistance**
- **Meeting and training room space**
- **Workshops for human resources (HR) professionals and small business owners**
- **Access to the Mobile Career Center, a state-of-the-art, fully accessible computer lab.**

A primary vehicle for engaging Cobb County employers to shape key elements of this plan has been the Board's involvement with Cobb Chamber of Commerce's Cobb Workforce Partnership initiative in 2015. WSC is still playing a key role in the development of the 2020 Workforce Partnership Study, currently under development. The report lays out a blueprint for the next five years, coinciding with the time frame of this WIOA local plan. The WSC CEO sits on the steering committee of the Cobb Chamber overseeing and informing the information in study. This report is a roadmap for workforce development efforts in Cobb. It identifies areas where the county is strong and also areas where there is more work to do. We believe that this initiative will strengthen our local talent pool for all Cobb businesses.

Additionally, WSC is a member of the Cobb Workforce Partnership which further strengthens our ability to serve employers. The Partnership addresses current and future workforce needs and concerns. More specifically, the goal of the initiative is to have industry inform the workforce educational supply chain (programs, curriculum, training, and resources) in Cobb County. Utilizing a collaborative approach, the Partnership brings together leaders from the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, K–12 educational systems, postsecondary education institutions, and other stakeholders to learn from companies in some key industry sectors about their current workforce concerns and future needs. The ultimate goal is to establish ongoing partnerships and communication to make continual improvements to the talent supply chain in the county.

**c. How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?**

The most notable alignment with economic development is the strong coordination between WorkSource Cobb and the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. The WSC Board includes the Chief Operating Officer of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. WorkSource Cobb is present at the Chamber as a trusted and engaged partner, sitting on various industry councils including but not limited to Construction Trades Industry Council, Healthcare and Biotech Industry Council, Technology Industry Council and the Advanced Manufacturing Industry Council.

Further engagement in the Cobb Chamber includes, membership in the Cobb Workforce Partnership (CWF). CWF is a coalition of both Cobb County and Marietta City Schools, Kennesaw State University, Chattahoochee Technical College, Georgia Highlands College, Life University, CobbWorks, and over 30 Cobb businesses—as a unified commitment to identify and address the workforce needs of our business community and to establish a pipeline of job-ready workers in Cobb. The vision of CWF is that every Cobb employer has an opportunity to educate and train their future workforce in partnership with educators as early as K-12, and every Cobb student is connected with career pathway opportunities in our community through every level of their educational track.

The Cobb Workforce Partnership initiative envisions a future where the following conditions exist:

- Industry and education are optimally connected and aligned.
- More employers have the workforce they need locally.
- Students and the underemployed/unemployed are more engaged and focused on a career path.
- A more defined workforce pipeline exists in Cobb County, and partners are aligned to coordinate and secure resources.
- An organizational structure is in place to facilitate the alignment of Cobb's business needs and workforce supply.
- The education systems respond quickly to the changing needs of employers and the skills they need.
- Parents, students, and teachers are more informed about career paths and the training and education required.



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- Employers understand the changing needs and work style of the future workforce.
- Residents of Cobb County know where to go (e.g. resources, programs, and assistance) for career advice and training, and residents are more workforce ready/employable or able to start their own enterprises.

WorkSource Cobb serves to meet the needs of economic development in multiple ways: researching on workforce availability; training to address skill gaps; foundational skills development for all jobs in the county; and increasing the access to post-secondary credentials for youths and adults to increase the overall educational attainment level of the county. WSC's presence and participation at these key prospect meetings and groups strengthens our ability to inform and coordinate workforce development programs and economic development. It also creates the opportunity to present resources and services available to prospects along with data on access to employees customized to the prospect's needs.

In addition to the strong partnership with the local chamber, organized labor representatives serve on the LWDB. WSC works closely with its local board to spur economic development and develop strategies that meet the talent needs of its local area. The local area is committed to implementing and utilizing mutually-beneficial economic/workforce development options promoted under the WIOA as appropriate to continue to strengthen our ability to improve the quality of life for Cobb employers and residents.

### **Strengthen Linkages**

Utilizing a “No-Wrong Door” approach, WSC provides easy access for customers who are in of connecting with service(s). Our service delivery model is integrated, streamlined, effective and seamless. The system integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to program services. This includes core programs, as well as other required and optional partners identified in WIOA. Access to the services including intake and registration, eligibility determination (if applicable), enrollment in the program, and referral to program is made available on-site or through direct linkage:

#### ***Title I Programs***

- Programs authorized under Title I of the WIOA.
  - Adult Program
  - Dislocated Worker Program
  - Youth Program
  - Job Corps

***Title II Programs***

- Adult education and literacy  
(AEFLA) activities authorized under Title II of the WIOA.

***Title III Programs***

- Wagner-Peyser Act Program

***Title IV Program***

- Vocational Rehabilitation  
(Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Other than Section 112 or Part C).

***Title V Program***

- AARP  
Activities authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965

***Carl D. Perkins Act programs (post-secondary)***

- Career and technical education programs at the post-secondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

***Veterans Services***

- Veterans Services
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

***Unemployment Insurance***

- Unemployment Insurance  
Programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws Programs authorized under Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007.

To further strengthen our ability to service customers, most recently, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency, WSC developed a virtual service delivery model to mitigate barriers to accessing services during the economic shut-down period. Customers can now access WIOA services through:

- Online Orientation
- Online Applications/Uploads
- Online Chat System to answer questions virtually
- Online TABE (pending)

This model, originally envisioned by WIOA is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of our local and regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for: employment, education, training, and supportive services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market; particularly those with barriers to employment.

**No Wrong Door** supports our organizational goals of moving customers to economic self-sufficiency by providing a high-quality One-Stop center with an integrated service delivery model that connects customers (individuals and employers) with a full range of services available in their communities whether they are looking to find jobs, build basic educational or occupational skills, earn a post-secondary certificate or degree, obtain guidance on how to make career choices or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers. WSC provides a variety of entry points and further strengthens those entry points through MOUs with inclusion and referral practices and Infrastructure Funding Agreements.

### **Unemployment Insurance (UI)**

More specifically as it relates to UI working in partnership with GDOL, as the provider of Wagner-Peyser (WP) services, GDOL provides comprehensive administration of UI claims on-site within the One-Stop through a GDOL staff member daily along with providing referrals to core partners both online and in-person. WSC and GDOL representatives meet monthly as part of an onsite partner group to work together to review data, discuss challenges and develop collaborative solutions to better service customers. Led by the WSC One-Stop Operator, ongoing efforts are made to strengthen linkages between all the partners including the UI system.

Due to social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency, resulting in over 800,000 unemployment claims in Georgia, WSC and UI will develop expanded strategies that identify individuals who are likely to exhaust their UI benefits and require them to come to the Workforce Development Center for job search assistance. Customers would be provided with an orientation of services and given an initial assessment to determine specific needs. Based on their particular circumstances, customers may be referred to additional services and resources, including job search workshops, staff-assisted job search activities, partner programs, and/or training services. This change may help unemployed individuals return to work before their benefits are depleted. We expect that the impact of this emergency will be felt well past 2022.

#### **4. Regional Service Delivery**

Describe how the region will address the items listed below.

- a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements.**

#### **SEE REGIONAL PLAN FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON REGIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

The Board and WorkSource Cobb are committed to increased levels of regional planning and coordination of service delivery strategies to provide increased visibility of services and increased ease of access for employers and job seekers in the Metro-Atlanta region. The WorkSource Cobb CEO actively participates in monthly meetings of workforce directors of the Metro Atlanta region.

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The five workforce boards (WorkSource Cobb, Atlanta, Fulton, DeKalb and ARC) work collaboratively as members of Atlanta CareerRise and Metro-Atlanta Industry Partnership Group to address regional issues and develop collaborative solutions.

At the time of the drafting of this plan, the regional plan has not been completed. We expect that similar to the 2016-2020 regional plan, the plan will continue with areas of collaboration and key priorities addressed. As of today, many of the key priorities and areas of collaboration identified in the 2016-2020 plan have been addressed, updates below. However, there are still several areas that require continual and intentional approaches to move the needle. Some of those areas include, but are not limited to:

- Sharing best practices and resources (materials, curricula, procurement templates, contract templates, evaluation information, etc.)
- Enhancing communications among workforce areas in the region (monthly meetings in the short term, identification of key issues, sharing best practices among staff at both the planning level and operations level)
- Collaboration for Business Outreach and Services (single points of contact for regional employers, decision tree for providing services, industry specialists shared regionally, coordinated education of regional partners and stakeholders).

Cobb County recognizes the value of excellence in regional planning combined with excellence in local delivery of services and intends to be a full participant in implementing regional priorities aimed at advancing customer services. The Regional Plan will identify priorities for joint action on coordinating services for job seekers, including: continuing to build on the current Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) structure which now includes all five workforce boards: City of Atlanta, Cobb, DeKalb, ARC and Fulton; working systematically to standardize contract formats and templates; standardizing assessment instruments and job readiness curricula; and developing new technology for sharing data within the region. Additional coordination under the Regional Plan will address potential opportunities for expanded access to programs and services on a region-wide basis. This will be accomplished via collaboration in areas such as site selection for full-service centers and the network of access points, and via development of career pathways with education and training partners on a region-wide basis.

Further regional strategies currently underway are the leveraging of resources to support strategies that benefit the region. Most recently, the boards signed MOUs to support an expanded regional outreach campaign which was recently updated in response to the pandemic emergency.

The plan considers the emerging needs of customers as they experience the social and economic impacts of the emergency. The plan will:

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- Place less emphasis on certification/credentials training and more on the resources (including WorkSource training and job readiness workshops)
- Shifting our call-to-action; from 'sign up' or 'come in' to 'get the resources you need to find the right job'
- More deliberate coordination between/across Areas.
- More targeted digital outreach
- Utilize **ATLWorks.org** as the central portal (website) to access any of the (5) workforce boards driving people to sign-up or to visit a career resource center
- Make expanded use of social media campaigns
- Coordinate messages by medium, area, and responsibility. Then we would share content as appropriate and where it makes sense supplement area efforts.
- Develop employer videos to support employer engagement in workforce resources and services.
- Develop collateral materials to deliver common messages across the region.

While ARC is leading the efforts of the outreach campaign, each of the LWDAs are working closely to inform strategies, review data and develop solutions to challenges. Furthermore, each LWDA is committed to contributing \$50K to support this ongoing outreach effort.

**b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs. (if applicable)**

Currently, the workforce area partners are working toward greater efficiencies in a three-stage process: 1. Each local area works to create more efficient use of funds from local partners via new Resource Sharing Agreements under new state guidelines tied to USDOL final regulations; 2. Regional partners identify areas where one partner can take the lead on a particular issue or delivery structure and share with the other partners; 3. Regional partners will identify any costs that might be more effectively covered by pooling of administrative and/or program funds.

**c. Describe plans for coordination of eligibility documentation and participant outreach.**

Further regional service delivery strategies currently underway include the Human Centered Design (HCD) project. The five workforce boards in collaboration with Atlanta CareerRise are utilizing a human-centered design framework for understanding challenges and developing effective solutions for customers who utilize the workforce programs. This approach removes barriers between traditional service delivery models and actual service recipients. It places stakeholders -who are the end users of services, programs and initiatives- at the center of the solution design process and aims to more authentically address the root causes of customer/workforce issues.

The goal of the project is to design a standardized service delivery model across the five workforce boards that improves access to services and, in turn, create better outcomes for customers.

This process is coupled with viewing service delivery through a racial and equity lens, utilizing data to understand how services are currently being delivered and develop strategies that address challenges. The standardized service delivery model will include but not be limited to the following:

- Eligibility and Intake processes
- WIOA Orientations
- Standardized Applications
- Standardized Policies (as applicable)
- Regional Outreach plans

**d. Describe plans for coordination of work-based-learning contracts such as OJT, IWT, CT, and Apprenticeship.**

**Bachelors of Nursing Scholars Program**

There has been ongoing discussion and coordination around developing work-based learning contracts such as (OJT, IWT, CT and Apprenticeship) amongst the five regional workforce boards. The newest project includes development of a MOU between the boards to support a Bachelors of Nursing (BSN) Incumbent Worker Pilot Program in Metro Atlanta. Each workforce board will fund the training of Eligible Employers' Incumbent Workers for the purpose of assisting such employees in obtaining the skills necessary to ensure their continued employment and to prevent layoffs.

The five boards understand the value that coordination of employer-based project bring to region and look forward to expounding upon this strategy moving forward. Regional collaboration supports economic and social mobility as well as allows each LWDA to reduce necessary expenditures through cost-sharing with the other local agencies, leverage available necessary skills within the participating LWDA to save potential procurement costs and improve customer outcomes through a broader service reach

**5. Sector Strategy Development**

Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.

**a. Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development**

Sector strategies are an essential component of the regional strategy for the five workforce boards. Guided by TCSG's five goals and vision of creating a unified public workforce system, the regional

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development of sector strategies further support integration across core partners and partners beyond those. These partnerships, which are composed of a diverse group of stakeholders. Including but not limited to employers, community and economic development, K-12 Education, Adult Education, regional workforce agencies, human service organization, Community Based



Organizations (CBO), etc. These partnerships work collectively to design and implement practices, policies and programs that support moving the needle in affecting systems change. Guided by industry and evidenced based data, the sector strategies are founded on a shared regional vision of building a skilled workforce.

**b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.**

While the full array of Sector Strategies will be more clearly outlined within the Regional Plan, current sector strategies for in-demand industry sectors include:

**Convener: WorkSource Metro Atlanta-** WorkSource Metro Atlanta is composed of five boards: WorkSource Atlanta, WorkSource Cobb, WorkSource DeKalb, WorkSource Fulton, and WorkSource Atlanta Regional. The boards work collaboratively to develop strategies to meet the training and educational needs of individuals and businesses' workforce needs within the region in effort of creating a well-trained workforce that will position the region to compete in a rapidly changing global economy

**Atlanta CareerRise** - A convener for regional sector strategy development for WSC is Atlanta CareerRise. Atlanta CareerRise is a regional funder collaborative, bringing together local funders around a shared strategic vision for workforce development in a 13-county region. By pooling

and aligning resources from philanthropic, corporate, public and other funders in an investment strategy to achieve its vision, the collaborative is a catalyst to create sectoral workforce partnerships, train workers, and improve workforce practices<sup>16</sup>. In collaboration with the five (5) workforce boards (Cobb, Atlanta, Fulton, DeKalb and ARC) Atlanta CareerRise provides space and technical support for **monthly meetings** as well as has a standing agenda item on the Monthly Director's Meeting Agenda. Utilizing a regional sector strategy approach **coupled with** economic and labor market information, career pathways and competency models the consortium works



collaboratively with Atlanta CareerRise to identify resources, roles and responsibilities in responding to regional needs in high-demand industries, (Healthcare Information Technology, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, Construction and skilled trades and Healthcare and Bioscience.) to help drive skill-based initiatives.

**Convener: Cobb Chamber** - Cobb Workforce Partnership **meets monthly** to further strengthen the public workforce system's alignment and responsiveness to the business community supporting the creation of a strong statewide system by investing integrated strategies. The Partnership addresses current and future workforce needs and concerns. More specifically, the goal of the initiative is to have industry inform the workforce educational supply chain (programs, curriculum, training, and resources) in Cobb County. Utilizing a collaborative approach, the Partnership brings together leaders from the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, K-12 educational systems, postsecondary education institutions, and other stakeholders to learn from companies in some key industry sectors about their current workforce concerns and future needs. The ultimate goal is to establish ongoing partnerships and communication to make continual improvements to the talent supply chain in the county.

**Convener: Metro Atlanta Exchange for Workforce Solutions (MAX)** MAX was launched in December of 2014 by a team of regional leaders who recognized that increased collaboration across the Atlanta region's workforce development arena empowers all. MAX serves as a convener and connector for the Atlanta region's workforce development community. The organization makes an intentional effort to convene a broad array of workforce system groups together. MAX connects with over 1,000 stakeholders representing service providers, educational entities, intermediaries, employers, and funders. MAX is a catalyst for empowering and aligning workforce development efforts to meet the needs that employers have for a ready workforce<sup>17</sup> in an effort sparking collaboration and bringing awareness to the vast amount of resources and services available in the workforce ecosystem. Membership in this group positively influences workforce efforts and collective impacts through stronger cohesiveness.

**SEE REGIONAL PLAN SECTION FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SECTOR STRATEGIES**

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.atlantacareerrise.org/aboutus.asp>

<sup>17</sup> <http://metroatlantaexchange.org/about-max/>



- c. **Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.**

**Atlanta CareerRise** utilizes a demand-driven approach to identify industry sectors. Working in collaboration among diverse workforce service providers throughout the community, including co-founding MAX, the Metro Atlanta eXchange, for Workforce Solutions to address the needs of both employers and works. With a high focus on serving low wage individuals to support moving them to economic self-sufficiency, the organization convenes a broad range of partners with common workforce goals, develops and supports demand-driven partnerships and identifies and disseminates practices that improves results.

**Cobb Workforce Partnership Steering Committee** used the data and findings gathered from five high-demand industry sector meetings to establish the project themes and priorities. The group focused on identifying and prioritizing short-term and long-term opportunities to help address the issues and workforce needs. Across the five high-demand industry groups, several common themes and opportunities emerged.

**SEE REGIONAL PLAN SECTION FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SECTOR STRATEGIES**

- d. **Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:**

- i. Participating employers;
- ii. Target occupations;
- iii. Training programs; and
- iv. Target Populations.

**SEE REGIONAL PLAN SECTION FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SECTOR STRATEGIES**

- e. **Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.**

An ongoing key feature of the Metro Atlanta Regional Plan is to continue to utilize data to identify existing and emerging industry sectors where coordination of efforts can be value-added to provide enhanced customer services through leveraging resources and intentional strategies for employers on a region-wide basis. The Boards will work together to identify models of sector-based collaboration that already exist, develop a template for expansion into other sectors, and identify workforce areas that can provide leadership on key sectors.

6. **Description of the One-Stop Delivery System**

Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

**a. Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and job seekers**

The Board has developed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU, serves as the vehicle to specify minimum services to be provided by partners via the one-stop service delivery system. The MOU includes an Infrastructure Funding Agreement which requires all core partners to financially contribute to the one-stop system and participate by having a physical presence or a direct linkage connection. Via these agreements, the Board establishes performance expectations and receives regular monitoring reports from the Board's staff related to achievement of goals.

The WorkSource Cobb One-Stop Operator is IN THE DOOR, LLC, a private, competitively procured company. Supported by the center operations manager, the operator has responsibility for day-to-day operations of the facility, partner service coordination and maintenance of the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), ensuring quality customer service by partner and contractor staff, and community outreach regarding the services available at the One-Stop and via partners in the system. The Operations Manager also serves as the Equal Opportunity Officer for the Center.

A new online survey through Survey Monkey will be launched in May 2020. The survey will be used to assess needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers. This new system has been upgraded from the original survey card and paper processes. Staff will continue to actively encourage customers' completion of the survey prior to exiting the center. All participants of the myriad of workshops conducted at the resource center will also complete standardized electronic evaluations. Customer responses will be tabulated on a monthly basis and will be used to identify areas of improvement for staff training and service delivery purposes. Customers can highlight positive experience with a specific staff member through a Way2Go comment card. The cards are available in the career resource center for customers to fill out voluntarily.

- b. Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

WorkSource Cobb has transitioned to the WIOA streamlined approach for delivering career and training services with access, as needed for skills development, tied to a Career Pathways structure. A wide range of services are available to the public at the **Comprehensive One-Stop Center** located at:

**WorkSource Cobb**  
Workforce Development Center  
463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 100  
Marietta, GA 30060

The comprehensive One-Stop provides job seekers and employers access to programs, services, and activities of all One-Stop partners, including but not limited to:

- Career services.
- Training services.
- A wide range of employer services
- Workforce and labor market information.
- Access to programs and activities carried out by One-Stop partners, including Wagner-Peyser employment services.

A primary feature of the WorkSource Cobb service delivery strategy is the provision of comprehensive self-service resources to customers. Customers may utilize the resource area at the WorkSource Cobb Workforce Development Center and the GDOL Career Center much like they use a public library. Whereas, a customer may visit a library and use an array of computers, programs, and resource materials, they use the workforce centers for job search, skill development, and career development functions. Similarly, WorkSource Cobb coordinates with many other local community-based organizations that have similar resources in their facilities. WorkSource Cobb has moved to a self-managed application process with all application forms and supporting documents available on its website. This has eliminated customers waiting to attend an initial information session and has streamlined the eligibility and career advising processes.

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The comprehensive One-Stop also provides customers access to all core partners and others. These partners are represented at the comprehensive site physically or via direct linkage. Access to services are clearly defined in the Memorandum of Understanding between each partner. Direct linkage is appropriately defined as:

*“...Direct connection at the One-Stop, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time web-based communication technology, to a program staff member who can provide program information or services to the customer.”*

Partners work collaboratively to identify and understand customer needs, provide intake and eligibility processes, share information as much as policies allow and create a seamless system that strengthens access to all programs and services for which an applicant may qualify. Organizations without a regular presence at the One Stop can facilitate group information sessions and/or orientations to provide access to information and services offered by their organization. Customers inquiring about those services are directed to the assigned direct linkage workspace. For example, vocational rehabilitation services are a direct linkage partner and do not have staff located at the One-Stop. In cases where a customer needs to complete an application or inquiries about specific services offered vocational rehabilitation, they are given information on the application process with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency and directed to the workspace to contact the agency while at the center. The same example applies to individuals identified as veterans with potential services available due to their veteran status. WSC operates in a space of continuous improvement, as such we are working in collaboration with our partners identify improved processes for connecting customers to services.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic emergency and social distancing requirements, as an essential service organization, WorkSource Cobb has implemented a new service delivery model. **Virtual Services** and resources to reduce any interruption in services during, specifically during the “Shelter-in-Place Order. WSC believes this new service delivery model will become a permanent part of their new “new normal” as it enhances service delivery strategies, by expanding access to customers who may not normally visit the One Stop, this includes both jobseekers and employers.

**Virtual Services** have been implemented to include: (1) training application processes have been executed to allows customers the ability to take pictures of required documents with their smart phones and upload them directly to VOS for process; (2) job search assistance; which provides customers access one-on-one services (receive job leads and announcements) via phone, email or video chat; (3) online workshops, (4) social media for increased outreach, and (5) business

services via video chat. These virtual services will be added to the one-stop system service delivery design beyond the emergency.

As of 2019, WSC's local area population was over (760,141) over 345 sq. miles. Because of limited public transportation access in our local area and to ensure the broadest access to services, WSC operates several Affiliate and Specialized Sites within its service delivery area. The REACT program and the Juvenile Service programs are specialized sites, targeting customers in need of services who are participants within the Cobb County Accountability Courts. This program is a collaboration between the WSC the Cobb County accountability courts.

- Drug Treatment Court
- Family Dependency Treatment Court
- Cobb County Mental Health
- Veterans Treatment Court
- Parental Accountability Court

The Cobb County Courts have a successful history of implementing treatment-based and juvenile strategies addressing targeted offender populations.

The WSC REACT and Juvenile Service program provide needed workforce development and employment services to the both accountability court service models (youth and adult). REACT and youth staff establish direct relationships with pre-adjudicated customers who have been referred by the court. Participants work with a WSC Career Training Advisor to:

- Receive GED testing/literacy program assistance
- Receive Career Counseling/Coaching
- Develop resumes
- Practice interview skills
- Complete WIOA intake and eligibility process
- Enroll in education/training
- Receive information on the broad array of services via the One-Stop
- Participate in work-based learning activities
- Conduct job search
- Identify and assist with employment placement.

Career Training Advisors also work to identify employers with talent needs to match program participants with the employment opportunities.

To further strengthen access for customers in our local area, WSC operates a Mobile Career Center (MCC). The Mobile Career Center is a state-of-the-art, fully accessible, computer lab on wheels, an Affiliate Site. Customer are provided free access to:

- Computer stations for résumé writing and job search
- High-speed satellite Internet connection for online job searching
- Printer services
- Résumé and cover letter review
- Resource and research materials
- Fully accessible ADA workstation with movable table and auxiliary equipment

Using Cobb County's Public Library system as the primary access point for the Mobile Career Center, the MCC develops and posts a schedule of service at each library through-out Cobb County and via the WSC website along with leaving outreach materials for distribution at each location. The MCC is also available for special outreach in targeted neighborhoods and in response to large hiring or layoff events in the county.

- c. **Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and how the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.**

Serving individuals with disabilities is a key part of the Board's service delivery design and a priority for assuring access to services for all applicants of the system. Designated staff members serve as advocates for customers with disabilities and act as liaisons with partner agencies, including, the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA).

The WorkSource Cobb staff and all service providers are required to attend training on accommodating customers with disabilities via a web-course provided by the ADA Technical Assistance Center. Staff and service providers are trained at the onset of their contract on equal opportunity laws and regulations. The Equal Opportunity Officer (EOO) provides the training to staff and partners annually. The Equal Opportunity Officer maintains a schedule to track those attending training. The One-Stop Operator, through the Workforce Partners' Council, coordinates with the members of the council to provide community initiatives to promote disability awareness. These events target community organizations, core partners, businesses, and staff to promote education and awareness of available resources and services, knowledge of laws and regulations, and how-to knowledge to appropriately service individuals with disabilities.

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The comprehensive one-stop center provides push-button door access into the facility and restrooms, and also has ADA-accessible workstations. The one-stop center also provides accessibility tools and applications on its computer workstations. Additional auxiliary aides are available upon request. Furthermore, WSC's MCC possesses a fully accessible ADA workstation with a movable table and auxiliary equipment.

**d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.**

Cobb County has one comprehensive site.

WorkSource Cobb is the designated One-Stop for Cobb County and a partner of the American Job Center; certified as the comprehensive site. Along with the One-Stop Operator, the following core partners maintain a physical presence at the comprehensive one-stop site: Georgia Department of Labor, AARP, Job Corps, and Cobb Adult Education Center. The following core partner provide services through direct linkage and are not physically located at the one-stop: Cobb County CDBG Program, Chattahoochee Technical College, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. These partner locations are designated as affiliate one-stop sites.

<b>Comprehensive One-Stop Site</b>	<b>Major Services Provided by Each Partner</b>
WorkSource Cobb Workforce Development Center 463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 100 Marietta, Georgia 30060 770-528-4300 (O) 770-528-4302 (F) information@cobbworks.org	Provides career counseling services, training and education financial assistance, business services, and connection to employment opportunities and community resources. WSC provides these services utilizing federal funding authorized by WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Programs, Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs, & Programs authorized under Second Chance Act of 2007.
<b>Partners located at Comprehensive Site</b>	<b>Major Services Provided by Each Partner</b>
One-Stop Operator (IN THE DOOR, LLC)	Provides day-to-day operations of the facility, partner service coordination and maintenance of the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), ensuring quality customer service by partner and contractor staff, and community outreach regarding the services available at the One-Stop and via partners in the system.

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AARP	Title V of the Older Americans Act / Senior Community Service Employment program. The mission of the AARP Foundation SCSEP is to provide temporary job training and placement for people who are unemployed, age 55 or older with limited economic resources, and to provide employers with trained, motivated, mature workers. AARP Foundation SCSEP provides opportunities for eligible seniors to obtain new job knowledge and training in a community services/ non-profit organization, federal, state, county or city organizations for 18 hours per week at the prevailing minimum wage.
Cobb Adult Education Center	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program
Georgia Department of Labor	Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services, Trade Adjustment Assistance activities, Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs, Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws.
Job Corps	WIOA Title I Job Corps. program
<b>Partners Providing Service through Direct Linkage</b>	<b>Major Services Provided by Each Partner</b>
Chattahoochee Technical College	Career and technical education (CTE) post-secondary programs that lead towards associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education Act of 2006
Cobb County CDBG Program	CSBG Program HUD Social Service Program
Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency	Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program services to individuals with disabilities to assist with gaining employment.
<b>Additional Designated Affiliate Sites</b>	<b>Major Services Provided by Each Partner</b>
Cobb County Accountability Courts	WSC provides career and educational services to the court ordered programs (Veteran, Drug, Mental Health, Family/Child Support, DUI).
Mobile Career Center	WSC provides services throughout the county through a partnership with library systems. The mobile career center provides career services, job readiness workshops, resources and tools for job seekers and businesses.

Additional community partners servicing Cobb County by providing career services not funded by WIOA:

- The Center for Family Resources, Inc.
- MUST Ministries
- Georgia Department of Community Supervision
- Tommy Nobis Center
- Cobb County Public Libraries



- The EDGE Connection
- Cobb Douglas Community Services Board
- Goodwill of North Georgia

**d. Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.**

In The Door, LLC was selected as the One-Stop Operator beginning July 1, 2017. The WIOA core partners provide oversight in conjunction with a staff representative. The Board intends to follow the state issuance of the final WIOA regulations to create appropriate separation of roles for the local procurement process. The Board prepares a Request for Proposals (RFP) for release in Spring 2020 for an anticipated release date of May 2020. The Board will (1) research the market by requesting information from potential proposers, (2) update, as needed, its current procurement instrument that clearly identifies our specific service needs, (3) carefully evaluate the responses received, including cost, price and analyses and (4) select an Operator to begin services effective July 1, 2020.

In keeping with our efforts to streamline processes and institute a regional approach for workforce services, the Board will work collaboratively with our counterparts from the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, DeKalb County, and Atlanta Regional Council (ARC) to identify possible methods to minimize the costs related to procurement, such as cooperatively interviewing potential vendors prior to release of the RFP and/or potentially sharing a common RFP and evaluation tool.

Technical College Systems of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development continues to provide Workforce Implementation Guidance and technical assistance to aide LWDA's with One-Stop Operator Procurement. The Board, per state guidance, will set: standards for the one-stop operator, evaluation criteria for selection and will work with other workforce areas in the region to create regional consistency.

**7. Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts**

Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under Title I.

While WorkSource Cobb/CobbWorks, Inc. is a non-profit entity in the State of Georgia with federal 501(c)(3) tax status, the organization is supported by the Cobb County Government for financial management and administrative procedures. Under this cooperative agreement between WorkSource Cobb and the Cobb County Government, the competitive procurement process adheres to the standards of Cobb County Government for the award of any grants or contracts.

WorkSource Cobb complies with the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments (2 CFR 200). The Agency also complies with the Technical College Systems of Georgia's., Office of Workforce Development (OWD) procurement guidelines per Section 2.2 of the Department's Policy Manual and with applicable Workforce Implementation Guidance (WIG) letters.

Competitive procurement is utilized for the acquisition of needed services by third parties. In this process, the Workforce Development Board authorizes the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) which describes what services are needed and the parameters of the engagement. The process to collect bids includes the following: 1) a bidders list of interested vendors is developed and maintained; 2) a bid announcement is distributed to the bidders list, advertised in the local newspaper in the legal section, and posted on WorkSource Cobb's website; 3) a bidders' conference is held to provide an overview and allow for a question and answer session; 4) all questions and responses from the bidders' conference are posted on WorkSource Cobb's website and shared with all those in attendance; 5) bids are accepted and tracked utilizing a bid receiver sheet to document the date, time and who received the document. All bids are accepted sealed and are not opened until the submission deadline has been met. Documentation of the bidders list, the legal notice, the bidders' conference, and accepted bids are maintained in a file for review as needed. Proposals are evaluated for both responsiveness and competitiveness. Responsiveness refers to whether the minimum conditions of the RFP were met by the proposer; competitiveness addresses the quality and appropriateness of the proposed services as specified by the desired scope of work. An assigned staff is responsible for opening contents of each submitted proposal and distributing the proposals to the review committee. Staff and relevant board members evaluate and score the proposals using an established rubric. Board committees are utilized as appropriate; for example, the youth committee will participate in the review of youth services proposals while the business services committee will review work-based learning proposals.

### **8. EEO and Grievance Procedures**

Provide a description of local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

The Board maintains a designated Equal Opportunity Officer who reports directly to the CEO. The EO Officer is responsible for coordinating regular staff training related to EO compliance as well as, monitoring and investigating activities, complaints, and sub recipients and bringing issues to resolution. Additionally, the EO Officer monitors data collection to ensure compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements of WIOA, as well as, provides this information to managers for review and strategy adjustment.

Service providers, partners and contractors are required to adhere to the policies and procedures, as described in this section, to ensure that all of Cobb County's residents have access to the full range of workforce development resources available to them.

### **General Grievances**

General grievances are defined as complaints about customer service, working conditions, wages, work assignments, etc., that arise in connection with WIOA Title I funded programs; operated by WIOA recipients including service providers, eligible training providers, one-stop partners and other contractors. A customer complaint poster is located in the lobby of the Resource Center to provide customers with contact information if they are dissatisfied with services, for any reason, while utilizing the Resource Center. All customers, upon their first initial visit to the workforce development center, receive the grievance and complaint policy and general grievance form as a part of the new customer registration packet. The grievance and complaint process is outlined in the policy document, and customers receive a copy of the policy and general grievance form upon completion of registration for services. Any customer may attempt to resolve all issues of unfair treatment by working with the appropriate manager and/or supervisor, staff member, service provider or one-stop partner involved, informally; prior to a written grievance being filed. Any customer wishing to file a grievance must complete the general grievance form or submit a written grievance. All grievances are forwarded to the President/CEO for review, resolution, and determination. The President/CEO may designate the Operations Manager to investigate the grievance and make a recommendation for determination. A determination letter is issued within 60 days. If a customer is not satisfied with the determination, an appeal can be filed with the Compliance Director at the Technical College Systems of Georgia (TCSG), Office of Workforce Development (OWD) within 60 days of the date of decision. Upon completion of the investigation of the appeal, a final determination letter will be issued within 60 days of the appeals request by the OWD.

### **Discrimination Complaints**

Discrimination complaints must be submitted in writing to the Equal Opportunity Officer, who serves as the One-Stop Operations Manager. Only complaints submitted in writing will be investigated. Customers have 180-days from the date of the incident to file a complaint. A determination letter is issued within 90-days of the date of the complaint. If the complainant is dissatisfied with WorkSource Cobb/Cobb Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) resolution of his or her equal opportunity complaint, the complainant may file a complaint with TCSG/OWD. Such complaints must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date of Notice of Final Action issued by WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's proposed resolution.

**Updated EEO procedures and forms are provided as Attachments 5 and 6.**



## LOCAL BOARDS AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

### 1. Local Boards

Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.

**a. Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (§ 679.320(g))**

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) for the State of Georgia's Local Workforce Investment Area 4 (Cobb County), is the Cobb County Workforce Development Board (the Board). The Board was originally created under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and was reconfigured to comply with all requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014. The Board, in partnership with Cobb County Government, governs the local workforce development system by ensuring that services provided by CobbWorks Inc. and partners are: comprehensive, fiscally responsible, integrated, effective, responsive, and participant focused. The Board is comprised of 23 individuals representing: business, education, economic development, housing, senior community service, vocational rehabilitation, organized labor, and community-based and social services organizations. In accordance with state law, the chief local elected official, the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, appoints members of the Board. Per TEGF No. 27-14, WIOA requires that the business representatives be appointed from among individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations and that the representatives from labor organizations be appointed from among individuals who have been nominated from local labor federations. Business sector board members are nominated by the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and the labor representatives are nominated by AFL-CIO. The adult education representative is chosen from the leadership from the adult education provider. The Board consists of a 51 percent majority, of members who are business representatives; they are representatives of businesses that provide employment opportunities in the local area in in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in WIOA section 3(23)). These representatives are uniquely suited to communicate the emerging workforce needs of employers in high-growth, in-demand sectors to the Board. The Board also consists of members who are representatives of organized labor, education, and community organizations. A diverse and integrated board ensures that the WorkSource Cobb network will be governed effectively and is highly responsive to the needs of employers, job seekers, and youth in the county.

**b. Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.**

New board member orientations are offered twice per year. Orientations are conducted by the Executive Director, which gives the new board member and the director an opportunity to build their relationship. All new members receive a board binder complete with board, organization, and WIOA information at the time of their first board meeting. Additionally, the Planning,

Governance and Organizational Development Committee acts as a resource to new members to help them acclimate to the board and facilitate learning.

**c. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce development activities with regional economic development activities being carried out within the planning region.**

WorkSource Cobb maintains a strong relationship with the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and Cobb County Economic Development creating a solid local foundation for coordination with other economic development and workforce development organizations in the Metro Atlanta region. The Cobb Workforce Development Board also includes several key economic development leaders on the board from local government and higher education in addition to the Chief Operating Officer of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. Their participation and guidance provide clear direction for board economic development activities.

The Board also actively participates in economic development initiatives that are carried out in the region. It partners and collaborates with the other four local workforce boards to provide a coordinated and seamless system of services to businesses and industries that are located throughout the Metro-Atlanta Workforce Region.

A major component to this regional approach is the partnership with Atlanta CareerRise and the Metro-Atlanta Industry Partnership whose goal is to focus on understanding and responding to employer workforce needs and working with a workforce partner network to implement regional job programs that meet the needs of employers and job seekers. It benefits employers by giving them access to a partner network and resources that are committed to meeting their workforce needs. Through this partnership, WorkSource Metro Atlanta works with multiple employers and workforce partner organizations in a regional strategy that is aligned, funded and sustainable.

WorkSource Cobb and the region as a whole also participates in the Metro Atlanta eXchange for Workforce Solutions (MAX), which works to advance economic competitiveness in the Atlanta region by strengthening connections, collaborations, and practices among workforce developers and organizations engaged in workforce development. MAX connects with over 1,000 stakeholders representing service providers, educational entities, intermediaries, employers, and funders. MAX is a catalyst for empowering and aligning workforce development efforts to meet the needs that employers have for a ready workforce.

**d. Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.**

Each board member is asked to participate on a committee relevant to their interests and skillset. The committee meetings are conducted on the off months from bi-monthly board meetings and offer board members opportunities to further engage in board activities.

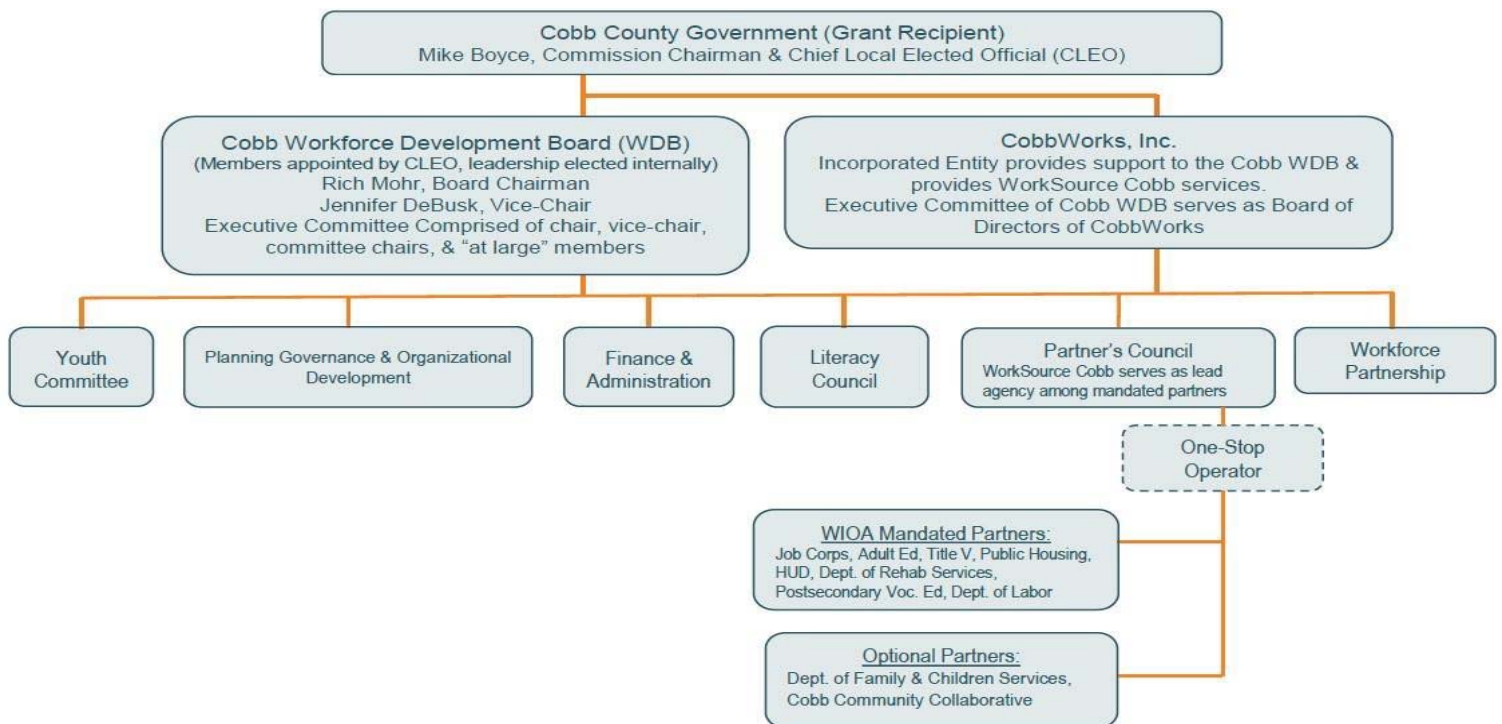
The communications manager for WorkSource Cobb serves as the liaison to the board for information sharing and utilizes monthly reports, social media and email announcements to keep board members informed and involved.

Board meetings are also structured to include an education component and/or program success stories to foster their knowledge and investment of their board role. Each meeting also concludes with a survey to glean feedback from board members to help plan for future meetings and maintain engagement.

**2. Cobb Workforce Development Board and Board Committees**

Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

**Cobb Workforce Development Board & WorkSource Cobb System Organizational Chart**





## **Cobb Workforce Development Board Committees**

### **Planning, Governance, and Organizational Development**

Responsible for development of strategic planning initiatives, board development, organization governance and development, resource identification including pursuit of additional grants resources, and marketing.

### **Finance and Administration**

Responsible for the development and oversight of administrative policies and procedures, contracts, budget development and tracking.

### **Youth Committee**

Provides development and oversight of a comprehensive youth service strategy for the local workforce area.

### **Literacy Council**

Provides development and oversight of the Cobb Literacy Council. Their mission is to bring together the community and its resources by promoting and supporting literacy in Cobb County.

### **Cobb Workforce Partnership**

Coordinates and promotes service delivery strategies to businesses in the local workforce area including work-based learning, sector initiatives, business recruitment and expansion efforts.

### **Cobb Workforce Partners' Council**

Responsible for promoting employment and education opportunities that strengthen the workforce and economic development of the Cobb community.

## **3. Plan Development**

Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed to include the participation of core partners, providers, board members, and other community entities. Also describe the process by which the local board provided a 30-day public comment period prior to the submission of the plan to solicit input into the development of the plan, including comment by representatives of businesses, representatives of labor organizations, and representatives of education.

To ensure a highly effective comprehensive Local Plan, WSC worked collaboratively with a diverse group of partners to identify existing and to develop new strategies for 2020-2024. The consortium built upon the 2016, four-year plan and 2018 updates and worked with partners, staff and regional workforce development partners to ensure alignment with the state's Unified State Plan. More specifically, input was received from these key stakeholders and information incorporated into the final Cobb County Local WIOA Plan. Participation included: core partners, service providers, employers, economic development officials, chamber of commerce representatives, transportation experts, and other community leaders.

In an effort of broadening opportunity for input, on April, 29 2020, a draft of the Cobb Local Plan was made available to the public via the board's website coupled with notice of availability of the plan published in the *Marietta Daily Journal*, Cobb County's legal organ, to representatives of businesses, labor organizations, educational institutions, and other community contacts to gather their feedback. Any comments and/or feedback is included in the Final Plan.

**THE FULL REGIONAL PLAN WILL BE COMPLETED IN OCTOBER 2020**



## SERVICE AND DELIVERY TRAINING

### 1. Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals

Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in core programs, as appropriate; and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary, academic, or industry-recognized credential.

#### Comprehensive

Utilizing a No-Wrong Door model, WorkSource Cobb will continue its efforts to ensure that a wide range of agencies, organizations, businesses, and community groups are involved in planning and delivering services through the workforce development system. A "continuum of services" is envisioned to provide opportunities for all customers regardless of background, skills, or abilities. This conceptualization makes many options available to residents. For example, residents entering the system through WorkSource Cobb will have access to veterans' services through onsite staff from the GDOL, residents interested in work readiness or literacy programs can easily access services within the One-Stop or will be provided a direct linkage to partner programs operated by organizations such as Center for Family Resources, Cobb Adult Education Center or the Cobb Literacy Council (CLC). As a subsidiary of WSC, the CLC further strengthens WSC's ability to provide literacy services to customers and support gaps in services.

The service model consistently **provides opportunities for individuals** including those with disabilities **at all skill levels and levels of experience** a multitude of services that include: job-driven information coupled with choices related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options. This model offers customers the opportunity to receive both skill development and job placement services that support economic mobility.



### **Integrated**

Cobb County has drawn on its history of strong and enduring partner relationships to ensure that its Workforce Development System is integrated. Using an integrated service delivery model **enhances WSC operational efficiency** presenting a clear and unified picture. The model also expands opportunities for braided funding strategies and leveraging resources that strengthen the safety net for Cobb residents. WorkSource Cobb enjoys positive relationships with the Georgia Department of Labor's Cobb/Cherokee Career Center, the Cobb Community Collaborative, the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, the Cobb Educational Consortium, notwithstanding its regional partnership with its sister agencies in the region. All are linked through the integrated Workforce Development System. This structure connects the resources of each of these segments of the community, as well as increasing the access of residents and businesses to the varied services of the system.

### **Effective**

Effectiveness is based on maximizing WorkSource Cobb's ability to help identify the best career pathways, training, and job opportunities for each individual, offering a full range of job readiness and training services while facilitating referrals to appropriate employers. For businesses, the system will treat employers as equal customers, making an intentional effort to understand their needs and allocate resources to support effective solutions. Talent recruitment, training and sourcing will be categorical imperatives and seen as a gateway to economic mobility for Cobb residents. WSC will provide employers with access to the broadest skilled talent pool as well as resources for training incumbent workers

To demonstrate effectiveness, WSC will develop performance quality improvement plans coupled with data capturing and tracking methods that provide information on perceptions of equal opportunity and treatment, institutional barriers and/or factors encouraging and inhibiting service delivery for persons within various population segments (e.g. older workers, formerly incarcerated, ESL population, persons with disabilities, etc.). This data collection will include but not be limited to WIOA and non-WIOA registrants served through the local Workforce Development System. The Georgia Workforce System only captures performance data for those customers who are registered; it does not account for the larger number of customers served through the resource area at the one-stop center, special initiatives, or services by partners that comprise the system.

WSC believes that to be more effective, good data can help identify issues, and perceptions allowing the organization to proactively address challenges, measure progress and capitalize on opportunities. Collecting, tracking and evaluating data on an ongoing basis will provide credible, compelling information when communicating with key decision-makers and stake-holders about

support for programs or initiatives. Furthermore, data will be used to inform budgets, policies, processes and services. Good data and performance quality improvement plans will support increased trust and respect among stakeholders.

### **Responsive**

The Board will ensure responsiveness of the local Workforce Development System by regularly measuring the satisfaction of its customers, both individuals and employers. Through surveys, analysis of performance data and discussions with customers and community groups, WorkSource Cobb will determine if components of the system are working properly and where the need for improvement exists. The system will be monitored by the One-Stop Operator Consortium and community-based groups representing residents and special populations. WorkSource Cobb also utilizes its Mobile Career Center to extend its services into the community and increase responsiveness to changing needs and target communities in the county.

### **Customer-focused**

WorkSource Cobb places a high priority on customer satisfaction. The one-stop system operator and all service providers are advised to demonstrate flexibility in meeting the individual needs of customers while maintaining compliance with WIOA law, regulations and local area and state policies. The Board has established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) framework that has the flexibility and scope to enable the core program partners to expand services to participants as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Through the MOU, the partners define, at a minimum, the following key elements for expansion of access and service provision for individuals who qualify for a single funding source or for multiple funding sources:

- Access points in the WorkSource GA delivery system, as each program and funding source will provide access to potential customers via the one stop delivery system;
- Services to be provided and delivery mechanisms for each service;
- Coordination of services including processes for co-enrollment to meet multiple needs of customers;
- Referral processes and case management responsibilities;
- Tracking and sharing of data for service coordination and documentation of outcomes; and
- Co-location of staff at service sites as needed for the provision of comprehensive services.

WIOA strengthens the "Priority of Service" requirement to create greater opportunities for low-income and lower-skilled individuals to succeed under WIOA Adult funding in combination with other funding sources such as TANF. In the past, under WIA, priority of service would go into effect only if the local area determined that funding "was limited." WIOA removes the "limited funding" provision and makes the priority of service automatic for all WIOA Adult funding.

WorkSource Cobb will strengthen its relationship with the TANF system in accord with the State WIOA Unified Plan which states that "OHS will incorporate employment and training aspects of the SNAP and TANF programs with the unified workforce system under WIOA through four primary mechanisms: integration across programs, a focus on youth, collaborative performance measures, and strengthened relationships with employers. Moving forward, TANF and SNAP will work to identify opportunities for colocation and inclusionary practices for enhanced service delivery and streamlined communication between WIOA partner programs. WSC is currently well-positioned to support expanded TANF and SNAP collaborations as it advertises its services through distributing flyers at the Cobb DFCS office which administers the TANF and Food Stamp/SNAP programs. Additionally, all services and special offerings are advertised through the Cobb Community Collaborative, the association for human service agencies in Cobb County. WSC also markets its services to participants in the Georgia Fatherhood Initiative administered through Chattahoochee Technical College and to SNAP recipients through the local DFCS office.

## **2. Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers**

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

### **Career & Training Services**

WIOA establishes two levels of employment and training services for adults and dislocated workers, simplifying the earlier "tiers of services" approach under WIA and creating greater responsiveness to customers' needs as presented to service staff. The two new levels of service are Career Services and Training Services. Career Services incorporate Basic Services, Individualized Services, and Follow-up Services, that are available for all adults and dislocated workers. Training services are provided as appropriate in individual career plans to equip individuals to enter the workforce, retain employment, and advance in skill and wage levels to reach levels of family sustainability and self-sufficiency.

### **Basic Services**

The Cobb Workforce Development Center currently provides the following basic career services:

- Determination of an individual's eligibility to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs;
- Outreach, intake, and orientation on information and services available through the WorkSource GA system;
- Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs;
- Labor exchange services, including:

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- Job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including the provision of information on non-traditional employment and in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
- Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the local workforce system;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services available outside of the current WorkSource GA partners;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and provider type;
- Provision of information on performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the local workforce system;
- Provision of information related to the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance;
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation; and
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA and WorkSource GA partner programs.

#### **Individualized Career Services**

The Cobb Workforce Development Center provides individualized career services in the event that the intake and assessment team determine that it is appropriate and necessary for an individual to obtain, retain, or advance in employment. These include the following services:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers;
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information regarding eligible training providers;
- Group counseling;
- Individual counseling;

- Career planning;
- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment and/or training;
- Internships and work experience that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services as described in WIOA §129(b)(2)(D); and
- Enrollment in English Language Learning (ELL) program or integrated basic education and occupational training programs.

### **Training Services**

WIOA is designed to increase participant access to training and education, particularly courses and programs of study leading to high-value credentials based on labor market needs. Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter jobs, retain employment, and advance in skills in wages. Training access is provided by Cobb Workforce Development Center and its partners in the following ways, either as an independent program element or in combination with other elements, all within the context of the career pathway defined in the participant's career plan:

- Occupational skills training, including training in non-traditional employment opportunities, provided via Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) or other means;
- On-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeships, cooperative education and other work-and-learn opportunities sponsored by employers;
- Incumbent worker training in accordance with WIOA Section 134(d)(4), providing low-wage workers an opportunity to advance to higher skill, higher-wage jobs, and providing opportunities for current employee seeking additional training for job advancement and increased wages;
- Employer-sponsored training such as tuition reimbursement programs and up-front training for new hires;
- Entrepreneurship and self-employment training;
- Transitional jobs for participants who are lacking relevant work experience for jobs they are seeking, in accordance with WIOA Section 134(d)(5);
- Job readiness training emphasizing foundational workforce skills (soft skills) in combination with other training;
- Adult education, literacy, and ELL programs, in combination with occupational skill training whenever feasible; and
- Customized training sponsored by an employer or group of related employers where a commitment to hire is made for successful training completion.

### **Follow-up Services**

Follow-up services are provided by WSC staff to assist trained, newly-hired workers and their employers to address any issues that could interrupt employment. These services include counseling on workplace standards of behavior and attachment to any support services that may be appropriate to address personal issues. Services will be available during the first 12 months following the first day of unsubsidized employment.

### **3. Description of Rapid Response Services**

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The provision of services to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) petition has been filed is led by the Rapid Response Team of the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), utilizing funds that have been reserved by the state for Rapid Response activities. Processes and services related to Rapid Response interventions are described in the State WIOA Unified Plan. GDOL works closely with the Technical College System of Georgia, Workforce Division when layoffs occur, including those with foreign trade impact for which Trade petitions are submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor. GDOL staff work with state-level partners and with the local workforce development area staff to provide the full range of local and state services to impacted workers.

When a TAA petition is filed, State TAA staff notifies relevant local partners. At the time of notification, WorkSource Cobb combines efforts with the state staff and with other Metro Atlanta workforce areas to ensure that all local and state services are made available to impacted workers, and that sessions for presentation of information are coordinated with the workers and with their employer and labor union, if applicable. If affected workers are unable to attend group sessions or the number of workers is small, the One-Stop Operator will arrange for workers to be served on an individual basis at the WorkSource Cobb or other appropriate sites.

In accord with the WIOA State Plan, all participants are offered TAA case management services and information on services available to them, including:

- Full range of training: remediation, literacy, English language learning, occupational training, OJT, apprenticeships, and other;
- Income support and wage supplements;
- Health Coverage Tax Credit (assistance in paying health insurance premiums);
- Job search assistance;
- Relocation assistance;

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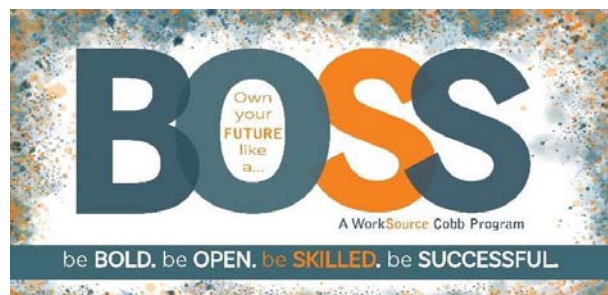
- Comprehensive and specialized skills assessment;
- Individualized career planning and career counseling;
- Information on financial aid and labor market opportunities; and
- Other services customized for the specific occupations and industries impacted.

Upon receipt of the layoff notice, GDOL coordinates with Work Source Cobb staff to plan a Pre-Employer Meeting with partner agencies (local GDOL career centers, WIOA, USDOL, technical school, etc.) to discuss strategy. The employer is contacted within 48 hours and an employer meeting is scheduled to gather all necessary information to ensure all needs are met. In cases where employer/employee meetings are not conducted, information will be emailed to the employer or their contact person. Special services are generally provided for layoffs that involve 100 or more employees. Specific training programs also may be designed to meet the needs of a mass layoff or closing. One-stop staff are available to provide core and intensive services both for satellite access points and for larger layoffs. Teams, involving one-stop staff, GDL Career Center staff, and Rapid Response staff, are assembled to assist with large layoffs to provide on-site services either at layoff sites or at another local setting. Staff will share resources ranging from UI insurance and Trade benefits when applicable, training opportunities, workshops and job search assistance. On-site recruitments are set-up where appropriate in order to quickly process appropriate candidates for hiring. Dislocated Worker funding is utilized for core, intensive and training services, with the majority of training services accomplished through the individual training account system. During Rapid Response employee meetings, information regarding Registered Apprenticeship programs, as well as OJT's, are disseminated and discussed. Once the EIS is completed, Work Source Cobb contact information is made available for future inquiries. In effort to provide the most comprehensive service possible Work Source Cobb staff asks the employer to provide them with feed-back regarding the presentations which is used to maintain or improve the level of service delivery provided.

### 4. Description of Youth Services

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

WorkSource Cobb has recently rebranded and redesigned the WIOA youth program. With a full program infrastructure redesign, the program formerly known as Youth A.S.S.E.T.S. (Youth Achieving Success thru Support, Education, and Training Services), has been re-branded as the **B.O.S.S.** Program. **B.O.S.S.** re-envision the lens with which youth with barriers are viewed and challenges them and others to view them as young professionals.





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The program aims to challenge young professionals to be **BOLD. OPEN. SKILLED. SUCCESSFUL.** This program offers many of the same services as the old WIOA Youth A.S.S.E.T.S. program, but expounds upon those services, making them more robust, career pathway oriented and offers greater flexibility.

More specifically, career pathways are now viewed as career lattices, offering multiple and flexible entry points that support education, development and upskilling in multiple directions and areas. The lattice acknowledges and embraces the fact that career paths can move in any direction—diagonally, upwardly and downwardly making the program more nimble, flexible and responsive to the needs of youth in need of services. **B.O.S.S.** is a year-round program for young adults ages 16-24, to include:

- Individual Training Accounts (ITA)
- GED
- Paid Internships/WEx
- Professional Development
- Financial Literacy
- College & Career Tours
- Talent Tours
- Entrepreneurship
- Apprenticeship
- Career Counseling
- Mentoring

While encompassing a career pathway strategy, the **B.O.S.S.** program has included a more robust earn and learn program model that incorporates incentives for reaching specific education and career milestones. In addition, work-based learning plays a critical role matching youth with both subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities that are aligned with individual career goals and aspirations. It is the intent of the Board to expand work-based learning opportunities as part of this broader career pathways strategy improving the employability and development of young professionals. Working in partnership with area employers, enrolled youth will be matched based upon, career interests, education/training. The program aims to:

- Connect classroom learning to the real-world by providing opportunities to practice skills in real-world scenarios.
- Develop soft skills.
- Provide an opportunity to observe professionals in action.
- Provides the opportunity to network with potential employers.

In addition, WSC young professionals will be matched with industry specific mentors aligned with their aligned career pathway. This mentorship component is meant to support program retention and improved youth outcomes as well as provide youth with supportive, healthy relationships



between industry specific mentors who will share their knowledge, skills, and experience, about their specific industry. According to Youth.gov, mentorships contribute to a host of benefits for mentors and mentees<sup>18</sup>.

**Benefits for youth:**

- Increased high school graduation rates
- Lower high school dropout rates
- Healthier relationships and lifestyle choices
- Better attitude about school
- Higher college enrollment rates and higher educational aspirations
- Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved behavior, both at home and at school
- Stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- Improved interpersonal skills
- Decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use (MENTOR, 2009; Cavell, DuBois, Karcher, Keller, & Rhodes, 2009)

While the **B.O.S.S.** program offers new innovative strategies for improving outcomes for youth 16-24, it does not remove the required youth elements, but instead expounds upon them. The Board and its Youth Committee ensure that required WIOA youth services elements are addressed by referral by WorkSource Cobb staff of youth participants to other community-based programs that provide key elements of service; and Maintaining a resource network of community organizations and youth groups that provide connections for youth to academic, work-based learning, and supportive services resources. The WSC youth program utilizes a hybrid model to provide the program elements. Agency staff provide intake, eligibility and case management directly to participants while referring youth to partner agencies for specialized services or onsite programs within the One-Stop. Service include but are not limited to:

- GED preparation
- Mental health services
- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupation
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling
- Leadership development activities (e.g., community service, peer-centered activities)

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<sup>19</sup> <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/mentoring/benefits-mentoring-young-people>

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Services for youth with disabilities are coordinated with our partners at Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation and other local non-profits specializing in disability services such as Nobis Works because, WIOA places a much greater emphasis on serving older, out-of-school youth. Once an older youth, age 16-24, has been determined eligible under WIOA Youth and/or Adult eligibility guidelines, youth participants may select a training course of study and /or provider from the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ultimate goal for the youth participant is to receive occupational skill training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations as described in the ITA process section of the plan.

The youth participant meets with a WIOA Career and Training Advisor (CTA) to determine the match between the participant's career pathways strategy and labor market demand. As with all ITAs, WIOA-funded assistance will only be provided for training in growth occupations identified for the region.

WorkSource Cobb will ensure that the required youth program elements are made available to WIOA youth participants through the use of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) The ISS shall, at minimum, address the following basic elements:

### **Employment/Education Goal**

- Every youth participant should have one employment/education goal, at minimum, outlined in the ISS. These goals may be short-term or long-term.
- Each goal and the attainment of the goal is fully documented, including the date the goal was set and the date the goal was attained. Goal attainment must be based on an individual assessment using widely accepted and recognized measurement or assessment techniques.
- Each goal requires substantial improvement in the individual's skills. The attainment of any goal is directly related to the WIOA services provided

### **Training and Supportive Service Needs** (if applicable)

- This portion of the ISS describes the participant's training and supportive service needs. This includes all skill deficiencies and barriers which may prevent the participant from attaining the employability goal, regardless of whether those needs will be met through WIOA or non-WIOA resources.
- Training needs are identified in the areas of basic literacy skills, occupational skills and work readiness skills. These needs are identified by comparing the information obtained in the objective assessment process to the skills required by the participant's career, skill attainment, and employment goals.

### **Schedule of Activities and Services**

- All activities and services that are planned with the participant, in response to the needs identified, are described. This schedule includes the training and supportive services provided through WIOA resources and all non-WIOA sources. A timeline that identifies the planned beginning and ending date of each activity and service,

as well as the planned program completion date, must also be included.

**Achievement Objectives**

- Achievement objectives or benchmarks to measure progress toward the ultimate attainment of the employability goal is included in the ISS. Such objectives establish interim standards of success throughout the period of program participation. Examples of achievement objectives include completion of training activities, attainment of specified grade levels, completion of GED, elimination of employment barriers or other goals that are specific to the individual needs or barriers of a participant.

**Follow-Up Services**

- The case manager will provide follow-up services that will track the progress of the youth after exit from the program for at least 12 months after program completion and, based on the youth's needs, provide assistance to help the youth secure better jobs, career development and further education. Follow-up information is collected and entered in the WorkSource Portal.

**5. Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives**

Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training programs, On-the-Job Training 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 employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy. If these services are not utilized, provide a description of why.

WIOA places increased emphasis on work-based learning opportunities that are integrated with academic programs to provide context for classroom programs and to allow trainees to obtain valuable work experiences and access to employers who may hire them. Such strategies allow employers to become full participants in education and training programs that are designed to address their skill gaps, all within a Career Pathways framework that keeps the trainees focused on job acquisition and career advancement goals.

WorkSource Cobb has primarily used on-the-job training (OJT) options for work-based learning for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Older Youth. OJT is also a valuable resource for working collaboratively with the Board's economic development partners to expand jobs with local employers and, looking forward, to combine with incumbent worker training to meet increasingly higher education and training needs. The Board employs a set negotiated payment structure for OJT placements, making the process simple and user-friendly for employers. The Board intends to work with other workforce development boards in the Metro Atlanta region to coordinate the message to employers and to explore the creation of a region-wide, simplified employer OJT contract template.

The Board and WorkSource Cobb staff will work to expand work-based learning opportunities as a key partner with the Cobb Chamber of Commerce in implementing the newly-created Workforce Partnership initiative (Cobb Workforce Partnership, December 2015). The Chamber made workforce development its number one priority in 2015 and charged local employers to become more engaged in planning processes and as partners in implementing strategies. In the project's key theme of "Experience" the report addressed the need for real-world experience by stating: "Companies indicated that for many positions they are looking for candidates with real-world experience such as internships, job shadowing, or prior work experience. Educators recognized the need for more real-world case studies and awareness of the types of problems industry is trying to address." The Board and WorkSource Cobb staff will use this focus as a leverage point for offering employers an array of options for direct engagement in work-based learning strategies.

#### **6. Provision of ITAs**

Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs 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.

A training services program is defined as one or more courses or classes or a structured regimen that leads to an industry recognized certificate or credential, a certificate of completion of a registered apprenticeship, a license recognized by the state or federal government, an associate or baccalaureate degree, a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, employment or measurable skill-gains towards a credential or employment.

Not all allowable types of training services are subject to the requirements of the training provider provisions. Contracts for services may be utilized instead of ITAs only when one or more of the following six exceptions apply and the LWDB has fulfilled the consumer choice requirements of 20 C.F.R. §680.340:

- When the services provided are on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, transitional employment, internships, paid or unpaid work experience;
- When WorkSource Cobb determines that, there are an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local area to accomplish the purposes of a system of ITAs. The determination process must include a 30-day public comment period and be described in the local plan;
- When WorkSource Cobb determines that, there is a training program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve individuals with barriers to

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employment. WorkSource Cobb will develop criteria (as noted in 20 C.F.R. §680.320) to be used in determining demonstrated effectiveness, particularly as it applies to individuals with barriers to employment;

- When WorkSource Cobb determines that it would be most appropriate to contract with an institution of higher education or other eligible provider of training services in order to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in- demand industry sectors or occupations, provided that the contract does not limit customer choice;
- When WorkSource Cobb is considering entering into a pay-for-performance contract and the Local WDB ensures that the contract is consistent with § 683.510 of this chapter;
- When WorkSource Cobb may provide training services only if it submits a request to TCSG for a waiver. The proposed request should be made available to eligible training providers and the public for public comment no less than 30 days. Public comments must be included with the request. The request will include evidence that there are an insufficient number of eligible provider of such a program of training services to meet local demand, information that the board meets the requirements for an eligible training provider under WIOA Section 122, and information that training will prepare participants for an in-demand industry sector or occupation in the local area.

An adult, dislocated worker, or youth determined eligible for WIOA-funded training services may select a provider from the state approved Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) after consultation with WIOA Career and Training Advisor (CTA) and with WIOA funding as the last source used after other public sources, such as PELL grants and HOPE grants are used. In accordance with the following policies, an Individual Training Account (ITA) may be created as an integral part of the customer's Individual Employment Plan.

##### **Policies**

- Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIOA Plan as growth occupations or prospects for occupational areas not listed in the plan should be documented in consultation with the CTA.
- Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance.
- Training must be at least 12 quarter hours per week to comply with existing Unemployment Insurance (UI) requirements. Exceptions to this policy may be approved in writing on a case-by-case basis
- Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (2 years). Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis, and requests should include evidence that

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financial support is available during the extended training period.

- An ITA will not be approved for a customer for whom training has been provided by WIOA funded activities within the past 24 months.
- In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the WIOA local area, but may include out-of-area or out-of-state institutions. Out-of-area training programs that are not within a reasonable commute to the local WIOA area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the U.S.
- All applicants must apply for the Pell Grant and HOPE Scholarship program if eligible. Depending on the need and availability of WIOA funding, Pell Grant funds may be combined with WIOA funds to cover expenses related to the training.
- WIOA funds will be guaranteed and paid directly to the school/training providers in the form of an ITA voucher; no funds will be released directly to the customer for tuition or costs of direct training.
- Customers will not be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred prior to being approved for WIOA-funded training and without written approval from the assigned CTA. Customers are encouraged not to enter into financial agreements, make any type of payment, or be coerced to make payments to hold a training slot.
- WIOA funding may be provided for college-level and post baccalaureate education only under the following conditions:
  - The customer must be accepted into a certificate or diploma program, and the course of study must be occupationally specific (such as radiology technician, accounting, teacher certification). No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (such as general studies, business administration, history, etc.)
  - The total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and result in a specific certificate or degree.
  - The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources and reasonable supports to engage in a long-term training/education program.
- Continuing Education and other similar courses will be approved if the following conditions apply:
  - The customer must have a specific occupational goal as part of an overall Individual Employment Plan.
  - The customer must have a work history or educational background consistent with the occupational goal, as part of an identified and documented career pathway.
  - The customer must present evidence of how the proposed education/training will increase his/her marketability for employment in

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the region.

- ITAs may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition/fees, drug testing required for training entry, and medical screening required for training entry.
- Customers accepted on a provisional basis may receive assistance tied to achievement of training benchmarks, with such arrangements approved on a case-by-case basis.
- ITAs will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or negligence. The customer will be responsible for such fees and any other fines or penalties.
- The following regional funding limits apply to ITAs:
  - Up to \$8000 in training costs, excluding supportive services, may be spent on each participant in the first year of training.
  - For training that exceeds one year, total training costs may not exceed \$10,000, excluding supportive services.
  - If the cost of training exceeds fund limitation guidelines, the CTA will assist in developing a financial plan to cover the costs for training completion. Customers will not be required to apply for loans as a condition of participation. Customers must demonstrate payment of any amounts in excess of approved ITA plans prior to payment by WorkSource Cobb. Distance learning including on-line training will be considered for customers on a case-by-case basis if the following criteria are met:
    - Must meet all WorkSource Cobb current ITA policy requirements
    - Must possess computer skills adequate to participate in the training
    - Must satisfactorily complete on-line assessment (<http://www.gvtc.org/Resources/SmarterMeasure.aspx>) to assess readiness for distance learning and provide a copy to the CTA for documentation
    - Must have reliable access to a computer.

#### **Distance learning course of training module being requested must:**

- Lead to the completion of a training program
- Require students to take periodic tests
- Require students to come to campus or other approved training site for certification exams and meetings with instructors.

#### **The following applies to participants in distance learning unless employed:**

- Child care supportive services will not be paid for time to study and/or to participate in distance learning activities
- Tuition will not be paid for repeating any course
- Distance learning approval will occur on a course-by-course basis.
- Any ITA will be considered for "Pick-ups" for students already enrolled in non-



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WIOA funded training. Those students include those who have been enrolled in colleges and technical schools supported by HOPE, Pell Grants, student loans, displaced homemaker/single-parent projects, TANF programs, and other programs who, for a variety of reasons, find themselves in need of WIOA funding to complete education or training. The following conditions must be met:

- All "pick-ups" must be WIOA eligible.
- All "pick-ups" must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better, which must be documented in the participant's file.
- No "pick-ups" are permitted for less than one quarter/semester or 8 weeks of training (whichever is longer at the training institution) remaining for completion of the program of study.
- All "pick-ups" must have the documented approval of the Program Services Manager. The student must provide appropriate documentation and explanation of the inability to continue training due to financial constraints or other reasons. Included must be an explanation of why the previous method of support for training is now inadequate. This documentation will be noted in the customer's file.
- Training for "pick-ups" must be determined to be appropriate based on the program of study as it related to occupation for which there is a labor market demand. Administration of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) is not required for "pick-ups" as eligibility for training has already been assessed. However, a review of the participant's grades, supportive service needs, and labor market information related to the education/training just occur and be documented in the participant's file.
- WIOA funds for training expenses (tuition, books, supplies, fees, tools, uniforms, equipment, tests, etc.) surrounding a "pick-up" will be reduced by all other funding sources that do not require repayment by the customer. Other funding sources may include, but are not limited to, HOPE, Pell Grants, and the Montgomery GI Bill. WIOA funds are never to be considered as the first source of funding.

#### **7. Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Micro-Enterprise Services**

Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services.

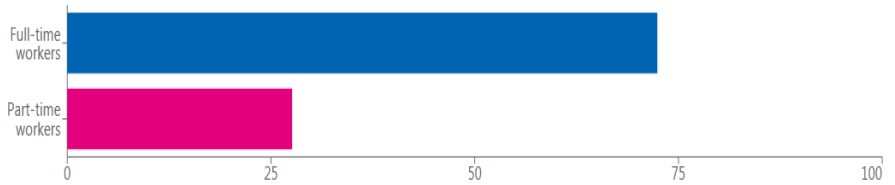
Entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services can bring tremendous value to a local area. Local, state, and national economies are highly dependent on small business, entrepreneurship and this new gig economy. New businesses create more jobs and introduce



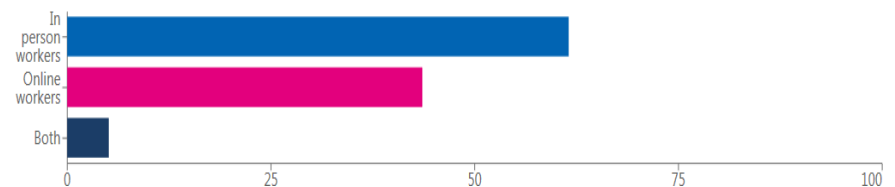
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new ideas that solve problems in better ways. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are 1.6 million gig economy workers in the US, working for services like Uber and Task Rabbit. These workers account for 1% of the US workforce. As

such, offering entrepreneurial skills training will be value added for the WSC local. The gig economy includes freelance and contract workers — anyone taking a job for a finite amount of time. These groups are also considered entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are people who start their own business. Having a clear understanding of the risks, best practices, laws and strategies for scaling a business will be value-added for customers who identify in these categories.



Sixty-two percent of these workers perform their work in-person versus 38% online. In-person gig work platforms include ridesharing companies like Uber and Lyft and delivery companies like Dolly and Postmates. Online platforms include Clickworker, which tasks workers with data management and web research, and Fiverr, a platform for creative work.



According to USA facts, seventy-two percent of the 1.6 million people working gig jobs work full time, meaning more than 35 hours per week. Not all gig workers are self-employed. In fact, 63% report being an employee, rather than being self-employed. Eighty percent of self-employed gig workers don't have a formal business entity set up.<sup>19</sup>

WSC will work to strengthen its partnerships and services with training schools, groups and organizations that provide entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services. In addition, WSC will take an intentional approach to seek out collaborative opportunities to coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services for customers who have interest in this area. Furthermore, customers will be encouraged to utilize training service providers placed on the Georgia Eligible Training Provider List.

WorkSource Cobb will continue efforts to expand entrepreneurship training and connections to resources, as much current research points to the increasing number of workers who will be self-employed "contract employees" during the next decade.

<sup>20</sup> <https://usafacts.org/articles/what-gig-economy/>

## 8. Coordination with Education Programs

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

The Cobb Workforce Partnership is a coalition through which universal and cross-cutting workforce needs can be addressed by top-level decision makers across education and industry, while industry-specific and localized needs are addressed by those most familiar with the details of each particular sector. The overall initiative is jointly led by the Cobb Chamber Board of Directors, WorkSource Cobb/Workforce Development Board, and Local Educational Institutions. Steering Committees oversee and coordinate the work of the Sector Partnership Groups, with membership of the Steering Committee comprised of:

- Chair
- Sector Partnership Chairs (6)
- Marietta City Schools
- Cobb County Schools
- Kennesaw State University
- Chattahoochee Technical College
- Life University
- Georgia Highlands College
- CobbWorks
- Facilitator/Subject Matter Experts

The Steering Committee has a defined mission with four (4) primary roles:

- To Define and Manage the measures of success for the program.
- To Support and Oversee the progress of each Sector Partnership according to those measures. To Develop and maintain a constant flow of communications between education, industry, and the community at large.
- To Work on Initiatives that cut across the sector partnerships such as developing and implementing a plan for a world-class college and career academy and a coordinated workforce development and career pathway marketing plan.

With the most recent opening of the Marietta College and Career Academy and impending opening of the Career Academy at Osborn High School, recently approved from 14.5M, expected to open May 2020, the consortium will build upon the work plans of 2016/2018 for these state-of-the-art collaborations. Working through this consortium, programs and activities and strategies will be developed to enhance services and avoid duplication of services. This partnership helps the academies formalize sector partnerships and equip students with the skills and experiences that Cobb County employers prioritize as most needed. The findings of the initial report call for the academies to be STEM-focused and aligned with both technical and vocational career paths

with links to two-year and four-year colleges. The Partnership also recognizes the need to raise community awareness of the wide range of career opportunities that exist with access provided by specific technical training and a commitment to lifelong learning.

The Board and WorkSource Cobb leadership are embedded in the Partnership process and will work collaboratively with the Cobb Chamber to sustain the Partnership as the primary forum for sector-based planning combined with educational partnerships to support the sectors. Chattahoochee Technical College (CTC), the Carl Perkins technical education provider for the local area, is represented on the WDB by its Dean of Economic Development. The local WDB works closely with CTC in training program development as well as in cross referring students and trainees.

## 9. Description of Supportive Services

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable.

***The support services policy is as follows:***

### **Purpose**

Supportive services for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth are provided for by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I. This memorandum establishes local area policy for WorkSource Cobb in providing support services as allowed for by WIOA.

### **Reference**

WIOA, section 3(59), 20 CFR § 681.570, 20 CFR § 200 and 20 CFR § 681.640

### **Policy**

Based on individual assessment and availability of funds, support services may be awarded to eligible participants. Support services must be tied to education, training, job search activities, or maintaining employment. Support service awards are only provided under the following conditions:

- Individuals are Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible and registered in the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (GWROPP) and are participating in career or training services, including post-exit follow-up services;
- To participants unable to obtain support services through other programs that provide such services;
- When they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in WIOA Title I activities; and,

- A maximum of \$3000.00 total support services assistance may be awarded for the entire participation period.

### **Guidelines and Procedures**

All supportive services must have been approved and recorded in GWROPP prior to the participant receiving or obtaining the goods or services. Backdated requests for services will not be approved. Advances against future payments are not allowed. The provision of supportive services must be determined on an individual basis. Eligibility and determination of need for supportive services should be conducted by a case manager or appropriate LWDA staff on a case-by-case basis to determine if the participant is eligible for and in need of supportive services. Eligibility for Supportive Services is contingent upon enrollment and/or participation in a training program or approved activity.

Support services may be granted in the following categories with the related stipulations and restrictions: (Note: All support services are provided at the discretion of the local workforce area; support services are not to be considered automatic or entitlements and are contingent upon the assessment of a customer's circumstances by local area staff.)

### **Auto Insurance**

Support service payment may be issued for auto insurance coverage required by the State of Georgia and can only be justified in a situation where, without the insurance, the participant would not be able to travel to the training site and/or place of employment. Liability insurance coverage will be authorized only if the vehicle is needed for the participant to seek, accept or retain employment or to participate in employment and training activities. Liability insurance, as required by the state covers damage to property and persons after an accident happens. The vehicle must be titled and registered in the participant's name. Payment may not exceed three month's coverage.

### **Auto Repair**

WIOA funds may pay for repair and replacement of essential parts and safety equipment to an automobile only if it can be verified there is no other reasonable way for the participant to transport himself/ herself to a training or work site. The vehicle must be titled and registered in the participant's name, be properly insured and it must be verified by a reputable mechanic that the repairs are needed. Exceptions may be made if the vehicle belongs to another family member and is the only means of transportation available to the participant. Exceptions must be documented in the participant's file. Original invoices/receipts are required for car repair payments. Quotes or work orders are not accepted for payment receipts.

### **Childcare/After-School Program (ASP) Care**

One-time payments may be made for after-school registrations. The childcare cost may be reimbursed at the local documented rate. This rate should be reviewed on an annual basis. These

limits apply on a per child basis. The childcare provider must be licensed or registered or documentation of adequacy of alternative child care must be maintained in the participant's file.

#### **Uniform Clothing**

Clothing and or footwear may be purchased for interview or work, such as a uniform or a particular type of work boot required for the job by an employer. Medical/Dental/Optical Policy may allow that the maximum can be expended in one (medical, dental, optical) area, or a combination of all three areas. Covered expenses include medical testing/treatment, prescriptions, mental health testing, counseling. WIOA funds cannot be used for costs of family members. This service should be limited to the minimum required to permit the person to participate in training, job search, accept employment, or maintain employment.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Items that ensure participant is prepared for a job interview and/or entering employment, including cost for professional licenses, certifications, Individual Training Account (ITA) or intensive service test fees, background checks, identification (Georgia Driver's License, identification card), etc.

#### **Rent Assistance:**

WIOA funds may assist with past due rent payments. Clear verification (copy of rental agreement and eviction notice or letter from landlord) of outstanding charges and residency must be provided by the customer. Documentation that the situation would make it impossible for the participant to conduct an efficient job search, maintain employment or participate in training without the rent assistance, and that the participant has a plan for future payments. Mortgage or other payments that contribute to the purchase of real property that the participants own are not allowed (e.g. house, car, boat). Regulations prohibit the payment of debts incurred prior to enrollment in the program. Payments must be made to vendors as opposed to reimbursing the participant.

Housing assistance includes supportive service payments for rent. When supportive service funds are used to pay this expense, documentation must be in the participant's file that verifies the address and rental amount. Documentation may be a signed copy of the rental or lease agreement or when there is no rental or lease agreement between the participant and the landlord, service providers may use a signed Verification of Rent form that lists the rent amount, period of time, address, landlord's federal ID# or social security number. Documentation must be in the participant's file. Rent receipts shall be maintained in the participant's file with other lease or rental documentation. The provider shall pay the landlord directly, unless extenuating circumstances exist which requires the provider to reimburse the participant directly. Documentation of extenuating circumstances shall be maintained in the participant's file.

#### **Tools**

Tools or equipment that would not normally be supplied by the employer, i.e., computers,

industrial equipment, stationary machinery, safety equipment, etc. may be purchased. A bona fide, written job offer must be provided prior to the approval of funds for purchase. Tools may be purchased for participants, if the tools are required to continue a training program or obtain employment. The service provider must determine that the tools are required and that they cannot be provided by any other source such as the prospective employer, or the participant. Tools become the property of the participant upon satisfactory completion of the WIOA training as outlined in the participant's IEP or upon employment. If the participant fails to complete the prescribed WIOA training, the tools remain the property of WIOA.

#### **Computer Purchases**

In limited cases, the purchase of a computer may be approved as a required tool. This is most typically, but not exclusively, in distance learning situations. Per guidance from USDOL, case managers must request approval from their program manager prior to a computer purchase to ensure it meets the requirements. Factors that will be taken into consideration prior to computer purchase approval include but are not limited to: does the training program include distance learning and to what degree; does the participant have reasonable computer access through another source such as a computer lab on campus or at a public library; does the participant have a lengthy commute to obtain computer access. Providers requesting a computer purchase approval can include justification addressing these factors in an e-mail or submit a request completed by the participant.

#### **Tool/Computer Return**

Service providers are to maintain an inventory list of all returned tools/computers. The inventory list must include the month/year the item was purchased, a description of the item, the general condition of the item; the month/year the item is removed from inventory and the status of the item's disposal.

#### **Disposal of Inventory**

Providers should retain returned inventory for a reasonable period of time based on the condition and usefulness of the item. If an item has been kept in inventory for a reasonable period and has not been able to pass on to another program participant, then the item can be donated to a non-profit organization. Inventory items cannot be passed on to staff of the service provider or to any individual where a conflict of interest might be perceived.

#### **Transportation**

A participant may receive only one type of transportation assistance at any given time: gas card or monthly bus pass. File documentation must clearly itemize transportation assistance.

**Bus Pass** - Participants may receive a bus pass and may be renewed monthly. Bus passes range in denominations of a 31-day, 10 ride, or a single ride. WorkSource Cobb staff will determine the most suitable denomination based on need. Participants are required to be enrolled in training

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or participating in an approved activity, in good standing and making satisfactory progress to continue to be eligible to receive transportation assistance. Prior to receiving the gas card, participants must complete a Supportive Service Determination Request Form (SSDR). WorkSource staff must upload the form in GWROPP and enter case notes as long as the participant is receiving supportive services.

**Gas Cards** - Pre-paid gas cards for transportation assistance are available for participants enrolled in training or participating in an approved activity, in good standing and making satisfactory progress. The amount of the Gas Card will be calculated using the IRS Standard Mileage Rate. The calculation formula will include miles from home to school roundtrip multiplied by the amount of days attending class. See IRS standard mileage link as follows: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-issues-standard-mileage-rates-for2019>. Gas cards will be issued once per month; however, a participant may receive additional funds not to exceed two cards per month with approval of a PSM. Prior to receiving the gas card, participants must complete a Supportive Service Determination Request Form (SSDR). WorkSource staff must upload the form in GWROPP and enter case notes as long as the participant is receiving supportive services.

**Ride-Share Cards** - Pre-paid ride-share cards for transportation assistance are available for participants enrolled in training or participating in an approved activity, in good standing and making satisfactory progress. The amount of the card will be calculated using the IRS Standard Mileage Rate. The calculation formula will include miles from home to school roundtrip multiplied by the amount of days attending class multiplied by the IRS Standard Mileage Link. See IRS standard mileage link as follows: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-issues-standard-mileage-rates-for-2019>. The card(s) will be issued once per month, however a participant may receive additional funds not to exceed two cards per month with approval of a PSM. Prior to receiving the card, participants must complete a Support Service Determination Request Form (SSDR). WorkSource staff must upload the form in GWROPP and enter case notes as long as the participant is receiving supportive services. WorkSource Cobb staff will generate a requisition to be approved by PSM and submitted to Finance for final approval and purchase.

#### **Other Supportive Services**

Other supportive services may be provided as determined by the local workforce area. Such goods and services should be reasonable and necessary for the participant to remain in training and/or obtain or retain employment. These services may include, but are not limited to:

- Haircuts, personal grooming and hygiene needs;
- Bonding and liability insurance for employment;
- Work clothing (includes clothing for interviews);
- Financial counseling or assistance;



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- Application fees and GED fees;
- Union dues or initiation fees;
- Auxiliary aides and services for participants with disabilities;
- Business licenses; and
- Drug testing as required for employment (includes WEX)

Support service funds may not be used for the following purposes:

- Fines and penalties, such as traffic violations, late finance charges, interest payments, community justice restitution and supervision fees
- Entertainment, including tips
- Contributions or donations
- Vehicle or mortgage payments
- Refundable deposits
- Food, alcohol, or tobacco products
- WIOA regulations prohibit the payment of debts incurred prior to enrollment in the program.

All support service payments must be tied to education, training, job search activities or maintaining employment. Support services must be reflected in the customer's Individual Career Plan (IEP) and/or case documentation in GWROPP.

The Support Service Determination Request (SSDR) Form (Addendum 1) A) must be thoroughly completed for all support service requests needed to mitigate a barrier or barriers to customer's participation in and completion of training or employment activity, but not directly related to program participation and as such considered "standard and customary." Examples of "standard and customary" support services for which the SSDR is not required include: tools required for program/work participation, uniform/specific clothing required for program participation, license/ testing/certification/background check fees required for program participation and or credential attainment. The following questions and issues must be addressed when completing the form:

- Description of the specific circumstances that have created the need for support services at this time.
- Description of staff and customer's efforts, and the outcomes of those efforts, in obtaining assistance from other community resources, friends, or family members.
- Description of how will this assistance remedy the specific situation and assist the customer in completing training and/or maintaining employment.
- If the support service request reflects a recurring need, explain how this need will be addressed in the future without additional assistance.

All efforts must be made to ascertain that support service payments provided to participants are not available through another resource. Staff must utilize the SSDR to clearly document resource referrals made to participant. Community resources are the primary source for support service



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needs such as food stamps, TANF, Medicaid, and community based social service agencies. One Stop staff should assist participants in exploring resources available from other sources in the community or within their own support system. Document all conversations regarding support services, referrals, actions, etc. in the participant's file.

#### **Other Considerations**

- Support service payments are not automatic or guaranteed to customers. Payments must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to allow a participant to overcome a barrier to training or employment.
- The expenditure should not exceed a prudent person's decision under the circumstances at the time the cost is incurred. It should reflect current market price, and public perception should be taken into consideration.
  - Participants may not exceed \$3,000 per participant per year (365 days after the first service/participant date)
  - WorkSource Cobb will spend no more than 25% of their allocation for a particular funding stream. The determination will be based on the program year total allocation per funding stream.
- WorkSource Cobb may request a waiver to the supportive services cap waiver.
  - A waiver for an individual participant can be requested when the LWDA has defined the exceptional needs of the participant that would require them to exceed the supportive service cap. The LWDA will determine the new cap for the participant based on the request.
  - A waiver may be requested for a narrowly defined population of participants. WorkSource Cobb will provide a definition of the participant type and propose a new cap for the participants who meet the definition. The current policy will be updated to define the population, the amount of the new cap, and the frequency of the payments to the participants.
- Source documentation comprised of original invoices or receipts are required for all payments/reimbursements. No photocopies are allowed. Source documentation should allow tracking of funds to a level of expenditure adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of applicable laws and regulations, and be in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. All forms and signatures must be completed in ink. No pencil.
- All original source documentation related to support services must be submitted to the finance department with the completed payment requisition; copies of the source documentation should be maintained in the customer's file.
- Reconciliation of pre-purchased support services (i.e., bus passes, pre-paid gas, clothing, personal care services/products cards and certificates, etc.) must occur at least monthly. Reconciliation must be conducted by the administrative/finance manager, certified by the program services manager and reviewed by the executive director/CEO.
  - All payments must be entered into the GWROPP and be reconciled and determined accurate 60 days' prior the participant exit.
  - All changes to a participant's supportive service situation should be updated in real time in the GWROPP.

- Support service payments/reimbursement must be paid from funds in the program year they were incurred.
- Retention/Follow-up services for participants may be provided on a case-by-case basis for up to one year after initial employment date.
- WorkSource Cobb reserves the right to deny any request for lack of funding or other good

#### 10. Coordination with Social Service Programs

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate with social service providers, including SNAP and TANF. The description should include the utilizations of both programs as a referral source.

The local board will utilize its Workforce Partners Council (WPC) to engage social service programs to participate in the workforce system. The board will identify a contact for Department of Family and Children Services to participate on the WPC and develop a stronger relationship as a resource for customers. Currently, information on services and programs provided by the Department of Family and Children services; such as SNAP and TANF is available to customers in the one-stop resource center. The WPC which includes the one-stop core partners and community social service agencies provides a connection to available resources for the customers serviced in the one-stop. Social Services agencies currently participating on the WPC include:

- The Center for Family Resources, Inc.
- MUST Ministries
- Georgia Department of Community Supervision
- Tommy Nobis Center
- Cobb Douglas Community Services Board
- Goodwill of North Georgia
- Georgia Department of Early Care & Learning



## COORDINATION WITH CORE PARTNERS

### 1. Description of the Workforce System

Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

### Services to Individuals

WorkSource Cobb will continue its efforts to ensure that a wide range of agencies, organizations, businesses, and community groups are involved in planning and delivering services through the workforce development system. A "continuum of services" is envisioned to provide opportunities for all customers regardless of background, skills, or abilities. This conceptualization makes many options available to residents. For example, residents entering the system through WorkSource Cobb will have access to work readiness training through existing programs operated by core partner programs. With the implementation of social distancing amidst the Pandemic and the concerns of COVID 19, WorkSource Cobb has had to rethink its service delivery strategies and offer virtual platforms to service customers. Customers continue to be served and WorkSource adheres to the guidelines set forth by the State of Georgia. WorkSource Cobb is providing career services, training services, work ready workshops, and business services via video chat, telephones, and email. We will continue to enhance services to create more innovative ways to serve customers (job seekers and businesses).

### Services to Businesses

For businesses, the system will provide access to the broadest number of potential candidates and information about their skills and potential, as well as access to relevant training services. WorkSource Cobb's business services model encompasses utilizing a One-Stop collaborative process led by the WSC Business Services Professional to recruit, assess and source talent for employers that have hiring needs. The Business Services Professional is responsible for identifying employers and engaging employers in the wealth of resources available in the workforce ecosystem, including but not limited to: On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), Customized Training (CT). WorkSource Cobb will continue to strengthen this model to expand OJT and IWT services to business and build a talent pool of skilled candidates. This will model will include the tracking of both WIOA and non-WIOA funded individuals to help improve performance.

### Integrated Core Services

Cobb has drawn on its history of strong partner relationships to ensure that its Workforce Development System is integrated. WorkSource Cobb's core partners are co-located at the one-stop to effectively provide career services, employment and training opportunities. WorkSource Cobb has strengthened service delivery by creating an electronic one-stop referral process that can be emailed to partners and tracked by the One-Stop Operator. The referral process streamlines the sharing of information and keeps the customer from repeating the need multiple times. With co-location of partners, WorkSource Cobb will continue to build upon its positive relationships with the Georgia Department of Labor's Cobb/Cherokee Career Center, AARP Foundation, Cobb Adult Education Center, Job Corps, Cobb CDBG program, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, and Chattahoochee Technical College and all are linked through the

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Workforce Development System. This structure connects the resources of each of these segments of the community, as well as increasing the access of residents and businesses to the varied services of the system. To improve services identified under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), WorkSource Cobb entered into a contract with Chattahoochee Technical College to provide a WIOA Coordinator to manage enrollment of WIOA training applicants. The role of the WIOA Coordinator is to recruit, provide WIOA program information, and provide case management of eligible customers. Customers must be enrolling in training options in High Demand Careers, such as healthcare, information technology, skilled trades and/or transportation/distribution/logistics (TDL).

### Effective

Effectiveness is based on maximizing WSC's ability to help identify the best training and job opportunities for each individual, offer a full range of job readiness and training services, and facilitate referrals to appropriate employers. Further, WorkSource Cobb will continue to develop methods of tracking and capturing service data to non-WIOA registrants served through the local workforce system. The Georgia Workforce System only captures performance data for those customers who are registered; it does not account for the larger number of customers served through the resource area at the one-stop, special initiatives, or services by partners that comprise the system.

## **2. Coordination with Wagner-Peyser**

Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Wagner-Peyser services in Cobb County are delivered through the GDOL. Services include a universal public labor exchange system (i.e., employment services) for all job seekers who are legally entitled to work in the United States as well as for employers who are attempting to fill job openings. Wagner-Peyser staff members are also responsible for providing TAA to eligible participants and employers, and assistance to Veterans.

Due to COVID 19, all partner staff have been relocated back to their main offices. Prior to the Pandemic, GDOL has had assigned staff located in the one-stop providing employment services. Previously, WorkSource Cobb assigned a staff member to attend weekly re-employment workshops held at the GDOL Cobb/Cherokee Career Center. With the current situation creating mass layoffs throughout the state, WorkSource has coordinated with GDOL career center staff to include information regarding WIOA career and training services.

The GDOL Career Center and the Cobb Workforce Development Center work diligently to address the complicated issue of providing WIOA and GDOL services to customers in a coordinated and seamless

manner. The MOU and IFA outlines services and the financial contribution offered by GDOL as a core partner of the one-stop. One-Stop Operator has implemented partner and WIOA staff cross training to enhance service delivery within the one-stop. Cross training will be provided annually to ensure WIOA staff and core partners are knowledgeable of services offered in the one-stop. GDOL participates in monthly meetings with core partners and community social services organizations.

The Board has followed the guidance issued by USDOL in the Final Regulations to integrate core partner services into the one-stop structure. It will continue to develop and implement strategies to improve the referral system, integrated case management, and training between Title I workforce services and other core partners

### **3. Coordination with Adult Education**

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of WIOA.

WorkSource Cobb partners with the Cobb Literacy Council and Cobb Adult Education to provide GED classes at the Workforce Development Center and also at the Cobb Adult Education Center. Through these partnerships the Workforce Development Center is able to offer a comprehensive program including: Adult Basic Education Classes in Reading, Math, and Language; ESL classes; GED preparation classes; literacy tutoring; Civics and Citizenship classes; and other services that prepare customers for occupational training or, for example, supporting/partnering with the Adult Education Center on an Integrated Educational Training (IET) project. Computer literacy is also a key element of preparation in working with Adult Education customers. Through the Cobb Literacy Council, WorkSource Cobb has provided funding to purchase books and materials for an IET project for the hospitality industry. The Board integrates Cobb Adult Education Center provides GED classes at the workforce development center for the young adult services. We also coordinate intake and eligibility and TABE testing onsite for customers interested in adult education services. Integrating these services has strengthened and improved core services offered to the community.

The MOU and IFA outlines services and the financial contribution offered by Cobb Adult Education Center as a core partner of the one-stop. One-Stop Operator has implemented partner and WIOA staff cross training to enhance service delivery within the one-stop. Cross training will be provided annually to ensure WIOA staff and core partners are knowledgeable of services offered in the one-stop. Cobb Adult Education Center participates in monthly meetings with core partners and community social services organizations.

WIOA calls for a strengthened role by local workforce development boards in reviewing local Adult Education plans in order to further integrate WIOA Title I and Title II activities in a Career Pathways

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framework aimed at meeting the needs of local employers. Moving forward, it is planned that adult education providers in the county will provide the Board with an outline of grant applications that includes: geographic focus areas served within the grant; how adult education is providing instruction that supports the chosen sector strategies of the region and local area; the partner activities that prepare individuals for careers; Adult Education and WIOA co-enrollment processes; and evidence of a service strategy between the Adult Education and the Cobb Workforce Development Center that serves to promote integrated services through multiple sites and access points in the county, including on-line services. By working together in these and other ways, adult education programs and other WIOA partners will create a more efficient and effective education and workforce development system with improved outcomes that meet employers' increased needs for educational attainment.

The Board has and will continue to follow the lead of the State's Office of Adult Education in emphasizing integration of services in a Career Pathways context. The State 2016 WIOA Integrated Plan commits to this leadership by stating: "OAE will work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to provide comprehensive and wraparound services to program participants. State-level policy and planning bodies provide an opportunity for Adult Education to work with WFD, GDOL, and other key agencies defined in the law. Adult Education will provide resources and services through One-Stop Centers (including intake/orientation for Adult Education services, and transition resources), referral processes, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships."

### 4. Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation

Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

The Board includes representation from the GVRA as a core partner to ensure that accessibility goals for services are constantly monitored and adjustments made as needed. A primary goal of the Board is to help people with disabilities to become fully productive members of society by achieving independence and meaningful employment. This is best achieved via fully integrated services that ensure that persons with disabilities receive access to the full range of assistance available.

The Board works cooperatively and collaboratively to align WIOA career and training services with GVRA to enhance and improve work opportunities for individuals with disabilities. As discussed earlier, the Cobb Workforce Development Center location, along with the mobile unit, are both well-equipped so that individuals with disabilities can easily conduct self-service job search activities. Additionally, as needed, customers are referred to the GVRA offices when they

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have more comprehensive or unique needs that are outside of the expertise of Workforce Center staff.

Currently, GVRA is a direct linkage core partner providing services via phone or video conference. Moving forward with WIOA implementation, the Board will explore having GVRA personnel co-located at the Workforce Development Center on a more frequent basis, with a long-term goal staff co-location. One-Stop Operator has implemented partner and WIOA staff cross training to enhance service delivery within the one-stop. Cross training will be provided annually to ensure WIOA staff and core partners are knowledgeable of services offered in the one-stop.

As noted in the State 2016 WIOA Unified Plan, WIOA places an even greater emphasis than WIA on the integration of Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA services funded under Title I. The Board and its regional partners will specifically work with GVRA on three priorities identified by the state plan:

- **Partnerships** to integrate GVRA services into multi-agency solutions for job seekers, youths, and employers
- **Marketing** to promote GVRA services to eligible customers while addressing confidentiality issues and preventing stigmatization of customers with disabilities
- **Business Services** that position GVRA services for employers as an integral part of business outreach, focusing on the message that hiring customers with disabilities is "good for business".



## PERFORMANCE, ETPL AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

### 1. Description of Performance Measures

Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance in the local area of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system.

Performance measures are negotiated annually to assess the performance of the local area. During the time of drafting this plan, new common measures for negotiations are pending. Current program measures have been attached.

**THE NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE STANDARDS ARE PROVIDED AS ATTACHMENT 2.**



## 2. One-Stop System Performance and Assessment

Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

### Locally/Regionally Developed One-Stop Performance Standards

In the past years, the Board had not developed local performance standards for the One-Stop in addition to the required WIOA Indicators of Performance. Unofficially, center usage was counted manually and had been a measurement used to gauge success of the One-Stop Center. Also, customer survey cards were used to determine satisfactory customer service. Going forward, the Board will develop performance standards to begin effective July 1, 2020, as follows.

### Performance Standards

- Customer Service: Achieve 85% satisfactory or above rating for PY20/21
- Service Integration: Educate 75% of all new customers on One-Stop program services
- Center Usage: Increase new customer usage by 40%
- Social Media Satisfaction: Achieve a 4-star or higher satisfaction rating for online customer reviews

The criteria for these performance factors are based on maintaining a continuous improvement model for service delivery, educating all customers on the myriad of services available in the One-Stop, servicing an increased number of job seekers, and improve the online presence.

Currently, an Access database tool is used to track One-Stop center daily usage per visit. This tool captures information regarding services accessed by the customer during their visit, including core partner services. The online customer service survey will create data to track customer satisfaction. All customers are required to register in the Georgia Workforce Online Participant Portal which is used regionally and statewide.

### One-Stop System and Regional Service Delivery Assessment

The Board adheres to the TCSG/OWD Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter (WIG LS-19-

15) , Georgia One-Stop and Affiliate Certification Guidelines as its formal One-Stop Certification process to assess the Cobb County local delivery system every two years. At a minimum, the Board verifies that the local workforce development system provides universal access to the programs, services and activities described in WIOA, including having at least one physical center located within local area supplemented by multiple points of access and referral.

As part of our One-Stop Certification process, the Board updates its Business Plan and submits it



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to the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Workforce Division, including the following elements:

- Vision and mission statement
- Diagram and narrative of customer flow through our system
- Description of the clear flow of services between all partners
- Overview of the facility's service delivery structure
- Plan for increased enrollment in various programs and increased use of facilities
- System for referring individuals to training services and the use of ITAs
- Description of leveraged resources with multiple funding sources, educational grants, and other financial aid programs
- Community outreach plan
- Overview of local One-Stop partners and the ways in which services are integrated.

With respect to regional initiatives, at this time the five local boards that comprise the Greater Atlanta Workforce Region have not adopted a formal process or methodology for jointly assessing service delivery structures and procedures. This is an item that the Board intends to explore with regional partners in implementing regional plan goals.

### 3. ETPL System

Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

#### a. **Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.**

One of the goals of local Executive Director is to work regionally to identify various procedures, tools, templates and materials that can be utilized across the five (5) workforce areas. The desired outcome for consistency in this approach includes improving customer service for stakeholders including job seekers, our business community, and/or training provider.

Solicitation of bids are made through a public invitation process and through the posting of a training provider application on the WorkSource Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) website, the lead agency of the ITA Work Group (formerly ITA Regional Committee). The online training provider application packet includes a responsiveness checklist, meeting and application submission dates. WorkSource Cobb continues to work with the five WDBs to determine policies and procedures applicable for the region.

#### b. **Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.**

The Metro Atlanta ITA Work Group (formerly the Regional ITA Committee) reviews and/or approves WIOA training provider applications for the five Workforce Boards. The Work Group is

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comprised of professional individuals with knowledge pertaining to education and employment for the region. Programs are evaluated based on past performance including program completion, credential attainment, wages at placement, and training-related employment. Pre-award visits are also made, interviews conducted with staff and/or current students to measure the level of customer satisfaction.

**c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.**

Applications are reviewed for completeness and responsiveness. Notification of a denial and/or non-responsiveness will be forwarded to the provider. The notifications will denote the reasons along with the information to resolve and resubmit training application.

In the event that an ITA customer or training provider has been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA funded program or activity, a compliant may be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer. Each compliant must be filed in writing, either electronically or hard copy, and must contain complainant's contact information, a clear description of the allegations in sufficient details along with the complainant signature.

Once received, the EO Officer will provide an initial written notice within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the compliant. The compliant will be processed and a Notice of Final Action is issued within ninety (90) days. If WorkSource Cobb/CWDB has not provided complainant with a written decision within ninety (90) days of the filing of the compliant, complainant need not wait for a decision to be issued. Complainant may file a complaint with TCSG within thirty (30) days of the expiration of the 90-day period. If complainant is dissatisfied with WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's resolution of his or her equal opportunity compliant, complainant may file a complaint with TCSG. Such complaint must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date you received notice of WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's proposed resolution.

After an investigation is conducted by the Equal Opportunity Officer, mediation may be recommended which will be conducted by an impartial mediator. The period for attempting to resolve the complaint through mediation will be thirty (30) days from the date the complainant chooses mediation; but must be performed within ninety (90) days of the initial filing date. Upon a successful mediation, a conciliation agreement is signed that the complaint has been resolved. A copy is sent to TCSG/Office of Workforce Development within ten (10) days of execution. In the event of an unsuccessful mediation, WorkSource Cobb/CWDB will issue a Notice of Final Action within ninety (90) days. The complainant may amend complaint at any point prior to the beginning of mediation or the issuance of the Notice of Final Action.

- d. Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process). Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.**

As part of the regional partnership, current providers making changes to program description, program location and/or total training cost are required to submit a Program Change Request (PCR) Form. Only changes to the total training cost exceeding \$100 must be approved by the ITA Work Group. The PCR form is made available to all training providers and located on ARC website. Once changes are approved, the change of information is then updated and entered into the on the state training portal system.

- e. Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.**

The Agreement regarding the Management of a Regional Individual Training Account System by and between the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and CobbWorks, Inc. provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of each party involved. Those roles and responsibilities include updating provider information in the state VOS system, the collaboration of program review and approvals, as well as board/staff member support to the ITA process.

- f. Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.**

The WorkSource Cobb/CobbWorks Training Provider Agreement sets forth the roles and responsibilities of the provider as it relates to credentialing, advisement, training-related employment and follow-up services to customers eligible under the WIOA program. The eleven (11) month time period (July-June) defines the parameters and/or relationship of the provider and administrative entity. The Agreement speaks to program approvals, reimbursements, program completion/performance, and recruitment.

Any new ITA Training Providers must also complete a Cobb County Vendor Application and W-9 for payment processing and/or reimbursement of approved program cost.

- g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).**

Staff works with individuals seeking training and/or employment services by providing resources or program information prior to their selection of a training provider and/or training program.

While customer satisfaction is a top priority, the customer must meet entry-level criteria set forth by the school or program, as well as the local labor market criterion, indicating a need for those skills obtained during training.

A training participant determined eligible for WIOA funded services may select a provider from the ETPL after consultation with a WIOA Career and Training Advisor (CTA).

- Program should not exceed 104 weeks (two years)

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- An ITA will not be approved for a customer for whom training has been provided for by WIOA funds within the past twenty-four (24) months.
- Out-of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIOA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
- ITA funding limits are, \$7000 for the first year of training and \$10,000 for training that exceeds beyond one year.
- Eligible participants must reside in Cobb County. If the customer is a dislocated worker and resides outside of the service area, he/she may receive training if the last dislocation employer is located within the local area.

#### h. Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.

Under WIOA, registered apprenticeship programs are automatically eligible for inclusion on the ETPL. Registered Apprenticeships are not subject to the same application process and/or performance requirements.

Programs that make such request locally are reviewed by the Board and WorkSource Cobb staff to explore coordination with appropriate sector-based planning groups and education/training providers who might want to develop specialized recruitment and/or pre-apprenticeship programs. Information on the apprenticeship program is then passed on to the Department of Economic Development's Workforce Development Division of inclusion on the statewide ETPL. Exploration of new or expanded apprenticeship programs will also be a topic of discussion among regional workforce development directors within the context of sector-base initiatives with employers.

#### 4. Implementation of Technology

Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

Expanding the use of technology is an assiduous task for enhancing services to customers. While technology plays a critical role in service delivery, WSC is mindful in not losing the human touch that is often necessary in servicing customer with barriers.

To improve the customer's overall experience and enhance services for both employers and participants, WSC has made a commitment to investing in technology. For many customers, the first point of contact is the **WSC Website**. The website improves access and awareness of services for customers. Providing up-to-date information and 24/7 easy access. WSC **Social Media Presence** (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) expands awareness of the resources and services within the workforce ecosystem, increasing customer's ability to engage and register for services.

WSC is working collaboratively with its regional WDAs (DeKalb, ARC, Fulton and Atlanta) to

## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

identify and procure a **Customer Relationship Management** tool (CRM). The CRM is a centralized database that allows the LWDA to collect data and manage customer relationships. The tool will improve each LWDA's ability to service employers by managing communications and interactions with them as well as provide the ability to collect and capture data that can be used to improve services and increase penetration rates within each local area.

Most recently and in response to the pandemic emergency, WSC established a **Virtual Service Delivery Model**. Customers can email or call to request access to services. The response results in:

- Telephone consultation with career coach or counselor
- Virtual WIOA Orientation via Teams or Zoom Technology platforms
- Mailing or Emailing a WIOA application
- Online VOS upload (secure State portal) to help complete the process, customers can now also upload documents to the VOS system.

A part of this model also includes access to free virtual professional development workshops to support improvement in work readiness skills.

WSC currently in the process of including an **Online Chat Option** to the website to further enhance service delivery and improve services to customers. This feature will bring a number of benefits to customers including but not limited to increasing accessibility for services, by providing the opportunity to ask questions quickly and easily.

Each of the WSC technology tools/platforms will strengthen WSC's ability to measure service delivery. Each possesses its own data collection/reporting tools allowing WSC to incorporate in its performance quality improvement plans. Data collection and ongoing review will help to improve service delivery by helping staff to make informed decisions about service delivery and develop strategies that address issues and/or build upon success seen in the data.



## STATE INITIATIVES AND VISION

### 1. **State Branding**

Provide a description for how the area has adopted and will continue to utilize the state brand.

The Board, WorkSource Cobb and service partners are committed to the WorkSource Georgia brand. WorkSource Cobb/CobbWorks Inc. updated all resources and materials related to its interface with the public, such as websites, facility signage, mobile career center, letterhead,

brochures, pamphlets, and other related materials to ensure clarity and consistency in messaging and outreach. The Communications Manager oversees all collateral where the moniker is used to ensure adherence to the WorkSource Georgia Branding Guide. Staff are also educated and trained on the brand, including telephone and email protocols.

When referencing the five local workforce development areas in the regional plan collectively, the brand and logo WorkSource Metro Atlanta is used to represent Region 3. WorkSource Metro Atlanta is working together to provide a unified WorkSource outreach initiative, which will potentially include billboards, social media, radio, print materials, and a website ([atlworks.org](http://atlworks.org)), to help further solidify the cohesiveness of WorkSource Georgia messaging in the region. The [atlworks.org](http://atlworks.org) website is especially key to the regional brand. All regional outreach initiatives will drive traffic directly to [atlworks.org](http://atlworks.org) site to ensure that all messaging is cohesive. Any individual, no matter their location, will be able to easily access their local workforce agency through the site as well as regional resources and events.

## 2. Priority of Service

Describe how the area/region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to those specified by state and federal policy.

Priority for adult services must be given to recipients of public assistance or other low-income individuals, with added priority for individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority applies regardless of funding levels. Individualized career services and training services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, to:

- Public assistance recipients and other low-income adults; and
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Veterans under WIOA § 3 (63)(A) receive priority of service as described in the Jobs for Veterans Act (38 U.S.C. 4215 (2)). Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for adult programs must receive the highest priority for services. TEGL 3-15 references TEGL 10-09 regarding order of priority for veterans and eligible spouses. Priority must be provided in the following order:

First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance are low-income individuals, or who are basic skills deficient. Military earnings are not to be included as income for veterans and transitioning service members. Second, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses who meet WIOA priority criteria. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups. Last, to individuals outside the groups given priority under WIOA

One of the most effective ways WSC coordinates and aligns services across programs and partners is by continuing to share efforts, initiatives and needs with our local GDOL

representatives. Their LVER and DVOP staff are available for intensive employment and employability development. LVERs provide outreach and discuss the benefits of hiring veterans with employers, while DVOPs provide individual services to veterans and assist them in overcoming barriers to employment through intensive services and case management. WSC will continue to promote our services in a manner that will increase training, employment, job retention, high earnings, and occupational skills improvement for our Veterans.

#### **Additional Target Population:**

##### *ESL*

WSC has identified a need to increase the delivery of services to our ESL population. Cobb County currently has a 16% ESL population with substantial barriers to training and employment. WSC seeks to facilitate the development and progress of ESL community in the workforce and increase access to entrepreneurial opportunities, thereby meeting the needs of employers and promoting the growth of the county. WSC seeks to enhance the service capacity and receptivity of agencies, nonprofits, and community-based organizations to better address the needs of ESL community inclusion and mutual understanding among ESL communities and service providers.

In accordance with the principles of universal access and customer-centered design under WIOA, WSC currently provides the ability to communicate in over 25 high demand languages with access to video interpretation and document translation.

In an effort to provide services to the ESL population, WSC will conduct workshops and develop printed materials in primary languages. Workshops will focus on an overview of services, job search assistance, referral to resources and training. Printed materials include flyers for programming, upcoming events and collateral services.

If there is a need for ESL classes, a referral to Cobb Adult Literacy is created. The ESL classes focus primarily on mastery of English through six different levels of communication skills and level promotion is determined by progress checks and assessment measures. Cobb Adult Education currently provides additional certification training for the ESL community. Interested customer can participate in Front Desk Representative/Hospitality classes through Integrated Education Training. An IET program must include the following three components: adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training (\$463.36). More than half of individuals who participates in IET programs are ESL. Once IET is complete WSC Business Services Professionals work to identify training related employment opportunities.

WSC continues to develop outreach strategies and techniques to reach target populations; and determining that our programs are meeting the needs of target populations, including particular training needs and wraparound services.

WSC will develop the following strategies to ensure efficiency:

- Provide workshops and printed materials in primary language
- Design and implement practices that actively engage industry sectors;



## Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

- Balance traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy;
- Include both virtual and center-based service delivery for job-seekers, workers, and employers;
- Develop and maintain integrated case management systems;
- Ensure WSC continues to stay abreast of all resources available for our customers

WSC will continue to coordinate efforts with mandated partners, community partners and local organizations to develop additional and strengthen existing career pathway opportunities for our ESL customers.

### 3. Alignment with State Goals

Describe how the area/region will align with each of the goals listed in the State Unified Plan.

#### a. **Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.**

WSC's Local Plan has taken an intentional approach with thoughtful progression in the development of strategies that align with the State's goals listed in the State Unified Plan. The plan utilizes a sector partnership framework to inform and guide strategic workforce development plans, programs and processes while enhancing partnership coordination for a demand-driven workforce system. Sector partnerships play a paramount role in the WSC local plan, being used as an effective organizing framework for positively impacting economic and workforce development activities within the local area and region.

### **STATE GOALS**

#### **Goal 1**

Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.

#### **Goal 2**

Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.

#### **Goal 3**

Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities.

#### **Goal 4**

Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels.

#### **Goal 5**

Alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic



#### Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

populations in the workforce system.

WSC will continue to work collaborative with local and regional partners to include but not be limited to a variety of stakeholders connected to industry sectors – including local colleges, labor unions, education and training providers and community and economic development – to address skill shortages while developing talent pipelines of skilled workers to meet future demand. These partnerships promote industry growth and competitiveness and improve worker training, retention and advancement, career pathways, job re-definitions, and shared training and support capacities that facilitate the advancement of workers at all skill levels.

Furthermore, WSC is committed to establishing robust sector partnership policies that include funding, technical assistance, and program initiatives that support utilizing the workforce ecosystem to increase prosperity both locally and regionally.

**b. Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.**

WSC is committed to continuing utilizing an integrated service-delivery model. WSC currently works closely with its regional partners to identify regional challenges and leverage resources to support effective solutions. Evidence of this partnership has been previously described above, examples include, (a) working with regional WDA's to develop and implement an outreach campaign that expands awareness of the resources and services within the workforce development ecosystem - targeting employers and jobseekers; (b) working with regional partners to execute an regional Bachelors of Nursing IWT program – targeting lower wage healthcare workers; (c) and most recently discussing the development of regional virtual job fairs. This regional integration will allow each LWDA to reduce necessary expenditures through cost-sharing with the other local agencies, leverage available necessary skills within the participating LWDA to save potential procurement costs and improve customer outcomes through a broader service reach.

**c. Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities.**

In order to meet the workforce needs of the state, each local area must align with the described goals in the State Unified Plan. This will require full utilization of the workforce ecosystem to help meet the needs for both rural and urban communities while increasing statewide prosperity. This local plan speaks to a variety of existing strategies as well as emerging strategies that utilize a robust sector partnership framework based on local and regional needs. The framework is built upon an integrated service delivery model that supports the allocation of resources, braided funding strategies, technical assistance, strong partnerships and strategic investment across the region. WSC is committed to an ongoing participation in existing partnerships and new partnerships that speak to community and industry needs and supports economic mobility for its community. WSC will also seek out opportunities to serve as an intermediary/convener, coordinating efforts of sector partnerships. With this in mind, WSC is committed to quality

#### Area 4: Cobb County-WIOA Plan 2020-2024

partnerships that support intentional efforts which identifies and responds to each local area's community and industry needs effectively and efficiently through consistent interaction amongst the partnership.

**d. Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels and alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system.**

Aligning the workforce system with education at all levels is and will continue to be an integral component within workforce development strategies. Strengthening the ability of these systems to work collaboratively improves our ability to develop a well-trained and educated workforce that continues to promote regional job growth. WSC will utilize new and existing tools and tactics for working with employers and education/training providers to ensure that all population segments are identified as viable future talent. WSC will work with partners, such as colleges, K-12 schools, community organizations, human service orgs, employers, other regional LWDAs, etc. to:

- Bring educators and business leaders together to support student transitions into key economic sectors
- Utilize a data-driven approach to identify collaborative strategies that support continuous improvement for post-secondary education
- Expand opportunities for internships, paid work-experiences and IWT
- Identify opportunities for leveraging resources
- Increase the number of youth enrolled for post-secondary education and employment for an improved performance metric.
- Strategically focus support on a greater number of apprenticeships and other Earn-and-Learn training models
- Develop old and new strategies that support low-wage workers in attaining additional credentials that will lead to wage increases and/or self-sufficiency.
- Develop new and support existing strategies that focus on training underserved populations for fill the skills gaps in the talent pipeline (e.g. Ex-Offenders, women in skilled trades, ESL populations, low-income, persons with disabilities).



ATTACHMENT LIST

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### Cobb Workforce Development Board

The composition of the following list of individuals is compliant with mandated WIOA criteria.

NAME	Title and Affiliation	WIOA Criteria	Term Expiration
<b>Jennifer Debusk</b> Vice-Chair of Exec Committee Finance & Admin	Controller NPSG Global	Business	June 30, 2022
<b>Steve Foster</b> Cobb Workforce Partnership	Exec VP Economic Development Georgia Power	Business	June 30, 2022
<b>Mark Gibson</b> Immediate Past <b>CHAIR</b>	Assistant General Auditor, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta	Business	June 30, 2020
<b>Timothy Gordon</b> Literacy Council <b>CHAIR</b>	Vice President of Operations, InfoMart	Business	June 30, 2020
<b>Pat Horton</b> Cobb Workforce Partnership	Workforce Initiatives Coordinator, Georgia Hospital Association	Business	June 30, 2023
<b>Matt Hoyman</b> Cobb Workforce Partnership	Manager, Holder Construction Company	Business	June 30, 2022

<b>Dana Johnson</b>  Business Partnerships- <b>CHAIR</b>	Executive Vice President of Economic Development,  Cobb Chamber of Commerce	Business	June 30, 2022
<b>Patricia Kellner</b>  Planning, Governance & Organizational Development	HR Director Kimco Facility Services .	Business	June 30, 2020
<b>Richard Mohr</b>  Board <b>CHAIR</b>  Finance & Admin	Chief Technology Officer and VP of New Products, FMS at Ryder System, Inc.	Business	June 30, 2022
<b>Traron Moore</b>  Cobb Workforce Partnership	WarnerMedia, Director of HR	Business	June 30, 2021
<b>Esther Prieto</b>  Cobb Workforce Partnership	Cobb EMC Director of HR Operations	Business	June 30, 2022
<b>Dennis Winslow</b>  Cobb Workforce Partnership	President Win-Tech, Inc.	Business	June 30, 2022

NAME	Title and Affiliation	WIOA Criteria	Term Expiration
<b>Daneeia Badio-McCray</b>  Youth Committee <b>CHAIR</b>	President, My Max, Inc.  & Marietta PAL/Marietta Police Department	Community-based program for <u>youth</u> employment services	June 30, 2020
<b>Kimberly Roberts</b>  Planning, Governance & Organizational Development	Managing Director, Cobb County CDBG Program Office W. Frank Newton, Inc.	Community-based program for individuals with <u>barriers</u> to employment	June 30, 2021
<b>Jeff Rogers</b>  Workforce Partners' Council	Administrative Director, Mechanical Trades Institute- JATT	Labor Apprenticeship Program	June 30, 2020
<b>Jason Gray</b>  Workforce Partners' Council	Business Manager IUEC Local 32	Organized Labor	June 30, 2022
<b>Mark Templeton</b>  Workforce Partners' Council	Business Agent IUOE Local 926	Organized Labor	June 30, 2022

NAME	Title and Affiliation	WIOA Criteria	Term Expiration
<b>Shane Evans</b>  Cobb Workforce Partnership & Workforce Partners' Council	Dean of Economic Development, Chattahoochee Technical College	1) Higher Education: Technical College 2) Economic Development	June 30, 2021
<b>Valerie Carter</b>  Workforce Partners' Council	Service Area Manager Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency	Rehabilitation Act	June 30, 2022
<b>Daniel Cummings</b>  Cobb Workforce Partnership	Economic Development Manager City of Marietta	Economic Development	June 30, 2022

<b>Francia Browne</b>  Literacy Council	Director, Cobb County Adult Ed	Adult Education	June 30, 2020
<b>Elizabeth Scott</b>  Cobb Workforce Partnership & Workforce Partners' Council	Regional Coordinator, Region 3 N Cobb, Cherokee, North Fulton and Gwinnett Counties Georgia Department of Labor	State Employment Service Office (Wagner Peyser)	June 30, 2021
<b>NAME</b>	<b>Title and Affiliation</b>	<b>WIOA Criteria</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
<b>Bryant McDaniel</b>  Planning, Governance & Organizational Development <b>CHAIR</b>	Retired General Manager, Coca-Cola Enterprises	Other/Community Volunteer	June 30, 2021

Membership Distribution		
Category	Number of Representatives	Percentage of Representatives
Business	12	<b>52</b>
Workforce	5	<b>21.7</b>
Education & Government/Economic Development	5	21.7
Other	1	4
		Total Members: 23

**Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance**

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<b>WIOA Performance Measure</b>	<b>PY20 Goal</b>	<b>PY21 Goal</b>
Adult Q2 Entered Employment	77.5	78
Adult Q4 Entered Employment	75	76.5
Adult Median Earnings	\$6000	\$6200
Adult Credential Rate	70	65
Adult In-Program Skills Gain	38.6	39.6
DW Q2 Entered Employment	78	80
DW Q4 Entered Employment	75	76.5
DW Median Earnings	\$7000	\$7200
DW Credential Rate	70	66
DW In-Program Skills Gain	29	31
Youth Q2 Placement in Employment or Education	68	70
Youth Q4 Placement in Employment or Education	67	69
Youth Median Earnings	\$3000	\$3200
Youth Credential Rate	60	60
Youth In-Program Skills Gain	38.6	39.6
Employer Measure		



**Comment 1**

Originating Entity: Tim Gordon, Cobb Workforce Development Board Member

Comment: "ITAs" looks very big on the table of contents.

**Comment 2**

Originating Entity: Jim Montgomery, staff

Comment:  
On page 45, it mentions that the Mobile Career Center has Printer, scanner, and copier services available. We only have a printer available on the MCC.

**Comment 3**

Originating Entity:

Comment:

**Comment 4**

Originating Entity:

Comment:



## Equal Opportunity Complaint & General Grievance Policy and Procedure

**For Applicants, Participants, Other Interested or Affected Parties**

<b>SECTION I:</b>	<b>Equal Opportunity Complaint Policy</b>
<b>SECTION II:</b>	<b>General Grievance Policy</b>
<b>SECTION III:</b>	<b>Complaints of Fraud, Abuse, or Other Alleged Criminal Activity</b>
<b>SECTION IV:</b>	<b>Complaints against Public Schools</b>

### **I. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMPLAINT POLICY**

WorkSource Cobb/Cobb Workforce Development Board (CWDB) adheres to the following United States law: "Equal Opportunity Is the Law". It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following basis: race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas: (1) Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; (2) providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or (3) making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities.

#### **What To Do If You Believe You Have Experienced Discrimination**

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either:

- The recipient's Equal Opportunity Officer (or the person whom the recipient has designated for this purpose); or
- The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210 or electronically as directed on the CRC Web site at [www.dol.gov/crc](http://www.dol.gov/crc).
- If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center.
- If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you may file a complaint with CRC before receiving that Notice. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient).
- If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

A **complaint** is an allegation of discrimination on the grounds a person, or any specific class of individuals, has been or is being discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship status, or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity as prohibited by WIOA or part 29 CFR 38.69. An allegation of retaliation, intimidation or reprisal for taking action or participating in any action to secure rights protected under WIOA will be processed as a **complaint**.

**Note: A complaint cannot be processed as both a program complaint and as a discrimination complaint.**

## **FILING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION (under Equal Opportunity Complaint Policy)**

**Who May File:** Any person requesting aid, benefits, services or training through the WorkSource Cobb workforce system; eligible applicants and/or registrants; participants; employees, applicants for employment; service providers, eligible training providers (as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act), and staff with the workforce system that believes he/she has been or is being subjected to discrimination prohibited under the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions 29 CFR Part 38 and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

WorkSource Cobb/CWDB is prohibited from discriminating against a person, or any specific class of individuals, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship status, or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity as prohibited by WIOA or part 29 CFR 38.69 in admission or access to, opportunity or treatment in, or employment in the administration of or in connection with, any WIOA funded program or activity. If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within **180 days** from the date of the alleged violation with:

**ALISA JACKSON, EO OFFICER  
WORKSOURCE COBB  
463 COMMERCE PARK DRIVE, SUITE 100  
MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060  
(770) 528-8066  
TDD: 711, voice: 1-800-255-0056,  
[ajackson@cobbworks.org](mailto:ajackson@cobbworks.org)**

**Each complaint must be filed in writing, either electronically or in hard copy, and must contain the following information:**

- (A) The complainant's name, mailing address, and, if available, email address (or another means of contacting the complainant).
- (B) The identification of the respondent (the individual or entity that the complainant alleges is responsible for the discrimination).
- (C) A clear description of the allegations in sufficient detail including the date(s) and timeline that the alleged violation occurred to allow the recipient, as applicable, to decide whether: (1) what agency has jurisdiction over the complaint; (2) the complaint was filed in time; and (3) the complaint has apparent merit; in other words, whether the complainant's allegations, if true, would indicate noncompliance with any of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA or part 29 CFR Part 38.
- (D) The written or electronic signature of the complainant or the written or electronic signature of the complainant's representative.

### **Complaint Processing Procedure**

An initial written notice to the complainant will be provided within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the complaint. The notice will include the following information pursuant to part 29 CFR 38.72:

- (1) Acknowledgement of complaint received including date received; notice that the complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process; notice of rights contained in §38.35; and notice that the complainant has the right to request and receive, at no cost, auxiliary aids and services, language assistance services, and that this notice will be translated into the non-English languages as required in §§38.4(h) and (i), 38.34, and 38.36.
- (2) A written statement of issue(s) which includes a list of the issues raised in the complaint; for each issue, a statement of whether or not the issue is accepted for investigation or rejected and the reasons for each rejection after performing a period of fact-finding.
- (3) Notice that the complainant may resolve the issue through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) any time after the complaint has been filed, but before a Notice of Final Action has been issued.

If the complaint does not fall within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act jurisdiction for processing complaints alleging discrimination under Section 188 or Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination provisions at 29 CFR Part 38.74, the complainant will be notified in writing within five (5) business days of making such determination. The notification shall include the basis of the determination as well as a statement of the complainant's right to file with the Civil Rights Center (CRC) within thirty (30) days of the determination.

Upon determination that the complaint has merit and is within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act jurisdiction and period of fact-finding or investigation of the circumstances underlying the complaint.

### **Complaint Processing Time Frame**

A complaint will be processed and Notice of Final Action issued within ninety (90) days of receipt of the complaint pursuant to 29 CFR 38.72. Complainant may elect to file his or her equal opportunity complaint with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Office of Workforce Development (OWD). TCSG OWD's contact information is as follows: Britney Singer, Compliance Director, 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150, Atlanta, Georgia 30345-4304, (404) 679-1371, [wioacompliance@tcsgeu.edu](mailto:wioacompliance@tcsgeu.edu).

If WorkSource Cobb/CWDB has not provided complainant with a written decision within ninety (90) days of the filing of the complaint, complainant need not wait for a decision to be issued. Complainant may file a complaint with TCSG or CRC within thirty (30) days of the expiration of the 90-day period. If complainant is dissatisfied with WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's resolution of his or her equal opportunity complaint, complainant may file a complaint with TCSG. Such complaint must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date you received notice of WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's proposed resolution.

### **OR**

Complaints may be initially filed or appealed to the Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC) U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210 or electronically as directed on the CRC website at [www.dol.gov/crc](http://www.dol.gov/crc) within thirty (30) days of complainant's receipt of either WorkSource Cobb/CWDB Notice of Final Action or TCSG Notice of Final Action. In other words, within one hundred twenty (120) days Complainant may file his or her appeal.

### **Resolution Process**

**Alternative Dispute Resolution:** Complainant must be given a choice as to the manner in which they have their complaint resolved. After an investigation is conducted by the Equal Opportunity Officer, ADR may be chosen by the complainant to resolve the issues, as long as a Notice of Final Action has not been issued. Mediation is recommended ADR and will be conducted by an impartial mediator. Complainant must notify the Equal Opportunity Officer within ten (10) days of receiving the Notice of Issue Statement letter of whether ADR is selected to resolve the dispute. WorkSource Cobb/CWDB will provide an impartial mediator and will provide interested parties information regarding the arrangements (date, time, and location).

**Time Frame:** The period for attempting to resolve the complaint through mediation will be thirty (30) days from the date the complainant chooses mediation; but must be performed within ninety (90) days of the initial filing date.

**Successful Mediation:** Upon completion of successful mediation, the complainant and respondent will both sign a conciliation agreement attesting that the complaint has been resolved. A copy of the conciliation agreement will be provided to Technical College Systems of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development within ten (10) days of the date the conciliation agreement was signed.

**Unsuccessful Mediation:** In the event mediation was not successful, WorkSource Cobb/CWDB shall proceed with issuing a Notice of Final Action within the ninety (90) day limit.

**Complainant Responsibility:** The complainant may amend the complaint at any point prior to the beginning of mediation or the issuance of the Notice of Final Action. The complainant may withdraw the complaint at any time by written notification.

**Breach of Agreement:** Any party to any agreement reached under ADR may file a complaint in the event the agreement is breached with Britney Singer, Compliance Director, Technical College Systems of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development, 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150, Atlanta, Georgia 30345-4304 or Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC) U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210. The non-breaching party may file a complaint within thirty (30) days of the date that party learns of the alleged breach (29 CFR 38.72).

## **II. GENERAL GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Any person applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I (WIOA) paid for by WorkSource Cobb/Cobb Workforce Development Board (CWDB) will be treated fairly. WorkSource Cobb/CWDB will make every effort to resolve all general, non-discriminatory complaints informally between those involved before a grievance is filed. Grievances may be filed in accordance with the written procedures established by WorkSource Cobb/CWDB. **If you believe a violation of Title I of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or regulations of the program has occurred, you have the right to file a grievance.**

A **grievance** is a complaint about customer service, working conditions, wages, work assignment, etc., arising in connection with WIOA Title I funded programs operated by WIOA recipients including service providers, eligible training providers, one-stop partners and other contractors.

**FILING A GENERAL GRIEVANCE (violations of the act or regulations not alleging discrimination)**

**Who May File:** Any person, including WIOA program participants, applicants, staff, employers, board members or any other interested parties who believes they have received unfair treatment in a WIOA Title I funded program.

Any person may attempt to resolve all issues of unfair treatment by working with the appropriate manager and/or supervisor and staff member, service provider, or one-stop partner involved informally prior to a written grievance being filed.

All complaints as described in the previous definition may be filed within one hundred twenty (120) days after the act in question by first completing and submitting the General Grievance Form to:

**SONYA GRANT, PRESIDENT/CEO  
WORKSOURCE COBB  
463 COMMERCE PARK DRIVE, SUITE 100  
MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060  
(770) 528-8072  
sgrant@cobbworks.org**

**Grievance Processing Procedure**

A complaint may be filed by completion and submission of the General Grievance Form located at [www.worksourcecobb.org](http://www.worksourcecobb.org). WorkSource Cobb/CWDB will issue a written resolution within sixty (60) days of the date the complaint was filed. Pursuant to Section 181 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WorkSource Cobb/CWDB shall provide the grievant with an opportunity for a hearing within sixty (60) days of the complaint's filing, if requested in writing by the grievant. In the event a hearing is not requested, WorkSource Cobb/CWDB shall issue a decision as to whether provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act were violated. In the event the grievant is dissatisfied with WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's decision, he or she may appeal the decision to the Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development (OWD) within sixty (60) days of the date of the decision. If such an appeal is made, the OWD shall issue a final determination within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the appeal.

In the event WorkSource Cobb/CWDB does issue a written resolution within the sixty (60) days of the complaint's filing as required, the grievant has the automatic right to file his or her complaint with the Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development.

**Hearing Process**

A hearing on any complaint filed shall be conducted as soon as reasonably possible, but within sixty (60) days of the complaint's filing. Within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the request for a hearing, WorkSource Cobb/CWDB shall: (1) respond in writing acknowledging the request to the grievant; and (2) notify the grievant and respondent of a hearing date. The notice shall include, but not limited to: (1) date of issuance; (2) name of grievant; (3) name of respondent against whom the complaint has been filed; (4) a statement reiterating that both parties may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing; (5) the date, time, place of the hearing, and the name of the hearing officer; (6) a statement of the alleged violation(s) of WIOA; (7) copy of any policies and procedures for the hearing or identification of where such policies may be found; and (8) name, address, and telephone number of the contact person issuing the notice.

The hearing shall be conducted in compliance with federal regulations. The hearing shall have, at a minimum, the following components: (1) an impartial hearing officer selected by WorkSource Cobb/CWDB; (2) an opportunity for both the grievant and respondent to present an opening statement, witnesses, and evidence; (3) an opportunity for each party to cross-examine the other party's witnesses; and (4) a record of the hearing which WorkSource Cobb/CWDB shall create and maintain.

The hearing officer, considering the evidence presented by the grievant and respondent, shall issue a written decision which shall serve as WorkSource Cobb/CWDB's official resolution of the complaint. The decision shall include the following information: (1) the date, time, and place of hearing; (2) a recitation of the issues alleged in the complaint; (3) a summary of any evidence and witnesses presented by the grievant and respondent; (4) an analysis of the issues as related to the facts; and (5) a decision addressing each issue alleged in the complaint.

No applicant, participant, employee, service provider or training provider will be intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against because they have made a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

### **Appeal Process**

An appeal may be requested by contacting the Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development, Attention: Britney Singer, Compliance Director, 1800 Century Place N.E., Suite 150, Atlanta, Georgia 30345-4304, (404) 679- 1371, [wioacompliance@tcsgeorgia.edu](mailto:wioacompliance@tcsgeorgia.edu) within sixty (60) days of the date of the decision.

### **III. COMPLAINTS OF FRAUD, ABUSE, OR OTHER ALLEGED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

In cases of suspected fraud, abuse or other alleged criminal activity, you should direct your concerns to the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, at 1-866-435-7644 or [inspector.general@oig.dhs.gov](mailto:inspector.general@oig.dhs.gov).

### **IV. COMPLAINTS AGAINST PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

If the complaint is not resolved informally and it involves public schools of the State of Georgia, the grievance procedure will comply with WIOA and OCGA 20-2-1160.

**I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURE AND UNDERSTAND THE INFORMATION PROVIDED WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT.**

---

**Participant Signature**

---

**Date**

---

**Print Name**

---

**Last 4 SS#**

---

**Parent/Guardian Signature  
(if participant is under age 18)**



**Attachment 5: General Grievance Form**  
(For Non-Discrimination)

**For Applicants, Participants, Other Interested or Affected Parties**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please complete for a general complaint. Once you have completed the appropriate questions, please sign and date at the end of this form. If you require assistance in completing this form, please contact WorkSource Cobb and request to speak to a manager or supervisor.

*Pursuant to Section 181 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WorkSource Cobb shall provide the grievant with an opportunity for a hearing within sixty (60) days of the complaint's filing, if requested in writing. If a hearing is not requested, WorkSource Cobb shall issue a decision as to whether provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act were violated. In the event the grievant is dissatisfied with the WorkSource Cobb's decision, he or she may appeal Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development (OWD) Compliance Team. If such an appeal is made, the OWD shall issue a final determination within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the appeal.*

**WorkSource Cobb**

ATTN: Sonya Grant, President/CEO  
463 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 100, Marietta, GA 30060  
Office: (770) 528-8072; Fax: (770) 528-8078  
Submissions should be sent to: [sgrant@cobbworks.org](mailto:sgrant@cobbworks.org)

**1. Complainant Information:**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Are you a WorkSource Cobb employee? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**2. Respondent** (Agency, Employee, or Employer you are making the complaint against):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** What is the most convenient time for us to contact you about this complaint? \_\_\_\_\_

**4.** Briefly describe, as clearly as possible, your complaint. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Also, attach any written materials pertaining to your complaint.

a. Please explain the basis of the complaint. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Who was involved? Include witnesses, fellow employees, supervisors, or other. Provide names, addresses, and telephone numbers if known. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
c. Please list the location and date. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Were you offered employment services? (if applicable) ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

**I certify that the information furnished above is true and accurately stated to the best of my knowledge. I authorize the disclosure of this information to enforcement agencies for the proper investigation of my complaint. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible consistent with applicable law and a fair determination of my complaint.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name



---

**Attachment 6: Signature Page**

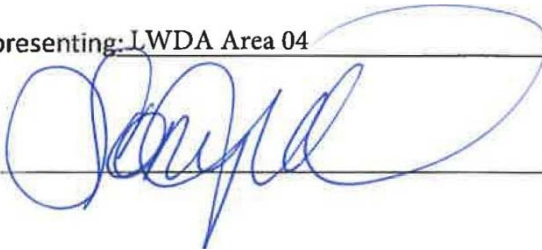
The undersigned hereby agree to adhere to all applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and policies in performing any duty associated with the funds made available to under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Name: WorkSource Cobb

Title: Local Workforce Area Director

Entity Representing: LWDA Area 04

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: Sonya Grant, Executive Director

Title: Chief Local Elected Official

Entity Representing: Local Government Official

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: Michael H. Boyce, Chairman, Cobb  
County Board of Commissioners

Title: Local Workforce Development Board Chair

Entity Representing: LWDB Board Chair

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Attachment 7: Regional Sector Strategies

**Does the plan provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details: participating employers, target occupations, training programs, and target populations?**

Sector strategies support strengthen the region's ability to meet the highest demand sectors needs to recruit and retain skilled workers. They also help under-skilled workers gain requisite occupational skills and obtain good jobs in those sectors. Because sector strategies are developed from a demand-driven approach to meet the needs of regional businesses from a certain sector, the activities implemented as part of specific sector initiatives vary. WorkSource Cobb, in collaboration with its regional partners prioritize economic mobility for the under-skilled workforce with sector-focused occupational skills training that is designed and implemented with regional businesses' input and support. This strategy helps to ensure that training graduates are equipped with the skills required to be productive employees and builds their capacity to retain employment.

As a member of WorkSource Metro Atlanta, a regional partnership network through Metro Atlanta Industry Partnership (MAIP), WorkSource Cobb's sector strategy includes a robust group of participating partners which includes but are not limited to employers, workforce partners, government agencies, professional & trade organizations, etc. See list below:

### Employer/Industry Partners

Alliance Solutions Group, Inc.  
American Medical Response (AMR)  
Amazon  
Anthem  
Applied Resource Group  
ASOS  
AT&T Georgia  
ATL Freight  
Bank of America  
CareSource  
CVS Health  
DeKalb Fleet Management  
Delta  
DHL  
Diaz Foods  
Emory Healthcare  
Equifax  
Fabric.com  
Flexport  
Fulton County Government  
Future Forwarding  
Georgia Beverage Association  
Georgia Department of Public Health  
Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)  
Global Resource Management, Inc.  
Good Samaritan Cobb  
Grady Healthcare  
HD Supply  
HWC Logistics  
IBM  
ICS  
InComm  
Jackson Healthcare  
JAS Forwarding USA Inc.  
JC Penney  
Kaiser Permanente  
Lexis Nexis  
McKesson  
NCR  
Northside Hospital

Piedmont Healthcare  
Platinum Cargo Logistics  
Prologis  
Ryder  
State Farm  
Stein Mart  
Talent Stream  
UPS  
Upward Global Logistics & Distribution  
Verizon  
Visiting Nurse Health System  
WellStar Health System  
Zywie

### Workforce Partners

Academic Institutions  
Atlanta Public Schools  
Atlanta Technical College  
Chattahoochee Technical College  
Cherokee County Public Schools  
Clayton County Public Schools  
Clayton State University  
Cobb County Schools  
Decatur Public Schools  
Buford City School District  
DeKalb County School District  
Douglas County Public Schools  
Emory Continuing Education  
Fayette County Public Schools  
Fulton County Public Schools  
Georgia Department of Education Career & Technical Education  
Georgia Highlands College  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Georgia Piedmont Technical College  
Georgia State University  
Gwinnett Public Schools  
Gwinnett Technical College  
Henry County Public Schools  
Kennesaw State University  
Marietta City Schools  
Rockdale Public Schools  
Southern Crescent

Technical College  
TCSG Office of Apprenticeship  
Troy University  
West Georgia Technical College

### Chambers & Economic Development

Alpharetta Tech Commission  
Atlanta Regional Commission  
Cherokee Chamber  
Clayton Chamber  
Cobb Chamber & Select Cobb  
Conyers-Rockdale Chamber  
DeKalb Chamber  
Douglas Economic Development  
Fayette Chamber of Commerce  
Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Greater North Fulton Chamber  
Invest Atlanta  
Metro Atlanta Chamber  
Partnership Gwinnett  
Select Fulton

### Community Service Providers

Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Atlanta CareerRise  
Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency  
Bobby Dodd Institute  
Boys and Girls Club Atlanta  
Catholic Charities of Atlanta  
City of Refuge  
Covenant CNA School  
First Step Staffing  
General Assembly  
Georgia Justice Project  
Goodwill of North Georgia  
Hearts to Nourish Hope  
HireGI  
Honor Code  
International Rescue Committee Jewish Family and Career Services  
Latin American Association

Mullins International Solutions  
Multi-Agency Alliance for Children  
Nobis Works  
Per Scholas  
TechBridge  
United Way of Greater Atlanta  
Urban League of Greater Atlanta  
YearUp

### Government Agencies

Georgia Budget and Policy Institute  
Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs  
GdEc, Center of Innovation in Logistics  
Georgia Department of Human Services/TANF  
Georgia Dept. of Labor  
Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency  
State of Georgia Division of Family and Children's Service

### Professional & Trade Organizations

American Production and Inventory Control Society Atlanta (APICS)  
Georgia Association of Career & Technical Educators  
Georgia Hospital Association  
International Forwarders and Brokers Association (AIFBA)

### Workforce Initiatives

Aerotropolis Atlanta  
Atlanta Airport University  
Atlanta Committee for Progress  
CATALYST  
Regional Economic Competitiveness Strategy  
IWORCS  
Metro Atlanta eXchange for Workforce Solutions  
Opportunity ATL  
Supply Chain City Talent & Education Task Force

**Employer engagement** is the foundation of sector strategy development, as talent pipeline strategies are driven by employers' needs. Understanding that both the employer and jobseeker are equal customers, businesses cannot succeed without a skilled and talented workforce. If the available workforce is not skilled to meet the business needs, it puts business at a competitive disadvantage.

The regional partnership network strengthens our ability to connect with employers and build deep and sustainable industry collaboration. These strong relationships will foster a greater understanding of industry trends and dynamics as well as facilitate understanding of employers' training and other workforce needs. Additionally, they will provide the regional partnership an opportunity to solicit feedback and guidance on the system, and implement value-added strategies and services that address the industries' identified workforce needs.

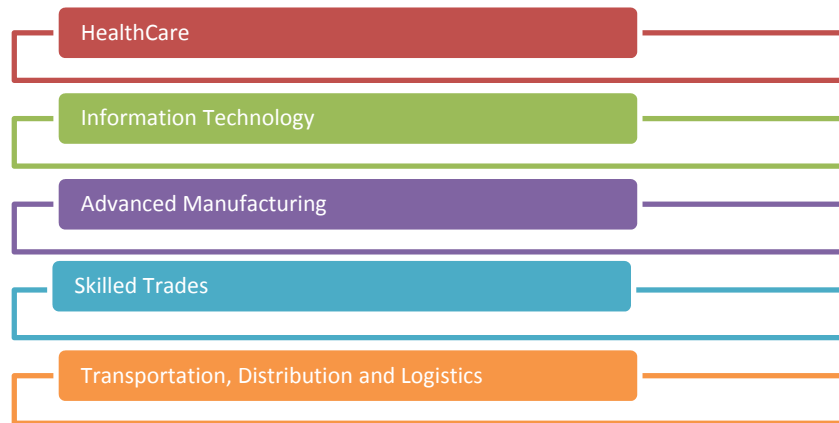
To support ongoing engagement, set strategies and address challenges for effective problem solving, WorkSource Metro Atlanta's regional partnership network through MAIP includes the following meetings with partners:

- Monthly webinars
- Bi-weekly (twice a month) meetings
- Employer forums
- Semi-annual partner meetings
- Special projects
- Monthly newsletter

**A Sector Strategy** approach will allow the regional partnership to focus on building talent pipelines utilizing intentional strategies with sector-focused occupational skills training rooted in targeted industry career pathways. When paired with targeted industry career pathways, intentional strategies create more beneficial outcomes for employers and workers. Targeting five (5) high-demand industries and career pathways provide a strategic plan combining education and training for job seekers to better align skills training to the employers' needs. This approach embodies a culture that supports economic mobility for the worker while simultaneously embracing industry sectors and engaging all partners in the workforce ecosystem to fulfill the needs of the employers and jobseekers. List below are the five (5) high-demand industries that will be targeted during this regional plan period.

These five industries were selected for a variety of reasons, including their employment size, past and projected growth, demand for workers, existing skill gaps, prevalence to multiple counties in the region, and the accessibility and quality of the jobs offered. Other considerations were the impacts of COVID-19 and the potential for automation of jobs in those industries. While these industries were selected as the targets for metro Atlanta, some of the local boards have identified additional industries to target within their specific areas.

## The Five In-Demand Target Industries



### Healthcare

Healthcare represents a range of sub-industries, including offices of physicians, hospitals, home health services, and nursing homes. It accounted for 278,000 jobs in the Atlanta region in 2019. General and Medical Surgical Hospitals account for almost one third of this industry's employment, representing over 81,000 jobs. Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists) is another major sub-industry, accounting for over 47,000 jobs.<sup>1</sup> The tables below represent the top sub-industries within each industry.

### Information Technology

The Information Technology industry is another major employer in the metro Atlanta region, accounting for over 91,400 jobs. It is composed of businesses ranging from data centers to software designers and consultants. The largest sub-industries are Wired Telecommunications.

Carriers; Software Publishers; Motion Picture and Video Production; and Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services, each of which account for over 66% of the jobs.

Prior to COVID-19, growth in Information Technology was expected to continue over the next five years. The industry was expected to add over 2,700 jobs, expanding employment by 3%. Growth is primarily driven by Software Publishers; Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services; and Motion Picture and Video Production. The employment demand will largely be driven by replacement demand, which accounts for 94% of annual employment demand

### Skilled Trades-Construction Industry

The Construction industry includes a range of sub-industries including Nonresidential Electrical Contractors and Other Wiring Installation Contractors; Commercial and Institutional Building Construction; and Nonresidential Plumbing, Heating and Air-Conditioning Contractors. In the Atlanta region, this industry represents over 128,000 jobs.

Prior to COVID-19, growth in the Construction industry was expected to continue over the next five years. The industry was expected to add over 9,000 jobs, expanding employment by 8%. Growing is primarily driven by the Nonresidential Electrical Contractors and Other Wiring Installation Contractors; Commercial Institutional Building Construction and Nonresidential Plumbing, Heating; and Air-Conditioning Contractors. Annually, the Construction industry is expected to have over 1,900 job openings. The employment demand will largely be driven by replacement demand, which accounts for 87% of annual employment demand.

### **Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics**

The Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics industry includes a range of groups, including Truck Freight, Air Transportation, and Warehousing. In the Atlanta region, it represents nearly 162,000 jobs. As shown in the following table, the largest sub-industries include Scheduled Passenger Air Transportation, General Warehousing and Storage, Couriers and Express Delivery Services, and General Freight Trucking.

Prior to COVID-19, growth in the industry was projected to continue, but at a lower rate over the next five years. Specifically, Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics in the Atlanta region was expected to add 8,500 jobs, expanding employment by 5.3%. The sub-industries that demonstrated strong growth over the past five years are expected to continue the trajectory, while some sub-industries that provide local retail transportation services, such as Taxi and Limousine Services are expected to shed jobs. The sub-industries that are expected to add the most jobs over the next five years.

### **Advanced Manufacturing Industry**

The Advanced Manufacturing industry includes a range of sub-industries including, Commercial Printing, Plastic Product Manufacturing, and Aircraft Manufacturing. In the Atlanta region, this industry represents nearly 119,000 jobs. The largest sub-industries in Advanced Manufacturing are summarized in the following table.

Significant growth in Advanced Manufacturing is not expected over the next five years. The industry is expected to add only 600 jobs. The employment demand will largely be driven by replacement demand, which accounts for 99% of annual employment demand.

### **Training programs; and Target Populations.**

In alignment with the goals of WIOA, the regional partnership will target individuals with barriers to employment. This includes but is not limited to: lower income and low educational attainment. The Regional Directors will make intentional efforts to explore and expand outreach to youth/young adult, dislocated workers, English-as-a-second language (ESL) workers and increasing women in technology.

The Regional Directors will address the needs of the jobseekers and businesses. With a primary focus of equipping target populations with the skills to succeed in education/training and employment. By engaging the employers in determining the skills and education needed, the Regional Directors will work with local training schools, colleges, etc. to develop the training needed to fill the need, thus providing the employers with a strong pipeline of qualified workers and strengthening our region's economy.

**Utilizing career pathways** provide the increased opportunities of increasing individuals' educational/skills attainment and improving their employment outcomes for economic mobility. Additionally, this strategy also successfully meets the needs of employers and the demands of growing sectors and industries. 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. Career pathways are education, training, and credential sequences that align to talent needs of targeted industry sectors and are employer-driven. Pathways articulate the full range of K-12, adult education, and post-secondary education assets and embed "stackable" industry-recognized credentials. Career pathways accelerate educational attainment and career advancement in high-demand industries.

This systems approach makes it easier for people to earn industry-recognized credentials (through avenues that are more flexible and opportunities for relevant education and training) and to attain marketable skills so that they can more easily find work in growing careers. These comprehensive education and training systems are particularly suited to meet the needs of working learners and non-traditional students.

Using a robust network of training programs, the Regional Directors will work in collaboration to develop relevant career pathways for the above industries/sectors. Through MAIP, partners in the Training and Registered Apprenticeship (TRA) Roadmap Team can be found below.

### **MAIP Partners – TRA Roadmap Team, provided by CareerRise Accenture**

Accenture	Emory University
Alliance Solutions Group	First Step Staffing
HOPE Foundation	
Altierus Career College	
Atlanta Regional Commission	Fulton County Government, Department
Atlanta Technical College	of Community Development-Youth and
Bobby Dodd Institute	Community Services Division
CEFGA	Fulton County Schools
Chattahoochee Technical College	Georgia Center for Opportunity
CKS Packaging	Georgia Department of Public Health
Construction Education Foundation of Georgia	Georgia Highlands College
Conyers Rockdale Economic Development Council	Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network
Covenant CNA School	Georgia Piedmont Technical College
Crossroads Community Ministries	Goodwill of North Georgia
DHS DFCS	Great Promise Partnership
Douglas County School System	Greater North Fulton Chamber
Emory Continuing Education	Gwinnett County Public Schools

Gwinnett Technical College  
Hearts to Nourish Hope  
Holder Construction  
Inspiritus  
Integrity CDC  
Interapt  
International Operating Engineers  
Jewish Family and Career Services  
Kennesaw State University  
LISC  
Mullins International Solutions  
National Center for Supply Chain Automation  
New Birth Employment Network  
Paulding County School District  
Per Scholas  
Rockdale County Board of Education  
Safe PC Solutions/Safe PC Cloud  
Semais  
Soft Skills Zone, LLC  
SOSSI- Saving Our Sons & Sisters  
International  
Stinson & Associates, Inc.  
STRIVE Atlanta  
Technical College System of GA  
Wisdom to BELIEVE Foundation  
Women In Technology  
WorkSource Cobb  
WorkSource Atlanta  
WorkSource Atlanta Regional  
WorkSource DeKalb  
WorkSource Fulton  
Year Up, Inc.

Coordination with Core Partners	Pass/Fail	If Fail, Areas of Improvement	Comments
Did the LWDA properly fill out and submit a signature page?	No	Signatures should be obtained after final LWDB approval.	COMPLETED SEE PAGE 113
Does the plan provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details: participating employers, target occupations, training programs, and target populations?	Fail	Did not complete.	COMPLETED SEE PAGE 114-119
Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.	Fail	This should include more detail on how the competitions are advertised/publicized. Include details on how fairness and equity are protected/enforced in the process.	COMPLETED SEE PAGE 49-50