

Alabama Workforce Development Area (AWDA)

Four-Year Plan for Program Years 2016 – 2019

I. Local Area Governance

- a. Provide the most current **Organizational Chart** depicting the relationship of the agencies comprising the workforce system, including education, economic development, and the one-stop delivery system partners. **(Attachment A)**
- b. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor (20 CFR 679.560(b)(14)). Identify by name, function, and organizational affiliation of the local area:
 - i. Signatory Official: **Mr. Mickey Hutto, Supervisor AWDA**
 - ii. Grant Recipient: **Mr. Greg Canfield Secretary, Commerce**
 - iii. Chief Elected Official: **Governor Robert Bentley**
 - iv. Workforce Development Board Chair: **Dr. Steve Turkoski, Dothan Chamber**
 - v. Chief Fiscal Officer: **Mr. Phillip Fetzer**
 - vi. One-Stop Delivery System Area Managers: **Ms. Ruby Beezley, Ms. Brinda Barrett, Mr. Jim Cook, Mr. James Ramsey, Mr. Robert Brantley**

II. Local Workforce Development Board

- a. Provide a current listing of Local Board membership, including the category of representation as outlined in WIOA Section 107(b)(2). The board must include:
 - i. **Business Representatives:**
Ronnie Boles, General Automotive; Rosemary Elebash, NFIB; James Ford, Ford Meter; Karen Gresham, East Alabama Medical Center; Allen Harris, Bailey Harris Construction; Donny Jones, West Alabama Chamber of Commerce; Phillip Kelley, Michelin Tire; Jim McClellan, Spar, Inc.; Lawrence Lavender, Lavender, Inc.; Cleve Poole, Pioneer Electric; Scott Stiefel, EDS Trucking; John Stout, TS Tech; Steve Turkoski, Dothan Chamber

ii. Workforce Representatives:

Mary Allbritten, AFL-CIO; Rickey Kornegay, AFL-CIO; Brandon Cardwell, Montgomery Electrical JATC; Donnie Adams, Alabama State Building Trades; Frank Coiro, Job Corps

iii. Education and Training Activities Representatives:

John Mascia, Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind; Linda Monaco, Telamon Corporation; David Walters, Alabama Community College System, Adult Education

iii. **Governmental & Economic and Community Development Representatives:**

Lee Lawson, Baldwin County EAA; Fitzgerald Washington, ADOL;
James Myrick, Rehabilitation; Laura Chandler, SAWDC

- b. If the local board has not been formed at the time of plan submission, or it needs membership changes to be in compliance, include a timeframe to become compliant and the process that will be used to meet the requirements for local boards included in WIOA Section. 107. This process must include notifying the State of the formation of or any changes to the board and providing a list following the guidelines in Section II. a. above.

III. Career Centers

- a. List the Comprehensive Career Centers and the Satellite Career Centers operating within the local area.

Alabaster, Albertville, Alexander City, Andalusia, Anniston, Athens, Bay Minette, Blountsville, Brewton, Camden, Cullman, Decatur, Demopolis, Dothan, Enterprise, Eufaula, Fayette, Foley, Fort Deposit, Fort Payne, Gadsden, Greenville, Haleyville, Hamilton, Hayneville, Huntsville, Jackson, Jasper, Luverne, Monroeville, Montgomery, Opelika, Ozark, Pell City, Phenix City, Phil Campbell, Roanoke, Scottsboro, Selma, Sheffield, Talladega, Troy, Tuscaloosa, Valley, Vernon

- b. Identify which partners are represented in the career center; and

WIOA Title I (Adult Dislocated Worker and Youth), Adult Education, Wagner-Peyser programs, Rehabilitative Services, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs.

- c. Provide the name, title, telephone number, and email address of the principal **Career Center Contacts. (Attachment B)**

Note: The State Board will develop and review current statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system in accordance with WIOA Section 101(d)(6). When these policies are finalized, local areas will be provided with the policies, and, if necessary, a modification to the local plans will be requested to incorporate any needed changes.

IV. Analysis of Local Area Conditions and Needs

- a. Provide analysis of local area economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i)). Existing current analysis may be used if available and appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(iii)).

The State of Alabama experienced record low unemployment rates, stronger GDP growth, and 130,000 new jobs between the years of 2004 through 2007. Although this period brought a more diversified economy to the state, it was not immune to the effects of the recession. Between 2008 and 2010, the state lost 138,500 jobs. Since the recession, Alabama's recovery has been slow but steady. Federal, state, and local government budgets suffered tremendously during the recession, and cutbacks have occurred since at all levels. Federal budget constraints have hurt the state's military base operations and also the federal research contracts in the state. This led to fewer jobs and a slower recovery.

Although manufacturing took a major hit during the recession, it remains a strength in the state. Due to the change in the global economy in recent decades, the state's traditional industries have gone through major changes. Many manufacturing operations moved overseas, producing major employment declines in textile and apparel industries. The 21st century brought diversification to the state's economy, with an emphasis in the location of several foreign owned companies into the state. The impetus for this began with the influx of major automotive manufacturers into the state. While the major auto manufacturers did hurt during the recession, they have experienced increases in auto sales and exports since, which has led to additional shifts and employees. This in turn had a positive effect on the output of the parts suppliers in the state. The resurgence in automotive manufacturing has also led to additional transportation manufacturers locating in the state. Both ship building and aerospace manufacturing have experienced success in the state. Since 2009, the state's exports have risen over 57.0 percent. In the year 2014, Alabama's total exports was \$19.5 billion, just short of the state's record set in 2012 for overseas shipments.

Bioscience and Chemicals are also being targeted through the state's strategic plan. While the total for the bioscience cluster has experienced a downturn since 2000, the cluster has grown over 14.0 percent since 2010, and there have been announcements of 335 new jobs in upcoming months. Most of those jobs announced are in pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing, which has experienced a steady growth in employment of 473.0 percent since 2000, and continued to grow during the recession years. The chemicals cluster also took a downturn since 2000, but has grown slightly since the recession. Although a very small portion of this cluster, soap, cleaning compound, and toiletry manufacturing has grown 154.0 percent since 2000. Additionally, announcements for 200 new jobs in paint, coating, and adhesive manufacturing have recently occurred.

Two more targeted clusters in **Accelerate Alabama** are *Distribution Centers* and *Corporate Operations*. While distribution, like most industries, took a hit during the recession, it has steadily increased in employment since 2010. Warehousing has especially grown, with an increase of nearly 47.0 percent since 2010, and over 1,000 additional jobs announced for the near future. Additionally, approximately 140 new jobs have been announced for general freight trucking. Corporate operations have been growing at a steady pace since 2000. From 2000 to 2014, this cluster has grown 60.0 percent, with nearly 1,300 new jobs announced in the upcoming months.

Information Technology, another targeted industry cluster, overlaps the Enabling Technology cluster somewhat. The largest industry in the information technology cluster is business support services which has grown at a steady pace, even during the recession, of over 63.0 percent since 2000. Additionally, over 500 new jobs have recently been announced in this cluster.

Alabama's strategic plan for economic development is also targeting industries that are associated with ***Enabling Technology***, due to the increased use of nanotechnology and robotics (used in many of the large automotive production plants in Alabama and surrounding states). To show the dedication to prepare the workforce for these types of jobs, the State of Alabama, Calhoun Community College, AIDT, and robotics industry leaders across the nation collaborated to build the robotics technology park. The park consists of three training facilities, each targeted to a specific industry need. While the industries associated with this cluster show minimal growth thus far, nearly 1,000 additional jobs have recently been announced for the state.

Cyber Security is an emerging industry another cluster which overlaps the Enabling Technology cluster. Huntsville, Alabama is home to the second largest research park in the United States, Cummings Research Park, with over 400 companies that include Fortune 500 companies, local and international high-tech enterprises, and US space and defense agencies. It also includes a thriving business incubator and competitive higher education institutions. Cyber security is most certainly an emerging sector in this state, and in the entire country.

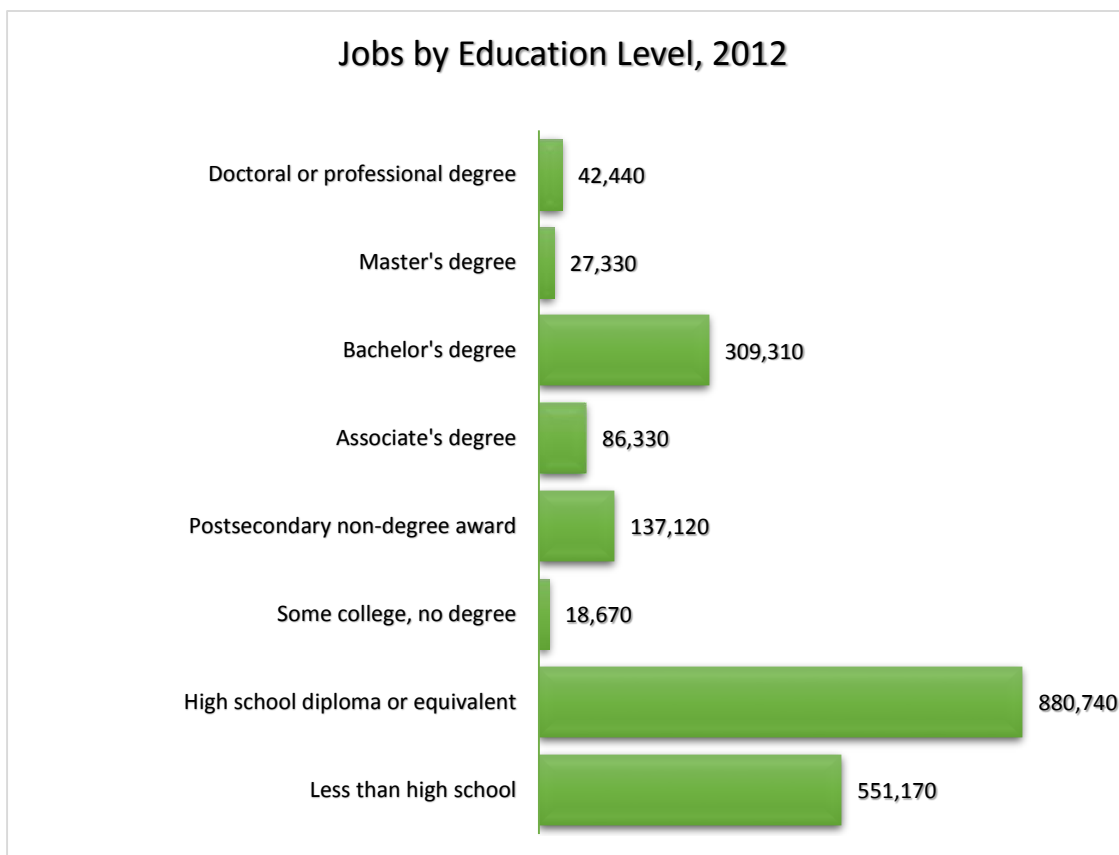
One industry sector that is not addressed in the **Accelerate Alabama** plan is Health Care. The fact that the baby boomers are hitting retirement age, and also that people are living longer, is beginning to have a large impact on the health care system. Additionally, there are many more specialized jobs in health care, than in the past, due to the fact that health care costs have risen and so has demand for health care. While hospitals have experienced small, but steady, growth every year since 2000, most of the growth in health care employment come from industries that provide more specialized care. Industries such as outpatient care centers, home health care services, and specialized health practitioners have doubled in employment since 2000. In addition, employment in residential disability, mental health, and substance facilities have grown 226.0 percent since the turn of the century.

Continuing care retirement and assistant living facilities have also doubled in employment. Furthermore, as the population ages, so does the workforce in the health care industry. In Alabama in 2014, 21.0 percent of the health care workforce was over the age of 55. With the projection, for the period 2012-2022, of nearly 60,000 new jobs in health care, combined with an increasing number of workers retiring, the demand in health care is very high in the state (**Figure 8**).

- c. What knowledge and skills are needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(2))?

In 2012, only 30.0 percent of jobs were in occupations that typically require postsecondary education for entry. Within this group, jobs in occupations which require a Bachelor's degree for entry held the largest share at 15.0 percent. Occupations requiring a high school diploma or equivalent and less than high school made up 70.0 percent of jobs in 2012. Occupations with the highest percentage growth typically require a form of postsecondary education, with associate's degree occupations holding the highest share at 18.9 percent.

All occupations requiring postsecondary education are projected to grow faster than average, 10.4 percent. At 8.7 percent, less than high school occupations show the slowest growth over the projection period.

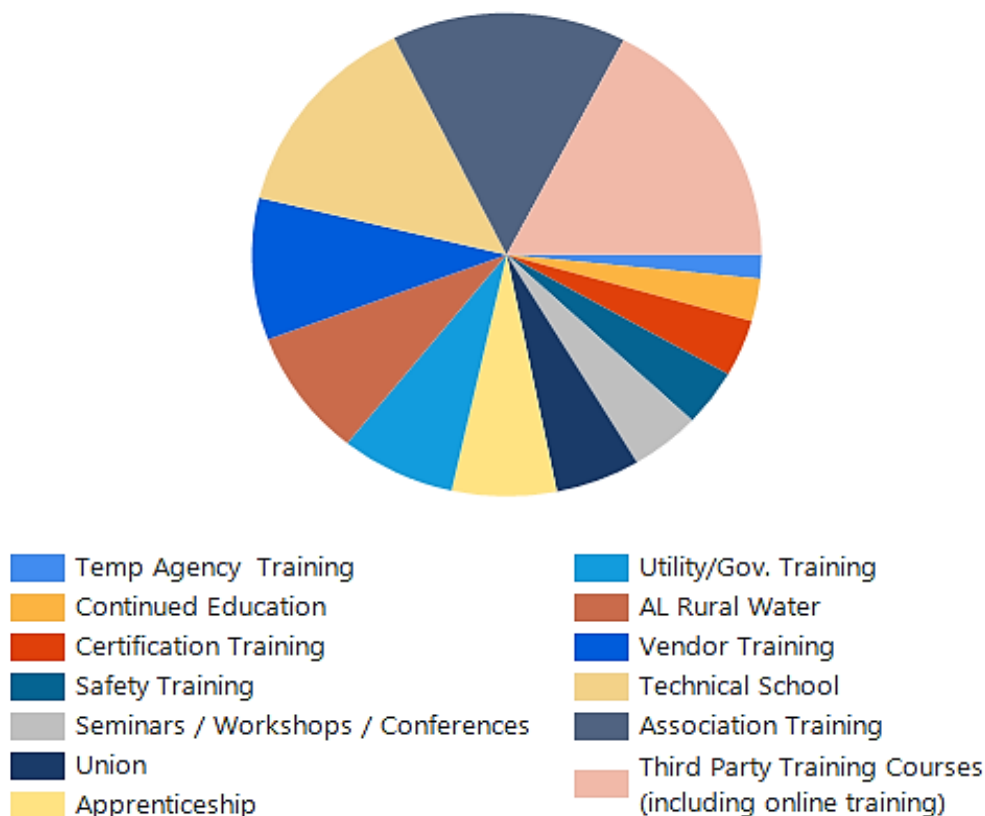


Source: Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information. Alabama Education & Training Outlook, 2012-2022.

Over the past five years there have been a multitude of reports all over the country on the topic of skills gaps. More importantly the emphasis has been on soft skills. Alabama is no different. Employers all over the state have been claiming that they cannot find employees with adequate skills. The Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Division decided that the state needed some numbers to show the employers' concerns in these areas. As a result, a skills survey was conducted, and published, in 2013. Many of the employers that were voicing these concerns were in manufacturing and construction industries, so for this survey the decision was made to survey employers in those two industries, plus utilities. A sample of 6,926 employers was randomly selected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Over 5,000 employers in the three industries responded to the survey. The survey instrument included three categories of questions: Recruitment Challenges; Skills Gaps Identified; and Training and future needs.

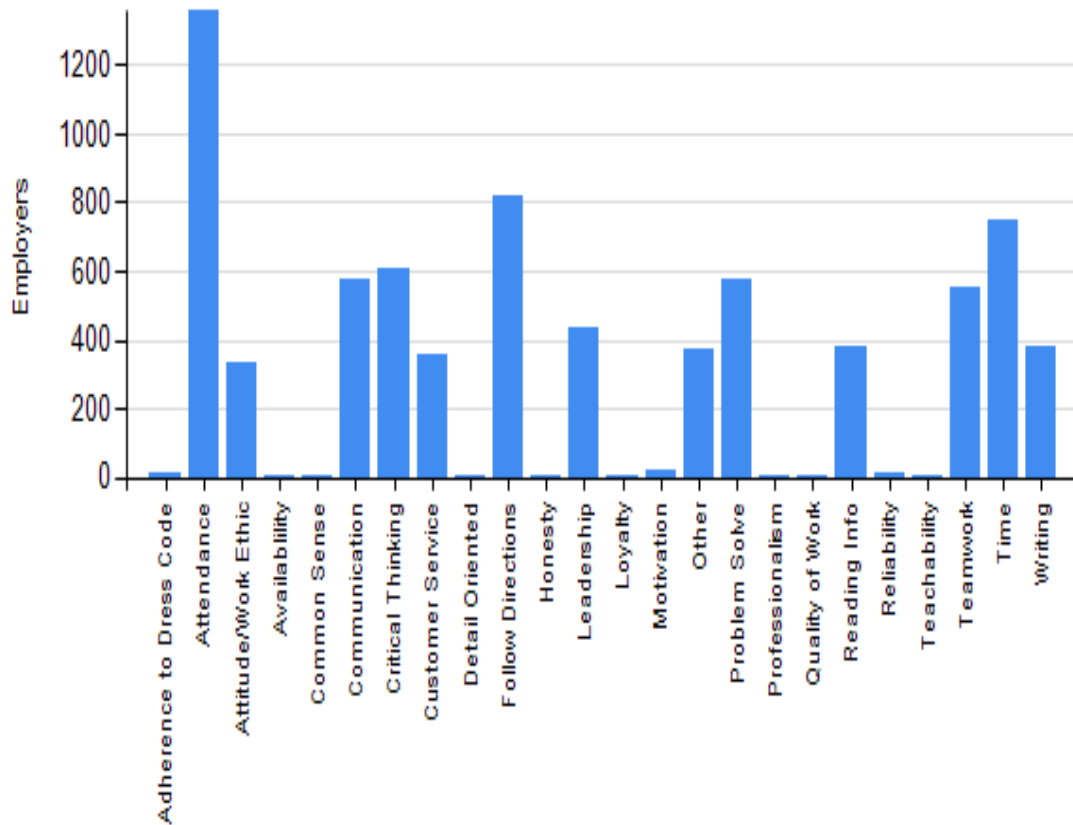
Employers in the sample who had hired within the past two years were asked the level of difficulty they had in finding candidates with adequate basic skills. A majority of those stated that it was either extremely or moderately difficult. The responses also indicated that it was most difficult to hire people with experience in the occupation, but hundreds of employers said it was most difficult to hire for entry level positions. Over 1,300 employers indicated that the number one reason for rejecting applications was that they did not pass a drug screen, surpassing lack of work experience. When given the opportunity to list other reasons, employers indicated lack of driver's license or reliable transportation, lack of required certification, attendance history, employment history, failed employment skills testing, and others, most relating to soft skills.

**Other Training Resources Used Most By Employers
All Industries - All Areas**



Source: Alabama Department of Labor - Labor Market Information Division 2013 Skills Gap Survey

Gaps Identified in Soft Skills Industry: All Industries - Area: All Areas



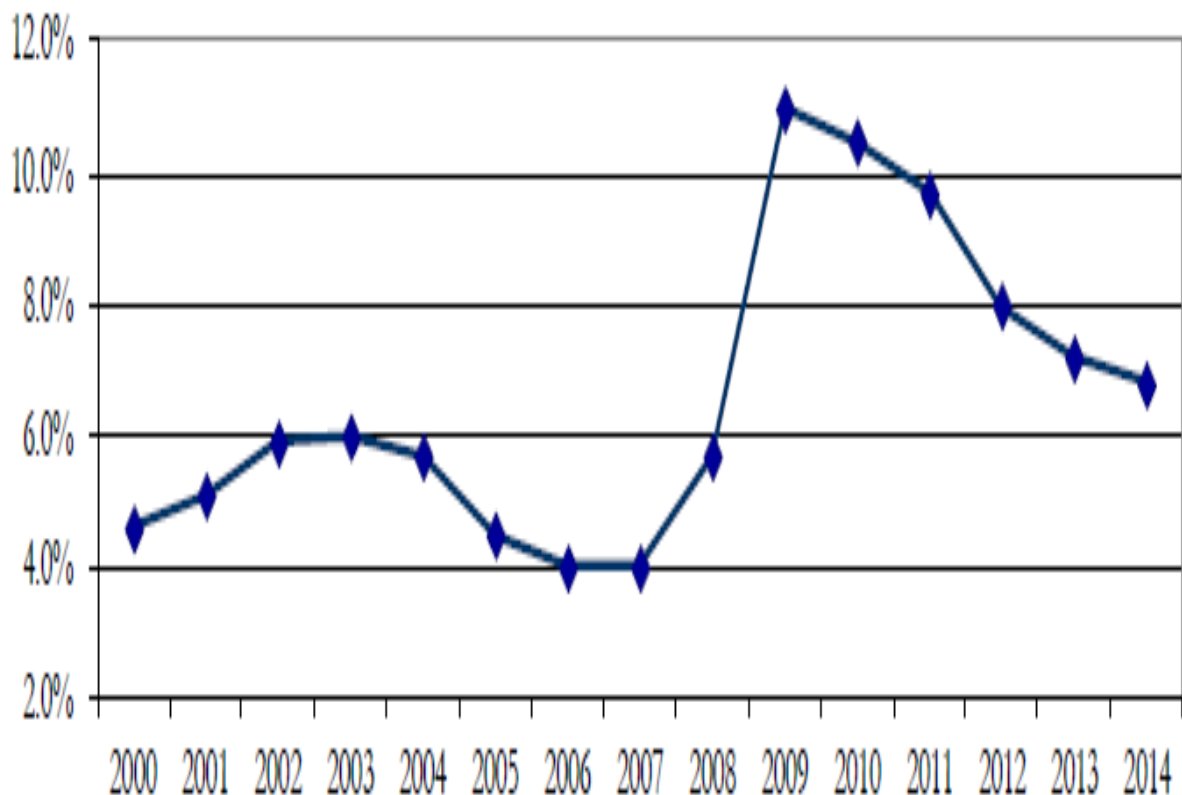
Source: Alabama Department of Labor - Labor Market Information Division 2013 Skills Gap Survey

A list of soft skills, and a list of technical skills was provided, so the employers could choose all skills gaps that have been identified in existing staff. Of the soft skills, across all industries and all areas, attendance was the overwhelming top choice. Others chosen at high levels were time management, following directions, critical thinking, and communication. Gaps identified in technical skills often varied by industry. In a majority of the manufacturing industries, the top technical gaps were machining, welding, and electrical. In utilities, the number one technical skill selected was math. Utilities employers also ranked engineering and electrical at high levels. The selections from construction companies varied depending on the type of work that was done. Some of the top choices were carpentry, blueprint reading, industrial experience, equipment operating, electrical, and welding.

- d. Provide analysis of the local area's workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3)).

The unemployment rate has been declining continuously since 2009 when it was highest due to the recession. Unemployment rates in 2014 ranged between 6.0 percent and 10.9 percent for the WDRs, with a 6.8 percent annual average for the state. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014 unemployment rates were higher for younger workers. Youth, age 16 to 19, experienced an estimated unemployment rate of 29.7 percent in 2014, which is down from 2010 when it was 30.8 percent. Labor Force participants between the ages of 20 and 24 experienced a significant drop in unemployment rate between 2010 and 2014, dropping from 20.9 percent to 12.9 percent. In April 2015, unemployment rates ranged from 4.8 percent (WDR 4) to 8.3 percent (WDR 6) for the regions, with a 5.3 percent rate for the state. The latest figures show that in November 2015 Alabama had an unemployment rate of 6.0 percent, down from 6.1 percent in November of 2014. Still, Alabama's rate is higher than the nation, which is currently at 5.0 percent.

Alabama Unemployment Rate



Source: Alabama Department of Labor

Unemployment Rate by Demographics

SUBJECT	
AGE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
16 to 19 years	26.40%
20 to 24 years	16.70%
25 to 44 years	8.50%
45 to 54 years	5.70%
55 to 64 years	4.10%
65 to 74 years	3.70%
75 years and over	3.00%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN	
White	6.70%
Black or African American	13.70%
American Indian and Alaska Native	8.60%
Asian	4.90%
Some other race	5.00%
Two or more races	14.50%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	6.60%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	6.70%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
Below poverty level	28.50%
DISABILITY STATUS	
With any disability	17.20%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT 25 TO 64 YEARS	
Less than high school graduate	13.70%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	8.90%
Some college or associate's degree	6.60%
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.10%
MILITARY	
Veterans	5.54%
Source: American Community Survey 2014	

Alabama's labor force participation rate has fallen from 61.4 percent in 2007 to 57.2 percent in 2014, third lowest in the nation, behind West Virginia and Mississippi. Since the unemployment rate is based on those people actively seeking employment, the labor force participation has a large impact. According to a study conducted by The Liberty Foundation, where it compared labor force participation rates using 2013 BLS data, out of the 51 states, Alabama ranked second lowest labor force participation for ages 35 to 44, third lowest for ages 45 to 54, and fourth lowest for ages 55 to 64. Fortunately, the

participation rates for these age groups increased in 2014, with the 35 to 44-year-old group increasing from 75.9 percent in 2013 to 80.2 percent in 2014. Furthermore, BLS data shows that labor force participation for youth age 16 to 19 has dropped from 31.4 percent in 2010 to 25.7 percent in 2014. A majority of counties with participation rates lower than the state average are located in the western part of the state.

In 2014, the measure of labor underutilization in Alabama was 12.6 percent, close to the nation at 12.0 percent. This measure includes the unemployed, those employed part time, and those marginally attached to the labor force. According to the Current Population Survey (CPS), Alabama had an average of 153,500 unemployed residents in 2014. Just over 89,000 workers were employed part time for economic reasons, which is referred to as involuntary part time. These people were either part time because the businesses they worked for were experiencing poor business conditions or were unable to find full time employment. People marginally attached to the labor force are those who are not presently working, but would like to work, are available to work, and have looked for work within the last year, but have not searched within the last four weeks. In Alabama, the marginally attached in 2014 was approximately 35,600. The number of discouraged workers in the state, which is a subset of the marginally attached, was around 11,000, accounting for 31.0 percent of all marginally attached.

The latest census figures for 2014 estimate the population in the state age 16 to 19 is 266,406. Over 43,000 were not enrolled in school, and approximately 17,000 were not enrolled in school or participating in the labor force. In Alabama, in 2014, there was approximately 120,000 youth age 14 to 21 in the workforce, 60.0 percent of them worked in retail trade and accommodation and food services, earning an average monthly wage of \$800. Nearly 7,500 worked in manufacturing, earning an average monthly wage of \$2,000, 6,500 in health care with an average monthly wage of \$1,000, and 8,800 in administrative and support and waste management services with an average monthly wage of \$1,300. In 2012, the unemployment rate for youth age 16 to 19 was 17.1 percent, and 16.0 percent for those age 20 to 24.

According to the SSI Annual Statistical Report 2014, Alabama ranks seventh in the nation in the percentage of the population who are receiving disability social security benefits. Census estimates from 2014 show that there were approximately 776,448 people in the state with a disability, nearly 40.0 percent over the age of 65. Nearly 140,000 disabled persons were in the labor force in 2014, with over 24,000 being unemployed. Half of those unemployed had some form of cognitive difficulty. Approximately 14,000 of the employed disabled persons had been determined to be below poverty level within the previous twelve months, while just over 11,000, nearly half, of the unemployed were below poverty level. Nearly 45.0 percent of the households in the state, with one or more people having a disability, received food stamps.

Disabled in the Labor Force

DISABILITY	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	NOT IN LABOR FORCE
Total with disability	114,928	24,477	283,144
Hearing Difficulty	37,185	3,364	36,278
Vision difficulty	25,109	5,052	44,060
cognitive difficulty	29,134	13,020	134,187
Ambulatory difficulty	44,315	7,576	183,488
Self-care difficulty	9,816	1,656	63,148
Independent living difficulty	16,211	6,069	130,137
<i>Source: American Community Survey 2014</i>			

Households & Families Receiving Food Stamps

HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FOOD STAMPS	291,541
Households with one or more people 60 years and over	25.50%
Households with children under 18 years	53.70%
Households below poverty level	59.10%
Households with one or more people with a disability	44.90%
Household Median income (dollars) past 12 months	15,749
FAMILIES RECEIVING FOOD STAMPS	210,434
Families with no workers in past 12 months	28.00%
Families with 1 worker in past 12 months	48.20%
Families with 2 or more workers in past 12 months	23.80%
<i>Source: American Community Survey 2014</i>	

In 2014, Alabama ranked 21st in the country in veteran population. (VA National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics) The state is home to five military bases: Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Montgomery; Anniston Army Depot, Bynum; Fort Rucker, Dale; Redstone Arsenal; and, Aviation Training Center Coast Guard, Mobile. In addition, Alabama is home to the fifth largest Army National Guard in the nation, with a total force of approximately 13,000. According to the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS, 2014), the veteran population in the state in 2014 was approximately 344,304. The largest percentage of veterans live in the areas where military bases are located. WDR 7, which includes the Montgomery metro area, includes a large percentage of veterans. There is also a very large percentage of veterans living in southeast Alabama in WDR 10, where Fort Rucker is located.

Veterans in the state display a strong desire to become members of the workforce, which is displayed in the labor force participation rate of 72.0 percent. Over 63.0 percent of the veteran population in the state has at least some education beyond high school, with 25.0 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher. While the unemployment rate in 2014 averaged around 6.8 percent, the rate for veterans was 5.6 percent (ACS 2014). Still, there are many who need additional assistance due to disabilities incurred while serving, and other circumstances. Nearly 30,000 veterans were considered below poverty level in 2014 (ACS 2014). In addition, The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics estimated that 88,048 veterans in the state were receiving disability compensation.

Veteran Population

SUBJECT	VETERANS
Civilian population 18 years and over	344,304
MEDIAN INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
Civilian population 18 years and over with income	35,573
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
Civilian population 25 years and over	339,797
Less than high school graduate	7.30%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	29.00%
Some college or associate's degree	38.20%
Bachelor's degree or higher	25.50%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
Civilian population 18 to 64 years	189,579
Labor force participation rate	72.00%
Civilian labor force 18 to 64 years	136,509
Unemployment rate (CPS rate)	5.60%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
Below poverty in the past 12 months	8.60%
DISABILITY STATUS	
With any disability	32.40%
Source: American Community Survey 2014	

An additional source of skilled labor exists in a pool of workers who are considered underemployed. Workers in occupations that underutilize their experience, training, and skills are underemployed. These workers often respond to job opportunities that they believe are better for reasons that include; lack of job opportunities, low wages in available jobs, and living too far from jobs. Workforce partners in Alabama fund an annual

underemployment survey. This survey is in its sixth year of existence. The 2014 survey reported approximately 8,896 responses across the state. In 2014, the underemployment rate in Alabama was 25.2 percent. Half of the counties in the state had an underemployment rate higher than the state.

- e. Provide analysis of the local area's current workforce development activities, including education and training. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (20 CFR 679.560(a)(4)).

The AWDA's Workforce Development Activities

Alabama devotes significant resources to education and workforce development at the local, regional and State levels. In 2014, Governor Bentley created and formally established the Alabama Workforce Council. The Council was tasked with advising and supporting core partners in Alabama's workforce development and education system to include, but not limited to, reviewing ways to streamline and align the existing workforce development functions in the State, evaluating regional workforce development and educational needs by promoting regional workforce councils and evaluating public/private partnerships (sectors) to create a feedback loop for industry and education.

The core programs including WIOA Title I–B, Wagner–Peyser, Adult Education and Rehabilitation Services provide a number of educational training activities through their respective programs. All of these activities are represented on the Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB). The AWDB also has cross representation from the private business sector membership on the Alabama Workforce Council.

The core programs previously under the Workforce Investment Act and currently under WIOA have participated and partnered in Alabama's One-Stop Career Center system since 2001. The core partner programs include WIOA Title I, adult, dislocated worker and youth training activities provided through a newly developing system within Alabama. In the proposed system there will be not less than six (6) and not more than nine (9) local workforce development boards and an appropriate number of administrative entities. The State level administrative entity for WIOA Title I is the Alabama Department of Commerce, that provides oversight and policy guidance through the Alabama Workforce Development Board for activities under WIOA Title I.

The yet to be determined workforce development areas provide career services, client assessment, case management, referral to Individual Training Accounts, on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, and work based learning. They also provide specialized employment and training activities for youth, including basic education, GED programs, occupational skills training, and work based learning activities.

The Alabama Workforce System (AWS) includes the following programs and entities operated through the following agents.

- **Alabama Career Center System** – Operated as a partnership between the Alabama Department of Commerce ((WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Alabama Department of Labor (Wagner–Peyser) UI, TAA and Veterans). The Alabama Career Center System also collaborates with Adult Education, Rehabilitative Services, TANF, SNAP and Title IV of the Older Americans Act (SCESP). Area-wide there are 25 Comprehensive Career Centers and 20 satellite and iterant sites in the system. In PY2014 the Alabama Career Center System provided 352,837 individuals with Wagner–Peyser labor exchange services and 7,924 individuals with WIOA training services, serving low–income adults, youth, and dislocated workers. Wagner–Peyser funding for PY2014 was \$8,502,449 and Workforce Investment Act funds totaled \$32,090.579.
- **Adult Education Activities** – Adult Education services are offered through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) throughout the state. In Fiscal Year 2015 funding totaled \$20,154,737 and had enrolled approximately 20,000 full time and 26,000-part time students in adult education classes. Adult Education have been an active partner with the Alabama Career Center System since 2001 and will continue to expand services within the career centers under WIOA.
- **Alabama Department of Labor** – Wagner–Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services – The Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) houses the Wagner–Peyser program (Employment Service), Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services programs. ADOL Wagner–Peyser and WIOA Title I programs have been colocated as part of the Alabama Career Centers since 2001. The Alabama Job Link (AJL) is provided by the ADOL. Alabama Job Link is the online job seeker and employer registration system that provide job seeker skills, abilities and work history with employers posting job openings in the system. ADOL provides Trade Act services and Veterans employment representatives in the career centers. In PY2014 approximately 350,000 job seekers were registered in the AJL system.

- **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)** – The Department of Rehabilitation Services Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) provides specialized employment and education related services and training to assist teens and adults with disabilities to become employable. Services include skill assessments, counseling, training programs, job placement, assistive technology and transportation. For Program Year 2014 funding for the VRS program totaled approximately \$25,000,000; and for the same period 31,244 job seekers with disabilities were provided services. Since 2001 the VRS has been an active partner in the Alabama Career Center System.

The strengths and weaknesses of Alabama’s workforce development activities include the following:

Strengths:

- Strong support from political education and business leaders for workforce programs across all agencies and programs.
- Business leadership within the Community College system to align training programs with the needs of business and industry.
- The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) with its network of 26 colleges and 89 instructional sites provides access to students throughout the State seeking career pathways and credentials to qualify for middle skills jobs.
- Alabama has partnership between state level core program agencies that goes back to 2001. There is a culture of strong communication and collaboration that enhances services throughout the Alabama Career Center System.
- The Alabama Career Center System that provides services to job seekers and employers at 25 comprehensive centers and 20 satellite and itinerant sites.

Weaknesses:

- Limited data integration – Two of the core partner programs maintain separate data management systems for participant tracking and case management functions.
- Limited awareness of the State and Local Workforce System as a brand by job seekers and employers. A unified and universal brand for the Alabama Workforce System needs to be created and implemented.
- Lack of a P-20W statewide longitudinal data system to track how job seekers and students are using the Alabama Workforce System and competency job training programs from K-12 and postsecondary to employment.
- The workforce system core and other partners must continue to emphasize soft shell training into all Alabama Workforce System supported training programs.

Capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce:

Alabama's workforce system capacity to provide services to both jobseekers and employers is shared by a number of agencies and program providers as summarized in (2)(A) of this document. The State's network of career centers is a shared function among the Alabama Department of Commerce for WIOA Title I services, the Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) for Wagner-Peyser, UI, Trade Act and Veterans' services, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation services for vocational rehabilitation services and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) for adult education (ABE) services. The network of twenty-five (25) Comprehensive Career Centers and twenty-two (22) satellite and itinerant centers provides broad coverage in all sixty-seven (67) counties in Alabama. Also, the Alabama JobLink is an internet-based online registration system for jobseekers and employers.

The State agencies overseeing Alabama's WIOA core programs and optional partners not only share space and services throughout the Alabama Career Center System but also interact on a regular basis to share program opportunities to best deliver programs on a local and regional basis. Our agencies working off a solid background of sharing data and collaboration of program services are ready to serve the State's businesses, jobseekers, training seekers, and others with the most viable options to meet their needs. The Alabama Workforce System has implemented a number of recent changes including agency/program consolidation and industry led regional councils to ensure more efficient and comprehensive access to available services.

V. Vision

- a. What is the local board's strategic vision to support the area's economic growth and economic self-sufficiency? This vision should be supported by analysis of the local area (Section I) and align with Alabama's Combined State Plan (20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)).

The area will have a Workforce System that is aligned with the general and specific needs of Alabama business and focus on the alignment of programs to meet the skills gap needs of our workers (especially those with barriers to employment) and the economic strategies provided through the state's **Accelerate Alabama 2.0 Strategic Plan**.

- b. Identify the local area's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) (20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)).

The Alabama Workforce Development Area's goals for preparing an advocated and skilled workforce in the 65 county area includes:

- Implementation of a robust Regional Workforce Council System that provides direct feedback to the education system (Community College Systems, K-12, Career Tech System) and the WIOA training providers.
- Development of strong public/private partnerships that provides direct engagement between the public and private sectors to increase the capacity to meet workforce needs.
- Aligning and consolidating the programs of the Community College system and Regional Workforce Councils with the State's vision and goals.
- Aligning the programs of the Community Colleges and other training entities with the "Accelerate Alabama 2.0" plans three main elements: Recruitment, Retention and Renewal.
- Ensure all workforce programs have strategies to serve individuals to barriers to employment and close skills gaps.
- Foster a strong relationship between workforce development system to create a seamless array of services for jobseekers and employers to address skills gaps as well as skills shortages.

VI. Local Area Strategy

- a. Based on the analysis in Section IV, what is the local area's overall strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in Section II (20 CFR 679.560(a)(6))?

The Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division is dedicated to assisting the growth of Alabama businesses and the workers that sustain their operations. By directing individuals toward job skills improvement programs, education, and training, the Workforce Development Division equips workers with the tools and talents that employers demand.

At the center of the Workforce Development Division's mission is AIDT, one of the nation's top state workforce training agencies. AIDT offers comprehensive pre-employment selection and training, leadership development, on-the job training, and assessments — all specific to each company's needs. AIDT has worked with thousands of businesses and trained more than 600,000 workers.

The Workforce Development Division is responsible for several workforce programs formerly managed by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, including the Alabama Career Centers (funded by the Department of Commerce and managed by the Alabama Department of Labor) and various training programs. The division also oversees the state's 10 Regional Workforce Development Councils, which connect local business leaders with education officials to formulate strategies to ensure the job demands of the industry are being met.

Formally established in 2015 by the Alabama state legislature via Alabama Legislative Act No. 2015-450, the Regional Workforce Councils provide a direct link to the workforce needs of business and industry at the local level. The Councils are business-driven and business-led and work with their member counties to develop a regional strategic plan and comprehensive workforce development system that supports local economic and job development activities.

Councils monitor the workforce needs of business and industry in their region, then develop and implement practical solutions. These range from hosting regional job fairs for immediate hiring needs, to addressing the short-term and long-term training needs of businesses. Regional Workforce Councils are a key mechanism in helping to ensure that there is an available pipeline of highly trained workers with relevant skills that Alabama companies want. Alabama's Regional Workforce Councils direct critical information and data to and from the Alabama Workforce Development Board.

- b. What programs are included in the local area's workforce development system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(i))? Provide a listing and brief description of each program.

In AWDA, the Alabama Workforce Development Area Section manages career center operations in conjunction with the Employment Service Division of ADOL. All career centers now have single site managers. Cross training of staff rather than cross awareness is taking place at the career centers. Monthly reporting has become more standardized and efficient with the issuance of guidance by the Local Area. There are currently twenty-five (25) Comprehensive Career Centers, ten (10) satellite centers, ten (10) itinerant point locations, and a mobile career center in AWDA. Comprehensive centers are full-time centers which have all WIOA partner agencies either on-site or have their services available to customers. Satellite centers are also operated full-time but do not have the full contingent of partner agencies located at the center. Itinerant point centers are only staffed part-time when customer demand has indicated a need in these mainly rural locations. The mobile career center or "bus" is used on-site for job / career fairs, Rapid Response events in cases of mass layoffs, in natural disasters when large numbers of individuals are left unemployed, and numerous other workforce related activities.

The Alabama Workforce Development Area (AWDA) continues to emphasize giving priority of services to veterans and eligible spouses for WIA funded activities.

Basic career services were available through Alabama's Career Center System and included, at a minimum, the following:

- ❖ Outreach, intake and orientation to available services;
- ❖ Job search, job placement and career counseling as needed via Alabama JobLink;
- ❖ Labor market information;
- ❖ Self-directed initial assessment;
- ❖ Provision of performance and cost information on training providers; and
- ❖ Follow-up services.

Individualized career services were provided for adults and dislocated workers who were determined eligible for WIA and are registered in the program. Intensive services provided were for job seekers that were determined to be unable to obtain a job through core services alone. Intensive services included, but were not limited to, the following:

- ❖ A comprehensive and specialized assessment of skills levels, aptitudes, abilities and needs;
- ❖ Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP/ISS);
- ❖ Case Management activities;
- ❖ Individual career counseling;
- ❖ Referral to training services; and
- ❖ Out-of-area job search assistance.

Training services were provided for adults and dislocated workers who were unable to obtain employment through assistance received in core and intensive services. Training services included the following:

- ❖ Occupational skills training;
- ❖ On-the-Job Training;
- ❖ Programs that provided workplace training with related instructions;
- ❖ Programs operated by the private sector;
- ❖ Skills upgrading and retraining;
- ❖ Entrepreneurial training;
- ❖ Job readiness training;
- ❖ Adult education and literacy training; and
- ❖ Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or a group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of training.

The OJT program provides reimbursement to employers for the extra costs associated with training WIOA participants. The reimbursement rate and length of training are negotiated and made a part of the OJT contract. Reimbursement was established at fifty percent (50%) of the participant's hourly wage rate for up to twenty-six (26) weeks.

The following Services are provided for youth in AWDA in accordance with WIOA Regulations:

- The primary means of providing occupational skills training opportunities for youth is through the utilization of the Individual Referral (IR) program, which is similar to the ITA program. Enrollments in the OJT program were also used as a means of providing youth with training services.

Also, WIOA youth services are provided by a network of youth program providers recommended by the AWDA Youth Committee and approved by the AWDA Local Board based on a competitive procurement process. The focus of these youth program providers was services to low income out of school youth without a high school diploma

or GED. These services include assessments, career counseling, and referrals to OJT and Individual Referrals (scholarships). Youth program providers provide various services including remedial education, GED preparation, and soft skills training to prepare youth and young adults to successfully enter the workforce or postsecondary education. Youth can receive occupational skills training via scholarships to postsecondary institutions.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Services Individual Training Account (ITA)

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), a specific agreement which provides educational or occupational skills training services, are the primary means for Workforce Investment Act training services delivery. Individual Training Account services may only be provided to Workforce Investment Act participants by those training providers who have applied to and been placed on the State's Eligible Provider List. Prospective education and/or occupational skills training providers must meet specific criteria in order to initially and subsequently retain Workforce Investment Act training provider status.

Postsecondary education institutions which offer instruction leading to generally recognized certification in high-demand occupational skills, and other institutions providing similar vocational instruction services, are among the several entities which may apply for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List.

The AWDA strives to maximize the number of clients in training through the efficient use of local area funds. In order to maximize the number of participants, the AWDA Local Board approved new cost limitations on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) (effective July 1, 2012). The maximum amount allowable for ITAs was adopted as follows:

Short term training of 13 weeks or less.....	up to \$3,500
52 weeks training or less.....	up to \$6,500
17 months or less (greater than 12 months but less than 17).....	up to \$8,000
17 to 24 months (greater than 17 months but no longer than 24).....	up to \$12,000

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, On-the-Job Training participants' employers are reimbursed a portion of these participants' wages in compensation for the extraordinary costs in additional time and attention generally associated with the provision of such training, and in recognition of the lesser workplace productivity of these trainees. Negotiations with the employer establish the maximum length of participants' training period. The maximum length of such training, however, is not to exceed six months.

Effective January 2015, the reimbursement policy was changed. Up to 75% reimbursement of participants' wages for small employers with 1 – 50 employees. The policy for all other employers remains the same at 50% reimbursement. This program is designed to fulfill the employment needs of local employers by providing a trained workforce while increasing productivity and profits.

The goals of the OJT program are permanent employment upon successful completion of training; placement into occupations that are long-term; and to build a skilled workforce for a growing Alabama economy. The OJT program is a highly successful training program for employers and their participant's.

- c. How will the local board support the strategies identified in Alabama's Combined State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 *et seq.*) to support service alignment (20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(ii))? Provide information concerning how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:
 - i. Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i)); and

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), through public two-year colleges and skills centers, provide assessment, counseling, basic education, and job training services for youth and adults served through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. For employers, ACT Work Keys job profiling and assessment services and customized training programs are available through two-year colleges.

Career/Technical educational programs are administered by the Workforce Division of the Alabama Community College System, including the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act stipulates that institutional recipients of Perkins' funds are mandatory partners in carrying out the Act. It is noted that Perkins' funds are used for overall improvement of career/technical education and are allocated by the college within the parameters of the legislation. The funding is used to address various needs identified by college staff and the local career/technical education advisory group from business and industry.

Also within the ACCS Workforce Division is the Adult Education and High School Equivalency Department which provides opportunities for adult learners to improve skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and communications. Diagnostic testing identifies individual needs by assessing one's educational level and to assist in the development of

an individualized education plan. The plan is designed to support learners in attaining their educational and employment goals. For many learners, the goal is to earn a high school equivalency as determined by the General Educational Development (GED) assessment.

Instructional methods are tailored to meet the needs of the learners and to prepare them for postsecondary education, training, and/or employment. Methodologies range from individualized and group instruction that incorporates technology and is aligned to college and career readiness standards. Contextualized curriculum and integrated education and training models are increasingly utilized to enhance skills and ensure students can apply their knowledge.

Adult education services provide the academic instruction that many Alabamians need to secure the required credential so they can obtain and maintain employment. According to the American Community Survey 2009-2013 five-year estimate, 17% of Alabamians 18 years old and older do not have a high school credential or its equivalent. Most adult education students read at the seventh grade level or lower. Studies have shown that the lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills and the lack of application of that knowledge is one of the most persistent barriers to obtaining employment. Adult Education classes provide the means to prepare students with the basic academic skills to be successful in the workforce which increases one's self-esteem, and productivity.

Adult education services are available through all Alabama Career Center locations whenever possible and may be accessed by referral from any of the participating partner agencies based on the identified need(s) of the client. Information regarding the location(s) and schedule(s) of all adult education classes are available in the one-stop career centers. Additional services offered include, but not limited to, integrated education and training models, employment preparation services, English Language Acquisition, Integrated English literacy/civics, corrections education & re-entry, and family literacy.

The Adult education program also offers the following classes that could be of benefit to people who visit the career centers: job readiness classes for welfare participants, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, English literacy/civics classes, adult education classes in all of the major correctional institutions, family literacy classes, and adult education classes for special populations. The AWDA is currently working closely with Adult Education to introduce contextual learning curricula into pilot adult education locations that will be targeted to learning/employment opportunities in the local service areas.

- ii. Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and

The AWDA, through its network of career centers, places major emphasis on providing potential WIOA participants with pertinent labor market information to assist them in making career choices into occupational clusters which will provide a pathway leading to higher paying employment which provides a sustaining wage for the participant's family. The AWDA is also currently working with Adult Education to provide contextual learning opportunities targeted to employment and training in occupations which provide a clear career pathway from entry level/wage employment, through a series of career ladder upgrades in skills and thus to higher wage employment.

- iii. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

The AWDA will continue to provide structured assessments and labor market information through the network of career centers and only provides WIOA assisted training (Individual Training Accounts) to courses of study which lead to the attainment of a postsecondary credential or other industry recognized certificate or credential.

d. What strategies and services will the local area use to:

- i. Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(i)); and

The recently appointed AWDA Board is comprised with a majority of representation from small employers which primarily represent in-demand occupations, thus insuring that the needs of the small business sector will at the forefront of board decisions. The membership also includes the Director of the state's National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) which represents the needs and concerns of small independently owned businesses in the AWDA. The AWDA also works closely with other Commerce Workforce Division staff who work full time with the Governors regional workforce councils which is comprised of business representation from each of the states 10 (soon to be restructured into 7) workforce regions. This partnership allows even greater input into the needs of employers within the designated workforce regions.

- ii. Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(ii)); and

An on-going restructuring of the states, and thus the AWDAs workforce development system has/is bringing several previously separated components of the workforce development system into the Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division. The AWDA staff work closely with representative of the states 10 (soon to be 7) workforce regions, also housed within the Commerce Workforce Development Division, to insure local input into the services provided by WIOA within each region within the local area.

- iii. Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iii)); and

The restructuring of the states, and the AWDA workforce development system, brings various components of the system into the Department of Commerce (see ii above) brings together the workforce development components working closely with the Business Development Division of Commerce. The major agency for the recruitment of new businesses into the state, and AWDA, and the expansion of existing businesses, is the Department of Commerce, thus insuring maximum coordination between the various workforce development programs and the economic development for the state, and the AWDA.

- iv. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iv)); and

AWDA Title IB services are already co-located within the Alabama Career Centers and share front-line staff as well as supervision with staff of the Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL), and includes job search, WIOA training/retraining services/etc., to individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI). UI is housed within the ADOL and utilizes “call Centers” and/or electronic filing of UI claims, but all UI claimants must report to one of the career centers for an interview and register for work of the Alabama Job Link system. Clients needing assistance to file their UI claims are provided assistance from career center staff when needed.

- v. 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 local area employers. Any of the above initiatives the local area chooses to implement should be in support of the other strategies to serve employers outlined above in Section III. d. (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(v)).

The AWDA, and its predecessors, has provided many of the above listed programs to support businesses for decades. This includes on-the-job training marketed by our WIOA funded Business Service Representatives (BSR) in every career center located within the AWDA, and supporting the marketing of incumbent worker training programs by these BSRs. The AWDA is prepared to implement additional services as listed above within local areas as the need is documented.

- e. How will the local board coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities carried out in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(4))?

See ii and iii of d. above.

- f. How will the local board promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (20 CFR 679.560(b)(4))?

The AWDA will continue to work with the postsecondary education institutions to support any training in this area which would result in a recognized credential. Currently only a couple of providers offer this type training within the AWDA.

The AWDA will also work closely with the Small Business Advocacy office within our Business Development Division of the Department of Commerce to promote the development of new businesses, including microenterprise services. These efforts to promote entrepreneurial skills training is enhanced by partnering with the Alabama Small Business Development Network which coordinates with the Consortiums 10 Small Development Centers located throughout the state.

- g. Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:
 - i. How will the local board ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through

the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(i)); and

The AWDA, in conjunction with the states performance requirements for training providers to be included and remain on the states Eligible Training Provider List, will monitor performance of entities providing WIOA funded training to insure that trainees/participants successfully complete training, earn nationally or industry recognized credentials, and become employed in in- demand occupations needed by regional employers.

- ii. 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 other means (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(ii)); and

Alabama Job Link (AJL) is the on-line portal to services offered through the Alabama Career Center System. It is an internet based self-service system for job seekers who can look for work, post their resume and receive emails notifications of job matches. AJL also provides access to Alabama's WIOA Eligible Training Provider List for training programs and access to the different programs provided by ADOL and WIOA. AJL also provides a link to partner agency websites.

- iii. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including career center operators and the career center partners, will comply with WIOA Section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iii)); and

In 2005, a team of persons with disabilities and others reviewed each Alabama Career Center for physical and programmatic accessibility using a survey checklist developed under Section 188 of WIA. A re-survey of career centers (including satellite centers) is being done in FY 2016 to check physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities,

services, technology and materials using a USDOL survey checklist developed under Section 188 of WIOA and a policy checklist. The surveys also measure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. This re-survey is being conducted by a team of persons with disabilities and others that includes assistive technology experts on deaf and blind needs. All of these surveys measure physical access from parking to entrances to where services are provided as well as accessibility of bathrooms, telephones, tables, and water fountains. Policies are also being evaluated to ensure that they do not exclude individuals with disabilities. Computers are being evaluated to ensure access for those with disabilities affecting hearing, vision, and manual dexterity.

At the completion of surveys of the career centers, a summary report will be compiled which will list all physical and programmatic barriers, if any, and suggested strategies to remove those barriers. New policies to ensure access may also be suggested. Responsibility for implementation of barrier removal strategies will be divided between the one-stop delivery system partners. Staff training may be developed where necessary to ensure that they have the knowledge, sensitivity, and awareness to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

- iv. What are the roles and resource contributions of each career center partner (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iv))?

See AWDA's Career Center Partnership's MOU.

- h. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(6)).

Funds received by the State and allocated to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) for Adult and Dislocated Worker Services will be used to:

- Provide Basic Career Services to assist job seekers in finding employment
- Provide Individualized Career Services to provide a more comprehensive assessment to identify the need for additional services
- Provide Follow Up Services for not less than 12 months following entry into unsubsidized employment
- Provide Training Services to job seekers who do not have the skills necessary to secure employment

Services provided through the Alabama Career Center System will assist customers in finding employment, education and/or training that will lead to employment or career enhancement.

For customers who need more than Basic Career Services to find employment, WIOA provides more comprehensive and specific Individualized Career Services and Training Services to assist in employment development.

Basic Career Services will be provided by Alabama Career Center staff assigned Wagner-Peyser (WP) duties. These services are available to Adult and Dislocated Worker customers through the Alabama Career Center System. Basic Career Services will include, at a minimum:

- Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the Alabama Career Center System
- Initial assessments of skill levels including academic skills, aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), English language proficiency, and supportive services needed

Labor Exchange Services, including job search and placement assistance, and when needed by an individual, career counseling, including:

- Provisions of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Provision of information on nontraditional employment
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the Alabama Career Center System and when appropriate other workforce development programs

Provision of current Labor Market Information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:

- Job vacancy listings in such labor market areas
- Information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs described above
- Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skills requirements for such occupations

- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible training service by program and type of providers
- Provision of information on how the local area is performing on Performance Measures and any additional performance information with respect to the Alabama Career Center System
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriated referrals to those services and assistance, including: child care; child support; medical or child health assistance available through State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program; benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); assistance through the earned income tax credit; housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and assistance under a State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA
- Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Re-Employment Services including a one-on-one interview, resume assistance, initial assessment, orientation to the career center and electronic database, Labor Market Information, Individual Employment Plan, referrals to Supportive Services, and other services as deemed appropriate
- UI Eligibility Assessment regarding availability for work, ability to work and job search activities
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under the WIOA and that are available in the local area
- Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace for participants in workforce development activities, who are placed in unsubsidized employment for not less than 12 months after the first day of employment, as appropriate

Individualized Career Services will be recorded services that will be provided by the Alabama Career Center System staff to Adults and Dislocated Workers who have been determined eligible for WIOA services and are unable to obtain a job.

Individualized Career Services are to be individualized for job seekers and require significant staff time to include a comprehensive and specialized assessment of skills levels, aptitudes, abilities, and needs, which will include:

- Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and/or
- In-depth interview and evaluation to identify employment barriers, supportive service needs, and appropriate goals
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that will include employment goals, appropriate planning objectives and the appropriate mix of services (both WIOA and non-WIOA) available in the local area necessary for customers to achieve employment goals
- Career Planning activities
- Labor Exchange Activities
- Individual career counseling/planning
- Group career counseling
- Referral to Training Services
- Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance

Short-term pre-vocational services and activities provided through the Alabama Career Center System to include:

- Learning skills
- Communication skills
- Interviewing skills
- Punctuality and personal maintenance skills
- Professional conduct skills
- Other skills development designed to prepare job seekers for unsubsidized employment
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers
- Financial literacy services
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs as provided by Adult Education and Basic Literacy services

Follow-up Services must be provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Follow-up services do not extend the date of exit in performance reporting.

Training Services may be needed for employed, unemployed or underemployed Adults and Dislocated Workers who have not been able to obtain employment leading to self-sufficiency. There is no sequence of service requirement for “career services” and

training. This means that the Alabama Career Center System staff may determine training is appropriate regardless of whether the individual has received basic or individualized career services first. Under WIOA, training services may be provided if the career center staff determine, after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, that the individual:

- ✓ Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone; and
- ✓ Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone; and
- ✓ Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.

Training services, when determined appropriate, must be provided either through an Individual Training Account (ITA) or through an OJT training contract. Training services must be linked to in-demand employment opportunities in the local area or planning region or in a geographic area in which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. The selection of training services should be conducted in a manner that maximizes customer choice, is linked to in-demand occupations, informed by the performance of relevant training providers, and coordinated to the extent possible with other sources of assistance.

Under, WIOA-funded Training Services are available through public and private partner and non-partner agencies as identified on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), <https://www.etpl.alabama.gov>. Non-WIOA funded training may be available through public and private partner and non-partner agencies such as Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education, Pell Grant, academic and/or technical scholarships, employer tuition reimbursement programs, and others.

The WIOA states that Training Services are directly linked to job opportunities in the local area and may include:

- ✓ Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment such as dedicated classroom training, and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
- ✓ On-The-Job training (OJT)
- ✓ Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs
- ✓ Training programs operated by the private sector
- ✓ Skills upgrading and retraining

- ✓ Apprenticeship training
- ✓ Entrepreneurial training
- ✓ Job readiness training
- ✓ Adult education and literacy training
- ✓ Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training

- i. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(7)).

The Alabama Workforce Development Area Local Board is made aware of all WARN and non-WARN notices by the State's Rapid Response Unit. Local Board staff receive Dislocated Worker event reports via e-mail to be made aware of planned dislocation events by company and location. Career center area managers and local career center managers are copied on e-mails announcing the date and time of group employee meetings (GEM's) in order to coordinate attendance by career center staff to provide information to dislocated workers about programs, services and training opportunities at the local career center.

- j. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)).

The Alabama Career Center System uses its association with its career center partners and local community agencies to ensure that the needs of youth are met while presenting the maximum opportunities for their goal achievements. A strong connection is fostered between youth program services, activities, and the Alabama Career Center System. It is important to ensure that youth are completely familiar with community services that assist in the reduction of barriers to employment, education, or training. Once eligibility determination has been made, the eligible youth is enrolled into WIOA and shall receive services available through the Alabama Career Center System to include an objective assessment that contains an academic and skills assessment of:

- ✚ Basic skills
- ✚ Occupational skills
- ✚ Prior work history
- ✚ Employability (pre-employment/work maturity skills)
- ✚ Aptitudes
- ✚ Interests

Youth must be administered an academic assessment (TABE) within the first 60 days of eligibility determination. This will be the pretest for determining “measurable skills gains”. The TABE assessment can be accepted from another approved agency, such as Adult Education, if it was administered within 6 months prior to eligibility determination. A TABE post-test to document measurable academic skills gains can be administered at any time and multiple times during a youth’s enrollment period, but **MUST** be administered at least once during a program year.

Assessment information will assist both the youth and the Alabama Career Center System staff in developing an appropriate career plan. Alabama Career Center System staff will assist youth who are prepared to make the commitment toward success. Assessment is a process through which joint decisions can be made concerning goals, objectives, employment, education, or training.

The ISS be developed for each youth and that it identifies “an employment goal including, in appropriate circumstances, non-traditional jobs, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant...”

Youth should also be introduced to planning tools such as My Next Move, www.MyNextMove.org, and mySkills myFuture, www.mySkillsmyFuture.org.

- k. How will the local board coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services (20 CFR 679.560(b)(9))?

The Alabama Workforce Development Area Local Board staff regularly network with secondary and postsecondary leaderships through State, Regional, and Local forums and meetings to exchange information about programs and services in the local area. Local Board members will also be provided information and updates about relevant secondary and postsecondary programs in the Alabama Workforce Development Area.

- l. How will the local board coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities (adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs) with the provision of transportation and other appropriate services in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(10))?

The AWDA is predominately a rural area with only minimal access to a full-time public transportation system. The public transportation systems that are available to serve the rural areas offer very minimal transportation access that is restricted to very structured routes and travel times, and are typically not sufficient to provide participants access to travel to and from training providers or to work-based training opportunities. Transportation assistance is provided by many of our 18 current Youth Providers either by agency vans, or gas cards for either WIOA participant vehicles or, most often, for participants to use for gas in friends'/family vehicles in exchange for transportation to class.

- m. Provide plans and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(11)).

Within the AWDA the WIA/WIOA staff have been colocated within the Alabama Career Center System of strategically placed (One-Stop) Career Centers for approximately 20 years and have worked closely with the Wagner-Peyser staff to provide non-duplicated services. That coordination and cooperation between the Alabama Department of labor (WP/UI/TAA/etc.) and the WIOA Title I AWDA has advanced so that our agencies share in the costs of supervision, and facility costs, to the point that we now have a cost-sharing

agreement whereas the costs of career center area managers and individual career center local office managers is allocated monthly based on the percent of non-supervisory staff charged to the individual benefitting cost centers. A copy of the Cost- Allocation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is included. **(Attachment C)**

- n. How will the local board coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities (adult, dislocated worker and youth programs) with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II? This description must include how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Section 232, for example, promoting concurrent enrollment in programs and activities, as appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(b)(12)).

Adult Education provided by the Alabama Career College System is present in virtually all Comprehensive Career Centers located within the AWDA. AWDA Youth Providers only provide adult education services where they are not readily available for Adult Education. AWDA Youth providers augment the adult education classes by providing tutors, space, participant incentives and other services to enhance the participation for participants who are basic skills deficient and/or need a GED or high school diploma to successfully enter the workforce or enter postsecondary education opportunities.

A representative from the local board, or local Board staff member will be on the State AE review committee for the adult education Request for Funding Proposals (RFP). The board will select one/two people from the board to represent them on the AE review committee. The board reviewer will make sure that each of the submitted proposals are in alignment with the goals of the board. The next competitive process required for Title II under WIOA is in 2017 and must be complete with providers ready to begin on July 1, 2017. The current tentative timeline for the process is to release an RFP in January/February 2017 and the review the applications April/May and make selections for new providers by June to begin providing service on July 1, 2017.

- o. Attach current copies of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) or other executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(13)). **(Attachment C)**
- p. Provide a statement indicating that the local area will negotiate local levels of performance consistent with WIOA Section 166(c) with the Workforce Development Division (WDD) and that these performance levels will be included in each year's Grant Agreement. These levels will be negotiated when the U.S. Department of Labor and other applicable federal agencies finalize performance levels for the State (20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)).

The state has not been scheduled to initiate WIOA Performance levels for Alabama. Once these state performance levels have been negotiated the AWDA will be notified of proposed WIOA performance levels for the local area. At that point, AWDA Section staff will review the proposed WIOA performance levels, and initiate the negotiation for final AWDA performance. It should be noted that due to the AWDA currently being comprised of 65 of the state's 67 counties we traditionally agree to accept the same performance levels as the USDOL has negotiated with the state.

- q. What actions will the local board take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (20 CFR 679.560(b)(17))?

The AWDA board and board staff within the AWDA Section of the Workforce Development Division of Commerce will continue to stress the targeting of training referrals to occupations that have been identified as High Demand/High Growth/ and High Wage occupations which can be attained by postsecondary education training programs that do not exceed the 104-week maximum allowed by the WIOA. These identified occupations will be adjusted for each Region of the State utilizing data developed by the Alabama Department of Labor's Labor Market Division. NOTE: this Regional Labor Market Information is currently presented for the 10 Workforce Regional Areas, but will be recalculated to conform with the reduction down to 7 Workforce Regions.

- r. How will individual training accounts be used to provide training services to adults and dislocated workers? Will contracts for training services be used? If training contracts for services are used, how will this be coordinated with the use of individuals training accounts? How will the local board ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (20 CFR 679.560(b)(18))?

The Alabama Department of Commerce, through the Workforce Development Division, hosts a website that provides job seekers full and accurate information concerning available Training Services on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), accessible at <https://www.etpl.alabama.gov>. Cost information is provided and may include such items as tuition and required books, materials, supplies, and fees. Performance information available through the website provides general statistics including successful training completions, job acquisition rates, entry-level wages, and career and promotional opportunities. This information will be provided to job seekers and should facilitate comparison shopping to ensure an informed customer choice, which aligns with the current Labor Market Information.

Job seekers may not need WIOA financial assistance to complete training necessary for job acquisition. Non-WIOA assistance may be available through grants, scholarships, or partner services and should be accessed in the event that WIOA funds are not sufficient to meet all training needs. Career Services will continue to be provided while job seekers are enrolled in Training Services. Case Management will take on even more importance since customers will be receiving services away from the career center. Extra efforts may be required to stay in contact with them. Also, additional supportive services may need to be addressed at this time to help ensure success.

Open lines of communication between the Alabama Career Center staff and the proper contact persons, as identified by the training provider, are very important. This may help to ensure that job seekers will have a smooth entry into training services and will facilitate both the Case Management and maintenance of Individual Training Accounts and On-the-Job Training contracts during the term of participation. Once again, as job seekers complete or near the end of participation in training services, appropriate labor exchange activities, which may include an updated resume, should be initiated to facilitate entry into unsubsidized employment. These services can be accomplished through a team approach of Alabama Career Center staff and other partners.

Alabama Career Center System is committed to fully integrating RA programs as an employment and training solution for one-stop centers. Career centers are encouraged to use RA as a career pathway for job seekers and a job-driven strategy for businesses. RA programs automatically qualify to be placed on the State and Local Board's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) allowing ITA's to support participants in RA programs.

- s. Describe the one-stop delivery system's current intake and case management information system(s). Are all WIOA and career center partners using the same system? How do WIOA and career center partners plan to implement and transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(20))?

Data collection and reporting processes for Title I and Title III programs is through the Alabama Job Link system for participants through the one stop centers. Participant data for Title I adult, dislocated worker and youth programs are is uploaded nightly to the AlaWorks data collection programs used by the Department of Commerce for Title I programs. Adult Education and Rehabilitative Services use programs developed to facilitate reporting requirement from their respective funding agencies.

Two of the core partners in Alabama have interoperable management information systems to exchange common data elements. The WIOA Title I entity (Alabama Department of Commerce) and the Wagner–Peyser entity (Alabama Department of Labor) run a nightly data extract that moves data from Alabama JobLink (AJL) to AlaWorks for the WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth reporting elements. Also, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) and the Alabama Department of Human Resources participate in a data warehouse provided by the Department of Commerce, known as the Interagency Electronic Linkage System (IELS). The IELS allows these agencies to extract data already collected by the Alabama Career Centers of clients served by these respective agencies.

- t. What policies does the local board have in place for the local one-stop delivery system that ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (20 CFR 679.560(b)(21))?

The state has established that priority of service will be given to individuals on public assistance, other low-income individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E). The State Program Integrity Section will review activities, services, administration, and management practices to ensure compliance with the Act, Federal and State Regulations, OMB Circulars, Government Auditing Standards, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), State Law and Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives.

- u. How will the local area, and in particular the career centers, comply with the Jobs for Veterans Act requirements?

In affiliation with the American Job Center (AJC) network, the Alabama Veterans' Services Program within the Alabama Career Center System shall offer comprehensive employment and career placement service to nearly 25,000 veterans a year through a combination of self-service Internet-based job services and direct assistance at AJCs throughout the state.

The Alabama Job Link (AJL) system, as a point of entry for self-service registration, provides a priority service notification to veterans and covered persons at the Alabama JobLink website.

Veterans and persons entitled to priority services and training complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for priority services and training at the point of entry into the workforce development system.

Veterans who can use AJL competently are encouraged to self-register and make maximum use of the automated access to resources. As a core service, career center specialists review applications and resumes submitted by veterans and covered persons who register for employment using self-service, to ensure that veterans' applications clearly state job objectives and show meaningful information with regards to work history, education and training. Because veterans' resumes are listed first in the search results and are annotated with an American flag, employers can quickly locate qualified veterans for job openings. To ensure that Veterans' receive priority in referral to job openings, the Alabama Job Link system provides 24- hour e-mail alerts to veterans for any job listing that matches their resumes. The automated system to select qualified candidates for job openings is programmed to refer only qualified veterans in the first 24 hours of the listing, unless no qualified veterans are available.

Priority service is also provided when veterans, or others eligible for priority, are identified at intake when registering for services at any AJC, or other service delivery points. Career center specialists will ensure that each veteran completing a full application will have properly recorded their skills, education, training, job or career interests, work experience, licenses or certifications, employment availability, contact information, and other vital information.

Additionally, AJCs will use signage, graphics, and displays to inform veterans and Covered Persons of priority service (as described under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and 20 CFR Part 1010) and as applicable to all USDOL-funded employment services and training.

Moreover, local career center managers will develop outreach activities to locate Covered Persons under Veterans' Priority. Managers or designated representatives will review special reports generated by AJL for the purpose of identifying veterans and Covered Persons who may be contacted and made aware of their priority in services and training. Career center managers will develop local service strategies and training goals for veterans and Covered Persons entitled to Veterans' Priority, in consultation with their partner agencies and training providers, to encourage maximum utilization of services and training by veterans and Covered Persons.

All Alabama Workforce Development regions have implemented Veterans' Priority in the State WIA and Wagner-Peyser Plan of Service. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) representatives and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) shall complement Priority of Service provided by the AJC to veterans and Covered Persons, as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41, and in accordance with the general and special provisions of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), and applicable regulations, policies, and directive guidance for JVSG from the Assistant Secretary, Veterans Employment and Training (ASVET), including Veterans Program Letters addressing DVOP-LVER Roles and Responsibilities.

The Alabama strategy leverages improvements in technology to enable career center specialists to locate and review the resumes of veterans using on-line self-services for the purpose of offering helpful advice or suggestions on presenting their skills and abilities to prospective employers, because the AJL data system is designed to support employers searching for key words, then automatically flags the resumes of veterans and Covered Persons who are identified as qualified candidates within the parameters entered by the employer. This advantage offers veterans and Covered Person a Priority in Service and enables an employer to contact them directly, with or without a referral through a posted job order.

Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE)

Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job center (AJC) network will provide comprehensive employment, training, and career placement services to nearly 25,000 veterans a year through a combination of Internet-based job services and personal assistance at Alabama Career Centers in the statewide AJC network. Alabama has more than 32,000 residents currently serving in the Armed Forces and nearly 13,000 of that in the National Guard and Reserve component. Alabama National Guard ranked fifth in numbers of troops deployed.

The Alabama Career Center System in the American Job Center network operates under the auspices of the Alabama Department of Labor, the state agency responsible for providing employment services and related services to veterans, and is authorized by the Governor to make application for funds to carry out the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) to carry out the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) program as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41.

The Alabama Job Link (AJL) enables veterans to use self-services, including registration. This approach enables specialists in the DVOP to review the registrations and resumes submitted by veterans on-line and then contact veterans who appear to need further assistance. Alabama DVOP specialists prioritize their efforts with veterans who are facing significant barriers to employment (SBE) in securing employment, including veterans who appear to be having difficulty in using the Alabama Job Link (AJL) automated system. The assignment of DVOP specialists at specific Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job Center (AJC) network is based on a strategy to ensure veterans with SBEs are priority customers in the Alabama Workforce Development system. Although many veterans can and will use the internet-based self-registration and various self-service features, veterans with SBEs are provided intensive services. Veterans who enter the Alabama Workforce Development System at an AJC (Alabama Career Center), are served initially by career center specialists. For veterans who appear to have an SBE, career

center specialists will offer additional services, to include referral to a DVOP who will provide intensive services and case management services to veterans having a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE), as defined by Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 03-14 and VPL 04-14:

1. All veterans enrolled in the Five-track Employment Program administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service. As covered in a separate agreement with VR&E, a client determined to be "Job-Ready" by VR&E will be referred by a VR&E Employment Coordinator to the state's Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC), who will refer the Job Ready VR&E client to an appropriate AJC manager for case management and job placement services.
2. Homeless Veterans, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)).
3. Veterans lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.
4. A Recently-separated military service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who at any time in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.
5. Low-income veterans (as defined by WIA at Section 101(25)(B)).
6. A veteran who is an ex-offender, as defined by WIA Section 101(27), who has been released from incarceration within the last 12 months.
7. Veterans ages 18–24 years old transitioning from active military service.
 - a. A Special Disabled Veteran or Disabled Veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1). Special Disabled and Disabled Veterans are those who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service connected disability.
 - b. Veterans in the categories above will be provided a comprehensive Assessment of Employability, addressing barriers to employment and a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) outlining the individual's employability planning.

Locating Priority Group Veterans

Veterans in priority groups will be located in the data system by developing special reports and search capabilities of the AJL system. Career center/AJC staff members will outreach to veterans who may benefit from DVOP services. DVOPs will outreach to homeless shelters, community agencies that provide services to homeless individuals, and will participate in special events for disabled and homeless veterans, such as Homeless Veterans Stand Downs.

VII. Service Provider Selection Policies

- a. Provide a description of the competitive process that will be used to award any subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(15)).

Providers will be required to collaborate with partners from the career centers and other social services, education, and employment–related supports in the area. The formula will be designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared to established goals as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

The proposal application will collect basic information regarding the eligible provider including, but not limited to, location, service area, scope of work for the program, demographics served, fiscal management procedures, and audit history. Additionally, each applicant will be required to submit a proposed budget, as well as programmatic information regarding statutory requirements. Questions may include the following:

1. Provide the vision and mission of the program or organization. Please include a description of the population that the program will serve, including how the program will meet the needs of adults with barriers to employment (e.g. displaced homemaker, low-income individual, individuals with disabilities, single parents, and other individuals as described in the law).
2. Provide a description of any cooperative agreements/contracts that the program has with other agencies and service providers for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities. Also, describe ways in which the program coordinates with other service providers to provide wrap-around services to participants (e.g. child care, transportation).
3. Describe how the program will align activities to the Local Plan for WIOA providers and supportive services. Include a description of how the program will promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs.

4. Describe the methods the program will employ to meet the State adjusted levels of performance. Additionally, describe the program's mechanism and process for collecting and reporting data to assess performance. The description of the program's methods to meet performance measures should focus on efforts to meet or achieve:

- a. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment after program exit; and
- b. Median earnings of program participants; and
- c. Percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma/equivalent during program participation or after exiting; and
- d. Effective service provided to employers.

5. Describe the program's current and/or future involvement as a local One-Stop Career Center partner, including how the program will contribute to products or services for career center participant, with emphasis on individuals with barriers to employment. Describe how the program's contribution to the One-Stop Career Center will be coordinated with other core providers, and delivered to participants.

6. Describe the scope of the program's activities, and the delivery of services to ensure that the needs of all eligible participants will be met.

7. Describe the program's ability to meet the 13 considerations used to assess the RFP that are listed below.

Assessing the RFP

The assessment of each grant application will involve an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At minimum, the review process and scoring rubric will consider the following:

1. The ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs and English language needs identified for the population in the area. Particular emphasis will be given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment—including low literacy skills and an English language barrier.
2. The eligible provider's ability to provide service to individuals with a (physical or learning) disability.
3. The eligible provider's demonstrated effectiveness in providing literacy instruction, including its ability to meet State-adjusted levels of performance and improve the literacy levels of eligible individuals.

4. The eligible provider's alignment with the WIOA Local Plan.
5. The depth, intensity, and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. The proposed program must incorporate the basic tenets of reading instruction. Attention will be given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates stringent research in the grant proposal submission and the development of the literacy program itself.
6. The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research and best practices.
7. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction, to include distance education, toward students' improved performance.
8. The eligible provider's demonstrated integration of contextualized instruction, to blend literacy skills, and preparation for transition to postsecondary education or entry into the workplace. Particular attention will be given to activities that promote and lead to economic self-sufficiency, and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship.
9. The qualifications and expertise of the eligible provider's instructors, counselors, and administrative staff. All instructors must hold (at minimum) a Bachelor's degree. The eligible provider must also demonstrate its ability and intent to provide high quality professional development to instructors and staff, toward the improvement of student performance.
10. The eligible provider's collaboration with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have or establish significant partnerships with public schools, postsecondary institutions, industry/business partners, and workforce boards.
11. The flexibility of program scheduling offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with Federal, State, and local support services such as childcare, transportation, and mental health services.
12. The eligible provider's information management system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the state-administered designated Adult Education System for Accountability and Performance for all grant related data collection and reporting.
13. The demonstrated need within the area occupied by the eligible provider for English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

- b. Identify local board criteria for awarding grants for youth activities.

The State will establish policy requiring Local Workforce Development Areas to submit RFP's for WIOA youth activities for review before being issued by the local area. The RFP's will be required to award youth program funds to established potential youth providers with the organizational history to meet expected youth performance measures.

- c. How will the local area determine service provider suitability for inclusion on the Eligible Training Providers List?

See Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive 2015-03, Change 1 at http://www.madeinalabama.com/assets/gwd/gwid/GWID_2015-03Change01.pdf

NOTE: the AWDA does not manage the ETPL, but will review all providers and courses of instruction provided by these providers to insure that the training provided meets the AWDA's focus on promoting only those occupations that provide entry employment into occupations, including those that provide career ladders/career pathways leading to High Growth/High Demand occupations that provide a sustainable wage for the participant and their families.

- d. How will the local area secure the required performance information from service providers?

All AWDA training providers, including both Youth Providers and ITA/skills training providers are required to report performance outcomes to the AWDA Career Center in their local area in "real-time". This includes the reporting of credentials/degrees/employment/etc. our network of career centers then reports these outcomes to us by entering the information into the Alabama Job Link data reporting system. In addition, for actual reporting of WIOA reportable outcomes of employment and wages the AWDA relies of the state to secure this data from the Alabama Department of Labor's Unemployment Compensation system from actual wages reported to that Agency.

VIII. Monitoring & Oversight Policy

- a. Provide a copy of the local area's monitoring and oversight policies and procedures. **(Attachment D AWDA's Monitoring Guide)**

IX. Grievance Procedures and Policies

- a. Provide a copy of the local area's Grievance Procedures and Policies. **(Attachment E)**

X. Comment Period

- a. What process will the local board use to provide a public comment period no longer than thirty days prior to submission of the plan? How will the local board ensure that the public, particularly representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations, have an opportunity to have input into the development of the plan (20 CFR 679.550(b), 679.560(b)(19))?

The AWDA Local Plan will be posted on <http://www.madeinalabama.com/> for a period of not less than 30 days.

XI. Assurances

- a. Provide a copy of the Assurances signed by the Chief Local Elected Official and the Chair of the Local Workforce Development Board. **(Attachment A)**

Note: References to the WIOA's Implementing Regulations will be reviewed upon final issuance of the WIOA's Implementing Regulations in mid calendar year 2016. If any revisions to references are required, a change to this policy will be issued by the Workforce Development Division.