Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan
PY 2017

Developing Kentucky’s World Class Talent Pipeline

Kentucky Career Center
Purpose.
The purpose of this Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan guidance is to provide instructions to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB’s) regarding the development and submission of Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive plans for program years (PY) 2017 through 2020 in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) three-year planning requirements. This document provides guidance regarding comprehensive multi-year Regional and Local Plan requirements.

The Act amends the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to strengthen the United States workforce development system through innovation, in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training, and education programs in the United States, and to promote individual and national economic growth, and for other purposes. The rule provides the framework for changes for statewide and local workforce development systems to increase the employment, retention, earnings, and occupational skill attainment of workers. Particularly those individuals with barriers to employment, so they can move into good jobs and careers, and provide businesses with the skilled workforce needed to make the United States more competitive in the 21st Century global economy.

A. Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plans.
Local plans serve as four-year action plans to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and to support the State’s vision and strategic and operational goals.

The Local Comprehensive Plan sets forth the strategy to:

- Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers;
- Apply job-driven strategies in the one-stop delivery system;
- Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment, training, and education programs; and
- Incorporate the Local Comprehensive Plan into the Regional Innovation Plan per 20 CFR 679.540.

Section 108(a) of the WIOA requires local boards in partnership with the appropriate chief elected officials to develop and submit a comprehensive four-year local plan to the Governor. It must identify and describe the policies, procedures, and local activities carried out locally that are consistent with the State Plan.

Local Plans, pursuant to WIOA, must align with the State’s vision as set forth in the Combined State Plan. The Local Plan must also address certain specific provisions as set forth in Section 108 of WIOA. The State provides this guidance to the LWDBs in the formulation of its Local Plans. At minimum, Local Plans must include the provisions in this guidance.
Commonwealth of Kentucky Workforce Vision and Goals

Over the past six years, the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB), in partnership with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and numerous partner cabinets, agencies and outside organizations, has engaged in an aggressive effort to implement the strategic initiatives outlined in the WORKSmart Kentucky plan adopted in 2010 and updated in 2013. The plan has served as a blueprint for transforming Kentucky’s workforce services focused on adapting to the changing needs of employers. The Bevin Administration welcomes the opportunity for continued alignment of Kentucky’s education and workforce systems with the goal of establishing dynamic, employer–led workforce development in Kentucky.

The administration’s vision includes:

• Establishing employer collaborative efforts arranged by both region and industry. These groups will examine current and future needs for skills and training and identify effective talent development systems. Information will be provided in real time to the workforce system in order to help align resources effectively and efficiently.
• Make career development an integrated element of government services with a vision of increasing labor force participation and growing Kentucky’s economy. Over the next four years, the administration will work with the KWIB on a new strategic plan and setting clearly defined goals. These goals will inform subsequent modifications of the State Plan and achieve the continuing transformation of Kentucky’s workforce system through innovative practices. This will enhance sustainable economic and job growth to improve the lives of Kentuckians.

The Department of Workforce Investment (DWI) Goals:

1. Career Pathways and Sector Strategies – Collaborate with business and industry to define career pathways for critical state and regional sectors.

2. Work-Based Learning Infrastructure – Create a state-level framework to facilitate employer engagement in work-based learning and ensure consistency in definitions used across the education and training continuum partners regarding definition.

3. Workforce Services Infrastructure Realignment – Continue to evaluate and realign services and support structures to expand on efforts to build a truly customer-centric model at the local level.

4. Data and Performance-Informed Decision Making – Ensure the collection of the right data to inform policy and practice among the partners to create an efficient and effective talent pipeline.

C. Regional Innovation Plan.

Each LWDB and its respective Chief Local Elected Official(s) [CLEOs] must collaborate with the other LWDBs and CLEOs within a respective planning region to prepare and submit a Regional Innovation Plan that identifies opportunities for regional collaboration and innovation and incorporates priorities and opportunities identified within the Local Plan, guidance from final WIOA regulations and feedback to Kentucky on its WIOA State Plan. Regional Innovation Plans will be submitted to the Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment as early as Jan. 1, 2017 and no later than June 30, 2017.
D. Relationship of Regional Innovation Plan and Local Comprehensive Plan.
The regional component of the plan should outline how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor marked information and must incorporate the Local Comprehensive Plans for each of the local areas within the planning region consistent with the requirements of the WIOA Rules Section 679.540(a).

E. Plan Completion, Submission and Approval.
1. **Completion.** All local workforce innovation areas in Kentucky must submit a plan that includes both the regional and local planning components outlined in this guidance. The questions in the guidance must be addressed in the plans in the order in which they are outlined in the guidance. Planning teams may include content beyond these questions.

2. **Submission.** The PY17-20 Regional and Local Plans must be submitted electronically to the following: holly.neal@ky.gov email account by close of business on June 30, 2017. Note: PY17 – 20 Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan must be emailed by a designated single point of contact. The subject line should read “(Area name) PY 2017-20 Regional and Local Plan” or the designated Drop Box account provided.

3. **Approval.** A Regional and Local plan submitted shall be considered to be approved upon written notice at the end of the 90-day review period. Plans will be considered approved 90 days after receipt of the plan unless:
   - There are deficiencies identified through audits in workforce investment activities that the local area has not made acceptable progress.
   - The plan does not comply with WIOA regulations inclusive of the regulations, public comment provisions and nondiscrimination requirements of 29 CFR part 38.
   - The plan does not align with the Kentucky Combined State plan in keeping with the alignment of the core programs in support of the identified state plan strategies

F. Modification Process.
Modifications to the Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan under Final Rules Section 679.530 and 679.580, each LWDB, in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials, must review the Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan every 2 years and submit a modification as needed.

Conditions which require a modification to the local plan include:

1. Changes in labor market and economic conditions; and

2. Other factors affecting the implementation of the plan, including but not limited to: the financing available to support the WIOA Title I and partner-provided WIOA services, and LWDB structure, and/or the need to revise strategies to meet local performance goals.

G. Public Comment
The Local Workforce Development Board must make copies of all Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plans, and any subsequent modifications to such plans, subject to no more than a 14-day public review and comment period before submission to the Governor.
Plans should be:

1. Made available to the public through electronic and other means such as public hearings and local news media. This should include an opportunity for public comment by members of the public inclusive of representatives of business, labor organizations and education.
2. Any comments that express disagreement with the plan must be submitted to the Governor along with the plan.
3. Information about the plan should be available to the public on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings.

H. Plan Organization
The planning guidance is organized into the following chapters and is designed to address both the regional and local planning requirements of WIOA in one planning document.

- Economic and Workforce Analysis
- Strategic Vision and Goals
- Alignment of Local and Regional Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies
- Program Design and Evaluation
- Compliance/ Performance/Administrative Cost

Questions to be addressed in each chapter are identified as Regional (R) or Local (L). Answers to regional questions require the collaboration of LWDB’s, CLEO’s, and partners within the region to provide a unified regional response. Answers to local questions require a local response.
LWDA name:
Regional name:
Chapter 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

A. (R) A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the regional plan, including a description of how all local areas were afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process.

Due to time constraints, EKCEP and TENCO decided it would be more advantageous for staff to review and address regional planning questions through email and phone consultations. The local/regional plan guidance is very similar to last year’s transitional plans (approved and currently in effect), which were created with the input and approval of EKCEP’s and TENCO’s Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) and local workforce boards.

Regional local elected officials and workforce development board members will have opportunity to review and provide input for the current plan through committee and board meetings. The document will be submitted electronically to the local elected officials and board members of each local workforce area prior to being posted for the public comment period. Any public input received will be reviewed and, if appropriate, corresponding modifications will be made.

Both local areas conducted data analyses on the region’s strengths, obstacles, and opportunities. The analyses conducted to complete the Regional Plan concluded that although there are many similarities in the challenges and opportunities faced by the region, there are also many differences between the two local areas that comprise the region. These differences — including each local area’s available funding levels, limitations, identified sectors, and accessibility to resources — are reflected throughout this regional plan.

B. (R) Provide a regional analysis of the economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

In 2017 the East Region continues to lag behind the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States in job growth and economic expansion. However, the continued growth of the healthcare sector and the vast array of job opportunities that come with the expanding internet economy and increased connectivity provide a new hope that the region can rise above its historical role as a geographically isolated economy and become a full and equal participant in the world’s Internet-based economy.

Unemployment continues to be a major economic issue in the East Region. The 2016 average unemployment rate for the East Region is 9.31%, which is significantly higher than both the Kentucky 2016 rate of 5.0% and the U.S. rate in 2016. Thus far in 2017, there are 15 counties in the East Region that have exceeded 10% unemployment — more than twice the statewide rate.
These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>2017 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breathitt</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
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<td>Carter</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

During the past year, monthly unemployment rates for the most distressed counties in the East Region have ranged as high as 17.9%.

Job loss is also a major economic issue in the East Region. From 2015 to 2016, the region lost almost 3,700 jobs.

The number of jobs in the EKCEP area fell to 112,246 in 2016, a decrease of 3,064 jobs (-2.7%) from the region's 115,310 jobs in 2015. Of the 23 counties EKCEP serves, 22 have shown a net loss in jobs from 2012 through 2016, with 12 those counties posting a four-figure job loss during that period.

In the EKCEP area, the most jobs were lost during 2016 from the employment category Mining, Quarrying, and Oil/Gas Extraction, which includes the rapidly declining coal industry. However, despite losing nearly 10,000 jobs in the past four-plus years, this category still accounts for the fifth-most jobs in the region. The employment categories that provided the most jobs in Eastern Kentucky in 2016 (and their average wages) are:

1. Government -- 28,046 jobs (avg. wage $50,265)
2. Healthcare and Social Assistance -- 21,570 jobs (avg. wage $52,727)
3. Retail Trade -- 18,104 jobs (avg. wage $29,036)
4. Accommodation and Food Services -- 8,554 jobs (avg. wage $16,163)
5. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil/Gas Extraction -- 5,886 jobs (avg. wage $74,512)
6. Manufacturing -- 4,401 jobs (avg. wage $48,106)
7. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services -- 3,329 jobs (avg. wage $50,715)

(The best average wages in the EKCEP area during 2016 were provided by jobs in the Utilities employment category, at $97,943, but that category accounted for only 837 jobs.)

As could be anticipated from the overall decline of the mining industry, the most job opportunities lost in the EKCEP area were in mining. From 2015 to 2016, 790 jobs in Bituminous Coal Underground Mining and 663 jobs in Bituminous Coal and Lignite Surface Mining were lost. The specific occupations that lost the most job opportunities were also in or related to mining; from 2015 through 2016, the region lost 184 jobs as Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators, 249 jobs as Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, and 224 jobs as Continuous Mining Machine Operators.

The category of Mining, Quarrying, and Oil/Gas Extraction today represents approximately 14% of the EKCEP region's $9.519 billion GRP (Gross Regional Product), a significantly smaller portion than the 24% it represented in 2014.

However, other sectors of the EKCEP area's economy are growing, and there is potential for rapid growth in sectors that are just beginning to emerge. Healthcare and Information Technology are sectors that have shown growth in Eastern Kentucky and promise further expansion.

In the TENCO local area, the number of jobs fell to 74,112 in 2016, a decrease of 600 jobs (-0.8%) from the region's 74,712 jobs in 2015. In the TENCO area, the most jobs were lost from the employment category Postsecondary Teachers, which lost 62 jobs from December 2015 to December 2016. Other leaders in job losses in the TENCO area during the same period were the employment categories Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive, which lost 54 jobs, and First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers, which lost 43 jobs.

The employment categories in the TENCO area that gained the most jobs from December 2015 to December 2016 were: Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food, which added 87 jobs; Retail Salespersons, which added 53 jobs; and Personal Care Aides, which added 49 jobs.

The employment categories that provided the most jobs in the TENCO area in 2016 (and their average wages) are:

1. Government -- 13,942 jobs (avg. wage $49,684)
2. Healthcare and Social Assistance -- 13,942 jobs (avg. wage $56,276)
3. Manufacturing -- 10,526 jobs (avg. wage $67,995)
4. Retail Trade -- 10,040 jobs (avg. wage $29,504)
5. Accommodation and Food Services -- 7,158 jobs (avg. wage $16,404)
6. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services -- 3,018 jobs (avg. wage $37,426)
7. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services -- 3,329 jobs (avg. wage $71,699)
8. Construction – 3,050 jobs (avg. wage $70,341)
9. Finance and Insurance -- 1,783 jobs (avg. wage $52,623)

(The best average wages in the TENCO area during 2016 were provided by jobs in the Utilities employment category, at $108,024, but that category accounted for only 485 jobs.)

The industry that lost the largest number of jobs in the TENCO area from December 2015 to December 2016 was AK Steel, which lost 733 jobs. The other industry categories that lost the most jobs were Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government), which lost 244 jobs, and Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing, which lost 240 jobs. The industries that gained the largest number of jobs in the TENCO area from December 2015 to December 2016 were Petroleum Refineries, which gained 186 jobs, and Limited-Service Restaurants, which gained 145 jobs.

The healthcare sector (or “Healthcare and Social Assistance” employment category) is a major employer and economic driver that is still growing within the region. Between 2015 and 2016, the employment categories General Medical and Surgical Hospitals and Services for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities showed sustained growth, as did the job opportunities for Registered Nurses and Personal Care Aides during that same period.

In the EKCEP area the top three businesses in terms of employees are all in healthcare:

- Pikeville Medical – approximately 2,400 jobs.
- Hazard ARH Regional Medical Center (and affiliates) – approximately 1,530 jobs.
- Pikeville Pharmacy – approximately 1,500 jobs.

In the TENCO area three of the five largest businesses in terms of employees are healthcare institutions:

- King’s Daughters Home Health – approximately 4,000 jobs.
- Ashland Community & Technical College – approximately 3,800 jobs.
- Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital – approximately 2,000 jobs.
- St. Clare Regional Medical Center – approximately 1,400 jobs.
- Marathon Petroleum – approximately 1,000 jobs.

Although it has represented a small percentage of jobs in the East Region in the past, Information Technology (IT) is a rapidly growing sector and appears to have an unlimited ceiling. The Internet-based economy has presented Eastern Kentucky with an unprecedented opportunity to compete upon a level playing field with the rest of the nation, because the Internet makes geography, transportation, and physical proximity to business centers irrelevant.

For over four years, EKCEP’s Teleworks USA initiative have been preparing Eastern Kentuckians to meet the needs of employers worldwide for home-based workers. These Internet-based work-from-home jobs — largely in customer service — bring outside wages into the region and broaden the employment opportunities of Eastern Kentucky’s workforce.
Ongoing improvements in both the Teleworks USA workshops and relationships with employers have brought significant success to the initiative. Since January 2015, Teleworks USA has connected to over 890 residents of the EKCEP service area to jobs with remote employers, representing more than $19 million in new wages brought into the region. Most of these new teleworkers have been prepared and placed through the six Teleworks USA hubs (in Jackson, Perry, Lee, Owsley, Harlan, and Pike counties). EKCEP will open at least one additional Teleworks Hub during calendar year 2017, and is exploring the possibility of providing the Teleworks USA assistance to other counties through a combination of a mobile “circuit-rider” hub operation and collaboration with selected schools. The current demand for reliable teleworkers is almost limitless and shows no sign of fading.

In March 2015, the White House named Eastern Kentucky as one of the original 21 TechHire Communities in the United States and designated EKCEP as its lead entity. The premise of the TechHire initiative is that many industries, not just IT, are struggling to find workers with proven tech skills. The initiative calls for TechHire Communities to forge partnerships between workforce development, education, and private employers to create pathways to accelerated training, work-based internships, and on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities for tech careers. These pathways will lead people to employment in middle-skill to high-skill IT occupations in H1-B-related industries, with the intent of reducing the need to import skilled foreign workers under the H1-B visa program. As in telework, there are a wealth of coding and programming jobs that can be performed as easily from Eastern Kentucky as from anywhere else in the world.

The planned construction of a high-capacity “dark fiber” trunk line into Eastern Kentucky will increase the remote-employment opportunities available to the local workforce, as well as making it more feasible to attract employers to physically locate within the region to take advantage of its connectivity, which will then be the equal of anywhere in the United States.

The EKCEP Workforce Innovation Board has recognized these current economic conditions by establishing the following five sectors as its priorities for training expenditures:

- Healthcare
- Skilled Trades
- Energy Production and Transmission
- Business Services, including Information Technology and Customer Service
- Manufacturing

The TENCO Workforce Development Board has also recognized these current economic conditions by establishing the following sectors as its priorities:

- Healthcare
- Skilled Trades
- Manufacturing
- Business Support Programs

In all sectors, employers consistently request training in soft skills in addition to specific occupational skills. Soft skills training – provided in conjunction with work-based learning —
continues to be an important element in workforce development services in the region.

To meet the coming employment opportunities in these sectors, job seekers will need assistance with setting attainable career goals, focusing their job searches, and choosing appropriate training. Job seekers often are not aware of the range of available occupations in the region that can offer a living wage and economic stability — especially with the regular expansion of job opportunities available online. Job seekers also need guidance in planning and preparing for their job search and in executing the steps in their job search process, such as writing resumes, developing job search strategies, finding job leads, and learning interviewing techniques. In sum, job seekers need assistance with career exploration and guidance, occupational information, access to resources, information about and access to training options, job search assistance, work experience, and education in soft skills and workplace behaviors. All of these needs emphasize the important role professional career advisors play in job seekers’ successes.

Funds that enable the workforce system to the remove the barriers that prevent some job seekers from employment success continue to be a strong need in the East Region. Along with increasing needs for services such as internships, on-the-job training, work experience, and other work-based learning placements that can open the doors to new career opportunities, EKCEP anticipates an increasing need for the supportive services that make it economically feasible for adults to complete trainings for new careers. As the need to master new technologies and skills becomes increasingly important, workers will require support while pursuing training tied directly to employment opportunities.

C. (R) Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data and information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

The East Region is comprised of the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P., Inc. and TENCO local workforce areas, consisting of 33 rural counties: Bath, Bell, Boyd, Bracken, Breathitt, Carter, Clay, Elliott, Fleming, Floyd, Greenup, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Magoffin, Martin, Mason, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Robertson, Rowan, and Wolfe. The 2016 population for the East Region is 647,618, which is a decrease from 2015 (653,578). The East Region makes up 15% of the total population of Kentucky.

Persistently high unemployment and a workforce that is decreasing in numbers and increasing in age are among the largest challenges faced by the region.

The East Region experienced a decrease in population from 2015 to 2016. The population of the EKCEP local area decreased by 4.2% and the population of the TENCO local area decreased by 0.4%. During the same period Kentucky’s population grew by 1.7%. The counties recording the largest decreases in population were: Boyd, Clay, Floyd, Greenup, Harlan, Martin, and Pike. Pike had the most significant decrease in population (-1,249). Despite the general population
decline, there are seven counties in the East Region that experienced minimal increases in population: Bath, Jackson, Knox, Mason, Menifee, Montgomery, and Owsley.

The 2016 average unemployment rate for the East Region is 9.31%. The East Region’s unemployment rate remains significantly higher than Kentucky’s rate of 5.0% in 2016. There are 15 counties in the East Region that have exceeded 10% unemployment — more than twice the statewide rate — thus far in 2017. These are:

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The poverty rate for the East Region is 29.2%, representing a 1.1% increase over 2015. The East Region’s poverty rate is 10.7% higher than the statewide poverty rate for Kentucky. Four counties in the region have a poverty rate of 40% or higher: Bell, Clay, Martin, and Owsley. Bell County has the highest poverty rate in 2016 (44.7%) and experienced a significant increase in its poverty rate from 2015 (+ 6.7%). The counties in the region with the lowest poverty rates include Bracken (15.7%) and Greenup (16.8%), both of which have experienced a decrease in poverty rate from 2016. Wolfe County had the most significant change in poverty rates within the region, posting a 12.3% decrease from 2015. However, Wolfe County’s poverty rate is still quite high at 30.7%. Clay County experienced the largest poverty rate increase in the region, with its rate rising 7.1% in 2016 (46.8%).

The secondary and postsecondary training institutions in the East Region continuously seek opportunities to improve upon the educational level of the region’s population. At least a high school diploma (or its equivalent) is necessary for entry-level employment. Currently, the East
Region has an average high school graduation rate of 93.3%. The counties with the highest graduation rates include: Robertson, Leslie, Rowan, and Carter with an average rate of 99.4%. The counties with the lowest graduation rate include: Breathitt, Clay, Morgan, Knox, and Harlan with an average rate of 85.3%. As a part of its Work Ready Communities Initiative, Kentucky has established a goal to have counties raise their graduation rates to 98% by 2022. Counties throughout the East Region have expressed some level of interest in achieving Work Ready status under this initiative and the leaders in each county — including workforce, economic development, secondary and post-secondary education, Adult Education, business, local elected officials and other interested parties — will develop plans to accomplish this graduation goal.

Of the 33 counties in the East Region, there are 21 counties (64%) in which more than 20% of the residents ages 18-64 lack a high school diploma or the equivalent. The goal of Kentucky's Work Ready Communities Initiative is for counties to show a 5% reduction in the number of individuals without a high school diploma or GED within five years.

The East Region includes eight counties (Boyd, Bracken, Greenup, Letcher, Mason, Montgomery, Robertson, and Rowan) that have a postsecondary educational attainment rate of 25% or higher. Three counties have a postsecondary educational attainment rate of less than 15% (Elliott, Lee, and Leslie). The Work Ready Communities Initiative has challenged Kentucky counties to achieve an educational level in which 32% of their residents age 25-64 have a two-year degree or higher within three years, and to achieve an educational level in which 39% have a two-year degree or higher within five years.

The East Region county rates for high school graduation, educational attainment, and percentage of the population lacking a high school credential (or its equivalent) are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Graduation Rate 2016 (KWIB.KY.gov)</th>
<th>Educational Attainment Rate 2016 (KWIB.KY.gov)</th>
<th>Lacks High School of Equivalency 2016 (KWIB.KY.gov)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyd</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bracken</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathitt</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliott</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleming</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Graduate Degree or Higher</td>
<td>Some College (No Degree)</td>
<td>Associate's Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenup</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Harlan</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>17.9%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21.7</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
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<td>24.2%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
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<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
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<td>20.3%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

From 2015 to 2016 in the EKCEP local area, the number of available workers at the higher levels of educational attainment decreased, in keeping with the drop of 4.2% in the region's population during the past five years (during which period the state's population grew by 1.7%). The exceptions were slight increases in workers holding an associate's degree or a high school diploma. The levels of educational attainment, and the numerical and percentage changes between 2015 and 2016 are:

- Graduate Degree or Higher: decreased from 16,848 to 16,276 (3.4%).
- Bachelor's Degree: decreased from 19,447 to 18,688 (4.01%).
- Associate's Degree: increased from 18,283 to 18,555 (1.48%).
- Some College (No Degree): decreased from 52,291 to 51,215 (2.16%).
High School Diploma: increased from 116,405 to 116,564 (0.13%).

However, due to the overall change in population and workforce, none of these categories changed as a percent of the EKCEP area’s available workforce by a significant amount.

For 2016 in the TENCO local area, over half of the population falls into the educational attainment categories of High School Diploma (or Equivalent) and Some College. Over 75,000 working age people in the TENCO area hold these qualifications. The levels of educational attainment, along with the population numbers and percentages in the TENCO area for 2016, are:

- Graduate Degree or Higher: 9,883 (7.1%).
- Bachelor's Degree: 13,547 (9.7%).
- Associate's Degree: 11,495 (8.2%).
- Some College (No Degree): 27,283 (19.5%).
- High School Diploma: 50,956 (36.4%).

Many of the concerns affecting the East Region — including high poverty rates, low educational attainment levels, poor graduation rates, and the percentage of the population lacking a high school diploma or the equivalent — are being addressed by initiatives such as SOAR (“Shaping Our Appalachian Region”) and Work Ready Communities. Six counties in the East Region have been recognized and certified as Work Ready: Montgomery, Rowan, Fleming, Mason, Greenup, and Boyd. Another 15 counties in the East Region have been certified as “Work Ready in Progress,” meaning that they have made significant progress toward meeting the standards required to be certified as Work Ready. These counties are: Lewis, Carter, Lawrence, Johnson, Martin, Magoffin, Floyd, Knott, Perry, Letcher, Owsley, Lee, Jackson, Knox, and Bell.

Another concern that affects the East Region is its aging workforce. The highest percentage of the region’s population falls into the 45-64 age range (www.thinkkentucky.gov 2015 data). This increases concerns about having the workforce needed both to supply local businesses once individuals retire from their current positions and to attract new, high-tech businesses to the region. Projections indicate that 28% of the region’s current workforce could retire within the next 10-20 years. Youth ages 16-24 make up only 11% of the region’s current population.

The percentages each age range represents in the population of each East Region county are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Under 16</th>
<th>16-24</th>
<th>25-44</th>
<th>45-64</th>
<th>65-84</th>
<th>85+</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>22.00%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>23.30%</td>
<td>27.70%</td>
<td>14.70%</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
<td>11.30%</td>
<td>24.10%</td>
<td>28.10%</td>
<td>15.80%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>18.50%</td>
<td>9.90%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>28.30%</td>
<td>16.00%</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bracken</td>
<td>21.20%</td>
<td>10.10%</td>
<td>23.60%</td>
<td>29.30%</td>
<td>14.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breathitt</td>
<td>18.20%</td>
<td>11.40%</td>
<td>25.10%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
<td>14.50%</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>19.80%</td>
<td>12.10%</td>
<td>23.60%</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
<td>15.40%</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>18.60%</td>
<td>11.10%</td>
<td>29.20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elliott</td>
<td>16.10%</td>
<td>10.20%</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
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<td>Fleming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>24.60%</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>19.20%</td>
<td>9.90%</td>
<td>23.20%</td>
<td>28.20%</td>
<td>17.40%</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlan</td>
<td>20.10%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>23.80%</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
<td>15.20%</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>10.30%</td>
<td>25.10%</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
<td>14.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>19.80%</td>
<td>10.20%</td>
<td>24.80%</td>
<td>28.30%</td>
<td>15.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knott</td>
<td>18.20%</td>
<td>13.30%</td>
<td>22.30%</td>
<td>29.80%</td>
<td>14.90%</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knox</td>
<td>20.70%</td>
<td>11.90%</td>
<td>24.20%</td>
<td>25.90%</td>
<td>15.80%</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>21.00%</td>
<td>9.80%</td>
<td>24.10%</td>
<td>28.70%</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>17.90%</td>
<td>10.10%</td>
<td>23.00%</td>
<td>31.80%</td>
<td>15.90%</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leslie</td>
<td>19.30%</td>
<td>9.70%</td>
<td>24.50%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
<td>15.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>20.10%</td>
<td>10.40%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>29.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magoffin</td>
<td>20.30%</td>
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<td>24.20%</td>
<td>29.60%</td>
<td>14.00%</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>20.70%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
<td>28.30%</td>
<td>15.10%</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>18.20%</td>
<td>10.10%</td>
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<td>26.50%</td>
<td>12.60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Menifee</td>
<td>16.90%</td>
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<td>29.70%</td>
<td>17.10%</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery</td>
<td>21.20%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>26.20%</td>
<td>26.80%</td>
<td>13.40%</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>16.70%</td>
<td>10.80%</td>
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<td>13.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Owsley</td>
<td>18.90%</td>
<td>9.30%</td>
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<td>16.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>19.70%</td>
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<td>25.30%</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
<td>14.50%</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other factors that characterize the regional workforce and affect the economic conditions in the East Region include:

- **Disabilities** — Of the East Region's residents of prime working age (18 to 64), 5.9% acknowledge a disability. Robertson and Rowan counties have the lowest percentage of individuals with disabilities; Owsley and Lee counties have the highest percentage of individuals with disabilities.

- **Offenders** — In 2016, there were 23,695 crimes identified in the East Region that caused individuals to become involved in the adult correctional system. (Note: This is the number of crimes, not the number of individuals who committed crimes.) The top five offenses included: Drugs/Narcotics (7,102), Larceny (5,965), Assault (3,628), Burglary (2,111) and Vandalism of Property (1,271) (according to kystatepolice.org). The five counties with the most criminal activity include: Bell, Boyd, Knox, Montgomery, and Pike.

- **Commuting Distances** — Due to a lack of employment opportunities in many of the region's counties, many individuals must commute outside of the county in which they reside to find employment. According to the United States Census Bureau (2015 data), an average of 42% of the residents in the East Region travel outside of their home county for employment. The counties where 50% or more of their employed population commutes outside of the county for work include: Bath, Bracken, Elliott, Fleming, Greenup, Knott, Lewis, Menifee, Robertson, and Wolfe.

- **Low Wages** — The average median wage for the 33 counties that comprise the East Region is $30,608. This is approximately $10,500 less than the median income for the state of Kentucky.

- **Veterans** — There were 36,555 veterans living in the region in 2015. The highest population of veterans is located in the counties of Boyd (4,226), Pike (2,960), and Greenup (2,563).

D. (R) An analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training in the region. This will include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities an capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.
Note: Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).

The workforce development activities in the East Region of Kentucky (EKCEP and TENCO) are focused on helping job seekers prepare for and obtain careers that pay a self-sufficient wage while helping employers — in both existing and emerging sectors — find or develop the workers they need to prosper and help grow the region’s economy. The WIOA and workforce development board staff in both local workforce areas work closely with the partner agencies required under WIOA and with other organizations to ensure that both job seekers and employers receive a full array of services to make it possible for these goals to be met.

Job seekers need assistance with setting attainable career goals, focusing their job searches, choosing appropriate training, and removing the barriers that might keep them from succeeding in their training or new employment. Job seekers are often not aware of the range of available occupations in the region that can offer a living wage and economic stability — especially with the constant expansion of job opportunities available online. Job seekers also need guidance in planning and preparing for their job search and in executing the steps in their job search process, such as writing resumes, developing job search strategies, finding job leads, and learning successful interviewing techniques. In sum, job seekers need assistance with career exploration and guidance, occupational information, access to resources, information about and access to training options, job search assistance, work experience, and education in soft skills and workplace behaviors. For these reasons, the role of the Career Advisor is crucial in the region’s workforce development system.

Career Advisors are the central and most important element of the WIOA-funded workforce development system. Career advisors work with clients to understand their circumstances, aptitudes, interests, barriers, and career objectives, use this information to place or refer those clients into the services that will take them to their career objective, and work with clients every step of the way as the clients pursue and attain their objective. The career advisor will evaluate each client’s needs and circumstances, then develop a career action plan of assessments, services, and guidance that will empower clients to make realistic decisions about their employment goals and enact those decisions to reach those goals.

Although career advisors may use their knowledge of and relationships with partner agencies and organizations to connect clients with many services through referrals, the career advisors stay in close touch with clients and participate in the client’s decision-making and problem solving.

The services career advisors can use to help a client reach his/her job goal include:

- Career Advising
- Assessments
- Basic Skills Instruction
- Workshops (e.g., soft skills)
In cases where it is appropriate, career advisors also can help job seekers become their own boss through entrepreneurship training.

In alignment with the emphasis of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, much of the training facilitated by the East Region’s workforce development system involves work-based learning opportunities. Often the best path to acquiring the skills a job seeker needs for a new career is a work-based learning placement (i.e., work experience, internship, on-the-job training) in which they can earn while learning and proving their value and work ethics to their employer. This is especially true for many Eastern Kentuckians who have been displaced from their previous jobs by the region’s economic downturn. Work experience, internships, and on-the-job training are major elements in the region’s services, providing an opportunity for businesses of all sizes to “road test” potential employees while ensuring that they get the precise and specific training that they need to best benefit both the worker and the employer.

The business services representatives of both local areas work closely with employers and the other members of the Employer Services Teams (comprised of the business services representatives of KCTCS institutions, OET, and other workforce system partners) to stay abreast of the workforce needs of the region’s employers and to collaborate with employers and each other to craft training solutions that meet those needs.

In addition to supporting employment in existing business sectors, the EKCEP local area has invested significant resources in creating earn and learn opportunities in the region’s nascent Information Technology (IT) sector. One early example was the group of 10 computer coders whose on-the-job training at Bit Source was supported by EKCEP. (Bit Source is a small coding startup business based in Pikeville, KY, and founded by two former coal executives.) Through these and other efforts, EKCEP is using earn-and-learn training to build new IT job opportunities in the region. The IT sector, not only creates employment opportunities within the sector itself, but also opens the door for economic growth for the entire region. TENDO intends to review EKCEPs involvement and contribution in supporting the IT sector to determine if the TENDO local area could replicate a similar project for the northern part of the East Region.

In the nascent — but growing and potentially huge — IT sector, traditional two-year and four-year academic training programs are becoming increasingly less important to some tech-centric employers, who prefer specific skills-based certifications, internships, and other work-based learning situations that allow workers to produce actual products while demonstrating their abilities, capacity to learn, and creativity to potential employers and/or customers. Some of these high-tech internships may last over a year — such as programs that train computer programming/coding interns — while at the lower end of tech-based careers, unskilled job seekers can learn enough basic computer skills and customer service skills in a four-week training to land home-based telework jobs working for remote employers. EKCEP is supporting
a variety of these work-based learning opportunities.

The East Region also has an opportunity to support the continually expanding aerospace industry. Like the IT sector, the East Region currently has limited employment in the aerospace industry, but it has potential to become one of the largest industries in the region. Currently, Kentucky is second in the United States for aerospace exports, which over a five-year period has increased by 145%. Recently, the One East Kentucky region successfully achieved their AEROready Certification from Common Sense Economic Development. This certification informs industrial site selectors that the area has met the criteria — including availability of local training in technical skills and an available skilled workforce — necessary to support aerospace industries. The support for Eastern Kentucky to be an “aerospace corridor” is widespread, with AEP, One East Kentucky and Ashland Alliance leading the charge. With coal and steel industries decreasing in the area, Eastern Kentucky has the workforce necessary for the aerospace industry to excel, including eight times the national average of metal workers. The opportunities in the aerospace industry are already starting to be recognized through companies such as Rajant Corporation (Rowan County) and Braidy Industries (Greenup County).

Morehead State University (MSU) provides a unique opportunity for the region to participate in space exploration through the Ronald G. Eaglin Space Science Center, which opened in 2009. Students in the Space Science program at MSU, are actively involved in planning, designing, construction and operation of satellites, and work closely with NASA and other aerospace agencies. Other training institutions, such as Maysville Community and Technical College, have plans to modify the curricula of certain programs to include training such as construction, maintenance, and operation of drones.

When job seekers need more traditional classroom training, there is a wide selection of postsecondary institutions that are located or offer instruction in the region, including:

- Kentucky Community & Technical College System (KCTCS) institutions, including:
  - Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College
  - Hazard Community & Technical College
  - Big Sandy Community & Technical College
  - Ashland Community & Technical College
  - Maysville Community & Technical College

- Regional State Universities, including:
  - Morehead State University
  - Eastern Kentucky University

- Private Colleges, including:
  - Union College
  - University of Pikeville
  - Alice Lloyd College
  - Frontier Nursing University
  - Kentucky Christian University
The workforce development system in the East Region has worked closely with most of these institutions, especially in preparing workers for careers in the growing healthcare sector. Many of these institutions have proven very willing to adapt their class schedules, teaching methods, and even locations to meet the needs of regional employers and/or the region’s job seekers. Examples of this include: the substantial changes Morehead State University made in its nursing program to accommodate the associate to baccalaureate nursing program for incumbent nurses at St. Clare Regional Medical Center, which was initiated by Tenco and supported jointly by Tenco and EKCEP; and the creation and adaptation of the electrical lineman training program at Hazard Community & Technical College and Maysville Community and Technical College in response to a need identified by EKCEP and the industry.

The workforce development system in the East Region also is alert to opportunities for job seekers to become their own bosses by starting their own businesses. The WorkSmart Kentucky plan states the KWIB’s “desire is to develop a culture of entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth of Kentucky,” adding that there is a need to “create a support system that maximizes collaboration and the ability for individuals to access services.” The East Region concurs. In support of entrepreneurship, EKCEP has launched the PlusOne program to support emerging and existing entrepreneurs by making WIOA on-the-job training available to help them expand their workforce. The PlusOne program targets businesses in the sectors of healthcare, IT, energy, business services, and skilled trades that have been in existence for five years or less.

Additionally, under Kentucky’s EDA Power Grant, EKCEP is providing training and consulting in e-commerce strategies in order to increase global marketing capability, product development, and production and process efficiencies for small and emerging businesses, and training is taking place in the region for businesses to adopt and set up e-commerce websites. And the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation is working with EKCEP to establish Entrepreneur Resource Centers that will provide entrepreneurial training and resources to the public.

The specific job skills employers require for current and emerging employment opportunities in the East Region vary widely by occupation. In some sectors, the paths to the necessary skills are clearly defined. (For example, almost every job in the growing healthcare sector has a defined academic training program and certification that provides job seekers with the skills that qualify them for work.) In other sectors, the career path is less precisely defined and may offer several alternate routes. However, all occupations require basic skills in math, reading and comprehension, written and oral communications, problem solving, reasoning, and human relations. For this reason, both Tenco and EKCEP recognize the importance of the GED and works closely with Adult Education providers throughout its region, including supporting the KWIB’s Accelerating Opportunities initiative, which creates effective pathways to credentials for low-skilled adults by integrating basic skills education with technical training and wrap-around services.

Basic computer literacy is becoming a requirement for a steadily increasing percentage of the jobs in today’s economy, and especially in the home-based customer service jobs.
Regardless of sector, employers consistently request training in soft skills (e.g., work ethics, attendance, punctuality, teamwork) in addition to specific occupational skills. Soft skills training – in conjunction with work-based learning – must remain an important service element in the East Region.

The primary factor affecting workforce development services in the East Region is funding, especially in the TENCO local area. Additional funds to enable the workforce system to eliminate the barriers that prevent some job seekers from employment success continue to be a strong need in our region. As the region’s economy struggles and more workers are displaced, there will be an increasing need for the supportive services that make it economically feasible for these former workers to meet their obligations and survive while they complete trainings for new careers. As the need to master new technologies and skills becomes increasingly important, workers will require support while pursuing training tied directly to employment opportunities.

Additionally, the proven strategy of work-based learning is expensive, often requiring supportive services as well as wage subsidies during the training period. As the WIOA law recognizes, internships, on-the-job training, work experience, and other work-based learning placements can very effectively open the door to new career opportunities – but they require adequate funding in order to have a significant economic impact.

E. (L) Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

The job skills necessary to obtain the current and emerging employment opportunities in Eastern Kentucky vary widely by occupation. However, all occupations require basic skills in math, reading and comprehension, written and oral communications, problem solving, reasoning, and human relations. Basic computer literacy is becoming a requirement for a steadily increasing percentage of the jobs in today’s economy, and especially in the home-based customer service jobs EKCEP is promoting through its Teleworks USA initiative. In addition, employers continue to ask the workforce system to help train job candidates in basic work ethics and soft skills such as attendance, punctuality, and teamwork.

In some sectors, the paths to the necessary skills are clearly defined. For example, almost every job in the growing healthcare sector has a defined academic training program and certification that provides job seekers with the skills that qualify them for work.

In other sectors, there are multiple paths that can lead to a successful career. For example, in the nascent — but growing and potentially huge — IT sector, defined two-year and four-year academic training programs are becoming increasingly less important to some tech-centric employers than specific skills-based certifications, internships, and other work-based learning situations that allow workers to produce actual products while demonstrating their abilities, capacity to learn, and creativity to potential employers and/or customers. Some of these high-tech internships may last over a year — such as programs that train computer
programming/coding interns — while at the lower end of tech-based careers, unskilled job seekers can learn enough basic computer skills and customer service skills in a four-week training to land home-based telework jobs working for remote employers.

For many Eastern Kentuckians who have been displaced from their previous jobs by the region’s economic downturn, the best path to acquire the skills they need for a new career may be a work-based learning placement (i.e., work experience, internship, on-the-job training) in which they can earn while learning and proving their value and work ethics to their employer.

Chapter 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

A. (L) Describe the local board’s strategic vision and goals to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency. Including goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include as applicable a description of any plans to generate new strategic vision and goals in the coming year and indicate the timeframe for such activities to occur. Strengthen to the extent possible, include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The strategic vision and goals of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) are stated in its Strategic Plan, as follows:

MISSION — The Eastern Kentucky WIB’s mission is to “Prepare, advance, and expand the workforce of eastern Kentucky.”

GOALS — The Eastern Kentucky WIB’s goals are:

- More — and better — job opportunities for the citizens of our region.
- A better-educated and better-prepared workforce in our region.
- A more diverse economy in our region.

VISION — The Eastern Kentucky WIB’s Strategic Plan includes its visions for the region of Eastern Kentucky, the workforce system in Eastern Kentucky, and the role of the WIB:

- Vision for the Region of Eastern Kentucky — The WIB’s vision for the region of Eastern Kentucky includes the goals below that expand its influence with other key components of the workforce system like economic development, secondary and post-secondary education, and others — with the outcome being that the WIB will have a more tangible effect on job creation, educational and skills attainment, graduation rates, economic development and
diversity, and job placement and retention. The goals associated with this vision are:

— Employers — new, existing, and emerging — have an adequate supply of well-educated and well-trained workers.

— Residents have the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes to work and earn incomes that make them self-sufficient.

— The region exhibits improved college and career readiness among high school graduates

• Vision for the Region’s Workforce System — The WIB’s vision for the region’s Workforce System includes the goals below for services and programs driven by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the current federal law that guides service delivery for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. These goals also include those shared by the Workforce Innovation Board and various partner agencies in the overall, integrated workforce system, including: postsecondary education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Kentucky Adult Education, Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, Experience Works, Job Corps, YouthBuild, Kentucky Office for the Blind, and Kentucky Department for Community Based Services, as well as programs authorized under the federal Wagner-Peyser Act. The goals associated with this vision are:

— Lifelong learning and skills development are integral parts of the workforce system. Long-standing relationships between employers and educators keep education and training opportunities one step ahead of the needs of the market.

— The system partners with those industries and businesses that drive the regional economy. It also works with chambers of commerce and economic development entities throughout the region to identify and support emerging industries vital to the region’s continued growth and diversification.

— Strong commitments to innovation, productivity, accountability, and results keep the system flexible and responsive to employers’ and residents’ ever-changing workforce needs.

• Vision for the EKCEP Workforce Innovation Board — The WIB’s vision for the role of the WIB includes the goals below that set the course for continued innovation in service delivery and the leveraging of additional funding to create new revenue streams that shape and guide organized activity outside the scope of WIOA. The goals associated with this vision are:

— The EKCEP WIB will continue to explore ways to influence economic development and provide citizens’ access to more and better jobs through the use of innovation and telework programs.

— EKCEP will continue to identify and pursue new revenue streams and leverage funding to diversify the employment base and expand activity outside the scope of WIA.

— The EKCEP WIB will set the regional workforce agenda. It will be widely recognized for its excellence as a leader and governing board, and for its commitment to making a
**CORE VALUES**—In addition to defining its mission, goals, and visions, the Eastern Kentucky WIB’s Strategic Plan also identifies five core values that the WIB believes must be embraced and practiced in order for it to succeed in its mission and attain its visions and goals. These core values are:

- **Innovation** — We believe we must remain creative and embrace emerging technologies and opportunities in order to not only strengthen economic development now, but also anticipate and plan for future growth and expansion.
- **Diversity** — We believe that if Eastern Kentucky is to grow to new levels, sustain our citizens, and support both new and existing business, we must pursue economic diversification.
- **Collaboration** — We believe we must seek, build, and nurture collaborative partnerships that will leverage the workforce system with other service providers to bring about more success for jobseekers and employers than we can accomplish alone.
- **Vision** — We believe that to positively change the economic landscape of our region, it will take a unified strategic effort and focused planning powered by a strong vision that guides the collective actions of education, economic development, and workforce partners.
- **Adaptability** — We believe that we must remain nimble and flexible in creating and delivering relevant workforce and employer services that have the most impact on jobseekers and employers and economic development throughout the region.

B. (L) Describe how the local board’s vision and goals relate to the Commonwealth’s goals, initiatives and priorities as outlined in the WIOA State Plan.

The goals and vision of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) align well with the initiatives and priorities of the Commonwealth of Kentucky as outlined in the “WorkSmart Kentucky” plan adopted by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB). Many of the initiatives and services implemented in Eastern Kentucky by the EKWIB align directly with KWIB’s initiatives, including these examples:

**Entrepreneurship** — The WorkSmart Kentucky plan states the KWIB’s “desire is to develop a culture of entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth of Kentucky," adding that there is a need to "create a support system that maximizes collaboration and the ability for individuals to access services." In Eastern Kentucky, EKCEP has launched the PlusOne program to support emerging and existing entrepreneurs by encouraging them to use WIOA on-the-job training to expand and grow their workforce. The PlusOne program targets businesses in the sectors of healthcare, IT, energy, business services, and skilled trades that have been in existence for five years or less. These businesses generally can request reimbursement of up to 50% of the wages of new employees during their on-the-job training period; if the company is receiving qualified technical assistance in the form of business coaching and/or business planning, wage reimbursement up to 75% can be provided.

Additionally, under Kentucky’s EDA Power Grant, EKCEP is providing training and consulting in e-commerce strategies in order to increase global marketing capability, product development, and production and process efficiencies for small and emerging businesses, and training is taking
place in the region for businesses to adopt and set up e-commerce websites. Through a partnership with the SOAR (Shaping our Appalachian Region) initiative formed in December 2016, EKCEP and its e-commerce training partners (AKA and SBDC) are working in seven communities with almost 50 businesses that are looking to adopt e-commerce business practices. In partnership with Advantage KY Alliance, EKCEP is training entrepreneurs in e-commerce strategies based on growth management and research of new markets.

And the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation is working with EKCEP to establish Entrepreneur Resource Centers that will provide entrepreneurial training and resources to the public. Hazard and Paintsville have been identified as the sites for the two pilot centers. Workshops and training will be provided, along with access to the resources.

The EKWIB agrees with the KWIB that entrepreneurship and small business growth will help drive the state’s economic recovery.

**Earn & Learn Opportunities** — The WorkSmart Kentucky plan states the KWIB’s desire for “partnerships to market the benefits of a variety of earn-and-learn opportunities, including registered apprenticeships (union and non-union) to Kentucky business.” The plan goes on to state that the “earn while you learn” approach to skills development for a wide variety of occupations in Kentucky has not come close to reaching its potential as a tool for building a highly skilled workforce, helping business and industry increase their competitiveness, and providing sustainable wages for Kentuckians willing to work hard to raise their standard of living.” The KWIB plan emphasizes that earn and learn opportunities “must be understood and promoted by the business service teams of each local workforce investment board, Kentucky Community and Technical College System’s Workforce Solutions and other state partner agencies to become an integral part of the solutions-based business services model.”

Despite a dearth of apprenticeship programs in its region, the EKWIB has long emphasized work-based learning opportunities as one of the best values it can offer its job-seeking clients. Work experience, internships, and on-the-job training are major elements in EKCEP's service model, providing an opportunity for businesses of all sizes to “road test” potential employees while ensuring that they get the precise and specific training that they need to best benefit both the worker and the employer. EKCEP’s employer liaisons work closely with Eastern Kentucky’s Employer Services Teams (comprised of the business services representatives of KCTCS institutions and other workforce system partners) to stay abreast of the workforce needs of the region’s employers and to work with employers and each other to craft training solutions that meet those needs.

In addition to supporting employment in existing business sectors, EKCEP has invested significant resources in creating earn and learn opportunities in the region’s nascent Information Technology (IT) sector. One early example was the group of 10 computer coders whose on-the-job training at Bit Source was supported by EKCEP. (Bit Source is a small coding startup business based in Pikeville, KY, and founded by two former coal executives.) Another example is the group of software development internships that EKCEP supported at the new Eastern Kentucky location of the Interapt software company. Through these and other efforts, EKCEP is using earn-and-learn training to build new IT job opportunities in its region.
Accelerated GED — According to the WorkSmart plan, “For Kentucky to be successful, the nearly 410,000 Kentuckians age 18-64 (15 percent of the working-age population) without a high school credential must have the opportunity to prepare themselves for college and careers, an opportunity that Kentucky Adult Education programs provide.” EKCEP recognizes the importance of the GED and works closely with Adult Education providers throughout its region. In fact, in Hazard EKCEP has one of the very few locations in the Commonwealth where Adult Education actually resides at and provides services in a full service one-stop center.

Accelerating Opportunity — The KWIB’s Accelerating Opportunity initiative “is aimed at creating effective pathways to credentials for low-skilled adults . . . so they can earn the credentials they need to get a family sustaining job.” The initiative does this by “integrating basic skills education with technical training while providing wrap-around services that include instructional and career supports for adult learners.” EKCEP has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Accelerating Opportunity initiative since its inception and has collaborated with each of the KCTCS institutions in its region to deliver it.

C. (L) Describe how the local board’s vision and goals take into account an analysis of the strategies in working with the other entities in carrying out the core programs and the required partners in the alignment of resources.

The vision and goals of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) were established through an inclusive strategic planning process that involved a wide array of stakeholders within the EKCEP region. EKCEP’s process was designed to create a strategic plan that defined not only the ways EKCEP spends the dollars it controls in the region, but also the ways its actions and programs reflect priorities shared with its partner organizations and therefore influence the ways they spend their allocations within the region.

To develop a consensus on regional vision and plan, EKCEP polled its partners and regional stakeholders in workforce development, secondary education, postsecondary education, government, community action, and business to determine their priorities and strategic objectives, and to quiz them on their vision for role and most important functions of the workforce system and the WIB.

The resulting strategic plan is simple and very focused, clearly stating four primary results-based goals, as well as defining EKCEP’s core values, mission, and vision for that region, the workforce system, and the WIB. Because it is a strategic document, the plan does not include tactics to accomplish goals or specific methods of measurement. However, the plan does reference these details as they appear in separate background support documents that clearly illustrate how the highlighted goals will be tracked and measured. It also includes a version of a “report card” showing how the region and work of the workforce system rate when compared to other comparable regions and sectors (for example, areas such as the Lake Cumberland LWIA and other states like West Virginia) in order to come up with a baseline against which to compare EKCEP’s regional success.

The completed plan was shared with EKCEP’s partners, and further comments were allowed. The
plan was then adopted by the WIB.

By using this strategic plan to guide its decisions, the EKCEP WIB is incorporating the input and vision of its partners and other interested stakeholders into its expenditures and guidance of the workforce development system.

Since the EKCEP Strategic Plan was completed, EKCEP has been closely involved in the SOAR (Shaping Our Appalachian Region) initiative, which has worked to build consensus and a shared vision on an even larger scale about what the Eastern Kentucky region will become in the wake of the collapse of coal as an economic driver. EKCEP’s Strategic Plan has served as the framework for much of its involvement in the SOAR initiative, and its validity has been reinforced by the fact that the mission, vision, and goals developed and adopted by SOAR closely resemble — and comfortably align with — the vision and goals in EKCEP's Strategic Plan:

**Mission** — SOAR’s mission is to expand job creation, enhance regional opportunity, innovation, and identity, improve the quality of life, and support all those working to achieve these goals in Appalachian Kentucky.

**Vision** — SOAR’s vision is an Appalachian Kentucky engaged in a landscape-changing enterprise: shaped by a shared and envisioned future, driven by innovation, entrepreneurship, and a commitment to common purpose, with improved education, health, and economic outcomes, and expanding opportunities, for all our region’s citizens.

**Values** — SOAR is a widely-shared enterprise. Our commitment to build greater prosperity, resilience, and equity in the region is posited upon a belief that support for, and strengthened partnerships among, those already working to achieve these goals is the wisest course. Our trust rests in the region’s greatest assets, upon which this future will be built: its people, places, and heritage, and in these mountains we call home.

Chapter 3: Alignment of Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

A. (L) Describe the local board’s strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment in order to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E); H. R. 803—442.1. This discussion should include a descriptive overview of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker, Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another.  

*Note: The six core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Programs and Vocational Rehabilitation. The elected partner plan programs are: Trade*
The strategic vision for the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) to achieve its mission (outlined in 2.A, above) emphasizes working closely with the required and optional partner agencies to align resources in order to carry out the core programs and meet the regional goals as efficiently as possible.

In Eastern Kentucky, the workforce system partners include:

- WIOA Title I programs for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth — Operated by EKCEP's nine contractor service providers (Bell-Whitley CAA, Big Sandy Area CAP, Daniel Boone CAA, Gateway CAA, Harlan County CAA, Knox County EOC CAP, LKLP CAC, Middle Kentucky CAP, Northeast Kentucky CAA).
- Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act - Career and Technical Education and Postsecondary Vocational Education — Provided through KCTCS and other postsecondary education institutions.
- Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kentucky Office for the Blind
- Title II Adult Education — Kentucky Adult Education.
- Veteran's Workforce Programs — Kentucky Office of Employment and Training
- Unemployment Insurance — Kentucky Office of Employment and Training
- Wagner-Peyser Act — Kentucky Office of Employment and Training
- Title V - Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Job Corps
- YouthBuild
- KTAP, TANF and SNAP, Kentucky Department for Community Based Services
- CSBG Employment and Training — LKLP CAC.

In its solicitation for entities to perform the services of One-Stop Operator throughout Eastern Kentucky’s workforce development network, the EKWIB tasked the selected operators with:

- Coordinating the delivery of services of participating one-stop partners and service providers in the county or counties that the One-Stop Operator serves.
- Fostering a culture of collaboration and excellent customer service among one-stop partners that promotes delivery of the innovative, high quality workforce development services to all customers of the workforce development system.
- Convening and leading regularly scheduled meetings of the one-stop partners to build the collaborative culture, improve service delivery, and evaluate progress toward shared goals.
- Serving as a resource for staff of all partner agencies in regard to the objectives, processes, requirements, and regulations of WIOA and the workforce services delivery system.

The administrative structure for the key stakeholders associated with for the partners in Eastern Kentucky’s workforce development system are listed below:

Administrative Structure
State Workforce Agency

**Entity Name:** Office of Employment & Training, Department for Workforce Investment,

**Address:** 275 East Main Street, 2 W-A, Frankfort, KY 40621

**Contact Person:** John Pallasch, Executive Director  [John.Pallasch@ky.gov](mailto:John.Pallasch@ky.gov)

Administrative Entity

**Entity Name:** Eastern Kentucky CEP (EKCEP) LWDB & LWIA

**Address:** 412 Roy Campbell Drive, Suite 100, Hazard, KY 41701

**Contact Persons:** Jeff Whitehead, Executive Director  [jwhitehead@ekcep.org](mailto:jwhitehead@ekcep.org)

Owen Grise, Deputy Director  [ogrise@ekcep.org](mailto:ogrise@ekcep.org)

Jennifer Bergman, JobSight Services Director  [jbergman@ekcep.org](mailto:jbergman@ekcep.org)

Fiscal Agent

**Entity Name:** Eastern Kentucky CEP (EKCEP) LWDB & LWIA

**Address:** 412 Roy Campbell Drive, Suite 100, Hazard, KY 41701

**Contact Persons:** Jeff Whitehead, Executive Director  [jwhitehead@ekcep.org](mailto:jwhitehead@ekcep.org)

Judie Miller, Financial Controller  [jmiller@ekcep.org](mailto:jmiller@ekcep.org)

Chief Elected Official

Eastern Kentucky C.E.P., Inc. Board of Directors

**Contact Person:** John Ed Pennington, Chairperson  [jepennington@windstream.net](mailto:jepennington@windstream.net)

**Address:** 347 Railroad Ave., Manchester, KY 40962

Workforce Development Board

Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

**Contact Person:** Rocky Adkins, Chairperson  [rocky@rockyadkins.com](mailto:rocky@rockyadkins.com)

One-Stop Operator, Comprehensive Kentucky Career Center JobSight, Hazard (as procured by the EKWIB)

**Entity Name:** LKLP Community Action Council

**Address:** 398 Roy Campbell Drive, Hazard, KY 41701

**Contact Persons:** Rick Baker, Executive Director  [r.baker@lklp.net](mailto:r.baker@lklp.net)
Jack Duff, KCCJ Manager  j.duff@lklp.net
Regan Conley, WIOA Director  r.conley@lklp.net

**Counties Served:** Leslie, Knott, Letcher, Perry

**One-Stop Operators, KCC JobSight Network (as procured by the EKWIB)**

**Entity Name and Address:** Bell-Whitley Community Action Agency

P.O. Box 159, Pineville, KY 40977
Phone: 606-337-3044

**Contact Person:** Craig Brock, Executive Director  craigbrock@bell-whitley.org

**Counties Served:** Bell

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**Entity Name and Address:** Big Sandy Area Community Action Program

230 Court Street, Paintsville, KY 41240
Phone: 606-789-3641

**Contact Person:** Mike Howell, Executive Director  mhowell@bsacap.org

**Counties Served:** Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Martin, Pike

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**Entity Name and Address:** Daniel Boone Community Action Agency

1535 Shamrock Road, Manchester, KY 40962
Phone: 606-598-4330

**Contact Person:** Mike Buckles, Executive Director  mike.buckles@danielboonecaa.org

**Counties Served:** Clay, Jackson

* * * * *

**Entity Name and Address:** Gateway Community Action Agency

151 University Dr., P.O. Box 367, West Liberty, KY 41472
Phone: 606-743-3133

**Contact Person:** Charlene Engle, Executive Director  charlene.engle@gcscap.org

**Counties Served:** Menifee, Morgan
* * * * *

**Entity Name and Address:** Harlan County Community Action Agency

319 Camden St., P.O. Box 1556, Harlan, KY 40831

Phone: 606-573-5335

**Contact Person:** Donna Pace, Executive Director  dpace@harlancountycaa.com

**Counties Served:** Harlan

* * * * *

**Entity Name and Address:** KCEOC Community Action Partnership

P.O. Box 490, Barbourville, KY 40906

Phone: 606-546-3152

**Contact Person:** Paul Dole, President and CEO  pdole@kceoc.com

**Counties Served:** Knox

* * * * *

**Entity Name and Address:** Middle Kentucky Community Action Partnership

1137 Main St., Suite 107, Jackson, KY 41339

Phone: 606-666-5902

**Contact Person:** Darrell Houshe, Executive Director  darrell.shouse@yahoo.com

**Counties Served:** Breathitt, Lee, Owsley, Wolfe

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**Entity Name and Address:** Northeast Kentucky Community Action Agency

21039 West US 60, Olive Hill, KY 41164

Phone: 606-286-4443

**Contact Person:** David Carroll, Executive Director  david.carroll@nkcaa.net

**Counties Served:** Carter, Elliott, Lawrence

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**B. (L)** Describe how the LWDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board 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). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The Eastern Kentucky WIB has worked to expand access to employment, training, and supportive services to eligible Eastern Kentuckians by expanding the amounts and types of workforce funding it brings into the region. Over the past four-plus years the WIB has risen to the challenge presented by the rising numbers of dislocated and underemployed workers in the region who need workforce services by pursuing resources beyond WIOA formula funds with which to serve them.

The additional funds that the EKWIB has brought into the region include:

- **Mining Industry ("H.O.M.E.") NEGs** -- This fund stream involves two National Emergency Grants totaling over $28,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Labor that have funded “Hiring Our Miners Everyday” (H.O.M.E.), EKCEP’s program that has helped over 3,000 dislocated coal industry workers and their families regain a place in the workforce. The wide array of services available under H.O.M.E. (including tuition, travel, and needs-based payments) have made it possible for many of these workers to retrain for new careers, and for some to relocate to continue their mining careers.

- **Community Impact NEG** -- This fund stream is a National Emergency Grant (NEG) of $7,484,017 from the U.S. Department of Labor that enables EKCEP to provide workforce development and retraining services to many Eastern Kentucky residents who lost their jobs in non-coal businesses as a result of the economic “domino effect” resulting from the rapid decline in the region’s coal industry.

- **Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) Grant** -- $700,000 fund stream is a planning grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support a pilot program and study in which EKCEP is blending and coordinating its WIOA Youth Programs with educational support programs run by Berea College’s Partners for Education in order to improve outcomes for disconnected youth ages 14-24 in seven Promise Zone counties (Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry).

- **"Paths 2 Promise" SNAP Grant** – This fund stream of $10,380,976 is a portion of a grant from national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training funds through the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community-Based Services. They support “Paths 2 Promise,” a pilot program and study designed to reduce dependency on SNAP benefits. EKCEP is the lead agency for this ambitious collaborative effort of the workforce system and the SNAP program, which is studying the effects and outcomes of enhanced collaborative employment and training services on 2,000 current SNAP recipients.

- **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Teleworks Hubs Grants (II and III)** – These grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission are supporting EKCEP and its Teleworks USA initiative that positions Eastern Kentucky job seekers to fill the needs of employers who hire home-based workers. The Teleworks Hubs II Grant was a $200,000 ARC grant that
supported EKCEP in establishing two new Teleworks USA Hubs, expanding the operation from two hubs to four. The Teleworks Hubs III Grant is a $400,000 ARC that is supporting EKCEP in establishing two new Teleworks USA Hubs and in improving its outreach to and connections with telework employers. The Teleworks USA hubs are producing dramatic results in bringing wages from remotely based employers into Eastern Kentucky by training local workers to fill the needs of telework employers for home-based workers. These hubs are producing dramatic results in bringing wages from remotely based employers into Eastern Kentucky by training local workers to compete for home-based jobs. Since January 2015, the Teleworks USA Hubs in Jackson, Perry, Lee, Owsley, Harlan, and Pike counties have placed over 895 local workers in Internet-delivered work-from-home jobs, representing over $19.1 million in new wages annually in Eastern Kentucky.

• **POWER (Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) Grant** -- This $2,000,000 fund stream represents a trio of grant-funded initiatives that focus upon economic development through the deployment and use of broadband technology. These POWER grants — funded collaboratively by the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Economic Development Administration, and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) — seek to expand and diversify the region's economy. EKCEP is directly involved in the POWER grant initiatives in partnership with SOAR (Shaping Our Appalachian Region), the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, and the Kentucky Finance Cabinet.

• **New York Community Trust** — This $150,000 fund stream was a private-sector grant from The New York Community Trust to support EKCEP’s efforts toward developing a digital economy in Eastern Kentucky. A portion of this money supported “Selling to the World,” an EKCEP initiative to improve the incomes of Eastern Kentucky artisans and craftspeople by providing them with entrepreneurial workshops, mentoring, and a hands-on introduction to Internet marketing and sales of their products. The remainder of this money went toward EKCEP’s role in supporting Bit Source, an emerging computer coding training and contracting firm in Pikeville that has shown significant success.

**NOTE:** The fund totals listed here are for the entire terms of these grants; the total funds listed are not available for the 2017-18 Program Year. (In some cases, the totals listed above include money already spent during previous years of those grants.)

These additional funds make workforce services accessible to hundreds more individuals than could be served by formula funds alone. The EKWIB will continue to pursue additional funding sources to expand access to employment, training, and supportive services to eligible Eastern Kentuckians.

C. (L) Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

1. Meet needs and facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development
programs in addition to targeted sector strategies;

EKCEP’s staff liaisons to businesses and industries consistently reach out and market the services of the workforce development system to the region’s businesses by attending meetings of Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, Trade Associations, and Society for Human Resource Managers organizations, and other business-oriented activities, where they engage business owners and managers in conversations about business needs and how the workforce development system might address those needs. Job fairs provide additional opportunities for the WIB’s representatives to network with businesses. Also, as members and conveners of the Regional Employer Services Teams, EKCEP’s industry liaisons are in constant communication with businesses inside and outside of the EKCEP region. These business engagements are discussed at the team’s bi-monthly meetings, where strategies are developed to meet identified business needs. These resulting strategies are communicated to training providers to ensure that training programs are employer-driven.

EKCEP’s staff is also planning events where businesses can learn about the workforce and education services that are available to them and to provide feedback. These events will be organized by business sectors, one of which may be a small business group.

Additionally, EKCEP has launched the PlusOne OJT (On-the-Job Training) Program to attract small businesses and entrepreneurs to make use of opportunity that OJT services provides to help them grow and/or expand their businesses. The PlusOne program targets small employers and entrepreneurs in the industry sectors of healthcare, IT, energy, business services, and skilled trades.

2. Support a local workforce development system described in element 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;

Complying with the WIOA mandate for workforce development boards to lead efforts to engage a diverse array of employers, EKWIB staff will continue to meet business leaders and owners face-to-face to discover and discuss their current and future workforce needs and develop and deliver timely solutions. EKCEP will also continue to serve as the convener and support staff for the three Regional Employer Services Teams that serve the region. These teams consist of employer and business services representatives from workforce system partners, education and training providers, and other stakeholders, who are in constant communication with businesses inside and outside of the EKCEP region. Information from these business communications is discussed at the teams’ bi-monthly meetings, where joint strategies are developed to meet identified business needs.

Businesses will be invited to Employer Services Team meetings periodically to allow them to provide feedback and suggestions for improving our services. EKCEP will use this information to develop workshops around the needs of business and to improve service delivery.

3. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development
partners and programs;

Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. continues to be deeply involved in the SOAR (“Shaping Our Appalachian Region”) initiative, as it has been since SOAR’s inception. One of SOAR’s prime objectives is to guide the region’s leaders to a consensus vision of what shape the region’s economy should take in the future — and the steps required to make that vision become a reality. SOAR has been characterized by unprecedented collaboration between economic development, workforce, education, private business, and government, and EKCEP has been an active and contributing participant at every step. Relationships between EKCEP and economic development entities (e.g., Kentucky Highlands Investment Corp. and MACED) have been deepened and expanded as they have worked in partnership to identify and address the area’s needs and opportunities. EKCEP leadership will continue to be available to work with any economic development entity that serves Eastern Kentucky to help build the new economy that will begin to fill the gap left by the decline of the coal industry.

Additionally, EKCEP is working with the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation to establish Entrepreneur Resource Centers that will provide entrepreneurial training and resources to the public. Hazard and Paintsville have been identified as the sites for the two pilot centers.

4. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs; and

The Kentucky Office of Employment & Training’s shift to automate much of the process for filing and managing unemployment claims — through call centers or online applications — has more difficult for the frontline staff of WIOA and other workforce partner programs to interact with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and staff. Fortunately, many OET frontline staff have significant UI experience, even though they are no longer tasked with hands-on assistance with UI applications. These staff remain an excellent resource to help strengthen the linkages between the one-stop delivery system and the UI program.

In the past, many unemployed job seeker customers preferred to file claims for unemployment benefits at the KCC JobSight location so they could speak to a UI representative face to face. This gave KCC JobSight staff the opportunity to provide a thorough orientation about all the services at the center that are available to meet the needs of the UI customer. Now, the current automated UI system will need to provide information about the basic career services and/or the individualized career services available at the career center.

5. Increase competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

EKCEP is collaborating with the state’s Office for the Blind, Department for Vocational Rehabilitation, to improve the career pathway opportunities available to disabled Eastern
Kentuckians. EKCEP is participating in “Project C.A.S.E. (Career and Successful Employment),” a federally funded grant project to help connect Kentuckians with disabilities to training, careers, and work experiences in healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology. EKCEP’s involvement includes employing three Career Pathway Coordinators who are working with Eastern Kentucky employers to inform them about the capabilities of the disabled and the resources — including assistive technologies — that are available to help them succeed in employment. The Career Pathways Coordinators will also explore with employers the ways career pathways and training progressions can be developed for disabled workers. As a part the collaborative effort, the new Career Pathway Coordinators will attend the meetings of Eastern Kentucky’s three regional Employer Services Teams, which are comprised of the business services representatives of area partners such as: the Office of Employment and Training, Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges, Cabinet for Economic Development, Job Corps, and others. The members of these EKCEP-founded teams are in the field regularly, talking with employers to identify emerging industries, hiring needs, and training needs, and to detect declining businesses and industries as early as possible.

Include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives or use of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board’s strategy in element 3.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B)].

D. (L)Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

In support of emerging and existing entrepreneurs, EKCEP has launched the PlusOne program to encourage small businesses to use WIOA on-the-job training to expand and grow their workforce. The PlusOne program targets businesses in the sectors of healthcare, IT, energy, business services, and skilled trades that have been in existence for five years or less. These businesses can request reimbursement of up to 50% of the wages of new employees during their on-the-job training period.

An early example of a business benefitting from PlusOne is Vizadoc of Manchester, KY. Vizadoc's business is converting instructional documents (e.g. assembly instructions) into a proprietary format that makes it possible for them to be displayed on smartphones. Vizadoc recently received OJT for 20 new employees under PlusOne.

Additionally, as part of the Kentucky’s EDA Power Grant, EKCEP is providing training and consulting in e-commerce strategies in order to increase global marketing capability, product development, production efficiencies, and process improvements. In partnership with Advantage KY Alliance, EKCEP is training entrepreneurs in e-commerce strategies based on growth management and research of new markets. Additional training is taking place in the region for businesses to adopt and set up e-commerce websites. Seven active companies are currently
receiving training and consulting in an effort to save 53 Eastern Kentucky jobs.

Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation is working with EKCEP to establish Entrepreneur Resource Centers that will provide entrepreneurial training and resources to the public. Hazard and Paintsville have been identified as the sites for the two pilot centers. Workshops and training will be provided, along with access to the resources.

E. (L) Describe the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

EKCEP’s WIOA Youth program is aligned with its overall service model, emphasizing career advising and transition into employment. Although EKCEP’s youth programs ensure that eligible youth have opportunities to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training, they also emphasize shorter-term, more direct paths to employment, especially for out-of-school youth.

Providing Youth Services — EKCEP provides youth services through contractors who hire youth staff and deliver services in their local areas. EKCEP program coordinators work closely with these contractors to implement EKCEP’s policies and develop strategies for youth services that:

- Effectively connect eligible youth to available services.
- Provide a thorough review of the occupational and workforce service needs of each youth.
- Provide an individualized service strategy for each youth that includes appropriate career goals and plans for overcoming barriers.
- Integrate WIA services with other appropriate community services.
- Prepare youth to meet employers’ needs.

EKCEP’s WIOA Youth programs provide access (based upon individual need) to these 14 service elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;

2. Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that include a component of academic and occupational education, including:
   - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities throughout the year;
   - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
   - Internships and job shadowing;
   - On-the-job training.

4. Occupational skill training, which may include training programs that lead to postsecondary credentials or are linked to in-demand sectors;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors;

7. Supportive services;

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and subsequently, for a total a duration of at least 12 months;

9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after completion, as appropriate;

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;

11. Financial literacy education;

12. Entrepreneurial skills training;

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

EKCEP’s WIOA Youth services are designed to:

- Help high school students who face barriers to scholastic or employment success to transition from high school to employment and/or post-secondary education.

- Help Out-of-School Youth to overcome barriers and successfully transition into employment and/or post-secondary education.

**Out-of-School Youth Services** — Because of limited funding and the requirement under WIOA that 75% of Youth funds be spent on Out-of-School Youth, EKCEP is targeting its Out-of-School Youth services to youth ages 18 to 24 — the portion of the eligible population that is most critically in need of rapid assistance to enter employment. To maximize the assistance available to help these youth transition into employment, EKCEP has blended its Out-of-School Youth services with its Adult and Dislocated Worker service model. Despite having different WIOA eligibility requirements and performance measures, older Out-of-School Youth need basically the same workforce services as Adult and Dislocated Workers to enable them to overcome their barriers to entering and succeeding in the workforce.

In addition to the full array of career advising and planning, skills development, job-search assistance, Job Clubs, and other services that are provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers, work experience opportunities are featured prominently for Out-of-School Youth. Work experience placements introduce and acclimate participants to the world of work and to give them experience in specific career fields or with specific employers who may be hiring soon.
Although it does not exclude other options, EKCEP’s Out-of-School Youth program emphasizes real local employment opportunities and the short-term skills development that will qualify clients to take advantage of those opportunities.

NOTE: Under a waiver granted for the P3 (“Performance Partnership Pilot”) grant, EKCEP’s Youth Programs in the Promise Zone counties (Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry) do not have to meet the 75% spending requirement for Out-of-School Youth. In these counties the program must spend only 50% of its Youth funds on Out-of-School Youth.

**In-School Youth Services** — To ensure a focus on transition into employment and/or postsecondary education, EKCEP limits its In-School Youth services almost exclusively to seniors in high school. EKCEP has blended its In-School Youth services with its Adult and Dislocated Worker service model. Although In-School Youth receive a variety of services to help them overcome barriers to career or academic success, the program emphasizes work experience placements, the skills necessary to acquire a job, and career advising to help the youth make informed career and educational choices and define the steps needed to pursue the career or educational goals.

In addition to the full array of career advising and planning, skills development, job-search assistance, Job Clubs, and other services that are provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers, work experience opportunities are featured prominently for In-School Youth. Work experience placements introduce and acclimate participants to the world of work and to give them experience in specific career fields or with specific employers who may be hiring soon.

**Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) Grant** -- The In-School and Out-of-School Youth in EKCEP's seven Promise Zone counties (Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry) are benefiting from a Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) Grant, which EKCEP has received. This $700,000 planning grant from the U.S. Department of Education supports a pilot program and study in which EKCEP is blending its WIOA Youth Programs with educational support programs run by Berea College’s Partners for Education in order to improve outcomes for disconnected youth ages 14-24 in the Promise Zone. The objective of the grant is closer collaboration between programs and services for youth who are in school, have completed school, or have dropped out of school, in hopes of leveraging all programs’ funds to produce better outcomes with fewer gaps and smoother transitions.

F. (L) Describe how the LWDB coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

The staff of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) coordinates education and workforce activities with Area Technology Centers, Kentucky Community & Technical College System (KCTCS) institutions, and other postsecondary education providers in the region. Coordination with educational agencies may include: regular meetings for improved communication and development of strategies and goals; joint planning and implementation of professional development/training; collaborative work on important initiatives such as Work Ready Communities; joint planning of and participation in career fairs and job fairs; sharing labor market information and employer feedback about high demand training leading directly to jobs in
order to improve training offerings in the region; and partnering on customized training projects to meet the needs of key employers in the region.

EKCEP has also included the employer services representatives of area postsecondary institutions on the three Regional Employer Services Teams that EKCEP convened and facilitates to serve the region. In addition to the business services representatives of EKCEP and area postsecondary institutions, these teams consist of employer and business services representatives from other workforce system partners, training providers, and other stakeholders. These representatives are in constant communication with businesses inside and outside of the EKCEP region to determine employers’ needs. The sharing of information through these teams’ bi-monthly meetings reduces redundant efforts to serve employers, and the joint strategies developed by these teams ensure that the resources of all members are brought to bear to meet identified business needs.

As the number of successfully completed projects have increased and important outcomes have been achieved in Eastern Kentucky as the result of these partnerships, staff and leadership with education and workforce agencies have become more and more committed to working together to achieve common goals and shared visions. This continuous collaboration enhances service delivery for customers and clients and avoids duplication of services through enhanced communication and partnership.

G. (R) Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area including facilitating childcare, transportation and other appropriate supportive services for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Because of the unique characteristics of the two local areas and the differences in budget and capacity identified by the analyses of the region, the local workforce development boards of the EKCEP and TENCO areas see no advantage in attempting to standardize the provision of supportive services across the region or coordinate the ways supportive services are provided between the two local areas. The WIBs have determined that each local area will be responsible for policies and procedures governing the type and level of supportive services provided to the customers in its area.

H. (L) Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by DWI merit staff and the LWDB’s contracted service providers to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

The staff of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) works closely with DWI’s merit staff in the local area and with EKCEP’s contracted direct service providers to implement the operational goals of Eastern Kentucky’s one-stop system. The MOU (including the Resource Sharing Agreements for full-time partners co-located in a Full Service or Affiliate Center) that provides the framework for all partners to share in the collaborative operation of the Kentucky Career Center JobSight one-stop operation and the jointly planned and implemented professional development training for partner staff all ensure that the workforce system partners work fluidly together, avoid duplication and repetition. On-going partner meetings at the county and regional level also ensure that detailed communication takes place on a regular basis to improve
coordination and implement the best strategies for operational goals within the EKCEP local one-stop system. The newly procured contractors that serve as One-Stop Operators for the Kentucky Career Center JobSight workforce development network in Eastern Kentucky have been tasked with:

- Coordinating the delivery of services of participating one-stop partners and service providers in the county or counties that the One-Stop Operator serves.
- Fostering a culture of collaboration and excellent customer service among one-stop partners that promotes delivery of the innovative, high quality workforce development services to all customers of the workforce development system.
- Convening and leading regularly scheduled meetings of the one-stop partners to build the collaborative culture, improve service delivery, and evaluate progress toward shared goals.

Additionally, the vision and goals of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) were established through an inclusive strategic planning process that involved a wide array of stakeholders within the EKCEP region. EKCEP’s process was designed to create a strategic plan that defined not only the ways EKCEP spends the dollars it controls in the region, but also the ways its actions and programs reflect priorities shared with its partner organizations and therefore influence the ways they spend their allocations within the region. To develop a consensus on regional vision and plan, EKCEP polled its partners and regional stakeholders in workforce development, secondary education, postsecondary education, government, community action, and business to determine their priorities and strategic objectives, and to quiz them on their vision for role and most important functions of the workforce system and the WIB.

The resulting strategic plan is simple and very focused, clearly stating four primary results-based goals, as well as defining EKCEP’s core values, mission, and vision for that region, the workforce system, and the WIB. By using this strategic plan to guide its decisions and operational strategies, the EKWIB is incorporating the input and vision of its partners and other interested stakeholders, creating a higher level of “buy-in” and unified spirit.

I. (L) Describe how the local board will collaborate with WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)] This will include a discussion of how the Local WDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA sec. 107(d) (11) (A) and (B) (i) and WIOA sec. 232. Adult Education and Literacy grant review training and process oversight to be provided by Kentucky Adult Education.

The EKCEP local board will collaborate with WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers at both the local level and state level. Kentucky Adult Education contracts with a service provider for each of the 23 counties within the EKCEP local area. Both EKCEP’s staff and contractors work with these service providers to coordinate the referrals of clients for assessments, testing and diagnostics, GED instruction, and remediation services to bring basic skills up in order to enable clients to continue to postsecondary education.

Local Adult Education providers are located on site and provide services at both the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) JobSight, Full Service Center, in Hazard, and the KCC JobSight, Affiliate
Center, in Pikeville. In counties where the local Adult Education provider is not co-located with the other workforce partners, all partners work together to plan and execute regular meetings to improve communication and referrals among partner staff for greater customer service and satisfaction in the local workforce development system. EKCEP local board staff also work with Kentucky Adult Education leadership staff to improve coordination and planning, and to discuss appropriate training and/or professional development for one-stop staff in the region.

J. (L) Please describe the direction given by the Governor and the local WDB to the one-stop operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134 (c) (3) (E).

Client Selection Procedures for ITAs: WIOA Adults — The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that local workforce areas give priority to recipients of public assistance and low-income individuals when selecting qualified adults into training. Veterans must also be given priority.

Program operators and career advisors must provide documentation that their client-selection process for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) gives priority to these groups in the following order of priority:

**Adult Program Order of Priority for ITAs**

1st Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who are public assistance recipients or low-income individuals who also meet the existing ITA eligibility requirements.

2nd Priority: Nonveterans who are public assistance recipients or low-income individuals who also meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

3rd Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who meet the existing ITA eligibility requirements.

4th Priority: Non-veterans who meet the existing ITA eligibility requirements. In order to adhere to this policy, career advisors will be required to keep a complete record of the qualified Adult clients who were being considered for ITAs at the time of each selection process.

**NOTE:** Regulations state, in accordance with 38 U.S. Code Part 4213, that “any amounts received as military pay or allowance by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits, must be disregarded when determining if a person is a ‘low-income individual’ for eligibility purposes.”

Client Selection Procedures for ITAs: WIOA Dislocated Workers — WIOA requires that local workforce areas give priority to veterans when selecting qualified dislocated workers into training. Program operators and career advisors must provide documentation that their client selection process for ITAs gives priority to these groups in the following order of priority:

**Dislocated Worker Program Order of Priority for ITAs**

1st Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who meet the existing ITA eligibility
2nd Priority: Nonveterans who meet the existing ITA eligibility requirements.

In order to adhere to this policy, career advisors are required to keep a complete record of the qualified Dislocated Worker clients who were being considered for ITAs at the time of each selection process.

Client Selection Procedures for ITAs: WIOA Out-of-School Youth — WIOA requires that local workforce areas give priority to veterans when selecting qualified out-of-school youth into training. Program operators and career advisors must provide documentation that their client selection process for ITAs gives priority to these groups in the following order of priority:

Out-of-School Youth Order of Priority for ITAs

1st Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

2nd Priority: Nonveterans who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

In order to adhere to this policy, career advisors are required to keep a complete record of the qualified Out-of-School Youth clients who were being considered for ITAs at the time of each selection process.

K. (L) Please describe how the Kentucky Career Centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky supplies and requires the use of its case management information systems for the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs. The use of EKOS — the primary existing system — is mandated because it allows the Commonwealth to track and tabulate participant performance information. As long as it retains this prerogative to mandate usage, the Commonwealth will be responsible for implementing and transitioning any technology-enabled intake and case management system.

The Commonwealth is currently considering replacing EKOS with more modern and versatile system in order to accommodate the expected exponential increase in workforce system customers that is expected to accompany Kentucky’s pilot program that will require community engagement activities from able-bodied Medicaid recipients.

Chapter 4: Program Design and Evaluation

A. (L) Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

1. The local board’s efforts to collaborate with employers, to provide continuous improvement of business services and to operate a “Job-driven” delivery system.

   EKCEP’s industry liaisons and business services representatives work closely with the region’s
employers to stay abreast of their workforce needs and to collaborate with employers to craft training solutions that meet those needs.

EKCEP also has convened three regional Employer Services Teams throughout its local area comprised of partners such as: Chambers of Commerce, Office of Employment and Training, Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges, Cabinet for Economic Development, Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of the Blind, Job Corps, and others. The team members make a collaborative effort to be in the field regularly, talking with employers to identify emerging industries, hiring needs, and training needs, and to detect declining businesses and industries as early as possible. The team approach ensures that all the represented partners are aware of the services provided by each partner, therefore enabling them to collaborate or make appropriate referrals as needed. EKCEP also uses the Survey Monkey software to poll businesses about their needs, our responsiveness to their needs, and to ask for suggestions and other feedback.

2. The local board’s efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted services providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]

The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) staff works with the state Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Coordinator, meeting on a regular basis and obtaining training updates within the Employ Kentucky Operating System (EKOS) and the Kentucky Center for Education & Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) state systems that capture and report eligible training provider registration and performance.

ETPL information must be reported by each institution and is stored in KCEWS. The data may be used for research by EKCEP management to determine if local and state eligible training providers are meeting the required performance benchmarks to maintain their high-demand status for each ETPL program offered within their institution. The EKWIB uses this performance data as the basis for decisions on whether to continue or discontinue using training providers. These decisions ensure that training that is offered to job seekers in the region is in high demand by employers in the local workforce system and will result in good jobs that pay sustainable wages upon completion of the training.

3. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]

The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) will work with its partners in the workforce system to facilitate access to the services provided through the one-stop delivery system and related KCC JobSight network locations. The technology used will include video conferencing, WebEx, and webinars for partner staff meetings and professional development as well as for customer services, when needed and as appropriate. The use of these technologies offers expanded opportunities for the services of all partners to be provided to staff and customers in remote areas. The use of technologies makes its possible to deliver services and
collaborate more economically, conserving closely budgeted funds for service provision rather than expending them on travel, redundant staffing, and other costs of geographically distributing services. The use of communications technologies and web-based data collection will allow more of the workforce partners' funds to be used to accomplish their specific goals and attain their outcomes.

4. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)]

In the Eastern Kentucky local workforce area the One-Stop Operators and all one-stop partners work together to ensure the physical and programmatic accessibility of all facilities, programs and services, technology and materials to individuals with disabilities. All partners within the KCC JobSight network may serve individuals with disabilities.

The Vocational Rehabilitation partners (Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation [OVR] and Kentucky Office for the Blind [OFB]) in the KCC JobSight network lend their expertise and specialized resources to Eastern Kentucky’s full service and affiliate KCC JobSight Centers and other KCC JobSight network locations, providing annual ADA Compliance certifications and technology and materials for disabled job seeker customers to utilize in the resource rooms at KCC JobSight locations, as needed in the EKCEP region. The Vocational Rehabilitation partners also provide OVR and OFB staff presence at KCC JobSight locations for on-site referrals of eligible customers and clients.

The expertise of OVR and OFB staff is also utilized in Eastern Kentucky’s one-stop delivery system to provide staff training and support throughout the locations in the KCC JobSight network.

5. Provide a description of the process used by the local board, consistent with subsection (d), to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the Local Plan, prior to submission of this plan.

The draft of the EKCEP Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan was posted on the EKCEP website and notices of the posting were placed online through social media and in key newspapers. Per instructions, public comments were accepted through the website for 14 days before the plan was submitted to the State. Public comments will continue to be accepted by EKCEP for an additional 60 days after the plan’s submission, allowing representatives of businesses and labor organizations to volunteer input. EKCEP staff will consider any significant comments or input are received during the public comment period and bring those comments to the EKWIB for consideration of modifications before final approval of the plan.

B. (L) Describe the local board’s assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]
The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) has determined that its local area needs more industry-driven and workplace-based training, in order to adequately prepare the area’s workforce to compete for jobs and provide the capacity for expansion for the region’s growing and/or emerging industries and businesses.

For example, the EKWIB finds that the “off-the-shelf” trainings available in information technology, computer coding, computer programming, and application development trainings are often inadequate to position job seekers for success in these rapidly evolving occupations. Therefore, the EKWIB is using the on-the-job training model, internships, and other innovative methodologies in partnerships with IT employers to prepare the region’s workforce to precisely meet those employers’ needs.

The EKWIB also believes the local area could use more micro-enterprise training and entrepreneurial trainings. The EKWIB — and the KWIB — believe that entrepreneurship and small business growth will play a major role in driving the economic recovery of the Eastern Kentucky region and the entire Commonwealth.

The EKWIB also believes that the number of unfilled registered nursing jobs in the local area indicates that the registered nurse training in the local area has not adequate to meet the demand of the area’s healthcare industry.

Additionally the EKWIB recognizes the need to continue to emphasize and expand the available trainings that can ensure high school students are able to graduate with a certification or other recognized workplace credential that will allow them to more directly into a job.

C. (L) Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

The Local Area Rapid Response (LARR) Coordinator and the state Rapid Response Coordinator work together to acquire information that is needed when a mass layoff is pending. If either one finds out important information regarding a mass layoff, they notify the other, to ensure that everyone has the latest information about the layoff. Services are coordinated by the LARR Coordinator and the local Rapid Response team members as needed following the actual layoff. Regional Employer Services Team members are also notified for additional assistance that may be needed for laid-off workers.

Local WIOA, OET and other Kentucky Career Center JobSight partner staff in the EKCEP region are instructed to notify the Local Area Rapid Response (LARR) Coordinator about any pending/actual layoffs. The LARR coordinator notifies the state via email within 24 hours of receiving notification of an actual or pending layoff that may potentially impact 50 or more employees.

The LARR Coordinator notifies the state Rapid Response Coordinator, Michelle DeJohn, by e-mail of all local Rapid Response events that are planned and delivered. The Rapid Response Coordinator or member of the LARR team will enter all information into EKOS under the Rapid Response tab.
When the LARR Coordinator finds out about a planned layoff, the employer is contacted to set up an initial informational meeting. During the initial employer meeting, the LARR team member will provide Trade information to the employer representative. Website information is given to the employer to complete a Trade petition, if so desired. When the LARR Coordinator acquires information that a company or its employees are in the process of filing a trade petition, the state Trade Act staff is notified by e-mail. LARR, WIOA staff and state Trade Act staff (Regional Trade Facilitator and OET local staff) would be on standby for the final decision to certify the company and its employees as Trade eligible.

D. (L) Provide an analysis and description of youth workforce activities including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. Describe strategies the LWDA will use for increasing the WIOA minimum Out-of-School Youth expenditure rate to 75 percent. Provide information on types of work-based learning activities planned for youth. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

EKCEP’s WIOA Youth program is aligned with its overall service model, emphasizing career advising and transition into employment. Although EKCEP’s youth programs ensure that eligible youth have opportunities to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training, they also emphasize shorter-term, more direct paths to employment, especially for out-of-school youth.

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- Effectively connect eligible youth to available services.
- Provide a thorough review of the occupational and workforce service needs of each youth.
- Provide an individualized service strategy for each youth that includes appropriate career goals and plans for overcoming barriers.
- Integrate WIA services with other appropriate community services.
- Prepare youth to meet employers’ needs.

EKCEP’s WIOA Youth programs provide access (based upon individual need) to these 14 service elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;

2. Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that include a component of academic and occupational education, including:
   - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities throughout the year;
   - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Internships and job shadowing;
- On-the-job training.

4. Occupational skill training, which may include training programs that lead to postsecondary credentials or are linked to in-demand sectors;

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

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors;

7. Supportive services;

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and subsequently, for a total a duration of at least 12 months;

9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after completion, as appropriate;

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;

11. Financial literacy education;

12. Entrepreneurial skills training;

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

EKCEP’s WIOA Youth services are designed to:

- Help high school students who face barriers to scholastic or employment success to transition from high school to employment and/or post-secondary education.

- Help Out-of-School Youth to overcome barriers and successfully transition into employment and/or post-secondary education.

Out-of-School Youth Services — Because of limited funding and the requirement under WIOA that 75% of Youth funds be spent on Out-of-School Youth, EKCEP is targeting its Out-of-School Youth services to youth ages 18 to 24 — the portion of the eligible population that is most critically
in need of rapid assistance to enter employment. To maximize the assistance available to help these youth transition into employment, EKCEP has blended its Out-of-School Youth services with its Adult and Dislocated Worker service model. Despite having different WIA eligibility requirements and performance measures, older Out-of-School Youth need basically the same workforce services as Adult and Dislocated Workers to enable them to overcome their barriers to entering and succeeding in the workforce.

In addition to the full array of career advising and planning, skills development, job-search assistance, Job Clubs, and other services that are provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers, work experience opportunities are featured prominently for Out-of-School Youth. Work experience placements introduce and acclimate participants to the world of work and to give them experience in specific career fields or with specific employers who may be hiring soon.

Although it does not exclude other options, EKCEP’s Out-of-School Youth program emphasizes real local employment opportunities and the short-term skills development that will qualify clients to take advantage of those opportunities.

**In-School Youth Services** — To ensure a focus on transition into employment and/or postsecondary education, EKCEP limits its In-School Youth services almost exclusively to seniors in high school. EKCEP has blended its In-School Youth services with its Adult and Dislocated Worker service model. Although In-School Youth receive a variety of services to help them overcome barriers to career or academic success, the program emphasizes work experience placements, the skills necessary to acquire a job, and career advising to help the youth make informed career and educational choices and define the steps needed to pursue the career or educational goals.

In addition to the full array of career advising and planning, skills development, job-search assistance, Job Clubs, and other services that are provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers, work experience opportunities are featured prominently for In-School Youth. Work experience placements introduce and acclimate participants to the world of work and to give them experience in specific career fields or with specific employers who may be hiring soon.

**Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) Grant** -- This $700,000 fund stream is a planning grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support a pilot program and study in which EKCEP is blending and coordinating its WIOA Youth Programs with educational support programs run by Berea College’s Partners for Education in order to improve outcomes for disconnected youth ages 14-24 in seven Promise Zone counties (Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry). The objective of the grant is closer collaboration between programs and services for youth who are in school, have completed school, or have dropped out of school, in hopes of leveraging all programs’ funds to produce better outcomes with fewer gaps and smoother transitions.

**The 75%/25% Fund Expenditure Requirement** -- EKCEP had anticipated for several years that a change was coming in the required percentages for expenditures on In-School Youth vs. Out-of-School Youth, and therefore has been shifting the emphasis of its WIA Youth program more heavily toward Out-of-School Youth. In the program year before WIOA passed, Youth expenditures in the EKCEP local area were more than 50% Out-of-School. Under WIOA, staff will continue to recruit job seekers in the expanded 18-to-24 age range for Out-of-School Youth services, and expenditures on In-School Youth clients will be limited and closely monitored as a part of the contractors’
budgets. Additionally, EKCEP has received a waiver of the 75%/25% requirement from the U.S. Dept. of Labor for the seven counties to be served under the P3 grant; in these counties the requirement for balancing Youth expenditures will be 50%/50%, because of the WIOA program's close collaboration with in-school services provided by the Berea College PFE programs.

E. (L) Describe local board actions to become and/or remain a high-performing local board, consistent with the factors developed by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board.

The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board's opportunity to participate in the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board's formal process and protocol for being evaluated and designated as a high-performing local workforce board has been superseded by the EKWIB's involvement in:

• Obtaining, designing, and administering two National Emergency Grants (NEG)s to try to help thousands of unemployed coal industry workers find their way back into the workforce and replace the billions of dollars that the coal industry collapse subtracted from Eastern Kentucky's economy over the past five years;
• Obtaining, designing, and administering an NEG to try to help hundreds of unemployed non-coal workers who lost jobs as a result of the economic “domino effect” that followed the coal industry collapse find their way back into the workforce and replace their wages that had been subtracted from Eastern Kentucky's economy over the past three years;
• Supporting, participating in, and managing an information-collection and workgroup for the SOAR (“Shaping Our Appalachian Region”) initiative.
• Coordinating closely with economic development, including identifying and dealing directly with emerging and expanding employers, in an attempt to seed and prepare the workforce for new economic opportunities.
• Serving as the White-House-appointed lead entity for Eastern Kentucky's designation as a TechHire region, including preparing applications for TechHire funding to support the development of IT jobs in the local area.
• Serving as the lead entity for the $20 million "Paths 2 Promise" pilot study grant from U.S. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training funds, under which EKCEP will attempt to get 2,000 SNAP recipients into employment and reduce their dependency on SNAP.
• Obtaining, designing, and administering two grants totaling $600,000 from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to help fund the expansion of EKCEP’s Teleworks USA initiative’s network of hubs, which in the last 30 months have prepared and placed over 890 Eastern Kentuckians into home-based jobs, representing an infusion of over $19.1 million in new wages into the region.
• Designing and implementing services under the $2 million POWER (Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) grant, consisting of a trio of grant-funded initiatives that focus upon economic development achieved by expanding and diversifying the region’s economy through the deployment and use of broadband technology.
• And administering and running EKCEP’s WIOA formula-funded programs.

While we believe that the EKWIB is widely perceived as high performing, we hope to better document high-performing processes consistent with the factors developed by the KWIB in the
future when this can be accomplished without sacrificing the EKWIB’s involvement in the region’s transformation as noted above.

F. (L) Describe how training services will be provided in accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), the process and criteria for issuing individual training accounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)] This should include how contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Accounts and how the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs.

In cases where training is not provided through a work-based training placement (e.g., on-the-job training work experience) or other contract for non-ITA training services, EKCEP funds training services for eligible individuals, through the use of individual training accounts (ITAs). In Eastern Kentucky, the workforce system funds trainings only in the industry sectors or occupations that the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) has identified as in-demand because they are either growing or emerging and have a high potential for sustained demand in the local area.

Client Selection Procedures for ITAs: WIOA Adults — The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that local workforce areas give priority to recipients of public assistance and low-income individuals when selecting qualified adults into training. Veterans must also be given priority.

Program operators and career advisors must provide documentation that their client-selection process for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) gives priority to these groups in the following order of priority:

Adult Program Order of Priority for ITAs

1st Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who are public assistance recipients or low-income individuals who also meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.
2nd Priority: Nonveterans who are public assistance recipients or low-income individuals who also meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.
3rd Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.
4th Priority: Non-veterans who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements. In order to adhere to this policy, career advisors will be required to keep a complete record of the qualified Adult clients who were being considered for ITAs at the time of each selection process.

NOTE: Regulations state, in accordance with 38 U.S. Code Part 4213, that “any amounts received as military pay or allowance by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits, must be disregarded when determining if a person is a ‘low-income individual’ for eligibility purposes.”

Client Selection Procedures for ITAs: WIOA Dislocated Workers — WIOA requires that local workforce areas give priority to veterans when selecting qualified dislocated workers into
training. Program operators and career advisors must provide documentation that their client selection process for ITAs gives priority to these groups in the following order of priority:

**Dislocated Worker Program Order of Priority for ITAs**

1st Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

2nd Priority: Nonveterans who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

In order to adhere to this policy, career advisors are required to keep a complete record of the qualified Dislocated Worker clients who were being considered for ITAs at the time of each selection process.

**Client Selection Procedures for ITAs: WIOA Out-of-School Youth** — WIOA requires that local workforce areas give priority to veterans when selecting qualified out-of-school youth into training. Program operators and career advisors must provide documentation that their client selection process for ITAs gives priority to these groups in the following order of priority:

**Out-of-School Youth Order of Priority for ITAs**

1st Priority: Veterans and/or eligible spouses who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

2nd Priority: Nonveterans who meet existing ITA eligibility requirements.

In order to adhere to this policy, career advisors are required to keep a complete record of the qualified Out-of-School Youth clients who were being considered for ITAs at the time of each selection process.

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**Chapter 5: Compliance/Performance/Administrative Cost**

Responses should be focused on the local area’s compliance with federal or state requirements.

A. (R) Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and Workforce Investment’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Office for the Blind (OFB) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services 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 of cooperation, collaboration and coordination. WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)

The primary agreements that define and manage interactions between the East Region's local workforce development boards (LWDBs) and the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Office for the Blind (OFB) with respect to collaborative efforts to enhance the provision of workforce services to individuals with disabilities are the one-stop center Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), along with their attendant Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs). These signed MOUs enable and provide the matrix for enhancing such services through collaborative efforts such as cross-training of staff, technical assistance, collecting and sharing of
The regional OVR manager is an active member of both the EKCEP and TENCO workforce boards and plays an integral role in ensuring career centers are accessible and user-friendly to individuals with disabilities. Representatives of OVR also provide valuable employer services through their active participation in the local employer service teams.

B. (R) Describe the establishment of the administrative cost arrangement including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate for the region.

The workforce development boards of the EKCEP and TENCO local workforce areas find no reason to pool funds for administrative costs. Such pooling would not provide any advantage or improvement in delivering services to meet the needs of the region’s employers or job seekers. Therefore, each local area will be responsible for the administration of their local funds, projects, and programs.

C. (R) Describe the establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate on and reach an agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region.

The local workforce development boards of the EKCEP and TENCO local areas agree that there would be no advantage in collectively negotiating uniform performance levels for the East Region. Such uniform performance levels would be inappropriate because of the unique characteristics of the two local areas and their differences in budget, capacity, and priorities.

Additionally, both boards believe their position is supported by the Act, which specifically assigns to each local workforce development board and its chief elected official the responsibility to negotiate performance levels for its local area in Sec. 116(c)(2).

D. (L) Identify the local grant recipient of Title 1 responsible for the disbursal of grant funds. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

The Eastern Kentucky C.E.P., Inc. Board of Directors serves as the Chief Local Elected Official for the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. local area, in accordance with the Section 107(c)(1)(C) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

As Chief Elected Official, this board receives the funds. Because this board has chosen to act as its own fiscal agent, rather than procuring an outside entity to act as fiscal agent, it is responsible for disbursal of the local area’s funds.

E. (L) Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the process for sole-sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes but is not
limited to the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker and youth services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

Per a directive issued by the Cabinet for Education and Workforce Development, Department of Workforce Investment, all Kentucky local areas are required to abide by the Commonwealth of Kentucky's procurement policies and procedures. Those policies and procedures appear in KRS 45.4, which is incorporated herein by reference.

The One-Stop Operators for the Eastern Kentucky CEP local workforce area were chosen through an open procurement process in February through June 2017. On February 27, 2017, EKCEP published a solicitation for proposals to:

- Deliver Workforce Services to Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth
- Provide Business Services to Employers
- Serve as a One-Stop Operator in Eastern Kentucky's Kentucky Career Center Network.

EKCEP chose to bid the One-Stop Operator function in combination with the Workforce Services functions because the two are closely interrelated. Bidders were invited to designate the area in which they proposed to deliver services and serve as One-Stop Operator — allowing them to propose to serve anything from a single county up to EKCEP's entire 23-county area. Once the proposals were received, staff reviewed them and presented recommendations for contract awards to both the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) and the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P., Inc. Board of Directors (serving as the CLEO as prescribed by WIOA), which awarded the contracts in June 2017.

F. (L) Describe the indicators currently used or intended by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Note: This description may include when, how and by whom the indicators are being employed; and if the measured performance and effectiveness are used in a continuous improvement process.

Measuring the performance of the Fiscal Agent for the EKCEP local area is not appropriate, because the grant recipient is the fiscal agent in the EKCEP local area. The integrity and accuracy of EKCEP's fiscal processes and procedures are established by the agency’s annual fiscal audit.

Performance information must be reported by each institution or provider that is on the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This information is stored in the Kentucky Center for Education & Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) system, where it may be accessed and used by EKCEP management to determine if these eligible training providers are meeting the required performance benchmarks to maintain their high-demand status for each ETPL program. The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (EKWIB) uses this performance data as the basis for decisions on whether to continue or discontinue using training
providers. The EKWIB’s criteria is that training that is offered to Eastern Kentucky job seekers must be in high demand by employers in the local workforce system, be in the sectors of emphasis selected by the EKWIB, and result in good jobs that pay sustainable wages upon completion of the training.

The performance of the one-stop workforce delivery system in Eastern Kentucky is measured mostly by its performance against the WIOA performance indicators, which have changed since WIA Common Measures. WIOA includes the following performance measures for all programs within the one-stop delivery system in the EKCEP local area for services to Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth:

WIOA Adult program performance indicators include:

- Employment Rate (Q2 post-exit),
- Employment Rate (Q4 post-exit),
- Median Earning,
- Credential Rate,
- Measurable Skills Gain.

WIOA Dislocated Worker program performance indicators include:

- Employment Rate (Q2 post-exit)
- Employment Rate (Q4 post-exit)
- Median Earnings
- Credential Rate
- Measurable Skills Gain.

WIOA Youth program performance indicators include:

- Placement in Employment/Training/Education (Q2 post-exit)
- Placement in Employment/Training/Education (Q4 post-exit)
- Median Earnings
- Credential Rate
- Measurable Skills Gain.

Although the WIOA law indicates that there will be performance indicators for Employer Services, the final decision has yet to be made on what those indicators will be.

We the undersigned attest that this submittal is the Regional and Local Plan for our Local Workforce
Development Area (LWDA) and certify that this plan has been prepared as required, and is in accordance with the applicable Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Transitional Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan Guidance.

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