

EASTERN KENTUCKY



CONCENTRATED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM, INC.

Revised Request for Proposals

to

**Deliver Workforce Services to Adults, Dislocated Workers,
and Youth, and Provide Business Services to Employers**

and

**Serve as a One-Stop Operator
in Eastern Kentucky's Kentucky Career Center Network**

**Services to be Performed
During the 2017-18 Program Year
(July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018)**

**Issued by
The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board**

April 3, 2017

I. Description of the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) and Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. Local Workforce Area

The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) is the workforce development strategy and policy board for the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. local workforce area, formed and certified under the provisions of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2015. The Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. local workforce area consists of these 23 counties in far Eastern Kentucky: Bell, Breathitt, Carter, Clay, Elliott, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Wolfe.

Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. (EKCEP), Inc. is a non-profit corporation that serves as the administrative entity and staff for the Eastern Kentucky WIB, executing the WIB's decisions and pursuing its objectives. However, EKCEP, Inc. does not provide Direct Workforce Services to clients of the workforce system, preferring instead to contract for the delivery of those services. Although Direct Workforce Services are provided through contractors, EKCEP staff and/or partners may provide workshops, seminars, etc. (e.g., soft skills training, computer literacy) that are aimed at actively engaging private industry in ways that support the placement efforts and other Direct Workforce Services provided by its contractors. Once those contracts have been awarded, EKCEP, Inc. interacts administratively with the contractors, providing leadership, guidance, professional development, technical assistance, monitoring, and other activities to ensure that the contractors faithfully execute the strategies and policies of the Eastern Kentucky WIB.

Primary funding for EKCEP, Inc. comes from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, through the Kentucky Cabinet for Education and Workforce Development, under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). EKCEP also provides services funded by grants from a variety of other sources, both public and private.

II. Services Solicited by This Request for Proposals (RFP)

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks proposals for organizations to perform two elements of workforce service delivery in one or more counties in the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. local workforce area. Those elements are:

- Serve as the One-Stop Operator for Eastern Kentucky's workforce services network in the counties proposed to be served by the organization, including coordinating the services of one-stop network partners at any full-service career center(s), affiliate career center(s), or other service outlet(s) in those counties.

- Deliver Direct Workforce Services to job-seeking clients and employers through the full-service career center(s), affiliate career center(s), or other service outlet(s) associated with Eastern Kentucky's workforce services network in the counties proposed to be served by the organization.

These two elements are explained in detail below (see Section II-A and Section II-B).

Because the functions of the One-Stop Operator are closely interconnected with the provision of Direct Workforce Services, and because the funding available to support the functions of the One-Stop Operator is very limited, EKCEP has chosen to accept proposals only from agencies that are able and willing to perform both functions. (The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act [WIOA] would allow EKCEP to perform the functions of the One-Stop Operator, but EKCEP prefers to contract with a Direct Workforce Services provider for these functions.)

Upon initial selection of a successful proposal, EKCEP and the EKCEP WIB retain the right to negotiate with the successful organization to modify the proposal and determine the terms of the contract before the award becomes final. If such negotiations fail to produce an agreement, EKCEP and the EKCEP WIB reserve the right to retract their approval of that proposal and select another proposal.

The duration of the contract awarded on the basis of this RFP will be one year (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018). However, based on successful performance, the EKCEP WIB may **choose to** renew the contract **annually for up to three additional years**.

A. One-Stop Operator

WIOA establishes the position of One-Stop Operator (Section 121[D]) and allows local workforce areas a great deal of latitude in defining the specific functions of this position. In the Eastern Kentucky local workforce area, the functions of the One-Stop Operator are to:

- Coordinate the delivery of services of participating one-stop partners and service providers in the county or counties that the One-Stop Operator serves. (In addition to the Direct Workforce Services for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth funded under Title I-B of WIOA and awarded under this RFP, the one-stop partners in any county include, but are not limited to, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Career and Technical Education, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Services, and employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act.) This coordination of services may involve multiple offices and/or service outlets, including a certified full-service career center or affiliate career center, if such exist within the One-Stop Operator's service area.

- Foster 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, including adults, dislocated workers, youth (both in-school and out-of-school), and employers. The One-Stop Operator must convene and lead regularly scheduled meetings (e.g., monthly, quarterly) of the one-stop partners to build this collaborative culture, improve service delivery, and evaluate progress toward shared goals.
- Serve 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.
- Provide support, assistance, and resolution to all staff in response to collaboration issues, facilities needs, or other problems.
- Provide direction for the team leads of the partners and function-based groups.
- Ensure that comprehensive cross-training and development plans are established for the staff of partners present in the area to be served.
- Measure customer satisfaction with the workforce delivery system in your service area.
- Lead the establishment of performance goals for the workforce services network in your area, and track and evaluate performance in pursuit of those goals.

If and when appropriate, the One-Stop Operator will also be required to participate in the Kentucky Career Center certification process for any locations within its counties **that choose to apply for certification as a full-service career center or affiliate career center.**

Additionally, if the Governor chooses to so require, the one-stop operator must also collect specific performance information from providers of on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, and transitional employment; and use the information to determine whether the providers meet the performance criteria required by the Governor.

In coordinating local services, the one-stop operator must not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services.

EKCEP will prefer to contract with an entity that is knowledgeable about workforce development services, their objectives, and the regulations that govern them, including:

- Career services (described in WIOA Section 134(c)(2)).
- Training services (described in WIOA Section 134(c)(3)).
- Employment and training activities carried out under WIOA Section 134(d), if any.
- Programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, postsecondary education, Unemployment Insurance, and Veterans Services.
- Data, labor market information, and analysis from Wagner-Peyser (described in Section 15(a) of the Wagner-Peyser Act).
- Labor exchange services authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

Entities that apply should possess and have demonstrated the following characteristics:

- Competent management skills.
- Commitment to excellent customer service.
- Cooperative culture among management and staff.
- Commitment to the integrated service delivery model.
- Willingness to partner with others.
- Flexibility and ability to adapt to change.

An entity that applies to be a One-Stop Operator in the EKCEP service area must disclose in its application any potential conflicts of interest that could arise from its relationship(s) with particular training service providers or other service providers, including, but not limited to, other Direct Workforce Services providers.

The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board will oversee and evaluate the performance of the entity or entities selected as the one-stop operator(s) for the local area.

B. Direct Workforce Services

Direct Workforce Services are workforce development services that help eligible clients prepare for, obtain, and succeed in self-sustaining employment, and help area employers find, train, and hire needed workers. Eligible individual clients include Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth (both In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth) who qualify for services under a variety of programs and funding streams administered by EKCEP. These funding sources may include:

the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); a variety of National Emergency Grants (NEGs) from the U.S. Department of Labor; grants from other U.S. federal departments; grant partnerships with the Commonwealth of Kentucky; private foundation and/or trust grants; and other public or private funds. By submitting a proposal, the applicant assures the EKWIB that: the applicant will provide appropriate Direct Workforce Services in the EKCEP area under any of EKCEP's current or future funding sources, as requested; and the applicant will work cooperatively and effectively with any entities that partner with EKCEP in grants that include the region the applicant proposes to serve.

Direct Workforce Services include:

1. **Career-Advisor-Based Workforce Services** — EKCEP's service model for eastern Kentucky is anchored by the career advisors employed by the contractors and their direct interaction with clients via face-to-face meetings, video conferencing, phone conversation, or other technology assisted conversations. Career-advisor-based services are a client-centered approach, the goal of which is to facilitate the client's preparation and strategic planning for his/her career using whatever workforce development services and activities are needed. Career advisors provide case management and job and career counseling throughout the client's active engagement of services, including after the client obtains a job.

In addition to working with clients already enrolled in Direct Workforce Services, career advisors are also responsible for conducting outreach, promoting workforce services and recruiting new clients within their communities. Career advisors must work closely with workforce partner agencies, educational institutions, other community organizations, and local governments to ensure that all potential clients are aware of the workforce services available. Under the contract to provide Direct Workforce Services, entities will be required to submit a written plan detailing the specific strategies and activities their career advisors will use in outreach to specifically targeted populations of potential clients. EKCEP will provide guidance for this plan to successful bidders.

As a part of their involvement with career opportunities and alternatives for their clients, career advisors must communicate with their local employer services representatives and maintain an awareness of local and regional employers and their workforce needs.

For a much more detailed explanation of EKCEP's service model for career-advisor-based services, see the excerpt from the EKCEP Client Policies Manual in Appendix 4. A list of other resources providing information about WIOA and workforce priorities is included in Appendix 3.

2. **Employer Services** — The successful bidder will be required to have staff designated to reach out to employers within their service counties, in order to determine employers' workforce needs, communicate those needs to the career advisors (and their job-seeking clients), and work collaboratively with career advisors, community leaders, educational institutions, local partners, and EKCEP's industry liaisons to identify and develop action plans to meet local employers' needs.

To provide these Direct Workforce Services, successful bidders will need to provide the following components:

1. **Required Staff** — The staff required to deliver Direct Workforce Services includes:
 - **Career Advisors** — The core position in the EKCEP Service Model is the career advisor. These staff will be the primary contact for job-seeking clients and will provide the career advising and case management services described in this request for proposals. Career advisors may work on EKCEP-provided workforce programs supported by a variety of funding sources.

Career advisors are the central and most important component of the workforce development network. Career advisors work with job-seeking clients to understand their circumstances, aptitudes, skills, interests, barriers, and career objectives, and then use all of this information to place or refer those clients into the services that will carry them to their career objective: an appropriate and self-sustaining job. Career advisors will connect clients with many of these services through knowledgeable referrals to partner agencies within the workforce development network. Even after referring clients to other service providers, career advisors are expected to stay in close touch with their clients and consistently be a part of each client's decision-making and problem solving.

A successful career advisor will build effective, trust-based relationships with clients that result in quality job placements, while both maintaining current knowledge of the labor market and demand occupations in their service area and nurturing ongoing, communicative partnerships with other entities within workforce development, training, and education. These attributes will become the career advisor's "product" that he/she uses in personal outreach efforts to recruit new clients.

EKCEP's job description for the position of career advisor is included in Appendix 2. This description is required to be adopted by all successful bidders and applied to any career advisor that provides services under contract with EKCEP.

- **Job Club Facilitators** — The successful bidder will need to designate one or more staff members as Job Club facilitators who will be responsible for the execution of Job Clubs within their service area. Job Club facilitators may also be career advisors with caseloads. (Other career advisors must be available to assist the Job Club facilitator and Job Club participants.) The Job Club facilitator will be responsible for publicizing the local Job Club, recruiting attendees, arranging for employer engagement and participation, and facilitating the actual Job Club meetings. Job Clubs will be conducted according to the curriculum and policies established by EKCEP, but adapted to local needs with the involvement of employers and other community partners.

- **Employer Services Representatives** — The successful bidder will need to designate staff to specialize in reaching out to employers within their service counties, in order to determine employers' workforce needs and communicate them to the career advisors and their job-seeking clients. The contractor's employer services representatives will collaborate with career advisors, community leaders, educational institutions, local partners, and EKCEP's industry liaisons to identify and develop action plans to meet local employers' needs. As a part of their collaboration with workforce system partners, the contractors' employer services representatives will be required to be a member of the appropriate EKCEP Regional Employer Services Team and to participate in team activities.

In counties where the population and economy do not justify assigning a staff person to perform full time as an employer services representative, a contractor may designate a staff person to serve as both a career advisor and employer services representative for that county. However, this designation must be made thoughtfully and with an understanding of EKCEP's commitment to employer services as a crucial element of its service model.

- **Workforce Management** — The successful bidder will need to employ and designate sufficient and qualified staff to manage, supervise, and oversee the activities and functions of the career advisors, employer services representatives, Job Club facilitators, and other staff who provide the Direct Workforce Services contracted for under this request for proposals. Management and supervision of these staff and services will include: providing strategic guidance and planning for staff; ensuring that performance and productivity goals are met; monitoring the quality of services provided; ensuring that proper records are kept; ensuring that EKCEP policies, federal regulations, and other relevant rules are adhered to; managing budgets; initiating and overseeing successful community outreach and education; and communicating and collaborating with

EKCEP to ensure that the best possible results are achieved for their service area.

- **Other Required Staff** — The successful bidder will need to provide adequate staff to perform any program support services that are not provided by career advisors, employer services representatives, Job Club facilitators, or workforce management, but are necessary to effectively deliver Direct Workforce Services and meet EKCEP policy requirements. These services may include: client intake, eligibility, enrollment, tracking, management of client information, etc.

EKCEP will provide technical assistance and training for any or all of these staff positions and activities to the successful bidders and their staff prior to contract execution (if needed) and on an ongoing basis throughout the contract, as needed. The staff of the successful bidder will be required to participate in these trainings and technical assistance activities. In some cases bidder staff may be required to achieve specific levels of competencies prior to performing some aspects of these jobs.

2. **Fiscal Services** — Organizations submitting proposals must be able to provide the fiscal services necessary to support the delivery of career-advisor-based workforce services. Fiscal services may include payments to clients or to vendors on behalf of clients for services such as training, payment of staff, and other necessary expenditures, using the accounting and bookkeeping procedures required to meet the appropriate federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars and funding-source regulations. EKCEP will provide the successful bidder with funding for direct training (such as tuition and On-the-Job Training wages) and intensive services (such as work experience wages) as needed, based on client activity and employer needs within the counties being served.
3. **Physical Facilities** — Organizations submitting proposals are expected to have or to be able to acquire suitable physical facilities from which to provide workforce services. Suitable physical facilities must include the actual offices and meeting room space needed for the delivery of career advisor services and appropriate client activities. The numbers and locations of these physical facilities must be adequate to provide reasonable convenience and accessibility to workforce services for residents throughout the county or counties the applicant proposes to serve. However, this procurement does not require that organizations have or establish a physical facility in every county to be served.

All facilities to be used in providing workforce services under this procurement within the EKCEP local workforce area must comply with all requirements for handicapped accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The physical facilities from which the workforce services are provided may include:

- An applicant-hosted Full-Service Career Center.*
- A partner-hosted Full-Service Career Center.*
- An applicant-hosted Affiliate Career Center.**
- A partner-hosted Affiliate Career Center.**
- An applicant-hosted Workforce Services Office*** associated with Eastern Kentucky's career center network.

* **Full-Service Career Center** — *A Full-Service Career Center is a workforce center that has been so designated by the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) after meeting criteria established by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Eastern Kentucky WIB, and completing the application and certification process. As of the date of this RFP, there is only one Full-Service Career Center in the EKCEP local area: the Kentucky Career Center JobSight at 412 Roy Campbell Drive, Hazard, KY.*

** **Affiliate Career Center** — *An Affiliate Career Center can be any location where two or more of the five core partner agencies (Office of Employment and Training, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Office for the Blind, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Title IB, and Adult Education) in the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) network in eastern Kentucky provide services and maintain a regular schedule during operating hours.*

*** **Workforce Services Office** — *Under this procurement, a Workforce Services Office is any location that provides the services of a partner agency associated with the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) network in eastern Kentucky and collaborates with other non-located KCC network agencies.*

5. Funding for Contractors' Activities — EKCEP will fund contractors' activities under three general categories:

- **Infrastructure** — This category includes the costs of providing the fiscal services and physical facilities described above in sections II.A.2 "Fiscal Services," and II.A.3 "Physical Facilities" (and possibly including some of the "Other Staff" mentioned in the last item in section II.A.1 "Required Staff"). These may be generally characterized as "overhead" costs, including the kinds of costs that comprise an indirect rate. Proposals must include a detailed budget statement itemizing these costs for the

full year. In evaluating infrastructure budgets proposed, EKCEP will consider the population of the service area and the potential for return on investment as factors in determining the amount to be funded within each contract awarded.

- **Staff Providing Direct Services to Job-Seeking Clients or Employers** — This category includes the costs of providing the career advisors, employer services representatives, Job Club facilitators, and workforce management described above in section II.A.1 “Required Staff.” Proposals must include a detailed budget statement itemizing these staff costs for the full year. In evaluating staff budgets proposed, EKCEP will consider the population of the service area and the potential for return on investment as factors in determining the number of staff to be funded within each contract awarded
- **Client Services** — This category includes the funds to support client services allowed by local policy (such as paid work experience, on-the-job training, tuition, supportive services, etc.). The total of these funds will **not** be a part of the contract. EKCEP will provide these funds to the contractor throughout the year, based upon caseload, actual services and activities, employer needs within the region, and funding availability.

6. **Outcomes and Performance Requirements** — EKCEP’s performance is measured against the goals, objectives, and standards attached to each funding stream that it administers. The EKCEP service model is designed to provide activities and services that will achieve these goals and objectives, and meet these standards. The overarching objectives of all of EKCEP’s programs are to prepare and place the region’s workers in jobs that provide a wage that makes them self-sufficient, and to build the region’s economy by ensuring that the region’s employers — whether existing or new — are able to hire qualified workers that help their businesses succeed.

Similarly, the performance of successful responders to this RFP will be measured against the goals, objectives, and performance standards attached to each funding stream that supports client services and activities that they will deliver under the contract. The specific levels of performance that will be deemed as successful will be discussed and identified during the contract negotiations that precede the final contract awards.

The performance measures for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs supported by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds can be found in Sections 116(2)(A)(i) and (iii) of the WIOA. The performance measures for the Youth programs supported by WIOA can be found in Sections 116(2)(A)(ii) and (iii) of the WIOA. The full text of the Workforce

Innovation and Opportunity Act is available online at:
<http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/docs/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

As mandated by WIOA, EKCEP annually negotiates its acceptable levels of performance against these measures. Contractors will be expected to meet or exceed these negotiated levels of performance.

- 7. Special Circumstances in the Promise Zone** — Seven counties within the EKCEP local workforce area (and part of one county outside of EKCEP's service area) were designated as a Promise Zone on January 7, 2014, by President Barack Obama. (The EKCEP counties are Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, and Perry. The non-EKCEP area included is a portion of Whitley County.) This designation as the first and, at that time only, rural Promise Zone in the nation gives the region preference in obtaining grant funds under several departments, and helps the communities involved engage in a collaborative and comprehensive effort to improve the overall quality of life in the region. Responders to this procurement who seek to provide workforce services in any of EKCEP's Promise Zone counties should be aware of some special initiatives planned for or underway in these counties. Among these are:

Promise Zone Performance Partnership Pilot (PZP3) — This is a pilot grant that funds planning and interaction between WIOA Youth workforce programs and several educational initiatives to increase their collaboration, communication, and collective impact on youth ages 14-24 in the Promise Zone counties. Under this grant, WIOA services will work closely with and, in some cases may even combine with, educational programs that serve the same at-risk youth population. EKCEP is the grant recipient for this program, and is working closely with Berea College's Partners for Education (PFE) nonprofit, which currently oversees the educational programs. For the three year duration of the PZP3 grant, any bidder that receives EKCEP's contract(s) to provide WIOA Youth services in the Promise Zone counties will be funded by EKCEP but must also agree to collaborate with and even take direction and supervision from PFE, which will fill the role of administrator and program coordinator for PZP3. Giving PFE a role in directing how youth workforce services are provided and coordinated with youth educational services gives the region an opportunity to improve outcomes for disconnected young people by increasing efficiency and impact.

"Paths 2 Promise" — This grant is a pilot project of the Employment & Training section of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). The grant's purpose is to reduce dependency on SNAP benefits and increase the work requirements and work effort required for able-bodied SNAP recipients. The grant recipient is the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), Department

for Community-Based Services (DCBS), but EKCEP is the “backbone agency” in the Promise Zone counties. This ambitious pilot program aims to study outcomes for 2,000 SNAP recipients who receive some additional services (including a collaborative effort toward collective-impact among WIOA, DCBS, community colleges, and others) and compare their outcomes to the results for 2,000 SNAP recipients who received less focused services — or no services at all. This grant program will require extra collaboration, extra record keeping, and delivery of some additional services on the part of the bidder(s) who receive EKCEP’s contracts to deliver workforce services in the Promise Zone counties.

Other Grant Programs— The preferential status conferred by the Promise Zone designation makes it likely that EKCEP or its partners in education, training, and workforce services will acquire other grants in the near future. It will be a condition of EKCEP’s contracts that the winning bidders agree to collaborate with, participate in, and deliver workforce services under any additional grants that come into the Promise Zone during the term of the contract.

III. General Procurement Terms and Information

A. Procurement Term

The initial period of contract performance will be July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Funding will be provided on an annual basis. EKCEP, Inc. reserves the option to extend this contract for one additional year, based on the availability of funds, contract performance, and the workforce needs of EKCEP and the region.

EKCEP reserves the option to use this procurement to add or increase workforce services within the region if additional funding for related workforce services becomes available and it is in the best interest of the region and EKCEP to do so.

B. Procurement Timeline

This RFP will be available from the EKCEP, Inc. website at www.ekcep.org, beginning February 27, 2017. The timetable for this procurement process is:

- RFP Release: February 27, 2017.
- Bidder's Conference: March 14, 2017.
- **Revised RFP Release: April 3, 2017.**
- Proposals Due: April 17, 2017.
- Evaluation of Proposals: April 17, 2017 — April 28, 2017.
- Recommendations and Negotiation of Contracts: April 28 — June 9, 2017.
- Staff Recommendation of Contracts: June 9, 2017
- WIB Approval of Contracts: June 15 2017.
- Contract Implementation: July 1, 2017.

C. Bidders Conference

An optional bidders conference will be held in Hazard at 1:30 p.m. on March 14, 2017. The conference will be held in the EKCEP conference room located within the Kentucky Career Center JobSight, 412 Roy Campbell Drive, Hazard, KY. This bidders conference will address questions about both roles sought by the RFP: One-Stop Operator and Direct Workforce Services Provider. Bidders are not required to attend the conference and failure to attend will not affect the score of a bidder's proposal.

Questions and answers from the bidders conference that provide significant clarification of the intent of the RFP, the services requested by the RFP, or other factors affecting proposals will be posted on the EKCEP website at

EKCEP.org. Questions from prospective bidders may be submitted at any time before the due date to: rfp@EKCEP.org. Questions and answer that provide significant clarification of the intent of the RFP, the services requested by the RFP, or other factors affecting proposals will be posted on the EKCEP website at www.ekcep.org/rfp.

D. Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals

Each proposal will be evaluated by EKCEP's Review Team based upon the bidder's:

- Responsiveness to the information requested and format prescribed in this RFP.
- Demonstrated ability to provide the fiscal and administrative capacity to support EKCEP's service delivery model.
- Cost reasonableness.
- Innovation and creativity in developing strategies to address the challenges identified in the narrative questions.
- Creativity and eagerness to reach out to new customers and partners for workforce development services.
- Demonstrated capacity to work proactively and effectively within the communities they serve, including consideration for a history of successful collaboration and outreach with partner agencies and employers.
- Demonstrated understanding of the economic and workforce needs of the community.

Full or partial points will be awarded for the response to each narrative question according to the amounts noted in Section IV.B.3, below.

The budgets provided in response to Section IV.B.4 below will also be evaluated by the Review Team, with an emphasis on appropriate proportion of line items in relation to the services and initiatives identified in the proposal's narrative. Proposed budgets are not final and may be adjusted through negotiation with the bidder after a proposal is conditionally approved by the Review Team.

E. Workforce Innovation Board Action

EKCEP, Inc. staff will make recommendations for which proposals to accept to the Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (WIB). The final selection of awardees will be made by the WIB.

F. Right to Cancel and Negotiate

EKCEP, Inc. reserves the right to delay, amend, reissue, or cancel all or any part of this RFP at any time without prior notice.

This RFP does not commit EKCEP to accept any proposal and EKCEP will not be responsible for any costs incurred by a bidder in the preparation of responses to this RFP.

EKCEP reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in any proposal, and to award contracts in whole or in part as is deemed to be in the best interest of EKCEP, Inc. EKCEP, Inc. reserves the right to negotiate with any bidder after proposals are reviewed.

EKCEP, Inc. reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of the contract with successful bidders.

IV. Proposal Submission Instructions and Content Requirements

A. Submission Instructions

EKCEP, Inc. must receive proposals no later than April 14, 2017 COB. Bidders must submit three hard copies and one electronic copy of their proposal. The hard copies should be sent to:

EKCEP, Inc.
Attn: Sharon Poff
412 Roy Campbell Drive, Suite 100
Hazard, Kentucky 41701

The electronic copy should be emailed to: RFP@EKCEP.org

B. Content Requirements

The proposal should consist of the following information in this prescribed order. (Number and letter each section of your answer appropriately.):

1. Proposal Cover and Affirmations Form

Complete the Proposal Cover and Affirmations Form (see Appendix 1)

2. Executive Summary

Give a brief description of the bidding organization's mission and history. Include how the EKCEP, Inc. service model and goals for the workforce

system in Eastern Kentucky fit with the organization's mission. (This summary **may not exceed 1 page**, single-spaced.)

3. Narrative

Answer all the questions (i through **xxvi**) in Sections 3-A and 3-B below.

3-A. Narrative — Questions Regarding Provision of One-Stop Operator Services (**110** total points possible)

Please keep your answers under **750** words per question.

- i. Provide a description and brief history of your organization, including the organization's mission and vision for its service region. (10 points)
- ii. Identify the county (or counties) in which you propose to serve as One-Stop Operator, and the specific service location(s) (Full-Service Career Center[s], Affiliate Career Center[s], and/or Workforce Services Office[s]) where you would serve. (5 points)
- iii. Are you currently the leasee, owner, or tenant of a facility or facilities in the counties where you would serve as One-Stop Operator? If so, identify those facilities; if not, explain your plan for acquiring or otherwise establishing such facilities. (Include each of the counties identified in question ii above.) (5 points)
- iv. Describe your organization's experience managing multi-agency workforce centers or other multi-agency collaborative ventures. (15 points)
- v. Describe your commitment to an integrated service delivery model and your plan for integrating the services of all required workforce partners and other partners in the counties you would serve. (15 points)
- vi. Explain the depth of your organization's knowledge and experience with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and/or its predecessor, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). (15 points)
- vii. Explain how your organization will measure customer satisfaction with the workforce delivery system in your service area. (10 points)

- viii. Describe how your organization will track and evaluate performance goals for the workforce services network. (5 points)
- ix. Describe any technological needs (e.g., computers, software, equipment, etc.), if any, that must be met in order for your organization to begin functioning as a One-Stop Operator. (5 points)
- x. Describe how your organization will perform the responsibilities described in Section II-A of this RPF, including: (a) how they will ensure all partner agencies are collaborating and cooperating in the delivery of comprehensive workforce services; (b) how your organization will train One-Stop Operator staff; (c) how you will foster cross-training for the staff of partner programs. (15 points)
- xi. Describe your organization's customer service experience and your process for handling complaints and/or concerns from customers. (10 points)

3-B. Narrative — Questions Regarding Provision of Direct Workforce Services (200 total points possible)

Please keep your answers under 750 words per question.

- xii. List the county (or counties) where you propose to provide Direct Workforce Services and describe the needs of job seekers in that area. (15 points)
- xiii. Describe how the career advising services your organization will provide will produce a lasting impact on the needs of the job seekers in your service area. (15 points)
- xiv. Describe the workforce needs of the employers in your service area. (15 points)
- xv. Describe how the employer services your organization will provide will produce a lasting impact on the needs of the employers in your service area. (15 points)
- xvi. Describe how the Direct Workforce Services you will provide through this contract will work collaboratively with education and economic development to support the economic development goals of the community. (15 points)

- xvii. Describe the ways in which your organization will leverage its connections to community resources and local organizations to comprehensively serve job seekers and employers. (15 points)
- xviii. Describe the strategies your organization will implement that will result in a greater level of outreach to the unemployed and underemployed? (15 points)
- xix. Describe the strategies your organization will implement that will provide innovative solutions to employers' workforce concerns. (15 points)
- xx. Describe the strategies your organization will implement to support EKCEP's efforts to promote home-based job opportunities working for remote employers (i.e., telework). (15 points)
- xxi. Describe your plans to recruit and serve Out-of-School Youth, including collaborating with schools and other community organizations to identify potential Out-of-School Youth clients. (15 points)
- xxii. Providing training in high-demand sectors and emerging careers is a priority of the Eastern Kentucky WIB, which will target its training funds to support training in these priority sectors and support the development of career pathways in these sectors. Describe how your Direct Workforce Services will identify and recruit the best candidates for these trainings, including those who are advancing within career pathways. (15 points)

NOTE: Demand sectors in Eastern Kentucky include:
healthcare (which includes health information management, medical coding, registered nursing, etc.);
skilled trades; manufacturing; energy (which includes electrical lineman, fiber optic linemen, solar, etc.); and **business services** (which includes IT, computer coding, programming, cyber security, telework for remote employers, accounting, bookkeeping, etc.).

- xxiii. Explain your organization's plans for reaching out to and recruiting new clients for Direct Workforce Services in the counties you propose to serve. Discuss the media and other specific message vehicles and activities you will use, as well as

the expertise of the specific staff members who will be responsible for initiating and following through on these activities. Please include any specific and innovative outreach opportunities that exist in your community. (15 points)

- xxiv. Provide a description of each service location where your organization will house career advisors and provide services to clients. Include a list of all other services provided from this location. (5 points)
- xxv. Identify the number of career advisors to be stationed at each location and list their qualifications and credentials. Include all credentials that specifically address the skills and competencies needed to perform the work of a career advisor. (10 points)
- xxvi. Please provide a description of any non-EKCEP-funded staff in each of your locations who will be leveraged to provide support to workforce development activities. (5 points)

4. Budget

Please answer the questions below:

- A. Provide a detailed line item budget of expenses for the infrastructure (i.e., facilities, equipment, accounting, maintenance etc.) required to deliver **Direct Workforce Services** for one year (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018) for each location where services will be provided.
- B. Provide a detailed budget for **staff** (i.e., salaries, fringe benefits, travel) to deliver **Direct Workforce Services** for one year (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018).
- C. Provide a budget for the delivery of **One-Stop Operator Services** for one year (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018), in a total amount not to exceed \$3,500 per county you intend to serve.

5. Organizational Documentation

To be considered, bidders must also submit the following organizational documentation:

- An organizational chart covering all positions
- Two (2) years of audited financial history.
- A report on the status of any costs that have been disallowed by any state and/or federal agency within the past three (3) years.

Failure to submit this documentation will disqualify a proposing organization from consideration.

C. Supporting Documentation

Bidders recommended for a contract will be required to submit supporting documentation for each budget line item during contract negotiation. Applicable support documentation may include:

- Current lease agreements
- Personnel policies
- A copy of your current federally approved Indirect Cost Rate approval letter.

NOTE: Please **do not** submit these items with your initial proposal. This documentation will be examined **only** for bidders whose proposal is recommended for a contract.

V. Appendices

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APPENDIX 1

Proposal Cover and Affirmations Form

Please copy, complete, and sign the cover and affirmations form that appears on the following page.

Use the completed form as the first page of your proposal.

**Proposal to Deliver Workforce Services to Adults, Dislocated Workers,
and Youth, and Provide Business Services to Employers
and
Serve as a One-Stop Operator in the Kentucky Career Center Network
in the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. Local Workforce Area**

During Program Year 2017-18 (July 1, 2017—June 30, 2018)

Full Name of Proposing Organization:			
Full Mailing Address (Street, City, State, ZIP):			
Organization Type (non-profit, for-profit, LLC, etc.):	DUNS Number:	Year Established:	Phone Numbers (include area code):
Contact Persons			
Name:		Title:	
-----		-----	
-----		-----	
-----		-----	
<p><u>AFFIRMATIONS:</u> The person signing below affirms that he/she is authorized to submit this proposal on behalf of the proposing entity. The person signing below further affirms that the proposing entity is capable of performing the services (including fiscal management and information tracking and reporting) as described in the attached proposal and agrees to EKCEP Workforce Innovation Board’s terms of service as described in the Request for Proposals to which this proposal responds.</p>			
Signature:			Date:
Printed Name:		Title:	

APPENDIX 2

Career Advisor Job Description

General Job Description:

The career advisor is the central and most important position to the success of workforce development services. Career advisors work with job-seeking clients individually to understand their circumstances, aptitudes, skills, interests, barriers, and career objectives, and then use this information to place or refer those clients into the services that will carry them to their career objective: an appropriate and self-sustaining job.

Career advisors connect clients with many workforce and training services through knowledgeable referrals to partner agencies within the workforce development network. After referring clients to these other service providers, career advisors stay in close touch with their clients, encouraging them, keeping them on their chosen career path, and contributing to the client's decision making and problem solving.

A successful career advisor will build effective, trust-based relationships with clients that result in quality job placements. To do this, the career advisor must maintain a current knowledge of the labor market and in-demand occupations in their service area and nurture ongoing partnerships with other entities within workforce development, training, and education. Trustworthiness, knowledge, and collaborative networking skills are the attributes that become the career advisor's "product" and "brand," that he/she can use to reach out to recruit new clients, which is an important part of a career advisor's duties.

Career Advisor Roles:

To accomplish the functions identified above, the career advisor must fill several different roles, including:

- Career coach.
- Mentor and trainer.
- Strategist and planner
- Client advocate
- Problem solver
- Student of labor market trends and needs
- Student of training and education alternatives
- Liaison to community resources.
- Networker.

- Recruiter.
- Advocate and promoter for the workforce system.
- Creative thinker.

Personal Characteristics:

A successful Career Advisor must have the following characteristics:

- Positive attitude.
- Results oriented.
- Sincere personal interest in the success of clients.
- Ethical, fair, and honest conduct.
- Focus on customer service.
- Belief in the value of workforce services.

Tasks and Duties:

The tasks and duties required of a Career Advisor will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interview clients to gather information (e.g., previous work history, educational, skills, etc.) to identify skills, interests, and training needs, and to help set career goals.
- Administer or arrange for assessments to identify each client's educational level, skill levels, and training needs.
- Administer or arrange for assessments to help each client identify work preferences and interests.
- Provide career exploration activities for clients, based on each client's assessment results and work preferences.
- Share labor market information with clients.
- Use all the information and assessment results to help each client develop a career action plan that includes specific, chronological action steps that lead to his/her selected career.
- Ensure each client is ready for job search activities and employment by referring him/her to appropriate workshops (e.g., resume writing, interviewing tips, portfolio development, how to research an employer).
- Link qualified clients to job opportunities in their local area and follow up with clients about their results.
- Assist with and participate in Job Club, including referring appropriate clients to Job Club and monitoring their progress in Job Club.

- Guide each client through options and alternatives for each action step in the career action plan leading to the client's career goal. This includes exploring all alternatives for financing and support services.
- Provide ongoing case management to ensure that the client is following the steps in his/her career action plan.
- Serve as a coach, mentor, consultant, and motivator to help clients through challenges that arise while pursuing the career action plan.
- Meet regularly with Employer Services Representatives to stay abreast of local and regional job opportunities, employer needs, and hiring trends.
- Discuss opportunities, challenging situations, creative solutions, and best practices with colleagues—both fellow WIOA Career Advisors and employees of workforce partner agencies—including participating in the State's Team-Based Case Management initiative.
- Brief employees of workforce partner agencies on WIOA services and initiatives.
- Attend briefings by workforce partner agencies on their services and initiatives.
- Initiate collaborative solutions with workforce partner agencies for clients of WIOA and clients of their agencies.
- Stay current on and understand the requirements contained in the WIOA law, the federal WIOA regulations, and EKCEP policies.
- Attend special trainings and technical assistance sessions provided by EKCEP.
- Maintain accurate client records in a timely fashion.
- Publicize the career advising and workforce services provided.
- Use innovative and effective methods to recruit new clients.

APPENDIX 3

REFERENCES

EKCEP: www.ekcep.org
www.jobsight.org

WIOA Overview: <http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/Overview.cfm>

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):
<http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/docs/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

WIOA Rules - https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/Final_Rules_Resources.cfm
This site also includes links to many other resources regarding WIOA operation and implementation, including reference guides, overview documents, and frequently asked questions.

WIOA Fact Sheet: One-Stop Career Centers:
http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/Docs/WIOA_OneStop_FactSheet.pdf

Training and Employment Guidance Letters: <https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/>

Kentucky Career Center (KCC) website: <http://kcc.ky.gov/>

KCC Certification – FAQ:
<http://www.kwib.ky.gov/ImplementationStatus/careercentercertification/CCCFAQ102014.pdf>

KCC Certification Information: <http://www.kwib.ky.gov/careercentercertification.htm>

KCC Partner for Success: <http://www.kwib.ky.gov/partnersuccess.htm>

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board – WORKSmart Kentucky Strategic Plan:
<http://www.kwib.ky.gov/documents/WORKSmart2013.pdf>

Kentucky Skills Network – (Business Services):
<http://www.thinkkentucky.com/workforce/>

Kentucky State Plan 2012 – 2017:
<http://kwib.ky.gov/documents/UNIFIEDSTATEPLAN0113.pdf>

APPENDIX 4

Excerpt from EKCEP's Client Policies Manual

The excerpt below provides an overview of EKCEP's philosophy of service and its service delivery model, including the central and crucial role that career advisors perform in the delivery of Direct Workforce Services. This passage is taken from the WIA version of EKCEP's Client Policies Manual. Although this manual will be revised as the transition to WIOA is completed, the role and importance of the career advisor to EKCEP's service delivery model is not expected to change. In the meantime, this remains EKCEP's service model and philosophy of service.

From the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. Client Policies Manual:

I. Overview and Background Information

EKCEP and 87 other Concentrated Employment Programs (CEPs) nationwide were formed in 1968 under federal Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) and the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) to meet the job training needs of people in areas of high unemployment and acute poverty. For more than 40 years, EKCEP has served 23 mountain counties in eastern Kentucky with exemplary training, employment, and workforce development programs to meet the region's changing needs.

Stated succinctly, EKCEP sees its mission as "Jobs for people, and people for jobs." EKCEP accomplishes this objective through a solutions-based approach in which it constantly evaluates the needs of eastern Kentucky's job seekers and employers and redesigns and adapts its services to meet those needs. EKCEP is committed to using the full flexibility provided by WIA to develop and customize services to best meet the specific and unique needs of eastern Kentucky's workers and businesses.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is the nation's primary workforce development legislation. The primary purpose of WIA is "... to improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation" and ..." help Americans access the tools they need to manage their careers through information and high quality services, and to help U.S. companies find skilled workers." For more information about WIA go to <http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce> or <http://www.doleta.gov/regs/statutes>

EKCEP's responsibilities as administrator for the Workforce Investment Board and One Stop Operator for the EKCEP region include the development and implementation of policies and procedures for the workforce system that are responsive to the needs of job seekers, low wage workers, and the employer community in an environment that is coordinated with economic development and promotes private sector involvement in the workforce system. This includes the continuous improvement of an effective one-stop system that is relevant to both sides of the workforce equation – jobseekers and employers.

In this role EKCEP has involved the workforce community and the employer community to create an ever-growing agile delivery system that is responsive and receptive to change. Our world today demands innovation, problem solving, and a fluid and nimble workforce system that involves the entire community – every job seeker – and every employer possible. Toward that end EKCEP is creating a service model that is more community centered, concentrated upon problem solving, and strategic partnerships between the public and private sectors within our region.

Service Model

The service model for the workforce development system defined by Eastern Kentucky C.E.P., Inc. (EKCEP) is based on the expectation that everything the workforce system does should be directed toward its two ultimate objectives:

- To provide qualified workers for quality jobs.
- To provide quality jobs for qualified workers.

In pursuing these objectives, the workforce development system serves primarily two customers:

- Job seekers.
- Employers.

These customers are served by a broad array of services and combinations of services to produce the two ultimate objectives.

EKCEP's service model focuses on two sets of parallel relationships:

- The relationship of career advisors with their clients. Throughout eastern Kentucky the workforce development professionals in each community provide multiple places where unemployed or under-employed job seekers can get help in their quest for a job. This help may take several forms, ranging from simple assistance with the job search process to more advanced career planning, skill development, and training that are directly linked to the needs

of local employers. This relationship is explained in detail in “Section B., Service Model for Job-Seeking Clients,” below.

- The relationship of Business Services Representatives with their partners, including employers, training providers, and business groups. For employers, the Business Services element of the workforce development system provides access to qualified job candidates, human resources services, and training to help ensure that they have a quality workforce. This relationship is explained in more detail in “Section 1.B., Service Model for Business Services,” on Page 16.

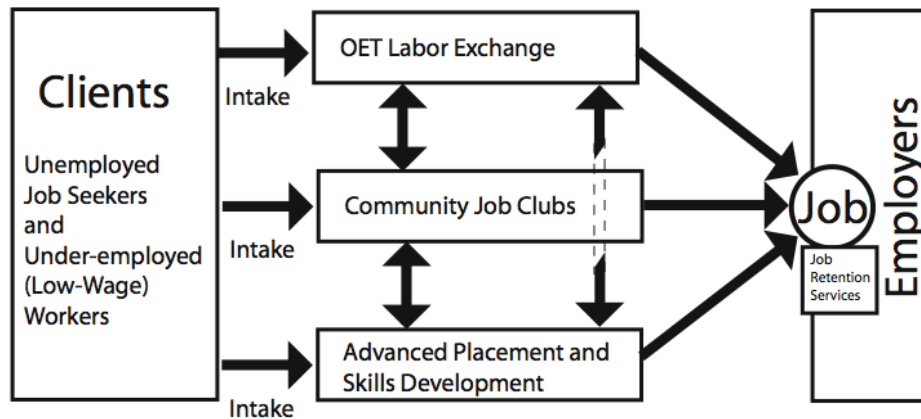
The success of the system in meeting the needs of either of its client groups — employers or job-seekers — depends upon successful communication and coordination between the Career Advisors and Business Services Representatives.

A. Service Model for Job-Seeking Clients

The diagram below provides a visual representation of the ways the workforce development system serves job-seeking clients. It shows a model that provides several possible entry points for these clients and allows them to dynamically flow across the entire range of services, moving into and out of individual services depending upon what will best help them toward their ultimate goal of obtaining a job.

NOTE: Detailed descriptions will be provided in later sections of the services and activities that comprise the Advanced Placement and Skills Development component, and the way that Business Services function in relation to these elements.

Service Model -- Client Flow



The elements shown in the diagram “Service Model—Client Flow” are described in Sections 1 through 6 below.

1. Clients — Unemployed Job Seekers and Under-Employed Workers

The clients of the workforce system include anyone who is looking for a job, whether currently employed or not. However, the system emphasizes serving unemployed job seekers and employed workers who are seeking a new job because their current job pays a wage that is less than appropriate for their qualifications or potential.

Different combinations of services will be appropriate for different clients because of the differences in their circumstances and objectives. Unemployed and under-employed clients who come to the workforce system may include:

- Clients who are entering the workforce for the first time
- Clients who are employed, but earning less than a self-sufficient wage (\$13.40 per hour)
- Clients who have been unemployed for a long time.
- Clients who have been unemployed for a short time.
- Clients who have lost a job as a result of lay-offs, workforce reductions, or business closings, through no fault of their own.

- Clients transitioning into a new career, whether currently employed or unemployed.

The services that will help these clients get a job may include any combination of Labor Exchange services, Community Job Club services, or the array of services that make up the Advanced Placement and Skills Development component — simultaneously or separately in any appropriate order, based upon their individual career needs, interests, and objectives. These services might include but are not limited to:

- Self-directed job search activities.
- Staff assisted job search activities.
- Assessments of skills, aptitudes and interests.
- Resume writing instruction and assistance.
- Instruction in job search techniques.
- Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
- Career advising
- Workshops (e.g., resume writing, marketing self to the employer, job interviewing tips, portfolio development, etc.)
- Development of a career action plan.
- Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment & Training.
- The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
- Skills training.
- Higher education.
- Work experience.
- Basic skills instruction.
- Referrals to the services of other workforce, education, or public assistance agencies.

2. OET (Office of Employment and Training) Labor Exchange

Labor Exchange is a service that links qualified job seekers to job openings with local employers. Job seekers register with the Labor Exchange program and are referred to appropriate openings as employers notify the Labor Exchange program of their needs. In Kentucky, Labor Exchange services are provided by the state's Office of Employment and Training and are funded by federal Wagner-Peyser funds.

OET provides an integrated array of Labor Exchange services so that job seekers and businesses can find the services they need. The employment-related Labor Exchange services provided by OET include job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers; re-

employment services for Unemployment Insurance claimants; and recruitment services to employers with job openings. Clients can get most services via electronic self-service, facilitated self-service, or staff assisted service.

As shown in the “Service Model—Client Flow” diagram, OET will work in coordination with the Community Job Clubs and Advanced Placement and Skills Development components to ensure that the eastern Kentucky workforce development system meets the needs of all clients and employers as completely as possible. OET’s role as provider of Unemployment Insurance services places them in contact with a high volume of job seekers and makes them a logical entry point to the system for many clients.

3. Community Job Clubs

- a. Description and Function — A job club is a small group of job seekers who meet weekly with local workforce professionals to improve their job searches. The group members provide support for each other while networking and learning techniques for improving their job searches from the workforce professionals and invited guests. This combination of support, networking, and job-search education makes job club members much more successful at getting a job than job seekers who search alone.

Job clubs are an integral part of EKCEP’s service model, as shown in the “Service Model—Client Flow” diagram. Job clubs serve as a major outreach and intake component because they are accessible and attractive to people who are seeking a job, regardless of their reasons.

As job clubs form they can expect to draw people who drop out after a short time, deciding that the job club approach is not for them. This kind of turnover is to be expected and actually serves as a kind of “natural selection” of club members who are seriously interested in both pursuing their career objectives and helping their fellow club members.

For the service model to be effective, job clubs should be available throughout EKCEP’s 23-county service area. Many locations may have several different job clubs functioning at the same time, depending on demand. The average job club is expected last eight to ten weeks.

- b. Goals and Services — The primary goal of a job club is to get jobs for its members. The job club does this by:

- Providing peer support for each job seeker during his/her career crisis.
- Easing the job seekers' feelings of isolation, fear, and depression.
- Helping the job seekers regain their confidence.
- Leading the job seekers to discover new skills and abilities.
- Providing networking opportunities with local employers that give job seekers access to unpublished job opportunities
- Providing job seekers with professional career services that develop and polish their job-search and interviewing skills.
- Helping each job seeker:
 - Develop and discover a clear vision of the type of job and salary he/she wants and the steps it will take to obtain that job as quickly as possible.
 - Uncover any hidden challenges that may be sabotaging his/her efforts to get interviews and job offers.
 - Create a job search plan that he/she can work from week to week with the support of the other club members.
- Providing workforce programming that includes:
 - Best practices for networking.
 - Understanding the anatomy of a job search.
 - How to build a resume.
 - Tips for applying successfully for jobs.
 - Ways to succeed at job interviews.
 - How to overcome obstacles and setbacks.
 - Up-to-date labor market and career information.
 - Building a digital identity in the 21st century job market.

- c. Facilitator — Each job club should have a facilitator who is primarily responsible for the scheduling and logistics of the club, as well as being the lead workforce professional. In most cases this facilitator will be a staff member from the local WIA contractor agency, preferably a career advisor who holds the Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) credential. In some cases, EKCEP staff may facilitate or assist in facilitating a job club.

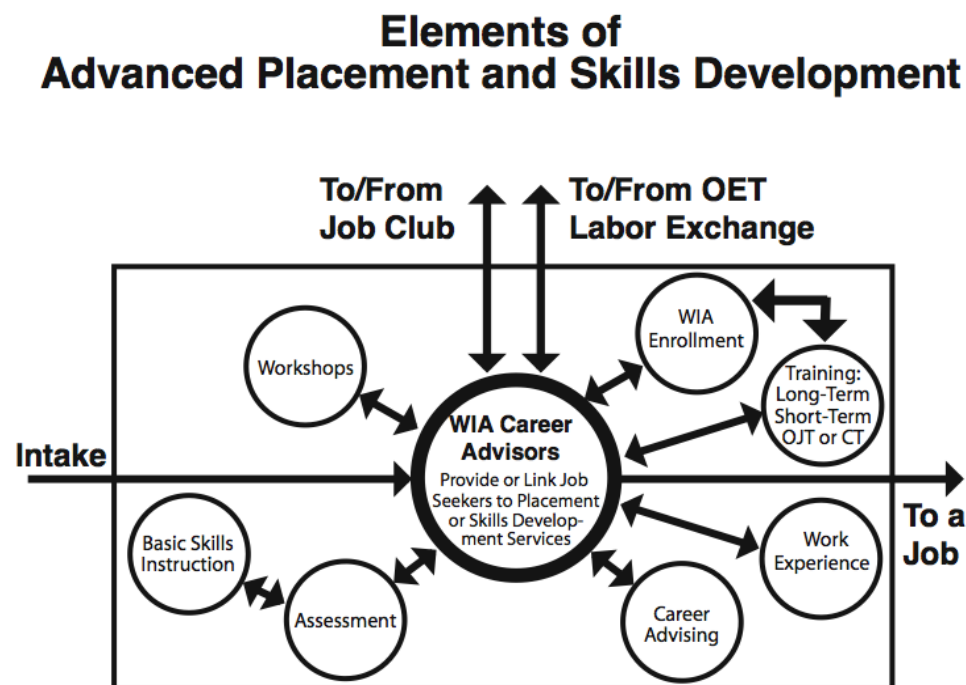
A job club's facilitator should be assisted by staff from the Office of Employment Training (OET), which should be a major partner in providing the job club service. OET staff should be especially active in helping make unemployed people aware of the opportunities provided by the job club. WIA Business Services representatives must also be in close contact with the lead facilitator, providing information about local employers needs and local job openings and learning

about the career objectives and qualifications of the job club members. Other important community partners are expected to be involved, providing workforce programming and a network of community support. These partners should include local community colleges, Adult Basic Education providers, chambers of commerce, local elected officials, and local businesses.

EKCEP will provide ongoing training and technical support for local job clubs and job club facilitators. Training and technical support will include assistance with local publicity, marketing materials, training job club facilitators, and ongoing program development.

4. Advanced Placement and Skills Development

The Advanced Placement and Skills Development component of the service model is comprised of what has been the main body of WIA services in the past. The services that comprise the Advanced Placement and Skills Development component are shown in the diagram below. (This diagram is a closer look at the Advanced Placement and Skills Development component shown in the “Service Model—Client Flow” diagram on Page 3.)



The elements shown in the diagram “Service Model—Client Flow” are described in Sections a through j below.

- a. WIA Career Advisors — The career advisors funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) are the central and most important element of the Advanced Placement and Skills Development component, as shown in the diagram. Career advisors perform the case management functions defined in the Workforce Investment Act, working with clients to understand their circumstances, aptitudes, interests, barriers, and career objectives, and then using this information to place or refer those clients into the services that will take them to their career objective: an appropriate and satisfying job.

Career advisors will connect clients with many of these services by referral to partner workforce agencies. However, career advisors are expected to stay in close touch with clients and consistently be a part of each client’s decision making and problem solving. Career advisors are also expected to collaborate closely with the Community Job Clubs and OET Labor Exchange components for the duration of each client’s journey to employment. (In many cases, the career advisor’s clients may have entered the workforce system through those components before being referred to them for Advanced Placement and Skills Development services.)

The services within the Advanced Placement and Skills Development component that career advisors can use to help a client reach his/her job goal include:

- Career Advising
- Assessments
- Basic Skills Instruction
- Workshops
- Work Experience
- WIA Enrollment
- Training
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Customized Training (CT)

NOTE: These services are described in more detail in sections b through j below.

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. As shown on the “Elements of Advanced Placement and Skills Development” diagram on Page 8, the career advisor’s plan for a client may include

referral to Labor Exchange services and Community Job Clubs as well as the services included under Advanced Placement and Skills Development. The client may participate in these services simultaneously or separately in any appropriate order, based upon their needs, interests, and objectives.

The career action plans for each client will differ, depending upon that client's circumstances, abilities, and goals. Several examples are shown below.

Services for Unemployed Clients: Unemployed clients come to the workforce system from a wide variety of circumstances, and the services appropriate for them will vary accordingly. Examples could include:

- **Clients who have been unable to find employment and are currently searching for a job.** These clients may have been unemployed for a short or long time, and may have been unable to find employment for a variety of reasons.

Depending upon their individual circumstances and past work experience, these clients may need some combination of these services:

- Assessments of skills, aptitudes and interests.
 - Resume writing instruction and assistance.
 - Instruction in job search techniques.
 - Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
 - Basic skills instruction, if needed.
 - Short-term skills training.
 - Long-term skills training, if a career change is appropriate.
 - The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
 - Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment & Training.
 - Other services and referrals, as appropriate.
- **Clients who have lost a job as a result of employee lay offs, workforce reductions, or the closing of a business.** These clients are called "dislocated workers." Characteristically, dislocated workers may be:
 - Frustrated by losing jobs that they were content with and enjoyed.
 - Worried and nervous about meeting their bills and other obligations.

- Feeling insecure at having to start over at this point in their lives.
- Unsure if they will be able to obtain employment with their current skills in today's job market.

Depending upon their individual circumstances and past work experience, these clients may need some combination of these services:

- Assessments of skills, aptitudes and interests.
- Resume writing instruction and assistance.
- Instruction in job search techniques.
- Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
- Basic skills instruction, if needed.
- Short-term skills training.
- Long-term skills training, if a career change is appropriate.
- The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
- Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment and Training.
- Other services and referrals, as appropriate.

Whatever services are provided, these dislocated workers must receive encouragement and reassurance from their career advisors. It is important that career advisors assure these former workers that they will be supported and guided throughout their journey to return to the workforce

- **Clients who have been out of the workforce because they have been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and have been dependent on the income of another family member, but are now entering the workforce because they are no longer supported by that income.** These clients are often called “displaced homemakers.”

Depending upon their individual circumstances—especially their education level and whether they have ever worked before—these clients may need a career action plan that includes a combination of many of these services:

- Assessments of skills, aptitudes and interests.
- Resume writing instruction and assistance.
- Instruction in job search techniques.
- Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
- Basic skills instruction, if needed.
- Short-term skills training.

- Long-term skills training, if a career change is appropriate.
 - The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
 - Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment & Training.
 - Other services and referrals, as appropriate.
- **Clients who are entering the workforce after graduating from high school or college.** These recent graduates may have limited or no work experience, but are now ready to join the workforce. They will probably need a career action plan that includes a combination of many of these services:
 - Resume writing instruction and assistance.
 - Instruction in job search techniques.
 - Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
 - Assessments of skills, aptitudes and interests, unless their career path has already been determined by their course of study.
 - Short-term skills training, unless these skills were covered in their education.
 - Long-term skills training, only if they become candidates for a career for which their education did not prepare them.
 - The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
 - Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment & Training.
 - Other services and referrals, as appropriate.
 - **Clients who are entering the workforce for the first time with no previous work experience.** These clients may include high school dropouts and will characteristically be intimidated by the whole job-search process, as well as the workplace itself. They will probably need a full array of services, with a probable emphasis on training services.

Services for Under-Employed Clients: Although all under-employed clients are by definition currently holding a job that pays too poorly to sustain them or their families, they still come to the workforce system from a wide variety of other circumstances and the services appropriate for them will vary accordingly. Examples could include:

- **Clients who are under-employed and under-educated or under-skilled** – These workers are holding a job that provides insufficient wages because they are unqualified for a better job. The career action plan for these clients will most likely:

- Focus first on assessing their aptitude and interests, then training them in appropriate marketable skills. Short-term trainings will likely be most appropriate because these clients probably won't be able to quit their current job in order to immerse themselves in long-term trainings.
 - Include basic skills instruction, if needed.
 - Add Instruction in resume writing, job interviewing skills, and other job search techniques as they near the end of their training.
 - Include referrals to other services, as appropriate.
- **Clients who are under-employed but educated or skilled –**
 These workers are holding a job that provides insufficient wages because they have been unable to find a job that matches their qualifications. The career action plan for these clients will most likely focus almost entirely on job search skills and networking, including:
 - Resume writing instruction and assistance.
 - Instruction in job search techniques.
 - Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
 - The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
 - Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment & Training.
 - Other services and referrals, as appropriate.
 - **Clients who have been out of the workforce because they have been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and have been dependent on the income of another family member, but because they are no longer supported by that income have entered the workforce and are working in job that provides insufficient wages.** These clients are “displaced homemakers” who are under-employed.

Depending upon their individual circumstances — especially their education level and the nature of their previous work experience — these clients may need a career action plan that includes a combination of many of these services:

- Assessments of skills, aptitudes and interests.
- Resume writing instruction and assistance.
- Instruction in job search techniques.
- Instruction and coaching in job interviewing skills.
- Basic skills instruction, if needed.

- Short-term skills training.
 - Long-term skills training, if a career change is appropriate.
 - The peer support and job-search assistance provided by a Job Club.
 - Labor Exchange services provided through the Kentucky Office for Employment & Training.
 - Other services and referrals, as appropriate.
- b. Career Advising — Career advising involves gathering and presenting information about a client’s career options to the client, helping the client interpret that information and make decisions based upon it, guiding the client through the process of developing a career action plan for reaching his/her career goals, and helping the client implement that plan.
- c. Assessments — Assessing a client’s aptitudes, abilities, and interests may involve the use of a wide variety of formal career assessments and tests, as well as the career advisor’s conclusions drawn from interviewing and working with the client. Assessment results should be shared with the client as the career advisor and client work together to make realistic decisions about the career action plan. To ensure consistency, any formal assessments or tests used must be approved by EKCEP.
- d. Basic Skills Instruction — A client’s assessments may show deficiencies in basic skills (e.g., math, reading) that are required for the career the client is interested in pursuing. If the deficiencies are not too large to be overcome, clients may be placed in or referred to remedial basic skills instruction to improve his/her skills in that area.
- e. Workshops — Workshops are approved brief trainings on a specific topic. WIA and its partners in the workforce system offer workshops on a wide variety of workforce-related topics. A series of these workshops can be an important part of a client’s workforce education.
- f. Work Experience — The Work Experience service places a client with little or no previous experience in the workplace into a temporary job with an actual employer, with WIA paying 100 percent of the worker’s wages. The objective is for the client to learn about and become comfortable with the working environment while learning some marketable skills and earning some money.
- g. WIA Enrollment — If a career advisor determines that WIA services (e.g., training, work experience) are appropriate for a client, the advisor must determine that the client is eligible for those services. At this point, the career advisor must collect information — especially financial information — that was not previously required for participation in services of the workforce system.

- h. Training — Long-term or short-term training is an appropriate service if it is required for a client to attain his/her career goals. Under WIA, funding assistance may be provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). However, ITA funding may be limited to training for careers that are considered “in demand” or support industries in sectors of emphasis.
- i. On-the-Job Training (OJT) — On-the-Job training is training provided to a client by an employer after the client has been hired. The length of the training period will vary, depending upon the job and complexity of the training. WIA funds pay a portion of the trainee’s wages during the training period, but the employer must also pay a portion of the wages.
- j. Customized Training — Customized training is training specifically identified by an employer as necessary for his/her employees. As with OJT, all workers trained must be employed by the business. WIA funds pay a portion of the total cost of the training, rather than a portion of the wages as in OJT, and the employer must pay the balance of the costs.

5. Job Retention Services

Job retention services are services that are provided to clients who have obtained a job to help them retain the job and succeed in it. This is a new area of emphasis for EKCEP. These services may be provided individually to workers, as workshops for groups of workers, or to a specific employer’s workers as a business service.

Job retention services may include:

- Advising and assistance with workplace behaviors.
- Advising and assistance with workplace relationships, especially regarding conflict resolution.
- Personal money management and budgeting.
- Planning for career advancement.

6. Employers

Employers are the source of the jobs sought by the job-seeking clients of the workforce system. However, employers are also important clients of the workforce system, turning to the system for help in finding dependable and qualified workers who will allow their businesses to thrive and expand.

The Service Model for Business Services (in Section 1.B., “Service Model for Business Services” below) provides details about how the workforce system in eastern Kentucky serves the region’s employers.

B. Service Model for Business Services

Business Services is the workforce system’s driver for job placements and the creation of skill development and training opportunities. Business Services plays a vital role in ensuring that the workforce needs of the region’s employers are met and that the workforce system is properly preparing the region’s job seekers for the real job opportunities that are present in the region.

1. Guiding Principles of Business Services

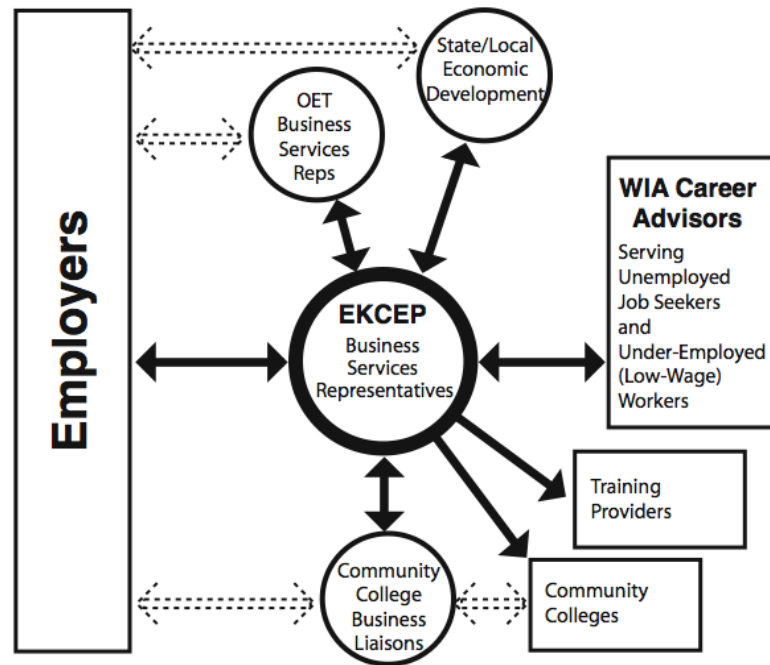
EKCEP's Business Services are guided by three principles:

- Business services should be solutions-driven. This approach is based on the belief that employers know best what they want and need, and therefore the best way to develop useful services for them is to listen to them. Because businesses differ, the solutions to their problems will also differ, and the workforce development system must be flexible to respond to these differences. Fixed menus of services and rigid program guidelines are not solutions-driven approaches.
- Business services should be relevant to business needs. The purpose of business services is to serve business' needs, not the needs of the workforce development program. Services must be legal and ethical, but within those limits the services must be developed with the needs of the businesses foremost in mind.
- Business services should be delivered in a timely manner. If the workforce development system is to help solve business problems and be relevant to actual business needs, it must operate at the "speed of business." Employers with workforce problems do not really care about the intricacies of Federal WIA program designs; they simply want to know if they can get help when they need it, not later.

2. Functions of Business Services

The relationships and functions of EKCEP's Business Services are shown in the diagram on the next page.

Role of Business Services



As shown in the diagram, the role of EKCEP's Business Services Representatives (BSRs) includes:

- Working directly with local employers to identify specific workforce development needs. BSRs should be in touch regularly with as many employers as possible within their assigned service area in order to be aware of each employer's current job openings, expansion or contraction plans, facilities and equipment upgrades, new product lines, and other aspects of their business that might affect their workforce needs.
- Working with local business groups (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, Society of Human Resources Managers [SHRM], etc.) to identify employer needs, raise awareness of EKCEP's business services programs, and develop relationships that can help promote EKCEP's workforce development activities.
- Assisting local employers in obtaining qualified employees, including informing local employers about available qualified job candidates, options for training previously unqualified job seekers, on-the-job training opportunities, assistance available for human-resources tasks, and other ways to address their workforce issues.

- Working and communicating regularly with the business services representatives of the Office of Employment and Training (OET), the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), and local economic development agencies to remain abreast of what they have learned about employers' workforce development needs in the region. BSRs should explore opportunities to partner with any of these organizations in any ways to meet employers' workforce development and training needs.
- Working with training providers to help them develop training programs that meet the skills needs of local employers and job seekers, and that meet EKCEP's training goals.
- Overseeing the initiation and implementation of employer based training programs supported by EKCEP WIA funds, including On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, Work Experience, and Incumbent Worker training programs.
- Communicating with WIA career advisors and the job seekers they serve about local employer needs, job opportunities, required qualifications/training, application and hiring procedures, and other specific factors relating to obtaining local employment.
- Working with Community Job Clubs and job club facilitators to help link job club participants with appropriate employers.
- Working with other EKCEP BSRs to implement employer services programs that involve multiple BSR service areas.
- Assisting other BSRs as needed in order to promote effective implementation of EKCEP business services programs.

The BSRs will report regularly to the EKCEP Business Services Director, who will oversee and coordinate EKCEP business services activities and programs and work closely with BSRs as they promote and develop new business services programs throughout the region.

3. Business Services Partnerships

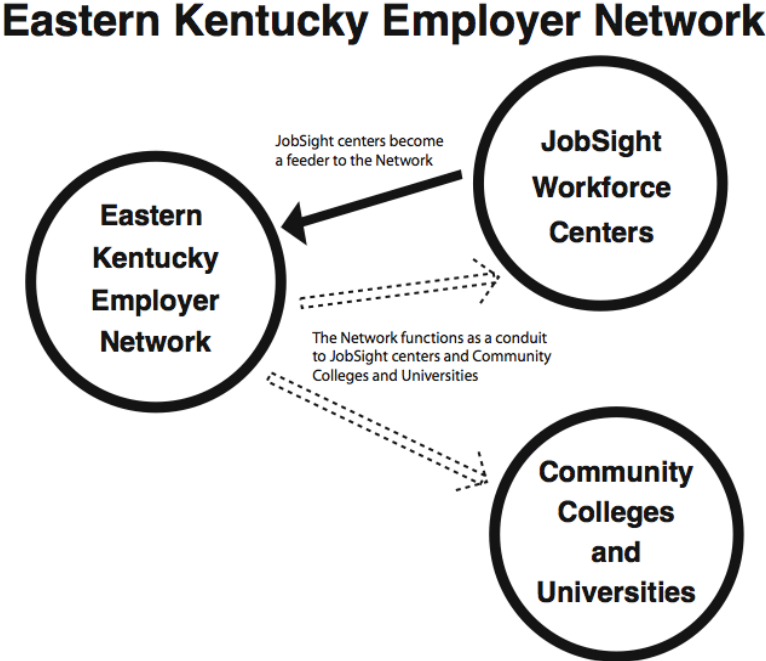
As shown in the diagram "Role of Business Services," EKCEP's BSRs will maximize their effectiveness by building and maintaining good working relationships with the business services representatives of the other workforce development, education and training, and economic development agencies that serve EKCEP's region.

By developing mutual understanding of each other’s missions and the shared goals, the business services representatives of each agency should be able to freely share information about employers’ needs, allowing each to be more efficient and effective in meeting those needs. The sharing of information and goals will also create natural opportunities for agencies to partner to provide solutions for employers.

4. The Eastern Kentucky Employer Network

In their role as communications links between employers, training providers, and the WIA career advisors, the BSRs will also serve the Eastern Kentucky Employer Network that EKCEP is launching in partnership with the University of Kentucky’s iWIN (Institute for Workforce Innovation). The employer network will be a consortium through which the region’s employers can share best practices, research solutions to business challenges, and provide consensus input to the region’s workforce development and training agencies.

The basic functions of the Eastern Kentucky Employer Network are shown in the diagram below.



Employers will join the Network as a strategy for hiring qualified employees and learning ways to promote employee retention and engagement. As the network functions, employers will inform the workforce development system regularly of their training needs and of

current and/or future job openings. The JobSight workforce centers, community colleges, and universities can then work collaboratively to train workers and job candidates in the skills that are in demand by the region’s employers — especially those identified by the network.

The results the employer network is designed to achieve overlap and align very closely with the objectives of the BSRs, making it logical for the BSRs to serve in the role of staff to the network. The proposed administrative structure of the Eastern Kentucky Employers Network is shown in the diagram below.

Eastern Kentucky Employer Network Proposed Operational Structure

