



**Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board
North Carolina Modification
For Local Area Workforce Development**

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Title I Interim Plan**

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

*North Carolina Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Solutions
4316 Mail Service Center
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316*

Introduction and Instructions

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Local Area Workforce Development Board (WDB) to develop and submit, in partnership with the chief local elected official, a comprehensive four-year plan. Four-Year Plans were submitted in May 2020.

In North Carolina, annually, each Local Area WDB, in consultation with the chief local elected official, is to provide updates to the Comprehensive Four-Year Plan. The WIOA Program Year (PY) 2022 Plan is to provide current information and be effective July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023 and will include required current local policies. The Local Area Plan will support the alignment strategy described in the 2020-2024 NC Unified State Plan in accordance with WIOA Section 102(b)(1)(E), and otherwise be consistent with the NC Unified State Plan. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's mission is to ensure North Carolinians are better educated, healthier, and have more money in their pockets so that they can live more abundant, purposeful lives. The cornerstone to achieving this goal is to help people get good-paying jobs to support themselves and their families. Through NC Job Ready, Governor Cooper's workforce development initiative, North Carolina is working to build a stronger and better workforce. NC Job Ready is built on three core principles: education and skills attainment are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an employer-led workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and local innovation is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system. In addition, Local Area WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 108 in the preparation and submission of the plan.

Through its strategic planning efforts, the NCWorks Commission developed a vision and mission for North Carolina's Workforce System. This vision is to build a job-ready workforce to strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure our state can adapt to a changing economy. The mission of the state's workforce development system is to ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity, and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

Federal and State Requirements for Local Administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Area WDBs should reference the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128, enacted July 22, 2014. Additional information is available at the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration website: www.doleta.gov.

North Carolina policy information is available at <https://www.nccommerce.com/jobs-training/workforce-professionals-tools-resources/workforce-policies>. Local Area WDBs should reference the North Carolina [WIOA Unified State Plan](#).

Local Area Plan Submission and Due Date

The Local Area Plan must be submitted through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE), the Division's web-based financial system. The due date is **May 6, 2022**. Each attachment must be submitted and labeled separately in either Word, Excel, or PDF format. Attachments not submitted separately will not be accepted. Forms requiring original signatures may use DocuSign® (or similar) and may be uploaded in WISE. If original signatures are obtained, forms must be mailed (and uploaded in WISE) to the Local Area WDB's assigned Planner at: N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions, 4316 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4316.

I. Local Area WDB verview

The Local Area WDB Overview provides important contact information that is used throughout the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). It is important that this section remain current during the Program Year. Updates should be submitted to the Local Area WDB's assigned DWS Planner when changes occur.

In the first section and anywhere else in the Local Area Plan, please include the appropriate salutation along with Titles such as Dr., The Honorable, Chairperson, and Judge. Thank you.

1. Provide the Local Area WDB's official (legal) name as it appears on the local Consortium Agreement established to administer the WIOA or, if not a Consortium, in the formal request for Local Area designation.

- If the Local Area is a Consortium, attach a copy of the current Consortium Agreement.
Name document: *Mid-Carolina Consortium Agreement*.

Mid-Carolina Workforce Development

- If the Local Area is not a Consortium, attach a copy of the formal request for Local Area designation.

2. Provide the Local Area WDB's official name.

- If the Local Area WDB officially changed its name, please attach a copy of the Status of Incorporation, attorney's letter, or other document.

Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board

3. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number, and email address of the Local Area WDB Director.

Matthew Fowler, Director
Mid-Carolina Regional Council
6205 Raeford Rd; Fayetteville, NC 28304
(910) 323-4191 ext: 50
mfowler@mccog.org

4. Provide the name, elected title, local government affiliation, address, phone number, and email address of the Local Area WDB's Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO).

Lewis Weatherspoon, Chair
Harnett County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 759; Lillington, NC 27546
(910) 893-7555
lweatherspoon@harnett.org

5. Provide the name, title, business name, address, phone number, and email address of the individual authorized to receive official mail for the CLEO, if different than question 3.

Melissa Capps
Clerk to the Board
Harnett County
P.O. Box 759; Lillington, NC 27546
(910) 893-7555
mdcapps@harnett.org

6. Provide the name, address, phone number and email address of the Administrative/Fiscal Agent responsible for disbursing Local Area WIOA grant funds. This is the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sections 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) and 108(b)(15)].

Mid-Carolina Regional Council
6205 Raeford Rd; Fayetteville, NC 28304
(910) 323-4191

7. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number and email address of the Administrative/Fiscal Agent's signatory official.

Justin Hembree, Executive Director
Mid Carolina Regional Council
6205 Raeford Rd; Fayetteville, NC 28304
(910) 323-4191 ext: 33
jhembree@mccog.org

8. Attach a copy of the Administrative Entity/Fiscal Agent's organizational chart with an 'effective as of date'. Name document: *Mid-Carolina Organizational Chart*.
9. Provide the Administrative Entity's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and assurance that the 'System for Award Management' (SAM) status is current. Administrative Entities must register at least annually on the SAM website www.sam.gov to receive Federal funding [required by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Section 4.11 and Section 52.204-7].

DUNS# 605800523; SAM status is current

10. Provide the name of the Local Area WDB's Equal Opportunity Officer who shall be responsible for assuring that discrimination does not occur in its programs or projects. (CPS 10-2021)

Kiersten Powell
Mid-Carolina Regional Council
6205 Raeford Rd; Fayetteville, NC 28304
(910) 323-4191 ext: 46
kpowell@mccog.org

Composition of the Local Area WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 107. Local Area WDB Membership Requirements have been provided as a reference at [Appendix C](#).

11. Provide each Local Area WDB members' name, business title, business name and address, phone number and email address on the provided form. The first block is reserved to identify the Local Area WDB chairperson ([form provided](#)). Indicate all required representation and indicate if vacant. [WIOA Section 107(b)(2)]. Name document: *Mid-Carolina WD Board List*.

Note: Please complete the entire form. Check the block on the form provided certifying compliance with required WIOA Local Area WDB business nomination process.

If a Local Area WDB list is not in compliance, please provide the current list and state the expected date that a compliant list will be provided (detailing vacant positions).

Use and identify categories as indicated on the form. Do not change required category names except to clarify those with multiple categories and do not count those names twice. Identify any names representing a dual category with an asterisk (*).

An updated Mid-Carolina WDB member list will be sent following anticipated appointments scheduled for October 3, 2022. The WDB is actively recruiting for a second labor representative.

Due to the start of the new Board, all term start dates are the same, but term end dates (i.e., year) may differ (some members will serve three years terms; others will serve a one year term but remain actively engaged on the Board as ex-officio members until they are eligible to serve again in the scheduled rotation between the three counties, e.g., Economic Development). We will be conscious of strategically adding new members in order to stagger terms going forward.

12. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB works with local elected officials to ensure viable local business representatives are appointed to the Local Area WDB in compliance with WIOA Section 107.

The Mid-Carolina Consortium is developing a process for ensuring viable, diverse, and equitable business representatives are appointed to the WDB in compliance with WIOA. Members of the WDB are encouraged to recruit for current and anticipated vacancies, especially representatives of local businesses. The Board works closely with local elected officials, key stakeholders, and WDB staff to submit recommendations of viable applicants for applicable vacancies for approval and appointment by the CLEO.

The Chief Local Elected Official must establish by-laws consistent with applicable local procedures, state, and federal laws to include WIOA Final Rules and Regulations 679.310(g). The Local Area WDB shall submit by-laws that clearly demonstrate all WIOA and North Carolina required elements described in [Appendix A](#). Additional by-laws guidance/template and electronic meeting formats have been provided in [Appendix B](#).

13. Attach the Local Area WDB By-laws including date adopted/amended. By-laws must include the required elements found in [Appendix A](#). Name document: Mid-Carolina WDB By-laws.

The Mid-Carolina WDB bylaws will be adopted by the WDB at their October 4, 2022 meeting.

14. To demonstrate that the attached Local Area WDB By-laws comply, complete [By-Laws Required Elements – Crosswalk chart](#).

Sunshine Provision - The Local Area WDB shall make available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information regarding the activities of the Local Area WDB, including information regarding the Local Area Plan prior to submission of the Local Area Plan, and regarding membership, the designation and certification of one-stop operators, and the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, and on request, minutes of formal meetings of the Local Area WDB. [WIOA Section 107(e)]

- Describe how the Local Area WDB will make copies of the proposed Local Area Plan available to the public. If stating the Local Area Plan will be on the Local Area WDB website, provide link. [WIOA Section 108(d)]

The Local Area Plan will be posted on the Mid-Carolina Regional Council website for a 30-day public comment period. Copies of the Plan will be provided upon request.

[Workforce Development \(mccog.org\)](http://mccog.org)

Public Comment - The Local Area WDB shall make copies of the proposed Local Area Plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media; allow for public comment not later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the proposed Local Area Plan is made available; and, include with submission of the Local Area Plan any comments that represent disagreement with the Local Area Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d)]

- Attach a copy of the Local Area WDB’s organizational chart with an ‘effective as of date.’ Include position titles. Name document: Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Organizational Chart.
- Complete the following chart for the PY2022 Local Area WDB’s planned meeting schedule to include time, dates, and location. *[Expand form as needed]*

Note: All Local Area WDB meetings shall be held in accessible facilities. All materials and discussions should be available in an accessible format upon request as indicated under North Carolina specific requirements detailed in [Appendix A](#).

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)
8/23/22	9 am	Location to rotate between Cumberland, Harnett, and Sampson Counties
10/4/22		
1/3/23		
Remaining PY22 dates to be determined		

- Attach a copy of the signed ‘Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters – Primary Covered Transactions’ ([form provided](#)). [Required by the Regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR 180, participants’ responsibilities.] Name document: Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Certification Form.

Note: Document must have the original signature or DocuSign® (or similar) of the Administrative Entity signatory official. If using original signatures, mail the signed [Certification form](#) to the assigned DWS Planner at N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions, 4316 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4316.

- Submit the original Local Area WDB and Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Signatory Page ([form provided](#)), bearing the original signatures of the Chief Local Elected Official(s) and the Local Area

WDB Chairperson, and attach a copy of the signed document if not using DocuSign® (or similar). Name document: Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Signatory Page.

Note: If using original signatures, mail the [Signatory Page](#) to the assigned DWS Planner at N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions, 4316 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4316.

II. Local Area WDB Strategic Planning

The Local Area WDB is required to keep the Local Area Plan up to date and fluid as events and funding changes occur which may require local area responses. Local Area Plans will require an annual modification. North Carolina has implemented integrated services delivery with an enhanced emphasis on regional planning and services. This approach is consistent with federal, state, and regional initiatives and opportunities. North Carolina's workforce development system includes businesses, organizations, agencies, employed and unemployed persons, training and educational institutions, adults, and youth. To enhance services to all constituents, aligning workforce development planning and services with regional labor markets is both effective and productive. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative is built on three core principles: education and skills development are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an employer-led workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and local innovation is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system.

Locally, WDBs are creatively working to address the new challenges of job growth and expansions. Employers in Local Area WDB areas continue to have a shortage of lower-wage, entry-level and middle-skilled level workers. As a Local Area WDB and workforce system, Local Area WDBs are leveraging resources and engaging in new partnerships that include the business community, economic developers, chambers of commerce, NCWorks Career Centers, community colleges, public schools, and community partners. Working together, Local Area WDBs are paving the way for an even stronger economy through sector partnerships and career pathways initiatives.

1. Provide a description of the Local Area WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an industry-driven, educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment. Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance and how it aligns with regional economic growth, industry sectors, and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(E)]

The strategic vision of the Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and persons with barriers to employment, is to support and implement Governor Cooper's vision of "Making North Carolina Job Ready." All Career Center employees are expected to be familiar with My Future NC and NC Grow, and strategic initiatives are to align with and support a solid foundation with our University and Community College systems. It is critical to level the playing field for young people entering the work force as well as those who face challenges in employment. Jobseekers will explore potential opportunities through Labor Market Information, complete work-interest assessments using NCWorks Assessments, and compare the assessments to available Certified Career Pathways with the help of qualified NCWorks Career Center professionals. Job retention, credential achievement, sustainable salaries, and measurable skills gain increases are among the performance factors reviewed by Service Provider Staff and Workforce Development Board Support Staff. Effective education and career services will help to enhance the skilled workforce, which will draw new businesses to our area, resulting in improved regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency for all.

2. Provide a description of how the Local Area WDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive service for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the Local Area WDB will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential including a credential that is

an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable. Include how these strategies will be a result of regional economic and employer-driven priorities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(3)]

The principal objective of the Workforce Development Board is to streamline and reduce duplicative customer-focused services from first contact with jobseekers or employers. This priority is for all NCWorks Career Centers under the Mid-Carolina local area. Onsite leadership addresses program access and continual service delivery improvement to promote awareness and identify additional priorities in serving all citizens. Mid-Carolina Staff conducts customer feedback surveys during onsite work visits, employer engagement, and regular monitoring.

Secondary and post-secondary education providers continue to represent some of our strongest partnerships. With educational programs being core to employment and training success, the WDB has placed a priority on coordinating workforce activities and service delivery with local educational programs. Career Advisors (both State and Subrecipient staff) maintain strong connections with guidance counselors, academic advisors, and other key education staff, including staff at alternative schools, to share information and determine the most effective methods for connecting with students. When feasible, WIOA Title I outreach, and activities are aligned with education activities for maximum input and reduced duplication. Career planners often educate clients about support services at local post-secondary providers, linking with advising and/or counseling staff, tutoring resources, and academic and emotional support groups.

To ensure the WDB keeps a pulse on educational programs, activities, and trends, WDB members, staff, and service providers participate in advisory committees, workgroups, and other community and economic development agencies that forecast labor market demands. The WDB also invites in-demand educational program providers to present at WDB meetings and discuss opportunities to collaborate. By providing WDB members with information from the Chamber of Commerce, local Labor Market information and Forecasting, and Economic Development report, Board members can make informed decisions on service delivery, facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, and improve activities that will lead to a workforce that is prepared with portable and stackable credentials. With the creation of the new local area, expanding access to employment training and education will be a priority to serve all local area jobseekers and employers.

3. Describe the Local Area WDB's use of **each** of the following initiatives: incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, layoff aversion, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other employer services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the regional strategy to meet the needs of businesses. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(B)]

The Mid-Carolina WDB communicates with partners throughout the local area and the region on a regular basis to coordinate efforts to meet business requirements. At the very least, this involves the Community College System, the NC University System, Economic Developers, CTE, SBTDC, and local government officials. Greater regional employers are a special emphasis for collaborative efforts across all networks to effectively express business needs and supply solutions. Furthermore, industries such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, transportation/distribution, construction, and information technology prioritize growth areas, including career route prospects. When applicable and suitable, the employment of training programs is stressed, particularly in the growth sectors, but also in other small-to-medium-sized firms that contribute to the broader process of strengthening the workforce system.

4. Provide a description of how the Local Area WDB coordinates workforce investment activities—including strategies, enhancing services, promoting participation in training programs, and avoiding duplication of services - carried out in the Local Area with the provision of Adult Education and Literacy activities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(13)]

The Mid-Carolina WDB coordinates workforce investment activities with the NCWorks Career Center's mandated partners, as well as many other local and regional partners, such as K-12 school systems, the Community College System, University systems, and Fayetteville Urban Ministry, which provide Adult Education and Literacy activities. The WDB continues to collaborate with these groups to discover and enhance approaches to reduce duplication of effort while maximizing the productive impact of our pooled resources in order to more effectively support the community, particularly those in greatest need.

5. Provide a description of cooperative agreements, as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11), between the Local Area WDB and other local entities described in Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of service to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts to include cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Section 108(b)(14)]

As a mandated partner, Vocational Rehabilitation is represented within the NCWorks Career Center MOU, the Unit Manager serves as an active member of the WDB, a representative of Vocational Rehabilitation is available onsite at the Cumberland County NCWorks Career Center, and the Harnett County affiliate NCWorks Career Center is located in a Vocational Rehabilitation facility. The Centers make every effort to include partners, especially those located onsite, in staff training to ensure consistent information and service delivery. Standard operating procedures for the Centers are continually developed and updated, with collaborative input from Center staff, in order to provide the most comprehensive information and guidance related to service delivery. Additionally, the MCWDB BSR is coordinating discussions and communications with Vocational Rehab BRRs in the region to discuss business outreach opportunities and ways to support existing business relationships. There will be at least quarterly discussions around business engagement activities and collaborative opportunities.

6. Provide a brief description of the actions the Local Area WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Local Area WDB, consistent with the factors developed by the NCWorks Commission. [WIOA Section 108(b)(18)]

The Mid-Carolina WDB continues to develop and enhance the role and responsibilities its members serve to the community. The Director and Board members make an attempt to attend NCWorks Commission meetings and report back to the rest of the Board and Center personnel. The WDB's objective and strategic goals were designed to be consistent with those of the Commission, which focuses on major issues identified in Governor Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative. The WDB and Career Centers are constantly working to improve service delivery by developing and implementing programs and activities, as well as the means for tracking progress, within and through the Career Centers to strengthen the framework to meet the current and future needs of the workforce development system in order to promote and sustain educational attainment and economic prosperity.

7. Explain the strategic plan for how the region will respond to national emergencies (such as the Covid-19 pandemic) or weather disasters to serve victims (such as aversion activities) and utilize special grants efficiently throughout the recovery period.

Special grants, such as the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG), will be utilized to provide disaster relief employment assistance, as well as employment and training services. Due to the effects of the pandemic, the NCWorks Career Centers are encouraged to implement methods that support and enhance virtual service delivery, such as communicating with customers via phone and email, completing NCWorks registration and enrollment processes remotely, and sponsoring virtual career fairs and job fairs for employers. The Centers will continue and improve these methods of service delivery beyond the pandemic in an effort to expand outreach and service provision for both job seekers and employers.

For employers who are left with no recourse other than mass layoffs during these disasters, Rapid Response will be used as an outreach method to assist affected employees and businesses to inform them of the services available, such as WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title I, and as applicable, NDWG, services.

8. Discuss the increase and expansion of service delivery and awareness efforts to reengage individuals with barriers (include dislocated workers, disconnected youth/high school dropouts, women, people of color in hard to reach communities, individuals with disabilities) to help reconnect the disconnected workforce. More importantly, clarify how success is measured.

The WDB is currently in the process of developing a stakeholder map and engagement strategy. These efforts will ensure the WDB is working with key community-based partners and thereby increasing awareness to the target populations including individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers, and disconnected youth/high school dropouts. The WDB currently works with a number of partners and invites agencies to attend and present at WDB meetings to educate the WDB on key issues related to the target populations. The WDB has initiated a Community Stakeholder planning committee to ensure awareness and respond to suggested service delivery improvement in re-engaging individuals with barriers.

The Career Advisors role includes outreach for program enrollment which includes direct contacts at various community-based organizations and providing presentations as well as one-on-one meetings about WIOA and non-WIOA programs and services. Career planners conduct targeted outreach to barrier groups and tailor information accordingly. Recent examples include the Fayetteville R.O.S.S. program in collaboration with Fayetteville Metropolitan Housing Authority and Fayetteville Technical Community, Project Hope, Project Grow, and realigning with Pathways for Prosperity. Outreach materials have been created to visually appeal to targeted audiences. Additionally, the NCWorks Career Centers routinely hosts workshops and information sessions for targeted audiences. The measure of success will be defined by the jobseekers receiving industry-recognized credentials and the wages reported during the 2nd and 4th quarters following exit from WIOA programs. WDB monitors will meet with staff regularly to build strategic plans and report back on the performance outcomes.

9. Provide an overview of how the region partners with NC Community Colleges, UNC institutions, and independent colleges in the local areas to prepare workers to succeed by using skills and education attainment with a focus on equity and inclusion.

Local and regional colleges and universities are partners in providing occupational skills training and opportunities for work-based learning. Increased emphasis shall be made on connecting to graduating students and exploring opportunities to assist them with gaining the necessary experience in their field of study through work-based learning and partner resources. Opportunities for a regional discussion around equity and inclusion will be considered.

10. Please describe how the Local Area WDB engages with local and regional Economic Developers.

The Mid-Carolina WDB interacts with local and regional economic developers on a regular basis, meeting with company clients, partners, and community leaders, both in person and virtually. We attempt to help their efforts in supporting existing firms, particularly with workforce services, as well as in recruiting new enterprises by sharing information about the services available, which includes local/regional workforce data.

11. How many new/expansion economic development projects has the Local Area WDB engaged in during the previous program year? Please indicate the type/number of services provided.

The Mid-Carolina WDB has supported local economic development organizations by sharing Title I and Title III services provided at the Career Centers as well as labor market information when needed. Information and services are shared to support existing industry expansion projects and the recruitment of new companies and include presentations about the posting of jobs in the NCWorks system, the ability to conduct hiring events, the On-the-Job Training Program, and research about the local/regional labor market. While there were multiple meetings and efforts made to support the recruitment of new companies, the MCWDB was directly involved with the following new and existing projects: eClerx, Fortuna, NFI (Campbell Soup), Dansons, and Chenmed.

12. Identify the Career Pathways developed by the Local Area. Complete the chart below.

Pathway Name	Partner WDBs	Year the pathway was developed	Number of trainees (to date) who have utilized the pathway
Collision Repair and Refinishing Technology (Cumberland County)	N/A	2016	Not available
Nursing and Allied Health (Cumberland County)	Lumber River (Hoke County) Regional Partnership (Moore County)	2017	Not available
Advanced Manufacturing (Harnett & Sampson Counties)	N/A	2018	Not available
Health Care (Harnett & Sampson Counties)	N/A	2018	Not available

13. In addition to facilitating the development of career pathways, also describe the review process for in-demand career pathways to determine if new pathways are needed, or if current pathways should be updated or removed based on the needs of the industry.
 - a. Include plans for new career pathways.
 - b. Explain how career pathways in the local area are in alignment with other partners/stakeholders' (DPI, community colleges, myFutureNC, universities, etc.) existing pathways or if they are duplicates.
 - c. Describe the strategy to avoid duplication efforts.

Mid-Carolina WDB Staff regularly meets with employers, businesses, and educational partners to determine the need for in-demand career pathways and review the need to update or remove based on the needs of local area industries. The Business Services team coordinates activities and services with workforce partners to provide comprehensive and streamlined efforts with industry demands. The WDB has plans to develop a new career pathway in construction and maintenance. This is a reflection of the R.O.S.S (Residential Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency) in partnership with Fayetteville Metropolitan Housing Authority and Fayetteville Technical Community College. Fayetteville Technical mapped out a plan for job seekers to receive industry-recognized credentials through their continuing education. Following an internship, students may continue to add portal or stackable credentials and degrees that will promote career stability and self-sufficiency but expose jobseekers to apprenticeships and self-employment.

All three counties (Cumberland, Harnett, & Sampson) have a high demand in the healthcare industry. The Business Services team will meet with employers and businesses to review the career pathways established; and, through collaborative efforts with our local Training Providers adjust the career pathways model to expand education and training to meet the needs of the employer. This strategic effort will ensure that Mid-Carolina remains abreast of industry demands, align with stakeholders, and prepare jobseekers for a competitive workforce.

As Mid-Carolina is continually meeting with stakeholders and partners to adjust career pathways for in-demand industries, the Business Services team will partner with Career Advisors to train and develop their knowledge of the resources and training available.

14. Provide a description of Local Area WDB's capacity to provide workforce investment activities to address education attainment and skill needs of high-demand fields - strategies for awareness and cultivation efforts to increase access to education and postsecondary credentials and certificates, availability of learn-and-earn opportunities (internships, apprenticeships, summer employment) and supportive services for hard-to-reach communities.
 - a. Explain strategies that include NextGen, NCCareers.org and any awareness models for success.

The local area uses labor market data to set service delivery strategies for in-demand occupations and industries that will guide and dictate appropriate sponsorship of occupational skills training, supportive services, and work-based learning opportunities for eligible and suitable individuals that will lead to educational, skills, and credential attainment on the track toward unsubsidized employment.

Mid-Carolina staff, in collaboration with NCWorks Staff, Partners, and Stakeholders, will recruit NextGen participants and other job seekers to connect with the career pathways and apprenticeships that best match their career values outlined through Allison training offered through NCWorks, Onet assessments, and work inventories through NCCareer.org. NextGen Career Advisors meet regularly with participants for job-shadowing and work-based learning opportunities that will expose them to Careers and in-demand skills. This supports comprehensive

guidance and counseling and other skills attainment promoting self-sufficiency. NextGen participants will also be afforded the opportunity for supportive services that support the completion of their work-based learning opportunity (work-based learning encompasses internships, apprenticeships, and summer employment). Mid-Carolina devotes itself to reducing barriers to the successful completion of education attainment, upskilling, and employment opportunities in compliance with all Federal, State, and Local area directives.

III. NCWorks Commission

The NCWorks Commission recommends policies and strategies that enable the state's workforce and businesses to compete in the global economy.

The Commission is designated as the state's WDB under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Led by a private sector chair, the 37-member Commission includes representatives from the business community, heads of state workforce agencies, educators, and community leaders. All members are appointed by the Governor.

Mission of the NCWorks Commission: To ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity; and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

Employer-led job training programs have the best career outcomes. Employers know best what skills their workers need, and employer involvement is key for workforce development and job readiness. Businesses that invest in developing North Carolina's workforce will benefit from well-trained employees and a more innovative and diverse workplace that better reflects its community.

1. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB engages with local employers and informs them of the wide array of business services offered. Include how the Local Area WDB ensures collaboration with other employer-facing workforce program representatives, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Agriculture Services, Foreign Labor, Re-Entry, and Veterans Services, through processes and procedures for information sharing and efficient employer customer service delivery.

Staff conduct outreach efforts, often as a result of partner referrals, to employers in the local area and the surrounding region to market the resources available through NCWorks and our partner organizations with strategic emphasis on new employers as well as those who do not have an NCWorks account or have not utilized NCWorks in a long time. Staff are expected to maintain contact with existing companies and identify opportunities that maximize the employer connection. It is required that all Career Center employees, regardless of function, are familiar with the full range of business services available and promote collaborative resources available through partner agencies for targeted populations. The MCWDB approved a board policy in early 2021 to explain the expectation and process of business engagement and business outreach. The SOP that is supported through this policy will be expanded to notate all of the program partners, further build out the team of business services, and plan at least quarterly meetings to talk through business engagement efforts and collaboration.

2. Please provide a brief overview of the business services team within the local area. Please identify the individual staff roles the Local Area WDB utilizes to conduct business services (that is Business Services Representative (Local Area WDB staff), contractor staff, Business Engagement Coordinator, NCWorks Career Center Manager, DWS staff, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, identify who makes regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services and/or Foreign Labor staff, etc.)

The Mid-Carolina WDB Business Services Team is comprised of a business services representative, career center management (both contract and DWS), subrecipient staff, DWS staff, and veterans staff members. The WDB BSR promotes NCWorks Career Center services through the Business Services Program, facilitates warm hand-offs to Career Center administration, and provides oversight and monitoring. DWS staff members are expected to manage the job order process, including updating existing and new employer accounts, make referrals to Agriculture Services and/or Foreign Labor staff, and provide leadership and direction to all staff about basic Wagner Peyer services, including job referrals, through Title III service delivery. The veteran staff members are in charge of frequent business outreach to new and current enterprises, as well as promoting all services available through the career center (s). Title I personnel are expected to deliver Wagner-Peyser services, initiate and supervise work-based learning programs, and facilitate the path toward unsubsidized employment for all WIOA participants. All outreach activity is to be communicated in advance to the WDB BSR and Career Center Manager with the expectation of applicable follow up and outcomes.

3. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB plans to increase NCWorks brand awareness at the local level (consult NCWorks Commission new 2021 Strategic Plan).

The Mid-Carolina WDB continues to raise awareness of the NCWorks brand by collaborating with community partners and companies to market the services and resources available through the NCWorks Career Centers, with a particular emphasis on the populations most in need of these services. The recent pandemic has highlighted the necessity to increase technology resources in order to improve accessibility and reach a larger audience.

4. Describe how the Local Area WDB and the partners identify and address local challenges for job growth and business expansions.

Communities across North Carolina are developing great local models of workforce development. North Carolina should build on those successes and replicate them in more places to continue building and expanding innovative solutions.

To routinely check on businesses, the Mid-Carolina WDB facilitates dialogue among partner agencies and the NCWorks Career Centers' employer services teams. When an expansion opportunity is identified, we collaborate with staff to promote the available opportunities and engage with partner agencies to identify eligible individuals. We screen candidates based on the needs of the employer to ensure that referred job seekers satisfy the basic qualifications to support the firm's requirements.

5. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB provides new and innovative solutions to support the growth of the local workforce system.

The Mid-Carolina WDB will actively promote local businesses and job opportunities through social media. We have built electronic recruitment methods that bring in new consumers through four platforms (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram), and Career Center advisors are expected to assist job seekers with creating their NCWorks accounts and facilitating next steps on

their path to employment. These efforts aim to help businesses meet their recruitment needs by enhancing both the quantity and quality of suitable job seekers, and as a result, we've been able to bring in more new employers who have noticed our outreach efforts on social media.

6. Is the Local Area WDB engaged in work-based learning? If so, please describe how the Local Area WDB is engaged in work-based learning projects with local employers.

The Mid-Carolina WDB participates in work-based learning and promotes the program to partners and businesses in the local area and the region on a regular basis. The Mid-Carolina WDB encourages work-based learning projects in high-demand, full-time career possibilities within the region, such as skilled trades, healthcare, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and transportation/logistics.

IV. NCWorks Career Centers

North Carolina's workforce system includes multiple agencies, programs, and funders. Collaboration, policy alignment, systemic communication, integration, and modernization of the workforce system will ensure a strong and healthy workforce system that can adapt to a changing economy.

For any documents that are missing or are unnecessary based on the response provided, please state, "No document is loaded and/or it will be loaded by the XX date".

1. Identify PY 2022 NCWorks Career Center location(s) including Tier 1, Tier 2, Affiliate, and Specialized sites; On-site partners; how NCWorks Career Center operator(s) are designated; provider(s) of WIOA career services and method of selection; whether youth service provider is on-site and, if so, youth services offered. Use the PY 2022 NCWorks [Career Center Chart](#). [WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A) and (b)(1)(B)]
Name document: Mid-Carolina Workforce Development PY 2022 NCWorks Career Centers.

The NCWorks Career Center system in the Mid-Carolina Local Area consists of three Tier I locations in each county (Cumberland, Harnett, and Sampson) and one affiliate site at the Vocational Rehabilitation office in Dunn, NC (Harnett County).

Mandatory and recommended partners include:

**WIOA Title I: Adult and Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs (on-site)
Job Corps (on-site in Cumberland County)
YouthBuild**

**Native American Programs
National Farmworkers Jobs (NFJP)**

WIOA Title II: Adult Education and Literacy (on-site)

**WIOA Title III: Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services (ES) program (on-site)
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) activities (on-site)
Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) programs (on-site)
Unemployment Compensation Programs (on-site)**

WIOA Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (on-site)

Authorized programs under Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (on-site in Cumberland County)

Fayetteville Cumberland Reentry Council (on-site in Cumberland County)

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Chambers of Commerce

Economic Development

2. Provide the name(s) of the current service provider(s), date, and process for when the competitive procurement of the One-Stop Operator(s) occurred. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to four years)

Due to the formation of the new Mid-Carolina Local Area effective July 1, 2022, contracts for the One-Stop Operator implemented by the previous administrative agents for Cumberland County and Triangle South Workforce Development were extended for the time period of July 1, 2022-December 31, 2022 to allow for a sufficient RFP process, to include review and recommendations for contract awards from a task force of the Mid-Carolina WDB. The new contracts are anticipated to begin January 1, 2023 for a contract period of one and a half years (June 30, 2024) with options for up to two additional single year terms so as not to exceed the four year maximum.

3. Provide a brief description of how Career and Training Services are provided. [WIOA Section 121(e), 134(c)]
 - a. Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to adults.
 - b. Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to dislocated workers.
 - c. Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to youth.

All customers are entitled access to high-quality career and training services. Career Services are to be made available to all job seeker customers of the NCWorks Career Centers, with specific delivery of services made on a case-by-case basis dependent on the needs of the individual.

Basic Career Services may include:

- **Determination of eligibility to receive assistance;**
- **Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the Career Center;**
- **Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs;**
- **Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling;**
- **Referrals to programs offered by local agencies that serve community members;**
- **Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate 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, and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations;**
- **Provisions of performance information and program cost information on eligible training providers;**
- **Provisions of information regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance measures and any additional performance information with respect to the Career Center delivery system in the local area;**
- **Provision of accurate information on referrals to supportive services, in formats that are usable by and understandable to one-stop center customers, such as childcare, child support, medical, child health assistance, TANF, SNAP (Food Stamps), and Earned Income Tax Credit;**
- **Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;**
- **Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA and are available in the local area.**

Individualized Career Services must be made available if it is determined to be appropriate in order for the individual to obtain or retain employment and may include:

- **Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of eligible customers, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;**
- **Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, providing information on eligible training services, and career pathways to attain career objectives;**
- **Group counseling;**
- **Individual counseling and career planning;**
- **Short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;**
- **Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;**
- **Workforce preparation activities;**
- **Financial Literacy Services;**
- **Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and**
- **English Language Acquisition and integrated education and training programs.**

Follow up services must be provided, as appropriate, for participants placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment.

Training services are designed to equip individuals to enter the workplace and retain employment. WIOA Title I participants may have access to training services following program enrollment into the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs, and when eligible individuals:

- **After an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning by Career Center staff, have been determined to be 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 and be in need of training services;**
- **Have need of training services and to have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services that are directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area involved or in another area in which the participant receiving such services are willing to commute or relocate;**
- **Meet the qualification requirements, and are determined to be eligible in accordance with the priority system.**

Training services may include:

- **Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment, provided through pre-approved training agencies;**
 - **Classroom Based Training services are provided in a manner that maximizes consumer choice in the selection of an eligible service provider. Depending on the program of enrollment, classroom based training may be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts. Training services are directly linked to occupations that are in-demand in the local area, region, or state. Training Services shall be limited to individuals who are unable to obtain other grant assistance for such services, or require assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs, including Federal Pell Grants.**
- **On-the-job training;**

- **Incumbent worker training;**
- **Programs that combine workplace training with related instructions, which may include cooperative education programs;**
- **Skill upgrading and retraining;**
- **Entrepreneurial training;**
- **Job readiness training provided in combination with other training;**
- **Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with (other training) services;**
- **Customized training conducted with the commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ the individual upon successful completion of the training.**

4. Describe how Local Area WDBs determine the need for enrollment in Training Services.

To assess the requirement for Training Services enrollment, training providers and their programs are considered to ensure that the labor market demands of the area are being addressed. After completing an IEP/ISS that determines that the individual is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain gainful employment, training services may be made available to eligible and suitable individuals; with the support of active case management, successful completion of training services would lead the individual on the path toward economic self-sufficiency.

5. Describe how follow-up services are provided through the NCWorks Career Centers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

According to TEGL (19-16) Section 134(c)(2)(A), the funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include...(xiii) follow-up services, including workplace counseling, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under the subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment for a period of not less than 12 months.

Per Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 and Section 134(C)(2)(A), funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include—...(xiii) follow up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

6. Describe how

- a. New NCWorks Career Center staff (DWS, service providers, and partner staff) are trained in the integrated service delivery system model (include a training timeline).
- b. Long after the initial start date does staff have full access to NCWorks.gov?
- c. The staff development activities reinforce and improve the initial training efforts.
- d. Describe the specific training that staff receive around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

MCWDB will develop and implement a comprehensive onboarding/training plan that will include a timeline of initial training milestones to include required NCWorks training, the ISD model, job-shadowing, and one-on-one training with Center Management and MCWDB staff with an expected timeline of four weeks for staff to be granted full access (as applicable to their role) to NCWorks Online. Mid-Carolina understands that NCWorks Career Center staff play a pivotal

role in educating job seekers about the resources available within the center, sponsorships for industry-recognized credentials and educational attainment, employment, and work-based learning opportunities, and core community programs for self-sufficiency. New staff members are required to understand the importance of building a strategic service plan with participants (whether Wagner Peyser or WIOA) that reflects the integrity of our NCWorks service delivery which is to greatly reduce barriers to education and employment success.

It is expected for functional managers to ensure adequate progree is occurring, with periodic review of and subsequent training support for the staff member. The MCWDB is committed to ensuring that staff has access to a variety of training and professional development opportunities, including training and webinars available through the NCWorks Training Center, Workforce GPS, and workforce-related conferences and events.

Mid-Carolina support staff review the compliance of the aforementioned training, monitor understanding of WIOA guidelines and local area service delivery expectations, identify and address trends that may hinder undue hardship for participants, and identify areas and opportunities for improvement. All Center staff, stakeholders, and partners are required to attend staff training.

Mid-Carolina prioritizes serving all customers. Mid-Carolina Staff will schedule a training for our entire local area with Mose Dorsey to explain the statewide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives in conjunction with Equal Opportunity training offered through the NCWorks Training Center Online.

7. Briefly explain coordination with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services.

All TAA activities are coordinated through the Raleigh Central Office Trade Unit, with Monique Allen as the primary contact. It is critical to the overall function of the workforce system to ensure seamless and effective service delivery for all participants, especially those adversely impacted by layoffs. Due to the complementary nature of the programs, we encourage individuals identified as eligible for TAA programs to be assessed for WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker eligibility so that eligible and suitable individuals may receive additional funding to access the training and supportive services they may need to return to the workforce. Through effective case management, Career Advisors for TAA/DW enrolled participants should share updates regularly to ensure that the individual's needs are being met with appropriately funded services without duplication of effort and service delivery.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Centers serve military veterans.

NCWorks Career Centers provide priority of service to Veterans, transitioning service members, and eligible spouses. To accompany and enhance the work of the staff, including LEVRs and DVOPs, in the region's NCWorks Career Centers, including one located on Fort Bragg, we continue to collaborate with other organizations that serve Veterans in order to effectively meet the comprehensive needs of this honorable population. The region continues to support programs conducted through community colleges (e.g. Transition Tech at FTCC) to provide training and job search assistance for those transitioning from active service to the civilian labor force.

9. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Center serve persons with disabilities.

In collaboration with partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, the WDB supports and enforces equal opportunities for all, including individuals with a disability. The Board aims to increase and expand flexible service delivery options to ensure the needs of participants are met by addressing their needs and advocating for increased access and opportunities, in training as well as the job market, especially for participants that face significant barriers or challenges.

10. Briefly describe the integrated service delivery strategy for serving employers and how the Local Area WDB staff and staff within the NCWorks Career Center coordinate outreach strategies and services to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services.

The Mid-Carolina Board Policy, Employer Services Protocol, sets the foundation for serving employers through the NCWorks Career Centers. This Protocol was created to help employers streamline services and for Center staff to promote and communicate consistent information. It also emphasizes the significance of sharing information as a team, providing regular communication updates to both the Career Center Manager and the BSR, and laying the groundwork for the Career Center's employer involvement. This Board Policy and Protocol are expected to be followed by all Career Center Staff.

11. Describe Local Area WDB strategies and services that will be used to strengthen linkages between Local Area WDBs and the NCWorks Career Center system and unemployment insurance programs. [WIOA Section 108(b)(4)(A)(iv)]

NCWorks Career Center service delivery aims to support a sustainable framework that anticipates and responds to the needs of the workforce. By early intervention for the unemployed and struggling businesses, we can decrease the number of individuals affected and the time spent in unemployment. By partnering with representatives of business, industry, and education, we can implement strategies to better prepare participants to be work-ready, effectively increase workforce retention rates, and promote a qualified, viable talent pipeline toward career advancement.

Under the Eligibility Assessment Interview (EAI) and the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) state guidelines, it is a mandatory requirement for all individuals to be physically able, available, and actively seeking work; these individuals must register through NCWorks Online. In doing so, the jobseeker will receive career counseling and job placement referrals. Under ISD, all customers are to receive the same orientation to the Center and be informed of the available resources to ensure a successful return to employment. After the orientation, an in-depth vetting process will begin. An assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, and abilities is conducted to better determine individualized services to most effectively serve and benefit the customer.

NCWorks Career Center staff provides follow-up services as mandated by the state under the REA program. The Career Center also works in unison with the NC Division of Employment Security (DES) on any issues pertaining to unemployment insurance claims and fraud.

12. Attach a flowchart for services – flowchart must include:
 - a. initial one-on-one interviews with customers,
 - b. NCWorks.gov dual registration,
 - c. skills assessments, and
 - d. determination of the need for further services.

Name document: *Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Services Flowchart 2022.*

13. Attach the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Area WDB and partners concerning operation of the NCWorks Career Center system. [WIOA Section 121(b) (A (iii))] Name document: Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board NCWorks Career Center MOU.

14. Describe the Local Area WDB's method for providing oversight to include:

- a. the review process and the frequency of review for the NCWorks Career Center system in the Local Area, including processes for ensuring quality customer service; and
- b. the roles and any resource contributions of the NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 121(a)(3)] [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(D)]

WDB support staff follow monitoring processes with pertinent and organized templates and methods that recognize best practices as well as identify trends and concerns so that necessary corrections can be made timely and appropriate training implemented to decrease insufficiencies, increase accountability, and maximize effectiveness. In conjunction with Mid-Carolina Board Support staff, the Career Center Manager is responsible for the development and implementation of proactive Center-wide goals and objectives that align with the required state and local performance measures and outcomes. These processes include measures for capturing customer (both job seeker and business) feedback to assess the effectiveness and impact of service delivery efforts throughout the Center and workforce system.

Resources and services provided by mandated partners of the NCWorks Career Center/One-stop delivery system are defined in the NCWorks Career Center MOU and related IFA, to include responsibility for ensuring that the applicable program, service, and activity provided in the Center is in accordance with WIOA goals, objectives, and performance measures. The WDB has the right to monitor activities as described within the MOU to ensure performance goals are being maintained and that the terms and conditions of the MOU are being fulfilled.

15. Describe how NCWorks Career Centers are using virtual technology to provide integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information systems for programs carried out under WIOA, and programs carried out by NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(21)]

NCWorks Career Centers utilize the NCWorks Online system in the Integrated Service Delivery model. Center staff are to ensure that every participant that comes through the Center has completed an NCWorks profile, is registered in Wagner-Peyser, referred to partner agencies as applicable (including WIOA Title I programs), has been properly vetted and completed the online assessments, and at a minimum, receives resume assistance and referrals to qualified job orders posted in the system. Applicable participants that have been deemed eligible and suitable will complete the Individual Employment Plan and Objective Assessment for enrollment into Title I's more personalized services. Required documents are scanned and uploaded into the NCWorks Online system where applicable case notes and activity codes are to be captured for every participant and employer interaction and action taken.

Career Center staff are to be trained on using the labor market information inside of NCWorks Online to better assist customers in making informed decisions about their career choices, education, and skills requirements for jobs. Through LMI training, staff can better equip employers with the most current data trends regarding salary standards in the area as well as valuable information to keep them competitive in the job market.

16. How does the Local Area WDB use data to monitor and track performance measures for serving individuals and business? Be specific about what systems are used, how regularly the Local Area WDB looks at these sources, and how the Local Area WDB might change the strategies based on the data.

The WDB monitors all Wagner Peyser and WIOA programs during the program year and provides feedback to DWS and sub-recipients on their strengths and weaknesses. Workforce staff regularly pull data for tracking performance in real-time while presenting quarterly reports supported by the information in Futureworks. Workforce support staff meets with sub-recipients monthly to discuss program performance, technical assistance needs, community updates, and upcoming strategic initiatives based on feedback from WDB members, stakeholders, and partners. Additionally, the WDB support staff conducts mock monitoring to include fiscal, data validation, equal opportunities, and program compliance in attempts to identify opportunities for continuous improvement to our local area's service delivery model and effectiveness throughout our local community.

V. Employer Services

1. Please briefly describe the efforts of the Business Services Representative and/or Employer Services staff in the following areas:
- Utilizing regional and local employer data to inform priorities.
 - Making regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services.
 - Participating in regional economic strategic planning and economic development recruitment, retention and expansions with employers, education partners and economic developers. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].
 - Including Historically Underutilized Businesses.

The local area's Employer Services Policy and Protocol provides direction and guidance for employer communication and engagement including procedures for existing company accounts, events, and the task order process. The goal is to engage with employers on a regular basis while sharing information with other staff and partners in order to have a more streamlined approach to addressing employer needs and minimizing duplicative, redundant, and excessive contacts with employers. While the stated methods in this document are geared toward managing communications, it also intends to help identify and inform value-add priorities on a larger scale across the county and region.

In addition to the Employer Services Policy, the Mid-Carolina WDB collaborates closely with local and regional economic developers, as well as education/training partners, to assist retention/expansion possibilities and new recruitment programs.

To assist Historically Underutilized Businesses, the MCWDB will explore opportunities to plan and participate in outreach initiatives to these recognized businesses in order to promote Career Center services and encourage new employer accounts in NCWorks.

2. Please describe the efforts of the Local Area WDB staff, Employer services staff and career center staff have made to deliver business services on a regional basis in the following areas:
- Utilizing regional and local economic data to inform priorities [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].
 - Collaborating with employer-facing partners such as Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services to meet employer needs and jobseeker recruitment efforts.

- c. Providing local and regional Rapid Response services, including identifying struggling and at-risk businesses and providing services to help avert layoffs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(8)]

The MCWDB focuses and recommends business outreach to local and regional growth areas such as skilled trades, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, information technology, and distribution/logistics. Short-term training opportunities in key growing areas are made available to suitable and qualified job seekers who are not accepted for full-time employment in these industries.

The MCWDB collaborates closely with Career Center Leadership and the respective Regional Operations Directors for opportunities to plan for improved cooperation with Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor, and Veteran Services. While these initiatives are ongoing, protocols are in place to ensure that communications and collaborations are supported and strengthened as needed.

When a Rapid Response is required, the MCWDB Business Service Representative contacts the business to commence the next steps, and the plan is put in action from there with the support of respective Center representation, dependent on the firm's cooperation. Since the pandemic, these services have been provided both in-person and virtually (or both) and will continue to be provided in the manner that best serves those affected. If a business is assessed to be failing or at risk, attempts will be made to quickly offer the Career Center's services while also working with Business Edge.

3. Please describe employer-focused partnership efforts in the areas of education and training and economic development in the following areas:
 - a. Enhancing the use of On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities to support the regional economy and individuals' career advancement.
 - b. Coordinating and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(5)]
 - c. Participating in regional economic strategic planning and economic development recruitment, retention and expansions with employers, education partners and economic developers. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

The MCWDB collaborates closely with local and regional partners to promote work-based learning opportunities for employers. This is accomplished through virtual and in-person presentations, as well as partner meetings throughout the year. Furthermore, relationships with firms engaged in work-based learning are shared with educational partners in order to identify future job seekers interested in specific career tracks.

In order to promote entrepreneurial services, the MCWDB engages small businesses through Chamber events and other local/regional initiatives, particularly in collaboration with the SBTDC and Small Business Centers.

The MCWDB promotes strategic planning at the local and regional levels for economic development efforts, particularly those involving retention, expansion, and recruiting programs. This frequently includes educational providers, and the MCWDB support staff participate in regular meetings, particularly with educational providers, to discuss next steps in these efforts.

VI. Performance

U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has the following WIOA Performance Indicators:

- Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit

- Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment Rate
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers (system-wide measure, not program specific)

1. Examine the Local Area WDB's current Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance on the Federal Primary Indicators of Performance for PY 2021 and prior Program Years. (Reports available via Future Works)

- a. What are some of the factors in the Local Area WDB that impact performance levels both positively and negatively? Be sure to consider factors such as the unemployment rate, factory closures/openings, economic development recruitment, retention and expansion efforts, regional industry growth priorities, and weather events and natural disasters that may have impacted the area, as well as internal operational factors that may impact the Local Area WDB's performance.

(Note: Provide at least two examples of positive factors and two examples of negative factors that have impacted the performance levels in your Local Area WDB, with an explanation of each).

We are still witnessing the effects of the pandemic through PY21 performance. Temporary and permanent business closures resulted in extraordinary unemployment; increased unemployment benefits and stimulus payments hampered people's return to work. A lack of interest from potential job searchers resulted in a significant labor shortage, further impacting businesses as they reopened amid new challenges which provided an opportunity for new and renewed interest in the services and resources available through NCWorks. We continue to evaluate how we deliver services, concentrating on the immediate need to match competent job seekers who want to work with firms who pay a self-sufficient, living wage. Improved communication with and assessment of the demands of our customers, employers and job seekers alike, contributes to increased support for system integration and initiatives. As qualified individuals obtain self-sufficiency through employment opportunities with employers participating in the workforce development system, the system can become more responsive and effective in advocating for increased educational attainment and employability skills, in order to promote and enhance a job-ready workforce.

- b. Discuss whether or not participants that have been served and/or enrolled as a result of COVID-19 differ in characteristics as compared to participants who have historically been served by the Local Area WDB. If so, how do these differences impact service delivery and performance?

As a result of extended unemployment benefits and stimulus payments, we did witness a drop in the interest of persons receiving unemployment benefits returning to the workforce. Regardless of unemployment benefit status, the return to the workforce has been slow for many dealing with other challenges, such as child care, health concerns, and alternative employment opportunities. WIOA Title I Programs, particularly the Youth Program, have experienced low enrollment, which has been exacerbated by difficulties acquiring essential eligibility documentation as a result of COVID-related closures/delays and limited capacity at facilities (e.g. Social Security Administration, DMV). Unsuccessful completion of occupational skills training has also been linked to COVID-related issues, such as illness and the need to care for school-aged children during remote learning hours.

- c. Discuss how your Local Area WDB's industries and business sector have been impacted by COVID-19.

The service industry was substantially impacted by COVID-19. While many businesses have recovered, many others, particularly restaurants and retail establishments, have been forced to close permanently. The health care industry, which already struggled to sustain their labor force prior to the pandemic, continues to experience unprecedented challenges in the aftermath of COVID-19. We continue to monitor the needs of business and industry in this ever-changing climate and execute timely initiatives through collaborative partnerships.

(Note: Include which industries and businesses have been permanently affected, which are recovering or perhaps are expected to recover, and how these industry changes may impact how the Local Area approaches serving its participants).

2. What strategies and methods are in place to maintain or improve performance?

(Note: Include information about tracking performance, ensuring accountability of positive performance outcomes, and training. Consider including the following information: Who is responsible for tracking performance? Which reports are reviewed? Are Future Works reports used? If so, how often? How are staff held accountable? How often is training provided to staff?)

Increased accountability from our service providers is supported through monthly performance monitoring, quarterly evaluations, frequent training (including review of Local Area Policies), and team-building exercises that emphasize the quality of services delivered rather than the quantity. Status of performance measurements, including state-mandated performance, contractual scopes of work, and Center-wide goals, is regularly shared with updates provided at WDB and Youth Committee meetings, staff meetings, and as part of quarterly monitoring reports. The Career Center Manager, DWS, and Service Provider staff are to collaborate on training needs, to include training recommended/required by Support Staff, as well as training on an as-needed basis from the appropriate local, regional, and state partners of the NCWorks Career Centers.

3. In the event the Local Area WDB is not on track to meet yearly performance indicator goals, please discuss what corrective actions/steps would be undertaken to address this situation.

(Note: This question is intended to be hypothetical and is seeking what plan the Local Area WDB has in place to address failing performance if it were to occur. Answers should address how the Local Area WDB monitors performance, communicates with staff, strategies for training and/or addressing potential issues, and follow-up accountability measures).

Monitoring reports, formal discussion, and applicable documentation will be provided to the appropriate representative who shall provide responses and make the required corrective actions. Appropriate training and technical assistance will be provided as needed in combination with an assessment of the Center's and service provider's performance goals and planning for optimized service delivery. If it is determined that the subrecipient is unable to operate at the desired level, alternative service delivery options and methods will be explored.

4. How is performance information shared throughout the hierarchy of staff? Please detail how the Local Area WDB addresses performance data in its relationship with its service provider(s) and how case managers are using performance data to drive Local Area WDB performance.

(Note: This question should address how frequently [monthly, quarterly, etc.] performance information is shared and by what method/medium [e.g. print-out, electronically, verbally through meetings, etc.], how the performance information shared may differ for the various levels of staff at the Local Area WDB, and

specifically for case managers, how performance data is shared with them and how they, in turn, use this information in their roles.)

Performance is shared through regular meetings and communication, with routine updates to Center management. The WDB and Youth Committee receive performance information and updates at their bi-monthly meetings. Regular meetings and training with Center employees emphasize the necessity of timely, correct data entry into NCWorks Online, as well as the critical role Career Advisors play in ensuring proper data entry and how it is tracked in the system which impacts performance. The Career Center Manager is to ensure that performance measures and Center-wide goals are communicated with Center management and staff. In cooperation with Center management, the Career Center Manager is responsible for coordinating training, identifying and executing procedures for addressing deficiencies in performance and Center-wide goals, and identifying opportunities for and implementation of improved integrated service delivery processes and methods.

5. The Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) measure is a real-time indicator denoting participants who are making demonstrable progress on a track toward Credential Attainment. Please describe how the Local Area WDB makes use of the information the MSG measure provides as a means of ensuring the Local Area WDB achieves its Credential Attainment indicator goal.

(Note: For this question, describe the methods and/or strategies in using the MSG measure as a means of tracking Credential Attainment. Who is responsible for tracking the MSG performance indicator? Are the Roster Reports in FutureWorks utilized? If so, how? Who is this information provided to, and then used by, career advisors, the Local Area WDB, or other staff.)

The Measure Skills Gains (MSG) is a real-time indicator. To ensure information is captured and documented properly in the NCWorks System, clarification and training was provided by the Program Analysts and DWS Accountability Manager for staff to accurately account for identifying and recording MSG and Credential Attainment goals. These performance measures will continue to be monitored and guidance provided as applicable.

Throughout the Career Center, there is a constant promotion of performance measurement awareness and training. In collaboration with Center management, the Career Center Manager shall develop and update Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for documenting clear and consistent methods for entering data in NCWorks Online, in conjunction with staff reference guides available in NCWorks Online, to ensure that information is captured accurately in the system for proper performance management. Regular performance measure reviews and ongoing staff training will help ensure that issues are detected and remedied in a timely and suitable manner. The State Regional Analyst will continue to provide annual training on new and existing best practices.

6. Describe how and when eligible training providers are reviewed at the local level and how customers are informed they have choices in choosing their providers.

After training providers and programs are reviewed and WIOA approved by DWS, the Mid-Carolina WDB has the ability to decide if the training is in demand in the impacted area. WIOA-approved providers and programs seeking Mid-Carolina certification will be submitted to the Mid-Carolina WDB for consideration at the earliest opportunity. In working with the state, the MCWDB must ensure that there are sufficient numbers and types of career and training services, including eligible providers with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities and eligible providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities,

servicing the local area and providing the services involved in a manner that maximizes consumer choice and leads to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.

7. Define what “significant number of competent providers” means in the Local Area WDB. Include whether the Local Area WDB uses more strict performance measures to evaluate eligible training providers. Attach if a separate policy. *Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board ETPL Policy*.

Reference Policy #9: WIOA Eligible Training Provider Guidelines. Service delivery staff are to be familiar with and understand the WIOA principles regarding customer choice and assist customers in making informed career decisions. The WDB considers a significant number of competent providers to include providers in the local area, and the Board may consider/certify any training providers and programs that are approved on the State’s Eligible Training Provider List.

VII. **Equal Opportunity**

1. Describe processes to ensure individuals are not discriminated against based on age, disability, sex, race, color, or national origin. [WIOA Section 188]

The Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board (WDB) and the local area’s respective NCWorks Career Centers prohibit discrimination in all of its practices under WIOA Section 188. The WDB also seeks to guarantee that its recipients are not subjected to discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, or handicap. Nondiscrimination statutes and executive directives enforced by WDB that apply to members of the public include the following:

- **Title V of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**
- **Section 504 the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
- **Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act**
- **Age Discrimination Act of 1975**
- **Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations**
- **Executive Order 13166, Improving Access for Persons with Limited English Proficiency.**

2. Attach the Local Area WDB’s current Equal Opportunity (EO) Complaint Grievance Procedure to address EO requirements [29 CFR 38.35]. Name document: *Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board EO Complaint Grievance Procedure*.
3. Describe the methods used to ensure local Equal Opportunity procedures are updated.

Equal Opportunity procedures are updated by annual monitoring and when recognized through federal, state, and local policy and procedural adjustments.

VIII. **Adult and Dislocated Worker Services**

1. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of existing Adult and Dislocated Worker education and training services.
 - a. Include how services are provided and the capacity to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers.

Willingness to assist individuals by enrolling them in a training program is a strength of existing Adult & Dislocated Worker education and training services in the sense that it promotes inclusion and diversity; however, this can also be a disadvantage because not everyone requires or is suitable for training, which is a disservice to both the individual and potential employer, not to mention an unsustainable program design due to funding limitations. The career advisor/program manager is responsible for determining whether the individual would benefit from full-time employment (WP) or some type of training (WBL / OST).

- b. Describe plans to address any weaknesses identified. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(D)]

Center staff must follow the “employment first” philosophy when assessing if customers are job ready or if additional resources are needed. The career counselor must ensure that they have gathered enough information from the participant's initial assessment to identify a plan that would be most suited for them, assess whether an available program or training would be the best course for each participant's specific need, and providing resources (to include referrals to partner agencies) to increase their chance of success on their path toward self-sufficiency.

2. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs that ensures an arm’s-length relationship between the Local Area WDB and service delivery.
 - a. Identify any service provider contract extensions

Due to the formation of the new Mid-Carolina Local Area effective July 1, 2022, contracts for the Service Providers for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs implemented by the previous administrative agents for Cumberland County and Triangle South Workforce Development were extended for the time period of July 1, 2022-December 31, 2022 to allow for a sufficient RFP process, to include review and recommendations for contract awards from a task force of the Mid-Carolina WDB. The new contracts are anticipated to begin January 1, 2023 for a contract period of one and a half years (June 30, 2024) with options for up to two additional single year terms.

The Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Analyst's responsibility is to ensure that all enrollments comply with federal, state, and local policies/procedures, which supports arm's length service delivery. This position also offers guidance and clarification to program services subrecipient staff in order to avoid questionable expenses and to address any concerns the Service Provider may have.

Note: While Final Regulations Section 679.410 (b) and (c) provide exceptions to the competitive procurement process, Local Area WDBs *must* have an arm’s-length relationship to the delivery of services.

3. Provide the date and process for when the competitive procurement of the One-Stop Operator(s) occurred. Include the expected length of the contract (one-four years).

Due to the formation of the new Mid-Carolina Local Area effective July 1, 2022, contracts for the One-Stop Operator implemented by the previous administrative agents for Cumberland County and Triangle South Workforce Development were extended for the time period of July 1, 2022-December 31, 2022 to allow for a sufficient RFP process, to include review and recommendations for contract awards from a task force of the Mid-Carolina WDB. The new contracts are anticipated to begin January 1, 2023 for a contract period of one and a half years (June 30, 2024) with options for up to two additional single year terms so as not to exceed the four year maximum.

4. Attach the Local Area WDB's Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider list effective July 1, 2022 using the PY 2022 [Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List](#) provided. Name document: *Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board PY 2022 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List*.
5. Describe the Local Area WDB's vision for serving the WIOA eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers to include high level goals, outreach strategies, services delivery, and expected outcomes.

To ensure the WDB's vision for providing pathways toward meaningful, sustainable employment for citizens, Career Center staff and partners must engage in collaborative methods that include exploring and providing opportunities for educational advancement and occupational skills training with the ultimate goal of obtaining/maintaining unsubsidized employment. Career Center staff must follow local, federal, and state guidance supported by monitoring and technical assistance and continue to engage partners working with the Center.

6. Describe the Local Area WDB's method for ensuring that a sufficient number of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the Local Area are from one of the following priority of services categories: public assistance, low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. [134(c)(3)(E), 3(24)]

The Mid-Carolina Local area encourage adults to enroll in individualized career and training services. These services are provided to individuals through the enrolment process, at which time eligibility is verified. Participants receiving public assistance, or are considered as low income, are eligible for WIOA services. Although priority of service is given to veterans (spouses), priority to participants will be given to local area participants, by verification of address/residence. The Mic-Carolina local area participant can be enrolled in training and/or career services. Due to certain barriers that may cause a hinderance, collaboration with partner agencies such DHHS and Fayetteville Urban Ministries which may provide resources to help participants become suitable to complete their training.

7. Describe follow-up services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers.

Per Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 and Section 134(C)(2)(A), funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include—...(xiii) follow up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

Per Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 and Section 134(C)(2)(A), funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include - (xiii) follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

8. Please describe the process for monitoring the service provider in the Local Area WDB. Include details such as how it is conducted, who is involved, and how often.

The Mid-Carolina WDB provides oversight and accountability of WIOA-funded activities for Cumberland, Harnett, and Sampson Counties. All monitoring reviews will be conducted by Mid-Carolina Workforce staff. The scope of monitoring will include developing and revising monitoring guides and instruments, maintaining contact with state monitoring personnel, reviewing state and federal monitoring policies and procedures, conducting monitoring visits, conducting follow-up visits due to non-compliance with WIOA regulations, and providing technical assistance to Local Area Staff. An onsite review will be conducted at least once per year, with several full and partial reviews conducted throughout the program year (reference Policy #7: Monitoring).

IX. Youth Services

USDOL provides funds to states who in turn provide local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting out-of-school youth and in-school youth with one or more barriers to employment prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. USDOL and North Carolina’s priorities are:

- *Out-of-School Youth (OSY) – A minimum of 75% of the Youth funds allocated to Local Area WDBs, except for the Local Area WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide services to OSY;*
- *Work Experience – Not less than 20% of Youth funds allocated to the Local Area WDB, except for the Local Area WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide paid and unpaid work experiences; and a*
- *Focus on Partnering – Co-enrollment encouraged where appropriate with Title II and IV.*

1. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities in the Local Area WDB, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Include identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities being used and/or planned. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(9)]

The Mid-Carolina Workforce Board is fortunate to collaborate and form long-term relationships that benefit youth throughout our entire region. Our community college and university members, non-profit mentoring partners, Fayetteville Urban Ministries, Sampson County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, Harnett County Title II advisory council, and other groups that provide outreach, guidance, resources, and wraparound support to Youth/Young Adults attend our monthly community partners meeting.

Youth Workforce Activity	For Persons with Disabilities?	Brief Assessment/Model Used	Success Rating
Paid and unpaid Work Experience (WEX)	Yes	Objective Assessment, TABE, Skills Gap Analysis (O*Net, MySkills, My Future)	Performance will be monitored for program success under the new Mid-Carolina Local Area

On-the-Job Training (OJT)	Yes	Objective Assessment, TABE, Skills Gap Analysis (O*Net, MySkills, My Future)	Performance will be monitored for program success under the new Mid-Carolina Local Area
Pre-Apprenticeship	Yes	Objective Assessment, TABE	Performance will be monitored for program success under the new Mid-Carolina Local Area
Paid and unpaid Internships	Yes	Objective Assessment, TABE, Skills Gap Analysis (O*Net, MySkills, My Future)	Performance will be monitored for program success under the new Mid-Carolina Local Area

2. Describe how the Local Area WDB’s broad Young Adult (NextGen) Program design is unique to include:

- a. providing objective assessments;

WIOA young adult participants will complete an objective assessment determining the academic level, skills, and service levels which include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive services, developmental needs, and strengths. Youth are to be assessed using TABE, observations, and intake interviews. Assessments for all youth, including those with disabilities, must be conducted. The Service Provider is required to apply ONET Interest Profiler, TABE, Work Readiness Courses, and/or any other assessments considered necessary by the Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board. The client’s supported services will be established on the Objective Assessment based on the results of the completed assessments.

- b. supportive services needed; and

NCWorks Career Center staff are expected to connect youth to resources in the local area and surrounding region. Career Advisors must include eligible WIOA supportive services on the Individual Service Strategy based on assessments conducted for the Objective Assessment. Customers who require additional wrap-around assistance are to be routed to partner organizations and community resources.

- c. developmental needs of each participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(A)]

Through Wagner-Peyser services, Career Center staff will evaluate the needs of all youth who may be eligible for WIOA Title I Youth Services. Through the initial assessment, Career Advisors will review the participants’ educational background, employment history, and desired career outcomes. An initial case note entered by the Career Advisor will highlight the participant’s eligibility for WIOA, the referral of the participant to Wagner-Peyser services only, or referral to an applicable partner agency. For those enrolled in the NextGen Program, the WIOA application is completed to determine eligibility supported by the Objective Assessment that identifies the participant’s academic, skill set, and needs to be self-sufficient. The Career Advisor will highlight the participant’s supportive services and development needs on the participant’s Individual Service Strategy Plan. Career Advisors will complete comprehensive guidance and counseling as the first service that summarizes that participant’s desired outcomes from participation. The Career Advisor must upload applicable documents to the participant’s file, the assessments and labor market information reviewed with the participant about suitable career pathways.

3. How does the Local Area WDB ensure the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) identifies appropriate services based on the objective assessment and is linked to youth performance indicators, career pathways, and program elements? [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(B)] How does the provider ensure the ISS is unique to the individual?

Individual Service Strategy (ISS) completed in NCWorks is created to align with items identified in the Objective Assessment, including measurable academic skills, soft skills level assessments, service needs, and strengths. The ISS must include documentation of appropriate career paths, such as educational and employment goals, as well as achievement objectives and services. The ISS must also cover basic needs to evaluate the client's overall needs and strengths, short and long-term goals, with an appropriate combination of services (specific to the applicable 14 program elements) that will be utilized to help the client achieve educational and career goals. The Individual Service Strategy is a reflection of the relationship between the Career Advisor and the participant and must be updated at least quarterly and as ISS goals are attained. For participants who participate in occupational skills training, the ISS must include information related to the participant's selected training provider and program. Training services must align with in-demand occupations for the local area as referenced in the Regional Labor Market Overview produced by the Labor & Economic Analysis Division with the North Carolina Department of Commerce.

4. Describe the Local Area WDB's strategy to ensure Youth (NextGen) Program activities lead to a high school diploma or its equivalent or a recognized post-secondary credential and post-secondary education and training opportunities. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)]

Title II representatives serve on the Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board, informing board members, workforce staff, and Career Center staff about the resources and policies available to leverage program activities leading to a high school diploma or equivalent, or a recognized post-secondary credential. Mid-Carolina staff meets with partners, in collaboration with subrecipient staff, to review and develop strategies for students identified as at risk of dropout and absenteeism. Potential clients are referred to Career Advisors for an evaluation of their eligibility and suitability for WIOA sponsorship. Following that, the Youth must complete the Adult Basic Education skills assessment to determine the best resource that meets the needs of the clients. The client is referred to a community college in the area for Adult High School Diploma/Equivalency Programs. If the Youth participates in another Title II program, the referral is made and documented in the participant's file.

5. Describe how follow-up services will be provided for (NextGen) youth.

Note: All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up for a minimum duration of 12 months.

Unless the Young Adult willingly opts out of follow-up, in which case the eligible reason must be documented in the case notes, follow-up is mandatory. During the quarterly follow-up, staff must document at least three attempts to reach the participant.

Career Advisors must:

- **Develop a strong mentoring relationship with the client throughout their participation**
- **Develop a comprehensive approach to maintaining touch and involvement with the youth during follow-up**
- **Involve clients by hosting activities that are in line with the client's ISS goals.**
- **Assist the client with his or her physical, emotional, and occupational needs.**

- **Maintain communication with the client's employer in order to achieve measurable performance. Staff should visit the employment site promptly after the youth client begins working to meet with management and the client to validate data linked to an incentive payment.**

6. Where does the Local Area WDB plan to serve the young adults (NextGen): NCWorks Career Centers Tier 1, Tier 2, Specialized Centers, Services Provider Offices, or Hybrid situations? Explain if it is both NCWorks Career Centers and Provider Offices or some other option.

NextGen Youth Staff are located on-site at the Tier I NCWorks Career Centers. As part of their service delivery plan, the Service Provider is expected demonstrate collaborative efforts with partner agencies to expand outreach for recruitment, increase virtual services throughout the region and in order to provide assistance to customers with limited mobility.

7. Attach the Local Area WDB Youth Service Provider's chart, effective July 1, 2022, using the PY 2022 [Youth Service Provider List](#) provided. Complete each column to include specifying where Youth Services are provided. Name the document: *PY 2022 Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Youth Service Provider List*.
8. Provide the date and process for when the competitive procurement of the Youth Programs was completed, to include any contract extensions.

Due to the formation of the new Mid-Carolina Local Area effective July 1, 2022, contracts for the Service Providers of WIOA Youth Programs implemented by the previous administrative agents for Cumberland County and Triangle South Workforce Development were extended for the time period of July 1, 2022-December 31, 2022 to allow for a sufficient RFP process, to include review and recommendations for contract awards from a task force of the Mid-Carolina WDB. The new contracts are anticipated to begin January 1, 2023 for a contract period of one and a half years (June 30, 2024) with options for up to two additional single year terms.

9. Provide the Local Area WDB's approach to meeting the required 75% minimum (NextGen) youth expenditures on out-of-school youth and include special outreach efforts and highlight planned program design. [WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A)] (CPS 09-2021)

As required in the Scope of Work, Youth Service Providers are responsible for providing Workforce Staff with their program design and strategy for ensuring the required 75% of youth expenditures are spent on out-of-school youth. Workforce Staff will monitor reported expenditures and provide technical assistance as needed to ensure the minimum 75% for OSY is met.

10. How does the Local Area WDB ensure that the minimum of 20% of funds is spent on work experience and is the Local Area WDB expending the 20% minimum on work experience to include an estimate of expenditures that will be paid wages to youth? If the Local Area WDB has not been meeting the minimum of 20% of funds, please explain additional measures to be taken this year. [WIOA Section 129(c)(4)] (CPS 09-2021)

As required in the Scope of Work, Youth Service Providers are responsible for providing Workforce Staff with their program design and strategy for ensuring that the minimum of 20% of youth program allocated funds are spent on work-based learning activities to include:

- **Wages/stipends paid to the client**
- **Staff time working to identify and develop a work experience for the client**

- Staff time working with employers to facilitate a successful work experience
- Staff time spent evaluating the work experience
- Client work experience orientation
- Employer work experience orientation
- Training or Educational components related to the work experience
- Employability and Career Readiness training associated with work experience
- Incentive payments associated with work experiences

Categories of work experience, as identified in WIOA, include:

- Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
- Pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Internships and job shadowing; and
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Any expenditures outside the above allowable expenditures (e.g., extending the work experience above the allotted period) must have prior written approval from the Workforce Development Board Director.

Mid-Carolina Workforce Staff developed a tracking system for staff time dedicated to identifying, developing, and supporting working experiences for Mid-Carolina to meet federal and state requirements.

11. Does the Local Area WDB have a dedicated full-time Youth Business Services Representative (or similar title) at the Local Area WDB level or at the Provider level, and if so, state which level and how many?

Mid-Carolina has a dedicated Youth Business Services Representative for the Cumberland County NCWorks Career Center. The Youth Business Services Representative is a subrecipient staff member that serves as a liaison for identifying unsubsidized job placements following completion of a measurable skills gain or credential, work-based learning opportunities, employer engagement, and assisting with work experiences. The Youth Business Services Representative also supports any strategic initiatives outlined by the Mid-Carolina Business Service and Young Adult Program Analyst.

The Harnett and Sampson County Career Centers do not have a dedicated Youth Business Service Representative. Career Advisors also work in the role of engaging employers for work-based learning opportunities, identifying opportunities for Youth, and following up on the monitoring process. For those Career Centers, they will be supported additionally by the Mid-Carolina Young Adult Program Analyst for identifying opportunities throughout the local area community.

12. Does the Local Area WDB have a re-entry program for young adults? If yes, please briefly describe it.

The Fayetteville Cumberland Reentry Council, which is under the administration of the Mid-Carolina Regional Council, is located within the Cumberland County NCWorks Career Center and has a dedicated Career Advisor that facilitates holistic referrals, occupational training, and job placements. Additional resources in the local area will be considered in order to maximize and support opportunities for justice-involved young adults.

13. Describe how the Local Area WDB partners, aligns, and leverages, as appropriate with:

- a. Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program resources and policies.

Staff representatives for WIOA Title II and Title I are expected to make referrals between programs with out-of-school youth. Title II success leads to the attainment of a diploma or GED. Career Advisors will ensure that participants without either a diploma or GED are referred to a Title II program for assistance or Human Resources Development course in partnership with our local community college leading to additional training assistance for the participant.

- b. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program resources and policies.

Title IV is an integral part of the Youth Services program's success. Career Advisors must make and document in case notes referrals made to Vocational Rehabilitation for additional services for Youth participants. Vocational Rehabilitation representatives have regularly scheduled hours at the Cumberland County NCWorks Career Center and an affiliate NCWorks Career Center is located at the Vocational Rehabilitation office in Dunn.

- c. Integrates adult education with occupational education and training and workforce preparation, as Local Area WDB's and the creation of career pathways for youth. [USDOL TEGL 8-15]

Youth Career Advisors are to inform and promote Certified Career Pathways for the local area in conjunction with completing Labor Marker and ONET training through the NCWorks Training Center. During the initial assessment and individual service strategy, Career Advisors review anticipated career outcomes with the participant.

14. Specify if the Local Area WDB plans to offer incentives for (NextGen) youth.

If yes, attach the Youth Incentive Policy to include:

- a. criteria to be used to award incentives;
- b. type(s) of incentive awards to be made available;
- c. whether WIOA funds will be used; and
- d. the Local Area WDB's internal controls to safeguard cash/gift cards.

Name document: Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Youth Incentive Policy.

Note: Federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs.

The Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board offers incentives to youth participants. Incentives are offered for achieving milestones, academic credentials or licenses, attending workshops that enhance professional skills, and attainment of employment. The Local Area Youth Services Policy is attached and provides additional details regarding incentives.

15. If the Local Area WDB does not offer incentives for (NextGen) youth, please explain why.

N/A

16. Describe the local strategy to prepare the youth (NextGen) for unsubsidized employment, including with small employers, specifically those that include in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and/or regional labor markets. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)(v)]

Mid-Carolina Regional Council Staff works collaboratively with subrecipients to ensure positive outcomes for our participants. Subrecipient Business Services Staff members are included in strategic planning meetings with partners including Economic Development, local Chambers of Commerce, and Regional Labor Market Business. This allows for the Business Services team to build partnerships for work-based learning opportunities for Young Adults that support their transition into self-sufficient adults.

The service provider’s program design must include concentrated initiatives to recruit out-of-school youth into in-demand occupations on a local and regional scale. In order to connect youth to employment, particularly in the skilled trades, the Work Experience Program shall be emphasized and suggested for promotion within the Career Center, partners, and the community. In addition, short-term training related to the indicated in-demand occupation for full-time work shall be identified and promoted. Business outreach shall be conducted in order to engage diverse employers to participate in these activities.

17. Please complete the [Youth Program Elements chart](#) provided to demonstrate how the Local Area WDB ensures each of the 14 youth program elements is made available to youth participants. Be certain to complete both columns to demonstrate partnerships and potential use of shared funding. [WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(A)] Name document: *Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Youth Program Elements Chart*

18. Does the Local Area WDB have a standing committee to provide information to assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth? [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]

a. If no, describe how oversight to planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth will be provided.

The MCWDB does not currently have a standing youth committee, but one will be initiated with PY22 in order to assist with planning, operations, and other strategic initiatives related to the provision of services to youth and young adults. In the meantime, Mid-Carolina Board staff provide oversight of the youth programs to include monitoring, training, and technical assistance.

b. If yes, please provide a response to the following:

a) Provide the committee’s purpose/vision.

b) Provide the committee’s top three goals or objectives for PY 2022.

c) List of members to include members’ agency/organization, one of which must be a community-based organization with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth. Provide the Committee’s Chair information in the first block (who must be a Local Area WDB member.) Name document: *Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board Youth Committee Members*. [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)] and,

c. Complete the following chart for the PY 2022 Youth Committee’s planned meeting schedule to include dates, time, and location. *[Expand form as needed.]*

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)

X. Local Area WDB Innovations

1. List additional funding received by the Local Area WDB to include special grants (Finish Line, Youth Initiative), NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG)

(disaster), YouthBuild, Foundations, NCWorks Commission, and outside funding to include a brief description of the source and the amount.

Grant Name/Kind	Brief Description	Beginning and End date	Source and Amount	Partner Organization (if applicable)
Finish Line Grant	Finish Line Grant- (Cumberland County)	7/1/20-7/30/22 7/1/21-1/30/23	FLG participant costs \$60,000 FLG Operations \$25,000	FTCC

- Describe one of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising Adult/Dislocated Worker program practices that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

Occupational skills training (e.g., CDL and CompTIA) courses with successful completions in which participants obtain an MSG and certifications that lead to unsubsidized employment in the related field.

- Describe one of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising youth program practices that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

The local area has made progress in developing processes for maximizing tracking and reporting of work-based learning-related expenditures in order to meet the required 20% of WIOA Youth program allocated funds. To further reinforce this development, the Service Provider must provide a detailed explanation/description of how their service delivery plan will support and execute appropriate activities in order to meet the requirement, with continual review and consideration for enhancing work-based learning opportunities.

- Describe one of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising regional strategy that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

In early PY22, the MCWDB is preparing a regional WOTC event for businesses. The BSR provided a general overview presentation regarding business services at a Chamber Event in April 2022, and the WOTC Program was one of the key subjects that attracted follow-up enquiries. In preparation for the event, the CMCWDB is collaborating with the state director of the WOTC program. The amount of firms that attend the event, as well as the follow-up activity thereafter, will lead to more opportunities with these organizations.

- Describe one of the Local Area WDB’s innovative business services strategies. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

The MCWDB created a process to promote priority occupations identified by the Career Center through NCWorks. These positions must match certain criteria (e.g., living wage, full-time, benefits, training opportunities, etc.) and are to be distributed to the most recent active registrants via the NCWorks system. This communication also highlights the Career Center's other offerings (e.g. Youth Program, Veterans Program, Re-Entry Program, OJT, etc.). Over 50 persons responded to the initial communication and the Center staff continue to actively assist these individuals with

connecting to employers. This template has also been used to promote career and resource events in the local area, with the potential to focus the outreach to target populations for maximum impact.

The MCWDB will focus on increasing the number of small businesses served in the local area with an overall goal of increasing retention rates on behalf of all businesses served in the local area. Collaboration with partner organizations will aim to improve suitability of potential candidates by identifying and addressing barriers and challenges hindering successful job placement and retention.

6. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's best or promising virtual services strategies that has yielded positive results. Provide any evidence that you have collected or plan to collect to suggest this practice is effective.

A regional best practice has been the implementation of pre-interview and human resources development workshops ahead of regional hiring events. By coordinating our efforts and collaborating with our local community colleges, jobseekers are allowed to engage community educational partners for job readiness tactics before meeting with major employers. Workforce staff has created workshop registration through Eventbrite with channels that keep candidates engaged and connect them with resources available within the career center. Following each event, with permission for the candidates, Career Center staff maintain contact following the event.

Mid Carolina WDB will continue to grow virtual services to ensure all job seekers and employers receive the necessary services to remove barriers and promote economic growth. As we develop a better strategy to address potential barriers for each county, establish a benchmark of success, and then determine how the data improve our service delivery throughout the NCWorks Career Center.

7. Describe how the Local Area WDB's inform other Local Area WDB's of best or promising regional workforce practices.

The MCWDB BSR regularly communicates with WDB BSRs and directors all over NC. Best practices are shared regularly and in-person training workshops are in the process of being planned now for statewide collaborative efforts through the BSR Consortium. This past year included trainings and best practices for OJT, IWT, Economic Development 101 and more.

8. Describe one of the Local Area WDB's business engagement practices that demonstrated employers taking charge and driving the agenda.

The next program year will build on the work done with skilled crafts companies this year. The MCWDB will continue to collaborate with FTCC and Cumberland County Government to build systems to connect persons to entry-level careers in the skilled trades that will lead to progressive opportunities. Prior to placement, business leaders counseled on the types of abilities required and stressed the importance of hands-on training. Short-term courses for numerous pathways into the skilled trades are being designed, and these programs will be launched soon to draw in even more firms. Work-based learning will be used for those who are suitable and eligible. Opportunities to expand business and partner-engaged initiatives throughout the local area will be a priority for PY22.

XI. Program Year 2022 Local Area WDB Plan Required Policy Attachments

1. The following policies are *required* to be attached as separate documents in WISE as part of the PY 2022 Local Area Plan. The Local Area Plan is not complete without these documents. Name each document: Local Area WDB Name, Policy Name.

- In the first column, state if the policy is attached or why it is missing and when it can be expected. If two of the policies have been combined, please make a notation.
- In the second column mark “Yes” *only* if the policy has been changed/revised since PY 2021 and requires a review for PY 2022 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- Do not add an empty document in WISE as a “placeholder”.

Required Local Area WDB Policies	Attached (Yes/No). If no, why?	Revised for PY 2022 (Yes/No) and needs review
1. Adult/Dislocated Worker Experience Policy	Yes	Yes
2. Competitive Procurement Policy	Yes	Yes
3. Conflict of Interest Policy	Yes	Yes
4. Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures	Yes	Yes
5. Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I	Yes	Yes
6. Individualized Training Account Policy	Yes	Yes
7. On-the-Job Training Policy	Yes	Yes
8. Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool and Schedule	Yes	Yes
9. Priority of Service Policy	Yes	Yes
10. Youth Work Experience Policy	Yes	Yes
11. Supportive Services Policy	Yes	Yes
12. Sampling Policy/Self-Attestation Procedures & Monitoring Schedule	Yes	Yes

2. Designate whether the following local *Optional Policy* is included and used at the Local Area WDB and is included in the Local Area Plan or write “N/A” implying “Not Applicable”, if the Local Area WDB does not have this policy and; therefore, does not use these services.

- In the second column mark “Yes” **only** if the policy has been changed/revised since PY 2021 and requires a review for PY 2022 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- Do not add a blank document in WISE as a “placeholder”.

If “Yes”, load the policy as a separate document. Name documents: *Local Area WDB Name, Policy Name*. [Example: IWT Policy – Yes. Attached as *Board Name IWT Policy*.]

Optional Local Area WDB Policies	Yes- the Local Area WDB has a policy or N/A (Not Applicable)	Revised for PY 2022 (Add Yes or N/A for this column)
1. Local Area WDB Guidance for Local Incumbent Worker Grants	Yes	Yes
2. Local Area WDB Needs-Related Policy	Yes	Yes
3. Local Area WDB Transitional Jobs Policy	N/A	N/A
4. Local Area WDB Youth Incentive Policy	Yes	Yes
5. Local Area WDB Guidance for Finish Line Grant	Yes	Yes

3. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are required [Regulations Section 680.300] to pay the cost of training provided with Adult and Dislocated Worker funds and limitations on duration and amount may be included [Regulations Section 680.320]. Please provide the following ITA elements in summary:

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Dollar Amounts	Lifetime cap of \$8,000; exceptions can be made by the Director with cause. Applies only to tuition, books, and fees.
Time Limits	Two years to obtain credential; additional 12 hours of remedial classes.
Degree or Certificates allowed (Associate, Bachelor’s, other)	No limitations; in most cases, it is an Associates’ Degree or certification. However, we work with individuals earning a Bachelor’s Degree, but only for up to two years.
Procedures for determining case-by-case exceptions for training that may be allowed	Any exceptions to existing policy guidance must be approved by the Workforce Development Director; applicable actions must be documented in case notes and supporting documents uploaded in NCWorks

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Period for which ITAs are issued (semester, school year, short-term, etc.)	One semester at a time.
Supportive Services covered by ITA (provide examples such as uniforms, tools, physical exams, etc.)	Tools, supplies, uniforms, and testing are allowed and are not applied to the lifetime cap of \$8,000.
Other	

4. Please specify the supportive services provided by the Local Area WDB Supportive Services Policy. List specific items under Supplies, Emergency, and Other, as identified in the Local Area WDB policy. *[Expand form as needed.]*

Transportation	Childcare	Supplies <i>(include examples)</i>	Emergency <i>(include examples)</i>	Other <i>(include examples)</i>
Yes	Requires Director approval	Yes (e.g., uniforms, tools, exam fees)	Yes (Needs Related Payments; requires Director approval)	

Note: The Local Area WDB must adequately safeguard all forms of supportive services payments (i.e., gas cards, cash, gift cards, etc.) and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes. The Supportive Services Policy must include the Local Area WDB’s internal controls to safeguard supportive services. The internal controls must address issuance, storage, and reconciliation of supportive services throughout the area.